

**FROM HOSTAGE TO HISTORIAN:  
JOSEPHUS, THE EMPERORS, AND THE CITY OF ROME**

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## ABSTRACT

The voluminous works of the Judaean historian Flavius Josephus have been and continue to be of tremendous importance for our understanding of the worlds in which he lived. For centuries his works have been thoroughly investigated by scholars in diverse fields. Until more recently, however, the Roman context in which Josephus lived as he wrote was rarely explored at length, despite the fact that it is indispensable for our knowledge and understanding of the man and the historian. Recent scholarship has, however, taken up the exploration of his interactions with his environment with enthusiasm, undermining longstanding conceptions regarding his relationship with the Roman world in the process. The present study builds on these current trends and considers particularly the social circumstances in which Josephus lived in Rome during the latter part of his life. By exploring the relationship between Josephus and each of the Flavian emperors—Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian—individually, this study seeks to explore the nature of these relationships more comprehensively than has been done in the past. This aim of comprehensiveness is achieved in part by beginning not with Josephus' arrival in Rome in AD 71, but with his first voyage to the imperial capital during the reign of Nero, and by considering also the contact between Josephus and the future Roman emperors within the Roman army camp in Judaea during the course of the 1<sup>st</sup> Judaeen War. In the examination of these relationships, this study supports the increasing recognition in Josephan scholarship that the Judaeen historian cannot justifiably be characterized as a 'Flavian lackey' or propagandist, a view that has not yet been fully accepted by non-Josephan scholars. Having established the possible parameters of his relationships with the imperial family, the study also explores the contact between Josephus and other inhabitants of Rome, including the Herodian princes and the patron of his final works, the

freedman Epaphroditus, in an attempt to determine as clearly as possible the social circles in which he functioned as he lived out the final years of his life in the city of Rome.

For my wife Diane  
and our son, Gabriel,  
with deepest affection

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A project such as this is never conceived and borne out in isolation. As far as the origins of the subject of this dissertation are concerned that is certainly true as well. I first encountered the writings of Josephus in an upper-level undergraduate Greek translation course taught by Prof. Steve Mason. Since I was a Classical Studies Major, I became most interested in the place of Josephus, and his fellow Judaeans, within the context of the Roman world. Subsequently I explored the expulsions of the Judaeans from the city of Rome in an undergraduate course directed by Prof. Jonathan Edmondson, focussing particularly on the relationship between the community and its urban environment. These two courses proved to mark the beginnings of continued exploration of these related areas, first through my Masters thesis, which assessed the impact of the Judaeans revolt on the Judaeans community in Rome, and then with the present project.

These two professors should also hold pride of place in my acknowledgements. Prof. Edmondson has been of tremendous support and provided crucial guidance throughout my university years. To him belongs the credit for the suggestion to devote my doctoral studies to exploring the relationship between Josephus and his fellow inhabitants of Rome, an inspired idea that emerged out of a crucial meeting with my supervisory committee when it became clear that a different direction was needed. He also graciously agreed to supervise my studies for the last year of my doctoral programme when my previous supervisor, Prof. Mason, accepted the prestigious Kirby Laing Chair in New Testament Exegesis at the University of Aberdeen. Prior to this, Prof. Mason very capably and with great patience introduced me to the world of Josephus in the way that only he can, with painstaking attention to methodology and rigorous application of historical principle. He has left an unmistakeable mark on this project, as will be immediately

evident from the footnotes. If infelicities and methodological quirks remain, they are due not to the inability of the instructors but to the inattentiveness of the pupil. To these two professors, then, I owe a great debt of gratitude.

I should also thank the other members of my supervisory committee, Prof. Christer Bruun (University of Toronto) and Prof. Phil Harland (York University), for their continued interest and support throughout. Although I kept them in the dark perhaps too often, their presence on the committee was very much appreciated and they have both contributed in various ways. I am also grateful for the willingness of Prof. Honora Chapman (California State University, Fresno) to serve as the external examiner for my dissertation defense. Her enthusiastic evaluation was encouraging and her feedback useful, as could be expected from such an established Josephan scholar.

I have also had the tremendous opportunity to participate in the Joint Collaborative Program in Ancient Greek and Roman History (ColPAH) between the Graduate History Program at York and the Graduate Program in Classics at the University of Toronto almost from its outset, which has offered a remarkable environment for doctoral studies. In addition to providing ready access to the expertise of reputable scholars from both institutions, ColPAH also boasts a large contingent of excellent graduate students, with whom I was privileged to share my years at York. The monthly seminars of the program, at which I also presented parts of my dissertation, have created a closely knit community of scholars that is both vibrant and collegial. From among the graduate students I would particularly like to thank those who were there with me from the beginning, namely Richard Aronson, Anna Irish, and Michael Helfield, in whom I found not only congenial colleagues but also good friends, and Tommaso Leoni and Reuben Lee, whose

historical interests overlapped my own and who served willingly as sounding boards for various thoughts and ideas, even though we were not always in agreement.

Of course, the academy has been only a part of my life, albeit a rather significant one, over these past years. I would, therefore, also like to express my deep appreciation to my family, particularly my wife, Diane, and our son, Gabriel, to whom this dissertation is dedicated. A doctoral student is a unique breed of husband and father, but they provided consistent and quiet support as well as a welcome respite from the books. Our parents and grandparents were also always supportive and contributed to the completion of these doctoral studies in both tangible and intangible ways. I should single out the contribution of Opa Kampen, whose careful reading of the final manuscript picked up errors that had eluded all previous readers. I would also and especially like to thank my father, Rev. W. den Hollander, who, with his confidence in my gifts, constant encouragement, and steady advice, allowed me to maintain the right perspective. Above all, however, I humbly acknowledge that this is a work that was not possible on my own, or even with the assistance of the individuals mentioned above. Soli Deo Gloria!

-----*In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps. Proverbs 16:9*-----

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: JOSEPHUS IN ROME<sup>1</sup>

Sometime during the first year of the reign of the emperor Gaius—or ‘Little Boots’ (*Caligula*) as the soldiers affectionately called him while he was yet a young boy<sup>2</sup>—that is between March 18 of AD 37 and March 17 of AD 38, a son was born in the backwater region<sup>3</sup> of Judaea to a mother of royal descent and a father of priestly stock, or so we are told.<sup>4</sup> This illustrious heritage was suitably complemented by a precocious childhood, during which the young Yosef ben Mattityahu excelled in his studies to the point that the chief priests and leading men of Jerusalem beat a path to his door to seek assistance regarding legal matters.<sup>5</sup> At the appropriate age of sixteen he undertook to gain experience in each of the Judaeian philosophical schools, namely those of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Having successfully passed through these, with considerable effort, he continued his training by retreating to the desert to join an ascetic figure named Bannus, with whom he spent three years, clothed in bark

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this dissertation use was made of the excellent translations of Josephus’ works of the Brill Project where applicable, and of the relevant Loeb volumes where the Brill translation is not yet complete. In some cases, particularly in the case of the Loeb, these translations have been adapted to provide a clearer sense of the original Greek. All other translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. Note also that throughout the dissertation, Josephus’ works will be referred to as follows: *War*=*Judaeian War*; *Antiquities (Ant.)*=*Judaeian Antiquities*; *Apion (Ap.)*=*Against Apion*. Other ancient works are abbreviated according to *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1996: xxix-liv, and the *SBL Handbook of Style* 2009: 69-152.

<sup>2</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.41.

<sup>3</sup> The avoidance of the term province for the region of Judaea at this date is deliberate. Recent scholarship has argued convincingly that Judaea became an independent province only later on, although there is no consensus as to a specific date when this was enacted (44, 67, and 70/71 are the suggestions); see Ghiretti 1985: 751-66; Cotton 1999: 75-81; Bennett 2007: 188-89; Eck 2007: 24-52; cf. Eck 2011: 45-68; Mason 2011: 210.

<sup>4</sup> Josephus *Life* 1-6; cf. Radin 1929: 193-6; Rajak 2002[1983]: 14-18; Mason 2003c: 37-9. The following brief introduction to Josephus’ life history prior to his arrival in Rome is a summary of Josephus’ claims regarding his early life and is not meant to be a critical analysis of the problems associated with these accounts. For more detailed discussions, see Laqueur 1920: 245-78; Thackeray 1929: 1-22; Feldman 1984b: 779-87; Bilde 1988: 27-60; Cohen 2002[1979]: 181-231; Rajak 2002[1983]: 11-45; Mason 2003c: 35-54.

<sup>5</sup> *Life* 8-9; concerning the motif of a precocious childhood, see Feldman 1998a: 90-91; Cohen 2002[1979]: 105-6.

and leaves and subsisting on wild plant life. Only then did he return to Jerusalem to involve himself in public life at the age of nineteen.<sup>6</sup>

Yosef found himself delegated “after [his] twenty-sixth year” to travel to the heart of the empire, the city of Rome, to secure the release of some priests who had been dispatched to Rome by the procurator of Judaea, M. Antonius Felix, to submit an account to the emperor Nero. On his travels to Rome he suffered a shipwreck in the middle of the Adriatic, but managed to swim through the entire night to be saved at daybreak by a ship from Cyrenaica, a miraculous rescue reminiscent of the accounts of Jonah and the apostle Paul.<sup>7</sup> Upon his arrival in Rome he managed to secure the release of the priests through a series of fortuitous acquaintances, including a mime-actor named Aliturus, who was a favourite of the emperor Nero, and the wife of the emperor himself, Poppaea Sabina, who granted him many gifts besides.<sup>8</sup>

Upon his return to Judaea, Yosef was apparently confronted with the early stages of rebellion against Roman rule, which he arduously sought to suppress.<sup>9</sup> His efforts were, however, ultimately unsuccessful, and the revolt broke out in earnest in the early summer of AD 66. As one of the local aristocrats, Yosef was prevailed upon to take on a position of leadership in upper and lower Galilee and Gamala, although the discrepancies between his accounts of this period in the *War* and the *Life* have made it difficult to determine whether his mission was to persuade those agitating for a rebellion to lay down their weapons (*Life* 28-30) or to organize the defence of those regions against the inevitable assault of the Romans (*War* 5.562-8) or some

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<sup>6</sup> *Life* 10-12; cf. Mason 1991: 326-56, 374, for the interpretation of the phrase ἠρξάμην τε πολιτεύεσθαι τῇ Φαρισαίων αἵρέσει κατακολουθῶν as, “I began to involve myself in public life, deferring to the philosophical school of the Pharisees” (Mason 2001), thus rejecting the traditional interpretation that Josephus was a Pharisee himself or wanted to be seen as such. For the difficulties in the chronology of the narrative here, see Shutt 1961: 2 n. 3; Mason 2001: 20 n. 86.

<sup>7</sup> See Jon. 1:13-2:10; Acts 27: 27-44; 2 Cor. 11:25.

<sup>8</sup> *Life* 13-16; concerning this expedition, see further below, pp. 36-72.

<sup>9</sup> *Life* 17-19.

combination of both.<sup>10</sup> In any case, his appointment as general in Galilee and his struggles in maintaining a balance between attempting to persuade the rebellious to desist and ensuring that the region was well defended serve as a clear illustration of the dilemmas facing the local elite under Roman rule, who had to please both the Roman overlords and the provincial subjects while also looking after their own interests.<sup>11</sup> Yosef himself acknowledges this difficulty, attributing the thought to Ananus, the chief priest and leader of the assembly in Jerusalem, that the leaders in Jerusalem should be “providing for the war out of necessity so that, if the Judaeans did not put an end to it, it should at least be done shrewdly.”<sup>12</sup>

The time spent by Yosef preparing for and conducting the revolt in Galilee was relatively brief. At his arrival at the end of AD 66, he was faced with internal conflicts among certain elements of the population, most notably two individuals named John of Gischala and Justus of Tiberias.<sup>13</sup> These were largely settled by February-March of 67, at which time Yosef was able to turn his attention to preparing for the inevitable arrival of the Roman forces, which he accomplished by fortifying the key villages of the area and storing up provisions of grain and weapons.<sup>14</sup> As it happened, his actual involvement as a general in the revolt was short-lived. The arrival of Vespasian and then Titus at Ptolemais on the coast in the spring of AD 67 gave the Romans a decided military advantage: three legions (the *Legio X Fretensis*, *Legio V Macedonica* and *Legio XV Apollinaris*); twenty-three auxiliary *cohortes*; six cavalry *alae*; and significant numbers of troops contributed by the allied kings, Antiochus of Commagene, Agrippa II,

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<sup>10</sup> Regarding these problems, see Laqueur 1920: 103-4; Thackeray 1929: 10-11; Shutt 1961: 37-41; Feldman 1984b: 782-4; Bilde 1988: 36-46; Cohen 2002[1979]: 8-23.

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. Brunt 1976: 161-73; Goodman 1987: 27-134; Mason 2001: xliii-xlvi. See also Bilde 1988: 44, regarding Josephus' policy in Galilee, “It actually appears to be a pro-Roman, but at the same time patriotic upper-class policy.”

<sup>12</sup> *War* 4.320: προσκοπούμενος δ' ὑπ' ἀνάγκης καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον, ὅπως, εἰ μὴ διαλύσαιτο Ἰουδαῖοι, δεξιῶς διαφέροιντο.

<sup>13</sup> Regarding the conflicts in Galilee, see Rajak 2002[1983]: 144-73.

<sup>14</sup> *Life* 187-88.

Sohaemus of Emesa, and Malchus II of Nabataea; a total of some 60,000 men.<sup>15</sup> Yosef very quickly found himself and his army besieged in the fortress of Jotapata. After some difficulties caused primarily by Yosef's self-proclaimed tricks and stratagems, including the pouring of boiling oil on the Roman soldiers and the application of slippery boiled fenugreek to the assault ramps, the Romans finally managed to take the fortress on 1 Panemus (June/July), AD 67.<sup>16</sup>

The stage was therefore set for the famous encounter between the Judaeen general and the future emperor Vespasian, an episode that marked the beginning of major changes in circumstance for the young Yosef. The events following his prophecy that the Roman general and his son would one day be emperors in Rome will be explored in much greater detail below, including Yosef's time spent in the Roman camp, first as prisoner-of-war, and then, after the declaration of Vespasian as emperor on July 1, AD 69, as a free man.<sup>17</sup> He remained in the company of the Roman army throughout much of the remainder of the revolt and was present at the siege and eventual capture of Jerusalem on 8 Gorpiaeus (August-September) of AD 70.<sup>18</sup> He appears to have accompanied Titus on his celebratory tour around the region, during which Titus put on elaborate games involving the prisoners, including gladiatorial contests and fights with wild animals, and when the Roman general decided to return to Rome, his former captive sailed along with him.<sup>19</sup>

The arrival of Yosef ben Mattityahu in Rome with the triumphant Titus in AD 71 marked a further transition in the life of the young Judaeen priest, a transition demonstrated most clearly by the assumption of a Roman name, T(itus) Flavius Josephus,<sup>20</sup> which accompanied his receipt

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<sup>15</sup> *War* 3.64-9; cf. Schürer 1973: 492.

<sup>16</sup> *War* 3.145-339.

<sup>17</sup> Prophecy: pp. 102-117; prisoner-of-war: pp. 78-102.

<sup>18</sup> *War* 6.407; for a chronology of the revolt, see Levick 1999: 40-42.

<sup>19</sup> *War* 7.23-4, 39, 96-118; *Life* 422.

<sup>20</sup> The exact *tria nomina* that should be applied to Josephus is uncertain, although most suppose his *praenomen* to have been Titus and Flavius would undoubtedly have been his *nomen* through the *gens Flavia*; see Hadas-Lebel

of Roman citizenship. Although he had been to Rome already during the time of Nero, a visit that could not have failed to make a deep impression, it was from this point on that the city of Rome became his new place of residence, from which he may never have left.<sup>21</sup> The significance of this move should not be missed. The Palestinian Judaeans had become a member of the Diaspora. The priest, who had served regularly in the now destroyed Temple in Jerusalem,<sup>22</sup> exchanged his home in the Holy City for a permanent residence in decadent Babylon, as some of his compatriots characterized the imperial capital.<sup>23</sup>

It was, therefore, also as a Diaspora Judaeans and inhabitant of Rome that he produced the extensive body of literature for which he has become renowned, and on which his very different environments made an indelible mark.<sup>24</sup> The first, the so-called *Judaeans War*, recounted the events of the previous years and was likely completed some time during the reign of Titus.<sup>25</sup> The second and largest, the *Judaeans Antiquities*, was a complete account of the history of his people from creation until the outbreak of the revolt, thus substantially a reworking of the Biblical

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1993[1989]: 195-6; Eck 2000: 281-3. Regarding subsequent renderings of his name, see Niese 1914: 7.569. We do not have any reference to the Roman voting district (*tribus*) to which Josephus would have belonged; see Mason 2001: 168-9 n. 1744 at *Life* 423.

<sup>21</sup> Rajak 2005: 79-97, is unable to provide any definitive evidence that he left Rome, although she makes the case that he did. Shahar 2004: 203-7, suggests that Josephus accompanied the Roman army at the sieges of Machaerus and Masada, thus leaving Rome again shortly after his arrival, on the basis of his apparent tendency to provide descriptive passages only of campaigns at which he was personally present.

<sup>22</sup> Although he nowhere states explicitly that he officiated in the Temple, this can be inferred from *Life* 1-2 where he describes his membership in the priestly day-course (*ἐφημερίς*); cf. *Ant.* 7.365-7; 1 Chr. 24:1-19; Mason 2001: 4-5 n. 9. For a recent comprehensive consideration of Josephus' priestly quality, see Gussmann 2008; cf. Tuval 2011: 397-411.

<sup>23</sup> 4 Ezra 3:1-2, 28-31; 12:10-12; 2 Bar. 10:1-3; 11:1; 33:2; 67:7; 79:1; *Orac. Sib.* 5.143, 159-60, 434-46; Rev. 17 and 18. Although the interpretation of the 'Whore of Babylon' in the Revelation to John as Rome is not universally agreed upon, the other identifications are undisputed.

<sup>24</sup> Despite this, he has not been considered as such in studies devoted to the Judaeans community in Rome—although his narratives are used extensively—largely because of presumptions regarding his isolation from that community, which will be addressed in Ch. 6. See for example Gruen 2002: 52, "The echoes we hear do not include Jewish voices—apart from epitaphs limited in scope and dating from a subsequent period"; cf. Berliner 1893; Vogelstein and Rieger 1896; Vogelstein 1941; Leon 1995[1960]; Cappalletti 2006.

<sup>25</sup> Stern 1975b: 31ff. (*non vidi*); S. Schwartz 1990: 13-16; *contra* Bilde 1988: 79 (between 75-79). Regarding the possibility that Book 7 was (re)published much later, under Domitian and/or Trajan, see Thackeray 1929: 34-5, 105; S. Schwartz 1986: 373-86; Cohen 2002[1979]: 84-6, 237-8; cf. Feldman 1975: 236; Attridge 1984: 193; Beard 2003: 547. See further below, pp. 119, 208, 334. For a useful introduction to the work, see Bilde 1988: 65-79.

narrative. To these books was appended his *Life*, a rather selective autobiography that served to illustrate his character and demonstrate his credentials. Josephus dates the completion of these volumes to AD 93/4.<sup>26</sup> The final work composed by Josephus in the city of Rome was his *Against Apion*, which is often viewed as a defense of Judaism against the Alexandrian Greek orator Apion—hence the traditional title. Josephus, however, claims that it was a response to those who failed to be convinced by the earlier *Antiquities* and a defense of the antiquity of the Judaeans people.<sup>27</sup> The dating of this work is unsecure,<sup>28</sup> but it marks the last we know of Josephus in the city of Rome. His subsequent life and death have been lost to history.<sup>29</sup>

This brief summary of his literary efforts makes it clear already that Josephus' Judaeans background and experiences continued to affect profoundly his outlook and perspective during his time in the city of Rome. He himself testified to this in the *War* in his address to the besieged inhabitants of Jerusalem who gathered at the walls to hear him speak, when he vowed, "For never may I live to become so abject a captive as to abandon my people or to forget the traditions of my forefathers."<sup>30</sup> His entire literary output reflects this continued preoccupation with his cultural heritage. From his account of the Judaeans war to his lengthy reworking of the Biblical narrative and history of the intervening period to his defence and promotion of the antiquity of the Judaeans customs and traditions, Josephus was busy in Rome with both the past and the contemporary circumstances of his compatriots. As Bilde has observed, "It is the political and

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<sup>26</sup> See *Ant.* 2.267; cf. *Life* 430; Petersen 1958: 262-3; Frankfort 1961: 52-8; Rajak 1973: 358-63; Barish 1978: 61-75; Migliario 1981: 98-101; Bilde 1988: 104-6; Weaver 1994: 474; Mason 1998a: 31-45; 2001: xv-xix; Cohen 2002[1979]: 170-80; Rajak 2002[1983]: 237-8. See further below, pp. 304-306, also for objections to this date. For a useful introduction to these works, see Bilde 1988: 80-113.

<sup>27</sup> *Apion* 1.1-5; for a useful introduction, see Bilde 1988: 113-22.

<sup>28</sup> See further below, p. 278.

<sup>29</sup> C.P. Jones 2002: 119-21, presents reasonable arguments for a date prior to AD 96, but this rests on his dating of *Apion*. For an alternative date, see e.g. Mason 2003c: 53, who suggests the year 100 as the earliest possible date and does not rule out the possibility that he survived well into the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

<sup>30</sup> *War* 6.107: μή γὰρ ἔγωγέ ποτε γενοίμην ζῶν οὕτως αἰχμάλωτος, ἵνα παύσωμαι τοῦ γένους ἢ τῶν πατρίων ἐπιλάθωμαι.

spiritual status of the Jewish people and of Judaism in the Greco-Roman world which constitutes the central theme in all of Josephus' works."<sup>31</sup> Hence no one seeking to understand either the man or his narratives would ignore his Judaeian identity.

Josephus was at this time, however, equally a Roman, and not only as Roman citizen but also as resident of the city. To paraphrase the 19<sup>th</sup> century German theologian and historian Abraham Berliner, "Er war ein Jude, war aber auch Römer—ein römischer Jude."<sup>32</sup> His daily experiences were situated amidst the hustle and bustle of the imperial capital, which lend a certain vividness to the brief notes on Rome that appear within the narrative.<sup>33</sup> His literary efforts as well were conducted in the city of Rome. His *War* was written in part to counter the misrepresentations that were being circulated in the city of Rome by rival historians and contributed to the prevailing negative attitude towards the Judaeians.<sup>34</sup> For this first literary attempt he enlisted local assistance, for questions of both style and content, and distributed copies to permanent residents or visitors in Rome, among whom were the emperors themselves and some members of the Herodian family. His subsequent literary enterprises were conducted with the support and encouragement of a local wealthy freedman, Epaphroditus. In their rhetorical themes as well, his narratives are in dialogue with contemporary concerns and interests. In short, if one wishes to understand Josephus' works as efforts at communication, the physical, social, and intellectual context in which they were written must be taken into account. They were not created nor did they exist in a vacuum. Consequently, just as we cannot hope to

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<sup>31</sup> Bilde 1988: 121.

<sup>32</sup> See Berliner 1893: 93, regarding the Judaeians in Rome: "Sie wurden Juden, wurden aber auch Römer—römische Juden."

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, the passages in which Josephus refers to the crowded streets and alleyways of Rome: *War* 2.105; *Ant.* 18.245 (τῆς Πώμης τὸν ὄχλον); these examples were pointed out to me in conversation by Prof. D.R. Schwartz. Consider also the description of the triumphal celebrations in *War* 7 or the many descriptions of the imperial court in his *Antiquities*.

<sup>34</sup> See *War* 1.1-3; cf. Mason 2005a: 88-9, for a translation and interpretation of *War* 1.1-3 that reflects Josephus' local engagement.

understand the narratives without knowing something of Josephus' Judaean background, so also we cannot truly appreciate them without exploring his contemporary environment. (N.B. throughout this dissertation, the deliberate decision has been made to render the Greek Ἰουδαῖοι and the Latin *Iudaeus* as 'Judaean' in order to emphasize that, during the period in question, the designation was primarily an ethnic one, i.e. descriptive of an ἔθνος or *gens*.<sup>35</sup>)

### **An Overview of Scholarship**

To establish the importance of context is, however, considerably easier than seeking to flesh it out. In the case of the historian Flavius Josephus this has presented significant difficulties, particularly with regard to his later years in Rome. The first issue is, unsurprisingly, the scarcity of evidence. As Thackeray observed some time ago, "Of his thirty or more years in Rome there is little to record."<sup>36</sup> Apart from some passing references to Josephus in the works of some of the Roman historians of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries,<sup>37</sup> and a single reference in the church history of Eusebius, which was simply taken over by later writers,<sup>38</sup> we have only Josephus' own testimony on which to rely, and even this is relatively brief.<sup>39</sup>

Moreover, a second problem arises from the first, namely that it is from Josephus' own pen that we derive the majority of our information. The inherent issues this raises for historical reconstruction were largely ignored by the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century biographers of Josephus, who tended to reconstruct his life's path by uncritically assembling the various references from throughout his works into a relatively seamless narrative, generally glossing

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<sup>35</sup> In agreement with views expressed by Boyarin 2003: 68; Mason 2007a: 1-56; Boyarin 2009: 7-36. For alternative views, see D.R Schwartz 1992a: 5-15; Cohen 1999: 109-39; D.R Schwartz 2005: 68-78; 2007: 3-27; S. Schwartz 2011: 208-38.

<sup>36</sup> Thackeray 1929: 15.

<sup>37</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 5; Cass. Dio 65.1.4; App. *Hist. Rom.* fr. 17; cf. Viereck 1905: 534.

<sup>38</sup> Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3.9.2; cf. Jer. *De vir. ill.* 13; *Suda* s.v. Ἰώσηπος; Nicephorus Callistus *PG* 145.800B, 917D-920A.

<sup>39</sup> See especially *Life* 423-30, but also 361-67; *War* 7.437-53; *Ap.* 1.50-52.



over the contradictions between the accounts and only occasionally expressing doubts about his more extraordinary claims, conducting largely what the early 20<sup>th</sup> century philosopher and historian R.G. Collingwood termed “scissors-and-paste history”.<sup>40</sup>

While scholars already early on in the 20<sup>th</sup> century increasingly recognized the rhetorical nature of the narratives and the consequent difficulties in establishing a straightforward historical narrative, this rarely applied to the details Josephus provides regarding his situation in Rome, likely because there was no account in the *War* to contradict his presentation in the *Life*, unlike the period when he served in Galilee during the beginning stages of the revolt. In fact, his claims regarding the intimacy of his relationship with the Flavians were usually accepted indiscriminately and then used as interpretative keys for deciphering his narratives and working around his biases. While the advocates of this approach rightly acknowledged the necessity of understanding Josephus’ circumstances in Rome,<sup>41</sup> they failed to first critically examine the details that Josephus provides. This gave rise to the now classic reconstruction of the latter period of Josephus’ life, with Laqueur its most vociferous proponent, which argued for major changes in both Josephus’ life history and his outlook.<sup>42</sup>

These arguments were underpinned by the common view of Josephus as an unprincipled opportunist, who quite readily adapted his position to suit the various situations in which he found himself, a characterization of his life that has been profoundly influenced by the dark shadow of his perceived act of betrayal at Jotapata, when he gave himself up to the Romans after

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<sup>40</sup> Collingwood 1999: 12-6 (based on his writings principally from 1938-9, of which the manuscripts were discovered in the archives of the Oxford University Press in 1995). For examples of this “scissors-and-paste” approach, at least to the details of Josephus’ life in Rome, see Edersheim 1882: 441-8; Hamburger 1883: 502-5; Niese 1896: 193-200; 1914: 569-71; Hölischer 1916: cols. 1934-2000.

<sup>41</sup> As observed by Bilde 1988: 130-31.

<sup>42</sup> See especially Luther 1910: esp. 5-9; Laqueur 1920: 245-78; Weber 1921; Rasp 1924: 27-47; Smith 1956: 67-81; Cohen 2002[1979]: 86, 232-40; Shutt 1961: 119-21; Neusner 1972: 224-54; Migliario 1981: 92-137; Attridge 1984: 192-227; S. Schwartz 1990: 1-22, 82-88, 170-208. Although Thackeray 1929: 52, rejected any abrupt change in attitude, he nevertheless subscribes to the view that the *War* was a piece of Flavian propaganda and that the *Antiquities* was written while Josephus was freed from imperial constraints.

miraculously(?) escaping the knives of those hiding with him, who had resolved to submit to death rather than a foreign power. It was a decision that impacted the remainder of his life,<sup>43</sup> and the question of whether or not he should be considered a traitor, which already divided his countrymen, has continued to be debated to this day.<sup>44</sup> The potential impact of a positive answer to the question should not be underestimated, as is plain from the popular biography of 1914 by Norman Bentwich, the first attorney general of the British Mandate for Palestine, who wrote:

Hard circumstances compelled him to choose between a noble and an ignoble part, between heroic action and weak submission. He was a mediocre man, and chose the way that was not heroic and glorious. Posterity gained something by his choice; his own reputation was fatally marred by it.<sup>45</sup>

The negative judgment of Josephus' actions at Jotapata was often closely connected, therefore, with a general condemnation of his unscrupulous character, which was viewed as a key not only to understanding his narratives, but also for reconstructing the subsequent period in his life.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See *War* 3.438-42; 5.542-3; 7.437-53; *Life* 416, 423-5, 428-9.

<sup>44</sup> See e.g. Zeitlin 1934: 26-30; Brandon 1958: 830-36; Aberbach 1967: 13-19; Cohon 1970: 151-72; Walbank 1995: 273-85; Docker 2005: 1-38; note also the title of a recent popular biography by Seward, *Jerusalem's Traitor: Josephus, Masada, and the Fall of Judea* (2009), although his position is more balanced within. Josephus has also frequently been subjected to mock trials, particularly by Israeli youth movements, even in 1948, during Israel's War of Independence, as recalled by Hebrew University political scientist Shlomo Avineri (2010) in a review of Lisa Ullmann's recent translation of the *War* into Hebrew at *Haaretz.com*; cf. Feldman 2010. On Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1992, there was also an entire programme on prime-time Israeli television devoted to a mock trial of Josephus; cf. Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 237; Ben-Yehuda 1995: 330 n. 34; Sorek 2008: 20. Although at times found guilty of treason, as in Antwerp in 1937 during a mock trial conducted by law students, he has most often been acquitted for lack of evidence.

<sup>45</sup> Bentwich 1914: 57.

<sup>46</sup> See esp. Graetz 1888: 3.513-32; Hölscher 1916: 1934-2000; Laqueur 1920: 255ff.; Weber 1921: 22ff.; Bousset 1926: 3.39; Foakes-Jackson 1930: 18; Schalit 1933: 92-5; Williamson 1959: 24; Rappaport 2007: 68-81, esp. 69, "In his activity as a public figure he clearly lacks some virtues, such as personal courage, real military talent and expertise, "learning"... fidelity (either national or personal), and as a historian he lacks the analytical and critical sense needed for good historical writing." For a recent popular account of the crucial moment at Jotapata that provides a more balanced judgment, see Raphael 2011: 17-19, which is based on a lecture given at the University of Exeter on Nov. 2, 2011. The Holocaust of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War seems to have changed the view of at least Abraham Schalit on Josephus, who wrote in the preface to his edited volume *Zur Josephus-Forschung* (1973), xviii, "Wir blicken heute auf die Vorgänge in Judäa in der letzten Zeit des Zweiten Tempels anders, als das noch vor etwa zwei Generationen üblich war. Die Problematik des jüdischen Daseins im Römischen Reich war viel komplizierter, als man seinerzeit anzunehmen geneigt war, so daß Josephus nicht ohne weiteres als Verräter seines Volkes beurteilt werden kann"; on Schalit's changing views of Josephus, see D.R. Schwartz 1987: 9-28; 1995: 9-20.

According to the most extreme form of this view, then, Josephus began his life in Rome as a Flavian lackey, a flunky, a propagandist and *officiosus*, a *Römling*, a quisling, writing the *War* first in Aramaic and then in Greek in service of his imperial patrons, who employed Josephus as a servile mouthpiece to warn the allegedly threatening Parthian empire that Rome was not to be trifled with. This situation was supposed to have persisted throughout the reigns of Vespasian and Titus but to have changed drastically with the advent of Domitian, when Josephus apparently lost imperial favour and consequently his livelihood and was forced to change course. He became instead a Judaeen propagandist, enlisted by the bibliophile Epaphroditus to publish works that presented the culture and history of the Judaeans in a positive light, which left him free to seek the rehabilitation of his relationship with his fellow countrymen and even, according to some scholars, register his support for the fledgling rabbinic movement in Palestine to the Roman government. These details of Josephus' life were widely accepted, with relatively minor variations, throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Laqueur was, however, alone in postulating a final change in circumstance, namely the loss of the patronage of Epaphroditus, which forced Josephus to pursue his fortunes among the early Christians, for whose benefit he inserted the famous *Testimonium Flavianum* into his *Antiquities*.<sup>47</sup>

The most commonly accepted element of Laqueur's reconstruction, in both prior and subsequent scholarship, was his characterization of Josephus as the official 'court historian' of Vespasian and Titus,<sup>48</sup> which was agreed upon even by those who did not join in condemning Josephus as traitor.<sup>49</sup> This view has had profound impacts on the scholarly reception of his *War* and continues to hold sway within general scholarship, despite the fact that Josephan scholarship

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<sup>47</sup> The *Testimonium Flavianum* is *Ant.* 18.63-4. For other useful summaries of this scholarly portrait of Josephus, see Bilde 1988: 129-31; and Mason 2003b: 563.

<sup>48</sup> See also Momigliano 1934b: 884; Hengel 1989[1961]: 6-16; Safrai and Stern 1974: 1.24.

<sup>49</sup> Among those who viewed Josephus instead as a realistic moderate were Niese 1896: 201-202; Thackeray 1929: 29; Farmer 1956: 16-19; Zeitlin 1968-69: 182. For a more complete list, see Bilde 1979: 180 n. 6.

has now largely put it to rest.<sup>50</sup> Proof of this relationship was seen in the ‘stipend’ that Josephus received from Vespasian upon his arrival in Rome, the supposed flattery of the imperial patrons in his work, and his presentation of the volumes to both Vespasian and Titus, who also affixed his signature and ordered the work to be made public. These are particulars that Josephus himself provides in his *Life*, which were simply accepted at face value along with his *volte-face* at Jotapata as clear indicators of his pro-Flavian stance. In consequence, the details surrounding Josephus’ relationship with the imperial family or his place in Rome more generally were not questioned or examined accordingly.

Until more recently, then, the claims Josephus made regarding the details of the latter half of his life were rarely treated to critical analysis, let alone a comprehensive review. Even Seth Schwartz’s important work on *Josephus and Judaeen Politics* (1990) presents in its fundamental introductory chapter little more than a summary of what Josephus himself presents us in his *Life* and *War*, despite his intention to “use our biographical sketch of Josephus and analysis of his changing interests—both derived from his own works—as tools to evaluate the ways Josephus’ apologetic and propagandistic concerns coloured his historiography.”<sup>51</sup> In view of this scholarly approach, which prevailed for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is not surprising that the section on Josephus’ life in Feldman’s monumental bibliographical work, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship*, which traces the history of Josephan scholarship into the early 1980s, essentially ends with the prophecy to Vespasian and deals only with the controversial relationship between

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<sup>50</sup> See e.g. Southern 1997: 20-22, 24, 133; cf. Griffin 2000a: 4, 15, 17; Overman 2001: 216-17; Beard 2003: 543-58; Carter 2003: 50-52. See even Sorek 2008: 19, “On the death of his patron, the emperor Titus in AD 79 he finally shook off his Roman fetters and became the historian and apologist of his people.”

<sup>51</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 2.

Josephus and Justus of Tiberias for the following period.<sup>52</sup> There simply were no existing studies that dealt exclusively with Josephus in his social and cultural context in Flavian Rome.

While critical examination of the circumstances of Josephus' life in Rome remained generally neglected, the characterization of the Judaeen historian as a Flavian propagandist based on the publication of his *War* was rightly questioned quite early on. Already at the turn of the century Niese expressed the view that "it would be a mistake to regard the work as being an official chronicle. Josephus had no government commission for his task, but wrote entirely on his own initiative."<sup>53</sup> Other scholars, even among those who continued to adopt the traditional rendering of Josephus' relationship with the emperors, in examining the work in detail, also observed that the *War* did not adequately fulfill the requirements of pro-Flavian literature and that Josephus' perspective could not be described narrowly as Roman.<sup>54</sup>

Nevertheless, this was not often accompanied by investigation into Josephus' historical situation, even after Bilde's observation in his useful review of Josephan scholarship, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome* (1988):

there is no question that Josephus' social background and position have been granted far too little importance in earlier research, and that here we are confronted with a factor which is of decisive importance for the correct interpretation of Josephus...because...it transcends the literary plan of the writings and brings us back to the historical Josephus.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Feldman 1984a: 75-98.

<sup>53</sup> Niese 1914: 571; see also Zeitlin 1968-69: 182, "establishing the motive of Josephus in writing the book it must be said that he was not commissioned to do so by the imperial house of Rome."

<sup>54</sup> Thackeray 1929: 29, already tempered his view of Josephus as propagandist, calling him 'no mere hireling'; cf. Farmer 1956: 15-20; Lindner 1972: 142-5; Attridge 1984: 195-6; Moehring 1984: 865-71; Bilde 1988: 65-79. Nevertheless, also the view of the *War* as composed for the Flavians persists, as can be seen in Sorek 2008: 23, "There is almost universal assent he composed *JW* for his Flavian patrons and even the title of the work reflects his pro-Roman biases."

<sup>55</sup> Bilde 1988: 180. For this emphasis on the importance of Josephus' social standing for our understanding of his narratives, although focusing mostly on his position in Palestine, see also Zeitlin 1968-69: 184-5; 1969-70: 39-68; Kreissig 1970: 99; Mayer and Möller 1974: 272; Brunt 1977b: 149-53.

A key exception to this earlier research was the relatively brief article written by Yavetz in 1975, which dealt with the portrayal of Titus in the *War* as well as the possible parameters of the relationship between Josephus and Titus and has served as the starting point for more recent scholarship seeking to understand Josephus' place in Flavian Rome. His concluding observations are worth quoting here: “[Josephus] was never awarded the official title of *amicus Caesaris*. He was not among his *comites*. He must have been a member of the lower entourage, in the same category as doctors and magicians, philosophers and buffoons.”<sup>56</sup> Here, uniquely, the position of Josephus as an especially favoured member of the Flavian court was brought into question and an alternative interpretation was proffered.

A watershed in marking out a different path to these questions was Rajak's *Josephus: The Man and the Historian* (1983), which took as its starting point precisely “the once prevalent representation of Josephus as a Roman propagandist (whatever that means), subservient to his rescuers in the Flavian house.”<sup>57</sup> Although her concerns were wide-ranging, she broke ground in her presentation of a much more nuanced picture of Josephus' relationships with his imperial patrons and the attendant obligations. Among her many contributions, which have served in many cases as foundational for my study, is her observation that the commendation of Titus and his signature need not have entailed an official commissioning.<sup>58</sup> Her reasonable explanation of its limited significance decisively undercuts the case for considering Josephus as propagandist. At the same time, as a result of her broader interests, her examination of the latter part of Josephus' life, which she considered under the title “Flavian Patronage and Jewish Patriotism”, still remained only an “incisive guide which maps and explains the field”.<sup>59</sup> In the case of

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<sup>56</sup> Yavetz 1975: 431-2.

<sup>57</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: xiii.

<sup>58</sup> Echoed by Mason 1991: 57-62.

<sup>59</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: x.

Josephus' social circumstances in Rome, however, the call for further inquiry was not quickly answered. In fact, in the second edition of her work, published nearly twenty years later in 2002, she could still observe that "Josephus' own identity as a Roman in Rome remains...shrouded in mystery."<sup>60</sup>

And, of course, the source problem remains as well. New evidence has not been forthcoming and we must still rely principally on Josephus' own testimony. Rajak's study of Josephus in Rome demonstrated, however, the value in evaluating the claims made in his narratives against the ancient backdrop, in particular our general knowledge of Flavian Rome and the nuances of imperial patronage. Although Rajak did not have the space to pursue these questions at length, her work revealed the need for increased sensitivity in our approach to Josephus' narratives and a greater awareness of the context in which he was living and writing. She built, that is, on the growing appreciation for Josephus' literary creativity and rhetorical control of the narratives, which was already emerging at the turn of the century in the work of scholars such as Bloch, Niese, and Drüner, and was significantly advanced by Laqueur and Thackeray, but truly gained momentum in the years following Rajak's initial publication.<sup>61</sup>

In fact, this methodological consciousness was characteristic of much of the scholarship on Josephus that emerged following Rajak's initial publication. Many of the works of that period concerned themselves with the narratives themselves, some conducting what might be called literary studies of Josephus' works, in particular the biblical paraphrase of *Antiquities* 1-11, while others began to address more directly questions regarding the overall aims, structures, themes, and audiences of Josephus' works.<sup>62</sup> These studies were made possible, in part, by the

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<sup>60</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: xiii.

<sup>61</sup> Bloch 1879; Niese 1896: 193-237; 1914: 569-79; Drüner 1896; Laqueur 1920; Thackeray 1929.

<sup>62</sup> See e.g. Moehring 1984: 864-917; Varneda 1986; Bilde 1988; Mason 1991; Sterling 1992; Begg 1993; Parente and Sievers 1994; Feldman and Levison 1996; Mason 1998c; Feldman 1998a; 1998b; cf. Begg 2000. It should be

tremendous resources that became available during those previous years, particularly the Concordances developed by Rengstorff and Schalit, but also the bibliographical work of Feldman and Schreckenberg.<sup>63</sup> Recognition of the fundamental issues inherent in using Josephus as the only source for much of our reconstruction of first-century Judaea and acknowledgement of the sophistication of his narratives led these scholars to make valuable contributions to our understanding not only of the texts themselves, but also of Josephus' aims, audience(s), and his relationship to contemporaries, both Judaeans and non-Judaeans.<sup>64</sup>

Not coincidentally, this period also saw a growing interest in the social, political, and cultural context for Josephus' writing activities, namely Flavian Rome. Within the Parente and Sievers volume of 1994, two essays tackled questions regarding Josephus' social position in Flavian Rome, although Goodman's examination of the possible connections between Josephus and the Judaeans at Rome is perhaps more useful for the historian than the ruminations of Hata on the 'dark periods' of Josephus' life, which verge on the novelistic.<sup>65</sup> Other contributions of the late 1980s and 1990s explored the connections between Josephus and the Flavian house, with the work of Mason in particular serving to bolster the increasing scholarly recognition of the limitations of Josephus' relationships with the emperors.<sup>66</sup> These developments were roughly contemporaneous with the publication of the most important recent monographs on the Flavian emperors, which themselves marked significant advancements in our

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noted that the Feldman volumes of 1998 also include earlier scholarship, even from the 1960s; the majority, however, can be assigned to this period.

<sup>63</sup> Feldman 1963; Schalit 1968; Schreckenberg 1968; 1979; Rengstorff 1973-83; Feldman 1984a; 1986b; 1989b: 330-448. The Rengstorff Concordance was used already in its pre-publication stage by Attridge 1976. These tools have more recently been supplemented by very useful electronic resources, in particular the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG), based out of the University of California, Irvine, and the new Project on Ancient Cultural Engagement (PACE), set up by Steve Mason.

<sup>64</sup> In particular, see Bilde 1988; Mason 1991; Sterling 1992; selections in Parente and Sievers 1994, and Feldman and Levison 1996; Mason 1998c.

<sup>65</sup> Goodman 1994b: 329-38; Hata 1994: 309-28.

<sup>66</sup> See Saulnier 1989: 545-62; Mason 1994: 161-91; 1996: 143-86; 1998a: 31-77; 1998b: 64-103.



understanding of Flavian Rome,<sup>67</sup> a coincidence that presented a ripe field for fruitful advances in our understanding of Josephus' place in Rome during the latter period of his life.

The general flurry of activity in Josephan studies that characterized the 1990s spilled over into the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium when interest in Flavian Rome as context for Josephus' writings really burgeoned. Particularly noteworthy have been the ongoing Josephus seminars at the annual Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) conferences, which began in 1999, as well as the regular meetings of the International Josephus Colloquium (*Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium*), which first met in 1992 in San Miniato, Italy, in memory of Morton Smith, and has since met in Münster (1997), Brussels (1998), Aarhus (1999), Amsterdam (2000), Paris (2001), Dortmund (2002), Rome (2003), Dublin (2004), and Haifa (2006). The majority of the papers presented at these latter meetings were subsequently published in edited volumes, which has provided them with a much wider audience.<sup>68</sup> Among these papers and within these volumes are an increasing number of contributions that deal directly with Josephus' place in Flavian Rome, exploring both his literary interactions with this environment and his social circumstances therein.<sup>69</sup>

In this context several projects that were also initiated rather recently are continuing to make a significant impact. The Münster Josephus project (*Münsteraner Josephus-Ausgabe*), which began with the Josephus Colloquium in 1997 and was led by Siegert and Schreckenberg at

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<sup>67</sup> E.g. Bengtson 1979; B. Jones 1984; 1992b; Darwall-Smith 1996; Levick 1999; Griffin 1999: 1-83; Salles 2002; cf. Nicols 1978; Lucrezi 1982; Franchet d'Espèrey 1986: 3048-86; Coleman 1986: 3087-115; Pfeiffer 2009. See also the contributions in Pailler and Sablayrolles 1994, which derived from a major conference devoted to *Les Années Domitien*, aimed specifically at correcting the prevailing view of Domitian in the ancient sources and modern scholarship; the flyer for this conference declared: "Il est temps de faire le point, de rassembler les données éparses pour sortir le règne de Domitien des oubliettes de l'Histoire où l'a précipité la vindicte des Tacite, Pline ou Suétone. Il est temps de lui restituer sa juste place, entre Vespasien et Trajan, à la charnière du Ier et IIème siècle ..." It is not possible here to chart the history of scholarship on Flavian Rome, but it may be noted that these works have contributed significantly to our understanding of Flavian Rome. The developments in scholarship will be explored further where relevant.

<sup>68</sup> Parente and Sievers 1994; Siegert and Kalms 1998; 1999; Kalms 2000; 2001; Siegert and Kalms 2002; 2003; Sievers and Lembi 2005; Rodgers 2007; Pastor, Stern, and Mor 2011.

<sup>69</sup> See esp. Mason 1998a: 31-77; Haaland 1999: 282-304; Barclay 2000: 231-45; 2005b: 29-44; Mason 2005a: 71-100; Price 2005: 101-20; Spilsbury 2005: 209-27; McLaren 2005a: 279-96; Haaland 2005: 297-316; McLaren 2007: 49-67; Curran 2011: 65-86; D.R. Schwartz 2011a: 331-52; Tuval 2011: 397-411.

the Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum, although now no longer active, played a major role in its production of a new *editio critica minor* and annotated German translation of Josephus' *Life* and *Against Apion*.<sup>70</sup> This new critical edition was consulted by the ongoing Brill Josephus Project, edited and led by Steve Mason, which is engaging an international cast of fifteen scholars from eight different countries on four continents in providing a comprehensive English translation and commentary of all of Josephus' works.<sup>71</sup> Although not all the volumes have yet been published, the existing ones have proven to be marvellous resources for all aspects of Josephan scholarship, including consideration of his social life in Flavian Rome.<sup>72</sup> These projects, as well as the numerous translations of Josephus' works into other languages over the past few decades—including modern Greek, Danish, Romanian, Russian, Hebrew, Polish, Spanish, Dutch, and Italian—have vastly opened up the world of Josephus and continue to contribute to the present momentum.<sup>73</sup>

That Josephan scholarship was beginning to find a home in Flavian Rome was made unmistakable by the inclusion of two papers on Josephus in the recent volume on *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text* (2003), one by a classicist and the other by a well-known Josephan

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<sup>70</sup> Siegert, Schreckenberg and Vogel 2001; Siegert 2008.

<sup>71</sup> These scholars are John M.G. Barclay (Durham University, England), Christopher T. Begg (Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.), Honora Chapman (California State University, Fresno), Louis H. Feldman (Yeshiva University, New York, USA), Anthony J. Forte (Pontifical Biblical Institute), Jan Willem van Henten (Universiteit van Amsterdam, the Netherlands), David Ladouceur (University of Notre Dame), Gaia Lembi (University of Pisa), David Levenson (Florida State University), Steve Mason (University of Aberdeen, Scotland), James L. McLaren (Australian Catholic University, Ascot Vale, Victoria), Thomas R. Martin (College of the Holy Cross, USA), Daniel R. Schwartz (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), Joseph Sievers (Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, Italy), and Paul Spilsbury (Ambrose University College, Calgary, Canada).

<sup>72</sup> Those published are, in order of volume, vol. 1b: Mason 2008a; vol. 3: Feldman 2000; vol. 4: Begg 2004; vol. 5: Begg and Spilsbury 2005; vol. 9: Mason 2001; vol. 10: Barclay 2007. Incredibly the translations and commentaries of these costly volumes—but not the opening essays—are also freely available on Steve Mason's Project on Ancient Cultural Engagement (PACE) website at <http://pace.mcmaster.ca/york/york/index.htm>.

<sup>73</sup> For the bibliographic information for these translations, see Sievers 1999: 264-71. Among these translations note especially the Hebrew translation and commentary of the *Life* by D.R. Schwartz (2007b), which I have unfortunately been unable to consult.

scholar.<sup>74</sup> The intersection was most self-consciously explored, however, at a conference and graduate seminar held at York University in Toronto in the spring of 2001, which was entitled ‘Flavius Josephus in Flavian Rome’ and marked “the first study of Josephus’ Roman context in such scope and detail”, assembling for that purpose a strong cast of international scholars of varying areas of expertise.<sup>75</sup> Among the papers included in the conference and subsequent publication are a number that deal directly with questions regarding Josephus’ social circumstances in the city of Rome, exploring these by both examining the relevant material in the texts themselves and evaluating possibilities presented by the ancient context.<sup>76</sup>

These recent engagements with Josephus’ Roman context have by no means resulted in a *communis opinio*, however. Although the distance between Josephus and the Flavian court is now generally agreed upon, even if not fully explored, there is still a clear divide in scholarship between those who consider Josephus to have been a marginal figure in imperial Rome, ‘isolated’ and ‘lonely’, and those who see him as actively engaged with/in the Roman social and literary scene.<sup>77</sup> These differing views are especially on display in the two edited volumes of 2005.<sup>78</sup> In his exploration of the audience of the *War*, Mason argues on the basis of our knowledge of the publication process in antiquity that Josephus’ literary efforts were conducted in a local and social environment among members of the Roman literati, particularly those who had a special interest in Judaeae culture, as suggested in Mason’s earlier work on the audience of Josephus’ *Antiquities/Life*.<sup>79</sup> His second essay, moreover, assumes the same interaction with the local context when he investigates how Josephus’ works were read in Flavian Rome, focusing

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<sup>74</sup> Beard 2003: 543-558; Mason 2003b: 559-90.

<sup>75</sup> Published as ‘Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome’: Edmondson, Mason, and Rives 2005; quotation from vii.

<sup>76</sup> See esp. Cotton and Eck 2005: 37-52; Bowersock 2005: 53-62; Rajak 2005: 79-97; C.P. Jones 2005: 201-208.

<sup>77</sup> The portrayal of Josephus as ‘lonely’ and ‘isolated’ has long appeared in scholarship; see e.g. Bentwich 1914: 59; Rappaport 1930: xxiv; Yavetz 1975: 432; Momigliano 1987: 119; Bilde 1999: 34.

<sup>78</sup> Sievers and Lembi 2005; Edmondson, Mason, and Rives 2005. This divide was pointed out also in the recent review of both volumes by Gera 2008: 113-31, esp. 118-22.

<sup>79</sup> Mason 1998b: 64-103; 2005a: 71-100.

particularly on the ironic dimensions of the narratives.<sup>80</sup> Whereas Mason makes a strong case for the local nature of Josephus' enterprise, however, Price argues that Josephus refrained from public performance and that his readership should be located primarily in the East, highlighting his Judaeian background as opposed to his Roman context.<sup>81</sup> On this basis, Price presents Josephus as isolated within his local context. This is also the conclusion of Cotton and Eck in their contribution to one of the 2005 volumes. While affirming Mason's arguments for the distance between Josephus and the imperial court on the basis of the mean nature of the honours accorded the Judaeian historian, the results of their investigation into the possible connections between Josephus and members of the senatorial and equestrian elite of Rome are largely negative.<sup>82</sup> Although their chapter is already cited frequently and quite rightly for its acute observations in this regard by scholars seeking to establish Josephus' context,<sup>83</sup> their suggestion that "Josephus was in all likelihood extremely lonely and extremely isolated in Rome",<sup>84</sup> seems to take absence of evidence for significant contact between Josephus and members of the Roman elite as evidence of the absence of all such contacts.

So, while the past two decades have seen a dramatic increase in interest in Josephus' Roman context, the field is by no means clear, nor have the avenues for enquiry been exhausted. The dichotomy which Seth Schwartz already attempted to reconcile in 1990 remains in play. At that time he concluded his investigation with the observation that, "Josephus' life story and intellectual history suggest that he was no scholarly recluse, poring over obscure scrolls in a dusty cell. Rather, he was a public figure, interested in and informed about political

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<sup>80</sup> Mason 2005b: 243-88.

<sup>81</sup> Price 2005: 101-20.

<sup>82</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 37-52. See also, more recently, the observation of Nodet 2007: 111, that Josephus viewed himself as "a new Daniel (isolated in a foreign court)".

<sup>83</sup> See e.g. Brighton 2009: 37-8; Pummer 2009: 62; Jensen 2010: 62.

<sup>84</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 52.

developments in Rome and Judaea at the time when he was writing.”<sup>85</sup> Subsequent scholarship has, however, belied his confidence and the question is still open. This is due in part to the limitations of the evidence, as has been discussed above, but also to the absence of a systematic consideration of the social circumstances of Josephus’ life in the city of Rome, a void the present study hopes to fill.

### **Contribution and Scope of the Present Study**

It is then within these exciting developments in Josephan scholarship of the last decades that this study has both its origin and its foundation. That is to say, without the growing recognition of the importance of context for understanding Josephus and his narratives, the need for a wide-ranging exploration of his social circumstances in the city of Rome would not have become evident. At the same time, previous scholarship has already considered many of the questions that are explored in this study, but often in isolation, in passing, or in contexts where space was prohibitive. The present study does not, therefore, claim to supersede these earlier examinations, but seeks instead to carry them further, either through employing them as jumping points for deeper investigation or lending them greater significance by considering the same questions within a broader context.

This broader context is provided, moreover, not only by the wider parameters of my study, but also by its use of evidence. The limitations of having largely only Josephus’ own testimony on which to base our reconstructions of his life remain. Furthermore, as Feldman has pointed out on a number of occasions, “Most students of Josephus have noted that he cannot be

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<sup>85</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 210, reacting perhaps in some measure to Yavetz 1975: 432, “In spite of his efforts, Josephus must have been a very lonely man in his old age.”

relied upon, particularly in matters in which he himself was involved.”<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, it is not only possible but also profitable to evaluate the claims made by Josephus and the narrative picture he provides against the ancient backdrop, by presenting general conditions and placing him within his historical environment, which in turn allows us to imagine the possibilities. This approach admittedly operates under the assumption that we can consider Josephus as somehow typical within his various environments. At the same time, however, if it is done self-consciously, in the awareness that we are presenting only plausible scenarios, the benefits should temper our caution.

When applied in such a manner, the historical imagination is inseparable from the enterprise of history. This was demonstrated most clearly by Collingwood at the beginning of the twentieth century,<sup>87</sup> who characterized the historian’s work as ‘a web of imaginative construction’ and observed the close resemblance between the historian and the novelist.<sup>88</sup> He states,

Freed from its dependence on fixed points as supplied from without, the historian’s picture of the past is thus in every detail an imaginary picture, and its necessity is at every point the necessity of the *a priori* imagination. Whatever goes into it, goes into it not because his imagination passively accepts it, but because it actively demands it.<sup>89</sup>

Where the historian and the novelist significantly part ways, however, is in their relation to reality. While the novelist seeks a coherent picture, without necessarily claiming a relationship to reality, the historian is restricted by the very nature of his enterprise, which is to make inquiries

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<sup>86</sup> Feldman 1975: 232; 1984a: 862. But, as Mason 2009: 7-43, has argued convincingly, the question of authority is in general not something that we can determine.

<sup>87</sup> For a useful introduction to the views of Collingwood and their continuing value, particularly in the realm of education, see Hughes-Warrington 2003: 129-154; cf. Lemisko 2004; Harris 2006: 45-63.

<sup>88</sup> But see already the ideas concerning the importance of the powers of the mind and the imagination in the historiographic enterprise expressed by Wilhelm von Humboldt in a speech at the Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin in 1821 entitled “Über die Aufgabe des Geschichtsschreibers”; see Humboldt 1967: 57-71.

<sup>89</sup> See Collingwood 1993[1946]: 231-49; quotation on p. 245. The original edition was released posthumously in 1946 but the ideas expressed there originate in his lectures of the 1920s and 30s, which were probably written down in 1935-6.

into what really happened. Limitations are therefore placed on his imagination to the extent that his picture needs to be localized, both geographically and chronologically, and must also relate to the evidence, however broadly construed.<sup>90</sup>

This close link between the historian and the novelist by way of the use of imagination has certainly not been universally accepted by those inquiring into the philosophy of history, particularly not among those who lean towards traditional empiricism.<sup>91</sup> Others, however, have argued that the historical imagination is so intrinsic to the pursuit of the historian that historical narratives can be characterized, as Hayden White (1966) put it, as “verbal fictions, the contents of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in the sciences.”<sup>92</sup> The inseparability of history and fiction that this view implies has been further explored by Paul Ricoeur in the third volume of his monumental *Temps et récits* (1985), in which he sees the two as necessarily interwoven and argues that the narrative imagination is critical for historical understanding.<sup>93</sup>

Such recognition of the importance of the role of fictionalization within historical research and the usefulness of the historical imagination has led some to turn their attention to “virtual histories”. These counterfactual analyses push the limits of the imagining of historical possibilities by pursuing those that were never actualized, while maintaining as their primary interest the very incidents that are being negated by the investigation.<sup>94</sup> In the last years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup>, this genre of historical writing has turned into

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<sup>90</sup> Collingwood 1993[1946]: 246; see also Veyne 1984[1971]: 3-13, 55-6, regarding the connections between the novel and history; see especially x, “history is a true novel.”

<sup>91</sup> I.e. those Le Goff 1992[1977]: 120, calls “the defenders of positivist history”; see e.g. Lemon 1995: 42-47.

<sup>92</sup> H.V. White 1978: 42; cf. H.V. White 1966: 111-34, esp. 123; 1973; contrast Lemon 1995.

<sup>93</sup> Ricoeur 1988[1985]: esp. 99-240 (English trans.); cf. the contributions in Korhonen 2006, which interact directly or indirectly with the views of both Hayden White and Paul Ricoeur.

<sup>94</sup> ‘Virtual history’, or ‘Counterfactual History’, should be distinguished from the ‘Alternate History’ that is a genre of popular literature that is interested primarily in the hypothetical scenarios that emerge from an event and not in the event itself, although the latter term is often used for both.

something of an industry, highlighted particularly by the trademarked ‘What If?’ series directed by Robert Crowley,<sup>95</sup> but has only just begun to attract critical attention from historians.<sup>96</sup> While this approach erases nearly any distinction between the work of the historian and the novelist and, as such, is perhaps “strangely repugnant to many, if not all, professional historians”,<sup>97</sup> in the very least it provides fresh perspective in the quest for the philosophy of history and offers unique insights on the relationship between the past and the present.<sup>98</sup> Less useful, perhaps, but related to these contrafactual explorations are the almost limitless alternate realities that are created within the world of ‘historical’ video games, which take the outworking of these principles to an extreme but in which some historians still see value.<sup>99</sup>

At some point in this exercise of our imagination, however, we stray from an inquiry into the past and cease, therefore, to conduct an historical investigation.<sup>100</sup> No one would argue that the outcomes of these ‘historical’ video games have any relationship to the historical reality nor do the “virtual histories” make any claim to represent what actually happened in the past, even if the latter do seek to provide insight into it. Nonetheless, the underlying principle that defines these games and narratives as ‘historical’ is useful, namely that they are set within a certain context or environment that has a clear relationship to the past. Beyond that context, however, the relationship with the historical reality stops, which allows for an incomprehensibly vast range of possible results. This is where the obvious difference between the world of video games and

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<sup>95</sup> See the contributions in Fergusson 1997; Crowley 1999; 2001 (including contributions by ancient historians Victor Davis Hanson and Josiah Ober); 2003; Tetlock, Lebow, and Parker 2006 (V.D. Hanson and Barry Strauss); Bresnahan 2006; Ransom 2006; cf. Hawthorn 1991.

<sup>96</sup> See e.g. Tucker 1999: 264-76; 2004: 227-39.

<sup>97</sup> See the review of Fergusson 1997 by Roberts 1997: 6.

<sup>98</sup> Bulhof 1999: 145-68; Rosenfeld 2002: 90-103; De Mey and Weber 2003: 28-38.

<sup>99</sup> See Fogu 2009: 103-21, focusing on Sid Meier’s *Civilization*; cf. Kansteiner 2007: 131-48.

<sup>100</sup> For a useful, recent, discussion of the conception of history, which is presented as an inquiry into the past, see Mason 2011: 171-86.



that of the writing of history lies, namely that in the latter case the historical context continues to define the limits of the possible.<sup>101</sup> As Gardner has put it recently:

The account that the historian constructs is always subjectively inflected through the exercise of imagination together with the operation of narrative emplotment which constitutes the final phase of the historical process. *But the writing phase is always objectively constrained and disciplined by the stages that precede it.*<sup>102</sup>

Within these bounds, however, the historical imagination is able to work freely and, indeed, is indispensable.<sup>103</sup> We return, thus, to the creation of what Collingwood terms “a web of imaginative construction”, which is the objective of my examination of Josephus’ social circumstances within the city of Rome.<sup>104</sup>

Through the course of this study, then, I evaluate Josephus within a series of contexts and environments and examine him within a sequence of roles that are suggested by the narratives but are established and fleshed out on the basis of an examination of external evidence. Thus, for example, I consider at various points Josephus as prisoner-of-war and interpreter in the Roman camp; as imperial client of the Flavians and literary client of Epaphroditus; as Roman and Judaeon. While these environments and roles are suggested by the narratives themselves, the presentation of the historical possibilities is based on the application of our more general knowledge of these types of scenarios from other ancient sources. This study makes full use, therefore, of the rich evidence that has been preserved from the ancient world outside of the writings of Josephus and also applies the insights of modern scholars working in relevant areas, such as the Roman army or imperial patronage, in an effort to reconstruct various possible

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<sup>101</sup> But see the observations of Carr 2001: 153-67, for problems associated even with “this most obvious and taken-for-granted feature of past actions, their location in space and time” (154), focusing particularly on the multiplicity of realities according to varying points of view or perspectives.

<sup>102</sup> Gardner 2010: 25 (emphasis added).

<sup>103</sup> For further defences of the role of imagination in the historian’s enterprise, see Le Goff 1992[1977]: 120-22, who qualifies the type of imagination as ‘scientific imagination’.

<sup>104</sup> For a useful defence of Collingwood’s philosophy of history against post-modern views, see Connelly 2004: 34-42.

models of the environments within which to place Josephus. There is therefore that “constant alternation of the general and the individual, the individual as end and the general as means”, which Collingwood characterized as historical thinking.<sup>105</sup> While these models do not then provide us with direct and external evidence for Josephus’ life in the city of Rome, they do assist us in imagining the possibilities and, as with models more generally, “they are useful as a tool to allow us to see what is potentially significant to an historical problem.”<sup>106</sup>

One supposition of this study is, therefore, that the experiences of Josephus, although unique, still took place within common and recognizable contexts. Even though he may in some ways have been exceptional—as historian and survivor of the Judaeen war in Rome, he provided a direct link to those events that had played such a conspicuous role in the Flavian accession and was, therefore, intrinsically special—he could not stretch the limits of the possible.

A second supposition is that his past held significance for his present. My investigation of Josephus’ social circumstances in the city of Rome after the revolt does not begin therefore with his arrival with Titus in AD 71, but some years earlier with his first direct encounter with Rome, his embassy to Neronian Rome in his 26<sup>th</sup> year. I explore this voyage, which is vividly recounted in his *Life* and marks there his first foray into public affairs, in Chapter 2 as the foundation for Josephus’ experiences in and with the city of Rome. There I will present the possibility that this visit not only afforded Josephus a preliminary glimpse into the vibrant life of the impressive imperial capital, including the inner workings of the imperial court, but it also forced him to establish contacts within the city, even among the sizeable Judaeen community that occupied a visible place there. This awareness of his ensuing familiarity with both the city and its inhabitants has then an impact on my reconstruction of his later, more permanent, arrival in

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<sup>105</sup> Collingwood 1924-1925: 153.

<sup>106</sup> Kelly 2011: 15.

Rome. Suddenly he no longer appears as dependant on the goodwill of the emperors as has often been imagined, nor do we need to suppose that it was so difficult for him to carve out a niche for himself in his new environment.

In Chapter 3 I begin my investigation of Josephus' relationships with the Flavian emperors, starting naturally with Vespasian, the father and founder of the dynasty. These relationships are treated at length over the course of Chapters 3-5 to account for both the emphasis in existing scholarship on his connections to the Flavians and the prominence which these are accorded in his narratives. Josephus' description of his life in Rome revolves around the benefits he received successively from the emperors. Rather than considering them as a whole in the manner of most recent studies, which can obscure possible changes over time or mask the potential significance of continuities, this more systematic approach allows me to pursue the various lines of question further and consider them within the appropriate contexts.

As far as his relationship with Vespasian is concerned, I turn my sights again on the period immediately prior to his residency in Rome, in this case in order to establish the possible parameters of this relationship by examining the initial contact between the two. I begin, therefore, with the evocative scene in AD 67 after the siege of Jotapata when the captured Judaeen general came face to face for the first time with the Roman general and uttered the famous prediction that Vespasian and his sons would come to rule the Roman Empire. From there I consider his time spent in the Roman camp, first in chains and then as a freed man, which takes me into relatively uncharted territory.<sup>107</sup> The possibility is presented there that the general lack of proximity would have inhibited the establishment of a close relationship, even though

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<sup>107</sup> Bilde 1988: 57, observed, "to my knowledge there is no literature which gives special attention to the topic of Josephus in the Roman camp." Since then the situation has not changed significantly.

Josephus' prediction did serve as useful in Vespasian's efforts to consolidate his hold over the empire and secured for his prediction a place among the other *omina imperii*.

Having explored this early period, I turn to Rome, where I consider the elements of Josephus' relationship with Vespasian that gave rise to the persistent but steadily diminishing portrayal of Josephus as Flavian propagandist. His presentation of at least parts of the *War* to the emperor and his position as historian will be evaluated within the context of Vespasian's cultural programme and against the backdrop of the processes by which literary texts circulated in the ancient world. Here I will build on recent scholarship that has succeeded in establishing a certain level of consensus, at least among Josephan scholars, that the traditional portrayal of Josephus as a Flavian lackey cannot be sustained. The degree to which Josephus' relationship with Vespasian was circumscribed will be further demonstrated by an extensive analysis of the direct benefits Josephus received at Vespasian's hands, which are considered within the general context of imperial patronage.

I follow a similar approach in Chapter 4, in which I examine the interactions and bonds between Josephus and Titus. Again, I take my starting point in the Roman camp, particularly with the services rendered by Josephus to the commanding general at the siege of Jerusalem. I examine at length Josephus' role as mediator between the Roman command and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and his use as interpreter and interrogator of deserters and prisoners against a matrix of evidence relating to the functions of prisoners or deserters in the service of the Roman army. From there I will follow Josephus as he accompanies Titus around Judaea in the mop-up exercises after the successful capture of Jerusalem and then to Rome. Special consideration will be paid to the benefits received over this period, not only in the city of Rome but also in the environs of Jerusalem after its destruction, again within the broader historical context. I will

emphasize the limits of the relationship between Josephus and Titus, particularly in light of recent explorations of the rhetorical artistry of his narratives, which have exposed significant cracks in their portrayal of Titus.

When I move on to the youngest member of the Flavian dynasty, Domitian, in Chapter 5, I am heading again into an area that has not often been explored in great detail. This is due in part to the common assumption in scholarship that the advent of Domitian marked the end of the relationship between Josephus and the Flavian house, despite Josephus' own claims to the contrary. Although this standpoint has been undercut in recent years by the arguments against the characterization of Josephus as a Flavian propagandist, the relationship between Josephus and Domitian has not yet been explored at length. While the evidence for contact between the two figures is relatively slim, this investigation is crucial, for it is during the reign of Domitian that Josephus produced the majority of his literary works. Here I will again examine Josephus in his role as an imperial client and historian, but also, significantly, as a Judaeans in Domitianic Rome, since this period was marked by changes in the circumstances of the Judaeans in Rome, not least of which was the more rigorous application of the *fiscus Judaicus*. In my examination of this final instance of Josephus' relationship with the Flavians, I will take special note of the continuity with which Josephus characterizes this aspect of his social life in the city of Rome and present possible implications of this presentation.

Since these three chapters all reinforce the view that Josephus' social situation in the city of Rome was not determined by his affiliation with or presence in the imperial court, however frequent that might have been, a final chapter considering the evidence for Josephus' relationships with other inhabitants of Rome is necessary for a more comprehensive picture. In Chapter 6, therefore, I focus on those members of Roman society outside the imperial family

whom we either know had contact with Josephus or might suppose to have had based on hints within the narratives or antecedent possibilities. In the background of this chapter lies Josephus' literary circle in the city of Rome, and the individuals whom we know were recipients of Josephus' literary works determine the chain of our investigation. I take my starting point again in the Roman camp with the soldiers and military officials whom Josephus encountered during these three years, since he explicitly claims to have sold copies of his *War* to those who were involved in the revolt. From there I turn to members of the Herodian family present in the city of Rome, whom Josephus also identifies as members of his readership, particularly Agrippa II, who was also involved in the writing process. Other figures involved in Josephus' literary efforts are also investigated as members of Josephus' social circle, including the so-called assistants who assisted in some way with the Greek of the *War*, but especially the literary patron, Epaphroditus. At this point I also consider the possibility that Josephus conducted oral presentations of his works prior to releasing finished copies; that is, I explore the possibility that Josephus had both a readership and an audience.<sup>108</sup> Finally I consider the possible connections between Josephus and the Judaeans in Rome, suggesting on the basis of hints within the narrative and antecedent possibilities that Josephus did have ties to his compatriots in the city of Rome, who also served as natural members of his readership and audience.

The aim is, then, to establish as clearly as possible Josephus' social location in the city of Rome. Apart from the simple value of returning to the historical Josephus and developing a nuanced understanding of where he fit within the social scene of Flavian Rome, this study also creates a background against which to evaluate Josephus' narratives. Given the increasing

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<sup>108</sup> Because the existence of an 'audience' for Josephus' works in the literal sense of the word is not self-evident, I distinguish throughout between 'readership'/'readers' and 'audience', using the former terms to designate those whom we know received copies of Josephus' work or whom Josephus may have targeted as potential recipients of his written work and the latter to refer to those who may have been present at oral presentations of Josephus' works. The possibility of a local audience, present at *recitationes* of Josephus' works, is explored on pp. 322-27.

recognition that these writings “bear the unmistakable imprint of his Roman context” and that the author himself was “breathing the socio-politico-cultural air of Flavian Rome”,<sup>109</sup> it is important to establish as clearly as possible Josephus’ relationship to this environment. The present study seeks to provide, therefore, not only a picture of Josephus in Rome but also a window through which to analyze his narratives.

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<sup>109</sup> See von Ehrenkrook 2009: 29.

## CHAPTER 2

### YOSEF BEN MATTITYAHU IN NERONIAN ROME

When Flavius Josephus accompanied Titus to Rome in AD 71 following the conquest of Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> it was not his first foray into the imperial capital. According to his *Life* he had undertaken a mission to the city of Rome some years prior to the outbreak of the revolt to seek the release of a number of priests who had been sent there in chains by the procurator Felix. He undertook this trip as Yosef ben Mattityahu, a young Judaeen from a priestly family,<sup>2</sup> a detail that should be borne in mind throughout our investigation.<sup>3</sup> The narrative account of his successful completion of this mission serves as an illustration of his entry into public life and as a demonstration of his good character, central topics throughout the *Life*.<sup>4</sup> Since his main interest in this work is the description of his experiences in Galilee during the revolt, however, the report of his first trip to Rome is relatively brief and can be presented here in full:

After my twenty-sixth year, indeed, it fell to me to go up to Rome for the reason that will be described. At the time when Felix was administering Judaea, he had certain priests, close associates of mine and gentlemen, bound and sent to Rome on a minor and incidental charge, to submit an account to Caesar. Wanting to find some means of rescue for these men, especially when I discovered that even in wretched circumstances they had not abandoned piety toward the deity but were subsisting on figs and nuts, I reached Rome after having faced many dangers at sea. For when our ship was flooded in the middle of the Adriatic, we—being about 600 in number—had to swim through the entire night. And when by the provision of God a Cyrenian ship appeared before us around daybreak, I and some others—about eighty altogether—overtook the rest and were taken on board. After we had come safely to Dicaearchia, which the Italians call Puteoli, through a friendship I met Aliturus: this man was a mime-

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<sup>1</sup> *War* 7.116-22; *Life* 422.

<sup>2</sup> See *Life* 1-6; cf. *War* 1.3; 3.352; *Life* 80; Mason 2001: 4 n. 4.

<sup>3</sup> This is illustrated effectively by Edmondson 2005: 1-3, who refers to Josephus in his brief biography as Yosef until the point at which he receives citizenship following the revolt, a feature I adopted in Ch. 1.

<sup>4</sup> See *Plut. Mor.* 10.804C-12.806F regarding the possible opportunities for entry into public life, which include significantly for our case embassies to the emperor; for the reference, see Mason 2001: 20-21 n. 90, 94. Regarding the importance of ἦθος within the *Life*, see Mason 1998a: 48-75.



actor, especially dear to Nero's thoughts and a Judaeon by ancestry. Through him I became known to Poppaea, the wife of Caesar, and then very quickly arranged things, appealing to her to free the priests. Having succeeded, with enormous gifts from Poppaea in addition to this benefit, I returned home.<sup>5</sup>

As with other aspects of Josephus' life story, this trip to Rome early on in his public life has, until more recently, rarely been examined at any length. In scholarly accounts of Josephus' early career, particularly those of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the episode was often recounted in roughly the same manner in which Josephus himself presents it, with the only real critical analysis emerging in suppositions regarding the impact of this trip on Josephus' sensibilities. By and large scholars seem to agree that the visit to Rome must have made a deep impression on the young Judaeon provincial, who would have returned to his native province with memories of the glitz and glory of the imperial capital overwhelming any hope for a successful outcome to a revolt against Rome.<sup>6</sup> And indeed, in the *Life* his first response to the beginnings of the revolt upon his return from the capital is to counsel the people to consider both the military expertise and the good fortune of the Romans before they risk their lives.<sup>7</sup>

When the episode was examined at greater length, it usually occurred within the context of certain excessively speculative hypotheses. For example, attempts have been made to connect

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<sup>5</sup> *Life* 13-16: Μετ' εικοστὸν δὲ καὶ ἕκτον ἐνιαυτὸν εἰς Ῥώμην μοι συνέπεσεν ἀναβῆναι διὰ τὴν λεχθησομένην αἰτίαν: καθ' ὃν χρόνον Φῆλιξ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐπετρόπευεν ἱερεῖς τινὰς συνήθεις ἐμοὶ καλοὺς κάγαθοὺς διὰ μικρὰν καὶ τὴν τυχοῦσαν αἰτίαν δῆσας εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἔπεμψε λόγον ὑφέξοντας τῷ Καίσαρι. οἷς ἐγὼ πόρον εὐρέσθαι βουλόμενος σωτηρίας, μάλιστα δὲ πυθόμενος ὅτι καίπερ ἐν κακοῖς ὄντες οὐκ ἐπελάθοντο τῆς εἰς τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβείας, διατρέφοιντο δὲ σύκοις καὶ καρύοις, ἀφικόμην εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην πολλὰ κινδυνεύσας κατὰ θάλασσαν. βαπτισθέντος γὰρ ἡμῶν τοῦ πλοίου κατὰ μέσον τὸν Ἀδριανὸν περὶ ἑξακοσίου τὸν ἀριθμὸν ὄντες δι' ὅλης τῆς νυκτὸς ἐνηξάμεθα, καὶ περὶ ἀρχομένην ἡμέραν ἐπιφανέντος ἡμῖν κατὰ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν Κυρηναϊκοῦ πλοίου φθάσαντες τοὺς ἄλλους ἐγώ τε καὶ τινες ἕτεροι περὶ ὀγδοήκοντα σύμπαντες ἀνελήφθημεν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον. διασωθεὶς δ' εἰς τὴν Δικαιάρχειαν, ἣν Ποτιόλους Ἴταλοι καλοῦσιν, διὰ φιλίας ἀφικόμην Ἀλιτύρῳ, μμολόγος δ' ἦν οὗτος μάλιστα τῷ Νέρωνι καταθύμιος Ἰουδαῖος τὸ γένος, καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ Ποππαία τῆ τοῦ Καίσαρος γυναικὶ γνωσθεὶς προνοῶ ὡς τάχιστα παρακαλέσας αὐτὴν τοὺς ἱερεῖς λυθῆναι. μεγάλων δὲ δωρεῶν πρὸς τῇ εὐεργεσίᾳ ταύτῃ τυχῶν παρὰ τῆς Ποππαιᾶς ὑπέστρεφον ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκίαν; trans. Mason 2001: 21-27.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Edersheim 1882: 444; Graetz 2009[1893]: 2.277; Bentwich 1914: 43; Thackeray 1929: 7-8; Shutt 1961: 37; Feldman 1984a: 83; Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 57; Rajak 2002[1983]: 42; more generally, see Noy 2000: 144-6. The summary offered by Kelly 2003: 997, may be mentioned as an oddity, "The Jewish authorities sent Josephus to the emperor Nero as an ambassador and, while in Rome, he converted to the Roman polytheistic religion and Latinized his name."

<sup>7</sup> *Life* 17: καταστέλλειν οὖν ἐπειρώμην τοὺς στασιώδεις καὶ μετανοεῖν ἐπειθὸν ποιησαμένους πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν πρὸς οὓς πολεμήσουσιν, ὅτι Ῥωμαίων οὐ κατ' ἐμπειρίαν μόνον πολεμικῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατ' εὐτυχίαν ἐλαττοῦνται.

Josephus to the apostle Paul based on the chronological proximity of their voyages to Rome.<sup>8</sup> Such efforts to link the two figures have a long history, possibly originating in the obscure *Reflections* of Bernardin Pastouret of the seventh century.<sup>9</sup> By far the least convincing of these has been the popular 19<sup>th</sup> century proposition that the two Judaeans sailed on the same ship, argued simply on the basis of the corresponding details of the shipwrecks described in Josephus' *Life* and Luke-Acts.<sup>10</sup> But also unpersuasive have been the arguments put forward in support of the suggestion that Paul was among those prisoners whom Josephus went to Rome to liberate but that Josephus was forced to record his involvement in a cryptic manner in order to conceal any connections to the ill-reputed fledgling Christian community.<sup>11</sup>

Another detail that has attracted imaginative reconstruction is the granting of gifts by the empress Poppaea Sabina to Josephus upon his successful petition for the release of the priests. Working on the assumption that the revolt was imminent already when Josephus traveled to Rome, scholars have viewed these gifts as a testimony to Josephus' pro-Roman sentiments. Accordingly, we should see them as bribes to secure his support in representing the interests of Poppaea (and Nero) in the province of Judaea. The only reason Josephus mentioned this incriminating detail then was that the matter was widely known and could not therefore be

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<sup>8</sup> The voyage of Paul to Rome from Caesarea, which also included a shipwreck, can be found at Acts 28:27-44; cf. 2 Cor. 11:25.

<sup>9</sup> Anonymous 1851: 494. To date I have been unable to track down these *Reflections* of Bernardin Pastouret.

<sup>10</sup> See Sharpe 1851: 88-98; and its favourable review, Anonymous 1851: 494-5, which, however, misidentifies the author as John, rather than Samuel, Sharpe; cf. Gray 1819: 357-68; Aiton 1852: 29-31; Sharpe 1879: 58, 69-70. See, however, the appropriately severe criticism in Anonymous 1854: 166-83. For the corresponding details of the two narratives, see Gnuse 2002: 162-4.

<sup>11</sup> See Orchard 1995: 248-70. The similarities between the situations of the priests and that of Paul and his companions was noted as a matter of interest by Edersheim 1882: 444; cf. Thackeray 1929: 7; Feldman 1984b: 782. We do not dismiss the possibility that there was contact between the two men, particularly given their common ethnic background, but abandon the question for lack of evidence. In any case, Josephus does not betray any close familiarity with the early Christians; see Thackeray 1929: 125-53; Feldman 1984a: 821-38.

omitted.<sup>12</sup> Apart from misunderstanding the nature of relationships between the emperor and his subjects, the proponents of this viewpoint also assume that the leaders in Rome were aware that there was a situation to defuse in Judaea while Josephus himself reports that the beginnings of the revolution occurred in his absence.<sup>13</sup>

While these hypotheses strain the imagination and are not supported by either the internal or external evidence, they do correctly consider the possibility that this first public experience of Josephus was significant. What Gohei Hata has pointed out regarding the period immediately after the trip to Rome—“it is very important for any Josephan biographer to fill in the intervening years from 64 CE to 66 CE because it was the events during these two years that constituted a turning point in the life of Josephus”—can equally be applied to the trip itself.<sup>14</sup> In the present study, then, I will examine the details of Josephus’ mission to Rome not only to elucidate our understanding of the episode itself but also to explore its potential significance for the subsequent events of Josephus’ life, in particular his circumstances in Rome under the Flavians, which remain the primary focus of this dissertation. For this investigation, scholarship of more recent years is useful in drawing us away from the offbeat reveries of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which sought to draw lines between Josephus and the early Christian figures. Of particular importance are the invaluable translation and commentary projects on the *Life*,<sup>15</sup> which have aimed at elucidating Josephus’ account and provide a secure basis from which to pursue

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<sup>12</sup> See especially Hata 1994: 309-28, who admits to excessive use of imagination but still appears to place significant historical weight on his reconstructions. See also Corssen 1914: 139-40; Thackeray 1929: 8; Shutt 1961: 37; Feldman 1984a: 82-3; 1984b: 782; 1992a: 982.

<sup>13</sup> *Life* 17; of course, this detail figures in the overall emphasis in the *Life* on his reluctance to enter into the rebellion. For objections to these theories regarding the gifts given to Josephus by Poppaea, see Sterling 1992: 231 n.24; Strangelove 1992: 51-3; McKechnie 2005: 352. These gifts will be explored in greater detail below, pp. 69-73.

<sup>14</sup> Hata 1994: 328; cf. 309. Hata is primarily concerned with what he perceives as a gap in the chronology between Josephus’ departure from Rome and his arrival in Jerusalem at the beginning stages of the revolt, during which time Hata posits a trip to Alexandria to explain Josephus’ interest in Egypt more generally (see *War* 1.33; 7.421ff.; *Ant.* 12.388; 13.63ff., 285; 20.236-7) and to allow him time for military training with the *Legio XV Apollinaris*, for which Hata does not provide any concrete evidence. We will see, moreover, that the lacuna is not as obvious as he suggests.

<sup>15</sup> Mason 2001; Siegert, Schreckenberg and Vogel 2001; cf. D. R. Schwartz 2007b (*non vidi*).

further answers to the historical questions regarding key aspects of Josephus' life course. Other recent studies have dealt with this account effectively from a social-scientific perspective, contributing insights particularly from the realm of patron-client relations.<sup>16</sup> The present state of scholarship is ripe, therefore, for further inquiry into the lived reality behind Josephus' autobiographical account.

I will begin by investigating the possible dates and the duration of Josephus' stay in Rome, suggesting on the basis of both the specific evidence in the *Life* and the general indications from accounts of other imperial embassies that Josephus' mission would not have been accomplished quickly. Following this I will pursue the contacts made by Josephus over the course of his trip, beginning with the imprisoned priests themselves and continuing on to consider the Judaeian mime-actor Aliturus and the empress Poppaea, both of whom Josephus explicitly credits for his success in freeing the priests. The plausibility of this course of events will be evaluated in light of ancient evidence for travel, particularly among Judaeians, and I will argue that the successful completion of Josephus' mission should be attributed more broadly to his success in gaining entrance into the well-established Judaeian community in the city of Rome. Finally I will explore the implications of Josephus' familiarity with the city of Rome and suggest that his first trip to Rome was of singular importance for his later experiences in the imperial capital.

### **Date and Duration of the Trip**

The beginning point for our investigation of the date and duration of Josephus' mission must be his explicit opening statement, namely that it occurred 'after his twenty-sixth year' (Μετ'

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<sup>16</sup> See Strangelove 1992; Neyrey 1994: 177-206. I should mention also Bohrmann 1999: 222-29, which deals particularly with the 'silences' in Josephus' account and provides many pertinent observations on Josephus' account.

εἰκοστὸν δὲ καὶ ἕκτον ἐνιαυτὸν), that is after his twenty-sixth birthday.<sup>17</sup> Since he had earlier provided the information that he was born in the first year of Gaius Caesar's *imperium*, the beginning of which we can securely date to March 18, AD 37, we can fix his departure as having occurred sometime between March 18, AD 63, and March 17, AD 65, assuming of course that his memory and the transcription of the text were accurate.<sup>18</sup> This time frame can be narrowed down if we add a further detail provided by Josephus, namely that he was in his fifty-sixth year in the thirteenth year of Domitian.<sup>19</sup> Given that Domitian's thirteenth year began on September 14, AD 93, we are able to limit Josephus' birthday to the period between September 14, AD 37, and March 17, AD 38, and can consequently confine the commencement of his crossing to Rome to the period between September 14, AD 63, and March 17, AD 65.<sup>20</sup> This latter date for his departure is immediately unlikely since it would have meant that the majority of his trip occurred after his twenty-seventh birthday and renders his time reference meaningless.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, when we take into account the period of the so-called *mare clausum*, beginning some time around November 10<sup>th</sup> and ending in early March of each year, during which regular shipping was all but halted, the latter date may legitimately be dismissed as improbable.<sup>22</sup> Although it certainly happened that seafarers braved the inclement weather in pursuit of greater profit and to ensure a

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<sup>17</sup> *Life* 13.

<sup>18</sup> *Life* 5: ...Ματθία δὲ ἐγὼ τῷ πρώτῳ τῆς Γαίου Καίσαρος ἡγεμονίας. Mason 2001: 21 n. 93. For the date of Gaius' accession, see the Arval records at *AFA* 43.10 (Scheid 1998); cf. Barrett 1990: 50-55.

<sup>19</sup> *Ant.* 20.267: ...ἥτις ἐστὶν τρισκαίδεκάτου μὲν ἔτους τῆς Δομετιανοῦ Καίσαρος ἀρχῆς, ἐμοὶ δ' ἀπὸ γενέσεως πενηκωστού τε καὶ ἕκτου.

<sup>20</sup> See Sterling 1992: 229 n. 14; Orchard 1995: 266 n. 4. For the date of Domitian's accession, see *CIL* 6.2060; Cass. Dio 66.26.3; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 21.

<sup>21</sup> The fact that Josephus speaks more precisely about his age here than just before at *Life* 9 (ὄν περὶ τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτου ἔτους) and 10 (περὶ δὲ ἑκκαίδεκα ἔτη γενόμενος) may suggest that his departure occurred shortly after his birthday.

<sup>22</sup> For the dates of the *mare clausum*, see Plin. *HN* 2.47; Veg. *Mil.* 4.39; *CTh.* 13.9.3; cf. de Saint-Denis 1947: 196-215; Rougé 1952: 316-19; Rapske 1994a: 22-47; Riesner 1998: 308; Horden and Purcell 2000: 142-3. Regarding the difficulties of winter travel, see Cic. *Att.* 15.25=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 403; *Leg. Man.* 11.31; Tac. *Ann.* 3.1; *Hist.* 4.81; Casson 1971: 270-72.

stable grain supply,<sup>23</sup> it is unlikely that mere passengers, such as the 600 in whose company Josephus sailed, would have risked their lives needlessly or indeed that the sailors would have burdened themselves with unnecessary cargo. So, when we work backwards from November 11 a reasonable sailing time of two months, we are left with the latest possible departure taking place around the beginning of September of AD 64.<sup>24</sup>

The rest of the process of narrowing down the time frame for Josephus' trip is considerably less secure. A sea voyage over the autumn months of either AD 63 or 64 is an attractive possibility, taking into account the fact that Josephus suffered a shipwreck and considering that the period from September 14 to November 11 was an especially risky time to travel since the weather and sea conditions were quite unpredictable.<sup>25</sup> The well-known shipwreck of the apostle Paul also took place during this time of the year and the author of Luke-Acts attributes the dangerous sailing conditions to the fact that it was now 'after the Fast' (i.e. after Yom Kippur).<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, despite some scholars' inclination to favour an autumn

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<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Suet. *Claud.* 18; Plin. *HN* 2.47: "Yet the severity of the storms does not entirely close up the sea. In former times, pirates were compelled by the fear of death, to rush into death, and to brave the winter ocean; now we are driven to it by avarice"; cf. Casson 1984: 96; Rapske 1994a: 25; Warnecke 2002: 102-3, calls the oft-cited *mare clausum* 'eine Fiktion'. Nevertheless, it is clear from the sources that, even if there was no *mare clausum stricto sensu*, these months were generally avoided by all but the most enterprising.

<sup>24</sup> While the voyage from Rome to Alexandria could be over in as little as ten days to three weeks (see e.g. Philo *In Flacc.* 26-7), any ship travelling in a westward direction faced the adverse etesian winds (called the *meltemi* in present day Turkey) and was forced to skirt the coasts for the majority of the trip; see for example Tac. *Hist.* 2.98-99. In his analysis of the ancient sources and of reports of pilgrim voyages between Italy and the Holy Land in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, for which there is better evidence, Duncan-Jones 1990: 17-25, reports a median time of 86 days for the westward voyage, although he cautions against assuming this figure as typical. See also Casson 1994: 151-2 (two months+); Noy 2000: 142 (two months); Mason 2001: 24 n. 105 (six weeks+). The three weeks assumed by Orchard 1995: 250, are surely too brief.

<sup>25</sup> Plin. *HN* 2.47; Veg. *Mil.* 4.39; cf. Philo *In Flacc.* 125; *Leg.* 15, 190.

<sup>26</sup> Acts 27-28:16. The precise dating of Paul's own trip to Rome is notoriously complex. We know more generally, however, that Yom Kippur (10 Tishri) would have fallen in early October in AD 58/59; see Rapske 1994a: 23-24; Riesner 1998: 224-5.

departure on this basis,<sup>27</sup> shipwrecks were common enough throughout even the ‘safe’ shipping season to lend this presumption little weight.<sup>28</sup>

Another factor to consider is that a significant event occurred precisely within this time frame, namely the great fire of Rome, which broke out in the early hours of July 19, AD 64, destroying fully seven of the fourteen Augustan *regiones* of the city and significantly damaging another three, all over a period of six days.<sup>29</sup> The coincidence of this disaster with the rough dates for Josephus’ visit was noted already by Edersheim, who simply assumed that Josephus was present in Rome during the fire, while others have used the silence of Josephus regarding the fire as an indication that he was not in Rome at the time.<sup>30</sup> Nero’s punishment of the Christians as culprits, among whom we should include at least some Judaeans,<sup>31</sup> does make the absence of any mention of the fire noteworthy and may suggest that we should either consign Josephus’ final departure from Rome to a date before the outbreak of the fire or set the date of his arrival in Rome well after the fire to allow for at least some rebuilding (otherwise we might expect Josephus still to comment on the event), which would push us to the autumn of 64. Either of these two scenarios supports the earlier proposition of an autumn sailing. Nevertheless, it is difficult to place much weight on this *argumentum ex silentio*, particularly since Josephus’ narrative here is in general quite compressed and he is interested above all in reporting his own

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<sup>27</sup> Orchard 1995: 250; Kokkinos 1998: 392-3.

<sup>28</sup> Parker 1992: 10-15; Mason 2001: 24 n. 104. The archaeological record supports the reality of these dangers; see the table of shipwrecks in Konen 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.38-44; Suet. *Ner.* 38; Cass. Dio 62.16-18; Plin. *HN* 17.1.5; Sen. *Oct.* 831ff.; *CIL* 6.826; 6.30837=*ILS* 4914 (the *Arae Incendii Neronis*). See Hülsen 1909: 46-7; Griffin 1984: 128-9; Shotter 1997: 59-60.

<sup>30</sup> Edersheim 1882: 459; Thackeray 1929: 7; Williamson 1964: 142; Orchard 1995: 250. Kokkinos 1998: 392-3, simply mentions Josephus’ silence as ‘absolutely remarkable’. Bohrmann 1999: 223, proposes instead that Josephus’ silence can be attributed to his lack of interest in providing details strictly concerned with Roman history (cf. *War* 2.250). She suggests, on this basis, that the subsequent persecution had nothing to do with the Jews; cf. van Kooten 2011: 449, esp. 36. There is absolutely no basis for the suggestion of Corssen 1914: 136-40, that Josephus was responsible for bringing the charge of arson against the Christians through Poppaea, explaining the silence of Josephus as due to embarrassment over his involvement.

<sup>31</sup> See Rom. 16:3, 7, 11; cf. Acts 28:17-24; Suet. *Claud.* 25.4; Brändle and Stegemann 1998: 117-27; Lampe 2003: 69-79, 82-4; Mason 2009b: 303-28, esp. 312-14; Visscher 2009: 71-96. The matter of the proportion of Judaeans to Gentiles is complex and cannot be addressed here.

activities.<sup>32</sup> Apart from the shipwreck, which had become a popular narrative *topos* in ancient literature,<sup>33</sup> he provides few details that are not directly relevant for understanding the success of his mission.

A second securely dated incident contributes more definitively to the timeframe of Josephus' visit to Rome, namely the death of Poppaea Sabina in the summer of AD 65. While pregnant with Nero's child, Poppaea reportedly suffered a fatal kick from her husband in an outburst of rage, an action the emperor apparently regretted deeply immediately afterward.<sup>34</sup> This provides us with a firm end date for Josephus' successful petition to the empress. She seems, however, to have continued to enjoy Nero's favour until her death, and indeed thereafter, and so we cannot push this end point any earlier than the day of her death. Furthermore, we are not given with this event a date for Josephus' departure from Rome.<sup>35</sup> We cannot exclude the possibility that he was still in Rome when Poppaea died and that his departure occurred at a later point.

In fact, this scenario is suggested at first glance by the manner in which Josephus connects his return from Rome to the outbreak of the revolt. He continues the narrative, "Now I was surprised already to find the beginnings of revolutions", seeming to imply an uninterrupted chain of events.<sup>36</sup> In his earlier account of the revolt, the *Judaean War*, Josephus had explicitly

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<sup>32</sup> See the observations of Bohrmann 1999: 222 (cf. 229): "Mais nous sommes frappés par son silence sur la description de la Ville, sur l'impression qu'elle a pu lui faire, sur ses contacts éventuels avec les Juifs du Trastevere. Où logeait-il? Qui voyait-il? Comment passait-il son temps? Combien de temps séjourna-t-il à Rome? Après avoir passé combien de jours à Puteoli; y aurait-il rencontré Poppé?"

<sup>33</sup> See Hom. *Od.* 5.282-423; Verg. *Aen.* 1.36-135; Catull. 68; Sen. *Ep.* 22.12; Suet. *Aug.* 8.1; Dio Chrys. *Ven.* 2; Prop. 3.7; Juv. 12; Acts 27-8; Diogenes of Oenoanda *New Fr.* 7 (concerning which see Clay 1973: 49-59); cf. Bilde 1988: 31; Mason 2001: 24 n. 104; Rajak 2002[1983]: 43-4; Gnuse 2002: 162-4. Most of the literary descriptions of shipwrecks have been collected in Kroll 1921: 412-14.

<sup>34</sup> See Tac. *Ann.* 16.6-7; cf. Suet. *Ner.* 35; Griffin 1984: 194. See, however, the cautionary words of Champlin 2003: 104-7, regarding the historicity of this series of events.

<sup>35</sup> As suggested by Rajak 2002[1983]: 65.

<sup>36</sup> It is useful to view the quotation in context; *Life* 16-7: *μεγάλων δὲ δωρεῶν πρὸς τῇ εὐεργεσίᾳ ταύτῃ τυχῶν παρὰ τῆς Ποππαίας ὑπέστρεφον ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκίαν. Καταλαμβάνω δ' ἤδη νεωτερισμῶν ἀρχὰς καὶ πολλοὺς ἐπὶ τῇ Ῥωμαίων ἀποστάσει μέγα φρονοῦντας.*



dated the beginning of the war to the month of Artemisius (April-May) in the twelfth year of Nero's *imperium*, which was AD 66.<sup>37</sup> Taken in strict accordance with one another, these passages seem to imply that Josephus returned to Judaea from Rome in the early spring of 66 and would render an earlier return untenable.<sup>38</sup> If we accept a late departure date in the autumn of 64, this entails a stay in the capital of nearly a year and a half, while with the earliest date, September of 63, we are presented with a period of two and a half years during which Josephus was present in Rome, a situation that does not seem on the surface to be supported by Josephus' relatively brief account of the mission.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, there is no immediate justification for dismissing either of the two options.<sup>40</sup> We are faced then with the possibility that Josephus spent a considerable amount of time in the city of Rome.<sup>41</sup> This is only partially mitigated if we accept the re-dating of the beginnings of the revolt offered by Kokkinos to the previous year.<sup>42</sup>

Nevertheless, we should not push the chronology of the narrative transition from Rome to Judaea too hard. It was in Josephus' interests for his readers to believe that "fresh from a

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<sup>37</sup> See *War* 2.284; cf. *War* 1.20; *Ant.* 20.257, 259. There is a contradiction to this date at *War* 2.555, which places the later assault of Cestius Gallus in the month of Dios (October-November) in Nero's 12<sup>th</sup> year, an impossibility if the 12<sup>th</sup> year had ended in early October. Most scholars have, therefore, emended this to Nero's 13<sup>th</sup> year. See, however, Kokkinos 1998: 387-95, who argues that Josephus went to Galilee in December of 65, redating the beginning of the revolt as well on the basis of various other arguments; cf. Kushnir-Stein 1999: 196-8; Sievers 2001: 101-5; Mason 2001: xxi, 28 n. 121; 2008a: n. 1824. For the date of Nero's accession (October 13, AD 54), see Suet. *Claud.* 45; *Ner.* 8; Tac. *Ann.* 12.68-9; Cass. Dio 60.34.3; cf. *War* 2.248-9; *Ant.* 20.148.

<sup>38</sup> The other option is to argue for a looser definition of the beginnings of the revolt here, as does Orchard 1995: 250-51, and point instead to the disturbances under Albinus (AD 62-64) and Florus (AD 64-66) as described by Josephus at *War* 2.274-78. This allows Orchard to posit a return before the Great Fire. This view contradicts, however, the explicit statements in Josephus' narratives mentioned above, which link the outbreak of the revolt to May of 66.

<sup>39</sup> These possibilities are presented by Mason 2001: 27-8 n. 121. The fanciful attempt by Hata 1994: 312-16, to explain the years that elapsed between Josephus' departure and a return in AD 66, which includes training in Alexandria as a Roman agent, can be dismissed.

<sup>40</sup> The statement of Kokkinos 1998: 393, that "Josephus's stay in Rome would not have lasted more than a year or two...so he would have returned to Jerusalem at the latest by 65" is completely unsubstantiated even if plausible. It certainly does not help his arguments in pushing the beginning of the revolt to AD 65. See also the criticism of Sievers 2001: 104.

<sup>41</sup> See Williamson 1964: 141, "How long he dallied in Rome cannot be determined for certain; but comparison of the account which he gives in the *Life* of the state of things which he found on his return to Jerusalem with the record of events set down in *The Jewish War* suggests a period of two or two and a half years."

<sup>42</sup> Kokkinos 1998: 387-95. His arguments need not be dealt with at length here since the precise dating does not affect our overall concerns. Objections have been raised by Sievers 2001: 104; and Kushnir-Stein 1999: 196-8.

successful priestly embassy to Rome, he arrived back in Jerusalem to find a revolution under way”, or that “when he arrived in Judaea, he found the country in a state of open revolt”.<sup>43</sup> This suits his claim to have been outspoken in his advocacy of peace in the early stages of the revolt, a characterization that appears to contradict the description of this part of his career in the *War*, in which he presented himself as a general from the outset.<sup>44</sup> Here, however, he presents himself as immediately seeking to restrain the revolutionaries and convince them of the futility of their cause. His lack of success in this regard is attributable only to their frenzied state.<sup>45</sup> The overall effect of this representation of the chain of events is, then, that Josephus cannot be held responsible for the seeds of the revolution that were planted in his absence; nor can he be blamed for his failure to prevent the revolt since it had already progressed too far. That is not to say that he did not return in AD 66—the possibility remains. Nor should we necessarily imagine that he is attempting to conceal his actual complicity in the outbreak by blurring the precise timeline, although this is certainly possible and would fit well among the arguments of those scholars who posit a clear revolutionary purpose in Josephus at the beginning of the revolt.<sup>46</sup> We must simply be wary of placing too much weight on Josephus’ chronology of events; he was, after all, writing some thirty years after the events unfolded.

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<sup>43</sup> Spilsbury 2003: 4; Sterling 1992: 231.

<sup>44</sup> *War* 2.562-84. The distinctions between the two accounts have been drawn sharply especially by Laqueur 1920: 103-108; Cohen 2002[1979]: 8. See, however, the more nuanced observations of Mason 1998a: 34.

<sup>45</sup> See *Life* 17-19: Καταλαμβάνω δ' ἤδη νεωτερισμῶν ἀρχὰς καὶ πολλοὺς ἐπὶ τῇ Ῥωμαίων ἀποστάσει μέγα φρονούοντας, καταστέλλειν οὖν ἐπειρώμην τοὺς στασιώδεις καὶ μετανοεῖν ἔπειθον ποιησαμένους πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν πρὸς οὓς πολεμήσουσιν, ὅτι Ῥωμαίων οὐ κατ' ἐμπειρίαν μόνον πολεμικὴν, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατ' εὐτυχίαν ἐλαττοῦνται: καὶ μὴ προπετῶς καὶ παντάπασιν ἀνοήτως πατρίσι καὶ γενεαῖς καὶ σφίσι αὐτοῖς τὸν περὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων κακῶν κίνδυνον ἐπάγειν. ταῦτα δ' ἔλεγον καὶ λιπαρῶς ἐνεκείμην ἀποτρέπων, δυστυχέστατον ἡμῖν τοῦ πολέμου τὸ τέλος γενήσεσθαι προορώμενος. οὐ μὴν ἔπεισα: πολὺ γὰρ ἢ τῶν ἀπονοηθέντων ἐπεκράτησεν μανία; cf. *Life* 21-29.

<sup>46</sup> See e.g. Cohen 2002[1979]: 61-2, 186-7; Goodman 1987: 159; Price 1992: 42-3 n. 130; Krieger 1994: 227-29.

Table 1—Summary of Possible Dates for Josephus’ Embassy to Rome

| <i>Departure from Judaea</i> (all dates AD)  |  | <i>Return from Rome</i>                     |                            |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Josephus’ birth-date:<br>a) born in the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of Gaius ( <i>Life</i> 4):<br>b) 56 yrs old in 13 <sup>th</sup> yr. of Domitian ( <i>Ant.</i> 20.268):<br>a + b = birth-date | Mar. 18, 37—Mar. 17, 38<br><br>Sept. 14, 93—Sept. 13, 94<br><br>Sept. 14, 37—Mar. 17, 38 | <i>Life</i> 17: “beginnings of revolutions” | April/May 66 (latest date) |
| 2. <i>Life</i> 13: departure “after his twenty-sixth year”   | Sept. 14, 63—Mar. 17, 65   |   |                            |
| 3. <i>Mare clausum</i>   | November—early March   |   |                            |
| 2 + 3 = voyage to Rome   | a) <b>Sept. 14, 63—Nov. 63</b><br>or<br>b) <b>Mar. 64—Nov. 64</b>                        |   |                            |
| 5. Other significant dates:<br>a) Fire in Rome<br>b) Death of Poppaea  | July 19, 64<br><br>Summer of 65  |   |                            |

As far as the dating of Josephus’ mission is concerned, then, we are still left with a relatively broad timeframe if we admit all the possibilities—the earliest departure in September of AD 63 and the latest return in April/May of 66. Regardless of preferences, we simply cannot narrow it down further. With regard to the duration of the trip, however, we can turn to contextual evidence to provide a possible background against which to consider the length of Josephus’ stay in Rome. To do so we must first determine the appropriate context. Although the English word embassy, which usually holds an official connotation, has been applied to Josephus’ assignment in virtually all of the scholarship cited thus far, Josephus does not use the characteristic Greek language that is generally used to describe an official mission. He does not call himself an ‘ambassador’ (πρέσβυς/πρεσβευτής) or refer to his mission as an ‘embassy’ (πρέσβεια), which is the language he uses to describe the delegations of leading men from

Caesarea who were sent by the procurator Felix to render their dispute before Nero.<sup>47</sup> In reaction to the savage treatment they had been receiving from the procurator Gessius Florus, the inhabitants of Jerusalem also beg of Agrippa II and the chief priests the right to send ‘emissaries’ (πρέσβεις) and an ‘embassy’ (πρέσβεια) to Nero.<sup>48</sup> So the lack of such language in the present context may suggest that Josephus’ mission should not be considered within this general framework. Furthermore, the absence of an encounter with Nero in the narrative and its explicit reference to Poppaea as the benefactress may imply that Josephus never met the emperor himself,<sup>49</sup> a rare occurrence in the case of provincial embassies. Only late in life did Augustus delegate the reception of embassies to others and we have no evidence elsewhere to suggest that this was common procedure for later emperors.<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless, these objections to considering Josephus’ trip as an official diplomatic mission or embassy can be mitigated. In the first place, we can point in the narratives to at least one official delegation to the emperor that is not spoken of in the terms mentioned above, namely the group of leading men of the Samaritans and Judaeans who were sent with the procurator Ventidius Cumanus and the tribune Celer by Ummidius Quadratus, governor of Syria, to Claudius in Rome to account for the disturbances that had occurred between the two ethnic groups.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, Josephus’ other word choices do lend an official atmosphere to his trip.

The manner in which he introduces his involvement in the mission, ‘it fell to me’ (μοι

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<sup>47</sup> *War* 2.270: μενούσης δὲ τῆς στάσεως ἐπιλέξας ἐκατέρωθεν τοὺς γνωρίμους ἔπεμψεν πρέσβεις ἐπὶ Νέρωνα διαλεξομένους περὶ τῶν δικαίων.

<sup>48</sup> *War* 2.342-3. See also 2.490; 4.414-15; *Ant.* 14.34-5; 17.300-302; 20.7-9; 20.193-6. For the use of similar language in Josephus’ narratives regarding official contexts outside of the Roman ones, see also *Ant.* 4.103; 4.296; 5.151; 8.368. A discussion of the various ‘embassies and cases’ during the period leading up to the revolt, including Josephus’ own trip to Rome, can be found in McKechnie 2005: 339-61; see also Millar 1992[1977]: 376-9.

<sup>49</sup> Some scholars have blatantly disregarded the fact that Josephus claims to have received his benefactions from Poppaea, *not* Nero; see Feldman 1992a: 982; 1993: 423-4; Hata 1994: 315. See, however, Mason 2001: 27 n. 116, “Since Josephus would presumably have mentioned an audience with the emperor as a major achievement, we are probably entitled to infer that he never actually met Nero.”

<sup>50</sup> *Cass. Dio* 55.33.5; 56.25.7; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 385.

<sup>51</sup> See *War* 2.241-44; *Ant.* 20.131-33. There are also many examples of delegations to provincial authorities that might be considered within this context as well but do not use the standard language; see Bash 1997: 76 n. 41.

συνέπεσεν), might suggest the selection of Josephus from among other possible qualified candidates,<sup>52</sup> which was generally the procedure for the appointment of embassies.<sup>53</sup> Within the narrative this serves to highlight, then, his suitability for the venture and also has the effect of marking him out as a representative or an ambassador.<sup>54</sup> The official character of the entire episode is further emphasized by the legal language used to describe the priests' responsibilities upon arrival in Rome, namely 'to submit an account to Caesar' (λόγον ὑφέξοντας τῷ Καίσαρι).<sup>55</sup> This explains also its inclusion in the narrative as the first major public duty undertaken by Josephus,<sup>56</sup> once he had decided to involve himself in public life (πολιτεύεσθαι).<sup>57</sup> Finally, the range of what can be considered to have been an official delegation or embassy in the ancient world is considerable and we should not impose a strict definition on Josephus' mission. As McKechnie has pointed out, "There may have been imperial hearings in the first century where an officious bystander's question, "Is this diplomacy or law?" would have seemed difficult."<sup>58</sup>

It is, therefore, instructive to make some observations regarding what we know of provincial embassies more generally. Perhaps the most important of these concerns the likelihood that an embassy to Rome was not a straightforward affair accomplished summarily. In support of this we need look no further than an episode reported by Josephus himself, involving

<sup>52</sup> This sense of delegation is implied in the translation of Mason 2001: 21 *ad loc.*, which is used here.

<sup>53</sup> See e.g. Fronto *Ep.* 2.7; *ILS* 6087.92.; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 384; Rajak 2002[1983]: 40. This phrase is interpreted differently by Bohrmann 1999: 223, "Il semble que Josèphe se soit embarqué pour Rome *par un concours de circonstances*, il déclare en effet: "il m'arriva" (μοι συνέπεσεν), d'aller à Rome" (emphasis mine).

<sup>54</sup> Some scholars have suggested on this basis that he was already versed in Greek and perhaps in rhetoric to some degree; see Hengel 1989: 23; Hadas-Lebel 1989: 45-9; Paul 1993: 63; Rajak 2002[1983]: 42, 46-64; 2005: 85; *contra* S. Schwartz 1990: 36 n. 44.

<sup>55</sup> For ὑπέχειν λόγον or the variant ὑπέχειν δίκην, see Dem. 19.95; Pl. *Prt.* 338D; Xen. *Mem.* 4.4.9; cf. *War* 2.628; *Ant.* 14.180; 17.144; 20.131; *Life* 408; Mason 2001: 22-23 n. 99.

<sup>56</sup> Such service was even mentioned in a *cursus honorum*, at least in inscriptions from the eastern provinces; see e.g. *I. Eph.* III 728; *I. Eph.* III 802; cf. Eck 2009: 199-201.

<sup>57</sup> See, however, Bohrmann 1999: 223, who ignores or misinterprets Josephus' statement in *Life* 12: "ainsi Josèphe est, selon toute vraisemblance, à Rome en tant que simple particulier et non en ambassade officielle comme celle des Alexandrins sous Claude: la "carrière" de Josèphe débutera plus tard, en Galilée, avec l'éclatement des hostilités."

<sup>58</sup> McKechnie 2005: 341-2; regarding the wide range of activities that could be considered within the context of 'ambassadorial language', see Bash 1997: 3-4, 40-54; Eilers 2009: 1-3, 8. See also Ager 2009: 15-43, regarding the difficulties in distinguishing between categories of diplomatic exchanges, also in light of modern legal language.

emissaries sent by the procurator Felix to Nero in response to the conflicts that had broken out between the Syrian and Judaeans inhabitants of Caesarea Maritima.<sup>59</sup> According to the account given in the *War*, this delegation left Judaea prior to Felix's recall sometime between AD 58-60 and only returned at the beginning of the revolt in AD 66, an absence of at least six years.<sup>60</sup> The possibility of such a lengthy waiting period for the resolution of the affair is dismissed by Levine on the basis of his assumption regarding the general efficiency of the emperors in dealing with such embassies, but he provides no evidence for specific time frames and furthermore clouds the entire account by conflating this embassy with another Judaeans delegation which, according to Josephus' *Antiquities*, left for Rome only after Felix had been replaced as procurator. Since their appeal failed rather quickly on account of the intervention of Felix's brother, Pallas, the entire process was completed in a relatively short period of time.<sup>61</sup> In Levine's fusion of these two accounts the time spent in Rome by the emissaries is dramatically reduced.<sup>62</sup> Apart from the methodological issues with such attempts to create a straightforward historical narrative, this approach obscures the key details of the individual narratives.<sup>63</sup> The most important of these details for our purposes is that Josephus expected his readership to believe that an embassy could linger in Rome without a resolution of their case for a period of some 6 to 8 years.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> *War* 2.266-70.

<sup>60</sup> *War* 2.284. The absence may also be 8 years, if we accept the re-dating of Felix's term of office from 52-58; see Kokkinos 1998: 385-6; see, however, Kushnir-Stein 1999: 195-7.

<sup>61</sup> *Ant.* 20.173-84.

<sup>62</sup> Levine 1974: 383-5; 1975: 29. Problems with the dating were already noted by Schürer 1979: 2.117 n. 169, who argued that the response of Nero 'can scarcely be dated later than AD 61'. Further, the parallel accounts are commonly conflated in an attempt to seek the underlying historical reality with the result of obscuring the narratives themselves; see Kasher 1977: 16-27; McKechnie 2005: 354-55; Kloppenborg 2000: 247 n. 56; Rajak 2002[1983]: 39; cf. McLaren 1991: 159 n. 1.

<sup>63</sup> For a clear discussion of the difficulties in re-constructing the historical reality behind these events and the methodological concerns, see Mason 2008a: n. 1820; 2009a: 25-36; cf. McLaren 1998: 36-7 n. 14.

<sup>64</sup> Kasher 1977: 25-6, suggests that the delay was caused by the influence of Poppaea Sabina. Once she died, Nero felt free to act in favour of the Syrians. Cf. Kasher 1990: 254-5. *Contra* Levine 1974: 383, "All this was accomplished within a fairly short period of time, much before the outbreak of the war."

Although the embassy from Caesarea stands out as an extreme example of lengthy waiting periods, there is further evidence that suggests these matters were not dealt with swiftly. We can look further in Josephus' narratives at his account of a Judæan embassy sent to Claudius during the procuratorship of Cuspius Fadus requesting control of the high priestly vestments.<sup>65</sup> The precise date of the embassy's departure to Rome is unclear; according to Josephus' account it occurred at the outset of Fadus' tenure as procurator, which itself began following the death of Agrippa I at some point in AD 44.<sup>66</sup> If we allow for a reasonable amount of time for the news to reach Rome and for the subsequent appointment and arrival of the new procurator, we are presented with the possibility that the embassy departed for Rome late in the sailing season of AD 44, arriving in Rome before the end of the year. Since Josephus does report the precise date on which they received a letter from Claudius granting their request the successful completion of the embassy can be securely dated to the fourth of the Kalends of July (June 28<sup>th</sup>), AD 45.<sup>67</sup> The likelihood is then that the ambassadors spent at least eight months in the city of Rome awaiting Claudius' response to their petition, a significant amount of time to be spent in a foreign city. Moreover this particular embassy had the benefit of immediate intercession by Agrippa II, who, like almost all of the members of the Herodian family, had been educated in Rome, in this case in the household of Claudius, and was there in AD 44 when his father, Agrippa I, died. Initially Claudius reportedly intended to appoint the young prince as successor to the throne, but was dissuaded by his counsellors on account of Agrippa II's immaturity.<sup>68</sup> Consequently, Agrippa II remained in Rome until sometime in AD 52, and perhaps even later, when he took up

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<sup>65</sup> *Ant.* 20.1-14.

<sup>66</sup> The death of the Herodian king cannot be dated definitively but for our purposes we may note that it occurred at the latest in early August of AD 44; see *War* 2.219; *Ant.* 19.343-59; Acts 12:19-23. The latest date, 6 August AD 44, is proposed by Kokkinos 1998: 378-80. The earliest proposed date is that of S. Schwartz 1990: 107-111, who suggests September/October of AD 43. The conventional dating is March of AD 44; E. Schwartz 1963: 124-8; Lake 1933: 446-52.

<sup>67</sup> *Ant.* 20.14: ἐγράφη πρὸ τεσσάρων καλανδῶν ἐπὶ ὑπάτων Ῥούφου καὶ Πομπηίου Σιλουανοῦ.

<sup>68</sup> Concerning Claudius' alleged plans for the province of Judæa, see D.R. Schwartz 1990: 149-53.

government of the much lesser kingdom of Chalcis after the death of his uncle, Herod of Chalcis.<sup>69</sup> His presence in Rome and existing connections with the imperial court made him a valuable ally and Josephus expressly credits his involvement as facilitating the process.<sup>70</sup> Without this intervention we might expect the entire ordeal to have been prolonged.

For while the intercession of an influential figure such as Agrippa II could expedite matters, other factors could equally well lengthen the visit. In the case of the Alexandrian embassy that may have travelled to Rome already in the winter of AD 38/39,<sup>71</sup> it was the absence of the emperor, who was on the German frontier, and his dilatoriness that dragged out the process.<sup>72</sup> Although the precise chronology is almost hopelessly convoluted, on any reckoning the path of the embassy was not a smooth one.<sup>73</sup> According to the account of Philo,<sup>74</sup> who was himself a member of the delegation, upon their arrival in the city of Rome in the early spring the ambassadors were granted a brief and unsatisfactory meeting with the emperor, after which he left the city for Puteoli.<sup>75</sup> Given their desire to gain an audience with the emperor, the Alexandrian embassies accordingly followed him to the Bay of Naples but were not given the opportunity to meet with him there. Subsequently, without having given the ambassadors a response, Gaius left Rome in October of AD 39 to deal with unrest on the German frontier,

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<sup>69</sup> See *Ant.* 19.360-63; 20.134-6. The dating is insecure; see Schürer 1973: 1.471-73; Kokkinos 1998: 318-41. For further discussion of Agrippa II, particularly his relationship with Josephus, see pp. 295-306.

<sup>70</sup> *Ant.* 20.10: Καλέσας δὲ Κλαύδιος τοὺς πρέσβεις ἔφη ταῦτα συγχωρεῖν καὶ ἐκέλευεν αὐτοὺς Ἀγρίππα χάριν εἰδέναι, ταῦτα γὰρ ἐκείνου ποιεῖν ἀξιώσαντος.

<sup>71</sup> See Harker 2008: 14. Philo mentions only that the embassies left in the winter, not specifying whether the year was AD 38/9 or 39/40. The latter date had been favoured by most scholars; see Balsdon 1934: 19-24; Smallwood 1957: 3-17; 1961: 47-50; 1981[1976]: 243.

<sup>72</sup> For discussions of the events of 38-41, including the attempt by Gaius to set up a statue of himself in the Jerusalem Temple, see Balsdon 1934: 19-24; Schürer 1973: 1.392-8; Smallwood 1981[1976]: 220-56; Kasher 1985; D.R. Schwartz 1990: 77-89; Schäfer 1997: 136-60; Harker 2008: 10-47.

<sup>73</sup> The following description of the embassy's activities follows the chronology of Harker 2008: 11-18.

<sup>74</sup> See especially *Leg.* 181-9, 349-67; cf. *Ant.* 18.257-60.

<sup>75</sup> Gaius is attested to have been in Campania in the summer of AD 39; see Cass. Dio 59.17; Suet. *Calig.* 19.3; cf. Harker 2008: 14.



returning to Italy in May of AD 40 and only entering Rome at the end of August.<sup>76</sup> In the interim the entire process was complicated by Gaius' attempts to erect his statue in the Temple, which naturally occupied the attention of the Judaeian ambassadors. As it happened the embassy was eventually granted an audience in Rome in the Gardens of Maecenas and Lamia on the Esquiline at some point between September of AD 40 and the assassination of Gaius January 24, AD 41—nearly two years after their initial arrival—forced to trail the emperor as he inspected his building projects, only to be dismissed rather ungraciously without even receiving an official decision.<sup>77</sup> This may have left the same ambassadors to press their case instead with Gaius' successor, Claudius, together with the new embassies that had been sent from Alexandria.<sup>78</sup> For their efforts, then, Philo and his fellow Alexandrians may have spent upwards of three years in the imperial capital. It is no small wonder that the philosopher bemoaned the fact that civil turmoil had stolen the leisure time he more happily devoted to pursuing his studies.<sup>79</sup>

Although we cannot generalize on the basis of Philo's experience with Gaius, who was undeniably exceptional in many ways, even in better circumstances it is not surprising that petitioners or disputants could be required to spend a significant amount of time in the capital. The number of embassies from Judaea alone reveals the readiness of the provincials to address their issues to the emperor in person and even this number may give too weak an impression of the frequency of such embassies throughout the provinces.<sup>80</sup> There are hints elsewhere regarding

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<sup>76</sup> See Smallwood 1967: nos. 9-10; on Gaius' itinerary with references to ancient sources for all the dates, see Halfmann 1986: 170-72.

<sup>77</sup> See Harker 2008: 17-18, "Gaius did not hear the embassies until September AD 40 at the earliest. He had therefore left an important embassy waiting for almost two years before granting it a full hearing."

<sup>78</sup> Later tradition has Philo in Rome during the time of Claudius; see Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 2.18.7-8; Suda s.v. *Philo Judaeus*; cf. Harker 2008: 19.

<sup>79</sup> Philo *Spec.* 3.1-3.

<sup>80</sup> Beyond those mentioned already, see also the debate about the future government of Judaea after Herod's death: *War* 2.80-100; *Ant.* 17.299-323; the appeal for provincial status instead of Archelaus' rule: *War* 2.111-13; *Ant.* 17.342-4; an appeal for a diminution of tribute: *Tac. Ann.* 11.42.5; the request to maintain the wall built to block

the potentially high numbers of embassies attendant upon the emperor at any given moment. In his *Panegyric* of Trajan, Pliny praises the emperor's alacrity in dealing with embassies, implicitly contrasting him with previous emperors, "They [the petitioners] come into his presence promptly, and are dismissed promptly, and at last the emperor's doors are no longer besieged by a mob of embassies which have been shut out."<sup>81</sup> The tremendous burden that these posed to the emperor is suggested in Cassius Dio's well-known digression on the virtues of the good *princeps* by the advice given by Maecenas to Augustus, which reflects the concerns of the Severan age, namely to restrict the number of embassies sent by the cities to the emperor by directing them instead to the local governor.<sup>82</sup>

Although we have no evidence indicating that this procedure was ever formally in operation, the emperors did attempt at various times to place limits on the embassies. In the case of Vespasian this involved the restriction of embassies to no more than three ambassadors,<sup>83</sup> while Trajan barred completely the formal deputations regularly sent from Byzantium at great cost merely to greet the emperor.<sup>84</sup> Tiberius' earlier attempt to reduce the burden of embassies was considerably less official; he reportedly delayed the reception of embassies deliberately in order to discourage the sending of others.<sup>85</sup> These examples underscore the likelihood that at any given moment there were large numbers of groups and individuals waiting for the appropriate

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Agrippa II's view of the temple grounds: *Ant.* 20.189-95; cf. the request to Petronius to send an embassy to Gaius regarding the placement of his statue in the temple: *Philo Leg.* 239-49. Cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 379.

<sup>81</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 79.6-7; trans. Radice 1969.

<sup>82</sup> Cass. Dio 52.30.9: "Do not allow them [i.e. the cities] to send any embassy to you, except if there is a matter involving a judicial decision, but let them explain whatever they require to their governor, and have such petitions as he approves sent on by him. Thus they will neither have any expenditure nor achieve their end by improper means, but will receive proper responses without expense or trouble"; cf. W. Williams 1967: 479.

<sup>83</sup> *Dig.* 50.7.5.6. This passage raises the unanswerable question of whether or not Josephus went to Rome among other ambassadors; see Niese 1914: 569. The precise numbers could vary: e.g. four: *IGR* IV 566; five: *IGR* IV 251; eight: *IGR* IV 1123; twelve: *Ant.* 20.189-95; fifty: *War* 2.80-100; *Ant.* 17.299-323. It was also possible, although rare, for a single individual to go: *AE* 1920 100=SEG XI 922; *Plut. Mor.* 216B, 233F, 511A; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 381-2 n. 41-45; Bash 1997: 40-41.

<sup>84</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 10.43-4. Regarding the restrictions on embassies, which appear to have begun with Vespasian and implemented particularly by Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, see W. Williams 1967: 470-83.

<sup>85</sup> *Ant.* 18.170-71; cf. *Philo Leg.* 182-3.

circumstances to afford them a hearing with the emperor, so that the assumption of the unknown orator addressing Constantine at Trier in AD 312 that the emperor would be surrounded by men from almost every city on personal or public missions would appear valid for our earlier period as well.<sup>86</sup>

The overall result of these large numbers of diplomatic missions to the capital would have been a significant backlog of pending cases and the likelihood that appointment to such an embassy would entail a significant outlay of time. This is clear from the attempts to regulate the amount of time taken to deal with cases, issued in the later empire, which capped cases from Italy at six months and those originating in the provinces beyond the Alps or across the sea at a full year. In capital cases, this cap was extended to nine and eighteen months respectively.<sup>87</sup> Other regulations made provision for the absence of the ambassadors from their hometowns. Men could not be nominated as *tutores* or *curatores* in their absence and were not obligated to fulfil the duty if the praetor did so anyway. Only under special circumstances could civil action be taken against an ambassador and in those cases where disputes were initiated, the ambassador could take action for full restitution (*restitutio in integrum*).<sup>88</sup> These directives were designed to lessen the burden of undertaking such duties, since there were those who attempted to avoid the responsibility.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> *Pan. Lat.* VIII.2.1: *cum omnes homines omnium fere civitatum aut publice missi aut pro se tibi supplices assint*; cf. *Philo Leg.* 182: τσοῦτων ὄντων πρεσβευτῶν σχεδὸν ἀπὸ πάσης γῆς ἀφιγμένων. This is supported also by inscriptional evidence of individuals who undertook embassies to the emperor; see *CIL* XII.594: a freedman from Arelate (Gallia Narbonensis) to Antoninus Pius; *CIL* V.5894: a decurion from Mediolanum (northern Italy) who made five embassies to Rome; *AE* 1916 120: an office-holder from Sinope (Bithynia) who undertook four embassies, one to Hadrian and three to Antoninus Pius; *IGR* I.608: an office-holder from Tomi (Moesia Inferior) to Antoninus Pius.

<sup>87</sup> *FIRA*<sup>2</sup> I, no. 91; see Sherwin-White 1963: 115-6; Millar 1992[1977]: 512.

<sup>88</sup> *Tutores/curatores*: *Dig.* 26.5.21.3-4; civil action: *Dig.* 5.1.8; 5.1.24-8; cf. 4.6.8.

<sup>89</sup> See the discussion in Millar 1992[1977]: 382-3, regarding the concessions given to those undertaking an embassy to make the task more palatable. Service might also be avoided because of the very real dangers that accompanied travel in the ancient world, as the not uncommon reports of deaths of ambassadors demonstrates; see e.g. *IGR* I 261; *AE* 2001 378; *CIL* III 5031=*ILS* 7115; *CIL* VIII 20758; Polyb. 30.21.1-2; cf. Eck 2009: 204-5. On the multiple difficulties that could face an ambassador, see Brennan 2009: 173-91.

The evidence for the nature of embassies to the emperor suggests therefore that we should not dismiss too hastily the possibility that Josephus spent the entire time between the autumn of AD 63 and the early spring of AD 66 in the city of Rome or at least a significant segment within this timeframe. Although he does claim that his appeal to release the priests met with success very quickly (προνοῶ ὡς τάχιστα), this was able to happen only once he had met Poppaea Sabina. Prior to this moment we must allow for sufficient time for Josephus to have developed the necessary network of connections that would gain him access to a hearing before the wife of Nero in the first place, which is the process to which I will turn shortly. Although the narrative highlights the difficulties of the voyage itself, glossing over the precise details of Josephus' actions in Rome, it was this latter stage that was the crucial ordeal. By eliding the events prior to his successful petition, Josephus gives the impression that the process of achieving an audience with Poppaea was a routine experience. It was this process, however, that was perhaps of the most lasting significance for his later residency in the city of Rome, above all on account of the contacts he made, which I shall now further explore.

### **Contacts in Rome**

The precise identification of the unnamed priests whom Josephus calls his 'close associates and men of good standing' (συνήθεις ἔμοι καλοὺς κάγαθούς) and who had been sent to Rome on 'a minor and incidental charge' (διὰ μικρὰν καὶ τὴν τυχοῦσαν αἰτίαν) is a matter of some debate, a result not only of the near complete lack of evidence, but also of the ambiguity of these two phrases.<sup>90</sup> In the case of the first phrase, although the term συνήθης calls to mind an intimate relationship based on cohabitation and indeed preserves that sense in a number of

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<sup>90</sup> *Life* 13: καθ' ὃν χρόνον Φηλιξ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐπετρόπευεν ἱερεῖς τινὰς συνήθεις ἔμοι καλοὺς κάγαθούς διὰ μικρὰν καὶ τὴν τυχοῦσαν αἰτίαν δήσας εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἔπεμψε λόγον ὑφέξοντα τῷ Καίσαρι.

passages in the *Life*,<sup>91</sup> it could also be used within the realm of ritualized friendship where it denoted a more formal relationship based on ties of guest-friendship (ξενία).<sup>92</sup> From Josephus' later claim to have freed his brother and 50 friends (φίλοι) following the siege of Jerusalem and further to have discovered and delivered 190 'friends and close associates' (φίλων ἐμῶν καὶ συνήθων) locked in the temple, it is clear that in Josephan language such terms also do not necessarily entail the intimacy of a close relationship, but can reflect varying degrees of connection.<sup>93</sup> The fact that the term is here connected to the unquestionably formulaic *kalos kagathos*,<sup>94</sup> which had been used as such already in the literature of the fifth century BC,<sup>95</sup> further limits its probative value. I would conclude therefore that although Josephus was likely to have met these priests previously, or at least functioned in similar social circles, his appointment to spearhead the appeal for their release was not necessarily attributable to special ties.

This lack of concrete evidence has not, however, stopped scholars from hypothesizing regarding the identity of these men. By far the most speculative proposal has been that of Orchard, who suggests that the apostle Paul was among those whom Josephus was sent to free, but his theory is based on a rather shaky series of proposals that involve some chronological gymnastics and misconceived notions regarding Roman political procedures, which are not worth delving into here.<sup>96</sup> The suggestion of Hata, who identifies these priests with the later

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<sup>91</sup> See e.g. *Life* 180, 192, 204, 419.

<sup>92</sup> See e.g. Polyb. 5.74; Plut. *Dion* 52.1; *C. Gracch.* 12.2; *Ant.* 3.6; cf. Herman 1987: 23-6.

<sup>93</sup> *Life* 419; cf. 420. For the linking of φίλος and συνήθης, which is pervasive, see e.g. Philo *Contempl.* 41.2; Plut. *Lyc.* 11.3; *Pel.* 28.4; *Pyrrh.* 12.6; *Them.* 32.5; *Alc.* 21.2; *Aem.* 21.2. Further regarding these phrases, with a comparison also to the Latin terms *amici* and *familiares*, see Mason 2001: 22 n. 26, 93 n. 789.

<sup>94</sup> The linkage appears to be unique to Josephus; a search of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* turned up only this passage.

<sup>95</sup> See the references provided by Mason 2001: 22 n. 97, to illustrate the proverbial nature of this phrase: Ar. *Eq.* 184, 227, 735; *Lys.* 1060; Hdt. 1.30; 2.144; Isoc. *Soph.* 13.6; *Antid.* 15.316; Lucian *Patr. Enc.* 3; Diog. Laert. 2.48, 3.88; cf. *Ant.* 10.204.

<sup>96</sup> Orchard 1995: 248-70. The chronological difficulties are resolved by the possibility of a *lapsus calami* on the part of Josephus in confusing the procurator Felix with Festus; see Herrmann 1976: 154-55. Orchard also misreads Sherwin-White 1963: 112-19, in arguing that accused persons would not have lingered in Rome for four years, as

mentioned Joazar and Judas, who accompanied Josephus to Galilee, simply on the basis of the parallel use of the adjectival phrase *kalos kagathos*, bears little weight in light of the already mentioned formulaic nature of the phrase.<sup>97</sup>

Other scholars have taken a more traditional approach in attempting to combine this account with others recorded by Josephus. Smallwood suggests that the priests were sent to Rome in connection with a feud that arose between the high priest and the leading citizens involving the theft of tithes around harvest time, perhaps on a charge of breach of the peace.<sup>98</sup> Although Josephus presents separate, even if similar, incidents occurring first under the procuratorship of Felix and subsequently under Albinus, Smallwood proposes that Josephus has duplicated a single episode that took place while Albinus was procurator and that he was therefore in error in his *Life* in ascribing the responsibility to Felix. This would then obviate the perceived problem of the four years spent by the priests untried in the city of Rome.<sup>99</sup> Her solution is, however, unsatisfactory; it necessitates significant sloppiness on the part of Josephus and does little to further our understanding of any of the episodes in the narrative. Similar issues accompany the proposal of Hadas-Lebel that these priests be identified with Ishmael the high priest and Helcias the guardian of the temple treasures, who travelled to Rome during the procuratorship of Festus to receive permission from Nero to allow a wall, which had been built to block the view of Agrippa II from his new dining room (οἶκημα) over the temple grounds, to remain untouched. Although the ten other ambassadors were permitted to return home, Ishmael

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indeed the priests did according to Josephus (*Life* 13; cf. *Ant.* 20.182 for the end of Felix's term in office); cf. Acts 28:30.

<sup>97</sup> Hata 1994: 318 n. 25. Joazar and Judas: *Life* 29. He further suggests, on the basis of *Life* 256 where the same phrase is used, that there may have been three figures ("If, while being judged in relation to Ioannes, I had brought some two or three gentlemen (καλοὺς κάγαθοὺς) as witnesses...").

<sup>98</sup> *Ant.* 20.180-1 (Felix); 205-7 (Albinus).

<sup>99</sup> Smallwood 1981[1976]: 280-81 n. 84; cf. Herrmann 1976: 154.

and Helcias remained with Poppaea as hostages (ὀμηρεύσοντας).<sup>100</sup> There are, however, a number of difficulties with this identification. Foremost is the chronological discrepancy but there is also the fact that the priests in the *Life* were sent in chains, while Ishmael and Helcias went freely as emissaries.<sup>101</sup> In any case, neither proposal contributes significantly to our understanding of Josephus' own mission.

Much like the identity of these priests, the ambiguity with which Josephus describes the charges on which they were conducted in chains to Rome has resulted in disagreement among scholars. Some have accepted the 'ordinary' nature of the charges and argued on the basis of this characterization and the absence of this episode in his other works that such incidents involving arrests of members of the ruling class were commonplace and the resulting embassies routine.<sup>102</sup> Others, however, have pointed to the duration of the priests' captivity (five to twelve years) as evidence that the charges were anything but 'minor and incidental', supporting this with reference to Josephus' use of similar language to describe the charges against a number of individuals he calls bandits (λησταί) who had been imprisoned by Gessius Florus but were later released by Albinus in return for money.<sup>103</sup> According to this theory these priestly acquaintances of Josephus were, therefore, revolutionary figures. In his *Life* then, since Josephus is seeking to conceal his own revolutionary tendencies by portraying himself instead as 'pro-Roman', he

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<sup>100</sup> *Ant.* 20.189-96. Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 44-5. To be fair, she merely presents this as a possibility, although she later seems to assume the validity of the identification (56). This episode will be further explored below in connection with Poppaea's involvement.

<sup>101</sup> See Rajak 2002[1983]: 39. Similar problems attend any linking of these priests to the emissaries sent by Felix to Nero in response to the civil difficulties in Caesarea (*War* 2.270); see Bohrmann 1999: 224, "Il n'est pas impossible que les notables emprisonnés à Rome, soient du nombre de ceux liés aux événements de Césarée puisque Néron donne raison aux Grecs et qu'il est mécontent des émeutes au point de révoquer Félix."

<sup>102</sup> See Goodman 1987: 139, "Violent faction struggle within the ruling class was apparently endemic"; Rajak 2002[1983]: 39, "this is confirmation, if confirmation be needed, that such activities took place more often than we are told about them."

<sup>103</sup> *Ant.* 20.215. This language has, however, little probative value, as pointed out by Mason 2001: 22 n. 98, on the basis of similar uses by Philo *Decal.* 151 and Lucian *Fug.* 19.

downplays also the severity of the charges against the priests he travelled to Rome to save.<sup>104</sup>

While this interpretation may in fact be correct, it is based partially on the incorrect assumption that individuals sent to Rome on relatively insignificant charges would have had their cases handled expediently and only serious cases would be prolonged.<sup>105</sup>

Furthermore, the seriousness of the charges themselves is relative to one's perspective. The most enticing explanation for the priests' incarceration and transport to Rome, in my view, is one proposed by Bohrmann.<sup>106</sup> She suggests that the priests were particularly scrupulous observers of their ancestral laws, as evidenced by their diet of figs and nuts while in prison,<sup>107</sup> who consequently ran into trouble with the unpopular procurator Felix for criticizing his unscrupulous conduct, in particular his marriage to the Judaeen queen Drusilla, the sister of Agrippa II and Berenice, which was in contradiction to the ancestral laws.<sup>108</sup> According to Josephus, Felix had also organized the murder of Jonathan, the high priest, in retaliation for his frequent suggestions that he could better administer the affairs of the Judaeans than the procurator himself.<sup>109</sup> It is not out of the question, therefore, that he reacted negatively to criticism levelled at him by some over-zealous priests, sending them to Rome perhaps for treason (*maiestas*) to serve as an example. Thus the reason (αἰτία) behind their trial in Rome may have

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<sup>104</sup> Cohen 2002[1979]: 61-2, 186 n. 13; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 36 n. 44, 70 n. 52. Hata 1994: 314 n. 14, provides a variation on Cohen's theory, maintaining that Josephus himself was 'pro-Roman' and suggesting that the priests had a change of heart while in Rome and thus were viewed by Josephus and the other 'pro-Romans' as potentially useful in counselling the people against revolt.

<sup>105</sup> This misunderstanding is also evident in Herrmann 1976: 154, "Comment admettre, si Festus est arrive comme procureur en Judée au début de 55, l'hypothèse que les prisonniers aient vécu emprisonnés *sans jugement* de 54 à 63 ap. J.-C.; cela pour une faute insignifiante" (emphasis original); see, however, *Ant.* 18.170-78; Acts 25-28; cf. Sherwin-White 1963: 112-19.

<sup>106</sup> Bohrmann 1999: 225-26.

<sup>107</sup> *Life* 14; cf. *Ant.* 10.190 (Daniel). See Bohrmann 1999: 227-29; Mason 2001: 23-4 n. 103.

<sup>108</sup> Regarding Drusilla, see *Ant.* 20.141-44; Suet. *Claud.* 28; Acts 24:24; cf. Kokkinos 1998: 321; Brenk and Canali de Rossi 2001: 412-14. In the case of Drusilla's initial planned marriage with Epiphanes, son of Antiochus IV, the deal fell through because the Commagene prince was unwilling to be circumcised; *Ant.* 20.139. Regarding marriages between Judaeans and foreigners, see Barclay 1996: 410-12.

<sup>109</sup> *Ant.* 20.162-165, esp. 162: ἔχων δὲ καὶ ἀπεχθῶς πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα Ἰωνάθην ὁ Φῆλιξ διὰ τὸ πολλάκις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ βουθεῖσθαι περὶ τοῦ κρειτόνως προϊστασθαι τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἰουδαίαν πραγμάτων.



been trifling, namely criticism of the procurator's choice of wives, even if the actual charge (*maiestas*) was not.

Apart from these vague details regarding the priests, who provide the occasion for Josephus' diplomatic mission to Rome, we are not given any further information. The focus is, after all, on the resourcefulness of Josephus. So we cannot be certain that Josephus even met these men upon arrival in Rome, let alone travelled back with them to Judaea.<sup>110</sup> We might suspect, however, that members of the large Judaeian community in the city of Rome were aware of the incarceration of the priests and perhaps had sought them out.<sup>111</sup> The figs and nuts were certainly not standard fare for prisoners, which was usually bread and water.<sup>112</sup> It was possible, however, for privileged prisoners to receive more nourishing food from well-wishers, as indeed happened in the case of Agrippa I through the intercession of Antonia, the sister-in-law of Tiberius.<sup>113</sup> In this case, the unusual food choice, which serves here to illustrate the extreme piety of the priests, may indicate the involvement of friends who could appreciate the religious scruples of the priests and thus supply them with these special rations. In the past, members of the Judaeian community had shown an interest in provincial affairs. According to Josephus they turned out in great numbers—eight thousand—to support the embassy of fifty Judaeians protesting the appointment of Archelaus as king after the death of his father, Herod the Great; while the entire community, Josephus would have us believe, poured out of the city to catch a glimpse of the impostor travelling about impersonating Alexander, one of the sons Herod had

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<sup>110</sup> *Contra* Hadas-Lebel 1993: 56-7.

<sup>111</sup> For scholarship on the Judaeian community in Rome, see e.g. Berliner 1893; Vogelstein and Rieger 1896; Vogelstein 1941; Smallwood 1981[1976]: 120-44, 201-19, 356-88, 507-25; Leon 1995[1961]; Rutgers 1995; Barclay 1996: 282-319; Levinskaya 1996: 167-182; Rutgers 1998a: 45-69, 171-191; Gruen 2002: 15-53; Lampe 2003: 7-84; Cappalletti 2006. I will further explore some relevant details regarding this community in Ch. 6.

<sup>112</sup> For standard prison fare (*solo fiscalis*), see Cass. Dio 58.3.5-6; Tert. *Jejun.* 12; Heliod. *Aeth.* 8.6.2; Cyprian *Ep.* 21.2; 33.2; Ath. *Deipn.* 4.161A, B; cf. Rapske 1994b: 209-19; Mason 2001: 23 n. 103.

<sup>113</sup> *Ant.* 18.202-4; cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.118. See further on the privileged treatment of prisoners in the next chapter.

executed in 8/7 BC.<sup>114</sup> When some members of the priestly aristocracy in Judaea were conducted to Rome to face trial under Nero then, it is possible that certain Roman Judaeans made contact with these priests and sought to look after their needs.

There is evidence to suggest the antecedent possibility that Josephus himself would have sought out such loyal Judaeans upon his arrival in Rome. The natural place to find them was within the broader Judaeian community. In fact, it appears to have been a regular practice in the ancient world for travellers and newcomers to seek out the support and friendship of compatriots,<sup>115</sup> and likewise important for the local inhabitants, particularly those of wealth and standing, to be hospitable to provincial visitors.<sup>116</sup> Thus Licinius Montanus of Cirta in Numidia, the hometown of Fronto, would stay with the renowned orator whenever he was in Rome, enjoying his *hospitium* and *contubernium*. Similarly, the two sons of Sardius Saturninus, another native of Africa who may not even have been acquainted with Fronto, joined his boarding-school of sorts and became his students.<sup>117</sup> It is surely not a coincidence either that the first patient of Galen upon his arrival in Rome from Pergamum was a fellow Pergamene and a family friend who had been living in the city for some ten years already.<sup>118</sup> Of course, these linkages would usually have occurred between social equals; as Noy has pointed out, “Fronto would presumably not have offered accommodations to an African mule-driver, although he might have pointed him in the direction of other African mule-drivers.”<sup>119</sup> Presumably the mule-drivers themselves

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<sup>114</sup> Archelaus: *War* 2.80-81; *Ant.* 17.300-301. Alexander: *War* 101-105 (τό γε μὴν Ἰουδαϊκὸν ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ἅπαν); *Ant.* 17.330-31 (πᾶν τὸ τῆδε Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος).

<sup>115</sup> Or fellow cult adherents; see Apul. *Met.* 11.26; cf. La Piana 1927: 337. Of course, the two categories were not usually separable, a key difference with Christianity at this time; see Mason 2007a: 1-56.

<sup>116</sup> See Saller 1982: 185, “a Roman aristocrat, especially a recent migrant who still had numerous ties with his *patria*, was expected to host provincial visitors as a routine duty, and so renew and strengthen his bonds with them”; cf. Noy 2000: 148-52.

<sup>117</sup> Fronto *Ad am.* 1.3; 1.9: *Sardius Saturninus artissima mihi familiaritate coniunctus est per filios suos doctissimos iuvenes, quos in contubernio mecum adsiduos habeo*; cf. Champlin 1980: 45-6; Saller 1982: 163-4.

<sup>118</sup> Gal. *De praec.* 19.15; cf. 14.608; Nutton 1973: 159.

<sup>119</sup> Noy 2000: 149.

would have been happy to point elite visitors from North Africa to the famous Gardens of Maecenas, where Fronto had his villa.<sup>120</sup>

This regularized hospitality is also clear from the accounts in the Acts of the Apostles of Paul's travels and indeed those of other early Judaeo-Christian figures throughout the Mediterranean, whose immediate destination seems to have been the local gathering of Judaeans, the synagogue. The apparent ease of access into the Judaeo communities is noteworthy. Thus Paul and his companions came to Thessalonica "where there was a synagogue of the Judaeans, and according to Paul's custom he went in among them and debated with them over three Sabbaths from the writings..."<sup>121</sup> There is no indication of any obstacles to seeking out the Judaeo community or indeed that there were any difficulties in gaining access to their regular meetings.<sup>122</sup> This is the consistent impression we get from the experiences of Paul and the other leaders among the early Christians on their travels throughout the Roman world, whose immediate destination upon arrival in a new, unknown city was the Judaeo community and often their synagogue.<sup>123</sup> Although this characterization of events does serve the literary interests

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<sup>120</sup> Fronto *Ad Caes.* 2.1: *Horatius Flaccus memorabilis poeta, mihi que propter Maecenatem et Maecenatianos hortos meos non alienus*; cf. *CIL XV.7438*.

<sup>121</sup> Acts 17:1-3: Διοδεύσαντες δὲ τὴν Ἀμφίπολιν καὶ τὴν Ἀπολλωνίαν ἦλθον εἰς Θεσσαλονίκην, ὅπου ἦν συναγωγή τῶν Ἰουδαίων. κατὰ δὲ τὸ εἰωθὸς τῷ Παύλῳ εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐπὶ σάββατα τρία διελέξατο αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν... This passage, as with Acts as a whole, brings to light a significant difference in purpose for the travelling of many early Christians, namely missionary activity, which majority opinion suggests was not a feature of first-century Judaism, a distinction which should be kept in mind; see McKnight 1991; Cohen 1992: 14-23; Goodman 1994a; *contra* Feldman 1992b: 24-37; 1993: 288-341.

<sup>122</sup> See especially Acts 16:13-15: "On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river where we expected to find a place of prayer... When she [Lydia] and the members of her household were baptized she addressed us, saying "If you consider me to have faith in the Lord, come and stay in my home" (τῇ τε ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων ἐξήλθομεν ἔξω τῆς πόλης παρὰ ποταμὸν οὗ ἐνομιζόμεν προσευχὴν εἶναι... ὡς δὲ ἐβαπτίσθη καὶ ὁ οἶκος αὐτῆς, παρεκάλεισεν λέγουσα, εἰ κεκρίκατέ με πιστὴν τῷ κυρίῳ εἶναι, εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκόν μου μένετε). In many cities, the ease with which Paul and others were able to find the Judaeo community was directly attributable to the fact that there were large, recognizable neighbourhoods predominantly inhabited by Judaeans as occurred with other ethnic minorities; e.g. Antioch: Downey 1961: 544 n. 179; Alexandria: Philo *In Flacc.* 55; cf. *War* 2.487; *Ant.* 14.117; *Ap.* 2.34-5; Rome: Philo *Leg.* 155; cf. Leon 1995[1961]: 136-40; Lampe 2003: 38-9; Sardis, Oxyrhynchus and Hermoupolis: *Ant.* 14.259-61; Juster 1914: 2.177 n. 3. See also Cohen 1999: 56; Barclay 1996: 117-18, 331-32.

<sup>123</sup> See Acts 11:19; 13:4-6, 13-14; 14:1; 17:1-2; 18:4, 19, 24-7; 19:1-8; 28:13-5; cf. Meeks 2003[1983]: 16-19, 29.

of the author of Acts,<sup>124</sup> we should not dismiss the picture out of hand as evidence for the situation in the first century. In order to communicate to his audience, the author of Luke-Acts needed to create a plausible picture that would be readily accepted. Regardless of their historicity, therefore, the accounts of Paul's travels can be used to illustrate what was typical for the ancient world. On this basis I would argue then that the Judaeen community was, practically speaking, the natural place for a travelling Judaeen to seek out accommodations and provisions.<sup>125</sup> Once the Christian movement developed and spread beyond its initial Judaeen roots, such hospitality was further ingrained, although its basis changed from common ethnicity to shared membership in a "universal brotherhood of believers in Messiah Jesus".<sup>126</sup>

The process of entering a community of compatriots in a foreign city could be expedited by letters of reference or recommendation. This is clear particularly within the network of early Christians. Again, according to the author of Luke-Acts, when Apollos, a Judaeen from Alexandria, wished to travel from Ephesus, where he had received hospitality from Priscilla and Aquila, to Achaia, he received a letter of introduction from those in Ephesus which instructed the disciples in Achaia to welcome him.<sup>127</sup> Such recommendations are also found embedded in some of the early letters that circulated among the churches, encouraging hospitality not only for the leaders but for any travelling Christian.<sup>128</sup> The extent to which this became regularized is

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<sup>124</sup> This portrayal of the activities of Paul in Acts is noticeably different from the impression we receive from the Pauline letters, in which there is no visible connection between the early Christian communities and the synagogues; see Meeks 2003[1983]: 168. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily imply a conflict; it may simply be that Paul does not mention this early process. Furthermore, regardless of its historicity, this characterization of events must have been plausible to the audience of Acts and thus has its origin in the social realities of the Roman world.

<sup>125</sup> See also *CPJ* I no.138, 139; *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> no. 694; *CIJ* II 1404 (Rockefeller inv. S842).

<sup>126</sup> Quotation: Meeks 2003[1983]: 109; cf. Rom. 12:13; 16:23; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:10; Titus 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:9; 3 John 5-8; Heb. 13:2; 1 Clem. 10:7; Herm. *Sim.* 9.27.2-3; Justin *Apol.* 1.67.

<sup>127</sup> Apollos: Acts 18:27; cf. Acts 15:23-30. This figure is not known from any other sources, but the name itself is common in Byzantine Egypt, with over 80 attestations in Diethart 1980: s.v. Ἀπολλῶς, being a hypocoristic form of a pagan theophoric such as Apollodorus.

<sup>128</sup> Letters: Rom. 16:1-2; 1 Cor. 16:10-12; Phil. 2:25-30; Col. 4:7-9; Eph. 6:21-22; cf. Phlm. 22; Rom. 15:24; Meeks 2003[1983]: 109. The importance of such hospitality is revealed by Paul's inability to travel when he was unwelcome at his destination due to problematic relations; see 2 Cor. 2:1-3; 12:20-21; cf. Schellenberg 2011: 154-6.

revealed by the presence of such letters among Christian papyri from Oxyrhynchus, dating mostly from the third to fifth centuries; these so-called ‘letters of peace’ served as a testimony to the good character of the traveller and were accompanied by an expectation that the reader would provide for temporary hospitality and easy entrance into the community.<sup>129</sup> The apparent effectiveness of this practice even led the emperor Julian to attempt the institution of a pagan equivalent.<sup>130</sup>

This brief survey of evidence regarding the actions of foreigners visiting unfamiliar cities provides illuminating possibilities to consider for Josephus’ own experiences in the city of Rome. It seems logical that Josephus sought out members of the Judaeian community upon his arrival in order both to arrange for temporary accommodations and to establish an appropriate network of contacts that would ensure the success of his mission. Whether or not he attended regular Sabbath meetings at one of the four or five synagogues that were likely present in the city of Rome at the time is unknown,<sup>131</sup> but the possibility should not be excluded on the basis of his general silence regarding that institution.<sup>132</sup> The terse nature of the narrative at this point—Josephus is simply interested in illustrating his first foray into public affairs—necessitates leaving out those details that are subsidiary to the main plot. It may be that his silences reveal assumptions regarding the ability of his readership to use their experiences of daily life in the Roman world to fill in the blanks. That is, seeking out compatriots upon arrival in a new city and

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<sup>129</sup> PSI IX 1041; P.Alex. 29; PSI III 208; PSI IX 1041; P.Oxy. VIII 1162; P.Oxy. XXXI 2603; P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785; P.Oxy. LVI 3857; P.Oxy. XLIII 3149.

<sup>130</sup> Sozom. *Hist. eccl.* 5.16.3; Gregory of Nazianzus *Or. IV, Contr. Jul.* 1.111; cf. Blumell 2011: 244-5.

<sup>131</sup> Four synagogues are likely to have been present in Rome in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, the very names of which suggest some integration into Roman society, namely that of the Agrippesians (*CIJ* 365, 425, 503), of the Augustesians (*CIJ* 284, 301, 338, 368, 416, 496), of the Volumnesians (*CIJ* 343, 402, 417, 523), and of the Hebrews (*CIJ* 291, 317, 510, 535); see La Piana 1927: 356 n. 26; Leon 1995[1960]: 140-49; Richardson 1998: 20-22; De Spirito 1999: 389-93. A total of 13 different names for synagogues have been found. See further below, pp. 337-9.

<sup>132</sup> His silence on the synagogue has been presented as significant by Momigliano 1987: 118, “[Josephus] was divorced from the two vital currents in the Judaism of his time, the apocalypse and the synagogue”; cf. Bohrmann 1999: 222. See, however, Bilde 1999: 34.

using the existing bonds to gain access to the appropriate channels was routine behaviour and to be expected from any newcomer, particularly one of status.

Although this initial networking is largely hidden from sight in the narrative, Josephus does reveal the final stages that ensured the success of his mission. Investigation of the two explicitly identified figures involved at that point may be instructive insofar as evaluating the possibilities presented above is concerned. The obvious figure to begin with is the Judaeon mime-actor Aliturus, whom Josephus reports he met after his safe arrival in Puteoli (Dicaearchia).<sup>133</sup> Two significant details should be noted. First, Josephus states that he ‘met Aliturus through a friendship’ (διὰ φιλίας ἀφικόμην Ἀλιτύρω).<sup>134</sup> Most existing translations obscure the precise wording here, which is important, rendering the phrase “I became acquainted with Aliturus” (Whiston) and “I formed a friendship with Aliturus” (Thackeray).<sup>135</sup> According to these translations or interpretations, Josephus appears to have contracted a relationship with the mime-actor himself with no indication in the narrative of how exactly he met Aliturus in the first place. When we translate the passage literally, however, another interpretation is possible,

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<sup>133</sup> *Life* 16: διασωθεις δ' εἰς τὴν Δικαιάρχειαν, ἣν Ποτιόλους Ἴταλοι καλοῦσιν, διὰ φιλίας ἀφικόμην Ἀλιτύρω, μιμολόγος δ' ἦν οὗτος μάλιστα τῷ Νέρωνι καταθύμιος Ἰουδαῖος τὸ γένος. The precise location of this meeting is unclear. The fact that Josephus mentions this meeting directly after describing his safe arrival in Dicaearchia/Puteoli may suggest that it took place there. Some scholars have accepted this interpretation; see Corssen 1914: 139-40; Leon 1995[1960]: 234; Bohrmann 1999: 222. There likely was a Judaeon community in Puteoli (*War* 2.104; *Ant.* 17.328; 18.160; *CIL* X 1893, 1931, 1971; cf. Lampe 2003: 7-10), which may support this possibility. Nero's court was also often found in this area and during his own embassy Philo also met the emperor Gaius there (*Philo Leg.* 185). The syntax is, however, unclear with regard to this question and, moreover, the key events of the episode may be supposed to have taken place in Rome based on *Life* 13-14 (εἰς Ῥώμην μοι συνέπεσεν ἀναβῆναι... ἀφικόμην εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην). If all had been accomplished in Puteoli, there would have been no cause to travel to Rome at all; cf. Rajak 2005: 84-5. Josephus likely, therefore, passed directly through Puteoli (as did Paul in Acts 28:13) on his way to Rome, where he spent the majority of his time.

<sup>134</sup> This is the new Brill translation by Mason 2001: 24. See also the rendering of Avidov 1998: 275, “through *philia* I reached Aliturus.”

<sup>135</sup> Whiston's translation (originally published in 1737) is widely available. Thackeray's translation can be found in the Loeb edition of 1926. The latter particularly is the standard translation employed by scholars; see e.g. Hata 1994: 313; Cohen 2010: 220. See also the translation by Traill 1851: 33, “I landed at Dicaearchia...and there formed a friendship with Aliturus”; by Hudson 1882: 161, “I met with Aliturus...with this fellow-countryman I formed a friendship”; and the revised Loeb translation by Orchard 1995: 249, “I came into contact with Aliturus.”

namely that Josephus' *philia* is not with Aliturus, whom he may have simply met,<sup>136</sup> but with an/some individual(s) who provided access to the well-connected mime-actor.<sup>137</sup> Josephus may be providing a hint, therefore, at the necessary relationships that were established prior to his encounter with the individuals who effected his successful petition.<sup>138</sup>

Another significant detail included in the narrative may help us to further understand the relationships forged by Josephus at the outset of his mission, namely his characterization of Aliturus as a “Judaean by ancestry/birth” (Ἰουδαῖος τὸ γένος). In highlighting this biographical detail, Josephus seems to offer their common background as the reason for his meeting the mime-actor.<sup>139</sup> That is, it was on the basis of their shared ethnicity that Josephus met Aliturus in the first place and the willingness of the latter to assist was also predicated on this crucial connection between the two. The question whether or not the mime-actor should be considered an ‘apostate Jew’ on the basis of his close association with the imperial court and his career path tends to cloud the issue and furthermore reveals a misunderstanding of Josephus’ designation of Aliturus here.<sup>140</sup> We should not therefore reject the possibility that Aliturus could be found among the Judaean community. His level of adherence to ancestral customs is simply not an

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<sup>136</sup> See the similar use of ἀφικνέομαι at *Life* 14: ἀφικόμην εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην πολλὰ κινδυνεύσας κατὰ θάλασσαν; cf. Mason 2001: 25 n. 109.

<sup>137</sup> See also Avidov 1998: 275 n. 49, “By *philia* Josephus could be referring either to his connections as a whole, or, more plausibly to my mind, to some unspecified mutual friend through whom he gained access to Aliturus himself.”

<sup>138</sup> We should not, however, push this interpretation too far, since at *Ant.* 20.236, Josephus uses this precise phrase in a sense that suggests a bond of friendship between the two immediate parties, in this case Onias and Ptolemy Philometor: καὶ Ὀνίας ὁ τοῦ τετελευτηκότος Ὀνίου ἐξάδελφος ὁμώνυμος τῷ πατρὶ παραγενόμενος εἰς Αἴγυπτον καὶ διὰ φιλίας ἀφικόμενος Πτολεμαίῳ τῷ Φιλομήτορι καὶ Κλεοπάτρῃ τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ, πείθει τούτους. . . Nevertheless, the phrase itself does not appear to be formulaic—it does not turn up elsewhere in the *TLG*—which allows us to render a different nuance here.

<sup>139</sup> An alternative explanation is that this detail was necessary to offset his residence in Italy and perhaps also his name; see Cohen 2010: 220. Nevertheless, this does not explain why Josephus wanted his audience to know that Aliturus was a fellow Judaean in the first place.

<sup>140</sup> Regarding the level of his ‘piety’ or his status as ‘apostate’, see Smallwood 1959: 333; 1981[1976]: 281 n. 84, “he was without doubt an apostate, even if he retained enough national consciousness to befriend Josephus”; Noy 1993: 29. See, however, Barclay 1998: 81-2; Cohen 2010: 222, although his separation of the ‘geographical/ethnic’ designations from the ‘religious’ is problematic; cf. similarly, M.H. Williams 1997: 249-62; D.R. Schwartz 2007a: 3-27; see, however, Mason 2007a: 1-56, esp. 43-9.

issue here.<sup>141</sup> Josephus is explicit in revealing that the ‘broker’ who arranged for his eventual meeting with Poppaea Sabina was a Judaeen, and seems to present this as an implicit explanation as to why Aliturus was willing to assist. This suggests the possibility that those figures who put Josephus in contact with Aliturus in the first place were also fellow Judaeans whom he met upon his arrival in Rome, a scenario that fits with the description of the general procedures for foreign travellers provided above.<sup>142</sup>

As far as Aliturus himself is concerned, we know nothing else definitively since he is not externally attested.<sup>143</sup> Mason has even raised the possibility through an ironic reading of the narrative that he was not an historical figure, suggesting that Josephus may simply have been commenting humorously on the state of the imperial court, as being run by actors and women.<sup>144</sup> Others have, conversely, sought to flesh him out further by linking him with other known figures, such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> century pantomime artist M. Aurelius Pylades commemorated on two marble tablets from Ostia,<sup>145</sup> who appears to have been from Scythopolis and was thoroughly

<sup>141</sup> As it was, for example, at *Ant.* 20.100, where Josephus compares the piety (εὐσέβεια) of Alexander the alabarch of Alexandria to that of his son, who ‘did not hold to the ancestral customs himself’ (τοῖς γὰρ πατρίοις οὐκ ἐνέμεινεν οὗτος ἔθειν); cf. Turner 1954: 55; Barclay 1998: 87-88. See, however, *War* 2.487-98, where Josephus does not refer to Tiberius Alexander as an apostate.

<sup>142</sup> Thus Mason 2003b: 562-3 n.18, “This account, if factual, presupposes some connections with the Judaeen community...” Regarding the importance of brokers in patron-client relationships, see Boissevain 1974: 147f; Saller 1982: 74-77.

<sup>143</sup> Even his name has not been found elsewhere; see Mason 2005b: 287, who provides also a list of the collections examined (n. 12).

<sup>144</sup> See Mason 2005b: 284-8. He suggests that Aliturus might be a safe substitute for Paris, which is the name of an actor linked not only to Nero but also to Domitian (Suet. *Ner.* 54; *Dom.* 3; Cass. Dio 63.18.1) and even proposes intriguing linguistic possibilities for connections between the two names. The unique name is not known elsewhere and scholars have suggested that the Greek name was actually Halityros (Ἀλίτυρος; salt-cheese); see; Leppin 1992: 247; Mason 2001: 25 n. 110; Solin 2003[1982]: 3.1232. See also Matthews 1999: 199-218, who identifies rhetorical aims also in Josephus’ portrayal of Poppaea as one of a number of ‘Gentile noblewomen...advocating Jewish causes’ (211).

<sup>145</sup> *CIL* 14.4624a-b= *AE* 1998 272a-b; a: *M(arco) Aurel(io) - f(ilio) Pyladi] A+[.]SC+++[---] [pan]tomim[o sui temporis] primo in +[---et] [p]robato a[b imp. Valeriano] [[ [e]t Gallieno [Augg. ---] ]] ex provinci[a...]+E+ [---post] mortem patr[is s]ui lud[a]e at[q(ue) de]curioni civitat[iu]m Ascaloni[ta]n[orum] et Damascen[or]um. Huic s[...]*ndus ordo Augus[ta]lium non [sol]um propter memo[ri]am patr[is eius sed] et propter plenam [peritiam postul(antibus)] omnibus parite[r civibus---]; b: *[M(arco) Aurelio -] f(ilio) Ter(etina tribu) Py[ladi] [---] Scythop[oli] [pantomimo sui] tempor[is primo] [---]to et pro[bato] [[-----]] [---ex p]rovincia [--- post] mortem p[atris] [sui --- decurion]i civi[tatium] [Ascalonitanorum et Damascenorum]. [Huic---] [no]n solum [propter*



integrated into Roman society of his day, having been approved by the emperors Valerian and Gallienus and having received honours from the Ostian order of the *Augustales*.<sup>146</sup> Although it has been suggested that this Pylades was a descendant of Aliturus, this is surely making too much of the coincidences, which need illustrate nothing more than the possibility that a Judaeon could choose such a career path.<sup>147</sup> In any case, nothing connects the two figures directly.

Barring the discovery of any new evidence, perhaps in the way of an inscription, it is unlikely then that we will learn anything more about the Judaeon mime-actor or indeed determine decisively his historical existence. It is important to note, however, the plausibility of the event. The process of events fits within the general patron-client model under which Roman society functioned.<sup>148</sup> Josephus also clearly expected his readers to believe that he would have been able to secure the release of the priests through contacts he established in a city in which he was a foreigner, in particular by the assistance of a compatriot whose main claim to influence in the imperial court was his status as ‘heart-throb or special obsession of Nero’ (ἦν οὗτος μάλιστα τῷ Νέρωνι καταθύμιος),<sup>149</sup> while eventually finding favour at the hands of Nero’s wife.

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*memoriam pa][tri]s eius sed et pr[opter plenam] [pe]ritiam postul[antibus omnibus] [pa]riter civibus [---]; as presented in Cébeillac-Gervasoni, Caldelli, and Zevi 2006: no. 94.5. See also the synthesis of the two inscriptions offered by Noy in *JWE* 1.15: *M(arco) Aurel[io .] f(ilio) Ter(etina) Py[ladi] A[.]SCI[...] Scythop[oli] p[an]tomim[o sui] tempor[is] primo in c[.....]to et probato a[b imp(eratoribus) Valeriano] [e]t Gal[lien]o [---] ex provincia [Iuda]e[a] ..... post] mortem patr[is] sui Iud[ae]; item de]curioni civitat[is]m Ascalo[nitan]orum et Damascen[orum]. huic s[ecundu]m ordo Augus[ta]lium non solum propter memo[ri]am patr[is] eius, sed et propter plenam [ipsius] pe[ritiam] postul[antibus] omnibus pariter civibus [---].* For discussion of the text, see Noy 1993: 28-30; Cébeillac-Gervasoni, Caldelli, and Zevi 2006: 303-305; cf. Cébeillac-Gervasoni, Caldelli, and Zevi 2010: 88.*

<sup>146</sup> The suggestion of Leppin 1992: 31-2, that Pylades was the son of a Judaeon appears to be based on a misreading of *post mortem patris sui Iudae*, which suggests instead that his father’s name was Juda. Nevertheless, his father’s name does in turn suggest a Judaeon family line, as may his origin in Scythopolis; see Noy 1993: 19; Hezser 2005: 52; Cébeillac-Gervasoni, Caldelli, and Zevi 2006: 305; cf. Mason 2001: 25 n. 113.

<sup>147</sup> See also the comic actor Menophilus mentioned by Mart. *Ep.* 7.82, who may have been Judaeon, depending on the interpretation of *verpus erat*, which could either mean he was circumcised or that he had an erection as a result of his homosexual lust; cf. Cohen 1993: 42; 1999: 258-9; Schäfer 1999: 127-28, suggests that both meanings are intended, partly on the basis of Mart. *Ep.* 11.94. The identification of a certain Faustina as an actress, on the basis of what are proposed to be theatrical masks adorning her sarcophagus, has been refuted by Leon 1995[1960]: 234 n. 1; cf. Hachlili 1998: 287. For the original arguments, see Vogelstein and Rieger 1896: 52-3.

<sup>148</sup> See Strangelove 1992: 57-8; Neyrey 1994: 196.

<sup>149</sup> As translated by Mason 2005b: 285.

For it was through Poppaea Sabina, who married Nero in AD 62 and had at this point reached the high point of her influence on the emperor, that Josephus very quickly (ὡς τάχιστα) arranged the release of the priests.<sup>150</sup> The role of Aliturus in arranging an audience with Poppaea should not be overlooked. Josephus credits the actor with this stage in the process; he serves as the ‘broker’ in the establishment of the ensuing patron-client relationship.<sup>151</sup> Nevertheless, it is significant that Josephus does not here explicitly link his success to any sympathies Poppaea may have had towards Judaeen customs.<sup>152</sup> Earlier, in his *Antiquities*, Josephus famously attributed Nero’s positive ruling in favour of the Judaeen embassy—regarding the wall built to block Agrippa II’s view of the temple courts—to the *princeps*’ desire to show favour to his wife Poppaea.<sup>153</sup> The reason Josephus provides there for Poppaea’s intervention is that she was ‘god-fearing’ (θεοσεβῆς γὰρ ἦν), which most scholars have interpreted to mean that she was a ‘God-fearer’ in a quasi-technical sense meaning partial or loose attachment to Judaism,<sup>154</sup> although the precise meaning of this phrase and similar others (φοβούμενοι/σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν) even in unambiguously Judaeen contexts has proven to be a thorny issue and consensus among scholars has been elusive.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>150</sup> *Life* 16: καὶ δι’ αὐτοῦ Ποππαία τῇ τοῦ Καίσαρος γυναικὶ γνωσθεὶς προνοῶ ὡς τάχιστα παρακαλέσας αὐτὴν τοὺς ἱερεῖς λυθῆναι. μεγάλων δὲ δωρεῶν πρὸς τῇ εὐεργεσίᾳ ταύτῃ τυχῶν παρὰ τῆς Ποππαίας ὑπέστρεφον ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκείαν. Regarding the influence of Poppaea, see Tac. *Ann.* 14.1, 60-65; 15.61; Cass. Dio 61.12; 62.13; cf. Griffin 1984: 100-104.

<sup>151</sup> Strangelove 1992: 51-2, 56; cf. Boissevain 1974: 147f; Saller 1982: 74-77. See also Agrippa II as broker: *War* 2.232-46; *Ant.* 20.6-14, 118-36; and Beryllus: *Ant.* 20.183-4.

<sup>152</sup> See, however, Matthews 1999: 206, “The story in *Vita* 13-16...implies that she was known as a likely supporter of Jewish causes.”

<sup>153</sup> *Ant.* 20.195: Νέρων δὲ διακούσας αὐτῶν οὐ μόνον συνέγνω περὶ τοῦ πραχθέντος, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνεχώρησεν ἕαν οὕτως τὴν οἰκοδομίαν, τῇ γυναικὶ Ποππαία, θεοσεβῆς γὰρ ἦν, ὑπὲρ τῶν Ἰουδαίων δεηθείση χαριζόμενος, ἢ τοῖς μὲν δέκα προσέταξεν ἀπιέναι, τὸν δ’ Ἐλκίαν καὶ τὸν Ἰσμαῆλον ὀμηρεύσοντας παρ’ ἑαυτῇ κατέσχεν.

<sup>154</sup> Among these scholars, the presumed level of Poppaea’s attachment to Judaism differs widely: Henderson 1903: 467; Friedländer 1908: 1.257; Griffin 1984: 133 (see, however, p. 101); Leon 1995[1960]: 28 n. 1, 251; M.H. Williams 1988: 97-111; Bilde 1988: 32; Feldman 1993: 27 n. 114, 351; Matthews 1999: 204-5; McKechnie 2005: 358; Zilm 2008. The middle ground, taken by M.H. Williams (1988) and Matthews (1999), according to which Poppaea was not a proselyte in a technical sense but had some pious interest in Judaism, seems to be the most reasonable understanding of the narrative.

<sup>155</sup> See e.g. Lake 1933: 74-96; Feldman 1950: 200-208; Marcus 1952: 247-50; Siegert 1973: 109-64; Kraabel 1981: 113-26; Finn 1985: 75-84; Millar 1986: 150-76; Feldman 1986a: 58-69; MacLennan and Kraabel 1986: 46-53, 64;

It is likely, however, that Josephus was not using the term there in a technical fashion and thus the possibility of other interpretations remains open.<sup>156</sup> Others have argued, therefore, that she should not be considered to have been sympathetic towards Judaism in part on the basis of the supposed incompatibility between “the fundamental requirement of Judaism, [namely] the repudiation of idolatry and the worship of the Jewish God”, and general Roman religious practices such as the use of astrologers.<sup>157</sup> This rests, however, on an assumption that her level of adherence to either was such that they were mutually exclusive, which is a misunderstanding particularly of Roman flexibility regarding religious affiliation.<sup>158</sup> We should remain open, therefore, to the possibility of degrees of co-adherence and read the narrative candidly. At the most basic level Josephus’ passage suggests that her petition to Nero on behalf of the Judaeans (ὕπερ τῶν Ἰουδαίων) was the result (γάρ) of her piety (θεοσεβής). Any member of Josephus’ readership would have been aware of the unique religious customs and beliefs of the Judaeans, and hence was likely to have concluded that the religiously inclined Poppaea had a certain sympathy towards these ancestral practices. This may explain her desire to keep as hostages two members of the embassy in her house, namely in order to satisfy further her curiosity.<sup>159</sup>

Nevertheless, although the scenario is possible, this interest need not have been anything more

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Tannenbaum 1986: 54-7; Reynolds and Tannenbaum 1987; Overman 1988: 17-26; Feldman 1989a: 265-305; van der Horst 1989: 106-21; Murphy-O’Connor 1992: 418-24; M.H. Williams 1992: 297-310; Feldman 1993: 342-82; Binder 1999: 380-87. The discovery and publication of the well known Aphrodisias inscription (generally dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century although some push the date of face *a* of the inscription into the 5<sup>th</sup> century) in the late 1980s, which lists Judaeans and God-fearers side by side, was significant in re-establishing the term ‘God-fearers’ as a legitimate category for non-Judaeans with sympathies towards Judaism, although the category is by no means yet clear. For a useful recent discussion in the context of Domitian’s treatment of the Judaeans in Rome, see Heemstra 2010: 38-54.

<sup>156</sup> See *Ant.* 7.130, 153; 12.284; 14.308; cf. John 9:31. In contrast, see its almost formulaic use in Acts, which has provided the main fodder for the debate mentioned above: Acts 13:43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7, 13; 19:28.

<sup>157</sup> See especially Smallwood 1959: 329-35 (quotation from 332); 1981[1976]: 206 n. 16, 278-9 n. 79; cf. Griffin 1984: 101; Shotter 2008: 102.

<sup>158</sup> See e.g. SHA *Alex. Sev.* 29.2; *Juv.* 14.96; Cass. Dio 37.17.1; August. *De civ. D.* 186 (quoting Seneca); cf. Rutgers 1998b: 101.

<sup>159</sup> For alternative explanations, see Mason 2001: 26 n. 114, including the possibility of a humorous sexual dig. Nero may also have been seeking to appease Agrippa II by at least holding these prominent figures in Rome; see Stern 1975a: 156; Smallwood 1981[1976]: 279; McLaren 1991: 148 n. 1. We may note, however, that Josephus links their continued presence in Rome not with Nero himself but with Poppaea.

than a passing fancy. In any case, Poppaea's situation certainly should not be cited uncritically in discussions of Judaeen missionary activities as confirmation of the widespread attraction of Judaism or even its potential 'capture' of the empire,<sup>160</sup> in a manner reminiscent of Horace's description of the triumph of Greek culture over Rome: "captive Greece captured in turn her wild conqueror and brought her arts into rustic Latium".<sup>161</sup>

Josephus' description of Poppaea's role in his own mission contributes little to the question of her precise attraction to Judaeen customs. We may certainly suggest the possibility that Poppaea continued to maintain an interest in Judaea, Judaeans, and their religious practices,<sup>162</sup> but the reason for the ease with which Aliturus was able to introduce Josephus to the wife of Nero seems to be his prior ties to the imperial court, which were based not on a relationship with Poppaea, but with Nero himself. Nevertheless, it is still reasonable on the basis of the earlier episode to suggest that Aliturus brought Josephus to Poppaea rather than the emperor himself on account of her recognized sympathies.<sup>163</sup> It is perhaps also on the basis of

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<sup>160</sup> See Bruce 1958: 139-41; Johnson 1976: 11-13; Flusser 1976: 1097; cf. Feldman 1984b: 785, "Jewish missionary activities... were well on their way to converting the Roman Empire to a Jewish or semi-Jewish state." See also the scholars cited by Smallwood 1959: 333-34, who have advanced many theories based on assumptions regarding the influence of Judaeans on the imperial house.

<sup>161</sup> Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.156-7: *Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artis intulit agresti Latio*. It should be noted that Seneca does take up this theme with respect to the Judaeans themselves, stating that "the vanquished have given laws to their victors" (*victi victoribus leges dederunt*; August. *De civ. D.* 6.11). For the possible connection between the two passages, see also Isaac 2003: 47.

<sup>162</sup> See also her involvement in the appointment of Gessius Florus, the husband of her friend Cleopatra, to the procurator's position in Judaea (*Ant.* 20.252), a move which turned out to be devastating for the province but may not have been an obviously poor one prior to the fact; the sarcasm of Smallwood 1959: 135—"A fine benefaction from the 'friend of Judaism'!"—is unwarranted. Scholars have also long speculated regarding the possibility that Nero's persecution of the Christians (*Tac. Ann.* 15.44; Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 2.25), who were at this point a relatively insignificant number and likely indistinguishable to most from the Judaeans, was motivated by Poppaea's deflecting of attention from the Judaeans themselves; see e.g. Daniel 1911: 882; Canfield 1913: 496-7; de Ste. Croix 1963: 8; Frend 1965: 164; Simon 1996: 117; Mason 2009b: 313; cf. Walters 1998: 180-81. Corrsen 1914: 136-40, suggests that Josephus interceded with Poppaea on behalf of his compatriots, but presents no evidence to support his claim.

<sup>163</sup> Mason 2001: 27 n. 116; see, however, Feldman 1992a: 982; Hata 1994: 309, 314-5.

these sympathies towards the Judaeans that Poppaea granted the appeal rather quickly, providing Josephus with significant gifts besides.<sup>164</sup>

Some scholars have made much of these gifts, as mentioned earlier, finding them puzzling or even “complete nonsense”, and attempting to explain them as sealing “some secret transaction” between Josephus and Nero,<sup>165</sup> which involved the use of the former as a secret pro-Roman agent to defuse the tense situation in Judaea.<sup>166</sup> As pointed out above, however, there are a number of difficulties with this interpretation. Most obvious is the fact that Josephus claims explicitly to have received the gifts in addition to the release of the priests from Poppaea, not Nero.<sup>167</sup> More significant, however, is the misunderstanding of the ancient context that such speculation demonstrates. Josephus explicitly locates the exchange within the patron-client relationship by referring to Poppaea’s granting of his appeal as an act of εὐεργεσία. When this setting is recognized the purpose and meaning of the gifts become much clearer. Within a patronal relationship the burden was on the higher status patron to lavish gifts on the client, while the latter offered largely only his devotion and gratitude.<sup>168</sup> This was most clearly expressed in the routine provision of *sportulae*, whether in the form of money or goods, by wealthy elites to their clients on the occasion of the morning *salutatio*.<sup>169</sup> In the case of the *princeps* himself—and by extension also his family—who served as the ultimate patron within the empire, liberality was especially important, since it functioned also as an integral part of his

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<sup>164</sup> The suggestion of Smallwood 1959: 333, that, “Poppaea may have secured the release of the priests merely on the grounds that they had already been in custody for the last four years, which was quite long enough”, originates with her desire to discount the sympathies of Poppaea towards Judaism and has little to commend it.

<sup>165</sup> Quotations are from Hata 1994: 314-16.

<sup>166</sup> See also Feldman 1984a: 82-3; 1984b: 782; 1992a: 982; cf. Shutt 1961: 37, “prejudice against Josephus can easily make much of this reference to gifts; they were either symbols of friendliness or means of bribery.”

<sup>167</sup> *Life* 16: μεγάλων δὲ δωρεῶν πρὸς τῇ εὐεργεσίᾳ ταύτῃ τυχῶν παρὰ τῆς Ποππαιᾶς ὑπέστρεφον ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκεῖαν.

<sup>168</sup> See Saller 1982: 41-55, 122-30; Strangelove 1992: 51-3; Matthews 1999: 213; Mason 2001: 27 n. 118; 2007b: 47-8.

<sup>169</sup> *Mart. Ep.* 3.7; 8.42; 10.70, 75; *Juv.* 1.120; cf. Friedländer 1965[1908-13]: 4.77-81; Saller 1983: 252-3; Winterling 1999: 141f. We will explore further certain aspects of the patron-client relationship in subsequent chapters.

monarchic persona.<sup>170</sup> This could occur publicly and indiscriminately on the occasion of games or shows,<sup>171</sup> or more personally in response to successful embassies. Thus after a successful oration before Domitian, the poet, philosopher, and emissary Scopelianus of Clazomenae received “the gifts which are customary in the presence of the emperor”.<sup>172</sup> So also the gifts granted Josephus, whatever they comprised, were probably no more than routine expressions of liberality on the part of Poppaea and far more significant for the Judaeian visitor to Rome than for the influential wife of Nero.

For her part, Poppaea was simply acting out a role—what Kunst coins “matronage”—that had been exercised by other imperial women before her and had its origins among women of the late Republic who had ties to influential and powerful men as well as control over significant financial resources of their own.<sup>173</sup> Among these women in the imperial period were the wives, mothers, and sisters of the emperor, each of whom was well-placed to provide patronal services herself or serve as conduit for access to the emperor. The latter was the case with Octavia, who served as broker in obtaining the continuation of benefactions for the architect and writer Vitruvius from her brother, Augustus.<sup>174</sup> Imperial women could also, however, serve directly as literary patrons, as may have been the case with the well-connected Antonia Minor, the daughter of Octavia and Mark Antony and thus niece of Augustus, who became the sister-in-law of Tiberius, the mother of Claudius, the paternal grandmother of Gaius, and both maternal great-grandmother and paternal great-aunt of Nero.<sup>175</sup> Her relationship with Crinagoras of Mytilene, a Greek court poet, resembles a patron-client bond, although there is no evidence to suggest that

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<sup>170</sup> Millar 1992[1977]: 135-9.

<sup>171</sup> See e.g. Suet. *Calig.* 18.2; 37.1; *Ner.* 11-12; *Dom.* 4.5; *Ant.* 19.71; Cass. Dio 59.9.6-7; 59.25.5.

<sup>172</sup> Philostr. *VS* 1.21; cf. Dio Chrys. *Or.* 40.14.

<sup>173</sup> See Kunst 2010: 145-61.

<sup>174</sup> Vitr. *De arch.* 1 *praef.* 2-3: *cum eis commode accepi, quae cum primo mihi tribuisti recognitionem, per sororis commendationem servasti*; cf. Hemelrijk 1999: 104-108.

<sup>175</sup> Plut. *Ant.* 87.3; see, more generally, the biography of Kokkinos 1992.

any tangible support was offered, while there are even slighter hints of connections between the imperial woman and the poets Thallus of Milete and Honestus of Corinth.<sup>176</sup>

It was, however, the wife of Augustus, Livia, who served as the archetypal figure of the powerful imperial woman.<sup>177</sup> In a poem of 9 B.C. written by a Roman *eques* after the funeral of Livia's son, Drusus, she is even referred to as *Romana princeps* ("first lady of Rome").<sup>178</sup> The clearest testimony of her role as *patrona* is presented in the well-known *senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone patre*, which details the resolutions of the Senate in the trial of Cn. Calpurnius Piso, who was accused of complicity in insurrection and in the poisoning of Germanicus in AD 19;<sup>179</sup> Livia is described in the *SC* as follows:

Julia Aug(usta)—who has performed great services to the state not only because of her parentage of our *princeps* but also because of her many and great benefactions towards men of every *ordo*, (and) who justly and deservedly carries great weight in whatever she is obligated to seek from the Senate although she uses this power very sparingly.<sup>180</sup>

Her intercession on this occasion was on behalf of the wife of the disgraced senator, Plancina, whose life she requested Tiberius to spare. Nor was Plancina's the only life she intervened to save. According to Cassius Dio, when Augustus was informed that Cn. Cornelius Cinna Magnus, a grandson of Pompey, was plotting against him, he spent many sleepless nights pondering the question of whether or not to execute him, until Livia suggested a new approach to dealing with such plots, befriending the conspirator, which turned out successfully.<sup>181</sup> Her apparent sympathy for suppliants also led Ovid to appeal to her both directly and through his wife for intercession in

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<sup>176</sup> See Hemelrijk 1999: 109-11; cf. Kleiner 1996: 28-41.

<sup>177</sup> See Barrett 2002: 186-214; Purcell 2009: 165-94.

<sup>178</sup> *Consolatio ad Liviam* (or *Epicedion Drusi*) 349-56 (esp. 356); cf. *Ov. Pont.* 3.1.125 (*princeps femina*); Purcell 2009: 165.

<sup>179</sup> See also *Tac. Ann.* 3.1-19; regarding the relationship between the texts, see e.g. Talbert 1999: 89-97; González 1999: 123-42; Damon 1999: 143-62.

<sup>180</sup> *SC de Cn. Pisone patre* 115-19; trans. Meyer 1998: 322; cf. Eck, Caballos, and Fernández 1996; Griffin 1997: 249-63.

<sup>181</sup> *Cass. Dio* 55.14-22; *Sen. Clem.* 1.9; cf. Baumann 1994: 126-9; Dowling 2006: 66; Purcell 2009: 179-80, 187-88; Adler 2011: 133-54.

gaining clemency and release from his exile on the Black Sea.<sup>182</sup> For Velleius Paterculus, such influence was more divine than human.<sup>183</sup>

In some cases her negotiation could be unsuccessful, as in the case of the request of the Samians for freedom (ἐλευθερία). Livia's family had long been patrons of the island and she had been canvassing on their behalf.<sup>184</sup> In a reply preserved on the archive wall in the theatre at Aphrodisias, however, Augustus apologetically refused, saying, "I am well disposed towards you and would like to do a favour to my wife who is active on your behalf, but not to the point of breaking my custom."<sup>185</sup> In the end, however, Livia's persistence paid off and, while they were wintering on the island on a return trip in 20/19 BC, he yielded to her pleas to grant them freedom.<sup>186</sup> Given her obvious influence, it is no wonder then that Cassius Dio describes her receiving members of the senate and the plebs in her house at her own *salutatio*, the daily ritual greeting ceremony that was the traditional venue for contact between patron and clients and the moment at which benefactions might be transmitted.<sup>187</sup> Much as her husband had established a model for subsequent emperors to be followed or not, so also Livia demonstrated the heights that could be achieved by the imperial women, although none succeeded in matching her level of success.<sup>188</sup>

There is no need, therefore, to suppose that Josephus' encounter with Poppaea masks a meeting with Nero—it was enough that she should intercede—nor should we conclude that

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<sup>182</sup> *Ov. Pont.* 2.7.29; 3.1.114-28, 139-44, 149-50; cf. Dowling 2006: 120.

<sup>183</sup> *Vell. Pat.* 2.130.5.

<sup>184</sup> Regarding Livia's links with Samos, see Barrett 2002: 197-8.

<sup>185</sup> Reynolds 1982: 104-106 no. 13=SEG 32.833.

<sup>186</sup> See Barrett 2002: 36-8; Freisenbruch 2010: 39-40; for Augustus' itinerary, see Halfmann 1986: 158.

<sup>187</sup> *Cass. Dio* 57.12.2.

<sup>188</sup> See also Josephus' descriptions of Livia's actions as *patrona*; *War* 1.566; 2.167; *Ant.* 16.139; *Ant.* 17.10, 146, 190; 18.31; cf. Matthews 2001: 30-31.



Josephus left Rome “well-placed and in favour with Nero’s mistress Poppaea Sabina”,<sup>189</sup> which suggests too strongly the importance of the encounter for Poppaea. Although the entire episode could be highlighted legitimately by Josephus as an appropriate starting point for his public career, for Poppaea herself as the benefactress the experience may have been much more mundane. The gulf between the most influential woman in the Roman world and a young provincial priest would scarcely be bridged simply on the grounds that the former was sympathetic towards the peculiar ancestral customs of the latter. We need not even suppose that Poppaea remembered the youthful Josephus after granting the obligatory gifts and dismissing him. For Josephus himself, however, it was a trip to memorialize.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

That his first visit to Rome was memorable is indisputable, since we have Josephus’ record of the events in his autobiography. In addition, we might suggest that the experience itself would have had a singular impact on the young Judaeans’ life. This has been proposed by others largely in connection with his immediate return to Judaea and his role in the impending revolt. The vivid description by Graetz may serve as an example of the general perception of its significance:

Rome could not fail to exercise a great influence upon the character of Josephus. The glitter of Nero’s court, the busy life of the capital of the world, the immensity of all the imperial institutions, so dazzled him that he thought the Roman empire would be an eternal one and that it was specially favoured by Divine Providence. He did not see concealed beneath the purple and gold the terrible disease of which that great empire was sickening. From that moment Josephus became a fervent adherent of the Roman rule. Filled with enthusiastic

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<sup>189</sup> See Feldman 1999: 903; cf. Head 2004: 250. See also Smith 1958: 278, “he was able...to...return to Jerusalem by the age of 19, no doubt tired of asceticism and ready for the pleasures of Rome, *where he moved in the circle of the Empress Poppaea*” (emphasis mine).

admiration for Rome, he must upon his return have found the proportions of Judaea humble and dwarfed.<sup>190</sup>

Although unduly influenced by the traditional condemnation of Josephus as traitor to his people, Graetz and other scholars have rightly identified the importance of this episode in Josephus' development. It is certainly difficult to imagine that this first trip to the great imperial capital would not have had a significant impact on Josephus' view of his position and that of his people within the Roman world.

But we should also look beyond the immediate events in Judaea and consider the potential consequences of this trip for Josephus' later return to Rome following the revolt, at which point he took up permanent residence there. It will be useful, therefore, to reiterate in brief a few relevant observations. In the first place, it is likely that Josephus spent a not insignificant amount of time in the city of Rome while attempting to achieve the aim of his mission. Secondly, Josephus made contact with at least one of his fellow Judaeans who lived in Rome and quite possibly others from among the substantial Judaeian community. I have suggested the possibility that certain socially equal members of this community served as his hosts and assisted him in orienting himself within the city and in establishing the appropriate contacts. Thirdly, through these contacts Josephus gained entry into the imperial court and, although we need not imagine that he gained any standing therein, his experiences would have given him a unique insight into the workings of imperial patronage and the finer points of achieving success in the city where the emperor dwelled.<sup>191</sup> We might also present the possibility that he developed other contacts among the Roman elite who moved in imperial circles,<sup>192</sup> although this was by no means

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<sup>190</sup> Graetz 2009[1893]: 277; cf. n. 6 above.

<sup>191</sup> See also Spilsbury 1998a: 179, "This episode reveals Josephus's understanding, already at a young age, of the operation of Roman patronage and its potential for obtaining service in Rome."

<sup>192</sup> See Foakes-Jackson 1930: 7, "At Rome Josephus evidently became well known and made important friends, as was seen later when he surrendered himself to Vespasian after the capture of Jotapata in Galilee." It is unclear to

necessary for the success of his mission and we do not receive any indication that this took place. In any case, Yosef ben Mattityahu entered the city of Rome as an outsider and a foreigner, but by the time he had left he was no longer a stranger.

When he made his second voyage to Rome in the company of Titus perhaps a mere five years later in the spring of AD 71,<sup>193</sup> Yosef was, therefore, not heading into the unknown. Although his circumstances were drastically different, most clearly demonstrated by the name he was about to assume, Flavius Josephus,<sup>194</sup> we should not imagine that he was completely dependent on the goodwill of his imperial patrons in establishing a permanent residence in the imperial capital. Instead, we might expect that he would have renewed acquaintance with those with whom he had already developed bonds of hospitality. If he was indeed on the very margins of the Flavian court, a possibility I will explore in subsequent chapters, these existing social ties may have been crucial in establishing an alternative social network to the imperial *domus* and in preventing him from living out his days as a lonely man.

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whom he is referring here, but it may be Nicanor (15; cf. *War* 3.346). We will consider Josephus' relationship with Nicanor at a later point. See also Moehring 1984: 913, in the context of his investigation of the probability of Josephus' prediction of the accession of Vespasian: "Josephus belonged to the priestly aristocracy of Jerusalem and had once led a Judaeen embassy to Rome, where he had met Poppaea. Through his family background, *his Roman connections*, and his position as one of the leaders of the Jewish rebellion, Josephus was in an excellent position to keep well informed about developments in Rome and around Nero" (emphasis mine).

<sup>193</sup> See *War* 7.116-62; *Life* 422-3; cf. Levick 1999: 71, 88, 119-20.

<sup>194</sup> According to *Life* 423, Josephus received citizenship, and hence also the family name of the one who granted it, after his arrival in Rome (see Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 1.5.3). Regarding the citizenship grant, see pp. 138-40.

## CHAPTER 3

### JOSEPHUS AND VESPASIAN

To speak of Josephus as a Flavian historian or to describe him as writing under the patronage of the Flavians, ubiquitous in modern scholarship, obscures the existence of three distinct relationships, those between Josephus and Vespasian, Josephus and Titus, and Josephus and Domitian. While there is some value in treating the emperors as a unit, particularly the first two, in order to understand as clearly as possible the place of Josephus in the city of Rome following the suppression of the revolt, it is essential to consider his relationship with each subsequent emperor individually. This will allow me on the one hand to present possible differences in Josephus' standing and status over time, and on the other hand to establish the continuities in this regard throughout the later period of his life.<sup>1</sup>

The obvious starting point for this examination is the relationship between Josephus and the founder of the Flavian dynasty, Vespasian. Although the focus of this dissertation is on the nature of Josephus' social circumstances in Rome following the revolt, I will begin my examination with the earliest encounters between Josephus and each of the Flavians in order to establish as comprehensively as possible the parameters of each relationship, an approach that has not yet been taken in Josephan scholarship. In the chapters dealing with Vespasian and Titus I begin, therefore, at the fall of the Judaeian fortress of Jotapata when Josephus was taken prisoner by the Romans. In the present chapter I will explore the opportunities for the

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<sup>1</sup> The question of continuity or change both in attitude and social circumstances over the period of Josephus' life in Rome is one that has been hotly debated in Josephan scholarship and lies also at the heart of the present study, particularly with regard to social issues. The main proponents for continuity have been Bilde 1988: 173-206 esp. 179-80; Mason 1988: 445-69; 1991: 26-40, 181-95; 2000: xiv-xx; 2001: xxvii-xxxiv; Rajak 1998: 222-46; 2002[1983]: 223-229, although she does suggest increasing distance from the imperial family; for change, Laqueur 1920: 23-36, 258-78; Thackeray 1929: 52; Cohen 2002[1979]: 232-42.

development of a relationship between Josephus and Vespasian during his incarceration, using more general evidence for the nature of captivity in the Roman world to evaluate Josephus' narrative claims and to present possible answers to my historical questions. A similar approach will be taken to Josephus' famous prediction that Vespasian would become emperor of the Roman world by placing that event in the context of the other *omina imperii* forecasting Vespasian's accession.

After exploring these foundational stages I will turn my attention to Josephus' circumstances in Flavian Rome. I will first explore the nature of Vespasian's involvement in the production of the *Judaean War* by evaluating the historian's writing activities within the broader cultural programme of Vespasian and against the backdrop of the processes surrounding the circulation of literary texts in the ancient world. The other interactions between the two individuals, most significantly the benefits Josephus received, will be viewed within the context of traditional patron-client relations between the emperor and the public in order to establish the level of intimacy between the Judaean historian and the Flavian emperor. By thoroughly contextualizing Josephus in this way I will be able to support and build on the growing recognition in scholarship of the limitations of this relationship, which challenges the traditional understanding of Josephus as a Flavian court historian or propagandist, a development that I have already outlined in my opening chapter, while also acknowledging the unique position of Josephus that was precipitated by his special service to the Flavians as harbinger of the new regime.

## Josephus as Prisoner-of-War

I begin then with an examination of the capture and captivity of Josephus by the Romans. Prior to his arrival in Rome in AD 71, this period of two years was the only opportunity for Josephus to develop any kind of relationship with Vespasian, apart from the brief trip to Alexandria after the declaration of Vespasian as emperor in AD 69. Following these events Vespasian was busy consolidating his hold on the empire while Josephus remained with Titus in the Roman camp during the final stages of the Roman suppression of the Judaeen revolt. It is important, therefore, that we learn as much as we can about this period.

The most extensive account is found in the *War*. Josephus reports that on the new moon of Panemus, in the thirteenth year of Nero's principate,<sup>2</sup> the fortified town of Jotapata fell to the besieging Roman army and the inhabitants were routinely slaughtered or taken captive. Although Josephus initially avoided capture by hiding in a cave with forty other individuals, after a complicated sequence of events ending in the mutual suicide of his companions he and the last remaining individual gave themselves up to the Romans. Josephus provides us with a vivid rendering of his entrance into the Roman camp, a spectacle of sorts in which he acts as the central figure.<sup>3</sup> He presents the officers of the Roman army, as well as Titus himself, as deeply moved by the sight of the captive general, their emotions stirred by his youth—Josephus was around thirty years old at the time, older in fact than Titus himself—, memory of his exploits, and reflections on the capriciousness of fortune. The march through the camp ended at the feet of Vespasian who felt no such emotions but was instead persuaded only by the special pleading of his son Titus to spare the prisoner's life. Nevertheless, he did order that Josephus be guarded

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<sup>2</sup> The precise date is unclear. The options appear to be July 1 or 20, AD 67. Thackeray accepts Niese's calculations for the latter date in the Loeb footnote at *War* 3.339, while Levick 1999: 40, prefers the former.

<sup>3</sup> See further, regarding this episode as a 'spectacle', Chapman 1998: 16-18; 2005a: 293-6.

with special care (μετὰ πάσης ἀσφαλείας) since he reportedly intended to send the Judaeen general to Nero, likely for judgement.<sup>4</sup>

Upon hearing Vespasian's plans for him, Josephus requested a private interview with the Roman general, in which he claims to have made the famous prediction that both Vespasian and Titus would become Caesar and Emperor (Καῖσαρ...καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ). He was thus no mere captive but instead a messenger of greater things: i.e., a 'prophet', to put it in non-Josephan terms.<sup>5</sup> I will have occasion later on to discuss this prediction in greater detail; at this point it will be enough to call attention to Vespasian's alleged response to this announcement. He was at first sceptical but in due course came to place increasing trust in the veracity of Josephus' prediction. The result was that, although Josephus remained a prisoner-of-war, he was presented with clothing and other precious gifts and treated with consideration (φιλοφρονούμενος) by both Vespasian and Titus.<sup>6</sup> Finally, upon leaving Jotapata a few days later on the fourth of Panemus, roughly late July in the Julian calendar,<sup>7</sup> Vespasian settled his troops in the coastal city of Caesarea Maritima, where Josephus was to spend his days as prisoner-of-war until he was released some time after<sup>8</sup> the declaration of Vespasian as emperor in Alexandria.<sup>9</sup> Here the local

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<sup>4</sup> *War* 3.340-398.

<sup>5</sup> *War* 3.399-408; see esp. 400-403: "σὺ μὲν, ἔφη, Οὐεσπασιανέ, νομίζεις αἰχμάλωτον αὐτὸ μόνον εἰληφέναι Ἰώσηπον, ἐγὼ δὲ ἄγγελος ἦκω σοι μειζόνων. μὴ γὰρ ὑπὸ θεοῦ προπεμπόμενος ἦδειν τὸν Ἰουδαίων νόμον, καὶ πῶς στρατηγοῖς ἀποθνήσκειν πρέπει. Νέρωνί με πέμπεις· τί γάρ; [...] οἱ μετὰ Νέρωνα μέχρι σοῦ διάδοχοι μενοῦσιν. σὺ Καῖσαρ, Οὐεσπασιανέ, καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ, σὺ καὶ παῖς ὁ σὸς οὗτος. δέσμει δέ με νῦν ἀσφαλέςτερον, καὶ τήρει σεαυτῷ· δεσπότης μὲν γὰρ σὺ μόνον ἐμοῦ σὺ Καῖσαρ, ἀλλὰ καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης καὶ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων γένους, ἐγὼ δὲ ἐπὶ τιμωρίαν δέομαι φρουρᾶς μειζονος, εἰ κατασχεδιάζω καὶ θεοῦ." More will be said below about whether or not Josephus considered himself to have been a 'prophet'.

<sup>6</sup> *War* 3.408: φρουρᾶς μὲν οὖν καὶ δεσμῶν οὐκ ἀνίει τὸν Ἰώσηπον, ἐδώρεϊτο δ' ἐσθῆτι καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις κειμηλίοις φιλοφρονούμενός τε καὶ περιέπων διετέλει τὰ πολλὰ Τίτου τῆι τιμῆι συνεργοῦντος.

<sup>7</sup> See Thackeray's note in the Loeb at *War* 3.409, which refers to Niese's reckoning of July 23, AD 67. It is difficult, however, to pinpoint the precise equivalent; see e.g. Smallwood 1981[1976]: 308 n. 59; S. Schwartz 1990: 4 n. 4; Mason 2001: 164 n. 1698.

<sup>8</sup> The precise date of Josephus' release is unclear, but is likely to have occurred in mid-July, since Josephus reports that it occurred while Vespasian was in Berytus conferring with Mucianus: see *War* 4.622-9. Nevertheless, the dates here conflict with other sources (*Tac. Hist.* 2.79, 81; *Suet. Vesp.* 6.3); cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 6 n. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Most scholars have presumed Josephus' immobilization in prison in Caesarea; see e.g. Nicols 1978: 43-44; Bilde 1988: 53-8. The possibility that Josephus travelled with the Roman camp has been presented, however, by Shahar 2004: 194. The translation of Thackeray in the Loeb edition (1926) seems to suggest that he agrees with Shahar's

inhabitants demanded the punishment of the Judaean general, but these demands were suppressed by Vespasian's silence (ἡσυχία).<sup>10</sup>

There are a number of inconsistencies even within this account that give cause for extreme caution in reconstructing the events at Jotapata and Josephus' tenure as prisoner-of-war.<sup>11</sup> First of all, we are told that upon his capture Josephus was received by Vespasian with suspicion and ordered to be kept under close guard for his imminent trial in Rome.<sup>12</sup> From this standpoint, therefore, Josephus appears to have been treated as a typical captive general, a potential continued threat and certainly not deserving of special treatment.<sup>13</sup> Following his prediction, however, Josephus claims to have been treated well by the Roman generals and to have received signs of their favour. Nevertheless, he was not yet released from his chains. Subsequently in the narrative, Josephus again asserts that he received special treatment. He describes the anger of the populace of Jerusalem at hearing that he had not perished in the Roman destruction of Jotapata but was in fact very much alive in the Roman camp and "being treated by the commanders with greater care than was the usual lot of a prisoner."<sup>14</sup> Yet this portrayal of Josephus' time as a prisoner is undermined by the later account of his release. Once

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position; he translates ἐγενόμην δὲ παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις συλληφθεὶς αἰχμάλωτος as "after my capture I was a prisoner in the Roman camp" (*Ap.* 1.48). An objection to this, however, is that the word for camp does not appear in the Greek here, but *is* used to describe Josephus' setting *after* his release (κατὰ τὸ στρατόπεδον τὸ Ῥωμαίων; 1.49), which may be a significant distinction. In support of Josephus' captivity in Caesarea, see also the comments of Mason 2001: 164 n. 1703 at *Life* 414; Barclay 2007: n. 196 at *Ap.* 1.48.

<sup>10</sup> *War* 3.410-11: διὸ καὶ τὸν Ἰώσηπον ἀθρόοι καταβοῶντες ἤξιον κολάζειν. Οὐεσπασιανὸς δὲ τὴν περὶ τούτου δέησιν ὡς ὑπ' ἀκρίτου γινομένην πλήθους ἐξέλυσε ἡσυχία. Josephus makes much of the silence of Vespasian and Titus as positive indications of their support; this is likely exaggerated in Josephus' mind, which should make us wary more generally of his claims to have received honours from the emperors; see also *Ap.* 1.52; *Life* 417.

<sup>11</sup> See Niese 1896: 196ff.; Cohen 2002[1979]: 228-30; Stern 1991: 329; Feldman 1984a: 88-93; Avidov 1998: 264.

<sup>12</sup> This practice was not unusual, as Josephus' narrative itself suggests. See *War* 2.77-9, *Ant.* 17.297: the ringleaders of the uprising following Herod's death; *Ant.* 18.88-9: Pilate, following his run-in with the Samaritans; *War* 2.243-6, *Ant.* 20.131-6: Cumanus, Celer et al.; *Life* 424-5, *War* 7.441-50: Jonathan of Cyrene. Cf. Tac. *Hist.* 4.13: Julius Civilis, the rebel leader of the Gauls was sent to Nero in 67/8; Acts 27:1: when the apostle Paul was sent to Rome, at his request, he was also among other prisoners on the ship, presumably also on their way to the emperor; see also Suet. *Dom.* 16; Cass. Dio 59.29.4, 67.16.2; Tac. *Ann.* 6.40.2, 12.21, 16.10.2; *EJ* 311.2.42-7 (edict of Augustus). See further Millar 1966b: 159, 165.

<sup>13</sup> See Garnsey 1970: 73-4, regarding the reasons behind provincials being sent in chains to Rome; "It seems to have been recognized from the beginning of the Principate that the Emperor had the right to protect himself and his rule."

<sup>14</sup> *War* 3.348: πρὸς τῶν ἡγεμόνων πλεόν ἢ κατ' αἰχμαλώτου τύχην περιέπεσθαι.



Vespasian recalls the prophecy of Josephus regarding this accession, he is shocked or amazed (ἐξεπέπληκτο) that Josephus still remains a prisoner and tells Mucianus and the other commanders of his army that the situation is disgraceful (αἰσχρόν).<sup>15</sup> This account gives the impression that between the two events, namely the initial capture and the meeting following the acquisition of power, there had been no contact between the two individuals, which certainly does not lend weight to Josephus' claim to have been in a position of favour.<sup>16</sup>

The references in the other narratives to Josephus' time as prisoner pose the same difficulties for reconstruction. In the autobiographical work attached to the *Antiquities*, Josephus claims to have been kept under guard "with every care" and to have been supplied with "all honours" by Vespasian.<sup>17</sup> Further, in his treatise *Against Apion* Josephus reports that even while he was in chains Vespasian and Titus 'forced' (ἠνάγκασαν) him always to be in their presence.<sup>18</sup> Also in these accounts, then, we are presented with the claim that Josephus was treated unusually well and yet he does not suggest that he had been released from his chains, which was certainly a possibility, as I shall demonstrate. This makes it abundantly clear that we cannot adequately assess Josephus' time in captivity from the narrative accounts alone. His descriptions are rhetorically crafted on each occasion to present different messages to his readership.

Two crucial themes that have a significant effect on these portrayals are his desire to highlight the honours accorded him by the Roman emperors and his need to establish the

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<sup>15</sup> *War* 4.624-6: ἐξεπέπληκτο δὲ τὸν ἄνδρα δεσμώτην ἔτι ὄντα παρ' αὐτῷ, καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος Μουκιανὸν ἅμα τοῖς ἄλλοις ἡγεμόσι καὶ φίλοις πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ τὸ δραστήριον ἐκδιηγείτο καὶ ὅσα περὶ τοῖς Ἰωταπάτοις δι' αὐτὸν ἔκαμον, ἔπειτα τὰς μαντείας, ἃς αὐτὸς μὲν ὑπόπτεισε τότε πλάσματα τοῦ δέους, ἀποδειχθῆναι δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ χρόνου καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων θείας. "αἰσχρόν οὖν, ἔφη, τὸν προθεσπίσαντά μοι τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ διάκονον τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ φωνῆς ἔτι αἰχμαλώτου τάξιν ἢ δεσμώτου τύχην ὑπομένειν" καὶ καλέσας τὸν Ἰώσηπον λυθῆναι κελεύει.

<sup>16</sup> *War* 3.408; see the comments of Barclay 2007: n. 196 at *Ap.* 1.48.

<sup>17</sup> *Life* 414: παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις μετὰ πάσης ἐπιμελείας ἐφυλασσόμην τὰ πολλὰ διὰ τιμῆς ἄγοντός με Οὐεσπασιανοῦ.

<sup>18</sup> *Ap.* 1.48: με διὰ φυλακῆς Οὐεσπασιανὸς καὶ Τίτος ἔχοντες αἰεὶ προσεδρεύειν αὐτοῖς ἠνάγκασαν τὸ μὲν πρῶτον δεδεμένον.

accuracy of his information on the Roman side in the *War*.<sup>19</sup> Given these rhetorical aims and the differing perspectives within the narratives it is surprising that Josephus' favourable depiction of his captivity has rarely been questioned, despite the fact that some scholars have challenged the historicity of Josephus' prediction in AD 67, which he presents in the *War* as the basis for his positive treatment.<sup>20</sup> The result has been that Josephus has been taken at his word regarding a crucial two-year period of his life, an assumption that has a significant impact on our understanding of the relationships between Josephus and the Flavians. If Josephus is seen already as an exceptionally favoured prisoner, it is not difficult to imagine a similarly unique position later on in his life within the imperial court. When we place his imprisonment in the context of other depictions of captivity within his narratives and against the background of the treatment of prisoners-of-war in the ancient world more generally, however, the possibility emerges that Josephus' tenure as prisoner was much more commonplace than he suggests. Even if we do allow him the benefits he claims, in the appropriate context they can be recognized as relatively ordinary.

One recurring feature of Josephus' imprisonment in each of his narratives is his physical bondage. He ends the initial account of his capture by stating that, although Vespasian began to believe Josephus' prediction concerning the acquisition of the principate, he nevertheless did not release him from his chains (δεσμῶν οὐκ ἀνίει τὸν Ἰώσηπον).<sup>21</sup> That Josephus is referring here to physical rather than metaphorical bondage is clear from the ubiquity of references to these chains. The chains take on a figurative role in the release of Josephus from captivity some time

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<sup>19</sup> *Life* 414 (see Mason 2001: 164 n. 1699 *ad loc.*); *Ap.* 1.48 (see Barclay 2007: n. 48 *ad loc.*). By claiming to have been in attendance of Vespasian and Titus, Josephus presents himself as an eyewitness of the events that occurred during his captivity.

<sup>20</sup> Captivity: Thackeray 1929: 15; Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 112; Cohen 2002[1979]: 232; Rajak 2002[1983]: 186-7; see, however, Schalit 1975: 287-90. Prediction: Weber 1921: 154; Drexler 1956: 523; Nicols 1978: 92-3; Levick 1999: 67; Luke 2010: 82 n. 28. For a balanced discussion, see Rajak 2002[1983]: 186-191. The prediction will be discussed further below, pp. 102-117.

<sup>21</sup> *War* 3.408.

later, where their symbolic severing serves as an emphatic statement releasing Josephus not only from his status as prisoner-of-war but also from the stigma (τὸ ὄνειδος) attached to his former state.<sup>22</sup> This matter of stigma will be addressed later, but for now it must be emphasized that nowhere are we given the impression that Josephus was free physically of his chains during his two-year period as prisoner-of-war.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, throughout the narratives chains are a standard feature of imprisonment, particularly for prisoners-of-war.<sup>24</sup> Thus also John of Gischala, following his appearance in the Flavian triumph in Rome, was condemned to be held perpetually in bonds. It is not unlikely, on the basis of evidence discussed below, that he was permanently chained and met his death in chains. The headline captive of the triumph, Simon bar Giora, was also kept in chains from his captivity until his spectacular death as part of the triumphal ceremonies. Earlier on in the narrative the sons and kinsmen of Izates, the king of Commagene, were conducted in chains to Rome as hostages for their role in the revolt. Other figures whose imprisonment included physical bondage were: Jonathan, the weaver of Cyrene, who had brought charges against Josephus among others of having supplied him with assistance in his revolutionary efforts; Antiochus, the king of Commagene, who was soon released by Vespasian and accorded a number of special honours befitting royalty; and even Agrippa I, who was awarded iron chains for his careless remarks regarding the emperor Tiberius. In the latter case Josephus reports that

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<sup>22</sup> *War* 4.622-29.

<sup>23</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: 187, suggests that we need not imagine Josephus literally fettered at this time, placing significant weight on the evidence from *Apion* 1.48-9, and presents the possibility that Josephus was active in the camp. Both the internal and external evidence, however, suggest a different picture, as we shall see. Nevertheless, the observation of S. Schwartz 1990: 5 n. 8, that “It is unthinkable that an enemy general should have been permitted to move about freely”, argues the case too strongly. The general with *imperium* was also free to treat prisoners as he chose, as the case of Josephus also makes clear.

<sup>24</sup> In some cases it is difficult to judge between metaphorical and literal usage of the Greek words for being in chains, but the high number of definite references to chains suggests that we should understand the physical meaning in many cases. Furthermore, the metaphorical usage of ‘chain’ terminology presupposes the normality of their use since the metaphor would cease to function otherwise. See Garnsey 1970: 150-52; Rapske 1994b: 25.

the imprisonment lasted for six months time, during which the terrible conditions were alleviated only by the care shown to Agrippa I by a number of his friends.<sup>25</sup>

Within Josephus' retelling of the Biblical narrative as well chains figure prominently in the accounts of Joseph, who was shackled to the cupbearer of the king; and of Jeremiah, whose opponents took him out of prison where he faced death in chains and condemned him instead to something worse, namely sinking him up to his neck in mire.<sup>26</sup> Both Joseph and Jeremiah serve as types with whom Josephus identifies himself, so the commonality of time spent in chains is noteworthy.<sup>27</sup> While these examples provide no proof that the situation with Josephus was identical—his prediction did place him in a unique position—they do illustrate clearly the generally accepted treatment of prisoners and present the possibility that Josephus was subjected as well to the physical torment of constant bondage.

We should certainly not allow the eventual grant of freedom to colour unduly our view of the nature of his imprisonment. Although it is unlikely that Josephus was being reserved for appearance in the triumphal celebrations,<sup>28</sup> given that the accession of Vespasian to the imperial throne was some years away, alternate outcomes were certainly possible.<sup>29</sup> Apart from his

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<sup>25</sup> John of Gischala: *War* 6.434 (δεσμοῖς αἰωνίοις); Simon bar Giora: *War* 7.31 (τὸν μὲν ἐφύλαττε δεδεμένον); 7.36 (Καίσαρι... Σίμων προσήχθη δεδεμένος); the sons and kinsmen of Izates: *War* 6.356-7 (δήσας); Jonathan the weaver: *War* 7.449-50 (δεδεμένους); Antiochus of Commagene: *War* 7.238-40 (δεδεμένον); Agrippa I: *Ant.* 18.195-204 (τὸν σίδηρον).

<sup>26</sup> Joseph: *Ant.* 2.60ff. We should keep in mind the possibility that Josephus himself was shackled to other prisoners, a Roman practice; see Cato *ap. Gell.* 11.18.18; Plaut. *Capt.* 442. Jeremiah: *Ant.* 10.120-23.

<sup>27</sup> Jeremiah: see *War* 5.392-3; cf. Braun 1956: 56; Blenkinsopp 1974: 239-62; Mayer and Möller 1974: 271-84; Daube 1980: 26-27; Cohen 1982: 366-81; Gray 1993: 72-4; also the commentary *ad loc.* Begg and Spilsbury 2005: n. 647, 652. Joseph: Daube 1980: 27-8; Gray 1993: 77-8, points out that the parallels are not as strong in the case of Joseph, but she is more concerned with the similarities in their dream-interpretations rather than their time spent as prisoners.

<sup>28</sup> As suggested by Schalit 1975: 288.

<sup>29</sup> Incarceration in the Roman world was generally not a punishment in and of itself, but instead served as a temporary situation before the administration of the real punishment, especially in cases of capital punishment. The ancient equivalent to incarceration was exile; see *Dig.* 48.19.8.9: *sed id eos facere non oportet. Nam huiusmodi poenae interdictae sunt. Carcer enim ad continendos homines, non ad puniendos haberi debet*; cf. *Dig.* 48.19.35; Maher-Maly 1964: 1053-4; Krause 1996: 64-91; Bauman 1996: 30, 131 n. 39; Robinson 2007: 195; Mason 2008a: 8 n. 35 at *War* 2.5. Nevertheless, while in principle imprisonment was not recognized as a penalty, in practice it might

prediction, he was at this point simply a captured general, much as John of Gischala and Simon bar Giora later were. In his description of the final stages of the siege of Jerusalem, Josephus describes the variety of fates faced by prisoners-of-war, which ranged from immediate execution in the cases of both the old and feeble and those who still posed a threat; to enslavement of the able-bodied for use in such projects as Nero's Corinthian canal or the mines in Egypt; to display in public spectacles, particularly the triumph, of the "tallest and most handsome of the youth".<sup>30</sup> The dreadful conditions faced by these captives are clear from Josephus' claim that eleven thousand perished of starvation over the number of days that Fronto took to assign each his or her lot, a result, he claims, in part of the jailers' hatred and in part of the refusal of the prisoners to receive food.<sup>31</sup>

External evidence supports this dismal portrayal of the lives of prisoners with the references to chains serving particularly to illustrate the severity of the imprisonment.<sup>32</sup> Thus Livy provides an account of a Roman praetor's instructions to the cities of the Latin confederacy in 198 BC that prisoners-of-war be "loaded with chains of not less than ten pounds", just as if they had been confined in a public prison.<sup>33</sup> Even more severe were the "triple sets of fetters" (*vinculis triplicium*), weighing perhaps thirty pounds, that were used to chain a group of conspirators caught by Nero in AD 65.<sup>34</sup> In the case of triumphal processions, chains were a

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easily become a *poena*; see e.g. Sall. *Cat.* 51.43; Plut. *Cic.* 21.1-3; Tac. *Ann.* 6.3.3; Cass. Dio 58.3.5; 77.11.1; Garnsey 1970: 148-9. The case of John of Gischala (*War* 6.434) should be added to this list.

<sup>30</sup> Nero's channel project in Corinth: *War* 3.540 (6000 young men); the mines of Egypt: *War* 6.418 (those over seventeen years of age); display in public spectacles: *War* 6.414-9. For the latter, see for example the spectacles put on by Titus on his route back to Rome: *War* 7.23-5; 37-40; 96; or the triumph: *War* 7.118, 138.

<sup>31</sup> *War* 6.419. See further Eleazar ben Yair's speech at Masada in which he enumerates the horrors faced by captives: *War* 7.371-4.

<sup>32</sup> For the following discussion, Rapske 1994b: 20-28, has been particularly useful. See also Garnsey 1970: 147-52; and Krause 1996 which deals primarily with the later empire and specifically with prisons.

<sup>33</sup> Livy 32.26.18.

<sup>34</sup> Suet. *Ner.* 36.2; cf. Caes. *B.Gall.* 1.53, regarding Gaius Valerius Procillus who had been bound by the German leader, Ariovistus, in triple chains (*trinis catenis vincitus*). The appearance of the 'triple chains' in these separate sources may suggest that this was a standard procedure for use in exceptional cases. Rapske 1994b: 207, suggests the weight of 30 pounds on the basis of the Livy passage.

commonplace for the prominent captives who appeared in them, in both artistic and literary representations.<sup>35</sup> In Ovid's imaginative rendering from exile on the Black Sea of a Roman triumph over the Germans, the poet evokes just this image for his readers, declaring,

So all the populace can watch the triumph,  
Read names of generals and captured towns  
See captive kings with necks in chains and marching  
Before the horses in gay laurel crowns  
And note some faces fallen like their fortunes  
And others fierce forgetting how they fare.<sup>36</sup>

In the case of the young Egyptian princess Arsinoe, at least according to Cassius Dio, her shackled state caused the crowds to react with pity in seeing her conducted atop one of the floats (*ferculum*) of Julius Caesar's triumph of 46 BC.<sup>37</sup> In processions of another sort, Roman citizens facing execution or further punishment were similarly taken to their final destination in chains.<sup>38</sup> Such shackled or manacled captives are portrayed vividly as a motif on various works of art of the Roman world, most prominently on Trajan's Column, and illustrate the conventionality of the practice.<sup>39</sup> Throughout early Christian literature as well, being chained is synonymous with imprisonment,<sup>40</sup> which in the case of Peter meant being permanently chained to two guards.<sup>41</sup>

Such continuous chaining can be seen in other cases as well. In the famous case of Apollonius of Tyana, Philostratus states explicitly that the philosopher was in fetters from the commencement of his imprisonment to the moment of his release.<sup>42</sup> In Plautus' *Captivi* as well

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<sup>35</sup> See e.g. the triumphal frieze from the Temple of Apollo Sosianus in Rome (Beard 2007: 133 figure 23; cf. 134 figure 24); Sil. *Pun.* 17.629-30; Sen. *Tranq.* 150-6; cf. Beard 2007: 133-7.

<sup>36</sup> Ov. *Tr.* 4.2.19-24: *ergo omnis populus poterit spectare triumphos, cumque ducum titulis oppida capta leget, vinclaque captiva reges cervice gerentes ante coronatos ire videbit equos, et cernit vultus aliis pro tempore versos, terribiles aliis inmemoresque sui*; trans. Melville 1992: 27-28.

<sup>37</sup> Cass. Dio 43.19.

<sup>38</sup> Ov. *Con. Liv.* 273; Sall. *Iug.* 64.5; Cass. Dio 58.3; 58.11; Plin. *Ep.* 10.57.

<sup>39</sup> Bradley 2004: 306 and Plates 1-6, 11-17 (incl. Gemma Augustea; Column of Trajan; Column of Marcus Aurelius; Arch of Septimius Severus); for Trajan's Column, see Lepper and Frere 1988: Plates XIV, XXII, XLIX, CVII, CIX.

<sup>40</sup> 2 Tim. 1:16; Eph. 6:20; Acts 16:33; Acts 28:20.

<sup>41</sup> Acts 12:6-7; cf. *Ant.* 18.196, where a German captive in the same camp as Agrippa I requests the soldier to whom he is chained (τὸν συνδεδεμένον αὐτῷ στρατιώτην) permission to speak to the Judaeian king.

<sup>42</sup> Philostr. *VA* 5.22; 7.34-40.

the prisoners Tyndarus and Philocrates spend their entire captivity in chains, albeit at times with lighter chains to allow for improved mobility. The threat of punishment in the prison quarries also included being heavily shackled throughout the work day and being further bound during the night in a prison cell.<sup>43</sup> In the case of prisoners sent to Rome to plead their cases, continuous chaining until the time of the trial can also be inferred on a number of occasions.<sup>44</sup> The satirist Juvenal even exclaims exaggeratedly that so many chains were being used for the detainment of prisoners that there was a shortage of iron for agricultural implements.<sup>45</sup> The debilitating effects of such extended bondage were recognized by a number of ancient authors, who emphasize especially the weight of the iron, which could have the effect of rendering the prisoner's limbs incapable of proper functioning.<sup>46</sup> When Josephus reports, therefore, that he was put in chains, we would do well to keep in mind the generally wretched character of such custody.<sup>47</sup>

At the same time, we should not dismiss entirely Josephus' claim to have been treated favourably on the basis of his chains. As the example of Plautus' captives indicates, even while chained, prisoners could be granted relative freedom. So also the author of Luke-Acts has the apostle Paul, while imprisoned in the city of Rome and awaiting judgment, refer to the chains with which he is bound, likely by the wrist to the soldier assigned to guard him, as he speaks freely to the local leaders of the Judaeon community. What is more, the apostle is said to be living in private rented lodgings where he is permitted to receive these leaders to continue the

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<sup>43</sup> Plaut. *Capt.* 1.2, 722-6, 729-31.

<sup>44</sup> Livy 29.19.5; Suet. *Ner.* 36.2; *Dom.* 14.4; Tac. *Ann.* 4.28; cf. *Acts Thom.* 12.140. In an interesting proposal, Rapske 1994b: 208, suggests that an axe would have been necessary to break the chains, since the iron would have become rusted together after two years of continuous use. This does not, however, fit within the narrative, which contrasts the cutting of the bonds with the possibility of simply loosening them (ὅν αὐτοῦ μὴ λύσωμεν ἀλλὰ κόψωμεν τὰ δεσμά; *War* 4.628).

<sup>45</sup> Juv. 3.309-11.

<sup>46</sup> Ovid *Con. Liv.* 273f.; Sen. *Constant.* 1.6.2; Philostr. *VA* 7.36; Tert. *Mart.* 2; *Cod. Theod.* 9.40.22.

<sup>47</sup> The horror of prisons is revealed by a number of later 4<sup>th</sup> century sources; see e.g. Lib. *Or.* 45; *Cod. Theod.* 9.3.1 (AD 320); 9.3.7 (AD 409). See further Rapske 1994b: 196-225; Krause 1996: 271-304.

conversation.<sup>48</sup> Although the case of Paul in Luke-Acts was significantly different from that of Josephus, who was a prisoner-of-war and not yet a Roman citizen as Paul reportedly was, his example does illustrate effectively the range of treatment that an ancient prisoner could expect to experience. Lighter chains such as those binding Plautus' captives or the apostle himself could have been used for Josephus as well on occasions where the Roman generals may have wished to make use of his knowledge and expertise, perhaps at such moments as the sieges of Tarichaeae or Mt. Tabor, both of which had been fortified by Josephus in the early stages of the revolt.<sup>49</sup> The omission of any mention of Josephus' involvement may simply be due to a reluctance to implicate himself in the disastrous defeats of his compatriots. He does, after all, claim to have been 'forced' (ἠνάγκασαν) into the presence of Vespasian and Titus.<sup>50</sup>

At the same time, the prisoners' experience was also subject to the whims of his immediate wardens. As Mommsen already pointed out, "Ohne Zweifel ist dabei immer einerseits die Persönlichkeit der Vorgesetzten und vielleicht noch mehr die der Subalternen massgebend gewesen, andererseits das Vermögen und der Einfluss der Inhaftirten."<sup>51</sup> Thus, in her efforts to assuage the imprisonment of Agrippa I, as described by Josephus, Antonia, the sister-in-law of then emperor Tiberius, managed to procure as his guards "moderate characters" (μετρίων ἀνδρῶν), who could be expected to permit various concessions to alleviate his miserable captivity.<sup>52</sup> That these individuals needed to be specially selected suggests implicitly, however, that in general the prison guards could not be counted upon for sympathy. Hence Philo's stereotypical description of prison guards: "Everyone knows how full of inhumanity and cruelty

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<sup>48</sup> Acts 28:16-31. For discussion, see Rapske 1994b: 177-82.

<sup>49</sup> Tarichaeae: *War* 3.464-502; Mt. Tabor: *War* 4.54-61.

<sup>50</sup> *Ap.* 1.48.

<sup>51</sup> Mommsen 1899: 303.

<sup>52</sup> *Ant.* 18.203-4. It is instructive that even though he was granted these concessions, Agrippa I was still mistreated by his prison guards at the time of the death of Tiberius; see *Ant.* 18.232-3.



gaolers are; pitiless by nature and care-hardened by practice, they are brutalized day by day towards savagery, because they never even by chance see or say or do any kindness, but only the extremes of violence and cruelty.”<sup>53</sup> Such harsh treatment was supposed to engender greater security. Thus certain judgments were codified much later in the *Digest* that punished wardens who granted too much freedom.<sup>54</sup> So, while it is entirely possible that Josephus was particularly privileged among the other prisoners, we should not overestimate the significance of this relative status.

For the specific favours that Josephus does mention having received from Vespasian can also be explained easily within the context of a standard incarceration. First of all, I noted above that Josephus states that he received “clothing and other treasures” (ἐσθῆτι καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις κειμηλίοις) from Vespasian following his prediction.<sup>55</sup> While we can do little with the “other treasures” he claims to have received, a phrase he uses elsewhere simply to conclude lists of precious goods, such as the contents of the Temple treasuries,<sup>56</sup> his reference to receipt of clothing can be pursued further. The fact that he was not released from his chains at this point suggests that these articles of clothing were provided to ease the imprisonment. In normal circumstances decent clothing was obviously important, but it took on added importance for the prisoner in providing warmth and bedding, which were generally deficient under prison conditions.<sup>57</sup> In the account of the apostle Peter’s release from prison by an angel he is

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<sup>53</sup> Philo *Ios.* 81.; trans. Rapske 1994b: 258.

<sup>54</sup> *Dig.* 16.3.7; 48.3.12; 48.8.4; cf. Rapske 1994b: 254-61, for further examples of the relations between prisoners and their wardens.

<sup>55</sup> *War* 3.408.

<sup>56</sup> See *War* 6.282: ἕκατον δὲ καὶ τὰ γαζοφυλάκια, ἐν οἷς ἄπειρον μὲν χρημάτων πλῆθος ἄπειροι δ’ ἐσθῆτες καὶ ἄλλα κειμήλια. Interestingly the phrase appears there also in the context of clothing, in this case stored in the treasury chambers of the Temple, but the connection seems to have little probative value; cf. *War* 6.391. For a similar usage, see Philo *Plant.* 57.1: ἀργθρός τε καὶ χρυσός καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα κειμήλια; cf. the 6<sup>th</sup> century text of Evagrius *Hist. eccl.* 4.28.

<sup>57</sup> See Kraus 1996: 57, 287-8, for examples of “Mangel an Kleidung”, mostly from seventh century writings of Gregory the Great.

commanded to put on his cloak after the chains have fallen off, presumably because he had been using the cloak as covering or as bedding. Also the request of Timothy by Paul to take along his cloak may reflect Paul's need for greater warmth and comfort during his imprisonment, particularly with winter approaching. In the case of Agrippa I, mentioned above, one of the more significant ways in which two of the king's freedmen assisted him in alleviating his captivity was to smuggle in clothing to lay under him while he slept.<sup>58</sup> While Agrippa I also received other concessions such as special food, visits from his freedmen, and sympathetic guards, Josephus does not claim to have received any other such favours.<sup>59</sup>

The only other specific privilege that Josephus claims to have received during his time as prisoner was his 'marriage' to a fellow prisoner. That he viewed this as special treatment can be seen from the context. He writes, "After Iotapata had been taken in a siege, among the Romans finally I was kept under guard with every consideration, Vespasian supplying me with all the marks of honour. In fact, when he so directed, I even took a virgin for myself a native from among the prisoners who were seized at Caesarea."<sup>60</sup> As usual the lack of specific details makes it difficult to reach conclusions, but a few salient points can be made.<sup>61</sup> First of all, the genitive

<sup>58</sup> Peter: Acts 12:8 (τὸ ἱμάτιον); Paul: 2 Tim. 4:13, 21 (τὸν φαλόνην); Agrippa I: *Ant.* 18.204 (ἱμάτια). Note that in the case of Agrippa I, the freedmen had to resort to deception of the prison guards in order to achieve their goal, despite the fact that the guards were supposed to have been 'moderate men'.

<sup>59</sup> *Ant.* 18.202-4; cf. Cicero (*Verr.* 2.5.118), who also speaks of parents whose children have been imprisoned seeking to ameliorate their lot by bribing the prison guards into allowing them to provide better provisions or even, in desperation, a speedier demise. The official prison ration (*solo fiscalis*) was only intended to allow for basic survival and could even be taken away for punishment, torture or even execution; cf. Cass. Dio 58.3.5-6; Tert. *Jejun.* 12; Helioid. *Aeth.* 8.6.2; Cyprian *Ep.* 21.2; 33.2.

<sup>60</sup> *Life* 414: Τῆς γὰρ τῶν Ἰωταπάτων πολιορκίας λαβούσης τέλος γενόμενος παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις μετὰ πάσης ἐπιμελείας ἐφυλασσόμεν τὰ πολλὰ διὰ τιμῆς ἄγοντός με Οὐεσπασιανοῦ, καὶ δὴ κελεύσαντος αὐτοῦ ἡγαγόμεν τινὰ παρθένον ἐκ τῶν αἰχμαλωτιδῶν τῶν κατὰ Καισάρειαν ἀλουσῶν ἐγχώριον. An alternative translation of the words κελεύσαντος αὐτοῦ has been proposed by Daube 1977: 191-94, who suggests 'authorize' for κελεύω rather than 'direct' (see above) or 'command' (Thackeray, Loeb 1926) on the basis of the Latin word *iubeo*, which he suggests is behind the Greek. The arguments of Feldman and Mason in favour of the traditional translation are, however, convincing; see Feldman 1984a: 836; Mason 2001: 164 n. 1700 *ad loc.* As far as this union being a privilege is concerned, the linking words καὶ δὲ are significant in establishing the connection between the "marks of honour" (ἐπιμελείας) and Vespasian's directive.

<sup>61</sup> The matter of the historical reality is further complicated by the fact that the narrative appears to be altered to conform to the Biblical account of Joseph's marriage to Asenath the daughter of an Egyptian priestess (Gen. 41:45);

absolute construction κελύσαντος αὐτοῦ was likely included to shift the responsibility for the arrangement onto Vespasian's shoulders. Josephus, as member of a priestly family, was forbidden from marrying a captive, since she was assumed to have been raped and was thus not a virgin.<sup>62</sup> His claim that Vespasian was involved in some way absolves him to a certain degree of the shame attached to his contravention of priestly dogma and the accompanying impurity.<sup>63</sup> Yet, the union of the captives does also display a level of privilege, since it was by no means required of Vespasian; in fact, if they had the status of slaves, as prisoners-of-war often did, an official marriage would have been impossible.<sup>64</sup> Quasi-marital unions, referred to as *contubernia*, were permitted at the discretion of the slave-owner and served both as a reward for good behaviour and as a stimulus towards a sense of community within the slave population of a household. But such unions had no strict legal value, as is clear from the fact that children resulting from these unions were the legal property of the slave mother's owner.<sup>65</sup>

The possibility remains open that Josephus' relationship with this woman within the Roman camp was one such *contubernia*—incidentally, the term itself originates in the military context, describing the “sharing of a tent” between fellow soldiers.<sup>66</sup> We might imagine, then, a similarly informal relationship between Josephus and his fellow captive even if they were not slaves *stricto sensu*, who were permitted by Vespasian to “shack up together”, to borrow

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Josephus' own rendering of the Biblical narrative in his *Antiquities* also includes certain details (such as the virginity of Asenath) in order to bring the two into a closer approximation (*Ant.* 2.91); cf. Daube 1980: 27-8.

<sup>62</sup> Lev. 21:7; cf. *Ant.* 3.276; *Ap.* 1.35; *Ketubot* 2.9.

<sup>63</sup> According to a Talmudic text, simply being a prisoner already placed the individual in a state of uncleanness; *Mas. Mo'ed Qat* 2.1f.; cf. Rapske 1994b: 209-216.

<sup>64</sup> See Leonhard 1900: 1170-72; Daube 1977: 192; S. Schwartz 1990: 5 n. 10. It is unlikely, however, that Josephus was a slave during his captivity and thus a freedman following his release, on which see more below.

<sup>65</sup> Regarding these informal unions within slave *familia*, see Rawson 1974: 279-305; Treggiari 1981: 42-9; 1991: 52-4; Edmondson 2011: 347-9.

<sup>66</sup> The meaning was also extended to refer to the relationship between a master and his pupil (see e.g. Plin. *Ep.* 1.24.1; 10.94.1; Suet. *Gram.* 7, 30) or between emperors and men of learning (Suet. *Aug.* 89.1; *Tib.* 14.4, 56). These passages give the impression that *contubernium* involved staying under the same roof.

Edmondson's rendering of the Latin term.<sup>67</sup> Josephus uses a variation on the standard Greek verbal construction that is often used as a synonym for marriage but by no means always entails an official Roman marriage.<sup>68</sup> It is in Josephus' interest for the exact nature of this union to remain ambiguous.<sup>69</sup> Vespasian's special treatment could mean little more than permission for Josephus to have sexual relations with one of his fellow female prisoners, conceivably granted at Josephus' request and certainly requiring no direct contact between the Roman general and his prisoner. Presumably this would also have entailed at least temporary freedom from their chains. Understanding this as an informal arrangement makes sense of Josephus' description of their eventual separation.<sup>70</sup> He states, "This one did not stay with me for a long time, but when I was freed and traveled with Vespasian to Alexandria, she was released."<sup>71</sup> The verb choice (ἀπηλλάγη) gives the impression that her release from imprisonment was linked with her parting from Josephus. That is, they had shared their imprisonment, but their release from the chains entailed also a release from the arrangements that had been in place.<sup>72</sup>

We have evidence from elsewhere that confirms the possibility that the sexes were confined together.<sup>73</sup> During the time of Constantine the Great a general policy was put into place

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<sup>67</sup> Edmondson 2011: 347.

<sup>68</sup> ἡγαγόμενην γυναῖκα; here ἡγαγόμενην τινα παρθένον. He also uses similar constructions using the verb ἄγομαι in the context of his genealogy (*Life* 4) and when referring to his marriages while in Alexandria and Rome (*Life* 415, 427); cf. Mason 2001: 8 n. 25.

<sup>69</sup> This could also have been in the interests of preventing accusations from Judaeans members of the audience, should this marriage not have been officially contracted. Josephus holds a high view of marriage throughout his writings; see Kasher 2005: 95-108. His attitude toward women in general, however, has been viewed as negative; see E. & F. Stagg 1978: 45-8; D.R. Schwartz 1983: 555 n. 24, who suggests as basis perhaps Josephus' personal experience; Kasher 2005: 103-5. We should note, however, the positive portrayal of key women of the Old Testament in the *Antiquities*; see Amaru 1988: 143-70.

<sup>70</sup> The informality of this bond could also be related to the fact that Josephus' first wife was still alive and with his family in Jerusalem, as *War* 5.419 may suggest. In that case a second marriage would have been impossible without a legal divorce; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 4 n. 5.

<sup>71</sup> *Life* 415: οὐ παρέμενε δ' αὐτῆ μοι πολὺν χρόνον, ἀλλὰ λυθέντος καὶ μετὰ Οὐεσπασιανοῦ πορευθέντος εἰς τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν ἀπηλλάγη.

<sup>72</sup> See Mason 2001: 164-5 n. 1706, who notes especially the unusual choice of ἀπηλλάγη—passive of ἀπαλάσσω. In contrast to the expression used here, see *Life* 426 where Josephus uses the traditional verb for divorce (ἀποπέμνω) when describing his separation from his Alexandrian wife.

<sup>73</sup> For a complete discussion of the evidence for women in prison, see Klause 1996: 170-79.

requiring the separate confinement of men and women, which suggests a different practice prior to this.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, according to Cassius Dio and Suetonius it seems to have been standard practice for the emperors to treat men and women equally when it came to dealing with threats to the state.<sup>75</sup> The danger this could pose to the women is illustrated by an admittedly much later Talmudic account of a jailer who treated his prisoners, and particularly the women, abnormally well. The jailer describes his approach as follows, “I keep the men and women separate and I place my bed between them so that they may not come to sin; when I see a Jewish girl upon whom the Gentiles cast their eyes I risk my life to save her.”<sup>76</sup> Presumably in the absence of such an individual, the male prisoners would have been free to do as they pleased. What others took by force, then, Josephus was granted as a special benefit.

Although the limited evidence does not allow for any firm conclusions, the foregoing discussion does suggest clear limitations to the level of privilege experienced by Josephus during this time. He remained a prisoner-of-war. The chains with which he was imprisoned on the one hand may have posed as an impediment to his mobility, and on the other hand demonstrate the lack of interest the Roman generals had in setting him free. It is clear from other sources that those of high status or those looked upon favourably could be kept under guard without being chained, a privilege that Josephus never claims for himself.<sup>77</sup> This may be because at this point Vespasian and Titus were not particularly interested in anything Josephus had to offer, apart from perhaps some insider information on the fortified sites in the Galilee. Prediction aside, he had not proven himself loyal to the Romans in any way or given them any reason to think that he would be able to assist them. The fact that the claim to have been in attendance on Vespasian and

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<sup>74</sup> *Cod. Theod.* 9.3.3.

<sup>75</sup> Cass. Dio 58.11.5; 58.15.3; 58.27.4; 60.16.1; Suet. *Tib.* 61.4-5.

<sup>76</sup> *B. Mas. Ta’anith* 22a; trans. Rabinowitz in Epstein 1938: 109-10.

<sup>77</sup> Cass. Dio 36.53.3-6; Tac. *Hist.* 3.12; Philostratus, *VA* 7.23, 25; cf. Garnsey 1970: 147-8; Arbandt, Macheiner and Colpe 1976: 326.

Titus appears in a work written after the death of the first two emperors does not add any credence. Josephus' chief concern there is to present a basis for his assertion that he was well informed about the Roman side of the war.<sup>78</sup> We are left then with only one definite encounter between Vespasian and Josephus during the latter's time as prisoner, which, if we accept Josephus' chronology, occurred at the outset of their contact. Josephus' time in the Roman camp may have provided little opportunity, therefore, for contact between the two, let alone time for a meaningful relationship to develop.

So far I have been concerned with the impact Josephus' imprisonment had on his immediate situation. I have proposed some possible ramifications for his relationship with Vespasian on the basis of external evidence. We also receive certain hints within the narratives, however, that his time as prisoner-of-war may have had a lasting effect on his social status as well. First of all, his emphasis in the account of his release from chains on the removal of disgrace may suggest an ongoing concern at the time of writing, although it is equally possible, of course, that he simply wished to place a positive spin on a part of his past that was widely known.<sup>79</sup> In any case, when Vespasian emphasizes the shame (αἰσχρόν) in Josephus' continued imprisonment despite the fulfillment of his prophecy, Titus seeks to ensure that this reproach (τὸ ὄνειδος) does not follow him in his position as former prisoner. He proposes, therefore, a ceremonial severing of the chain, which Josephus claims is the traditional method of releasing those who have been imprisoned without cause. Vespasian approves of this and so an attendant proceeds to strike the chains from Josephus with an axe, symbolizing his return to the status he had held prior to his capture.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> See Barclay 2007: n. 196 at *Ap.* 1.48.

<sup>79</sup> *War* 4.626-9. Both Suetonius (*Vesp.* 5) and Cassius Dio (65.1.4) refer to him as a captive.

<sup>80</sup> *War* 4.627-9: τῷ πατρὶ Τίτῳ “δίκαιον, ὦ πάτερ, ἔφη, τοῦ Ἰωσήπου καὶ τὸ ὄνειδος ἀφαιρεθῆναι σὺν τῷ σιδήρῳ· γενήσεται γὰρ ὁμοίως τῷ μὴ δεθέντι τὴν ἀρχήν, ἂν αὐτοῦ μὴ λύσωμεν ἀλλὰ κόψωμεν τὰ δεσμά”. τοῦτο γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν

Although this ceremony is not known from any other sources, the idea that one could revert officially to a former status was not a new one. For the most part this was reserved for freedmen, especially those in the imperial employ. Although the practice appears to have begun in the late Republic, the majority of examples in the sources appear under the emperors.<sup>81</sup> While under regular circumstances a freedman was never equal with an *ingenuus*, a free-born individual, and always remained inferior both ideologically and legally,<sup>82</sup> in certain cases by granting the right to wear a gold ring according to the *ius anulorum aureorum*, the emperor gave to the freedman the rights of free birth (*ingenuitas*), a provision that was enabled by the Augustan *lex Visellia*. Nevertheless, in relation to his patron he remained a freedman, while his children and grandchildren were also excluded from the privilege of wearing the golden rings.<sup>83</sup> In such cases, therefore, freeborn status was merely an *imago*, not reality.<sup>84</sup> The emperor was also able, however, according to the *ius ingenuitatis*, to award as an imperial *beneficium* the actual status of a free born, even to those who had been slaves from birth, in a process called *natalium restitutio*.<sup>85</sup> Thus Augustus rewarded Menas for his betrayal of Sextus Pompeius with the status of an *ingenuus*, as did Nero his imperial favourites, the actor Paris and his mistress

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μη δεόντως δεθέντων πράττεται. συνεδόκει ταῦτα, καὶ παρελθὼν τις πελέκει διέκοψε τὴν ἄλυσιν. ὁ δὲ Ἰώσηπος εἰληφῶς περὶ τῶν προειρημένων γέρας τὴν ἐπιτιμίαν ἤδη καὶ περὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἀξιόπιστος ἦν; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 6-7 n. 13, who suggests that the word ἐπιτιμία here has an official connotation and that it refers to the civil rights of a free non-citizen subject.

<sup>81</sup> For a fuller discussion, see Duff 1928: 85-88; Millar 1992[1977]: 488-90; Mouritsen 2011: 107-108. Sherwin-White 1973: 331, points out that aristocratic opinion kept a firm check on the liberality of the emperor in dispensing this right to wear the 'golden rings' on freedmen, since these were distinctive emblems of equestrian status; cf. Weaver 1972: 282-3, regarding the sparing way in which the emperors doled out this benefaction.

<sup>82</sup> As stressed at Tac. *Ann.* 2.12.3; *Hist.* 2.92.3; regarding the status of the freedman, including the changes and developments over the course of Roman history, see Mouritsen 2011: 66-119.

<sup>83</sup> *Dig.* 2.4.10; 27.1.44; 40.10.1-6; cf. *ILS* 1899; Cass. Dio 48.45.8-9; for discussion of this process, see Sherwin-White 1973: 331; Duncan-Jones 2006: 215-6; Mouritsen 2011: 107-108.

<sup>84</sup> *Cod. Iust.* VI.8.2: *Aureorum usus anulorum beneficio principali tributus libertinitatis quoad vivunt imaginem non statum ingenuitatis praestat, natalibus autem antiquis restituti liberti ingenui nostro beneficio constituuntur*; cf. *Cod. Iust.* IX.21.1 for the *Lex Visellia*, which emphasizes also that the freedman is given the appearance (*imaginem*) and not the actual status (*non statum*) of a freeborn individual.

<sup>85</sup> *Dig.* 40.11.2-6; cf. Salkowski and Whitfield 1886: 166-7; Duff 1928: 86-8; Saller 1982: 42; Mouritsen 2011: 108.

Acte.<sup>86</sup> Vespasian himself married Flavia Domitilla, who had been enslaved and freed, but was afterward declared a freeborn citizen by a *recuperatorium iudicium* around the year AD 39, perhaps due to Vespasian's influence with Caligula.<sup>87</sup> Although these customs were later laid out in detail in the *Digest* and the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, which tend to lend them an official appearance, during the first century particularly such *beneficia* were largely dependent on the whims of the emperor, as was the manner in which they were bestowed.<sup>88</sup> In fact not long after the release of Josephus, according to Cassius Dio Vespasian sent a dispatch from Alexandria, "rescinding the disfranchisement of those who had been condemned by Nero and succeeding rulers for acts of *maiestas*, as they were called. This order applied to the living and to the dead alike."<sup>89</sup> It was possible, therefore, for the emperor to declare former status null and void in a word. So, although Josephus may be exaggerating in giving the impression that this particular method of freeing prisoners was an established practice, such restoration of status was certainly possible.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 74; *Ner.* 28; Tac. *Ann.* 13.27; Cass. Dio 61.7. A more distant parallel would be the ability of the censors to adlect new members into the patrician order, the process of *adlectio inter patricios*, which was freely exercised by Vespasian particularly; see Suet. *Vesp.* 9; cf. the epigraphic examples provided by Newton 1901: 34-38 (# 57-71).

<sup>87</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 3; cf. Duff 1977: 88 n. 3.

<sup>88</sup> Saller 1982: 53.

<sup>89</sup> Cass. Dio 65.9.1; trans. Cary 1925.

<sup>90</sup> According to Daube 1977: 193, based on his interpretation of *Life* 419, the right to grant such a privilege was even given to Josephus by Titus when he released some 190 Judean prisoners of war towards the end of the revolt. This rests on the translation of the phrase συγχωρήσας αὐτοὺς τῇ προτέρᾳ τύχῃ, which Daube interprets as meaning "restoring them to their former fortune" as it had been translated by Whiston, thus calling to mind the practice of *natalibus suis restituere* discussed above. Previously, in the Loeb edition (1926), Thackeray had commented that the meaning was doubtful and suggested the rather vague "paying that compliment to their former fortune". The latest translation provides another rendering, namely "I commiserated with them concerning their former fortune" (Mason 2001: 166), which certainly reflects the ambiguity of the phrase. Daube's proposal, however, explains more easily the clause immediately preceding this, οὐδὲ λύτρα καταθεμένους ἀπέλυσα ("I released them without their paying a ransom"). In Mason's translation it appears that Josephus himself might have expected payment for his liberality, which would have cast into doubt his character, and that he is therefore protecting his image (see n. 1728). But if we understand this instead as a reference to the ransom traditionally paid to the Roman officials (see Hopkins 1978: 108), which in this instance alone did not need to be paid because of the intervention of Josephus, we can make sense of the entire passage. That is, Josephus was granted the right to free these individuals so completely that not only did they not have to pay the traditional ransom, either themselves or through another, but the fact that they had



Whether or not this invalidation of Josephus' time as captive was official, the overall impression of the narrative is that the stigma still lingered despite the elaborate ceremony. This is not surprising in light of the attitude towards captivity displayed by the Romans and later codified. According to the *Digest*, captivity had a strong association with death: "In every branch of law, a person who fails to return from enemy hands is regarded as having died at the moment he was captured."<sup>91</sup> This was no doubt the result of the close relationship between captivity and slavery.<sup>92</sup> It was a common understanding that captives shared the social position, if not the status, of slaves. This is also apparent from the *Digest*, which explains the etymology of *servi* in the context of warfare: "*Servi* are so-called because generals have the custom of selling their prisoners and thereby *preserving* them rather than killing them; and indeed they are said to be *mancipia*, because they are *captives* in the hand (*manus*) of their enemies."<sup>93</sup> Even if the captured prisoner was not legally enslaved then—for enslavement was only one of the possible solutions for dealing with captured peoples—the "stain of slavery", the so-called *macula servitutis*,<sup>94</sup> still remained by virtue of his captivity. So, although Josephus never gives the impression that he became a slave and his capture as a prominent prisoner did not automatically entail slavery, he would still have faced this association with slave status.

Josephus' awareness of this link between captivity and slavery emerges throughout his narratives, but most clearly in his descriptions of those who preferred death to capture.<sup>95</sup> This

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even been captured was wiped from memory. By highlighting his involvement, Josephus calls to mind the parallel account of his own release.

<sup>91</sup> *Dig.* 49.15.18; cf. 50.17.209.

<sup>92</sup> Regarding slavery as a form of social death, see Patterson 1982; cf. Bradley 1994: 25-7; Mouritsen 2011: 13-14.

<sup>93</sup> *Dig.* 1.5.4.2. The assumption that prisoners-of-war became slaves also appears in the Mishnah in a discussion regarding those who were freed from captivity, "A slave who was taken captive and they [others] redeemed him, if as a slave [they redeemed him], he shall remain a slave; if as a free person, he shall not become a slave again. R. Shimon b. Gamliel says: In either case he shall remain a slave" (*M. Git.* 4.4); cf. Hezser 2005: 232.

<sup>94</sup> *Dig.* 40.11.5; *Cod. Iust.* VII.16.9; X.32.2; cf. Mouritsen 2011: 10-35.

<sup>95</sup> The metaphorical use of slavery to describe the life of provincials under Roman rule can be seen throughout Josephus' narratives; ee e.g. *War* 2.345-401; 4.175-9; 6.42-44. For discussion see especially the commentary on

preference was shared by all involved in the revolt, articulated even by one of the alleged ‘moderates’, Jesus bar Gamalas, who proclaimed nobly, “For my own part, though I should prefer peace to death, yet having once declared war and entered the lists, I would rather die nobly than live a captive.”<sup>96</sup> Later on in the narrative, in his narration of the exploits of the Judaeans during the siege of Jerusalem, Josephus reports that the general sentiment among those who were besieged was that “they would never be slaves of the Romans, so long as they might die free men.”<sup>97</sup> And, although it took a series of speeches, Eleazar ben Yair eventually convinced also those besieged with him in the fortress of Masada that mass suicide was preferable to the inevitable slavery at Roman hands, whether that was metaphorical or literal.<sup>98</sup>

In the case of Josephus himself, it was important for him to emphasize that, had it not been for his divine mission to serve as messenger to Vespasian, he also would have resisted captivity. So he prayed, “I willingly surrender to the Romans and consent to live; but I take you as witness that I go, not as a traitor, but as your servant.”<sup>99</sup> This divine duty aside, we are to understand that Josephus too would have preferred death to captivity. He deliberately presents the speech he devises against suicide, therefore, as philosophizing out of necessity (φιλοσοφεῖν ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνάγκης), effectively creating distance between the sentiments expressed, which appear to contradict other key moments in the narrative, and his own opinions.<sup>100</sup> He insists in this way

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Agrippa II’s speech prior to the outbreak of war; Mason 2008a: n. 2177, 2199, 2388 *ad loc*; also Gibbs and Feldman 1986: 281-310; Rajak 1991: 122-134; cf. Tac. *Agr.* 30ff.; *Ann.* 12.34; *Hist.* 4.17; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 34.51; Mosley 1991: 107-121.

<sup>96</sup> *War* 4.250: καὶ ἐγὼ καθ’ ἑαυτὸν μὲν ἂν εἰρήνην προτιμήσαιμι θανάτου, πολεμούμενος δ’ ἅπαξ καὶ συμβαλὼν θάνατον εὐκλεῖα τοῦ ζῆν αἰχμάλωτος.

<sup>97</sup> *War* 5.321: οἱ λοιποὶ δ’ οὐκ ἂν ποτε δουλεύσειν Ῥωμαίοις ἐβόων παρὸν ἐλευθέρους ἀποθανεῖν; cf. 5.458.

<sup>98</sup> *War* 7.334, 336, 386.

<sup>99</sup> *War* 3.354: δίδωμι μὲν Ῥωμαίοις τὰς χεῖρας ἐκὼν καὶ ζῶ, μαρτύρομαι δὲ ὡς οὐ προδότης, ἀλλὰ σὸς εἶμι διάκονος.

<sup>100</sup> *War* 3.361-82. For this interpretation of Josephus’ speech on suicide, see Gray 1993: 44-52; cf. Daube 1980: 18-19. For alternative views, see Ladouceur 1994: 97-99; Rajak 2002[1983]: 168-9; Weitzman 2004: 230-45; Price 2006: 14-19; Brighton 2008: 120-22. Price 2006: 24 n. 25, does note the possibility “that Josephus, who perceived he had a higher, God-given mission and had to survive in order to accomplish it, would do anything to survive, and gave a consciously false or misleading speech on the subject of suicide” but dismisses it as inconsistent with the rest of the narrative. Gray’s arguments are, however, convincing in favour of understanding the speech as a deliberate

that he remains untouched by the stigma of captivity, which is how he presents himself to Vespasian as well saying, “You think, Vespasian, that by taking Josephus you have taken a mere captive; but I come to you as a messenger of greater things. Had I not been sent ahead by God I knew the Judaeian law and how it is fitting for generals to die.”<sup>101</sup>

It is possible that the concern demonstrated here in the narrative to separate Josephus from his status as a captive stems from attitudes he faced while living in Rome. Given the importance of honour and shame concerns in Mediterranean culture more generally, it is not surprising that for the Romans themselves imprisonment had a lasting effect on one’s social standing and could inspire long-term distaste.<sup>102</sup> Thus M. Furius Camillus (390 BC) chose to exile himself from the city of Rome in order to avoid the enduring shame of having been hauled to prison by the tribunes. When Sejanus and Vitellius alike were conducted to their places of imprisonment, their guards forced them to reveal their faces in order that their shame might be known to the crowds.<sup>103</sup> In particular the chaining of prisoners was viewed as a disgrace, highlighted by the fact that privileged confinement (*honorata custodia*) was characterized by the absence of chains (ἐν φυλακῇ ἀδέσμω).<sup>104</sup> As a result of this, chaining was applied to Roman

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artifice justified by Josephus’ divine commission. In general, Josephus felt no compunction about advertising his capacity for deception; see *War* 2.610-11 and Mason 2008a: n. 3639 *ad loc*, who identifies Homer’s Odysseus as a typological reference point.

<sup>101</sup> *War* 3.400: σὺ μὲν, ἔφη, Οὐεσπασιανέ, νομίζεις αἰχμάλωτον αὐτὸ μόνον εἰληφέναι Ἰώσηπον, ἐγὼ δὲ ἄγγελος ἦκω σοι μειζόνων. μὴ γὰρ ὑπὸ θεοῦ προπεμπόμενος ἦδειν τὸν Ἰουδαίων νόμον, καὶ πῶς στρατηγοῖς ἀποθνήσκειν πρέπει.

<sup>102</sup> Philostr. *VA* 7.34-7; Dio Chrys. *De. ser.* 1.22; cf. Sen. *Ep. Lucil.* 9.9; Philostr. *VA* 4.37; Lucian *Tox.* 18, 28-29; Antiph. *De Caed. Her.* 18; *Mart. Perp. et Felic.* 5.2. The shame associations with imprisonment also emerge in Christian contexts, where service or sympathy towards prisoners is presented as unusual and within which Paul’s imprisonment needs explanation and justification; see Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 16:37; 26:29; Phil. 1:13-14, 29-30; 1 Thess. 2:2; 2 Tim. 1:8-12; 2:9; Heb. 10:33-4; 13:3. For an extended discussion focusing especially on the apostle Paul, see Rapske 1994b: 288-312.

<sup>103</sup> M. Furius Camillus: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 13.5.1; Livy 38.59.9-10; Sejanus: Cass. Dio 58.11; Vitellius: Suet. *Vit.* 7.17.1.

<sup>104</sup> Cass. Dio 36.53.3-6; 58.3.4-5; 77.11.1; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 3.12.

citizens according to the *lex Iulia* only under exceptional circumstances, along with flogging.<sup>105</sup> In this vein then Josephus presents Macro as hesitating when ordered by Tiberius to place the Judaean king Agrippa I in chains, while the eventual exchange of the prison shackles for a golden chain of equal weight served as an attempt to remove the reproach.<sup>106</sup> Such connotations of shame and disgrace Josephus may be seeking to remove from himself during his time in Rome, perhaps especially shortly after his arrival given the prominence of these themes in his *War*.

The potential significance of this time of imprisonment for Josephus' later circumstances in the city of Rome should then not be underestimated. To begin with, these two years marked the longest period of proximity between Josephus and Vespasian prior to his arrival in the city of Rome. If Josephus did spend this time largely forgotten among the other prisoners, chained and subjected to the poor conditions inherent with captivity, perhaps even confined in a guarded fort such as that displayed on Trajan's Column,<sup>107</sup> a close relationship at this point would have been unlikely.<sup>108</sup> Although he was undeniably privileged compared to his fellow captives, the benefits he lists can be understood as minor concessions to ameliorate his harsh environment. And while it remains possible that he was in attendance as adviser of sorts to Vespasian or Titus during this time period, as he claims, the other details he provides of his imprisonment and the external evidence make it difficult to imagine that this would have had any significant impact on his relative status. Two years into his time spent among the Romans, therefore, Josephus may have made little headway as far as improving his lot was concerned.

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<sup>105</sup> See especially Cicero's accusations against the corrupt governor of Sicily, Gaius Verres (*Verr.* 2.1.7, 13f.; 2.5.140-42, 161-63, 170); the case of the apostle Paul also comes to mind (Acts 22:24-29). For discussion of the application of this law and further examples, see Sherwin-White 1963: 71-4.

<sup>106</sup> *Ant.* 18.189-191, 236-7.

<sup>107</sup> See Lepper and Frere 1988: Plate XXXIII and p. 89-90.

<sup>108</sup> This point was made in passing by Nicols 1978: 43-44.

At the same time, we should understand that Josephus' status as former prisoner-of-war was not one that would easily be forgotten, regardless of the legality of the ceremony he described as stripping him of that stigma. For those who knew him or met him in the city of Rome, he would always remain the Judaeen general who had been captured during the war with the Romans, a detail which would almost assuredly have had the effect of categorizing him perpetually in the position of an outsider, at least from the position of the Roman elite.<sup>109</sup> This is underlined by the two main references to Josephus by Roman writers, both of which identify him as a prisoner-of-war first and foremost.<sup>110</sup> Suetonius, whose rise to prominence in the imperial court was roughly contemporaneous with Josephus' time in Rome, reports that: "one of the noble prisoners, named Josephus, when he was being put in chains, asserted most firmly that he would soon be released by the same man, who would then be emperor".<sup>111</sup> Much later, in the early third century, the historian Cassius Dio, in his recounting of the portents foretelling Vespasian's accession, states: "Although these require interpretation, not so Josephus, a certain Judaeen man captured earlier and chained by [Vespasian], who laughed and said, "You may imprison me now, but in a year, when you have become Emperor, you will release me"". <sup>112</sup> Although in neither case is his imprisonment reported in negative terms, it is significant that even after his many years in Rome (and after the writing of a considerable body of literature), Josephus was still identified by this brief period of his life, while his later accomplishments were not worth mentioning to the respective readerships. When we consider, as we have done above, the

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<sup>109</sup> I.e. ἀλλόφυλος: *War* 1.16.

<sup>110</sup> A third reference to Josephus' prediction can be found in a fragment of Appian's *Historia Romana* (Fr. 17 in Viereck 1905: 534) preserved by Zonar. 11.16.

<sup>111</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 5.6: *et unus ex nobilibus captivis Iosephus, cum coiceretur in vincula, constantissime asseveravit fore ut ab eodem brevi solveretur, verum iam imperatore.*

<sup>112</sup> Cass. Dio 65.1.4: ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ἐρμηνεύσεως ἐχρηζεν, Ἰώσηπος δὲ ἀνὴρ Ἰουδαῖος ἀχθεῖς τε ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πρότερον καὶ δεθεῖς ἐγέλασε καὶ ἔφη νῦν μὲν με δῆσεις, μετ' ἐνιαυτὸν δὲ λύσεις αὐτοκράτωρ γενόμενος.

evidence for the social stigma attached to this status, this is unsurprising. Josephus was until his death an ex-prisoner-of-war.

### Josephus as ‘Prophet’

A more likely basis for a close relationship with Vespasian would be Josephus’ prediction of Vespasian’s accession to the imperial throne, an episode that takes a crucial place within the narrative account of his capture and in the *War* as a whole.<sup>113</sup> In order to understand the encounter, we need to begin with the dreams Josephus claimed to have received while hidden in a cave with forty of the other defenders of Jotapata, dreams in which God had revealed both the misfortunes of the Judaeans and the futures of the Roman ‘kings’.<sup>114</sup> Since he was an interpreter of dreams and able to determine the meaning of God’s ambiguous declarations, he recalled the exact meaning of these supernatural occurrences and was inspired to give himself up to the Romans, although not as a traitor (προδότης), but as a divine servant/messenger (διάκονος).<sup>115</sup> When his companions did not agree with his decision—unfortunately he had not enlightened them regarding his divine mission—and moreover threatened to kill him, he was

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<sup>113</sup> See, therefore, von Struckrad 2000: 262, “schon früh, nämlich nach der Niederlage von Jotapata, legte Josephus durch seine erstaunliche Prophezerung die Grundlage für eine lange und enge Beziehung mit Vespasian und Titus.”

<sup>114</sup> It is not my intention to treat Josephus’ views on prophecy and prophets in general, since that has been done extensively elsewhere and does not impact directly our discussion here. See e.g. Blenkinsopp 1974: 239-262; Dellling 1974: 109-121; van Unnik 1978: 41-54; Begg 1988: 341-357; Feldman 1990: 368-422; Gray 1993; Gnuse 1996; Grabbe 2006: 240-7; Gussmann 2008: 288-305.

<sup>115</sup> *War* 3.351-54: ἀνάμνησις αὐτὸν τῶν διὰ νυκτὸς ὀνείρων εἰσέρχεται, δι’ ὧν ὁ θεὸς τὰς τε μελλούσας αὐτῷ συμφορὰς προεσήμαιεν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τὰ περὶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίων βασιλεῖς ἐσόμενα. ἦν δὲ καὶ περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων ἰκανὸς συμβαλεῖν τὰ ἀμφιβόλως ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ λεγόμενα, τῶν γε μὴν ἱερῶν βιβλῶν οὐκ ἠγνόει τὰς προφητείας ὡς ἂν αὐτὸς τε ὦν ἱερεὺς καὶ ἱερέων ἔγγονος· ὧν ἐπὶ τῆς τότε ὥρας ἐνθους γενόμενος καὶ τὰ φρικώδη τῶν προσφάτων ὀνείρων σπάσας φαντάσματα προσφέρει τῷ θεῷ λεληθυῖαν εὐχὴν, κάπειδὴ τὸ Ἰουδαίων, ἔφη, φύλον ὀκλάσαι δοκεῖ σοι τῷ κτίσαντι, μετέβη δὲ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἢ τύχη πᾶσα, καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐπελέξω τὰ μέλλοντα εἰπεῖν, δίδωμι μὲν Ῥωμαίοις τὰς χεῖρας ἐκὼν καὶ ζῶ, μαρτύρομαι δὲ ὡς οὐ προδότης, ἀλλὰ σὸς εἶμι διάκονος”.

forced to philosophize concerning their plight, adducing a series of arguments against suicide, which patently contradict sentiments expressed elsewhere in the narrative.<sup>116</sup>

When he was unable to persuade those trapped with him to give themselves up to the Romans he was forced to employ a further ruse, in which a lot was cast determining the order in which the men would kill each other. According to Josephus it was the providence of God that resulted in the lot falling to him last, which enabled him to convince his companion to give up the suicide pact.<sup>117</sup> Again the divine nature of Josephus' mission is highlighted for his readers. And so Josephus was finally led by his captors into the Roman camp to meet the Roman general. Vespasian apparently had in mind to execute him—in direct contradiction to Nicanor's promises earlier on<sup>118</sup>—but was persuaded by Titus to spare him and instead decided to send him to Nero. Upon hearing these plans, Josephus asked for a private audience with Vespasian, at which opportunity he made his prediction before Vespasian, Titus, and two friends. He opens significantly by denying his status as a “mere captive”, claiming instead to be a “messenger of greater things”, for which reason he gave himself up to the Romans alive.<sup>119</sup> His prediction is worth recounting in full again: “Do you think that those who succeed Nero will remain before you? For you will be Caesar, Vespasian, and *imperator*, you and your son here. Bind me now

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<sup>116</sup> E.g. *War* 1.311-13; 2.469-76; 3.31; 4.79-81; 6.280; cf. Hengel 1989: 262-5; Gray 1993: 45-50; Kelley 2003: 271-2. This passage likely serves as a part of a personal apologetic for Josephus aimed especially at those compatriots who from the beginning viewed his actions at Jotapata as traitorous but also at those Romans who scorned his disloyalty; see especially *War* 3.438-42, “some were accusing him of cowardice, some of betrayal, and the city was full of indignation and of insults directed at him” (cf. *Life* 416-7). Regarding Josephus as apologist, especially with regard to the *Antiquities*, see Sterling 1992: 16-19, 226-310; Krieger 1994: esp. 326-8. The question of the composition of Josephus' audience(s) is fundamentally related to these matters and will be dealt with in a later chapter.

<sup>117</sup> *War* 3.391 (θεοῦ προνοίας). Regardless of whether or not we accept the addition of “εἴτε ὑπὸ τύχης χρή λέγειν, εἴτε” found in some manuscripts, which adds the possibility that Josephus' salvation was a matter of fortune (τύχη), the overall sense of the passage is that God has directed the events. See Daube 1980: 30-31; Gray 1993: 51. The manuscripts omitting this phrase are P (Codex Parisinus Graecus 1945), A (Codex Ambrosianus (Mediolanensis) D 50 sup. = Gr. 234) and L (Codex Laurentianus, Plut. 69, Cod. 19), all three among the better witnesses; see Leoni 2009: 150-51.

<sup>118</sup> *War* 3.348.

<sup>119</sup> *War* 3.400: ἔφη, Οὐεσπασιανέ, νομίζεις αἰχμάλωτον αὐτὸ μόνον εἰληφέναι Ἰώσηπον, ἐγὼ δὲ ἄγγελος ἦκω σοι μειζόνων. μὴ γὰρ ὑπὸ θεοῦ προπεμπόμενος ἦδειν τὸν Ἰουδαίων νόμον, καὶ πῶς στρατηγοῖς ἀποθνήσκειν πρέπει.

more tightly in chains and hold me by yourself; for you, Caesar, are master not only over me but over the land and sea and every tribe of men; but if I have toyed with the words of God I would be justly bound even more severely.”<sup>120</sup>

In closing this episode Josephus reports that at first Vespasian was suspicious of the prediction being a ploy of Josephus to preserve himself, but that gradually he was led to believe it through God’s prompting and by the appearance of other signs pointing to the throne.<sup>121</sup> In addition, Vespasian discovered that Josephus had predicted to the inhabitants of Jotapata that the city would fall to the Romans in forty-seven days (which it had) and that he himself would be captured. This verification of Josephus’ ability to make accurate predictions added further weight to the possibility that also his foretelling of Vespasian’s accession would be proven correct in time. While Josephus was not released from his chains, he was presented with ‘clothing and other precious gifts’, and treated with kindness by both Vespasian and Titus.<sup>122</sup>

When Josephus returns to his prediction at the occasion of his release from imprisonment, he gives a rather different impression of the time that elapsed between his capture/prediction and his eventual release, as I have noted above. At this point Vespasian had indeed been acclaimed *imperator* by his troops,<sup>123</sup> and upon reflecting on the role of divine providence (δαιμονίου προνοίας) and a certain just destiny (δικαία τις είμαρμένη) in bringing the empire under his control, he recalled among the other portents (τά τε άλλα σημεΐα) also Josephus’ words. Here we are given the impression, then, that Josephus had been largely forgotten up to this point. Upon

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<sup>120</sup> War 3.401-3: οί μετά Νέρωνα μέχρι σοῦ διάδοχοι μενούσιν. σὺ Καῖσαρ, Οὐεσπασιανέ, καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ, σὺ καὶ παῖς ὁ σοῦ σῶτος. δέσμευι δέ με νῦν ἀσφαλέστερον, καὶ τήρει σεαυτῷ· δεσπότης μὲν γὰρ οὐ μόνον ἐμοῦ σὺ Καῖσαρ, ἀλλὰ καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης καὶ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων γένους, ἐγὼ δὲ ἐπὶ τιμωρίαν δέομαι φρουρᾶς μείζονος, εἰ κατασχεδιάζω καὶ θεοῦ.

<sup>121</sup> War 3.404: κατὰ μικρὸν δὲ εἰς πίστιν ὑπήγετο τοῦ θεοῦ διεγείροντος αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἤδη καὶ τὰ σκῆπτρα δι’ ἐτέρων σημείων προδεικνύοντος. The phrase ἐτέρων σημείων refers to the familiar *omina imperii* (Suet. *Vesp.* 4; Tac. *Hist.* 1.10, 2.1, 5.13), which we will have reason to discuss shortly.

<sup>122</sup> War 3.406-8.

<sup>123</sup> See War 4.592-621.



recalling these past events, Vespasian called together his commanders and reminded them first of Josephus' valour in his opposition to the Romans and then of his prophecies, initially suspected to be fabrications, but now proven divine.<sup>124</sup> Then followed the release ceremony (as recounted earlier) after which Josephus was a free man, untainted by his stint as captive and moreover esteemed as a reliable forecaster, all a direct result of his successful divination.<sup>125</sup>

The above summary makes it immediately clear that reconstruction of the historical event behind these episodes is a complicated affair. The historical event itself, as far as it has been interpreted by modern scholars on the basis of the narrative, has been presented as a key to understanding Josephus' motivation and actions following his captivity and as the foundation for his position among the Romans.<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, both passages play a significant rhetorical role within the narratives and are shaped and coloured to suit Josephus' aims, which make historical questions especially difficult to answer. The literary episode itself serves as a personal *apologia* for Josephus in his writing of the *War* excusing his betrayal and justifying his presence in the Roman camp/city of Rome, which undermines the traditional view of the *War* as a piece of Flavian propaganda.<sup>127</sup> Instead of serving the needs of the Roman emperors, it should be seen as a work that is primarily written with Josephus' own interests in mind. To arrive at a reliable historical account of this event simply on the basis of his narratives is impossible.

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<sup>124</sup> *War* 4.622-5: ὡς οὐ δίχα δαιμονίου προνοίας ἄναιτο τῆς ἀρχῆς, ἀλλὰ δικαία τις εἰμαρμένη περιελάγει τὸ κρατεῖν τῶν ὄλων ἐπ' αὐτόν· ἀναμνησκειται γὰρ τὰ τε ἄλλα σημεῖα, πολλὰ δ' αὐτῷ γέγονει πανταχοῦ προφαίνοντα τὴν ἡγεμονίαν, καὶ τὰς τοῦ Ἰωσήπου φωνάς, ὅς αὐτὸν ἔτι ζῶντος Νέρωνος αὐτοκράτορα προσεπειεῖν ἐθάρασεν. ἐξεπέπληκτο δὲ τὸν ἄνδρα δεσμώτην ἔτι ὄντα παρ' αὐτῷ, καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος Μουκιανὸν ἅμα τοῖς ἄλλοις ἡγεμόσι καὶ φίλοις πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ τὸ δραστήριον ἐκδιηγείτο καὶ ὅσα περὶ τοῖς Ἰωταπάτοις δι' αὐτὸν ἔκαμον, ἔπειτα τὰς μαντείας, ἃς αὐτὸς μὲν ὑπώπτευσεν τότε πλάσματα τοῦ δέου, ἀποδειχθῆναι δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ χρόνου καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων θείας.

<sup>125</sup> *War* 4.629: ὁ δὲ Ἰώσηπος εἰληφῶς περὶ τῶν προειρημένων γέρας τὴν ἐπιτιμίαν ἤδη καὶ περὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἀξιόπιστος ἦν.

<sup>126</sup> See Gray 1993: 43-4, especially n. 28; cf. Cohen 2002[1979], 98-100; 1982: 374-77. The significance of this episode is, however, downplayed by Lindner 1972: 57-9, 145; Bilde 1988: 51.

<sup>127</sup> Kelley 2004: 257-8; Rajak 2002[1983]: 191; Gray 1993: 43-44.

It is not surprising then that scholars have taken different views on what happened between the Judaeen general and the future emperor. If we accept the chain of events that is presented by Josephus, namely that he made this prediction in AD 67, there are a number of possibilities to explain this prediction: a) he did indeed have access to divine foresight or at least the ability to interpret ambiguous past prophecies;<sup>128</sup> b) he was able to calculate the probability of Vespasian's accession rationally; c) he simply made a brilliant guess. Each explanation presents difficulties. At this stage Nero's position was by no means secure,<sup>129</sup> but the civil war that emerged later was hardly in view.<sup>130</sup> Furthermore, even if it were certain that Nero's time as emperor was over, the likelihood of predicting Vespasian's succession was slim, particularly since there was no reason to believe that the following emperor would emerge from anywhere outside the Julio-Claudian family. Scholars have, therefore, either modified the prediction to a simple forecast of "brilliant military success to rival Corbulo's",<sup>131</sup> rejected the prediction of AD 67 altogether while accepting a version of the prophecy at a later date,<sup>132</sup> or explained the entire

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<sup>128</sup> Josephus' prediction here is often connected to the so-called 'ambiguous oracle' mentioned at *War* 6.312 and referred also to by Suetonius (*Vesp.* 5) and Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.13.2). Josephus himself links his revelation to scriptural prophecy at *War* 3.352, the most likely source being Daniel 2:31-45; 9:24-7; cf. *Ant.* 10.266-76; Mason 2003c: 49-50. Mason suggests that the application of these prophecies in Daniel to a divinely appointed Roman ruler in general was not remarkable, considering the security of Roman rule and the popularity of these 'oracles' at the time, but that Josephus' innovation was in applying them to Vespasian (esp. 50). See also Stauffer 1952: 155-9; Shochat 1960: 163-5; Griffiths 1970: 363-368; Gaston 1970: 458-62. A source of complication has been the rabbinic accounts of the prediction of Johanan ben Zakkai of Vespasian's accession, which has many parallels to the episode involving Josephus; see Baer 1971: 179-83; Saldarini 1975: 189-204, esp. 197-9; Moehring 1984: 907-914.

<sup>129</sup> Think, for example of the conspiracy of 65 led by G. Piso (*Tac. Ann.* 15.48-72) and the general discontent among both the people and the Senate that could be observed during this time period, which should include the great fire in Rome of the previous year (*Cass. Dio* 62.8-19; cf. 63.15); see the general discussion provided by Moehring 1984: 912-13.

<sup>130</sup> Moehring 1984: 907-914, however, accepts the account in rough form. See particularly his comment, "It must not have been too difficult for a man like Josephus to realize that the emperor's reign would not last much longer" (913); he bases his conclusions on a combination of arguments relating to the form of the prediction, the transmission of a similar prediction by Yohanan ben Zakkai in different Judaeen traditions, and the realistic assessment of the political situation given in the prediction; cf. Bruce 1965: 158; van Unnik 1978: 41-5. See also Hadas-Lebel 1994: 104-6, who even suggests that Josephus' prophecy may have played a role in provoking the events that led to Vespasian's accession.

<sup>131</sup> Levick 1999: 43; cf. Luke 2010: 82 n. 28.

<sup>132</sup> Schalit 1975: 208-327, esp. 297-300; 2007[1971]), 11.435-6. Schalit dates the prophecy to some time between the death of Galba on Jan. 15 and the accession of Vespasian on July 1, AD 69. See also the possibilities presented

episode as a collusion between Josephus and others in the interests of Flavian propaganda, suggesting on the basis of the prediction that Vespasian had designs on the imperial throne already then.<sup>133</sup>

For our purposes, however, it is not necessary to spend time probing the possibilities and probabilities of each proposal; a solution is unlikely in any case.<sup>134</sup> Whatever else we find in the accounts of Suetonius and Cassius Dio cannot be separated from the legend that grew out of the initial encounter and so, in the absence of any new evidence, this question cannot be pursued further.<sup>135</sup> If anything I would simply make the observation that, based on my analysis of Josephus' tenure as captive, whatever occurred in AD 67 was not significant enough at the time to merit his release. The legend of the earlier encounter that developed at the time of Vespasian's accession should, however, be further explored since Josephus establishes it explicitly as the key to his change in circumstances and so reveals it as fundamental for our understanding of his place in both the Roman camp and the city of Rome.<sup>136</sup>

On both occasions where the prophecy receives attention in the *War*, Josephus places his prediction among the other signs that were marshalled as indications of divine support for Vespasian's accession.<sup>137</sup> The emperors frequently presented their accession to the imperial

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by Mason 2003c: 50-51, which include the prospect that he brought up the oracle *after* the acclamation for the purposes of propaganda or that he first made a more general prediction and only later applied it specifically to Vespasian. Morgan 1996: 50 n. 36, explores the evidence in the other sources to evaluate the possibility that the prophecy was made only shortly before (*brevi*; Suet. *Vesp.* 5) Josephus' release, the result of which is inconclusive. We cannot, therefore, reject Josephus' account for this reason.

<sup>133</sup> Weber 1921: 154; Drexler 1956: 523; Chilver 1957: 34; cf. Nicols 1978: 92-3. This is unlikely to have been the case, particularly since the caution Vespasian had demonstrated when assuming the *latus clavus* early on in life can also be recognized in his bid for the throne; see Griffin 2000a: 2-3.

<sup>134</sup> See Rajak 2002[1983]: 186-7; cf. Feldman 1984a: 94-5.

<sup>135</sup> According to Suetonius, Josephus also predicted that he would be released by Vespasian (*Vesp.* 5.6); Cassius Dio reports that Josephus laughed (also a new detail) and repeats Suetonius' addition (66.1). Although the occurrence of this episode in these accounts supports the historicity of the event, these discrepancies underline the difficulty in establishing the precise details.

<sup>136</sup> *War* 4.629: ὁ δὲ Ἰώσηπος εἰληφῶς περὶ τῶν προειρημένων γέρας τὴν ἐπιτιμίαν ἤδη καὶ περὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἀξιόπιστος ἦν.

<sup>137</sup> *War* 3.404: ἐτέρων σημείων; 4.623: τὰ ἄλλα σημεῖα.

throne as inevitable through reference to signs that indicated that the gods had made their choice already at the conception or birth of the future ruler.<sup>138</sup> Whether or not these originated with the emperor himself is impossible to determine, but we can recognize that these signs subsequently served as witnesses to the legitimacy of the emperor's position, of the *consensus deorum* he enjoyed. These were then taken up and memorialized by the Roman historians, including Cassius Dio, whose earliest historical work was an account of the dreams and portents leading up to the accession of Septimius Severus and whose surviving history, which is replete with prodigies and portents, testifies to his continued interest,<sup>139</sup> although it is Suetonius in his imperial biographies who provides the most useful account for comparative purposes in his use of omens as a category for the arrangement of his biographies of the emperors. Unsurprisingly Augustus is reported to have received the most with seventeen, but Vespasian appears second on the list with twelve.<sup>140</sup> It is surely not coincidental that both of these figures established themselves and their dynasties in periods of great uncertainty and at the expense of rivals.<sup>141</sup> Signs that were either deliberately fabricated or favourably reinterpreted proved useful as a means of demonstrating the good luck (*felicitas*) of the emperor and emphasizing his divine patronage, two concepts that were inextricably tied together.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Fears 1977: 171; Potter 1994: 146.

<sup>139</sup> Regarding his earlier work, see Cass. Dio 72.23.1-2; cf. 76.11.1; it is even suggested by Marincola 1997: 49 n. 56, that this "motif of the future historian prophesying the future accession of an Emperor is influenced by ('modelled on' may be too strong a term) Josephus' portrayal of himself as a prisoner before Titus..." For a complete list of portents and dreams in Dio's surviving work, see the index in Boissevain 1926: 4.532-42; cf. Millar 1966a: 77.

<sup>140</sup> Augustus: Suet. *Aug.* 94-96; Vespasian: Suet. *Vesp.* 5; cf. Cass. Dio 65.8, 66.1; Tac. *Hist.* 2.78, 4.81-2; Oros. 7.9 (quoting Suetonius). Lattimore 1934: 443, lists also 5 portents for Tiberius, 1 for Gaius, 6 for Galba, and 3 for Vitellius; see also Weber 1921: 45ff. There is an interesting parallel to Josephus' prediction in Suetonius' account of the portents that encouraged Galba in his imperial pursuit, namely the prediction made by a young girl of high birth identical to that spoken by an inspired girl two hundred years prior that a ruler and lord of the world (*principem dominumque rerum*) would come from Spain (*Galb.* 9).

<sup>141</sup> Vespasian himself was keen to emphasize connections to Augustus, most clearly early on through his coinage, which emphasized the return of Augustan themes, namely *Virtus Augusta*, *Pacis Eventus*, *Fortuna Redux*, *Honos* and *Virtus*; see Levick 1999: 70-74.

<sup>142</sup> Lattimore 1934: 446; Levick 1999: 67.

There is certainly no need to suggest that Vespasian was directly involved in the propagation of every one of the signs recounted in the various sources, stories such as those regarding the sacred tree of Mars, which bore an unusually large shoot in representation of Vespasian; the dog who brought a human hand to Vespasian while he was eating his lunch; the plough-ox that burst into the dining room and bowed before the future emperor; or the cypress tree that was first uprooted but then took root again stronger than ever before.<sup>143</sup> These tales can equally be attributed to his followers and need not entail any involvement from Vespasian himself. Nevertheless, in their accounts of the omens that presaged Vespasian's accession, both Roman writers chose to emphasize the concern of the new emperor himself to highlight his divine backing. Tacitus attributes Vespasian's decision to seize the throne in part to these tangible signs of divine support and Suetonius' Vespasian also shows particular concern to broadcast his good fortune.<sup>144</sup> We should not, therefore, reject Vespasian's involvement in perpetuating these claims, but instead consider these omens as useful propaganda for the legitimisation of his rule.<sup>145</sup>

To these should be added a number of deliberate actions. Among them was a visit to the oracle of Ba'al Carmelus at Mount Carmel towards the beginning of June in AD 69. Here Vespasian received an oracle from the priest Basilides,<sup>146</sup> who declared that he would receive "a vast habitation, boundless territory, a multitude of men", or that he would never be disappointed in what he set out to do "however lofty his ambitions".<sup>147</sup> Prior to this his son Titus had visited the oracle of Venus at Paphos in Cyprus where he had been assured of his future on the imperial

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<sup>143</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 5.

<sup>144</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.78; cf. 1.10; Suet. *Vesp.* 5-7.

<sup>145</sup> See Scott 1975[1936]: 1-20; Nicols 1978: 96; Curran 2005: 90; Winn 2008: 158-60.

<sup>146</sup> Tacitus (*Hist.* 4.82) later points out the significance of the name, 'Son of the monarch', which derives from the Greek word for king, *basileus*.

<sup>147</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.78 (*magna sedes, ingentes termini, multum hominum*); Suet. *Vesp.* 5 (*animo quamlibet magnum*). The latter account does not mention the priest Basilides. For an extensive discussion of the passage in Tacitus, focused mainly on literary concerns, see Morgan 1996: 41-55.

throne.<sup>148</sup> Tacitus reports that his return to the troops in Judaea was “received as a mighty pledge of success by the wavering minds of the provincials and the troops.”<sup>149</sup> At every stage it was important to obtain, or be seen to have obtained, clear support from heaven, particularly for the benefit of followers.

Thus also after his accession in AD 69 Vespasian visited the temple of Serapis in Alexandria in order to receive divine insight regarding the length of his reign.<sup>150</sup> According to Suetonius, his freedman Basilides appeared to him there—despite being far away and hardly able to walk due to his rheumatism—and presented him with the customary sacred garlands and bread.<sup>151</sup> There is a strong possibility that this figure should be equated with the earlier Basilides of Mt. Carmel.<sup>152</sup> If this is the case it may be that this Basilides was on his way to Alexandria from Judaea with Vespasian, but was laid up as a result of his illness and had to be left behind. Even so, he was able to be of use *in absentia* in securing prestige for Vespasian by appearing in spiritual form in the temple. We have, therefore, a tentative parallel with Josephus, whose prophecy was of similar utility. We might expect then that the latter also continued to have a place in Vespasian’s entourage as one who marked out the Roman general as “the object of the favour of heaven and of the partiality of the gods.”<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 5. Suetonius reports that this incident sparked suspicions that Titus had designs to revolt from his father and establish himself as king in the East (*Tit.* 5.1b-3); cf. Moehring 1984: 908-910. Regardless of the historicity of this claim, the importance of these politically motivated religious symbols remains evident.

<sup>149</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.4: *Titus aucto animo ad patrem pervectus suspensis provinciarum et exercituum mentibus ingens rerum fiducia accessit.*

<sup>150</sup> The exact dating is difficult since Suetonius and Tacitus differ, but Levick 1999: 68, proposes that both the vision of Basilides and the miracles occurred in the winter of AD 69-70, prior to news of the capture of Rome reaching Alexandria. Griffin 2000a: 5, suggests that the miracles in Alexandria were arranged by the Judaeen prefect of Egypt, Tiberius Julius Alexander, specifically for Egyptian and eastern audiences. Curran 2005: 86-90, places much weight on Egypt as the political and theological foundation for the Flavian usurpation of imperial control on the basis of the events discussed here and select details regarding the Flavians following the revolt in the city of Rome.

<sup>151</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 7. Tacitus (*Hist.* 4.82) describes Basilides alternately as a chief figure of Egypt (*e primoribus Aegyptiorum*). The sacred garlands and bread were likely signs of royalty; see Henrichs 1968: 62-3.

<sup>152</sup> For the arguments in favour of this interpretation, see Scott 1934: 138-140; cf. Nicols 1978: 111-12, 125-6.

<sup>153</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.81: *multa miracula evenere, quis caelestis favor et quaedam in Vespasianum inclinatio numinum ostenderetur.*

In the same temple visit the god Serapis himself also bolstered *Vespasian's auctoritas* and *maiestas* by directing him to cure two individuals who would approach him later. This he subsequently did, albeit with hesitation, earning himself the reputation of miracle-worker.<sup>154</sup> In each of these cases it is difficult to separate the historical event from the legend that grew up around it,<sup>155</sup> but is also unnecessary for our purposes. The very circulation of the stories, historical or not, provides an indication of deliberate attempts made by Vespasian to secure popular support, which may also have included actual performances that were designed to indicate that his accession had the approval of natural and supernatural forces alike.<sup>156</sup>

By placing his own prophecy in the general context of these omens, Josephus also provides a new framework in which to explore his relationship with the new emperor. No longer is he a prisoner-of-war; instead he has been physically freed from his chains and, ceremonially at least, of the stigma attached to these. What is more, he has made himself useful to Vespasian in his efforts to secure the throne. For if we can see the prominent visits to select shrines and the publication of the favourable results as attempts by Vespasian and his coterie to emphasize the Flavian right to rule, then we should recognize that Josephus' prophecy served their purposes equally well. It is significant that the Roman writers Suetonius and Cassius Dio record the prediction of Josephus unceremoniously in their tabulation of the signs portending Vespasian's accession. He belonged there. While Josephus had an interest in highlighting only his own role

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<sup>154</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 7; Tac. *Hist.* 4.81-2. Henrichs 1968: 51-80, discusses the similarities between Vespasian's time in Egypt and the visit of Alexander the Great some centuries before. He highlights the significance of these parallels and the effect that the Alexandrians can be seen to have had on Vespasian's image. His discussion demonstrates the difficulties in determining a straightforward historical narrative. See also Weber 1921: 250-58; Scott 1975[1936]: 9-13.

<sup>155</sup> See Luke 2010: 78-106, for a lengthy discussion of the development of the legends regarding Vespasian's visit to Alexandria under the successive reigns of the Flavians. His major point is that the legends as we have them should be attributed more to the reign of Domitian than his predecessors. We are concerned, however, with the historical nucleus of the event.

<sup>156</sup> The late 3<sup>rd</sup>-century Greek orator Menander Rhetor (371.11-12) even recommends inventing omens if necessary.

and so omitted specifics regarding the other signs,<sup>157</sup> and Tacitus conversely omitted the prediction of Josephus in the interests of his narrative concerns,<sup>158</sup> these other writers rightly placed Josephus squarely in the midst of these early events. Just as Basilides bore witness to Syrians, Judaeans, and Egyptians alike that Vespasian was endowed with divine favour, so also the Judaeen general's prediction, which had now been proven true, announced to the inhabitants of the empire that these events had taken place with divine sanction. Having already released the prisoner as a reward for his accurate prediction,<sup>159</sup> Vespasian then also brought him along to Alexandria as symbol of his right to the throne at this crucial moment,<sup>160</sup> just as he allegedly sought to have Apollonius of Tyana accompany him to Rome from Alexandria in the legendary account of their encounter.<sup>161</sup>

Unfortunately we know nothing concerning the few months spent by Josephus in Alexandria through the end of AD 69 and into 70 with Vespasian and the key players in the Flavian camp, at least as far as Josephus was concerned.<sup>162</sup> Considering that, on the basis of our

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<sup>157</sup> We need not see in Josephus' omission of the other signs any other explanation than this personal one. *Contra* Henrichs 1968: 79, who attributes the silence to Josephus' attempt to illustrate Vespasian's reluctance in accepting the position of emperor; Levick 1999: 69, suggests that Josephus ignored these events in part because, "the manipulation of gentile cults in a city notorious for virulent hatred of Jews was repugnant"; Griffin 2000a: 6, understanding Josephus' version as Flavian propaganda, suggests that the Flavians were reluctant to see the advent in Rome overshadowed by events in Alexandria; Luke 2010: 81, relying on a similar assessment of Josephus' role, sees the Alexandrian miracles as simply not figuring in early Flavian propaganda.

<sup>158</sup> Morgan 1996: 45; cf. Chilver 1979: 237.

<sup>159</sup> According to the accounts of Suetonius (*Vesp.* 5) and Cassius Dio (66.1) Vespasian was to a certain degree obligated to grant this reward if he wished to make use of this prediction, since Josephus had linked its fulfillment with his own change in status. To then deny him this reward would have had the effect of casting his predictive powers into doubt. Josephus had thus placed Vespasian in a Catch-22.

<sup>160</sup> *Life* 415; *Ap.* 1.48. The omission of this detail from the *War* narrative may serve as part of Josephus' attempt to minimize his collusion with the Romans during this period. He had acted as messenger of God, but there was no divine reason for his accompanying them to Alexandria; Mason 2001: 165 n. 1705, points out that this would have been incriminating in the eyes of his fellow Judaeans soon after the end of the war. In the *Life* and *Apion*, however, he is concerned to emphasize the extent of contact between the Flavians and himself and so includes this detail. For the trip to Alexandria, see also *War* 4.656f.; Tac. *Hist.* 2.82; Suet. *Vesp.* 7.1.

<sup>161</sup> Philostr. *VA* 38, 41.

<sup>162</sup> Levick 1999: 52, 91; Griffin 2000a: 4-6. Vespasian left for Egypt in October of AD 69 and arrived in Rome at the end of September in 70. This suggests a period of approximately eight months in Alexandria when we allow for ancient travel time. Josephus, however, left with Titus likely early in 70 (January?) heading with the troops for



arguments above regarding Josephus' time as captive, this would have been the only real opportunity for the development of a relationship between Vespasian and Josephus, this lack of evidence is regrettable. Nevertheless, it is possible to make a few observations that may help elucidate this period. First of all, Josephus owed his freedom and therefore also his accompaniment of Vespasian to Alexandria to the (perceived) success of his prophetic pronouncement. We should not assume, then, that he necessarily had anything else to offer the Flavians at this point, other than accompanying them as a symbol of divine favour, which was further established by the Alexandrian *omina*.<sup>163</sup> This suggests the possibility, then, that there was little contact between Josephus and the new emperor during this period. Vespasian was concerned at this stage to secure his throne, a task that would have occupied all of his attention. While in Alexandria he needed not only to defuse the local situation, a task that took some effort, but also to direct the affairs, inasmuch as was logistically possible, of Rome and the empire, which included the long overdue supply of grain for the capital.<sup>164</sup> He was, furthermore, overwhelmed by such a multitude of embassies and visitors that Josephus claims the city of Alexandria was too narrow (*στενωτέρα*) to contain them.<sup>165</sup> We can certainly imagine, therefore, that the opportunities for contact between the new emperor and his former prisoner-of-war might have been few and far between.

At the same time, Josephus himself may have been busy with his own concerns. The only detail about the trip to Alexandria that he records is that he contracted another marriage.<sup>166</sup> It is

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Caesarea, where they took up winter quarters and readied themselves for the final siege of Jerusalem; see *War* 5.40-46; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 7.

<sup>163</sup> His later role in the Roman camp in service of Titus should not be used as evidence for a similar position under Vespasian. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>164</sup> Cass. Dio 66.8-9; Tac. *Hist.* 4.51-2.

<sup>165</sup> *War* 4.656; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 4.81. This was more generally the nature of the imperial court (see e.g. Plin. *Pan.* 79.6-7), but we should perhaps see the demands as heightened at this point, considering the circumstances; see Millar 1992[1977]: 363-549; Turcan 1987: 127-196.

<sup>166</sup> *Life* 415: γυναῖκα δ' ἐτέραν ἡγαγόμην κατὰ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν; cf. 426.

likely that this woman belonged to the large Judaeen community in Alexandria when we consider that Josephus was at pains more generally to emphasize his priestly status and his strict observance of the laws and traditions of the Judaeans, both of which would have been compromised by marriage to a non-Judaeen, a detail he himself makes clear.<sup>167</sup> If this was the case, then we should envision Josephus seeking out members of the Judaeen community upon his arrival in Alexandria and spending enough time among them to choose for himself a suitable wife, one who would bear him three children and accompany him to Rome.<sup>168</sup> More than this I cannot say. Although we might suspect that Josephus would have mentioned any assistance he was able to provide Vespasian and conclude from the absence of such claims that he was on the margins of Vespasian's party, his silence could hide much activity. At the same time, we should not posit simply from his presence in the emperor's entourage that he occupied a special position or that he was of more than symbolic value. In either case, however, we should not downplay the drastic change in circumstances for the Judaeen general, whose status changed from that of a prisoner-of-war whose only honour was that his suffering was eased by the Roman general to

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<sup>167</sup> For the large Judaeen community in Alexandria, see Smallwood 1981[1976]: 220-55; Kasher 1985: 168-355; Modrzejewski 1995: 161-83; Barclay 1996: 48-83, 103-228; Gruen 2002: 54-83. Regarding the importance of marriage to another Judaeen, see especially *Ant.* 12.187; cf. 4.131-55, describing the disaster brought on by Midianite women; 8.191-2, concerning Solomon's transgression of Moses' law 'prohibiting marriage with those of other races'; 18.340-52, criticising the marriage of Anilaeus to a Gentile; 20.141-43, commenting negatively on Drusilla's marriage to Felix. The Scriptural references can be found at Gen. 34; Exod. 34:15-16; Num. 25; Deut. 7:1-4; Ezra 9-10; cf. Tob. 4.12-13. That this was a common understanding is supported by Tacitus (*discreti cubilibus...alienarum concubitu abstinent; Hist.* 5.5.2). For discussion, see Barclay 1996: 410-12. An exception can be found in Josephus' description of Joseph's marriage to the Egyptian Asenath, which he presents as 'most distinguished' (ἀξιολογώτατον; *Ant.* 2.91). No issue is taken with this intermarriage, in contrast to the account in the apocryphal *Joseph and Asenath* in which Asenath first converts to Judaism (8-21). See also Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 193-4.

<sup>168</sup> It is unclear whether this wife accompanied Josephus during his time in the Roman camp following his stay in Alexandria. We first hear about her in Alexandria (*Life* 415) and then in Rome following the incident in which Jonathan of Cyrene brought accusations against Josephus, after which Josephus dismissed her (*Life* 426). Between these two events three children were born to the couple but we do not know when. Only one of these children survived, a son named Hircanus, who appears to have remained with Josephus (εἷς δέ, δὴν Ὑρκανὸν προσηγόρευσα, περίεστιν; *Life* 426). Rajak 2002[1983]: 196, agrees with the likelihood of the Judaeen ethnicity of this woman but suggests that Vespasian took Josephus along to Alexandria specifically for this purpose, to establish contacts within the Judaeen community there. It is, however, unlikely that Vespasian would have considered this necessary at this point and we read nothing in Josephus' works to suggest a reason for establishing such contacts.

that of a purveyor of one of the *omina imperii* who held a place of some honour in the Roman camp as a talisman.

What remains to be examined is whether Josephus maintained this place of honour following his separation from Vespasian when the latter headed from Alexandria to Rome and he himself returned to Judaea with Titus.<sup>169</sup> From the prominence accorded this episode in the narrative and the significance of prophecy or foreknowledge more generally in his narratives, we may certainly conclude that Josephus wished to retain the prestige that was accorded him for his successful prediction. He highlighted his own predictive abilities, while also identifying himself closely with Biblical prophetic figures such as Joseph, Jeremiah, and Daniel, although this may have resonated more with Judaeans members of his readership than with elite Romans.<sup>170</sup> My concern here, however, is not with his self-perception but with the effect his prediction had on his position within Roman society and particularly his relationship with Vespasian, a point more difficult to establish.

That Josephus' role was not forgotten is clear. I have noted already the references to Josephus' prediction among the *omina imperii* in the narratives of Suetonius and Cassius Dio. This evidence alone provides proof that Josephus' involvement in the events leading up to Vespasian's accession was known at least among certain members of the literate elite of his day. This is to be expected, given the importance accorded such signs of divine favour even after the successful placement of the candidate on the imperial throne. For instance the portents demonstrating Trajan's divine election were memorialized in Pliny the Younger's panegyric of

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<sup>169</sup> *Life* 416; *War* 5.47.

<sup>170</sup> See especially *War* 5.391-3, where he directly compares his circumstances to those of the prophet Jeremiah in a speech to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Josephus' supposed self-perception as prophet has been emphasized by many scholars; see e.g. Braun 1956: 56; Bruce 1965: 159; Lindner 1972: 56; Moehring 1984: 864-944; Attridge 1984: 192; Rhoads 1976: 8-11; Sterling 1992: 236-7; Gnuse 1996: 21-33. See, however, Feldman 1990: 400-407; Mason 1995: 308-11.

that emperor, highlighted in the context of his accession.<sup>171</sup> According to the early third-century Greek historian Herodian, the emperor Severus recorded his own *omina imperii* both in his autobiography and in inscriptions on his public statues. In addition Cassius Dio's first historical work was an account of the portents that inspired Severus to take the throne, for which he allegedly received a long and complimentary letter from the emperor himself. He confirms as well Herodian's claim that these signs were illustrated graphically, both publicly and privately.<sup>172</sup> The prominent place such omens receive in Suetonius' biographies suggests also that there was some value in their continued circulation even after the accession. This alone would have ensured that Josephus was able to maintain some standing as far as the Flavian court was concerned.

Nevertheless, we should not push this too far. As far as we know, Josephus had no continuing role as 'prophetic agent' within the Flavian household, despite the fact that Vespasian was inclined, at least publicly, to maintain an interest in predicting the future. According to Tacitus, Vespasian kept for himself a court astrologer, named Seleucus, who was likely recruited while Vespasian was in Syria—perhaps even after Josephus had made his prediction. He was available to Vespasian for advice and for the discernment of future events.<sup>173</sup> Suetonius agrees that Vespasian was subject to such superstitions, consulting his own horoscopes and those of his family and placing weight on them despite frequent assassination plots.<sup>174</sup> Employing such a

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<sup>171</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 1.5; 5.4-5; see Hoffer 2006: 73-87, esp. 73, "The accession of a new emperor was...the cardinal moment around which clustered the major elements of imperial propaganda and ritual...it was endlessly re-celebrated and re-enacted through such means as official visual art and monuments, annual oath ceremonies, and official speeches."

<sup>172</sup> Herodian 2.9.4; cf. 2.9.6; Cass. Dio 72.23.1; 76.11.1.

<sup>173</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.78.1: *nec erat intactus tali superstitione, ut qui mox rerum dominus Seleucum quendam mathematicum rectorem et praescium palam habuerit.*

<sup>174</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 25.

figure was not unusual.<sup>175</sup> Tiberius more famously kept close at his side the court astrologer Thrasyllus who had been selected precisely for his prescience and who featured in a number of sensational episodes.<sup>176</sup> It was thus possible for the aristocratic provincial to obtain a place of favour in Rome on the strength of his skills in divining messages from the gods.<sup>177</sup> In the case of Josephus, however, we have no evidence to suggest that he served in this capacity following his successful prediction of Vespasian's accession. It is misleading, therefore, to call Josephus "das Prophet des neuen Kaisers", at least in reference to his predictive abilities.<sup>178</sup> Whether or not it can justifiably be said regarding his work as an historian remains to be seen.

### Josephus as Historian

Of all the aspects of Josephus' connection with Vespasian, that of the relationship between Judaeian historian and Roman emperor has been the most discussed and also the most misconstrued. The traditional and long dominant theory regarding Josephus' writing in Rome was that he did so, at least under Vespasian, as Flavian propagandist authorized and commissioned to give the official Flavian account of the war.<sup>179</sup> This view took little account of the character of the *War*, however, which is fully a Josephan creation, stemming from his own

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<sup>175</sup> According to North 1990: 59-61, the 'great, named seer' re-emerged in the late Republic and early Empire as connected with the re-emergence of great men (esp. the emperors). See e.g. C. Gracchus and Herennius Siculus (Val. Max. 9.12.6; Vell. Pat. 2.7.2); Sulla and Postumius (Plut. *Sull.* 9.3); Caesar and Spurinna (Cic. *Fam.* 9.24; *Div.* 1.119; Suet. *Iul.* 81; Val. Max. 9.11.2).

<sup>176</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 6.20-21; Suet. *Tib.* 14.4; cf. Juv. 6.565-76.

<sup>177</sup> See Potter 1994: 158-170; Levick 1999: 69-70.

<sup>178</sup> The quotation is from Weber 1921: 284.

<sup>179</sup> Hölscher 1916: 1943; Laqueur 1920: 126-7; Weber 1921: 23, 44; Rasp 1924: 46; Thackeray 1929: 27-8; Shutt 1961: 5, 120; Cohen 2002[1979]: 86, 229, 232, 234; 1982: 366; S. Schwartz 1990: 1, 10, 13, 18, 153, 209; Price 1992: 175. One of the key supports for this theory is the view that the non-extant Aramaic precursor to the *War* (*War* 1.3) functioned as a commissioned work dispatched to the East, particularly the Parthians, in order to advise them of the futility of opposition; see e.g. Smith 1956: 74-5; Shutt 1961: 23-6; Hengel 1989: 7, 10; Yavetz 1975: 421; Curran 2005: 79; regarding the relationship between the Greek and Aramaic *War*, see Hata 1975: 89-108. See, however, Niese 1914: 7.571, "it would be a mistake...to regard the work as being...an official chronicle. Josephus had no government commission for his task, but wrote entirely on his own initiative"; for a useful presentation of the arguments against the official commissioning of the *War*, see Mason 1991: 57-62.

unique background and life circumstances. As Rajak has pointed out, “It has been taken for granted that the *Jewish War* is to be explained as a wholly Flavian history; but that too is perhaps little more than a prejudice, harboured in this case by the historian of modern times.”<sup>180</sup> Despite the increasing rejection of this uncritical view of Josephus’ works among Josephan scholars, the assumption that the *War* represented some form of official history and that Josephus acted as an imperial mouthpiece still persists in scholarly works that deal with overlapping areas of Flavian history.<sup>181</sup> This is due in large part to a continued misunderstanding of the relationship between the Judaeen historian and the emperor Vespasian, which is what will concern us now.

Despite the fact that nowhere in the *War* does Josephus claim to be writing on behalf of Vespasian or Titus, nor does he in any way suggest that he was being compensated or rewarded for his efforts in producing his narrative(s),<sup>182</sup> the characterization of Josephus as “der Officiosus der römischen Politik”<sup>183</sup> has persisted. He certainly received privileges from Vespasian, including what many believe to have been a regular stipend, as will be discussed below, but these were granted him for the most part immediately following the successful completion of the revolt.<sup>184</sup> When we consider then that Josephus never mentions Vespasian’s involvement in the writing process, the likelihood that Josephus was in the employ of Vespasian as historian diminishes.

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<sup>180</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: 185.

<sup>181</sup> See for example Southern 1997: 20-22, 24, 133, esp. 133, “Josephus carries the flag of Flavian propaganda so blatantly...” Also Griffin 2000a: 4, 15, 17, esp. 4, “the partiality towards the Flavians...[is] exemplified in an extreme form by Josephus in his *Jewish War*”; Overman 2001: 216-17; Beard 2003: 543-58; Carter 2003: 50-52. This traditional view can also be seen in the recent popular presentation of Josephus of Seward 2009.

<sup>182</sup> As he did later on in the case of Epaphroditus; see *Ant.* 1.8-9; *Life* 430; *Ap.* 1.1; 2.1, 296. Regarding his relationship with Epaphroditus, see pp. 312-19.

<sup>183</sup> The phrase is from Laqueur 1920: 256; cf. 259, 273.

<sup>184</sup> The arguments put forward by Sterling 1992: 239-40, emphasizing the connection between Josephus as historian and the Flavians will be dealt with at various points over the following two sections.

The only references linking Josephus' writings to Vespasian appear in roughly parallel contexts in his *Life* and *Apion*.<sup>185</sup> In the first instance, in his attack on the account of the revolt by Justus of Tiberias he reports, "I delivered the volumes to the emperors themselves when the deeds were barely out of view. They concurred that I had preserved the transmission of the truth. Accordingly, having expected to meet with their endorsement, I was not mistaken."<sup>186</sup> A close parallel can be found in the treatise *Against Apion* where Josephus states as part of his claims of accuracy, "So confident was I of its truthfulness that I decided to use as my witnesses, before everyone else, the commanders-in-chief during the war, Vespasian and Titus. For I presented the books to them first of all..."<sup>187</sup>

Traditionally these passages have been taken as signal proof of Josephus' membership within the "propaganda bureau of the new imperial family".<sup>188</sup> A number of significant observations that can be made on the basis of these two brief references lay this hypothesis to rest. First of all, even if we accept that the *War* in its final version of seven volumes was completed *after* the death of Vespasian,<sup>189</sup> both passages suggest that what was presented to the emperors was a completed copy of at least a number of books.<sup>190</sup> Furthermore, the fact that these

<sup>185</sup> A third passage, *Life* 363, will be considered more closely below and in the following chapter. At this point we may note that it simply elaborates on the endorsement mentioned at 361 and does not indicate any involvement from Titus prior to the 'publication' of the *War*.

<sup>186</sup> *Life* 361: αὐτοῖς ἐπέδωκα τοῖς αὐτοκράτορσι τὰ βιβλία μόνον οὐ τῶν ἔργων ἔτι βλεπομένων: συνήδειν γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ τετηρηκότι τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας παράδοσιν, ἐφ' ἣ μαρτυρίας τεύξεσθαι προσδοκῆσας οὐ διήμαρτον.

<sup>187</sup> *Ap.* 1.50-51: τοσοῦτον δέ μοι περιῆν θάρσος τῆς ἀληθείας, ὥστε πρώτους πάντων τοὺς αὐτοκράτορας τοῦ πολέμου γενομένου Οὐέσπασιανὸν καὶ Τίτον ἠξίωσα λαβεῖν μάρτυρας. πρώτοις γὰρ δέδωκα τὰ βιβλία.

<sup>188</sup> Cohen 1982: 366.

<sup>189</sup> See Stern 1975b: 31ff. (*non vidi*); S. Schwartz 1990: 13-16; *contra* Bilde 1988: 79 (between 75-79). Regarding the possibility that Book 7 was (re)published much later, under Domitian and/or Trajan, see Thackeray 1929: 34-5, 105; S. Schwartz 1986: 373-86; Cohen 2002[1979]: 84-6, 237-8; cf. Feldman 1975: 236; Attridge 1984: 193; Beard 2003: 547. For a useful discussion and resolution of the various elements of the debate, arguing convincingly for a completion date between 75 and 81, see Brighton 2009: 33-41.

<sup>190</sup> It is now commonly accepted that the presentation of completed copies to friends and associates was the normal non-commercial form of distributing works of literature and that the commercial bookshop was in its beginning stages; see Kenney 1982: 15-22; Winsbury 2009: 57-66; for the evidence of ancient bookshops and booksellers, see Kleberg 1967; Kenney 1982: 19-22; White 2009: 268-87; cf. Birt 1882, the classic work that argued for significant commercial publication of books in the ancient world.

volumes were presented by Josephus to the Flavians in order to claim them as ‘expert witnesses’ (μαρτυρία) to his testimony in the *War* precludes their own initiative either in commissioning the work in the first place or in supervising its production. This lack of involvement in the process prior to the volumes being made public (δημοσιῶσαι) is significant.<sup>191</sup> Unlike modern publishing, the important part of the circulation process of ancient literature occurred before the work was completed when segments were typically recited before an interested audience for their critical reception.<sup>192</sup> When finished sections were then given out, it signified the end of the process. These last recipients were then not directly involved in the production and shaping of the work, unless we can place them within the initial audience.<sup>193</sup> Vespasian and Titus should instead be located precisely where Josephus places them, among the “many others” (ἄλλοις δὲ πολλοῖς) who received his books, with priority accorded them only on the basis of their status, not their contribution.<sup>194</sup> It is telling that Cicero expresses some concern over his friend Caerellia’s borrowing an early version of his *On Moral Ends* from Cicero’s brother Atticus, since this draft of the text had not been intended for public consumption.<sup>195</sup> The implication is that the release of copies entailed the completion of the process and an acknowledgement that the

<sup>191</sup> *Life* 363. Josephus’ claim to have begun taking notes while in the Roman camp (*Ap.* 1.49) should be taken as part of his efforts to highlight the accuracy of his account. He does not mention this in the *War* and we should certainly not take this as support of his having been commissioned by Vespasian; *contra* Sterling 1992: 239.

<sup>192</sup> See especially Plin. *Ep.* 1.13; 3.18; 4.27; 5.12; 8.12. Cf. Starr 1987: 213-15; Harris 1989: 222-29; Fantham 1996: 2-19, 211-21; Johnson 2010: 39-62; for the application of this process to Josephus, see especially Mason 2001: 149 n. 1498; 2005a: 78-91; cf. Rajak 2007: 184-5. See further regarding the possibility of an audience for the oral presentation of Josephus’ works below, pp. 321-7.

<sup>193</sup> See White 1975: 299, “The book aborning generated a considerable society of its own, composed of the associates who had received early drafts, auditors who had heard the recitations, and *friends and patrons who received the final copy*” (emphasis mine); also Fantham 1996: 219-20, “The literary process is now complete, from composition, to recitation, to correction, to third thoughts, and finally to incorporation in the published text.” Cf. Nauta 2002: 120-24. In a particularly revealing letter, Pliny reports that a certain historian, when reading his work before an audience which included individuals featured in his history, was requested not to continue the reading sessions; although the author complied, Pliny adds, “the book, like their deeds, remains and will remain, and will always be read” (*Ep.* 9.27), out of the control of their original author.

<sup>194</sup> *Life* 362: καὶ ἄλλοις δὲ πολλοῖς εὐθὺς ἐπέδωκα τὴν ἱστορίαν; Mason 2005a: 86, points out that the same verb (ἐπιδίδωμι) is used for Vespasian and Titus as for the others. At *Ap.* 1.51-2, where Josephus again gives priority to the *imperatores*, they nevertheless receive the volumes in conjunction with ‘many Romans who fought with them in the war’ (ἐκείνους πολλοῖς μὲν Ῥωμαίων τοῖς συμπεπολεμηκόσι).

<sup>195</sup> Cic. *Att.* 13.21a=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 372; 13.22=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 329.



writer was satisfied with that version.<sup>196</sup> Thus Horace also warned authors to keep their works for revisions for nine years, since “the word once sent out cannot be called back” (*nescit vox missa reverti*).<sup>197</sup> The importance of releasing an acceptable finished product was compounded by the absence in the ancient world of any safeguards preventing the unauthorized copying and circulation of the work.<sup>198</sup> The fact, then, that Vespasian and Titus were presented with completed volumes detracts significantly from the possibility that they had any oversight over its actual production.<sup>199</sup>

The absence of any claim by Josephus to have received any reward for his first literary work is also noteworthy, particularly when placed in the general context of the Flavian literary scene, although his silence is of course no proof of the absence of such a reward.<sup>200</sup> From the beginning of the imperial period already it is clear that the presentation of texts of various kinds to the emperor had the potential of securing for the writer gifts and privileges, including some of tremendous value. Thus the Roman poet and friend of Virgil and Horace, L. Varius Rufus, received a gift of one million sesterces from Augustus for his famous rendering of the tragedy *Thyestes*, which was performed at the games in 29 BC celebrating the Augustan victory at Actium. Under Tiberius a certain Asellius Sabinus was rewarded by the emperor with 200,000 sesterces, half the census valuation of an *eques*, for a nonsensical dialogue between a mushroom,

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<sup>196</sup> This would support a date for the final publication of the *War* at the latest under Titus, since he was the one who signed a copy and made it public, which Josephus would surely not have allowed were it not a final copy; see Brighton 2009: 38, 40-41.

<sup>197</sup> Hor. *Ars P.* 386-90.

<sup>198</sup> As observed by Kenney 1982: 19.

<sup>199</sup> This of course does not mean that Josephus' *War* would not have been influenced or constrained by the overarching presence of the imperial house in Rome; see Rajak 2002[1983]: 196-7; cf. Sterling 1992: 239. It was obviously still important not to displease the emperor, hence the caution taken by Josephus when speaking critically; see Mason 2003b: 559-90; 2005b: 244-88. It is not justifiable, however, to state, as does Bellemore 1999: 95, that “The fact of the presentation alone dictates that the sections dealing with the affairs of the Flavians must have shown the imperial house in a good light.”

<sup>200</sup> Although this amounts to an argument *ex silentio*, we can be fairly confident that he provides us with a complete list of his benefits at *Life* 414-9, considering his citation even of the silence of Titus as benefit (417, 428); see Mason 2001: 168 n. 1742.

finch, oyster and thrush.<sup>201</sup> Although these were exceptionally generous rewards, they illustrate the possibilities for successful applicants of imperial favour and can be supplemented by references to numerous lesser rewards granted by members of the imperial families.<sup>202</sup> Josephus' rough contemporary, the poet Martial, even felt comfortable making specific requests when presenting his *libelli* to the emperor, some of which he undoubtedly received.<sup>203</sup>

In his interest in sponsoring the arts, Vespasian did not differ from his predecessors. Suetonius' summary is worth quoting in full, "[Vespasian] was most generous to all classes...in particular encouraging men of talent and the arts. He first paid teachers of Latin and Greek rhetoric a regular annual salary of 1000 *aurei* [i.e. 100,000 sesterces] from the *fiscus*; he also awarded magnificent prizes and lavish rewards to leading poets."<sup>204</sup> Our sources also provide specific instances: the poet Saleius Bassus received half a million sesterces; a tragedian called Apellaris was given 400,000, the wealth qualification for a knight; two cithara players, who likely appeared in the musical and literary celebrations linked with the inauguration of the newly restored Theatre of Marcellus, received 200,000 each.<sup>205</sup> The significance of these handouts is underscored by the fact that they were given out at a time when the state was in need of HS 4,000 million to return to a favourable situation, a debt amounting to five years of tax revenue.<sup>206</sup> They have been seen, moreover, as part and parcel of a larger cultural programme, which had its foundation in the much discussed so-called *Lex de imperio Vespasiani* drawn up shortly after the

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<sup>201</sup> L. Varius Rufus: Tac. *Dial.* 12; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 10.1.98; cf. *RE* 6.2 s.v. "Varii", 2380-81; Asellius Sabinus: Suet. *Tib.* 42.

<sup>202</sup> See further Millar 1992[1977]: 83-101, 493-6; Fantham 1996: 67-101.

<sup>203</sup> Mart. *Ep.* 8.24; cf. 6.10, 87; Saller 1983: 248.

<sup>204</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 17-18: *In omne hominum genus liberalissimus explevit... ingenia et artes vel maxime fovit. Primus e fisco Latinis Graecisque rhetoribus annua centena constituit; praestantis poetas...congiario magnaue mercede donavit.*

<sup>205</sup> Plin. *HN* 36.27; Suet. *Vesp.* 17-18; Eutrop. 7.19; Juv. 7.80-87; Tac. *Dial.* 9.5; cf. Levick 1999: 76 n. 34.

<sup>206</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 16.3 (40,000 million); Tac. *Hist.* 4.47; Levick 1999: 95-106; Griffin 2000a: 26-33. Also relevant was the immunity from taxation and billeting granted to doctors and teachers throughout the empire: *FIRA* I 73, 77.

accession.<sup>207</sup> Among the privileges granted the emperor was the following: “And whatever he considers to be in accordance with the public advantage and the dignity of divine and human and public and private interests he shall have the right and the power to do and to execute, just as had the deified Augustus...”<sup>208</sup> Scholars have pointed to the examples above, and to the writings of Josephus himself, as evidence that Vespasian took a very direct and practical approach to these powers, claiming even a desire “de contrôler l’activité intellectuelle de l’empire”.<sup>209</sup>

Nevertheless, Vespasian’s interest in serving as ‘patron of the arts’ has been overblown. Already some time ago, Woodside argued effectively that the interests of Vespasian in these instances were not in establishing a programme of propaganda, either to control his public image or to illustrate his *liberalitas*, but instead in serving the practical purpose of ensuring the continued reconstruction of the state through consistent administration of the Roman world, for which a high standard of education was important.<sup>210</sup> We should be careful, therefore, in creating out of these individual examples a concrete context within which to place Josephus.

A number of difficulties arise when placing Josephus in such a context anyway. I have noted already that Josephus never suggests that he was rewarded for his literary efforts. Furthermore, the sources make no mention of historians among those who received special privileges from Vespasian.<sup>211</sup> Actually we have little evidence to suggest that history writing was

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<sup>207</sup> The scholarly literature on this document is vast, but see e.g. Brunt 1977a: 95-116; Pabst 1989: 125-48; Hurler 1993: 261-80; Crook 1996: 118-20; for further bibliography, see J.S. Thompson 1993: 63-4 n. 172; more recently, see the contributions in Colognesi and Scandone 2009.

<sup>208</sup> *CIL* VI 930=*ILS* 244=Crawford 1996: vol. 1 no. 39: *utique quaecunque ex usu rei publicae maiestateque diuinarum | humanarum publicarum priuatarumque rerum esse | censebit, ei agere facere ius potestasque sit, ita uti diuo Aug(usto)...* (clause VI).

<sup>209</sup> Quotation: Franchet d’Espèrey 1986: 3053; cf. 3049-75; Homo 1949: 179; Bardon 1968: 267. Regarding Josephus: Thackeray 1929: 15; S. Schwartz 1990: 9 n. 23. For a reasoned rejection of this context for Josephus, see Rajak 2002[1983]: 197.

<sup>210</sup> Woodside 1942: 123-29.

<sup>211</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: 197; cf. Sterling 1992: 239, who points out that dismissing the statement of Suetonius on the basis of his failure to mention historians is an argument from silence. Nevertheless, the general lack of evidence for historians under direct imperial patronage is still significant.

ever a significant active tool for propaganda.<sup>212</sup> Of course, that is not to say that partiality towards the ruling emperors was absent—witness both Josephus’ and Tacitus’ critique of Flavian historiography<sup>213</sup>—and we should not for that reason dismiss the possibility of at least an outward Flavian slant. The emperor remained an imposing presence. Nevertheless, direct patronage or commissioning of historical works was not a feature of the Flavian period, as suggested also by the fact that the elder Pliny never made public his highly flattering *temporum nostrorum historia*, even though it was completed, which might have been expected had the emperor been involved in its production.<sup>214</sup>

This absence of direct patronage for historians is highlighted by Juvenal, who decries the plight of intellectuals more generally in his seventh satire but outlines the special difficulties facing the historian, prominent among which was the lack of monetary reward.<sup>215</sup> It was natural, therefore, for history writing to be restricted to those who were otherwise financially stable, and who would have also had unique access to state and family archives through their connections.<sup>216</sup> Thus, for Suetonius, the positions of *a studiis* and *a bibliothecis* under Trajan and then *ab epistulis* under Hadrian provided access to a rich array of documentary and literary evidence, resulting in much fuller biographies of the earlier emperors than the later ones, which were written after he was removed from his position.<sup>217</sup> In much the same way Josephus may have had privileged access to the *hypomnemata/commentarii* of Vespasian and Titus by virtue of his

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<sup>212</sup> Yavetz 1975: 431; Rajak 2002[1983]: 196-200. See also the warnings regarding the importing of modern conceptions of the ties between patronage and propaganda into the ancient context presented by White 1978: 75. For an alternative argument, see Franchet d’Espèrey 1986: 3061-69.

<sup>213</sup> *War* 1.1-8; *Tac. Hist.* 2.101.

<sup>214</sup> *Plin. HN* 1 *praef.* 20; see Griffin 2000a: 4. This work continued the history of Aufidius Bassus in thirty-one books.

<sup>215</sup> *Juv.* 7.98-104.

<sup>216</sup> See Mellor 1999: 193-94.

<sup>217</sup> See Townend 1959: 285-93; cf. Wallace-Hadrill 1995: 91-95, for qualifications to this view and interaction with prior scholarship.

relationship with them.<sup>218</sup> Josephus' decision to write should also, therefore, be predicated on his secure financial position and access to special resources rather than the reverse.<sup>219</sup> That is, he was able to devote significant amounts of time to writing because he already had the leisure (*σχολή*),<sup>220</sup> provided only incidentally, as I shall demonstrate, by Vespasian.

This lack of a formal link aside, however, it is still important to evaluate the possibilities of a relationship between historian and emperor; to this end, placing Josephus in the context of comparable figures is instructive, bearing in mind the general principles just discussed, which can also be recognized in other periods. In the late Republic there were certainly historians who were linked in some way to the major factions: Valerius Antias, an historian of the early first century BC used extensively by Livy, was likely patronized by the prominent patrician family, the Valerii; and the partiality shown by another early first century BC historian, L. Cornelius Sisenna, towards Sulla may suggest ties between those two figures, although Sulla was certainly not the only influential Roman with whom Sisenna had contact.<sup>221</sup> Among the educated and cultured Greeks there had been those who accommodated themselves to the coming of Roman rule by attaching themselves to outstanding Romans, the prime example of which was the

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<sup>218</sup> *Life* 342. These *commentarii* have received far more attention as evidence of the Flavian character of Josephus' *War* than is due. Josephus only implies that he consulted these 'field notes' and never accords them any significant place other than as witnesses to his own accuracy; see *Life* 342, 358; *Ap.* 1.56. In fact, in the *Apion* passage he gives priority to his status as eyewitness over and above his access to these 'field-notes'. Regarding other such *commentarii*, see Mason 2001: 140 n. 1402. It is the influential work by Weber 1921 which argues for extensive reliance on these notes of Vespasian by Josephus in the writing of the *War*, underlining his position as Flavian propagandist; cf. Franchet d'Espèrey 1986: 3066-67. On the possibility that Josephus' *Life* was written in the form of *commentarii/hypomnemata*, see Mason 2001: xlii-xliii.

<sup>219</sup> This financial security was only coincidentally established by the gifts of land and money from the Flavians (*Life* 423-5), which will be discussed shortly. The importance of Josephus' land-holdings should not be underestimated, since they could ensure enough income to provide the necessary *otium*. Thus Martial's view of Maecenas as the ideal patron rests on the ability of the latter to provide his poets estates; see *Ep.* 1.107; 8.56; 11.3; 12.4; cf. 9.97; 10.48; Saller 1983: 248.

<sup>220</sup> See *Ap.* 1.50.

<sup>221</sup> Valerius Antias: Rich 2005: 137-61; Sisenna: Sall. *Iug.* 95.2; Badian 1962: 50-51; Rawson 1979: 327-46.

historian Polybius, whose closeness to Scipio Aemilianus is familiar.<sup>222</sup> Regardless of the closeness of these relationships, however, there is no sense that these figures were specifically patronized as historians. The closest approximation to such patronage can be found in the ‘literary circle’ of Pompey,<sup>223</sup> among which could be found a number of relatively prominent Latin and Greek historians, including L. Lucceius, L. Scribonius Libo, M. Terentius Varro, and Theophanes of Mytilene.<sup>224</sup> But while the historical work of these individuals was, to an extent, designated for the praise or assistance of Pompey—Varro, for instance, published a work entitled *De Pompeio*, and Theophanes a volume with a similar title in Greek<sup>225</sup>—this was only one of their functions as advisors and *amici*, and their influence with Pompey was based on a wide range of factors.<sup>226</sup> Moreover, the sources give us no sense that these historians relied on their relationship with Pompey to support their literary activities or that their literary activities were the primary foundation of their relationship with the Roman *imperator*; the sole matter of importance was that they were members of the inner circle, the *consilium*, a status to which Josephus could lay no claim.

In many ways, Pompey—like Caesar, who also gathered around him distinguished writers but was most notably his own publicist,<sup>227</sup>—served to prefigure the emperors and in his

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<sup>222</sup> For discussion of this phenomenon, which included other literary figures such as Poseidonius (Pompey), Cornelius Epicadus (Sulla), Antiochus of Ascalon (L. Licinius Lucullus), and Philodemus (L. Calpurnius Piso), see Bowersock 1965: 2-5, 122-4.

<sup>223</sup> The actual interest of Roman elites of the late Republic like Pompey in intellectual pursuits is questioned by Crawford 1978: 183-207; cf. Momigliano 1975: 39; Gold 1987: 87, 103-7, “There is no real evidence that Pompey was, as some have maintained, the center of a literary circle or that he sparked an intellectual revolution. Pompey was mainly interested in the value of political power and benefactions; when writers could be used toward his practical ends, he was happy to play the role of patron” (87); but see the review of Crawford in Sherwin-White 1980: 447.

<sup>224</sup> *Caes. B. Civ.* 3.18.3; Anderson 1963: 34-41; Gold 1985: 312-27; 1987: 87-107.

<sup>225</sup> Plin. *HN* 6.51-52; Aul. Gell. 14.7.1-3; Jacoby *FGrH* ii B.188, suggests tentatively that the work was entitled *περὶ Πομπηίου ἢ Πομπηίου πράξεις*; Cicero *Arch.* 24 also refers to Theophanes as the *scriptor rerum Pompeii* and suggests that his award of Roman citizenship was linked to this work.

<sup>226</sup> See, for example, regarding the influence of Theophanes, Yarrow 2006: 54-67; cf. Gold 1987: 97-103.

<sup>227</sup> I.e. his *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile*; cf. regarding Caesar’s gathering of distinguished writers, which included men such as Hirtius, Q. Hortensius Hortalus, and C. Cornelius Gallus, G. Williams 1982: 10-13.

relationship with Greek and Roman intellectuals it was no different. Augustus' association with literary figures is well-known and, even if the actual financial support of men such as Horace and Ovid was left for the most part to Maecenas in the early days,<sup>228</sup> his court was replete with poets and historians. Nevertheless, despite a general encouragement of literary activity, in which he was followed by successors such as Nero and Domitian, direct patronage, at least in the case of historians, was generally lacking.<sup>229</sup> The nearest possibility is the historian Livy with whom Augustus enjoyed *amicitia*, at least according to Tacitus,<sup>230</sup> but to speak of their relationship as one of patronage in the sense of support and endorsement pushes the evidence too far. Certainly Augustus would have been pleased with a historical work that echoed much of his political ideology, but that is not the same as suggesting that the work was commissioned by the emperor in the first place.<sup>231</sup> A more apt case might be that of the obscure Greek historian Timagenes, who was a guest in the imperial palace, but this venture failed when the two had a falling out, which led the historian to take up residence with G. Asinius Pollio and to burn publicly his histories of Augustus' achievement.<sup>232</sup> Instead, if the concern was to foster a certain 'climate of opinion', then the works of historians would take a back seat to those appealed to a much broader audience such as poetry or even drama,<sup>233</sup> as is clear from Augustus' invitation to Horace to produce his hymn in commemoration of the *ludi saeculares* of 17 BC and his later

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<sup>228</sup> See e.g. Gold 1987: 111-72.

<sup>229</sup> See G. Williams 1978: 297-303.

<sup>230</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 4.34: *Titus Livius, eloquentiae ac fidei praeclarus in primis, Cn. Pompeium tantis laudibus tulit ut Pompeianum eum Augustus appellaret; neque id amicitiae eorum offecit.*

<sup>231</sup> The degree to which Livy's work reflects Augustan concerns is a matter of debate. For an extreme view, see e.g. Luce 1965: 240, "Instead of searching for Augustan allusions in Livian history, it might be more profitable to investigate to what extent Augustan policy was influenced by the Livian concept of the past"; but see the comments of Yavetz 1975: 431; cf. Petersen 1961: 440-52; Mayer 1998: 272.

<sup>232</sup> Sen. *Controv.* 10.5.22.

<sup>233</sup> As observed by Yavetz 1975: 431; cf. G. Williams 1982: 3-27, whose discussion of the 'political patronage of literature in Rome' over the years of the late Republic to the reign of Hadrian covers poetry almost exclusively; for the term 'climate of opinion', see G. Williams 1982: 12.

commissioning of L. Varius Rufus to compose a tragedy in celebration of his three triumphs of AD 29.<sup>234</sup>

The clearest parallel with Josephus in Augustan Rome was the historian Nicolaus of Damascus, whose universal history proved useful for Josephus in his own writing later on and who also composed a biography of Augustus, which drew on autobiographical material from the *princeps* himself.<sup>235</sup> He served primarily as the close advisor and agent of Herod the Great, even achieving reconciliation between the king and the emperor in Rome after a fallout as a result of Herod's invasion of Arabia.<sup>236</sup> As Bowersock has pointed out, "his advocacy of the Jews, his closeness to the Roman imperial court, and his services as an historian writing in Greek are all strikingly similar [to Josephus]."<sup>237</sup> These likenesses certainly stand out and I would add to them their relationships to members of the Herodian dynasty.<sup>238</sup> It is noteworthy also that Nicolaus seems to have developed a relatively close relationship with the emperor, who honoured him for his negotiating talents and even named a type of fruit after him, since it reminded him in its colour and sweet taste of Nicolaus' appearance and disposition.<sup>239</sup> Some scholars have even suggested, quite plausibly, that Nicolaus settled down in Rome in 4 BC after his successful negotiations in securing the ethnarchy in Judaea, Samaria, and Idumaea for Archelaus, Herod's son.<sup>240</sup> Nevertheless, there are no direct connections between Augustus and the literary efforts of Nicolaus, which strengthens the parallels with Josephus but limits his usefulness as an example of a historian within the imperial court.

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<sup>234</sup> Horace: Suet. *Vita Hor.* 38-40; Varius Rufus: Hor. *Serm.* I.5.40, 6.55, and 10.81.

<sup>235</sup> Jacoby *FGrH* ii. A 324-430; Bellemore 1984; cf. Bowersock 1965: 134-138; cf. Wacholder 1962; Mayer 1998: 271-2; Bowersock 2005: 56-7.

<sup>236</sup> *War* 1.574; cf. 1.629, 637-8; 2.14ff.; *Ant.* 17.219ff.

<sup>237</sup> Bowersock 2005: 57.

<sup>238</sup> See further regarding Josephus' relationships with the Herodians below, pp. 295-312.

<sup>239</sup> Jacoby *FGrH* ii F 136.11, T 10a-b; Plin. *HN* 13.45.

<sup>240</sup> Wacholder 1962: 108 n. 207; Stern 1974: 228; Toher 2009: 69-70. For Nicolaus' negotiations between Augustus and Archelaus, see *Ant.* 17.219-49, 299-320.



Under Tiberius, I should mention two historians of note. Valerius Maximus dedicated his *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* to the emperor,<sup>241</sup> while Velleius Paterculus provided a glowing portrayal of Tiberius in his history, but in the case of neither historian do we receive the impression that they experienced any sort of literary patronage from the *princeps*. This absence of direct imperial patronage of literature appears to have been a general phenomenon under Tiberius that continued more or less unchanged throughout the reigns of Gaius and Claudius, despite the latter's own scholarly interests. While this trend was reversed under Nero, who was generally inspired to re-create the glory of the Augustan literary scene, it resulted more in the flourishing of poetry, which, as mentioned above, was more conducive to establishing the climate of a new golden age.<sup>242</sup>

For explicit examples of historians within the imperial courts, then, we have to turn to the period after Josephus.<sup>243</sup> A freedman of the emperor Hadrian in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century, Phlegon of Tralles, was known to have been a historian and antiquarian; he, however, dedicated his only known work, the *Olympic Chronicle*, to a certain Alcibiades who was a *cubicularius* appointed to guard the emperor. Another learned freedman of Hadrian, Aristomenes of Athens, was an actor of Old Comedy and the author of three books *On Ceremonials*. Finally Chryserus, a freedman and *nomenclator* of Marcus Aurelius, compiled a record including names and dates of the events from the founding of Rome to the death of the emperor, who is explicitly called his patron.<sup>244</sup> In these cases the proximity of the writers to the emperor was based on their former position as imperial slaves and only in the case of Chryserus does the literary work appear to have had any direct relevance to the emperor. They are similar to Josephus in the sense that their

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<sup>241</sup> See Val. Max. 1.1 *praef.* 12-25.

<sup>242</sup> For these developments, see G. Williams 1982: 22-3; Morford 1985: 2003-2027.

<sup>243</sup> The literary scene under Titus and Domitian will be further explored in Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>244</sup> Phlegon of Tralles: Phot. *Bib.* 97; cf. Jacoby *FGrH* 257 T.3; Aristomenes of Athens: Athen. *Deipn.* 115 ab; Chryserus: Theoph. *Ad Autol.* 3.27; cf. Jacoby *FGrH* 96.

relationships with the emperors predated their literary accomplishments, but significantly different in that their positions as slaves and then freedmen of the emperors established them securely as members of the imperial household already.

It was also possible, however, to gain entrance into imperial circles on the basis of established intellectual prestige, much as it was in the late Republic with the houses of the most prominent Roman families. Thus Cn. Octavius Titinius Capito, a patron of literature who held frequent recitations at his house and wrote *The Deaths of Famous Men* himself, was handpicked by Domitian to serve as *ab epistulis* and *a patrimonio* at the imperial court.<sup>245</sup> Better known is the case of Suetonius, whose scholarly reputation led to his appointment first as *a studiis* and *a bibliothecis* under Trajan and then *ab epistulis* under Hadrian. Yet even he did not dedicate his *Vitae Caesarum* to the emperors but rather to his friend the praetorian prefect G. Septicius Clarus.<sup>246</sup> These are just two clear examples of individuals whose scholastic or intellectual successes drew the attention of the emperors and who then made use of these skills in special secretarial positions.<sup>247</sup> Although under the Flavians this trend was only just gaining momentum, it is significant that Josephus received no such advancements despite the fact that he was already known to the imperial family. Nor does he appear to have gained any unusual privileges following his presentation of the *War* to Vespasian and Titus.<sup>248</sup> A possible conclusion, then, is that Josephus' (limited) presence in imperial circles and his personal history writing should be disconnected. This might explain the absence of any mention of Josephus' writing by Suetonius

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<sup>245</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 1.17, 5.8, 8.12; see Millar 1992[1977]: 90, "We cannot be certain, but everything suggests that his role as an imperial secretary was the product, not the source, of his prominence in Roman literary circles."

<sup>246</sup> The preface to the *Vitae Caesarum*, which would have contained the dedication, is not extant. We know of the dedication, however, through Lydus *Mag.* 2.6; cf. SHA *Had.* 11.3; Plin. *Ep.* 1.18, 3.8, 5.10, 9.34; Morgan 1986: 544-5.

<sup>247</sup> Cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 83-101; Saller 1982: 63; 1983: 254.

<sup>248</sup> Such as the equestrian tribunate given to Martial by Domitian; see Mart. *Ep.* 3.95; 9.97.

or Cassius Dio,<sup>249</sup> for whom he was only a prominent prisoner-of-war with an interesting story, and the absence of any clear evidence for contact between Josephus and other Greek writers such as Plutarch, who visited Rome in the reign of Domitian.<sup>250</sup> Had he in fact been an official Flavian historian, we might have expected an entirely different situation. Instead I would place the emperors on the fringes of Josephus' literary circle.

This fits well with Josephus' own self-perception as historian, insofar as we can determine it from his writings, which is anchored by his Judaeian background rather than his proximity to the emperors. Although he never presents himself as one of the prophets of old, and indeed never explicitly uses the term *προφήτης* when referring to himself or his contemporaries,<sup>251</sup> he seems to view his own work as a natural continuation of the work of the prophets in the composition of history.<sup>252</sup> Thus in the prologue to the *War*, after observing that the history of Judaeans had been adequately recorded by both Judaeans and Greeks, he reports, "Where the writers of these affairs and our prophets leave off, from there I will make a beginning of my orderly account."<sup>253</sup> In other places he makes it clear that the role of the prophets in the composition of history guaranteed its accuracy. In his treatise *Against Apion* he writes, "The

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<sup>249</sup> The question of whether or not these later writers, and also and especially Tacitus, were familiar with Josephus' works is difficult to answer; see McClasland 1932: 330; Schreckenberg 1972: 68-70; Varneda 1986: xvii; Rajak, 2002[1983]: 193 n.18; Shahar 2004: 250-53; Barnes 2005: 141. Scholars have recognized clear verbal parallels in some passages of Tacitus and Josephus, but no definitive conclusions can be drawn.

<sup>250</sup> Plut. *De curios.* 522d-e; see Feldman 2005: 241, "One would have expected that Josephus, living in Rome under imperial auspices, would have had contact with other writers, such as Plutarch, who visited Rome; but he does not mention any of them"; cf. C.P. Jones 2005: 204-8. This does not mean, however, that we should not consider the context of Greek literature of the Second Sophistic in seeking to understand Josephus' narratives; see Mason 2008b: 93-130, esp. 130.

<sup>251</sup> Although he did use some of the same *termini technici* of prophecy and prophets for himself as for prophets of the Hebrew Bible; see van Unnik 1978: 41-54. In his *Antiquities* (1.240) Josephus quotes from Alexander Polyhistor who allegedly called the historian Cleodemos-Malchos a prophet (ὁ προφήτης), but it is unclear if this is Josephus' own insertion or a genuine quotation. John Hyrcanus is also acknowledged to have been a prophet; *War* 1.68-9; *Ant.* 13.299. See Feldman 1990: 399-401; cf. Aune 1982: 419-21.

<sup>252</sup> The alleged connection between Josephus as 'prophet' and historian has been explored widely; see e.g. Weber 1921: 66, 77, "Josephus hüllt sich auch als Historiker in prophetisches Gewand"; Blenkinsopp 1974: 241-2; Daube 1980: 35; Bilde 1988: 190-91; Sterling 1992: 236-8.

<sup>253</sup> *War* 1.18: ὅπου δ' οἱ τε τούτων συγγραφεῖς ἐπαύσαντο καὶ οἱ ἡμέτεροι προφήται, τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκεῖθεν ποιήσομαι τῆς συντάξεως.

prophets alone learned, by inspiration from God, what had happened in the distant and most ancient past and recorded plainly events in their own time just as they occurred.”<sup>254</sup> He certainly does not accord himself the same level of distinction as the prophets of old and indeed points out that the “exact succession of prophets” had ceased after the time of Artaxerxes.<sup>255</sup> It would be inconsistent with his narratives, therefore, to characterize him as a prophet, even if he did claim for himself certain predicative abilities.<sup>256</sup> Nevertheless, by linking his account to these authoritative works, he bolsters the claims for accuracy he makes elsewhere,<sup>257</sup> and ties his literary efforts explicitly to the sacred literature of his people. This weakens the claim that he was motivated by pressure from above.

The preponderance of external evidence would suggest, therefore, that Josephus as historian had little to do with Vespasian as emperor.<sup>258</sup> There is little evidence to support a characterization of him as a court historian or a Laqueurian *officiosus*, a detail which might otherwise be expected to have emerged in the defence of his historiography. Other than the final presentation of books to the emperor, there is no evidence of direct contact between the two, at least as far as the writing process was concerned, an activity that must have taken up significant amounts of Josephus’ time. In writing a history of his times, then, Josephus does not seem to

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<sup>254</sup> *Ap.* 1.37: ἀλλὰ μόνον τῶν προφητῶν τὰ μὲν ἀνωτάτω καὶ παλαιότατα κατὰ τὴν ἐπίπνοϊαν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ μαθόντων, τὰ δὲ καθ’ αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐγένετο σαφῶς συγγραφόντων; cf. *Ap.* 1.29; *Ant.* 4.118-9; 4.286; 4.329. See also Barclay 2007: n. 152 at *Ap.* 1.37; Feldman 1990: 397-407.

<sup>255</sup> *Ap.* 1.41: ἀπὸ δὲ Ἀρταξέρξου μέχρι τοῦ καθ’ ἡμᾶς χρόνου γέγραπται μὲν ἕκαστα, πίστεως δ’ οὐχ ὁμοίας ἠξίωται τοῖς πρὸ αὐτῶν διὰ τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι τὴν τῶν προφητῶν ἀκριβῆ διαδοχὴν; cf. 1 Macc. 4:46; 9:27. In her study of prophetic figures in Josephus, Gray (1993) attempts to circumvent this passage and the fact that Josephus restricts his use of prophetic language almost exclusively to the prophets of old in order to justify her view that Josephus and his contemporaries still conceived prophecy to exist; she fails to recognize, however, that she thereby works at cross-purposes with Josephus’ narratives, as pointed out by Mason 1995: 308-11; cf. Feldman 1990: 400-407; Barclay 2007: n. 169 at *Ap.* 1.41.

<sup>256</sup> See Mason 1995: 308-11.

<sup>257</sup> *Ap.* 1.47-9; 1.55; *War* 1.1, 3; cf. Marincola 1997: 63-86, 133-48; Barclay 2007: n. 152 at *Ap.* 1.37.

<sup>258</sup> It is misleading, therefore, to speak of Josephus as [writing] his works under the patronage of the imperial Flavian dynasty in Rome’ (Shahar 2004: 269), which is commonly expressed by Josephan scholars and others. While Josephus *was* writing in Rome and he *was* living to a certain degree under the patronage of the imperial household—as we will discuss below—these two activities were not as closely connected as these statements seem to suggest.

have been interested in maintaining a relationship with the imperial family, even if his existing connections to them flavoured his narratives. Instead he was continuing, consciously or not, a tradition that had begun long before.

It is surely not a coincidence that the majority of the foremost Greek historians suffered exile or separation from their native cities at some point in their lives. This served in part to ignite their desire to compose history. Plutarch observed this already in his *Moralia*: “Indeed the Muses, it appears, called exile to their aid in perfecting for the ancients the finest and most esteemed of their writings... All these and many more, when driven from their country, did not despair or lie prostrate in grief, but put their native abilities to use, accepting their exile as a provision granted by Fortune for this end.”<sup>259</sup> As examples, he mentions Thucydides, Xenophon, Philistus, Timaeus, Androtion, and the poet Bacchylides, to which could be added Herodotus, Polybius, Theopompus, Ctesias, and even Josephus. The simple bases for this phenomenon may have been the ready access to a broad variety of source material, contact with different peoples and places, and a desire to maintain in some way their natural interest in politics.<sup>260</sup> We need not look any further than these types of factors, therefore, to make sense of Josephus’ decision to write history in the imperial capital.

### **Josephus as Imperial Client**

Despite my attempts to separate Josephus’ work as historian from the imperial court, I would certainly not remove Josephus entirely from that context or diminish completely the connections that existed. After all, “the proportion of the population which could claim

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<sup>259</sup> Plut. *Mor.* 605C: καὶ γὰρ τοῖς παλαιοῖς, ὡς ἔοικεν, αἱ Μοῦσαι τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν συνταγμάτων καὶ δοκιμώτατα φυγὴν λαβοῦσι συνεργὸν ἐπετέλεσαν... πάντες οὗτοι καὶ πλέονες ἄλλοι, τῶν πατρίδων ἐκπεσόντες, οὐκ ἀπέγνωσαν οὐδὲ ἔρριψαν ἑαυτοῦς, ἀλλ’ ἐχρήσαντο ταῖς εὐφυΐαις, ἐφόδιον παρὰ τῆς τύχης τὴν φυγὴν λαβόντες.

<sup>260</sup> See Luce 1997: 100, for a discussion of this phenomenon. He makes no mention of Josephus in this context, perhaps because the Judaeon historian was not *stricto sensu* an exile.

acquaintance with the emperor was minute.”<sup>261</sup> The long scholarly tradition of inflating Josephus’ connections with the emperors has led my investigation to be largely negative in its establishment of plausible parameters for the relationship between Josephus and Vespasian. Nevertheless, it is important to explore the evidence for continued interaction as well. This emerges largely from the honours that Josephus reports he received from the emperors following the successful suppression of the revolt and during his residence in Rome. The benefits accorded him by Vespasian, which alone will occupy our attention here, are laid out in full in the *Life*:

When we came to Rome, I met with every provision from Vespasian. He even gave me lodging in the house that was his before the *imperium*. He honoured me with Roman citizenship. He gave me a stipend for supplies, and continued these honours until his departure from life, taking back nothing of his goodness toward me—which brought me into danger on account of envy.<sup>262</sup>

He further reports that following the execution of a certain Jonathan of Cyrene who had accused Josephus among others of supplying a group of rebels with weapons and supplies—an accusation which was apparently ignored by Vespasian—the emperor granted Josephus a gift of land in Judaea.<sup>263</sup>

When we ignore the opening line, which in typical Josephan fashion claims sweepingly “every provision from Vespasian”, it is striking how few the benefits are and how commonplace they were.<sup>264</sup> Pride of place is given to the lodging that Josephus received in the city of Rome, a

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<sup>261</sup> Millar 1992[1977]: 472.

<sup>262</sup> *Life* 423: ἐπεὶ δ’ εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἤκομεν, πολλῆς ἔτυχον παρὰ Οὐεσπασιανοῦ προνοίας; καὶ γὰρ καὶ κατάλυσιν ἔδωκεν ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τῇ πρὸ τῆς ἡγεμονίας αὐτῷ γενομένη πολιτεία τε Ῥωμαίων ἐτίμησεν καὶ σύνταξιν χρημάτων ἔδωκεν καὶ τιμῶν διετέλει μέχρι τῆς ἐκ τοῦ βίου μεταστάσεως οὐδὲν τῆς πρὸς ἐμὲ χρηστότητος ὑφελών, [ὁ μοι] διὰ τὸν φθόνον ἤνεγκε κίνδυνον.

<sup>263</sup> *Life* 425: ἔλαβον δὲ παρὰ Οὐεσπασιανοῦ δωρεὰν γῆν οὐκ ὀλίγην ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ. Josephus had already received land in Judaea from Titus to replace those he had owned prior to the outbreak of the revolt and which were rendered useless by the presence of the *Legio X Fretensis*, now posted permanently in Jerusalem (*Life* 422; cf. *War* 7.17). The above mentioned was presumably a separate grant from Vespasian. The size of this plot of land is unclear; we should not take Josephus’ description at face value. The date for this grant, although uncertain (see S. Schwartz 1990: 12 n. 38), seems to be connected by Josephus with his successful evasion of the accusations, concerning which see more below.

<sup>264</sup> This has been observed previously by Yavetz 1975: 431-2; Mason 1998b: 74-8; 2001: 168 n. 1742; Cotton and Eck 2005: 39-41. Contrast e.g. Feldman 1984a: 92, “One cannot avoid conjecturing that Josephus had done

former residence of Vespasian. Notable immediately is the fact that Josephus was not put up with the Flavians on the Palatine,<sup>265</sup> which the Julio-Claudians had cemented as the seat of power, nor in the Gardens of Sallust (*Horti Sallustiani*) where Vespasian was reported to have spent the majority of his time as emperor.<sup>266</sup> In his commentary on this passage, Mason has proposed two possible sites: first, the house in which Domitian was born, located on the Quirinal hill on a street called ‘The Pomegranate’ (*ad malum punicum*) and later turned into the *Templum Gentis Flaviae*; and second, the house in which Titus was born, situated near a seven-storey *insula* and described as ‘dingy’ (*sordidis aedibus*).<sup>267</sup>

While it is impossible to decide between the two options, or indeed another, a few illuminating possibilities may be observed. First of all, if Josephus found lodging in the well-situated birthplace of Domitian, we have firm evidence that this situation was not permanent, since he would at least have had to relocate when the home was turned into a shrine by Domitian. On a more positive note, it is explicitly located by Suetonius in the same region (*regio* VI) of the city as the *Horti Sallustiani* mentioned above, which presents at least the possibility of physical proximity to Vespasian whenever the emperor had retired to the Gardens from his official residence on the Palatine.<sup>268</sup> Then again, if he moved into the latter dwelling, the poor quality of these quarters should be emphasized. Suetonius reports that Titus was born, “in a

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something to earn such magnificent treatment”; Rajak 2002[1983]: 194, “The benefits conferred upon him...are striking in their generosity”; von Stuckrad 2000: 266, “die doch erstaunliche Anerkennung durch den Kaiser.”

<sup>265</sup> Regarding the Flavian residence on the Palatine, see Krause 1995: 459-68.

<sup>266</sup> Cass. Dio 65.10.4.

<sup>267</sup> Mason 2001: 168 n.1743 *ad loc.* House A: Suet. *Dom.* 1, 5; Martial 9.20.1; House B: Suet. *Tit.* 1. Cotton and Eck 2005: 39, seem to assume the former as the place of residence; cf. Eck 1995: 140. Regarding the *Templum Gentis Flaviae* see Dabrowa 1996: 153-61.

<sup>268</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 1.1. For the location, see Platner and Ashby 1929: 271-2; Krause 1995: 459-68; Hartswick 2004: 3-8. Cotton and Eck 2005: 39, emphasize in contrast the distance between this dwelling and the new imperial residence on the Palatine. We should, however, take Cassius Dio’s observation seriously: “He lived but little in the palace, spending most of his time in the Gardens of Sallust” (65.10.4).

dingy building near the *Septizonium* and in a very small dark room besides.”<sup>269</sup> He claims, moreover, that the place was readily accessible in his day, which would have prevented him to some degree from overstating the poor quality of the lodging.<sup>270</sup> No more, however, can be said, since the precise location of the *Septizonium*, which may have drawn its name from its architectural form or its possible location at the crossroad of seven streets, and even its purpose cannot be determined.<sup>271</sup>

In any case, while I cannot identify definitively Josephus’ first residence in Rome, I would observe that Josephus was treated no more favourably than a typical client of the imperial house and emphasize that we receive no indication that this arrangement was anything more than short-term. In fact, the use of the word κατάλυσις elsewhere in Josephus’ writings, particularly in the *Life*, would support the provisional nature of this accommodation in Rome. It refers predominantly to what we might call billeting, namely the provision of temporary quarters to military figures such as Josephus and John of Gischala.<sup>272</sup> This interpretation of the Greek word employed by Josephus coincides with its usage elsewhere to denote what we might call an inn, which provided by definition short-term lodging.<sup>273</sup> This gift of lodgings may, therefore, simply

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<sup>269</sup> Suet. *Tit. 1: natus est III. Kal. Ian. insigni anno Gaiana nece, prope Septizonium sordidis aedibus, cubiculo vero perparvo et obscuro.*

<sup>270</sup> The fact that the truth of Suetonius’ claim seems to be verifiable would suggest that the description here is not being influenced by the Flavian line emphasizing their poverty early on in life; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 2; Levick 1999: 12-3, presents the possibility that the spending before elections would actually have placed the family in dire financial straits.

<sup>271</sup> See Sartorio 1999: 268-9, s.v. *Septizonium* (1), “Generalement lo si localizza sull’Esquilino, ma senza una vera ragione, o sul Quirinale, dove si trovava il *Templum* della *gens Flavia* in aree di proprietà della famiglia”; cf. Richardson 1992: 350-51.

<sup>272</sup> *Life* 86, 91, 275, 384; cf. *Ant.* 12.102; Cass. Dio 59.28.2. In the latter passage the reference is to Gaius’ building of a (likely) temporary structure on the Capitoline to dwell in closer proximity to Jupiter: ἐτεκτῆνατο μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἐν τῷ Καπιτωλίῳ κατάλυσιν τινα.

<sup>273</sup> See Firebaugh 1972[1928]: 54; Casson 1974: 87-90, 197-218, 340; cf. Kleberg 1957: 26-73. Regarding the (generally low) character of inns in the ancient world, see Toner 1995: 67-8, 74-77. This interpretation of κατάλυσις was already supplied by Hata 1994: 327, who does not, however, provide any support for his proposal. The more common and etymologically related word is κατάλυμα for which the proper meaning, based on its root κατάλυω (according to Strong’s Concordance 2646), is ‘a dissolution (breaking up of a journey)’ and hence ‘a lodging-place’, which is by implication temporary; see e.g. Luke 2:7, 22:11; Mark 14:14; cf. Polyb. 2.36.1. The term is not included



reflect Vespasian's assistance in providing time and space for Josephus to settle into life in Rome.

Closely connected to this provision of accommodation was the presentation of financial assistance by Vespasian, which Josephus also numbers among his benefits.<sup>274</sup> The exact nature of this gift is difficult to determine, given the ambiguity of the Greek phrase σύνταξιν χρημάτων, translated most recently and literally as “a stipend for supplies”, but previously translated, or rather interpreted, as “an annual pension” or simply “pension”.<sup>275</sup> The enduring translations of Whiston and subsequently Thackeray obscure the fact that the Greek does not present a clear chronological framework for this gift. In fact, the precise phrase appears in two other contexts in which it is clear that the gift (of money in both cases) is a one-time contribution, rather than an ongoing commitment.<sup>276</sup> Moreover, if we translate the second word (χρημάτων) as “supplies” or “necessities”, the possibility arises that Vespasian presented to Josephus on his arrival in Rome a fixed sum of money aimed at assisting him in establishing himself comfortably, just as he was provided with temporary accommodations.<sup>277</sup> There is certainly evidence of such practical cash

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in the standard introductory work on hotels and inns in the Roman world, Kleberg 1957, which is weak on Greek sources and terminology in general (see esp. 1-25, 146-7).

<sup>274</sup> *Life* 423.

<sup>275</sup> The translations are from Mason (2001), Whiston (1737) and Thackeray (1926) respectively. The adoption in scholarship of the term ‘pension’ to describe this financial gift is pervasive and has rarely been questioned, unsurprisingly, given that it appears as the translation in *LSJ* II.4. It can be found in virtually any discussion of Josephus’ circumstances in the city of Rome by Josephan scholars and others alike. See e.g. Laqueur 1920: 30 (Gnadengehalt); Cohen 2002[1979]: 129-30, 236; Feldman 1998b: 294, 540; Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 196; Rajak 2002[1983]: 195. Thackeray 1929: 15, even links this ‘pension’ to those established for Latin and Greek teachers of rhetoric (Suet. *Vesp.* 18), for which we have no support, as discussed above; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 9 n. 23.

<sup>276</sup> Dem. *De cor.* 234.3: χρημάτων δὲ σύνταξιν εἰς πέντε καὶ τετταράκοντα τάλαντα; [Plut.] *X orat.* 851B.8: καὶ σύνταξιν χρημάτων ἣν ἐπεισε πρεσβεύσας διδόναι τοὺς [μὲν] συμμάχους εἰς τὸν πόλεμον πλείω πεντακοσίων τάλαντων.

<sup>277</sup> The granting of sums of money is presented by the author of the *Historia Augusta* as an alternative to public office in those cases where the individual did not have the requisite social status; SHA *Marc.* 3.9. It is unclear why Cotton and Eck 2005: 39, describe the possibility of this being a one-time gift of a sum of money as “less likely”. The subsequent phrase, καὶ τιμῶν διετέλει μέχρι τῆς ἐκ τοῦ βίου μεταστάσεως, need not present a difficulty for this interpretation; Josephus merely claims more generally, as he is wont to do, a continued place of honour.

gifts on the private level, for example Pliny's contribution towards the dowry of a friend's daughter or his gift of travel money to Martial upon the poet's retirement to Spain.<sup>278</sup>

What is clear in any case is that there is no explicit basis for a connection between this financial support and Josephus' literary efforts, an assumption that has a long history in Josephan scholarship.<sup>279</sup> If this were the case, we might expect a dedication of his work to the emperors, much in the same way that Vitruvius dedicated his *De Architectura* to Augustus, "since, through your kindness, I do not have to live in fear of poverty."<sup>280</sup> But we find nothing of the sort.<sup>281</sup> Instead we may understand these privileges as benefactions granted by the emperor to this newcomer to the city of Rome in order to help with such immediate concerns as appropriate lodging, furnishings and daily necessities, assistance that was typically supplied by a patron. And indeed, Josephus himself gives us this impression by placing these gifts in the immediate context of his arrival in Rome.<sup>282</sup>

Whereas these initial benefactions may be viewed more as forms of assistance than honours, the grant of Roman citizenship from Vespasian, which involved the changing of his name from Yosef ben Mattityahu to the more familiar (Titus?) Flavius Josephus, should certainly

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<sup>278</sup> Dowry: Plin. *Ep.* 2.4.2, 6.32.2; travel money: *Ep.* 3.21; cf. White 1978: 90. There was also the practice of handing out *sportulae*, which often took the form of small sums of money (usually a hundred *quadrantes*: Mart. *Ep.* 3.7; 8.42; 10.70, 75; Juv. *Sat.* 1.120) and was handed out at the morning *salutatio* along with food; see Friedländer 1965[1908-13]: 4.77-81; Saller 1983: 252-3; Winterling 1999: 141f. There is little evidence to suggest, however, that the emperors imitated private practice in this way with any regularity; see Suet. *Nero* 16; *Dom.* 7; Mart. *Ep.* 8.50.

<sup>279</sup> See especially Laqueur 1920: 30, "In der Tat hatte Kaiser Vespasian ihm zu der Zeit, da das bellum erschien, Wohnung und Gnadengehalt bezahlt (*vita* § 423); wir werden wohl annehmen dürfen, daß dies das *salarium* für die offiziöse Darstellung des jüdischen Krieges war (*vita* § 363)." See, however, Rajak 2002[1983]: 195-8.

<sup>280</sup> Vitruvius *De arch.* 1.pr.3: *Cum ergo eo beneficio essem obligatus, ut ad exitum vitae non haberem inopiae timorem, haec tibi scribere coepi.* The poet C. Valgius Rufus also dedicated a poem on pharmacology to Augustus; see Plin. *HN* 25.4; for other dedications to emperors, see e.g. Val. Max. 1.1 *praef.* 12-25 (Tiberius); Val. Flacc. *Argon.* 1.5-14 (Vespasian); Mart. *Ep.* 8.*praef.* (Domitian); regarding dedications, focusing on Martial and Statius, see White 1974: 51-61.

<sup>281</sup> Pace Coleman 2006: xxviii n. 33, "I infer from the 'seal' that Titus set upon the *Bellum Iudaicum* that it was in some sense dedicated to him (Jos. *Vita* 363)." This ignores, however, the context in which Josephus claims Titus' support; see further below, pp. 205-209.

<sup>282</sup> *Life* 423: ἐπεὶ δ' εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἤκομεν...

be viewed as a distinct privilege.<sup>283</sup> While the two benefits discussed above were perhaps more unusual and unexpected, however, this grant of citizenship was a standard form of *beneficium* given by emperor either freely or in response to a petition from the individual or his patron/*amicus* with access to the imperial court.<sup>284</sup> It has been pointed out by others that citizenship was granted frequently by the emperors, including the Flavians, so that we should not see this grant as evidence of the standard characterization of Josephus as intimate of the Flavian family.<sup>285</sup> The emperors in general but Vespasian in particular used citizenship among other privileges to assist in melding the empire together, bestowing it liberally also on his auxiliaries.<sup>286</sup> More notoriously he was even reported to have profited from the sale of various benefactions including citizenship in collusion with his mistress Caenis.<sup>287</sup> In Josephus' case, this new status likely did not even separate him from the large majority of his fellow Judaeans in the city of Rome, if we are to believe Philo's claim that most of the Judaeans there in his time were already free citizens.<sup>288</sup> Furthermore, the fact that he nowhere uses his *tria nomina*—even in his

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<sup>283</sup> The fact that this privilege seems to have been granted to Josephus upon arrival in Rome is of significance to our earlier discussion of Josephus' time as prisoner-of-war. Had he been a slave by virtue of being a captive, we should understand the elaborate ceremony of his release as a form of *manumissio*. If this were the case, however, Josephus would have become an imperial freedman and consequently almost certainly received Roman citizenship and the name of his patrons at that point already (see Lintott 1993: 161; Sherwin-White 1973: 322-34; for exceptional circumstances, see Gaius *Inst.* 1.12ff.). Instead, we should understand the severing of his chains simply as a way of removing the stigma of captivity, after which point he remained Yosef ben Mattityahu until the end of the revolt. This is illustrated effectively by Edmondson 2005: 1-3, who refers to Josephus in his brief biography as Yosef until the point at which he receives citizenship following the revolt. See, however, the remarks by Bilde 1988: 54, who dates the assumption of this Romanized name to the time of Josephus' release from captivity: "As was customary at the time, Josephus seems to have adopted the family name of his benefactor, Flavius. In any case, the Jewish Joseph ben Matthias from Jerusalem was thereafter referred to under the Romanized name of Flavius Josephus or Josephus Flavius." It is unclear on what basis he makes this observation; see similarly, von Stuckrad 2000: 256.

<sup>284</sup> See Millar 1992[1977]: 485; Saller 1982: 42, 53. Cotton and Eck 2005: 39, present the possibility that this grant was accompanied by the right of *conubium* or the *patria potestas*, since otherwise Josephus' children would have been separated legally from him; *contra* Goodman 1994b: 337, on the basis of Sherwin-White 1973: 268.

<sup>285</sup> Mason 1998b: 75; 2001: 168 n. 1744; Cotton and Eck 2005: 39-40.

<sup>286</sup> E.g. Plin. *HN* 3.30; Sherwin-White 1973: 221-87; cf. Mellor 2003: 82. This was taken to an extreme by Caracalla in AD 212, who extended citizenship to all free-born residents of the empire.

<sup>287</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 4.3; 16.2; Cass. Dio 65.14; see Levick 1999: 102-103; Cohick 2009: 266; Freisenbruch 2010: 141-3.

<sup>288</sup> Philo *Leg.* 155. The citizenship status was linked to their former position, or that of their ancestors, as captives of Pompey (63 BC) and Cassius (53 BC); see Plut. *Pomp.* 45; *War* 1.138-54; 180-81; *Ant.* 14.48-79; 119-22; cf. Leon

writing of the *War* shortly after receiving this status—suggests that he may not have valued this distinction as highly as we might suppose, although it should be acknowledged that the use of the *tria nomina* is rare in literary texts.<sup>289</sup>

This then is the extent of the imperial *beneficia* received by Josephus upon his arrival in Rome, at least as far as Vespasian was concerned. It is important to emphasize at this point that, in light of the number and nature of these honours, Josephus was not treated unusually well. This observation is underlined by the range of imperial benefactions that were available but not in fact granted to Josephus.<sup>290</sup> Of course, Josephus was not, on the basis of his position and background, in any position to be granted the *latus clavus*, even though it does seem to have been a Flavian policy to advance eastern provincials to senatorial positions as part of the creation of a new loyal elite.<sup>291</sup> Those who had served Vespasian well in the suppression of the Judaeen revolt and during the civil wars following the death of Nero were especially honoured—some even before his official accession to power—with senatorial rank and subsequently with prominent positions in the *cursus honorum*.<sup>292</sup> But while adlection to the Senate may have been out of reach for Josephus, promotion to the status of *equus publicus*, perhaps accompanied by a financial gift to meet the necessary wealth qualification, would definitely have been appropriate, if indeed he

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1995[1960]: 237-8. Their subsequent manumission would have been accompanied by a grant of Roman citizenship; cf. M.H. Williams 2010: 80-82.

<sup>289</sup> See *War* 1.3; 2.568 (Ἰώσηπος Ματθίου). The exact *tria nomina* that should be applied to Josephus remains, therefore, uncertain, although most suppose his *praenomen* to have been Titus and Flavius would undoubtedly have been his *nomen* through the *gens Flavia*; see Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 195-6; Eck 2000: 281-3. Regarding subsequent renderings of his name, see Niese 1914: 7.569. We also do not have any reference to the Roman voting district (*tribus*) to which Josephus would have belonged; see Mason 2001: 168-9 n. 1744 at *Life* 423. In his review of van Unnik (1978), Goldenberg 1980: 179-82, emphasizes the importance of remembering that Josephus was born Joseph ben Mattithiah, to which we might add that he continued to see himself as such throughout his lifetime.

<sup>290</sup> Cf. Yavetz 1975: 431-2; Mason 1998b: 74-8; 2001: 168 n. 1742; Cotton and Eck 2005: 39-41.

<sup>291</sup> B. Jones 1992b: 170-73; Boyle 2003: 9-11; Mellor 2003: 80-99.

<sup>292</sup> E.g. Plotius Grypus: Tac. *Hist.* 3.52; 4.39; Ti. Julius Celsus Polemaeanus: *ILS* 8971; Sextus Lucilius Bassus: Tac. *Hist.* 2.100; 4.3; C. Caristanius Fronto: *ILS* 9485; cf. Levick 1999: 170-73; Griffin 2000a: 35.

were as favoured as tradition would have it.<sup>293</sup> Within the equestrian as with the senatorial order, men who had served the Flavians in the period leading up to their accession were distinguished by Vespasian, most notably the *primus pilus* C. Velius Rufus who received numerous honours for his exceptional bravery against the Judaeans and subsequently rose to the governorship of Raetia under Domitian.<sup>294</sup> What is clear, then, is that the grant of citizenship to Josephus by no means singled him out as specially favoured; it did not even elevate him above those Judaeans whom he mentions as already holding equestrian status prior to the revolt.<sup>295</sup> The possibilities were virtually endless as far as benefactions from the emperors were concerned, so it is striking that we receive no other mention even of such honours as the privileges of *ius trium liberorum*, which provided exemption from *tutela* (legal guardianships) or *munera* (obligatory public services) that were imposed on individuals who had less than three children, a privilege that Pliny himself received and also requested for several of his friends, including the imperial biographer Suetonius.<sup>296</sup> Both Statius and Martial requested also the right to draw water from an aqueduct for their private residences; we know that the former was successful and the fact that the latter published his request may suggest that he too received this privilege.<sup>297</sup> It was also possible to obtain favours from the emperor for others—to serve as ‘broker’ that is, to use the

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<sup>293</sup> See Juv. *Sat.* 5.132f., which suggests that the emperors more frequently gave out the necessary funds to meet the census requirements; cf. *ILS* 1949; Sen. *Ben.* 3.9.2; Mart. *Ep.* 4.67, 5.19.10, 5.25, 12.6.9-11, 14.122; Plin. *Ep.* 1.19. For a few examples of individuals receiving the *equus publicus* from the emperor: Ov. *Tr.* 2.89-90; Philostr. *VS* 1.22; 2.32; *ILS* 1315 (Mactar); *ILS* 5058 (Abella); *ILS* 5473 (Rusicade); *IGR* III 778 (Attalia); cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 279-84; Saller 1982: 51-3.

<sup>294</sup> *ILS* 9200; see Kennedy 1983: 183-96. For the honouring of the troops following the destruction of Jerusalem, see *War* 6.5-17.

<sup>295</sup> *War* 2.308; see Mason 1998b: 75; 2008a: 247 n. 1978 *ad loc.* It is possible that there were those with equestrian status among the Judaeans at Rome at this time as well.

<sup>296</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 2.13; 10.2, 94-5; cf. Mart. *Ep.* 2.91-92; 3.95.5; 7.97.5; *ILS* 1910; regarding the *ius trium liberorum*, see Astolfi 1970: 99-102, 174-9.

<sup>297</sup> Stat. *Silv.* 3.1.61-4; Mart. *Ep.* 9.18; cf. Frontin. *Aq.* 3, 88, 103, 105, 111, regarding the right of private parties to have a private water pipe; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 496; Bruun 1991: 63-95, for discussion of the relevant evidence from *fistula*-stamps.

anthropological term<sup>298</sup>—as Pliny and Martial did in their petitions for citizenship for various individuals connected to them.<sup>299</sup> In the case of Josephus, however, the same almost regular pattern of exchange does not appear to have existed.

This view of Josephus' position in relation to the imperial court is consistent with the picture that has emerged from our analysis of the relationship between Vespasian and Josephus prior to the latter's arrival in Rome. At that point I noted that our evidence of opportunities for the development of a relationship is scant, although, of course, much may be hidden from the historical record.<sup>300</sup> Here I would observe that the period of Josephus' life in Rome under the headship of Vespasian should likely not be characterized by anything other than what Cotton and Eck have termed "the routine working of the imperial patronage system (*Klientelsystem*)."<sup>301</sup> Moreover, the basis for this patron-client relationship need not have been anything more specific than the involvement of Josephus in the early stages of the Flavian accession, both in his (temporary) service as 'prophet' of the new regime and his assistance to Titus in the final stages of the revolt.<sup>302</sup> The most important steps in Vespasian's elevation to the throne were taken in Syria, Judaea, and Egypt and it was, therefore, crucial for him to tie more closely to himself those who were involved by extending to them honours in keeping with their status and role in

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<sup>298</sup> Regarding the existence of 'brokers' or 'agents' who operated within the Roman patronage system, see Saller 1982: 74-77; for the anthropological model, see Boissevain 1974: 147f. The application of the term broker has been convincingly applied to the Judaeen pantomime actor Aliturus by Strangelove 1992: 50-51.

<sup>299</sup> See e.g. Mart. *Ep.* 3.95.11; Plin. *Ep.* 10.5-7, 10-11.

<sup>300</sup> See pp. 100-102.

<sup>301</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 40. The nature of patronage in the Roman world is notoriously complex, particularly in the context of changes between the Republic and the Principate, and has a lengthy history in scholarship. Within this discussion, however, the more specialized matter of relationships with the emperor is less contested. For a survey of scholarship regarding the latter subject, see Winterling 1999: 26-9, 161-6. For a useful discussion of the changes in *amicitia* and patron-client relations from the Republic to the Principate and the complex conditions that emerged, see Winterling 2009: 34-7. The following discussion, which seeks to place Josephus within the context of imperial patronage, owes much also to the work of scholars such as Saller 1982, and Wallace-Hadrill 1989: 63-87.

<sup>302</sup> For a discussion of the reason(s) behind the benefits received by Josephus, see Rajak 2002[1983]: 195-7. His services to Titus during the revolt, which will be discussed in the following chapter, should not be dismissed as background for his honours. Josephus himself claims that Titus interceded for him with his father on a number of occasions; see *War* 3.396-8; 4.627-9; 7.449-50.

the events.<sup>303</sup> It is a mistake, however, to speak in terms of payment or to ask how Josephus earned these *beneficia*; to do so is to miss the nature of imperial largesse, which was limited only by the impulses of the individual emperor and had the primary aim of establishing continuing loyalty.<sup>304</sup> Josephus was both rewarded for his demonstration of loyalty and obligated to maintain this devotion.

A comparison at this point may be instructive as an illustration of the possible limits of the subsequent relationship. The well-known German chieftain, Segestes, who was noted according to Tacitus for his good faith towards the Romans (*fides in nos*),<sup>305</sup> had first been of service in disclosing a conspiracy among the chieftains of the Cherusci—including his son-in-law Arminius—against P. Quintilius Varus, the Roman governor, in AD 9. The result, when Segestes' warning was ignored, was the legendary disaster in the Teutoburger Wald, in which Varus and his three legions were killed.<sup>306</sup> Following this success, the Cherusci revolted from the empire. Segestes was forced into the revolt by the collective will of the tribe (*consensu gentis*),<sup>307</sup> much in the same way that Josephus claims himself and other prominent Judaeans to have been.<sup>308</sup> After appealing to Germanicus, who had been entrusted with the suppression of the revolt, he was rescued by the Romans from the fortress where he had been besieged by his compatriots. He subsequently turned his daughter and son over to the Romans, who then featured in Germanicus' triumph. He himself made a speech of loyalty to the Roman troops in which he also expressed his desire to act as a suitable mediator for the German people (*genti Germanorum*

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<sup>303</sup> Nicols 1978: 125-131, 176; Levick 1999: 63-4.

<sup>304</sup> See White 1978: 87-8. This is also demonstrated by the gifts granted Josephus by Poppaea Sabina (*Life* 16), discussed in the previous chapter.

<sup>305</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.55.

<sup>306</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.55-59; Vell. Pat. 2.118; Flor. 2.30.32-39; Strabo 7.1.4.

<sup>307</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.55.

<sup>308</sup> See e.g. *War* 2.562-8; 2.651; 4.230; *Life* 17-23.

*idoneus conciliator*).<sup>309</sup> For his efforts he was rewarded with a place “as a guest of honour at the triumph over his loved ones.”<sup>310</sup> Furthermore, he was rewarded with indemnity for his relatives as well as a plot of land west of the Rhine (*sedem vetere in provincia*).<sup>311</sup> The Roman citizenship he had already received from Augustus he claimed as the basis for his actions in the interests of the Romans. Having thus benefited from his loyalty to the Romans, he settled down on the land he had received from Germanicus.

The similarities between Josephus and this Germanic chieftain are worth noting explicitly: their initial (reluctant) involvement in the revolts against the Romans; their status as mediators between their compatriots and the Romans; their Roman citizenship (although received at different stages); the reward of freedom for relatives; and the gift of land in the homeland.<sup>312</sup> Apart from Josephus’ decision to remain in Rome following the triumph and his subsequent literary output, the two life stories are striking in their corresponding details. It is instructive, therefore, to highlight the limits of the relationship between Segestes and Germanicus, who, although on generally poor terms with the emperor Tiberius, was still his adopted son and heir to the throne.<sup>313</sup> Segestes returned to his homeland with renewed reasons to remain loyal to the Romans through the privileges granted to him, but had no further contact with the imperial court. No obligations were placed on him by the benefactions granted to him, apart from his continued devotion.

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<sup>309</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.58.

<sup>310</sup> Strabo 7.1.4: τῷ θριάμβῳ παρῆν τῶν φιλάτων, ἐν τιμῇ ἀγόμενος; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 2.41. Although Josephus never claims to have held a privileged place at the Flavian triumph, his detailed account and the fact that he claims that no one in the city was absent suggest that he was at least present (*War* 7.120-57).

<sup>311</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.58.

<sup>312</sup> For Josephus as mediator: *Life* 29f. (among the Galileans); *War* 5.114, 261, 541-7; 6.93-113, 118, 129, 365 (for the Romans). This will be further discussed in the following chapter. For the freedom of members of Josephus’ family, as well as ‘friends and associates’ (φίλων ἐμῶν καὶ συνήθων), see *Life* 418-20; regarding the gifts of land, see *Life* 422, 425.

<sup>313</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.3; 4.57; Cass. Dio 55.13.1a-3; Suet. *Tib.* 15. Regarding the relationship between Tiberius and Germanicus, which is based on a complex interplay of ancient sources including Tacitus and the more recently discovered Tabula Siarensis and the *Senatus Consultum de Cn. Pisone Patre*, see e.g. Syme 1958: 1.418-19, 2.492; Pelling 1993: 59-85; Gonzalez 1999: 123-42; Severy 2000: 318-37.



Evidently Josephus did stay in Rome. Further, his educational background allowed him to pursue his interests in various writing projects during the latter period of his life. Although we should not allow his literary pursuits to unduly influence our understanding of the relationship between him and his imperial patron, as I have argued above, his presence in the city of Rome did allow for the continuous working of the patron-client bond in a more direct and personal way than was the case between Segestes and Germanicus, since proximity was essential for any further exchanges.<sup>314</sup> He does not indicate that he was present at the frequent afternoon *cenae* hosted by Vespasian or one of his intimates, which we might expect him to have mentioned had he been invited given the apparent completeness of the list of his privileges from the emperors; such a privilege was worth mentioning, as can be seen from Statius' joyful mention of his invitation to join Domitian at the imperial table.<sup>315</sup> Josephus also does not mention serving as host himself to the emperor or receiving such privileges as accompanying Vespasian in the imperial carriage.<sup>316</sup> This, if we can place any weight on the absence of evidence, would have put him beyond the innermost circle of *amici* who surrounded Vespasian and with whom he had a working relationship. It would also remove him from the ranks of other intellectuals who found a more permanent place at the imperial courts of Augustus and his successors, sharing as it were the *contubernium principis*.<sup>317</sup> If we were to place him among Seneca's three categories of *amici*,

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<sup>314</sup> Winterling 2009: 46, "close personal relationships in ancient Rome required a continuously renewed enactment and manifestation through interaction, that is, by personal communication of those present" (cf. 47).

<sup>315</sup> Stat. *Silv.* 4.2. Presence at imperial banquets was an important indicator of proximity to the emperor; see Friedländer, 1965[1908-13]: 1.93-7; Wallace-Hadrill 1996: 291-92; Winterling 1999: 145-160, who argues for the gradual institutionalization of these social (and political) events. Cassius Dio suggests that Vespasian was more open to admitting his *amici* to his dinner table than other emperors, which would make Josephus' absence more striking (65.10.5-6); see also Suet. *Vesp.* 19.1; cf. *Aug.* 74.

<sup>316</sup> For references to the emperors accepting the hospitality of friends, see Suet. *Aug.* 53.3; *Tib.* 31.2; *Claud.* 31.1; Cass. Dio 56.26.2; 57.11.7; 60.12.1; 65.7.1; 66.10.6 (Vespasian); 68.7.3; 69.7.3; Eutr. 8.4; SHA *Ant. Pius* 11.1-7; *Hadr.* 9.7; sharing the imperial carriage, see Tac. *Ann.* 11.33; Eutr. 8.4; Cass. Dio 68.7.4; 69.7.3.

<sup>317</sup> See Wallace-Hadrill 1996: 292; he mentions the philosopher Areius at Augustus' court (Suet. *Aug.* 89; Cass. Dio 51.16; Plut. *Ant.* 80), the grammarian Seleucus (Suet. *Tib.* 56) and the astrologer Thrasyllus (Tac. *Ann.* 6.20-21) at the court of Tiberius, the doctor Xenophon at Claudius' (Plin. *HN* 29.5; Tac. *Ann.* 12.67), and the musician Terpnus at Nero's (Suet. *Ner.* 20.1). Cf. Friedländer 1965[1908-13]: 1.75; Millar 1992[1977]: 83-94; Turcan 1987: 208ff.

he would seem to fit best within the last category, comprised of those who were welcome only at general receptions, not invited to the more select gatherings and certainly not the private parties.<sup>318</sup> These general receptions were by and large institutionalized in the morning *salutatio*, at which time the emperor was available to address the various needs of any who brought their cases before him.<sup>319</sup> It may be that for Josephus as well this was the best opportunity for gaining or maintaining imperial favour.

It is possible then that we should see this social ritual at the heart of Josephus' continued contact with the imperial court. Cassius Dio reports that Vespasian spent little time at the palace on the Palatine, preferring the Gardens of Sallust, where he received "anybody who desired to see him, not only senators but also people in general."<sup>320</sup> This was probably done on a routine basis on the occasion of the morning *salutatio*, as Dio mentions immediately afterward that Vespasian's intimate friends (τοῖς φίλοις) were even allowed to approach him *before* dawn while he was still reclining in bed.<sup>321</sup> These regular receptions attracted significant numbers of people from all walks of life and all levels of society seeking a wide variety of favours and judgments

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<sup>318</sup> Sen. *Ben.* 6.34. The three categories are a creation of Seneca who, moreover, uses the word *amici* here loosely. We should not consider Josephus as one of the semi-official *amici Caesaris*; if he had been an *amicus Caesaris* we can be certain he would have mentioned it. To speak of his relationship in terms of 'friendship' is, therefore, misleading; see e.g. Neyrey 1994: 196-7. For the application of Seneca's graded system of clients to the emperor, see Saller 1982: 11-12; Wallace-Hadrill 1996: 290. For other possible references to a graded admission, see Sen. *Clem.* 1.10.1; Plin. *HN* 33.41; Cass. Dio 57.11.1; *ILS* 1078=*CIL* VI 31746; *ILS* 1320=*CIL* VI.2169. See, however, the objections raised by Winterling 2009: 90-91 n. 69, who is concerned with disproving an official ranking of the emperor's *amici*, which these references do not support. Nonetheless, they do support a less formal level of differentiation among those present at the *salutatio*, although it is unclear how this differentiation would have taken place. There is little evidence for the existence of 'un service d'esclaves et d'affranchis (*officium admissionis, admissionales*)' including a *magister ab admissione*, as described by Turcan 1987: 134 (on the basis of Suet. *Nero* 10.4).

<sup>319</sup> This practice was followed by the emperors as early as Augustus himself (Cass. Dio 56.16.2f.). Regarding the *salutatio*, see Hug 1920: 2060-72; Friedländer 1965[1908-13]: 1.86-93; Millar 1992[1977]: 21f., 209f., 241f.; Wallace-Hadrill 1982: 40-41; Turcan 1987: 132-9; Winterling 1999: 117-144, esp. 122-38 (*salutatio* at the imperial court).

<sup>320</sup> Cass. Dio 65.10.4.

<sup>321</sup> Cass. Dio 65.10.5; cf. 72.35.4 for a similar situation regarding Marcus Aurelius before his accession.

from the emperor.<sup>322</sup> Of course, distinctions on the basis of status and proximity to the emperor would have been maintained even within this large group, so that we should probably place Josephus ahead of the large majority on the basis of his past involvement with the imperial family and perhaps his association with figures such as Agrippa II and Berenice, who held a prominent place in Flavian Rome.<sup>323</sup> He may even have joined a clique of similarly well-educated and leisured individuals, such as the group of learned men (*docti homines*) who habitually carried on philosophical discourses in the vestibule of the palace of Antoninus Pius while awaiting the appearance of the emperor.<sup>324</sup> At any rate, the level of honour accorded each petitioner could be measured visibly by the degree of familiarity with which the emperor greeted them, with a kiss and/or embrace showing the closest of bonds.<sup>325</sup> We should imagine, therefore, that Josephus' history with Vespasian (and Titus) put him ahead of the crowds of *plebs* who were waiting with their *libelli* perhaps for days on end, seeking resolutions to their disputes or requesting legal decisions.<sup>326</sup>

When we are told that Vespasian guarded Josephus against accusations then, it is not unreasonable to suppose that he went about securing the emperor's support in this traditional

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<sup>322</sup> The approachability of the emperor is a standard biographical detail in the ancient works; see Cass. Dio 56.26.3 (οὐχ ὅτι ἡ γερουσία ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ ἱππῆς τοῦ τε δήμου πολλοῦ); 57.11.1; 57.21.4; Suet. *Aug.* 53.2 (*promiscuis salutationibus admittebat et plebem*); *Ner.* 10.2 (*omnis ordines*); Aul. Gell. *NA* 4.1.1 (*omnium fere ordinum multitudo*); cf. *NA* 20.1.2; 20.1.55; Winterling 1999: 122-5. It is likely, however, that for those other than the senators and perhaps the *equites*, the general receptions (*publica/promiscua salutatio*; Suet. *Aug.* 53.5; Cass. Dio 56.41.5; Suet. *Vesp.* 4.4; *Nero* 10.2) were restricted to festival days; see Friedländer 1965[1908-13]: 1.87; nevertheless, given the large number of festival days on the Roman calendar, this still afforded plenty of opportunity to all ranks.

<sup>323</sup> In his *Panegyric* of Trajan, Pliny seems to suggest that among the *plebs urbana* there were those who could specifically be called *clientes* and held a special position within the general crowd (*Pan.* 23.1f.). The exact interpretation of this passage is disputed; see Saller 1982: 68 n. 162. Regarding ranking at the morning *salutatio*, see Garnsey and Saller 1987: 122. Josephus' associations with Agrippa II and other Herodians in the city of Rome will be explored in Chapter 6.

<sup>324</sup> Aul. Gell. *NA* 4.1.1; cf. 19.13.1; 20.1.2.

<sup>325</sup> Suet. *Otho* 6.2; cf. Tac. *Agr.* 40; *Ann.* 13.18; Plin. *Pan.* 22-4, 71, 85; SHA *Marc.* 3.4. On kissing at the morning *salutatio*, see Friedländer 1965[1908-13]: 1.90-93; Alföldi 1970: 40-42; Turcan 1987: 138-9.

<sup>326</sup> *Libelli*: Quint. *Inst.* 6.3.59; Suet. *Aug.* 53; *Claud.* 37; *Dom.* 17; Macrobius *Sat.* 2.4.3; Mart. *Ep.* 8.31.3, 8.82.1; Philostratus *VA* 5.38.

manner.<sup>327</sup> When faced with charges of one sort or another, a toga-clad appearance at Vespaian's *salutatio* in the Gardens of Sallust would certainly have served him well.<sup>328</sup> The emperor had already established by the gifts granted to Josephus upon his arrival in Rome that the Judaeian ex-captive was in good favour and so Josephus could expect him also to rule positively when handling these disputes. In the case of the serious accusations brought forward by Jonathan of Cyrene at the instigation of the Libyan governor Catullus sometime between Josephus' arrival in Rome early in AD 71 and AD 73,<sup>329</sup> we might imagine that Josephus went in person to plead his case.<sup>330</sup> Once Vespaian established that the accusations were unfounded he ensured that the guilty were punished and that the reputation of the accused was unsullied and his loyalty again secured by way of imperial largesse: a gift of land in Judaea.<sup>331</sup> All of this fits neatly within the routine working of imperial patronage.

In fact, we can even understand the presentation of Josephus' *War* to Vespaian and Titus as taking place within this context.<sup>332</sup> In one of the epigrams of Martial we find the Flavian poet among the multitude of petitioners at the morning *salutatio* offering Domitian not a *libellus* like the others but instead a small collection of poems (*carmina parva*): "While the multitude offers you plaintive petitions, Augustus, we too offer little poems to our *Dominus*. We know that your deity has time both for business and the Muses and that these garlands too are pleasing to

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<sup>327</sup> It is not entirely clear how many charges Josephus actually faced. He is unlikely to have fabricated the incident involving Jonathan of Cyrene and Catullus, but the more general claim to have had envious enemies who often prosecuted him must also be seen as a literary trope; cf. *Life* 80-82, 122; *War* 1.67, 1.208; *Ant.* 13.288; Mason 2001: 66 n. 435.

<sup>328</sup> Toga: *Mart. Ep.* 5.22; 9.100; 10.82; *Juv.* 3.126-30; see George 2008: 96-107.

<sup>329</sup> For arguments regarding the dating, which has not been agreed upon, see Cotton and Eck 2005: 46-8; D.R. Schwartz 2011a: 347-50; cf. S. Schwartz 1986: 373-86; 1990: 11 n. 35; Mason 2001: 169.

<sup>330</sup> *Life* 424; *War* 7.4477-450. Personal appearance before the emperor was generally the more effective way of receiving a positive response. See *Dig.* 48.6.6 regarding a certain Domitius Silvanus before Antoninus Pius as plaintiff; cf. *Dig.* 42.1.33 regarding Iulius Tarentinus before Hadrian in search of *restitutio*; *Dig.* 49.1.25=*P. Oxy.* 2104; *Suet. Aug.* 40 (citizenship); *Epict.* 3.9.1ff.; see Garnsey 1970: 68-72. Cf. regarding Catullus, p. 334.

<sup>331</sup> *Life* 424: ἔλαβον δὲ παρὰ Οὐεσπασιανοῦ δωρεάν γῆν οὐκ ὀλίγην ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ. We need not interpret this gift of land, therefore, as a sign that Josephus was advancing in imperial favour; *contra* S. Schwartz 1990: 12.

<sup>332</sup> *Life* 361-3; *Ap.* 1.50-51.

you.”<sup>333</sup> On another occasion, Martial requests that Parthenius, *cubicularius* of Domitian, ensure that his poems reach the emperor at a favourable moment: “admit this timid, slender volume within the threshold of the more sacred palace. You know the times when Jove is serene, when he shines with his own gentle countenance at which time he is likely to deny nothing to suppliants. You need have no fear of exorbitant petitions.”<sup>334</sup> Again the presentation of the poems takes place within the context of the *salutatio*, this time not directly but through a ‘broker’.<sup>335</sup> It would certainly not have been unusual, therefore, for Josephus to have turned up at one of these daily gatherings with copies of his book(s)—perhaps with a slave in tow to assist him with the cumbersome bookrolls<sup>336</sup>—to be presented to Vespasian, who would be expected at least to accept it, hopefully to read it or have it read to him, and ideally to endorse it in some way.<sup>337</sup> Once his work was received in this straightforward manner, Josephus would be able to claim Vespasian and Titus as witnesses (μάρτυροι) to the accuracy of his work.<sup>338</sup>

This context also suits the claim of Eusebius that Josephus’ works were “considered worthy [of deposit] in the library.”<sup>339</sup> Subsequent writers expanded on this, indicating that the

<sup>333</sup> Mart. *Ep.* 8.82.1-4: *Dante tibi turba querulos, Auguste, libellos/ nos quoque quod domino carmina parva damus,/ posse deum rebus partier Musisque vacare/ scimus et haec etiam sarta placere tibi*; trans. Shackleton Bailey 1993: 2.231.

<sup>334</sup> Mart. *Ep.* 5.6.7-11: *admittas timidam brevemque chartam/ intra limina sanctioris aulae./ nosti tempora tu Iovis sereni,/ cum fulget placido suoque vultu,/ quo nil supplicibus solet negare. non est quod metuas preces iniquas*; trans. Shackleton Bailey 1993: 1.357. See also Mart. *Ep.* 1.70; 2.91, 92; 3.95.

<sup>335</sup> See Boissevain 1974: 147f; Saller 1982: 74-77; Strangelove 1992: 50-51.

<sup>336</sup> For useful descriptions of ancient bookrolls, see Kenney 1982: 15-18; Johnson 2010: 17-22.

<sup>337</sup> Feldman 1984b: 784, suggests that Vespasian and Titus did not take the time to read the work carefully. He speculates that they wrote a recommendation in the manner of modern prefaces written by famous persons, on the basis of *Life* 363 (χαράζας τῆ ἑαυτοῦ χειρὶ τὰ βιβλία) and perhaps Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.10.9-11: *et imperator quidem Titus in tantum probavit ex istis debere libris ad omnes homines rerum gestarum notitiam pervenire, ut manu sua scriberet publice ab omnibus eos legi debere*; trans. Rufinus) but we need not imagine even this level of interaction. A simple signature would have sufficed; see Millar 1967: 13-14, for references to the emperors writing answers to *libelli* or letters by hand. One would imagine that the former took place on the spot also at the morning *salutatio*. Leoni 2007: 49 n. 46, imagines the possibility of ‘official readers’ first scrutinizing the work.

<sup>338</sup> Having the emperor as reader might also boost the readership of the work once it was released to the public. Thus Martial, “All my little books, Lord, to which you have given fame, which is to say life, are your petitioners, and will be read, I suppose, for that reason” (*Ep.* 8.*praef.*3-5); cf. 4.27; 6.64; Nauta 2002: 378.

<sup>339</sup> Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3.9.2.

*War* specifically was deposited into a/the public library.<sup>340</sup> It is possible that Eusebius had access to external evidence—he does claim the existence of a statue of Josephus in the city of Rome, a detail that does not appear in any of Josephus’ own works—but a more likely explanation is that Eusebius, and the others, were interpreting Josephus’ own ambiguous assertion that Titus, upon receiving the volumes, “ordered them to be made public”.<sup>341</sup> The interpretation that this “making public” meant deposit in a library rather than duplication in the very rudimentary book trade fits more easily within the processes involved in the circulation of ancient texts. Once in the library, the work was in the public domain and available to be copied by anyone interested.<sup>342</sup> The placement of the work in the library worked hand in hand, therefore, with the inscription of Titus in declaring that Josephus’ account of the *War* was trustworthy and acceptable.<sup>343</sup> It functioned simultaneously as a favour from the imperial patron to his client, probably at the request of the latter, in part to ensure that any subsequent copies would at least originate from a reliable version.<sup>344</sup> Although this may have had the effect of lending a semi-official quality to the *War*, it

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<sup>340</sup> Jer. *De vir. ill.* 13: *Hic Romam veniens septem libros Iudaicae captivitatis imperatoribus patri filioque obtulit, qui et bibliothecae publicae traditi sunt*; Suda s.v. Ἰώσηπος: ἐπὶ λόγους τῆς Ἱεροσολύμων ἀλώσεως τοῖς βασιλεῦσι προσήνεγκεν, οἵτινες τῇ δημοσίᾳ βιβλιοθήκῃ παρεδόθησαν); cf. Nicephorus Callistus *PG* 145.800B: οὗς λόγος ἔχει καὶ τὸν Καίσαρα Τίτον ἰδίαις γεγραφότα χερσὶ, δημοσιεύεσθαι πανταχοῦ προστάξει, καὶ τῇ ἐν Ῥώμῃ τῶν βιβλίων ἀναθέσει καταλεγεῖν; and 917D-920A: σοφίαν γὰρ καὶ τὴν τῶν λόγων παιδείαν διαφερόντως [Titus] ἡγάπα. ὡς καὶ αὐτὸν Ἰώσηπον οἶα δὴ λόγου ἄνδρα τιμαῖς ὑπερβαλλούσαις τιμᾶν, τὰ τε ἐκείνου βιβλία γράψαι χερσὶ, καὶ ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις τῆς Ῥώμης ἐναποτάξει. These authors all rely, however, on Eusebius’ work and cannot be relied upon as providing external evidence.

<sup>341</sup> *Life* 363: δημοσιῶσαι προσέταξεν; see Cohen 2002[1979]: 130-32, esp. n. 104-6. Although this discussion might fit more properly with the subsequent chapter on Titus and Josephus, it cannot really be separated from the context here. Some of the observations made here will, then, be significant later.

<sup>342</sup> Regarding the role of the library in the process of the transmission and circulation of ancient literature, see Kenney 1982: 23-5; Houston 2009: 233-67; Winsbury 2009: 67-75.

<sup>343</sup> It may be that the statue of Josephus in the city of Rome mentioned by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.9.1-2) was connected with the placement of his literary work in the imperial library. According to Suetonius, it was customary for busts of eminent writers to be set up in public libraries, to which Tiberius added the busts of his favourite poets (*Tib.* 70.2); cf. Tac. *Ann.* 2.37; Plin. *HN* 7.30.115. The practice extended also to private libraries; see Plin. *Ep.* 1.16.8, 3.7.8, 4.28.1, 8.18.11; Cic. *Att.* 4.10.1=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 84. Chapman 2009: 115, suggests that the natural place for both the statue and the texts to have been deposited was the Temple of Peace.

<sup>344</sup> Regarding this part of the publishing process and the possible proliferation of corrupted texts, see Bickerman 1944: 341-4; Marshall 1976: 252-64; Starr 1987: 215-6.

does not justify identifying the work as a whole as the proper official Flavian account of the Judaeae revolt.<sup>345</sup>

Such a request for a work to be placed in one of the imperial libraries would certainly not have been unusual. If we turn again to Martial, we can see the Flavian poet attempting to gain a place for his work in the imperial library through a broker named Sextus, whom he calls the “eloquent votary of Palatine Minerva”, likely referring to his role as curator (*a bibliothecis*) of the *bibliotheca Apollinis* which housed Greek and Latin collections in the Temple of Apollo attached to the palace of Augustus on the Palatine.<sup>346</sup> Martial pleads, “you who enjoy the god’s genius at closer quarters...find a place somewhere for my little books (*nostris libellis*), in the neighbourhood of Pedo and Marsus and Catullus.”<sup>347</sup> Inclusion in the imperial library was likely also the design of those scholars who deliberately chose to write commentaries on the works of Tiberius’ favourite poets and dedicated these to the emperor.<sup>348</sup> It was clearly the desire of Ovid, who, writing while he himself was in exile, imaginatively portrays his works making their way through the city of Rome attempting to find a place in one of the imperial libraries. He makes reference not only to the library in the Temple of Apollo, but also to one attached to the Theatre of Marcellus and another located in the Temple of Liberty. The book of poetry is notably rebuffed by a guard from the imperial palace, perhaps a *cultor Palatinae* such as Sextus, illustrating the continued denial of imperial favour to Ovid himself.<sup>349</sup> In this case, as with the others, it is clear that the initiative to induct the works into the public library was taken primarily by the writer himself, subject to the approval of the emperor. Subsequently the successful

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<sup>345</sup> See, however, Leoni 2007: 48-49 n. 45.

<sup>346</sup> Mart. Ep. 5.5.1: *Palatinae cultor facunde Minervae*. Regarding the *bibliotheca Apollinis*, see Suet. Aug. 29.3; Cass. Dio 53.1.3; *CIL* VI.5188 (=ILS 1589), 5189 (=ILS 1588), 5884.

<sup>347</sup> Mart. Ep. 5.5.2-6: *ingenio frueris qui propiore dei...sit locus et nostris aliqua tibi parte libellis,/ qua Pedo, qua Marsus quaque Catullus erit*; trans. Shackleton Bailey 1993: 1.356.

<sup>348</sup> Suet. Tib. 70.2; see Starr 1987: 216.

<sup>349</sup> Ov. Tr. 3.1.59-74.

applicant was free to construe its acceptance as he wished.<sup>350</sup> We should not, therefore, place significant weight on Josephus' claim that Titus' inscription and his order to 'publish' the *War* originated with his desire to restrict the transmission of knowledge of the revolt to these volumes.<sup>351</sup> In light of the ancient evidence, the privilege may have been much more routine than Josephus would have us believe.

The nature of imperial patronage was thus largely reactionary, even when relationships were already established. That is, requests, petitions and favours were received by the emperors and responded to accordingly.<sup>352</sup> As far as we know, there was no clear attempt made by Vespasian to seek out Josephus or go to any lengths to ensure his continued well-being, but rather Josephus went to his imperial patron when needs arose, meeting with success in an expected manner. Although his previous contact with the emperor may have guaranteed him a swifter audience or made him more certain of a positive response, he may still have lingered at the very margins of the imperial court. It may even be too much, therefore, to include him among the "doctors and magicians, philosophers and buffoons", who yet remained fixtures at court to one degree or other.<sup>353</sup> Josephus' presence on the occasions revealed in the narratives may have been much more incidental and at his own initiative.

The scant evidence for direct contact between Vespasian and Josephus during his residence in Rome accords well with the little evidence for the development of a relationship between the two prior to his arrival in Rome. Moreover, the interactions they did have throughout the two and a half years that they were in relative proximity to each other do not

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<sup>350</sup> Regarding Martial's presentation of Domitian's grant of the *ius trium liberorum* (*Ep.* 2.91, 92), see Daube 1976: 145-7; Nauta 2002: 336-37.

<sup>351</sup> *Life* 363: ἐκ μόνων αὐτῶν ἐβουλήθη τὴν γνῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παραδοῦναι τῶν πράξεων.

<sup>352</sup> See also Nauta 2002: 349, "Neither in Martial nor in Statius is there any reference to their receiving commands or instructions from the court..."

<sup>353</sup> Yavetz 1975: 431. For such figures, see e.g. Juvenal *Sat.* 4.38-33; Suet. *Aug.* 59; Cass. Dio 53.30.3; cf. Friedländer 1965[1908-13]: 1.85; Saller 1982: 63-4; Scarborough 1993: 40-41; Jackson 1993: 84-5.



appear to have been enough to establish Josephus within the imperial court, if we give any weight to the silence in our evidence. Although it was undoubtedly possible for outsiders to gain entrance into the *aula Caesaris* and become *intimi*, *proximi*, or *familiares* of the emperor even without standing within the traditional hierarchies of the Roman Republican constitution,<sup>354</sup> Josephus does not claim to have penetrated this inner circle, at least as far as Vespasian was concerned. His life in Rome during the writing of his *Judaean War* should then not be characterized narrowly by the occasions on which he visited the imperial court, which may have been few and far between. In my attempts to reconstruct his social milieu I should probably look elsewhere.

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<sup>354</sup> Winterling 2009: 90-102.

## CHAPTER 4

### JOSEPHUS AND TITUS

As I continue to consider the relationships between Josephus and the individual members of the Flavian dynasty, I move from the father and founder of the dynasty to the eldest son and heir to the imperial throne. It is with Titus that Josephus has always been understood as having had the closest relationship.<sup>1</sup> This is not without reason. In the *War*, already at the first moment of contact when the captured Judaeian general was brought before the Roman commanders, Josephus intimates that there was a special connection between the two young men, a claim that he cultivates throughout the remaining narrative as well as in the *Life*. The Roman troops react variously to the appearance of the enemy leader who had withstood the siege at Jotapata for so long, with some clamouring for his death and others exhibiting wonder at the reversal of his fortune (τὴν μεταβολὴν).<sup>2</sup> Among the Roman leaders, however, any remnants of anger dispersed with Josephus' appearance. And Titus is singled out for special mention:

But most of all Titus was especially touched by the endurance of Josephus under misfortunes and by pity for his youth.<sup>3</sup> As he recalled the combatant of yesterday and saw him now a prisoner in his enemy's hands, he was led to reflect on the power of fortune, the quick vicissitudes of war, and the general instability of human affairs.<sup>4</sup> So he brought over many Romans at the time to share his compassion for Josephus, and his pleading with his father was the main influence in saving the prisoner's life.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Laqueur 1920: 31, 97, 124, 258-9; Weber 1921: 54-7, 135, 284-7; Yavetz 1975: 423; Franchet d'Espèrey 1986: 3081-2; Stern 1987: 72, 78; S. Schwartz 1990: 12; Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 109-110; Cohen 2002[1979]: 85; Rajak 2002[1983]: 194-6, 200-207, 211-13.

<sup>2</sup> *War* 3.394.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus heightens the connection by drawing attention to their similarity in age. Josephus was 29 or 30 at this point: *Life* 5; cf. *Ant.* 20.267. Titus was 28: Suet. *Tit.* 11; Cass. Dio 66.18.4; cf. B. Jones 1984: 23 n. 1, regarding some discrepancies in the sources.

<sup>4</sup> See also *War* 6.409-313; *Life* 417; cf. Mason 2001: 165 n. 1714. Compare the reflections of Scipio Aemilianus at the destruction of Carthage: Polyb. 38.21.1; App. *Pun.* 19.132; Diod. Sic. 32.24; cf. Plin. *HN* 37.7.19-20.

<sup>5</sup> *War* 3.396-7: μάλιστα δὲ τὸν Τίτον ἐξαιρέτως τό τε καρτερικὸν ἐν ταῖς συμφοραῖς ἦρει τοῦ Ἰωσήπου καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἡλικίαν ἔλεος, ἀναμνησκομένῳ τε τὸν πάλαι μαχόμενον καὶ τὸν ἐν χερσὶν ἐχθρῶν ἄρτι κείμενον ὄρωντι παρῆν [

As with any episode in Josephus' narrative that is unsubstantiated by external sources and especially here,<sup>6</sup> the exact chain of events is impossible to ascertain and scepticism is compulsory, but the authorial hand is particularly evident in the claim that Titus' intercession was a matter of life and death. As Seth Schwartz has pointed out, the Romans were not in the habit of casually executing important prisoners such as Josephus; instead they were sent off to Rome to various ends.<sup>7</sup> We are, therefore, immediately alerted to Josephus' concern not simply to highlight but even to embellish his relationship with Titus.

Thus immediately thereafter Josephus also draws attention to Titus' cooperation in the special treatment he claims to have received as prisoner from Vespasian, including the "clothing and other treasures".<sup>8</sup> Two years later, after Josephus' prediction regarding the accession of Vespasian had been verified, it was Titus who suggested the ceremonial severing of his chains in order to remove thereby the ignominy of captivity.<sup>9</sup> Titus took on a further role in the narrative as intermediary between Josephus and Vespasian when the accusations of Jonathan and the other revolutionaries were brought against Josephus at the instigation of Catullus, the praetorian proconsul of Crete and Cyrenaica. Although the acquittal originated with Vespasian himself, Josephus expressly credits the intercession of Titus.<sup>10</sup> Throughout the *War*, therefore, Josephus

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δὲ] νοεῖν, ὅσον δύναται τύχη, καὶ ὡς ὀξεῖα μὲν πολέμου ῥοπή, τῶν δ' ἀνθρωπίνων οὐδὲν βέβαιον· παρὸ καὶ τότε συνδιέθηκεν μὲν πλείστους ἑαυτῷ καὶ πρὸς οἶκτον τοῦ Ἰωσήπου, πλείστη δ' αὐτῷ καὶ παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ μοῖρα σωτηρίας ἐγένετο.

<sup>6</sup> See Cohen 2002[1979]: 229, "The narrative about Josephus' own surrender is equally famous and suspect (BJ 3.340-408). Obviously we shall never know what happened at Jotapata" (cf. 228-230); cf. Niese 1896: 196-7; Feldman 1984a: 88-93; Avidov 1998: 264.

<sup>7</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 5 n. 7; see e.g. *War* 2.243; 6.433-4; 7.118; *Life* 408.

<sup>8</sup> *War* 3.408: φρουρᾶς μὲν οὖν καὶ δεσμῶν οὐκ ἀνίει τὸν Ἰωσήπον, ἔδωρεῖτο δ' ἐσθῆτι καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις κειμηλίοις φιλοφρονούμενός τε καὶ περιέπων διετέλει τὰ πολλὰ Τίτου τῆ τιμῆ συνεργοῦντος; see pp. 87-93.

<sup>9</sup> *War* 4.628-9.

<sup>10</sup> *War* 7.450: Οὐεσπασιανὸς δὲ τὸ πρᾶγμα ὑποπτεύσας ἀναζητεῖ τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ γνοὺς ἄδικον τὴν αἰτίαν τοῖς ἀνδράσι ἐπενηνεγμένην τοὺς μὲν ἀφήσι τῶν ἐγκλημάτων Τίτου σπουδάσαντος, δίκην δ' ἐπέθηκεν Ἰωνάθην τὴν προσήκουσαν· ζῶν γὰρ κατεκαύθη πρότερον αἰκισθεῖς. See also the protection Josephus claims Titus provided on other occasions: *Life* 416-17; 428-9. These will be discussed further below.

takes pains to demonstrate that a special bond existed between himself and the Flavian firstborn, perhaps implicitly revealing the absence of such a connection with the head of the new dynasty.<sup>11</sup>

Regardless of the historicity of these claims, it would not be entirely surprising that there should be a closer relationship between Josephus and Titus. I have observed already the closeness in age between the two.<sup>12</sup> More importantly, however, the opportunities for the development of a relationship were the greatest in the case of Titus. I have examined in the previous chapter the possibility that Josephus spent very little time in close proximity to Vespasian throughout the first stages of the revolt, particularly due to the potential restrictions on him as a prisoner and because Vespasian left for Rome very soon after Josephus' release from captivity. The situation with regard to Titus was, however, much different. From January of AD 70 when Josephus accompanied Titus on the return march to Caesarea from Alexandria and subsequently at the siege of Jerusalem to the spring of the following year when he sailed together with the victorious Roman general to the city of Rome for the imminent triumphal celebrations,<sup>13</sup> the two were in close proximity to one another.

This year-long period should, therefore, be properly viewed as fundamental for exploring the possibilities surrounding Josephus' relationship with Titus, a point that has not been fully acknowledged in scholarship up to this point.<sup>14</sup> According to his narratives, during his time in the Roman camp Josephus was called upon to render service to the Roman general on the basis of

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<sup>11</sup> See S. Schwartz 1990: 12 n. 39.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 154 n. 3; cf. Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 109-110, "...the first thing that may have struck [Titus] was that they were the same age. Josephus marks this moment as the beginning of Titus' firm and faithful friendship toward him, and it is probably true that their shared age counted heavily in their affection for each other."

<sup>13</sup> January, AD 70: *War* 5.1, 40-70; *Life* 416. Spring, AD 71: *Life* 422-3; cf. B. Jones 1984: 56-9, 72 n. 76, 209; S. Schwartz 1990: 7-9.

<sup>14</sup> In his seminal volume interacting with previous research on Josephus, Bilde 1988: 57, notes, "To my knowledge there is no literature which gives special attention to the topic of Josephus in the Roman camp" (cf. 53-57). Since then the following scholars have explored some aspects of Josephus' time in the Roman camp, but have by no means provided a comprehensive consideration: S. Schwartz 1990: 4-9; Rajak 2002[1983]: 194-6; Shahar 2004: 192-6.

his position as a native of the area with intimate knowledge of the local geography as well as the culture, language and attitudes of the native population. His role as interpreter and mediator for the Roman side necessitated frequent contact with the leadership of the Roman army, which makes this an important starting point for our investigation in this chapter. I will, therefore, examine carefully the details provided by Josephus in his narratives regarding his activities within the Roman camp after the departure of Vespasian, first viewing them within their narrative framework and then evaluating the historical possibilities by placing these activities within the ancient context. With regard to the latter I will explore the ancient evidence for the use of former prisoners and enemy combatants by the Romans for purposes of intelligence, interpretation and interrogation.

After examining Josephus' time within the Roman camp during the revolt, I will move on to consider Josephus' involvement after the successful capture of Jerusalem in the mop-up exercises and the subsequent journey to Rome. In this part of the investigation I will consider two key complementary elements of Josephus' activities during this period. In the first place I will examine his actions towards fellow Judaeans as a broker of Titus' *beneficia*, establishing himself as a patron of sorts on the basis of his relationship with the Roman general; in the second place I will look at Josephus himself in his status as client of Titus, as recipient rather than distributor of *philanthropia*. In discussing the latter, I will consider not only the privileges and honours Josephus claims to have received while still in Judaea, but also those that he credits Titus with having provided once he was settled in Rome. As with the previous chapter, the value of this part of the investigation will be the consideration of these benefits in isolation from the benefits received from the other members of the Flavian dynasty, with the aim of elucidating

Josephus' relationships with the individual emperors and so developing a more nuanced understanding of his position in relation to the imperial court.

One of the key observations that will emerge from my investigation is that we should not overestimate the strength or significance of the bonds between Josephus and Titus, as has been done too readily in the past. When we liberate Josephus from the chains that have tied him too closely to the emperors in past scholarship, Titus in particular, we have the opportunity not only to understand his historical situation more clearly but also to become more sensitive to his greater freedom of expression and, consequently, to the rhetorical artistry of his narratives. While much of previous scholarship embraced easily the superficially favourable portrait of Titus in the *War*, often seeing the flattering image as confirmation of the close relationship between the Judaeen historian and the Roman emperor,<sup>15</sup> recent scholarship has identified significant cracks in this perspective.<sup>16</sup> I will close this chapter, then, by examining these cracks carefully as evidence of Josephus' concern in the narrative not only to write artfully but also to speak subversively. Far from being proof positive of Josephus' position as a Flavian lackey and imperial mouthpiece, therefore, the image of Titus crafted by Josephus should be recognized as illustrative of the distance between the emperor and the historian and will assist me in establishing the possible parameters of their relationship.

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<sup>15</sup> See Laqueur 1920; Thackeray 1929: 47-8; Montefiore 1962: 162; Yavetz 1975: 411-32; Attridge 1984: 200-10; S. Schwartz 1990: 12-16; B. Jones 1992a: 408-20; Paul 1993: 56-66; Krieger 1994: 298-304; Mader 2000: 152-7; Cohen 2002[1979]: 85-6; Rajak 2002[1983]: 203-17; Goldsworthy 2003: 290-315; cf. Moehring 1984: 914-16.

<sup>16</sup> See McLaren 2005a: 279-95; 2005b: 34-48 (esp. 44-5); Mason 2005a: 100; 2005b: 243-88.

## Josephus as Interpreter/Mediator

In the previous chapter I presented the possibility that Josephus spent his time as prisoner of war in chains and that he had little opportunity for contact with Vespasian and Titus.<sup>17</sup> In any case, apart from his claim in the *Against Apion* that “Vespasian and Titus compelled [him] to be continually in attendance on them”<sup>18</sup> already during his period of bondage, he presents no concrete evidence of interaction with the Roman generals or that he provided services to them.<sup>19</sup> The situation is entirely different as far as his time in the Roman camp after his release from chains is concerned. After accompanying Vespasian and Titus to Alexandria, Josephus returned to Judaea with Titus and the Roman army and so was present also when the Roman army set up camp on the mountains surrounding and overlooking the walls of Jerusalem, namely Mount Scopus and the Mount of Olives,<sup>20</sup> and began their lengthy siege of the city, the details of which take up the entire narrative of books 5 and 6 of the *War*. The account of the siege is punctuated by the contributions of Josephus usually acting as some form of spokesman, interpreter, or mediator.

The primary task of Josephus in his capacity as spokesman was to invite those confined in the city to come to terms of accommodation with the Romans or desert to the Roman side. On most of these occasions, Josephus was sent out by Titus himself to convey a message to the besieged that originated from the Roman general himself.<sup>21</sup> Although the substance of the message and the directive of the message came from Titus, however, the shape and form was

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<sup>17</sup> See pp. 78-102.

<sup>18</sup> *Apion* 1.48: Οὐεσπασιανὸς καὶ Τίτος ἔχοντες αἰεὶ προσεδρεύειν αὐτοῖς ἠνάγκασαν.

<sup>19</sup> See Bilde 1988: 53-4; S. Schwartz 1990: 5-6; Barclay 2007: n. 196; *contra* Rajak 2002[1983]: 187.

<sup>20</sup> *War* 5.67-70; *Life* 416. These mountains still afford the best panoramas of the city of Jerusalem. The image of the Roman army perched atop Mt. Scopus overlooking the destruction of Jerusalem was made famous in a painting by the 19<sup>th</sup> century Scottish painter and traveller, David Roberts.

<sup>21</sup> *War* 5.114, 361-420; 6.93-113, 118, 129. On other occasions it may be that the initiative originates with Josephus himself; at the very least the narrative is inconclusive on this point: *War* 5.261; 541-7; 6.365. At *War* 5.325-6, Titus sends Josephus to conduct the petitioner Castor to the Roman general to allow the crafty Judaeans to beg for mercy. Josephus, however, sees through the ruse and refuses, also preventing his friends from taking his place.

likely dependent on Josephus himself, if the Roman general followed in any way the adage cited by Polybius in defence of his use of Carthaginian natives as sources of information, which asserted that, “the natives of a place do not only know best, as the saying is, the direction of the wind, but also the character of their compatriots.”<sup>22</sup> Certainly the speeches as they stand in the narratives, regardless of their historicity, are wholly Josephan.<sup>23</sup> In the lengthiest description of Josephus’ actions as spokesman he gives a two-part speech to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the first part echoing the sentiments expressed by Agrippa II in his attempts to halt the revolt in its early stages<sup>24</sup> and the second, responding to the obduracy of the audience, an impassioned review—or rather reinterpretation—of the history of Israel in which he famously claims that his people invariably met with defeat when resorting to arms.<sup>25</sup> At the highpoint of the latter part of the speech, Josephus departs from his role as spokesman for Titus and reassumes the role of spokesman for God, likening himself to the prophet Jeremiah, who prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 BC.<sup>26</sup> The theological and political attitudes expressed in this speech clearly echo the narrative themes of the *War* and reveal not only the narrative principle of using key characters to express the authorial voice but also suggest a level of flexibility in the messages that were to be transmitted by Titus’ spokesmen.<sup>27</sup>

Support for this can be found in a later passage, in which Titus is said to have directed Josephus to request that John of Gischala exit the city to engage in a pitched battle in order to

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<sup>22</sup> Polyb. 9.25.3: ἐγχώριοι γὰρ οὐ μόνον τὰς τῶν ἀνέμων στάσεις κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἐγχωρίων ἀνθρώπων ἦθη κάλλιστα γινώσκουσιν; cf. 4.78.4; 6.11.11; 10.28.3.

<sup>23</sup> Regarding the speeches in Josephus, see e.g. Thackeray 1929: 41-5; Lindner 1972: 21-42; Gabba 1976-77: 189-94; Varneda 1986: 92-105; Rajak 1991: 122-134.

<sup>24</sup> See *War* 2.345-401.

<sup>25</sup> *War* 5.361-420; for analysis of this important speech, which is not possible here, see Lindner 1972: 25-33; Michel 1984: 958-62.

<sup>26</sup> *War* 5.391-3. On the comparison to Jeremiah, see Braun 1956: 56; Farmer 1956: 9; de Jonge 1974: 207; Blenkinsopp 1974: 244; Daube 1980: 26-27; D.R. Schwartz 1981: 131; Cohen 1982: 366-81; Bilde 1988: 55-6; Gray 1993: 72-4; Gnuse 1996: 27-29; cf. pp. 68, 186.

<sup>27</sup> See also the speeches of Agrippa II (*War* 2.345-404) and Titus (*War* 6.323-50); cf. Michel 1984: 965-66; Walbank 1985: 242-61; McLaren 1998: 106 n. 49.



avoid further pollution of the temple and sin against God, a message that Josephus then transmitted to the besieged inhabitants, responding with great emotion to John's obstinacy.<sup>28</sup> The concern displayed by Titus for the preservation of the Temple is a recurring theme in the *War* and will be discussed further below.<sup>29</sup> At this point it is enough to state that the pious concern ascribed to Titus here is of dubious historical value given that it coincides precisely with a characteristically Josephan narrative theme regarding the pollution (μίασμα) of the Temple by the insurgents.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the Romans often showed no compunction in practice for destroying the temples and sacred places of their enemies.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, the accusation that an opponent was defiling sacred spaces was an accepted rhetorical tactic and there does appear to have been a general consensus urging respect for shrines, so Josephus may simply be refining Titus' actual message.<sup>32</sup>

That Josephus had the liberty to convey his own general message to the besieged is not surprising. The use of captives or former prisoners in this capacity was not unprecedented. The works of Xenophon provide us with a few examples from 4<sup>th</sup> c. Greece in which captured soldiers were released specifically for the purpose of reporting to the enemy declarations of either clemency in response to surrender or severity in the case of continued resistance, carrying much the same tenor as Josephus' communications from Titus to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.<sup>33</sup> There is, of course, a significant difference in the release of these prisoners in the hope that at least some of them would be of use in transmitting the commander's message and the repeated

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<sup>28</sup> *War* 6.93-110; cf. *War* 6.124-9, where Josephus also delivers the message from Titus that he has no wish to destroy or pollute the temple.

<sup>29</sup> See pp. 218-22.

<sup>30</sup> See *War* 1.39; 4.201, 215; 5.10, 402; 6.110; *Ant.* 7.92; 10.37; 11.297, 300; cf. Haber 2008: 35-6; Mason 2008: 323 n. 2663.

<sup>31</sup> See Rutledge 2007: 182-93; cf. Sall. *Cat.* 51.9.

<sup>32</sup> Rutledge 2007: 179-82, 193-4; for the rhetorical usage see, for example, Quint. *Inst.* 3.6.38; 3.6.41; 3.6.78; 3.8.29; 4.2.8; 4.2.68; 5.10.36; Cic. *Red. Sen.* 7, 19; *Red. pop.* 14; *Dom.* 104, 143; *Sest.* 95; *Cael.* 78; *Har. resp.* 32.

<sup>33</sup> Xen. *An.* 7.4.5; *Cyr.* 3.2.13; 5.4.24; cf. Russell 1999: 49.

use of an ostensibly loyal attendant in the Roman camp. Nevertheless, we do find in the Roman period one explicit case of the appointment of an ex-prisoner of war to the position of interpreter or mediator, albeit it in a poetic context. Silius Italicus describes the tragic tale of a certain Satricus, who was from the hill town Sulmo in central Italy, the birthplace of the poet Ovid, but had been captured in the First Punic War in Africa. The Carthaginians decided to make use of his services as translator of Latin and sent him along with an expeditionary force, but on the eve of the battle of Cannae Satricus escaped from the Carthaginian camp only to be slain by his own son.<sup>34</sup> Although the account is clearly fantastic, the reference to the employment of Satricus as interpreter may stand as evidence of the commonplace nature of the practice regardless of whether or not he existed as a historical character. Unfortunately in the many other cases in which we see similar figures employed, ethnic origin or background is not similarly identified, so that we can rely only on supposition when we suggest that prisoners were often used for such purposes.<sup>35</sup>

In Josephus' case, we might more accurately compare him to the figure of the deserter, whose presence in the enemy camp was voluntary. Josephus was indeed no longer a prisoner at this stage. Furthermore, we find deserters, particularly those of higher rank and status,<sup>36</sup> being employed in similar ways because of their familiarity especially with the character and nature of the enemy. According to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman historian of Alexander the Great, Arrian, one Indian deserter was found to be particularly trustworthy by Alexander and was even entrusted

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<sup>34</sup> *Sil. Pun.* 9.77-79; cf. Bruère 1959: 229-30; Peretz 2006: 451.

<sup>35</sup> See Peretz 2006: 451, "Roman commanders, probably, used as interpreters Romans who were previously prisoners of war and foreigners." For lists of interpreters, see Peretz 2006: 451 n.4; Rochette 1996: 87-89. See (in chronological order): Livy 7.26.1; 10.4.9; 10.8.3; 23.11.1-4; 27.43.5; *Sil. Pun.* 9.77-79; Livy 30.30.1; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 12.4-5; Cic. *Balb.* 28; Livy 45.29.2-3; Plut. *Cato* 22 (cf. Aul. Gell. *NA* 6.14.9; Macrobian 1.5.16); Plut. *Sull.* 27.2; Sall. *Iug.* 109.4; Plut. *Crass.* 28; Caes. *B.Gall.* 1.19.3; 5.36.1; Cic. *Att.* 1.12.2=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 12; 16.11.7=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 420; *Fam.* 13.54; Tac. *Ann.* 2.60.4; Suet. *Ner.* 13.3; Plin. *HN* 6.5.15.

<sup>36</sup> Vegetius suggests that low-level locals be avoided, since they might claim to know things of which they were in reality ignorant: *Mil.* 3.6; cf. Sheldon 2005: 132-33.

with key tactical messages to Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals, while another was appointed as commander of a garrison at the Rock of Aornos.<sup>37</sup> The use of deserters, as well as prisoners of war, in the context of ancient warfare is widely recognized and will be further explored below in connection with another of Josephus' responsibilities in the Roman camp.<sup>38</sup> At present, however, it is enough to note one key ability of both the prisoners and the deserters that made them, and Josephus himself, extremely useful in these contexts, namely their multilingualism.

On two occasions Josephus highlights his linguistic qualifications for the task of spokesman for Titus. Although he does not mention their own language of discourse, we may reasonably suppose that their exchanges were undertaken in Greek, since Josephus' facility with Latin at this stage was likely minimal,<sup>39</sup> while Titus, at least according to Suetonius, was well versed in Greek.<sup>40</sup> It would have been a relatively simple matter, therefore, for Titus to communicate privately to Josephus his message, which the latter would then transmit. Thus, at the first instance Josephus reports that the Roman general, wishing to persuade the Judaeans to surrender the city, "sent down Josephus to speak to them in their own language, thinking that they might give in more quickly to a compatriot."<sup>41</sup> Later on in the narrative, in the context of his plea to John of Gischala not to violate further the temple, Josephus explicitly states that he

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<sup>37</sup> Arr. *Anab.* 4.29.4; 4.30.4; cf. Russell 1999: 53.

<sup>38</sup> See pp. 173-83; cf. Isaac 1990: 399-408; Austin and Rankov 1995: 28-9, 68-83; Roth 1999: 321-25; Sheldon 2005: 20, 131-33.

<sup>39</sup> The extent of his familiarity with Latin even during his time in Rome is disputed; see Brüne 1969[1913]: 175-77; Paul 1993: 59; Redondo 2000: 420-21; Ward 2007: 632-49, esp. 633-6; cf. Gehman 1914: 32; Roland 1999: 18. Regarding the relatively common use of Greek by Judaeans during this period, see Porter 1993: 199-235.

<sup>40</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 3: *Latine Graequeque vel in orando vel in fingentis poematibus promptus et facilis ad extemporalitatem usque*. Facility with Greek was by no means equal among the emperors; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 89.1: *Ne Graecarum quidem disciplinarum levioere studio tenebatur... non tamen ut aut loqueretur expedite aut componere aliquid auderet; nam et si quid res exigeret, Latine formabat vertendumque alii dabat*; Suet. *Claud.* 42.1: *ac saepe in senatu legatis perpetua oratione respondit*.

<sup>41</sup> *War* 5.361: τὸν Ἰώσηπον καθίει τῆ πατρίῳ γλώσσει διαλέγεσθαι, τάχ' ἂν ἐνδοῦναι πρὸς ὁμόφυλον δοκῶν αὐτοῦς. See also the speech to John of Gischala, in which Josephus appeals to the fact that he is a compatriot and a Judaeans: μέμνησο δ' ὡς ὁμόφυλος ὦν παραινῶ καὶ Ἰουδαῖος ὦν ἐπαγγέλλομαι; *War* 6.107.

addressed his audience “in the Hebrew language”.<sup>42</sup> Although it is stated specifically only in these two passages, it is possible that Josephus’ interactions with the inhabitants of Jerusalem on Titus’ behalf were conducted in Hebrew/Aramaic on every occasion. There are a number of possible reasons for Titus’ use of Josephus. First of all, on certain occasions it was considered unbecoming of Roman *maiestas* for a Roman official to speak publicly any language other than Latin, so that even in cases where Greek would have functioned practically as the language of discourse, an interpreter could be used.<sup>43</sup> Thus, after his decisive victory over the Macedonians at Pydna in 168 BC, L. Aemilius Paullus proclaimed the decisions of the senate regarding the settlement of Greece in Latin, leaving the translation to an interpreter, despite the fact that he spoke Greek fluently.<sup>44</sup> So it may be that Titus’ desire was also to maintain official dignity. The precise relationship between this expressed ideal and the historical reality is, however, convoluted and it is questionable how broadly this principle functioned. The general competence of the audience in Greek is, moreover, also uncertain. Although there were certainly those who knew Greek sufficiently—Josephus is a case in point—Titus may have wished to reach as broad an audience as possible and for this reason relied on a native expert.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, there is the

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<sup>42</sup> *War* 6.96: καὶ ὁ Ἰώσηπος, ὡς ἂν εἴη μὴ τῷ Ἰωάννῃ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐν ἐπηκόῳ, τὰ τε τοῦ Καίσαρος διήγγελλεν ἑβραϊζῶν. Thackeray glosses the word ‘Hebrew’ as Aramaic in the Loeb edition *ad loc.* referencing Acts 21:40 and 22:2, which refer to Paul’s speech to an audience in Jerusalem where the Greek phrase is similarly τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ. The question of whether we should understand Josephus’ native tongue as Aramaic is not, however, answerable definitively. The old view, that Hebrew was no longer a spoken language in the first century, is no longer tenable. The possibility remains that, when Josephus speaks of the Hebrew language, he is in fact referring not to Aramaic, but to Hebrew itself. See Rajak 2002[1983]: 230-32, for a discussion of the problems associated with the issue. It is now generally agreed that the situation was one of both/and rather than either/or; see Grintz 1960: 32-47, who takes an extreme position on the use of Hebrew; Gundry 1964: 404-8; and Porter 1993: 199-235, whose main focus is in bringing Greek more fully into the picture. Josephus’ mastery of Hebrew has also been questioned; see Edersheim 1882: 452; Thackeray 1929: 77-8.

<sup>43</sup> See Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.147; Livy 33.32.5; Val. Max. 2.2.2; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 12.4-5; cf. Balsdon 1979: 140; Adams 2003: 545-576, 756; Peretz 2006: 453.

<sup>44</sup> Livy 45.29.3.

<sup>45</sup> The question of how much Greek was spoken in Jerusalem cannot be answered definitively. At the least we can say that there were on the one hand those who spoke Greek competently and on the other hand those who could not even understand it; cf. Porter 1993: 199-235; Rajak 2002[1983]: 46-64. Regarding Josephus’ own literacy in Greek, see p. 325; cf. Hengel 1989: 23; Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 45-9; Paul 1993: 63; Rajak 2005: 85; *contra* S. Schwartz 1990: 36 n. 44.

possibility that the regional dialect or accents would have prevented ready understanding even among those who were generally familiar with Greek.<sup>46</sup> The best explanation may then be that Titus simply wished as many people to receive his message in as clear a fashion as possible.

The general sense given by Josephus' appearance in these roles within the narrative is that he was employed based on *ad hoc* arrangements rather than in a formal capacity. A comparison is enlightening. Plutarch's account of the Parthian general Surena's famous siege of Carrhae in 53 BC provides a very similar visual image to that of Josephus speaking to his compatriots before the walls of Jerusalem. Wishing to verify the rumour that Crassus had made good his escape from the city, Surena "sent one of his attendants who could speak both languages up to the walls, with orders to call out in the Roman tongue for Crassus himself or Cassius, saying that Surena wished to have a conference with them. The bilingualist gave this message, and when it was reported to Crassus, he accepted the invitation."<sup>47</sup> We are not told the precise responsibilities of this attendant to the Parthian general, but his role here seems, as with Josephus, to have been contracted simply on the basis of his proximity to the general and his linguistic capabilities. That is, we should not understand him as operating in any sort of official capacity.

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<sup>46</sup> See, for example, Josephus himself who claims to have been prevented from pronouncing (προφορά) Greek sufficiently well due to his more customary usage of his native tongue; *Ant.* 20.263: ἔχω γὰρ ὁμολογούμενον παρὰ τῶν ὁμοεθνῶν πλεῖστον αὐτῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐπιχώριον παιδείαν διαφέρειν καὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν δὲ γραμμάτων ἐσπούδασα μετασχεῖν τὴν γραμματικὴν ἐμπειρίαν ἀναλαβῶν, τὴν δὲ περὶ τὴν προφορὰν ἀκρίβειαν πάτριος ἐκώλυσεν συνήθεια; cf. *Ant.* 1.7; *Ap.* 1.50. Regarding the existence of regional dialects more generally, see Millar 1968: 126-7; Balsdon 1979: 128-36.

<sup>47</sup> *Plut. Crass.* 28.3-4: ὑποπέμπει τινὰ τῶν παρ' αὐτῶν διγλώττων πρὸς τὰ τεῖχη, κελεύσας ἰέντα Ῥωμαϊκὴν διάλεκτον καλεῖν Κράσσον αὐτὸν ἢ Κάσσιον, ὡς Σουρήνα διὰ λόγων ἐθέλοντος αὐτοῖς συγγενέσθαι. ταῦτα τοῦ διγλώττου φράσαντος, ὡς ἀπηγγέλη τοῖς περὶ Κράσσον, ἐδέχοντο τὰς προκλήσεις. The Loeb translation of τοῦ διγλώττου as 'interpreter' formalizes the role of this attendant unnecessarily. The usual Greek equivalent for the Latin *interpres* is ἑρμηνεύς; see e.g. *War* 6.327; *Hdt.* 2.125, 154; *Xen. An.* 1.2.17.

By its very nature, then, the task of the interpreter, at least in this period and in these contexts, was temporary, unofficial, and informal.<sup>48</sup> This supposition is supported by the majority of examples of figures used as interpreters in the period of the late Republic to the early Principate. When we examine more carefully the instances assembled by Rochette, an immediate observation which can be made is that, at least on the Roman side, there were no set officials assigned as interpreter. On a number of occasions, the task was filled by a Roman official who was present, but his involvement was solely based on his linguistic abilities.<sup>49</sup> More often, the individuals and their statuses are unknown, which is consonant with their use on an *ad hoc* basis. In the case of the interpreters who served Caracalla in private meetings with foreign envoys, their low status can probably be assumed, since they were habitually put to death after the meetings to prevent their sharing of sensitive information.<sup>50</sup> Much earlier, the dismissal of his ordinary interpreters by Julius Caesar in favour of his close friend and Gallic *princeps*, C. Valerius Procillus, when an important meeting was scheduled with one of the leaders of the Aedui, suggests a similarly low status. These regular interpreters were perhaps enfranchised Gauls or others from among the allied troops.<sup>51</sup> So, although certain individuals were preferred in cases of especially sensitive material, by and large interpreters seem to have been drawn from the ranks of the Romans according to their utility rather than their position or standing. Furthermore, their selection as interpreters does not appear to have been accompanied necessarily by an increase in

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<sup>48</sup> See Peretz 2006: 452, “The Roman interpreter was a faithful client of his patron, and his personal service was temporary”; 470, “The Roman interpreter as a member of a delegation was usually considered to be on a low level without any authority or power.”

<sup>49</sup> Cn. Octavius (praetor): Livy 45.29.2-3; C. Acilius (Roman senator): Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 22; unknown (praetorian rank): Suet. *Ner.* 13.3; cf. Rochette 1996: 87-89.

<sup>50</sup> Cass. Dio 78.6.3.

<sup>51</sup> Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.19; cf. 1.47.4: *et propter fidem et propter linguae Gallicae scientiam*. See Sheldon 2005: 131. As recruitment for the Roman legions and the *auxilia* increasingly took place among the native populations in the Roman Empire, already by the end of the first century AD, those among the troops who spoke the local languages would not have been scarce; see Austin and Rankov 1995: 168-69.

status, even though, since it did entail working closely with the highest officials, it may therefore have been a useful opportunity for advancement.

Although the majority of such figures appear to have been selected from among the soldiers in the ranks of the Roman army, the precise background of the individuals involved rarely receives mention. It is not unlikely, however, given their facility in a foreign language, that there were a significant number among the interpreters who were loyal locals, as Josephus himself was. In the geographical and ethnographical explorations in book 6 of his *Natural History*, Pliny the Elder reports the presence of some one hundred and thirty interpreters in Dioscurias, a once prominent city in the Pontic region of Colica (ancient Colchis), who assisted the Romans in transacting business in the three hundred (!) varied languages of the local inhabitants.<sup>52</sup> An undated inscription from Rome also provides intriguing evidence of an interpreter between the Romans and the Sarmatians (ἑρμηνεύς Σαρμάτων), whose name, Aspourgios son of Biomastos, suggests an ethnic origin among the Aspurgians, a tribe from the north-eastern shores of the Black Sea, and who later died in Rome. His presence in Rome in the later part of his life may suggest alternately that he functioned as interpreter there, that he took up residence in the imperial city following the close of his career on the Bosporean frontier, or that he died on a mission as envoy.<sup>53</sup> The absence of any further details in the inscription and the accompanying epitaph of a certain Hēdukos, who is recorded as an envoy from Phanagoreia in the Bosporus, may suggest the latter scenario.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Plin. *HN* 6.15: *urbe Colchorum Dioscuriade iuxta fluvium Anthemunta nunc deserta, quondam adeo clara, ut Timosthenes in eam CCC nationes dissimilibus linguis descendere prodiderit; et postea a nostris CXXX interpretibus negotia gesta ibi*; cf. Braund 1994: 59, 143.

<sup>53</sup> *CIL* VI 5207=*IGR* I 261 B (from a columbarium in Rome): Ἄσπουργος Βιομάστου υἱὸς ἑρμηνεύς Σαρματῶν Βωσπορανός. The latter explanation is assumed by Peretz 2006: 461 n. 54; and Eck 2009: 204.

<sup>54</sup> *IGR* I 261 A: Ἡδύκος Εὐδόδου πρεσβευτῆς Φαναγορειτῶν τῶν κατὰ Βοῶς πόρον.

A final example of an interpreter in the Roman service drawn from among the locals strikes even closer to home. According to a second century inscription from Saccaeae, a city in the eastern region of Batanaea, which had formerly been part of the territory of Agrippa II, Alexander, the son of Akrabanos and a high priest, served as interpreter of the procurators (ἐπίτροποι) of the province of Syria.<sup>55</sup> Here on the edge of the Syrian desert this local man of influence served as an effective mediator between the Roman officials and the local inhabitants, not only because of his probable familiarity with the local Greek, Aramaic, and possibly even Arabic languages and dialects of the native inhabitants, but also as a result of his standing among them. This latter aspect would have made him an even more attractive figure for the Roman procurators to cultivate, since his involvement in the negotiations may have assured a more receptive response, particularly in this volatile region of the empire, plagued by bandits and peopled by nomadic tribes.<sup>56</sup>

With the figure of Alexander we come closer to a more formalized position of interpreter, as opposed to the previous examples, whose appointment or employment seem generally to have been contracted on an *ad hoc* basis, with little sense that they became members of an established institution. There is also evidence, however, of figures who did serve as interpreters in an official capacity, although this is slight and chiefly late. From the late first century there are inscriptions detailing the careers of two so-called *interpretes Augusti*, T. Flavius Arzachi and Domitius Philetus, but we receive no indication as to their responsibilities or that they belonged to an organized group.<sup>57</sup> Also datable to the second half of the first century is an inscription found in Slovakia, north of the Danube, recording the burial of a centurion, Q. Atilius Primus, who served

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<sup>55</sup> *IGR* III 1191: Ἀλέξανδρον Ἀκραβάνου ἀρχιερέα εὐσεβῆν φιλόπατριν, ἑρμηνέα ἐπιτρόπων, Ναμήλη [γ]υ[νῆ] α[ὐ]τοῦ Πετραία καὶ Ροῦφος υἱὸς ἐν ἰδίῳις κατέθεεντο. His local provenance is, as the note in *IGR* points out, *sine dubio*.

<sup>56</sup> See A.H.M. Jones 1940: 290; Millar 1988: 372; Peretz 2006: 462.

<sup>57</sup> Arzachi: *CIL* VI. 8481; Philetus: *CIL* VI 4871; cf. Peretz 2006: 452.



the Roman army as interpreter in their interactions with the Quadi, and later took this expertise into a career in trade.<sup>58</sup> Such figures appear to have been particularly useful on the northern frontier. From the late second and third centuries we have evidence to suggest that the Romans created official positions for interpreters on the Rhine/Danube frontier to deal with the locals in their own languages and to compensate for the paucity of knowledge regarding these regions.<sup>59</sup> These *interpretes* would have been attached to the provincial governor's *officium* in a specialist capacity in the same manner as *haruspices* (seers).<sup>60</sup> That these figures persisted is clear from a reference in the fourth century Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus's work to the presence of *interpretes Sarmatarum* in the army and the late 4<sup>th</sup>/early 5<sup>th</sup> century *Notitia Dignitarum* provides evidence of a large number of interpreters employed in different contexts both in the eastern and western parts of the empire.<sup>61</sup>

Overall, however, and for our period in particular, evidence for the use of interpreters by the Romans either on the frontiers or within the provinces is slim.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, the majority of the references that can be adduced do not fall within the course of a military campaign. In the cases where the sources do refer to the presence of interpreters in military negotiations, little to no details are provided, and we are left to speculate regarding relative status and background. We are given enough indications in the sources, however, to suggest that this general picture should be seen not as a reflection of the absence of such figures, but that the individuals involved were generally not worth mentioning. So, even in instances where an interpreter may have been present, such as the scenes on Trajan's Column in which the emperor receives embassies,

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<sup>58</sup> *AE* 1978.635; Kolnik 1978: 61-75; cf. Isaac 1990: 399; Austin and Rankov 1995: 28-29.

<sup>59</sup> *Interpres Germanorum*: *CIL* III 10505 (Aquincum); *interpres Sarmatarum*: *CIL* III 14349.5 (Pest); *interpres Dacorum*: *AE* 1947.35 (Brigetio); *interpretes*: *CIL* III 14507 (Viminacium); *CIL* III 8773 (Germania Inferior); cf. Millar 1988: 372-3; Lee 1993: 66-7; Austin and Rankov 1995: 28.

<sup>60</sup> See Austin and Rankov 1995: 149-55; *haruspices*: *CIL* VIII 2586; *AE* 1917.18.57.

<sup>61</sup> *Amm. Marc.* 19.11.5; *Not. Dign. [occ.]* 9.46 and [*or.*] 11.52; cf. Humphries 2007: 256.

<sup>62</sup> See Millar 1988: 372, "Although it is difficult to imagine that some mechanisms for mutual linguistic understanding were not employed along Rome's frontiers, the available evidence is extraordinarily slight."

prisoners of war or suppliants, the interpreter's presence is literally unremarkable and thus indistinguishable.<sup>63</sup> This leads to a few possible observations, namely that the interpreter in the context of a military campaign was often an individual with little authority or power, his service was temporary, and, although he worked closely with the general for a time, no personal relationship was necessary or would necessarily ensue. This is not surprising. Roman military campaigns were by nature *ad hoc* affairs, as we will see below in the context of intelligence gathering as well.<sup>64</sup> The Roman general would have to react to the situation on the ground, not only with regard to strategy and tactics, but also in the case of communicating with the local inhabitants. For both scenarios, the resources at hand had to be sufficient, both in terms of supplies and personnel.

That the interpreter within the context of a military campaign was unremarkable does not seem on the surface to be supported by Josephus' writings. The natural result of narratives such as the *War* and *Life*, written by a participant in the action with his own interests directing the flow of information, is the impression that the narrator's involvement at the various stages was somehow unique. Indeed, Josephus' involvement in the Roman camp during this stage of the revolt has given rise to his characterization of himself as a confidant of the Roman general.<sup>65</sup> When examined more closely, however, the narratives reveal that Titus' use of Josephus as interpreter was less noteworthy. Rather, other individuals were employed by Titus for precisely the same purposes. Schwartz notes that, "Josephus has considerably exaggerated his role as Titus' spokesman...Reality was not so dramatic. Titus had several Jewish propagandists and

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<sup>63</sup> See Lepper and Frere 1988: Plates XIV, LXVIII, LXXXIX (prisoners of war); XXI, XXXVII, XLII, LX, LXI, LXV, LXXII, LXXIII, XCVI, CIII (embassies and suppliants); cf. Peretz 2006: 457 n. 36.

<sup>64</sup> See pp. 173-83.

<sup>65</sup> Cohen 1982: 368; cf. Curran 2007: 76.

interpreters on his staff...Josephus was just one of them.”<sup>66</sup> These individuals can be seen at various points in the narrative, and it is instructive to examine them here in order to assess accurately the significance of Josephus’ involvement in the Roman camp.

First of all, and most striking because he appears by name, is the military tribune (χλῖαρχος; *LA tribunus militum*) Nicanor,<sup>67</sup> whose precise identity has remained elusive.<sup>68</sup> The first occasion on which we encounter Nicanor is at the end of the siege of Jotapata when the tribune is sent to Josephus and his companions in the cave to persuade them to surrender. Vespasian’s reason for sending Nicanor is made explicit by Josephus, namely that he was “known to Josephus and an old friend”.<sup>69</sup> The success of Nicanor in persuading Josephus to give himself over to the Romans confirms the effectiveness of the practice of using locals, or at least those familiar with the locals, to mediate between the opposing forces. Later, Nicanor appears on the scene at the siege of Jerusalem, approaching the walls with Josephus in an effort to persuade the Jerusalemites to surrender, presumably also in the local language, for which pains he received a dart in his shoulder. At this point Josephus describes the tribune as “not unknown to those on the wall”, which was likely one of the reasons for his participation to this exercise—

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<sup>66</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 7-8; cf. Curran 2005: 72, “Josephus also stands accused of a certain ungenerosity towards other sources which have not survived. He has...suppressed the importance of other Jewish advisers to Vespasian and Titus, minimizing their role to the advantage of his own.”

<sup>67</sup> Nicanor is his *cognomen*. Josephus habitually refers to Roman individuals by their cognomen; see e.g. Gratus: *War* 2.52; Iucundus: *War* 2.291; Longinus: *War* 2.544; (Tiberius) Alexander: *War* 2.220, 223, 309, 497; 4.617; 6.242; *Ant.* 20.100-103; Celer: *War* 2.244, 246; Florus: *War* 2.277, 280-343 (*passim*); Gallus: *War* 2.280, 510. For the equivalency of χλῖαρχος and *tribunus militum*, see H.J. Mason 1974: 99-100, 163-4. More generally regarding Josephus’ use of Greek military terms, see Devijver 1989: 56-72; Saddington 1995: 53-55. Regarding Nicanor, see further below, pp. 288-91.

<sup>68</sup> Devijver 1977: N 29, suggests the possibility that his origins were in the east, presenting for comparison a certain C. Iulius Nicanor (*PIR IV*<sup>2</sup> 440) from Hierapolitanus, a son of a certain Alexandrinus, who was given Roman citizenship from Augustus; cf. Bernard 1969: 2.142-44, for an inscription reading Κατύλιου τοῦ καὶ Νικάνορος τοῦ Νικάνο[ρος].

<sup>69</sup> *War* 3.346: ἕως Οὐεσπασιανὸς τρίτον ἐπιτέμπει χλῖαρχον Νικάνορα γνῶριμον τῷ Ἰωσήπῳ καὶ συνήθη πάλαι. See the discussion above on p. 53 regarding the use of συνήθης; cf. *Life* 13; 180; 192; 204; 419; 420; Mason 2001: 22 n. 26, 93 n. 789. In this case a close relationship is implied, since Josephus later has Nicanor describe himself as a friend (φίλος; 3.349). Avidov 1998: 264, calls Nicanor’s involvement ‘a factual kernel’ and says that it ‘has the ring of historical truth precisely because it is incidental to the main self-serving trend of the rest of it’.

another might be his status as a “friend of Titus”, even if this need not have entailed much.<sup>70</sup> The reason for his familiarity with both Josephus and the inhabitants of Jerusalem is not apparent but is likely accounted for by previous service in the area, either as a young equestrian prefect of one of the auxiliary cohorts stationed in Judaea under the procurators or as an officer in the *Legio X Fretensis*, which alone of Vespasian’s legions had served in the east prior to the outbreak of the revolt.<sup>71</sup> In any case, his presence in the Roman camp demonstrates the availability to Titus of others within the camp who were able on the strength of their linguistic capabilities and familiarity with the local culture and climate to provide such assistance.

For Nicanor was not the only other option. According to Josephus, when he was commanded by Titus to approach the walls and extend his right hand to Castor he refused, seeing through the Judaeen rebel’s deception, “*and also restrained those friends of his who were zealous to go to him*”. Titus was, however, able to convince “a certain Aeneas, a deserter, who said he would go to him”, but was nearly crushed by a rock for his trouble.<sup>72</sup> This passage suggests that there were available to Titus a larger number of individuals, presumably Judaeans like Josephus, either captives or deserters, who would have been able to serve in the same capacity as Josephus, namely as interpreters and mediators between the Romans and the besieged Jerusalemites. And indeed later in the narrative we find Titus in dialogue with John of Gischala

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<sup>70</sup> *War* 5.261: ἐν δὲ τούτῳ περιόντος αὐτοῦ τοξεύεται τις τῶν φίλων, ὄνομα Νικάνωρ, κατὰ τὸν λαϊὸν ὄμιον, ἐγγιον μετὰ τοῦ Ἰωσήπου προσελθὼν καὶ πειρώμενος εἰρηνικὰ τοῖς ἐπὶ τοῦ τείχους, οὐ γὰρ ἄγνωστος ἦν, διαλέγεσθαι. Regarding Nicanor as a friend of Titus, see S. Schwartz 1990: 7 n. 16. Given his relatively low status as military tribune, we should almost certainly not see this as a reflection of the more formal status of *amicus Caesaris*.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Ritterling 1925: 1676, who argues for his membership in the *legio X Fretensis* on the basis of the fact that it was the only legion that had served in the east prior to the revolt; *PIR*<sup>2</sup> V(3) (1987), 355 n. 76; Devijver 1977: N 29; Avidov 1998: 264 n. 3, suggests also the possibility of service in the army of Agrippa II to account for his familiarity with the locals, although it is difficult then to account for his status as military tribune.

<sup>72</sup> *War*. 5.323-27; quotations from 5.326: καὶ τοὺς ὠρμημένους τῶν φίλων κατέσχευ· Αἰνείας δὲ τις τῶν αὐτομόλων αὐτὸς ἔφη προσελεύσεσθαι. See already Roberts 1862: 276, “Josephus is supposed to affirm that, of all in the Roman camp, he was the *only one* who understood Hebrew, or who, knowing both that language and the Greek, was capable of acting as interpreter between the Jewish deserters and the Romans. But this is in direct contradiction to numerous accounts contained in his own writings, which imply that there were many besides himself, then in the camp of Titus, who were acquainted with the common Hebrew of the country, as well as the no less common Greek”; cf. Roberts 1878: 292-3; Sanday 1878: 97-8; 1878: 382-3; S. Schwartz 1990: 7-8; Curran 2005: 72 n. 10.

and the other rebel leaders, speaking through the services of an unidentified interpreter (ἑρμηνεύς), who is likely not Josephus himself given his tendency elsewhere to state his involvement explicitly.<sup>73</sup> In his task of mediating between the Romans and Judaeans, Josephus was, therefore, not alone.<sup>74</sup>

### Josephus as Interviewer/Interrogator

In his later work *Against Apion*, Josephus reveals that his linguistic and cultural qualifications made him useful not only for interpreting and mediating, but also for the important task of interviewing the deserters who escaped to the Roman camp. He claims that, “during that time, none of the action escaped my knowledge: for I watched and carefully recorded what happened in the Roman camp, and I alone understood what was reported by deserters.”<sup>75</sup> It is unclear whether or not this detail was concealed deliberately in the *War*; perhaps this duty was less salubrious and on that account, being an unnecessary detail in the general narrative of the revolt, was omitted.<sup>76</sup> If Josephus also assisted in the interrogation of captives (αἰχμάλωτοι) in

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<sup>73</sup> *War* 6.327; *contra* Gehman 1914: 33, “upon the Jews’ application for mercy, Titus made a speech to the enemy through an interpreter. The historian does not mention his name, but we can hardly imagine him to have been any other than Josephus.”

<sup>74</sup> Within the Roman camp there was also the famous Alexandrian Judaeans, Tiberius Julius Alexander, the nephew of Philo, whom Josephus calls Titus’ “friend most esteemed for wisdom and loyalty” (*War* 5.45: φίλων δὲ δοκιμώτατος εὐνοϊάν τε καὶ σύνεσιν Τιβέριος Ἀλέξανδρος), who served as counsellor (σύμβουλος) to Titus and was appointed as general of the entire army (*praefectus castrorum*) (*War* 5.45-6; *OGIS* 586; cf. *War* 2.220, 223, 309; 6.237, 242-3; *Tac. Ann.* 15.28). It is unlikely, however, that Alexander spoke Hebrew/Aramaic, since few from among the Egyptian Judaeans did, which would have made his usefulness in communicating with his fellow Judaeans limited; see Turner 1954: 54-55; cf. Mason 2008a: n. 1378. Furthermore, Alexander’s close ties to the Romans, having served as prefect in Judaea from AD 46-48 and as prefect in Egypt from 66-70, in addition to the possible perception of him as an ‘apostate’ (*Ant.* 20.100: τοῖς γὰρ πατρίοις οὐκ ἐνέμεινεν οὗτος ἔθειςιν), may have affected negatively his ability to influence the besieged; see Barclay 1995: 115-117.

<sup>75</sup> *Ap.* 1.49: ἐν ᾧ χρόνῳ γενομένην τῶν πραττομένων οὐκ ἔστιν ὃ τὴν ἐμὴν γνῶσιν διέφυγεν· καὶ γὰρ τὰ κατὰ τὸ στρατόπεδον τὸ Ῥωμαίων ὄρων ἐπιμελῶς ἀνέγραφον καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν αὐτομόλων ἀπαγγελλόμενα μόνος αὐτὸς συνίειν.

<sup>76</sup> References to ‘deserters’ (αὐτόμολοι; *LA perfugae*) are ubiquitous: e.g. *War* 4.377; 5.454; 6.118-21; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 8; Barclay 2007: n. 200.

this capacity,<sup>77</sup> a possibility that the ancient evidence strongly supports, it may be that he is masking complicity in the torture of his compatriots, since it is generally understood that torture was applied frequently in the extraction of information from captives.<sup>78</sup> In fact, in the speech mentioned above, Titus himself claims to have used torture as a matter of course to restrain those still eager for war, and earlier, at the siege of Jotapata, Vespasian had used torture by fire and crucifixion to extract information, in vain, from one of the captives.<sup>79</sup> It was not usually necessary to use the same force to extract information from deserters.

While the precise reason for omitting this aspect of Josephus' involvement in the Roman camp in the *War* is unclear, Josephus' purpose in including this detail in the *Against Apion* is apparent. Josephus is interested in this work in presenting his qualifications for the writing of history, for which his position as eyewitness and contemporary observer gave him important credentials.<sup>80</sup> Of course, his freedom within the camp allowed him to observe firsthand the actions of the Romans. In the role of interviewer or interrogator, however, Josephus would also have had access to knowledge of what was going on in Jerusalem during the siege, so that both sides of the engagement could have been presented in his narrative with a strong claim to accuracy. By staying abreast of events through the testimony of others, Josephus was able to "follow contemporary events" (παρηκολουθηκότα τοῖς γεγονόσιν) in a form of autopsy (αὐτοψία), which he identifies as one of two necessary criteria for good history, even when he

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<sup>77</sup> This seems to be assumed by S. Schwartz 1990: 8, "The least glamorous, but probably the most important, of his functions, interrogation of prisoners and deserters, is not mentioned in BJ."

<sup>78</sup> See Frontin. *Str.* 1.2.5; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 13; cf. Thuc. 7.86.4, for a similar situation in Greece; Austin and Rankov 1995: 67-73; Sheldon 2005: 131.

<sup>79</sup> Titus: *War* 6.345: δεξιὰς αὐτομόλοις ἔδωκα, καταφυγοῦσι πίστεις ἐτήρησα, πολλοὺς αἰχμαλώτους ἤλεησα, τοὺς ἐπείγοντας βασανίσας ἐκόλασα. Vespasian: *War* 3.321: ἐπειδὴ καὶ πρότερον ληφθεὶς τις τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰωταπάτης πρὸς πᾶσαν αἰκίαν βασάνων ἀντέσχεν καὶ μηδὲν διὰ πυρὸς ἐξερευνῶσι τοῖς πολέμοις περὶ τῶν ἔνδον εἰπῶν ἀνεσταυρώθη τοῦ θανάτου καταμειδιῶν. Although the Greek word βασανίζω implies the use of torture, it came to mean simply thoroughness of investigation and so it does not always entail torture itself; cf. Russell 1999: 43, 44 n. 147, 223 n. 156.

<sup>80</sup> See *Ap.* 1.45, 47, 53; cf. *Life* 357; S. Schwartz 1990: 8 n. 19.

was not physically present.<sup>81</sup> The importance of Josephus' involvement in the questioning of the deserters and possibly captives is magnified, therefore, since he establishes upon it the reliability of the narrative. Consequently, the fact that this detail emerges only in this impassioned defence of his qualifications casts a shadow of a doubt over his actual participation. Nevertheless, given that the procurement and assessment of information from deserters and captives would have required the same capabilities as those of the interpreters and mediators, namely familiarity with the local language and culture, we may logically infer that the same individuals would have assisted in the performance of both activities. Furthermore, a complete fabrication of his involvement is unlikely, particularly since there may still have been those around who could have questioned his account.<sup>82</sup> We can be fairly confident, therefore, that Josephus also played a role in the questioning of his compatriots.

The information provided by both deserters and captives was crucial for the successful running of an ancient military campaign.<sup>83</sup> As sources of intelligence they contributed to the effectiveness of the tactical decisions that needed to be made and helped the general and his staff form as complete a picture as possible of the enemy's circumstances. Although the formal intelligence institutions associated with the Roman military, particularly the *exploratores* and *speculatores* who both served in some form as scouting bodies, were quite rudimentary in the Republican period and were formalized only with the professionalization of the army under Augustus, the reliance on local inhabitants for supplying a wide variety of information to assist

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<sup>81</sup> *Ap.* 1.53; the other criterion of good history, according to Josephus, was access to reliable sources (παρηκολουθηκότα τοῖς γεγονόσιν). See Moessner 1996: 105-22, for the argument that παρακολουθέω can include staying in touch with contemporary events through other eyewitnesses; cf. Shahar 2004: 193-95; Barclay 2007: n. 217.

<sup>82</sup> I.e. those who had received/purchased copies of the *War*; see *Life* 362; *Ap.* 1.51-2.

<sup>83</sup> In general regarding the importance of prisoners and deserters for intelligence purposes, see Austin and Rankov 1995: 68-83; Roth 1999: 321-25; Sheldon 2005: 20, 131-33.

with both strategic and tactical decisions had a longer and less official history.<sup>84</sup> In the absence of conventions regarding the treatment of prisoners, the safest way for a captive to preserve his life or prevent harm was to provide information. It was the only weapon left in his arsenal. The situation of the deserter was not much different, apart from the fact that he made his way into the enemy camp willingly and was thus less likely to be mistreated. He was, nevertheless, not always trusted any more readily than the prisoner. The Romans often suspected deserters—apart from those who were of high rank—of fabricating information to secure their wellbeing. Those of higher status, however, were treated particularly well, since they could be expected to reveal valuable details about the enemy’s plans.<sup>85</sup>

The importance of these figures for military intelligence can be recognized by their appearance in later handbooks, such as the *Strategikon* attributed to the late 6<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine emperor Maurice, which suggests that “serious efforts should be made to capture inhabitants of the country alive in order to obtain information from them about the strength and plans of the enemy.”<sup>86</sup> This strategy, of specifically capturing enemy soldiers for the purposes of intelligence gathering, can be seen in practice already earlier with demonstrable results.<sup>87</sup> In his examination of Caesar’s use of intelligence, Ezov provides a useful summary of the types of information that a captive (and also a deserter) might provide: “The uniqueness of intelligence from prisoners is the view it provides of the enemy from the inside, on matters such as battle readiness, intentions, routines, morale, special measures, topography, exact organization and location of the force,

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<sup>84</sup> See e.g. Russell 1996: 42-54.

<sup>85</sup> See, for example, the large number of elite Judaeans, including some members of the high priestly families, who deserted and were relocated to Gophna (modern day Jifna) in northern Judaea towards the end of the siege of Jerusalem and who were promised restoration of property following the revolt; *War* 6.114-15. Cf. [Caes.] *B.Afr.* 35; *B.Hisp.* 11-12; Sheldon 2005: 133.

<sup>86</sup> Maurice *Strat.* ix.3; cf. Frontin. *Str.* 1.1; Onas. *Strat.* 10.9; 10.15; 10.22-4; Veg. *Mil.* 3.6.

<sup>87</sup> Frontin. *Str.* 1.2.5, 1.8.9; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 13; Livy 27.47.2-3; cf. Roth 1999: 323-4; Sheldon 2005: 20.



none of which could be obtained through the usual means of patrols and observation posts.”<sup>88</sup> Of course, such information was only valuable if it could be assessed and verified. It was, therefore, important either to compare the stories of a number of prisoners or to cross-check them with the information provided by deserters, Roman scouts, or loyal locals.<sup>89</sup> Otherwise the information was often considered to be unreliable. Nevertheless, we can find numerous examples in which information provided by deserters or prisoners proved to be crucial in the outcome of military engagements, illustrating the importance of ensuring that the incoming enemy deserters and captives were appropriately received and administered.<sup>90</sup>

Josephus himself provides a number of examples of the usefulness of intelligence gleaned in this manner. According to his *Life*, he himself, while serving as general in Galilee prior to his capture, relied on information from a deserter regarding the plans of a certain bandit chief, Jesus, and consequently managed to trap him and some of his men within the city of Sepphoris.<sup>91</sup> Later on as well, a random deserter from the city of Tiberias betrayed the fact that the inhabitants of that city had determined to defect from Josephus and give themselves over to Agrippa II, which allowed Josephus to take appropriate precautions.<sup>92</sup> A similar situation occurred when one of John of Gischala’s men, a certain Saccheus, deserted with knowledge of John’s plan to send letters to all the cities and villages in Galilee seeking to undermine Josephus’ position, knowledge that he promptly shared with Josephus, again sparing him the disadvantage of surprise.<sup>93</sup> Given the ubiquity of the practice within the context of ancient warfare, it is

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<sup>88</sup> Ezov 1989: 72.

<sup>89</sup> E.g. Caes. *B.Gall.* 5.8; 7.18.1; 7.44; 7.72.1; 8.8; [Caes.] *B.Afr.* 8; Livy 9.2.6-8; Tac. *Ann.* 2.25.2; cf. Ezov 1989: 71-2; Austin and Rankov 1995: 80; Sheldon 2005: 131.

<sup>90</sup> See e.g. Livy 31.23.3-7; 42.65.1-3; App. *B.Civ.* 2.28, 2.39; 3.49; 3.63; 3.71; *Pun.* 62; 66; 68; *Hann.* 6; 20; 34; 35; Plut. *Luc.* 8.8.

<sup>91</sup> *Life* 104-11, esp. 107: γὰρ ἤδη τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ τις αὐτομολήσας ἤκεν πρὸς με τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν αὐτοῦ φράζων; cf. Mason 2001: 74 n. 525.

<sup>92</sup> *Life* 158: καὶ ἐπιδραμῶν τις ἀπήγγειλέν μοι τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν, ὡς ἀφίστασθαί μου διεγνώκασιν.

<sup>93</sup> *Life* 239: Σακχαίου τῶν σὺν αὐτοῖς τῖνος αὐτομολήσαντος πρὸς με καὶ τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν αὐτῶν ἀπαγγείλαντος.

unsurprising that we should find Josephus describing his own implementation of this stratagem since it builds effectively on the portrait of the archetypical general that he paints for himself throughout the *Life*.<sup>94</sup>

From his account of the activities of the Roman side during the revolt, we can see the same strategies for the gathering of intelligence, even if Josephus himself was not explicitly involved. On two occasions Vespasian received information from a deserter regarding the situation at Jotapata. On the first, it was reported that Josephus had entered the city, upon which the Roman general immediately made his way to Jotapata, hoping to capture Josephus there and thereby put an end to the revolt. At this point the information was received quite readily and acted upon immediately, no doubt deliberately described in this way in order to stress the significance of Josephus for the war effort.<sup>95</sup> On a second occasion, however, Vespasian doubted the report of the deserter regarding the low numbers of the besieged, their general weakness and exhaustion, and their habitual inattentiveness in the morning hours, on the basis of an earlier experience with a captive who endured torture and crucifixion while giving up nothing more than a smile.<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, he acted on the information and successfully took hold of the city in the early hours of the morning. While these two informants provided key tactical information, deserters were also useful in determining the general morale of the enemy. Thus Vespasian was able to determine a successful approach to subjugating the countryside by evaluating the reports

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<sup>94</sup> See Mason 1998a: 31, 62-66, 73-4; 1998b: 102-3; 2001: xlvi-xlvii. He similarly portrays himself as the ideal general in the *War*; see Cohen 2002[1979]: 90-100; S. Schwartz 1990: 7-8.

<sup>95</sup> *War* 3.141-44, esp. 143: Οὐεσπασιανῶ δέ τις εὐαγγελίζεται τὴν μετάβασιν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτόμολος καὶ κατήπειγεν ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν ὡς μετ' ἐκείνης αἰρήσοντα πᾶσαν Ἰουδαίαν, εἰ λάβοι τὸν Ἰώσηπον ὑποχείριον.

<sup>96</sup> *War* 3.316-31, esp. 317-18: αὐτομολεῖ δέ τις πρὸς τὸν Οὐεσπασιανὸν τῆς αὐτῆς ἡμέρας τὴν τε ὀλιγότητα τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς πόλεως ἐξαγγέλλων καὶ τὴν ἀσθένειαν, καὶ ὡς ἀγρυπνία διηνεκεῖ καὶ μάχαις ἐπαλλήλοις δεδαπανημένοι δυνατοὶ μὲν εἶεν οὐδὲ βιαζομένους ἔτι φέρειν, καὶ δόλω δ' ἂν ἀλοῖεν, εἰ τις ἐπιθοῖτο...

of a steady stream of deserters who abandoned the city of Jerusalem to escape from various factions that had taken up residence there.<sup>97</sup>

Although they do not often appear in the historical narratives, individuals such as Josephus himself, possibly captives or deserters themselves or else loyal locals were crucial for the successful use of the intelligence that could be obtained from these two sources. It is instructive to return to the passage in which Josephus describes his role.<sup>98</sup> He states that he alone understood (συνίειν) the reports provided by the deserters. The verb συνίημι is ambiguous for revealing what it was that Josephus was uniquely able to comprehend. One aspect was clearly his linguistic ability to communicate with the Judaeans, and in certain contexts it is clear that understanding another's language is included in the meanings of the verb,<sup>99</sup> but this need not be the sole explanation for his special ability. Equally important to the examination process was the interpretation of the intelligence information provided, which may have included specialized details of topography or local culture that could be incomprehensible to a foreign observer. In sum, "Titus would be glad to make use of him because he combined with a knowledge of the language both general intelligence and a special knowledge of his countrymen."<sup>100</sup> The importance of this special knowledge is underlined by the fifth-century AD writer Vegetius, who warns in his manual of military matters against simply accepting the information provided, recommending the use of trained and experienced officials for this task to forestall the misuse of intelligence.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> *War* 4.410-13.

<sup>98</sup> *Ap.* 1.49: καὶ γὰρ τὰ κατὰ τὸ στρατόπεδον τὸ Ῥωμαίων ὄρων ἐπιμελῶς ἀνέγραφον καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν αὐτομόλων ἀπαγγελλόμενα μόνος αὐτὸς συνίειν.

<sup>99</sup> See e.g. *Hdt.* 4.114; *Thuc.* 1.3; cf. *LSJ* s.v. II.3.

<sup>100</sup> Sanday 1878: 97-8.

<sup>101</sup> *Veg. Mil.* 3.6; cf. *Onas. Strat.* 10.15. These specific officials, called *quaestionarii*, were later attached to the governor's *officium*; *CIL* VIII 2586; *AE* 1917.18.57; cf. Austin and Rankov 1995: 151.

The need for such figures was heightened by the fact that the Romans regularly embarked on campaigns with little or no intelligence, relying heavily on what they could gather from the *exploratores* and *speculatores*, from traders, or loyal locals.<sup>102</sup> When Caesar was unable to obtain enough information from traders in order to conduct his expedition onto the island of Britain, he sent out an officer ahead of him, who sailed for four days and observed as much as possible simply from off the deck of his ship since he did not dare to disembark for fear of the natives. On the basis of this rudimentary knowledge, Caesar launched his campaign.<sup>103</sup> While Caesar escaped disaster, the prefect of Egypt, Aelius Gallus, was not so fortunate. On the sole basis of rumours regarding the wealth in spices and precious stones of Arabia Felix, he undertook an expedition into the desert. Allegedly through the treachery of his Nabataean ally Syllaeus, he got lost with his whole army for six months and, upon arrival in Arabia with a vastly reduced force, was ignominiously chased back to Alexandria.<sup>104</sup> Similarly disastrous campaigns were conducted with little prior groundwork into the relatively unknown Parthia by Marcus Licinius Crassus and Mark Antony.<sup>105</sup> In both of these accounts as well, local guides proved treacherous.<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, in the absence of serviceable information regarding the outlying territories, reliance on native inhabitants was unavoidable.

Although in the case of the revolt in Judaea the military campaigns took place within the territory of a Roman province, the advantage of having access to native knowledge of the

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<sup>102</sup> See Isaac 1990: 401-408; Austin and Rankov 1995: 76-77. Polybius' praise of Hannibal for reconnoitring routes into enemy territory, and assessing the wealth of the land ahead, the ways of the natives, their political allegiances and degree of loyalty, reveals the exceptionality of such advance preparation; Polyb. 3.48.

<sup>103</sup> Caes. *B.Gall.* 4.20-21; cf. *B.Gall.* 2.16.1; Sall. *Iug.* 54.2; *Cat.* 57.3; Tac. *Hist.* 5.18; Suet. *Iul.* 58.

<sup>104</sup> See Strabo 16.4.22-23; Plin. *HN* 6.32; Cass. Dio 53.29. The historicity of these accounts, and the others mentioned below, is questionable, but the fact that betrayal by local allies became a narrative trope or common excuse suggests that it was a frequent occurrence; see Isaac 1990: 403.

<sup>105</sup> Crassus: Plut. *Crass.* 21-22; Antony: Plut. *Ant.* 50.2; Strabo 11.13.4; 16.1.28.

<sup>106</sup> See also Ammianus XVII.10.5-6.

topography, geography and local customs was no less significant.<sup>107</sup> Josephus himself, in addition to interpreting and transmitting the information provided by his compatriots in the Roman camp, was also of use to Titus in providing advice and direction in this regard. On the occasion when Josephus approached the walls with Nicanor to address the Jerusalemites, we are told that they were accompanying Titus, who had chosen some horsemen to reconnoitre the walls with him in order to determine weakest part of the defences. His decision to assault the monument of John the high priest on the basis of his awareness that the wall was weakest there and had easy access to the third wall suggests the possibility of insider knowledge.<sup>108</sup> The presence of both Josephus and Nicanor may explain the source of this information and their familiarity with the city and its environs is the most logical explanation for their accompaniment of Titus on this occasion—the decision to speak with the besieged on the walls appears to have been impromptu.

Josephus' topographical and geographical knowledge of the area was also of service after the revolt when he was sent by Titus with Sextus Vettulenus Cerialis, the *legatus* of the *Legio V Macedonica*, and his cavalry to Tekoa, a village some sixteen kilometres south of Jerusalem, to determine whether or not the terrain was suitable for building a fenced camp.<sup>109</sup> The suitability of a site depended heavily on a variety of factors including the presence of water, salt, wood, fodder, and food, as well as its defensibility, particularly when the camp was to be relatively

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<sup>107</sup> See Austin and Rankov 1995: 76-8.

<sup>108</sup> *War* 5.258-60: Τῶν γε μὴν ἔνδον οὕτως διακειμένων ὁ Τίτος μετ' ἐπιλέκτων ἰπέων περιῶν ἐξῶθεν ἢ προσβάλλοι τοῖς τείχεσι κατεσκέπτετο. ἀπορουμένῳ δὲ πάντοθεν, οὔτε γὰρ κατὰ τὰς φάραγγας ἦν προσιτὸν καὶ κατὰ θάτερα τὸ πρῶτον τεῖχος ἐφαίνετο τῶν ὀργάνων στερεώτερον, ἐδόκει κατὰ τὸ Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἀρχιερέως μνημεῖον προσβαλεῖν· ταύτη γὰρ τὸ τε πρῶτον ἦν ἔρυμα χθαμαλότερον καὶ τὸ δεύτερον οὐ συνῆπτεν ἀμελησάντων καθὰ μὴ λίαν ἢ καινὴ πόλις συνώκιστο τειχίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ τρίτον ἦν εὐπέτεια, δι' οὗ τὴν ἄνω πόλιν καὶ διὰ τῆς Ἀντωνίας τὸ ἱερὸν αἰρήσειν ἐπενόει; cf. *War* 5.52ff.

<sup>109</sup> *Life* 420: πεμφθεὶς δ' ὑπὸ Τίτου Καίσαρος σὺν Κερεαλίῳ καὶ χιλίοις ἰπεῦσιν εἰς κώμην τινὰ Θεκῶαν λεγομένην προκατανοήσων, εἰ τόπος ἐπιτήδειός ἐστιν χάρακα δέξασθαι; cf. *Life* 214.

permanent as the case seems to be here (i.e. a *castra stativa* or *hiberna*).<sup>110</sup> Presumably on this occasion as well Josephus was present in an advisory capacity on the strength of his familiarity with the locale.

That Josephus performed a signal service in proving himself loyal and applying all of his unique capabilities to assist in the Roman camp is undeniable. Furthermore, the very fact that he was thus employed illustrates the level of trust placed in him by the Roman general.<sup>111</sup> The services he rendered would have put him in relatively frequent contact with the highest officials in the army, including Titus himself, for whom he served on occasion as spokesman to the Judaeans. Nevertheless, we cannot argue on the basis of his involvement in the campaign that a close relationship developed between the Judaeans and the Roman general. We receive no indications that this occurred. In fact, if Josephus' situation conforms to the general picture derived from the external ancient evidence, his role was by nature temporary and informal and therefore insecure. He was also only one of a number of individuals who could fulfill the tasks that he was called upon to perform. The general impression of the narrative is that he was available in the Roman camp when the need arose, but that he was far from being a member of Titus' entourage or *consilium*.<sup>112</sup>

The uncertainty of his position in the Roman camp is underscored by the attitude of the Roman soldiers towards him. Josephus reports that he was often in danger of death during the siege of Jerusalem, at times from the Judaeans who sought revenge in their attempts to injure

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<sup>110</sup> See Veg. *Mil.* 1.22; Roth 1999: 119-55; Le Bohec 1994[1989]: 52, 131-33, 156-63; Mason 2001: 106-107 n. 952, 167 n. 1733; Hanel 2007: 395-410.

<sup>111</sup> See Rochette 1996: 83, "Il est aisé de comprendre que la qualité primordiale d'un interprète est la confiance, la *fides*, que le commanditaire de la traduction peut mettre en lui. Un seul mot, oublié ou mal rendu, peut parfois changer le cours des événements. Aussi est-il indispensable que s'installe une réelle connivence entre l'*interprète* et son supérieur."

<sup>112</sup> Regarding the military *consilium*, see Goldsworthy 1996: 131-3; Rankov 1999: 15-34; Johnston 2008 (Republican period); regarding the *consilium* of the emperor, which also served in *res militaris*, see Crook 1955: esp. 136; Kunkel 1968: 253-329; Amarelli 1983.

him from the walls,<sup>113</sup> but also from the Romans who did not place as much trust in him as their commander did and believed him to have betrayed them whenever they suffered a reversal.<sup>114</sup> This is not surprising, considering that there was always the danger when taking in deserters or other locals that they were in fact double agents (ψευδαντόμολοι), either acting as spies for the enemy force or intentionally spreading disinformation to create an advantage for the opposition.<sup>115</sup> It may be that Josephus contributed to their fears by voicing his continued sympathy for the plight of his compatriots and advocating for leniency.<sup>116</sup> In any case, the episode illustrates the precarious situation in which Josephus found himself within the Roman camp, ever subject to the clemency of the general in charge. Had he occupied a more secure position at this point, one would suspect that the troops would have been less likely to clamour for discipline. As it was the only protection Josephus received was the silence (σιγή) of Titus, hardly a stirring testimony of the relationship between them.<sup>117</sup>

### Josephus as Client, Broker, and Patron—The Roman Camp

Following the revolt Josephus remained with the Roman camp while Titus conducted his mop-up exercises in Judaea. The city of Jerusalem was destroyed and the *Legio X Fretensis* was

<sup>113</sup> *War* 5.541-2; cf. 3.438-42, where Josephus describes the hatred of the inhabitants of Jerusalem towards him; 5.261, where Nicanor is injured by a dart while accompanying Josephus.

<sup>114</sup> *Life* 416-17: κάκειθεν ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων πολιορκίαν συμπεμφθεις Τίτῳ πολλάκις ἀποθανεῖν ἐκινδύνευσσα, τῶν τε Ἰουδαίων διὰ σπουδῆς ἐχόντων ὑποχειρίον με λαβεῖν τιμωρίας ἔνεκα καὶ Ῥωμαίων ὅσακι νικηθεῖεν πάσχειν τοῦτο κατ' ἐμὴν προδοσίαν δοκούντων συνεχεῖς καταβοήσεις ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος ἐγίνοντο κολάζειν με ὡς καὶ αὐτῶν προδότην ἀξιούντων Τίτος δὲ Καῖσαρ τὰς πολέμου τύχας οὐκ ἀγνοῶν σιγῇ τὰς ἐπ' ἐμὲ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἐξέλυεν ὄρμας.

<sup>115</sup> See [Caes.] *B.Afr.* 35.2-4, where Metellus Scipio sent two Gaetulians as deserters to Caesar who were actually acting as *speculatores*; Caes. *B.Gall.* 3.18.1-6, where Sabinus sent a Gaul to the Veneti to report falsely that the Romans were in dire straits from the previous night's attack; cf. Austin and Rankov 1995: 78-9; Russell 1999: 221, "The most common cover employed by such agents, as with spies, was that of a deserter: it provided a familiar context for gaining admittance, it eliminated the need to fabricate another identity, and it lent itself well to a cover story built around a motive" (cf. 218-23; Appendix B, 239); Peretz 2006: 470.

<sup>116</sup> Barclay 1996: 350.

<sup>117</sup> See Mason 2001: 165 n. 1715, "Since Titus does not act against Josephus' accusers here (contrast §§ 425, 429), but simply fails to act on their claims, the strength of his support at this point may be somewhat exaggerated in Josephus' mind."

appointed to remain therein as garrison.<sup>118</sup> The remaining prisoners of war were also dealt with in a variety of fashions: those who still bore arms or were known to have been particularly seditious were killed, as were the elderly and infirm; the tallest and most attractive of the young men were reserved for the upcoming triumph in Rome; a large number of other able-bodied captives above the age of 17 were sent to the Egyptian mines for slave labour; others were sent off to the provinces as gifts destined to serve as entertainment in the arenas, facing death either as gladiators or by *damnatio ad bestias*; still others were used by Titus on his roundabout return to Rome for these same purposes; and finally those under the age of 17 were sold into slavery.<sup>119</sup> When the prisoners were being held in the temple courts while one of Titus' friends, Fronto, was designating each to his or her particular end, Josephus claims that some eleven thousand starved to death either because of their unwillingness to eat the food or as a result of the hatred of the guards.<sup>120</sup>

Given his continued presence in the Roman camp while these atrocities were being meted out on his compatriots, we might well imagine that Josephus would have faced severe condemnation from his own people, and indeed the tone of his *Life* bears this out. Following immediately upon his description of Titus' silence as protection from attacks against him from both sides of the conflict, Josephus reports:

And after the city of Jerusalem was being held by force, he (i.e. Titus) often tried to persuade me to take anything I might like from the ruin of my native place. He insisted that he gave his consent. Having nothing of greater value in the fall of my native place that I might take and cherish as a consolation for my

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<sup>118</sup> *War* 6.353-55, 363-64, 407-408; 7.1-4, 17-20; cf. 7.407.

<sup>119</sup> *War* 6.414-19; 7.23-24, 36-39; cf. p. 85; B. Jones 1984: 55-6; Levick 1999: 119.

<sup>120</sup> *War* 6.419: ἐφθάρησαν δὲ αὐτῶν ἐν αἷς διέκρινεν ὁ Φρόντων ἡμέραις ὑπ' ἐνδείας χίλιοι πρὸς τοῖς μυρίοις, οἱ μὲν ὑπὸ μίσους τῶν φυλάκων μὴ μεταλαμβάνοντες τροφῆς, οἱ δ' οὐ προσιέμενοι διδομένην πρὸς δὲ τὸ πλῆθος ἦν ἔνδεια καὶ σίτου. Cf. the sessions of Julius Caesar and Octavian at which they decided the fate of the leading captives; Cass. Dio 41.62.2-3; 43.13.2-3; 51.2.4; 51.16.1.



circumstances, I put the request to Titus for the freedom of persons and for some sacred volumes...I received as an expression of Titus' favour.<sup>121</sup>

As Mason has pointed out, Josephus seems here to be combating charges that he added to the shame of his betrayal by profiting from the defeat of his compatriots. He refused, however, despite Titus' explicit offers, to take anything more than what he could be commended for as a Judaeon.<sup>122</sup>

We should particularly note in the passage above and those directly following Josephus' concern to demonstrate that he did his utmost with regard to the prisoners. Given the horrific details of the aftermath of the revolt given in the *War*, we might suspect that Josephus' readers would have questioned his inactivity regarding the suffering of the captives. His account of his actions during this time in his *Life* may serve as a response to such accusations.<sup>123</sup> He claims, therefore, to have received from Titus on one occasion the freedom of his brother and fifty friends (φίλοι).<sup>124</sup> Later on, he received the authority from Titus to enter the temple where a large number of prisoners had been confined, apparently only women and children, from among whom he freed some 190 he recognized as friends and associates, restoring them to their former status

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<sup>121</sup> *Life* 417-18: ἤδη δὲ κατὰ κράτος τῆς τῶν Ἱεροσολυμιτῶν πόλεως ἐχομένης Τίτος Καῖσαρ ἐπειθέν με πολλάκις ἐκ τῆς κατασκαφῆς τῆς πατρίδος πᾶν ὃ τι θέλωμι λαβεῖν: συγχωρεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸς ἔφασκεν ἐγὼ δὲ τῆς πατρίδος πεσοῦσης μηδὲν ἔχων τιμιώτερον, ὃ τῶν ἑμαυτοῦ συμφορῶν εἰς παραμυθίαν λαβῶν φυλάξαιμι, σωμάτων ἐλευθέρων τὴν αἴτησιν ἐποιούμην Τίτον καὶ βιβλίων ἱερῶν ἔλαβον χαρισάμενος Τίτου.

<sup>122</sup> See Mason 2001: 165-6 n. 1717, regarding *Life* 417, "This emphatic statement seems intended to obviate the charge that Josephus had not only found privileged safety with the enemy after shamefully surrendering, but had then joined in the plundering of his own land. Titus invites him to do so, in effect, but he has the dignity to ask only for the release of his friends (below). It is a prominent theme in the *Life* that, although Josephus has had every opportunity for personal profit and revenge, he has consistently refused to indulge himself (80-4, 99-103, 262-64, 306-7, 368-69, 379, 384-89)."

<sup>123</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 8 n.21, "The pious tone of this section in V...seems a response to charges that Josephus had done little to alleviate the suffering of the captives and, perhaps, that the little he had done had been for a price (cf. V. 419). V's account of Josephus' humanitarian activities, therefore, may well be exaggerated."

<sup>124</sup> *Life* 419: μετ' οὐ πολὺ δὲ καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν μετὰ πεντήκοντα φίλων αἰτησάμενος οὐκ ἀπέτυχον. The brother was presumably Matthias (*Life* 8); cf. Mason 2001: 166 n. 1721. Regarding the large number of friends and associates that Josephus claims to have had here, which seem unbelievable to the modern reader, see Mason 2001: 22 n. 26, 93 n. 789.

without their having to pay a ransom.<sup>125</sup> Finally, on the return leg of his aforementioned trip with Cerealis to Tekoa, Josephus recognized three close associates among those who were crucified along the way. He brought them to the attention of Titus, who ordered them to be taken down from their crosses and granted treatment. Unfortunately only one of the three survived.<sup>126</sup>

Although the account of Josephus' generosity towards these captives may be in direct answer to criticism from his readers and may, therefore, also be considerably exaggerated, it is unlikely that he has completely fabricated his role in this regard. In his rendering of the Biblical account of Jeremiah in the *Antiquities* he introduces a similar action on the part of the prophet Jeremiah, who obtained for his disciple Baruch the same freedom that he himself had received from the Babylonian general. This parallel thus further strengthens the association between Josephus and the Biblical prophet.<sup>127</sup> Although it is certainly possible that Josephus first invented the account of his actions in alleviating the misery of some of the captives and then inserted a similar fabrication into his Jeremiah narrative, it seems to be a rather convoluted way to go about his purpose. It is more likely that his intercession on behalf of the captives actually took place and that it was a relatively simple affair to introduce a similar event into his *Antiquities*.

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<sup>125</sup> *Life* 419: καὶ εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν δὲ πορευθεὶς Τίτου τὴν ἐξουσίαν δόντος, ἔνθα πολὺ πλῆθος αἰχμαλώτων ἐγκέκλειστο γυναικῶν τε καὶ τέκνων, ὅσους ἐπέγων φίλων ἐμῶν καὶ συνήθων ὑπάρχοντας ἐρρυσάμην περὶ ἑκατὸν καὶ ἑνετήκοντα ὄντας τὸν ἀριθμὸν καὶ οὐδὲ λύτρα καταθεμένους ἀπέλυσα συγχωρήσας αὐτοὺς τῇ προτέρᾳ τύχῃ. Given that there seem only to have been women and children present on this occasion, it is unlikely that these prisoners are the same as those described above as being kept in the temple court of the women under the care of Fronto (*War* 6.414-19). Regarding the ransom, see pp. 96-7 n. 89; cf. Daube 1977: 193; *contra* Mason 2001: 166 n. 1728.

<sup>126</sup> *Life* 420-21: ὡς ἐκεῖθεν ὑποστρέφων εἶδον πολλοὺς αἰχμαλώτους ἀνεσταυρωμένους καὶ τρεῖς ἐγνώρισα συνήθεις μοι γενομένους, ἤλγησά τε τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ μετὰ δακρύων προσελθὼν Τίτῳ εἶπον ὁ δ' εὐθὺς ἐκέλευσεν καθαιρεθέντας αὐτοὺς θεραπείας ἐπιμελεστάτης τυχεῖν. καὶ οἱ μὲν δύο τελευτῶσιν θεραπευόμενοι, ὁ δὲ τρίτος ἔζησεν. Titus had used crucifixion as a punishment and inducement to surrender earlier as well; see *War* 5.289, 449-51; cf. 7.202-203. Josephus calls it 'the most wretched of deaths' (*War* 7.203: θανάτων τὸν οἴκτιστον), echoed in this by Origen (*Comm. Matt.* 27.22: *mors turpissima crucis*); cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.165, 168; Lucian *Prom.* 4. See Hengel 1977: 22-63.

<sup>127</sup> *Ant.* 10.158: καὶ Ἱερεμίας μὲν κατέμεινεν [ εἰς Δάναν] ἐν πόλει τῆς χώρας Μοσφοθᾶ καλουμένη παρακαλέσας τὸν Ναβουζαρδάνην, ἵν' αὐτῷ συναπολύσῃ τὸν μαθητὴν Βαροῦχον Νήρου δὲ παῖδα ἐξ ἐπισήμου σφόδρα οἰκίας ὄντα καὶ τῇ πατριῷ γλώττῃ διαφερόντως πεπαιδευμένον; cf. Jeremiah 40:1. The discrepancy is noted in the Loeb edition by Marcus 1951: 247; cf. Daube 1977: 27; Begg and Spilsbury 2005: n. 652. Regarding the association of Josephus with the prophet, see above pp. 84, 115, 160.

If this be the case, this episode allows us to explore further the nature of his relationship with Titus at this moment. Josephus states explicitly regarding the 190 women and children freed from the temple grounds that he was able to grant them this benefaction because Titus had given him the authority (ἐξουσία; LA *auctoritas*).<sup>128</sup> The act of freeing this large number of compatriots reveals, therefore, not only the tremendous prestige and honour that Josephus had accrued for himself by this stage of the revolt—these individuals would have been deeply indebted to him, becoming in effect his clients<sup>129</sup>—but also the status of Josephus as broker of the *beneficia* that Titus alone was able to bestow. Josephus’ ἐξουσία is in essence the *auctoritas* of Titus channelled through him. We have seen earlier how figures such as Poppaea and Aliturus could serve as brokers of imperial beneficence, and in this instance we can recognize Josephus taking on a similar role.<sup>130</sup> The important aspect to recognize is that the position of broker demands an existing patronal relationship, in this case between Titus and Josephus. The freedom granted to Josephus after the successful outcome of his prediction and his subsequent, informal service within the Roman camp during the course of the campaign serve as examples of the exchanges within patron-client relationships that could form within the context of warfare. Now, at the end of the revolt, in recognition of his loyalty and to ensure his continued devotion, Titus allowed Josephus to serve as broker in the distribution of the general’s *beneficia*, to their mutual benefit.

The manner in which this type of transaction functioned is illustrated most clearly in a letter of Pliny the Younger to Trajan, in which the provincial governor requested from the emperor, “I ask, Sir, that you delight me by augmenting the *dignitas* of my former quaestor—that

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<sup>128</sup> *Life* 419: Τίτου τὴν ἐξουσίαν δόντος; a genitive absolute construction here signifying a cause or condition (Smyth 2070a-d).

<sup>129</sup> See the note *ad loc.* of Mason 2001: 166 n. 1718, “The generosity that Josephus extends in this paragraph instantly certifies his prestige (*auctoritas*) as a powerful man: the benefaction (freedom or even life itself) is so basic that these friends will in fact be his debtors forever.”

<sup>130</sup> See pp. 64-9; cf. Boissevain 1974: 147f; Saller 1982: 74-77. The most obvious broker figures were the freedmen of the imperial court who gained increasing significance during the first century, for example Callistus, Polybius, Narcissus, Pallas, and Epaphroditus; see Saller 1982: 66-9.

is, my (*dignitas*) through him—as soon as it is expedient.”<sup>131</sup> This practice can be seen throughout the letters of Pliny as well as those of Fronto, the *amicus* and tutor of Marcus Aurelius, as has been clearly demonstrated by Saller in his influential work on patronage in the early empire.<sup>132</sup> As Saller explains, the benefit of brokerage within the system of patronage in the early empire was increased social cohesion, the creation of ‘vertical’ bonds not only between the emperor and the senators but also between these aristocrats and members of the lower orders.<sup>133</sup> Although the resulting web of relationships existed most visibly around the emperor and his inner circle of *amici*, with the latter receiving offices and honours in a manner that developed into a relatively standardized distribution of *beneficia*, it was a system that penetrated many social levels, where it operated on a much less formal basis.

The privilege granted to Josephus of extending freedom to captives also functioned, therefore, within such a network. Here Titus was acting as military commander, not yet being emperor, for whom it was equally important to establish harmony, cohesion, and loyalty amongst his troops. The privilege he extended to Josephus was not unusual. Within the context of their deliberations regarding the fate of captives taken in battle, both Caesar and Octavian regularly permitted the release or restoration of prisoners upon request from their friends.<sup>134</sup> Cassius Dio reports that, after the battle of Pharsalus, Caesar enrolled the common soldiers in his own legions while putting to death the captured senators and equestrians, “except some whom his friends

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<sup>131</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 10.26.3: *teque, domine, rogo, gaudere me exornata quaestoris mei dignitate, id est per illum mea, quam maturissime velis.*

<sup>132</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 2.13; 10.4-6, 11-12, 26, 51, 87, 94, 104; Fronto *Ad M. Caes.* 5.34; 5.37; *Ad Pium* 9; *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.7; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 814D; Sen. *Cons. ad Polyb.*; Tac. *Ann.* 12.8; de Ste. Croix 1954: 38-45; Garnsey 1970: 36-8; Millar 1992[1977]: 538-40.

<sup>133</sup> Saller 1982: 74-78, 134-5, 162-4, 168-87; 78, “...the emperor ensured the loyalty of an inner circle of friends with his *beneficia* and then granted them the resources to build their own clientèles whose loyalty was thus indirectly secured.”

<sup>134</sup> See Millar 1992[1977]: 520-21.

begged off; for he allowed each friend on this occasion to save one man.”<sup>135</sup> Later on, in his narrative of the battle of Thapsus, Dio confirms this as a habitual practice of Caesar’s, stating, “...of the men who had fought against him he spared many for their own sake, and many also for the sake of their friends. For, as I have stated, he always allowed each of his soldiers and companions to ask the life of one man.”<sup>136</sup> According to Nicolaus of Damascus’ fragmentary biography of Augustus, even the young Octavian received the release of his boyhood friend Agrippa, who had been taken captive in Libya.<sup>137</sup> In his letters, Cicero comments frequently and often disparagingly on this habit of Caesar, suspicious of the regal undertones of this power over life and death.<sup>138</sup> The practice was taken up by Octavian as well, who even spared high-ranking opponents such as Gaius Sosius, commander of the left wing of the fleet, and Marcus Scaurus, the son of Mucia Tertia, the former wife of Pompey, after the battle of Actium.<sup>139</sup> Later on, after the deaths of Antony and Cleopatra, he held another session in which he punished some opponents and pardoned others, “either from personal motives or to oblige his friends.”<sup>140</sup>

It is important to recognize that this practice of allowing *amici* to secure pardon on behalf of others was only one element of the *clementia Caesaris*, which developed into a key imperial virtue by the Flavian period. Although *clementia* had a long history in Roman life and literature prior to the late Republic,<sup>141</sup> it was Julius Caesar, according to the elder Pliny, who surpassed

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<sup>135</sup> Cass. Dio 41.62.1-3: πλὴν ἐε τινὰς οἱ φίλοι αὐτοῦ ἐξητήσαντο (τούτοις γὰρ ἓνα ἑκάστῳ τότε σῶσαι συνεχώρησε).

<sup>136</sup> Cass. Dio 43.13.2-3: καὶ τῶν ἀντιπολεμησάντων οἱ πολλοὺς μὲν δι’ αὐτοὺς ἐκείνους πολλοὺς δὲ καὶ διὰ τοὺς φίλους σῶσας· τῶν γὰρ συναγωνιστῶν καὶ τῶν ἐταίρων ἑκάστῳ ἓνα ἐξαιτεῖσθαι, ὥσπερ εἴρηται, ἐπέτρεπε.

<sup>137</sup> Nicolaus of Damascus, *FGrH* 90 F.127.

<sup>138</sup> See Cic. *Fam.* 6.6; 9.9; 13.19; *Att.* 11.20=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 235; cf. *Nep. Att.* 7.3.

<sup>139</sup> Cass. Dio 51.2.4-5; *Plut. Ant.* 80; cf. Cass. Dio 56.38. The intercession was not, however, always successful. Regarding Herod’s inability to save Alexas the Laodicean, see *Plut. Ant.* 72.3-4; *War* 1.393-4; *Ant.* 15.197.

<sup>140</sup> Cass. Dio 51.16: τῶν τε ἄλλων τῶν τὰ τοῦ Ἀντωνίου μέχρι τότε πραξάντων τοὺς μὲν ἐκόλασε τοὺς δὲ ἀφῆκεν, ἢ δι’ ἑαυτὸν ἢ διὰ τοὺς φίλους.

<sup>141</sup> See e.g. Dowling 2006: 1-20.

everyone in his clemency.<sup>142</sup> The examples given above are illustrative of Caesar's general practice in showing restraint on the battlefield, which, according to Cicero, had the effect of winning over the hearts and minds of the people.<sup>143</sup> The degree to which it became a part of his public persona is clear from the treatise that Aulus Caecina wrote to honour this policy and even more so from the temple that was decreed in celebration of Caesar's clemency, but never appears to have been constructed.<sup>144</sup> His increasing monopolization of virtues, in part by the introduction of such cults as those of *Victoria Caesaris*, *Fortuna Caesaris*, and *Clementia Caesaris*, was continued after his death by his heir, who wrote to the Senate after the battle of Philippi, promising to follow Caesar's example of clemency (φιλανθρωπία).<sup>145</sup> These developments culminated in the award of a golden shield, a *clipeus virtutis*, to Augustus, which was set up in the Curia Julia and proclaimed his *virtus*, *clementia*, *iustitia*, and *pietas*, but was also circulated throughout the empire by way of copies and representations, and highlighted in his *Res Gestae*, which similarly made its way around the empire.<sup>146</sup>

While it would be a mistake to attribute to these virtues canonical status as “cardinal virtues of a ruler”,<sup>147</sup> as Wallace-Hadrill has cogently argued,<sup>148</sup> they did form part of a collection of standard qualities that could be drawn upon collectively or individually by the emperors according to need in their development of an idealized imperial character. Thus, although the evidence for the promulgation of the *clementia Caesaris* diminishes somewhat after

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<sup>142</sup> Plin. *HN* 7.92-3.

<sup>143</sup> Cic. *Att.* 8.13= Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 163; 8.16= Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 166; 9.7c= Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 174c; 9.16= Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 185. Regarding Caesar's clemency, see Coulter 1931: 513-24; Syme 1939: 51, 65, 159; Weinstock 1971: 233-42; Yavetz 1983: 174-6; Alföldi 1985: 184-7, 206-22; Bauman 2000: 75-77; Konstan 2005: 337-46; Dowling 2006: 20-26.

<sup>144</sup> Aulus Caecina: Cic. *Fam.* 6.6.8; temple: Cass. Dio 44.6; App. *B.Civ.* 2.106; Cass. Dio 44.6.4; Plut. *Caes.* 57.4; cf. Weinstock 1971: 241-3, 308-10.

<sup>145</sup> Cass. Dio 48.3.6.

<sup>146</sup> *RG* 34.2; cf. *RG* 3; regarding the development of imperial virtues, albeit with differing views, see Charlesworth 1937: 105-33; Wallace-Hadrill 1981: 298-323; Classen 1991: 17-39; Noreña 2011: 37-100. For representations of the *clipeus virtutis*, see Zanker 1988: 95-6 figs. 79-81.

<sup>147</sup> Charlesworth 1937: 114.

<sup>148</sup> Wallace-Hadrill 1981: 298-323.

Caesar and Augustus, it is still possible to trace the development of the dialogue of *clementia* in imperial propaganda.<sup>149</sup> Tiberius released a series of coins inscribed with CLEMENTIAE and MODERATIONI and was honoured by the Senate's attempt to erect an altar to Clemency,<sup>150</sup> which demonstrates that these two qualities were important in the establishment of Tiberius' public image.<sup>151</sup> Clemency was also one of the key themes of Nero's reign, at least in the early years, which was revealed most clearly in his oral delivery to the Senate of Seneca's treatise *De Clementia* in AD 55.<sup>152</sup> He highlighted his clemency in deliberate reaction to Claudius' alleged neglect of that virtue in spite of his promises early on in his reign.<sup>153</sup> This change from the former regime was also extolled by Calpurnius Siculus, who wrote, "Clemency has broken the frenzied swords. No longer will the unfettered Senate in funeral procession weary the executioner. No longer will the wretched Senate chamber be empty and the prison full."<sup>154</sup>

Given the history of the development of *clementia*, and its particular significance for Caesar and Augustus in the aftermath of civil wars, it is not surprising that Titus also employed this virtue heavily in the construction of his public image.<sup>155</sup> Not only did he need to erase his reputation for cruelty, which he owed in part to his role as enforcer of the Flavian regime prior to his own accession,<sup>156</sup> but he had also succeeded, along with his father, in claiming the imperial throne primarily through success in suppressing a provincial rebellion and in emerging victorious in the *bellum civile* that followed Nero's death. The Flavians were, therefore, keen to create the

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<sup>149</sup> See Walker 2002: 208-23; Dowling 2006: 169-218.

<sup>150</sup> *RIC* 1.97 nos. 38-39; *Tac. Ann.* 4.74.3.

<sup>151</sup> Rogers 1943: 35-59; Gesche 1971: 37-80; Levick 1975: 123-37.

<sup>152</sup> *Tac. Ann.* 13.11; 14.11.

<sup>153</sup> See *Ant.* 19.246; *Sen. Apocol.* 14.1; *Suet. Ner.* 33.1.

<sup>154</sup> *Calp. Ecl.* 1.59-62: *Clementia contudit enses. Nulla catenati feralis pompa senatus carnificum lassabit opus, nec carcere pleno infelix raros numerabit Curia patres*; trans. Griffin 1984: 64.

<sup>155</sup> Regarding the clemency of Titus, see M.A. Levi 1954: 288-93; Yavetz 1975: 425-30.

<sup>156</sup> See *Suet. Tit.* 6.1-7.1; *Cass. Dio* 66.17.1; cf. Yavetz 1975: 430-32; B. Jones 1984: 99-100, 114-5; Griffin 2000a: 51, "the attribute that Titus most needed to acquire in the public eye was *clementia*."

illusion that the war had been a *bellum externum*.<sup>157</sup> The theme of Titus' clemency in Josephus' narrative fits, therefore,—at least superficially as we will see below<sup>158</sup>—within Titus' general imperial ideology. We need not, however, dismiss entirely the historicity of Titus' permission to Josephus to preserve the lives of his friends. Renewed stability and continued loyalty were crucial, and the granting of this privilege to loyal followers went a long way toward securing both. Thus in the case of Josephus as well, the positive response from Titus to his request for the freedom of his friends and associates accomplished much, relatively speaking, in advancing the stability of the province. The clemency of Titus was highlighted, the devotion of Josephus was maintained, the gratitude of the prisoners was secured, and consequently a level of cohesion was ensured.<sup>159</sup> A web was spun.

This web was created and existed, however, primarily within the context of the Judaeian revolt. The freedom granted Josephus, his subsequent service, and the privileges granted him at the successful close of the campaign illustrate the relationship between Titus and Josephus within the military environment; they need not entail anything further. The additional *beneficia* that Josephus received following the revolt can be explained in a similar fashion. First of all, Josephus claims that, upon Titus' insistence that he take what he wished from the destruction of his country, "Having nothing of greater value in the fall of my native place that I might take and

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<sup>157</sup> The propaganda used by the Flavians to depict the revolt as a *bellum externum* can be seen in the triumph, the coinage, and architecture; see Goodman 1987: 236; Mattern 1999: 5, 193; Overman 2002: 217, "by 75 C.E....the Flavian victory was an event owned, as it were, by the entire Roman world. The return of order, imperium, stability, and peace was displayed for all to see" (cf. 216); Mason, 2005b: 254-5. The Dalmatian war of Augustus was similarly cast as a foreign war (Suet. *Aug.* 20; *Tib.* 16) and the *Ara Pacis* was built to mark a foreign victory after Augustus' success in suppressing Spain and Gaul (*Res Gestae* 12).

<sup>158</sup> See pp. 212-23.

<sup>159</sup> Regarding the importance of the demonstration of clemency see Walker 2002: 203-231; Dowling 2006: esp. 169-218.



cherish as consolation for my circumstances, I put the request to Titus for the freedom of persons and for some sacred volumes...(which) I received as an expression of Titus' favour."<sup>160</sup>

These sacred volumes are, then, the first of Josephus' other *beneficia* I will be examining. They were given significance by Laqueur, who suggested that Josephus included this reference in order to strengthen himself against the attacks of Justus of Tiberias, who contested the accuracy of Josephus' rendering of the Hebrew Bible in his *Antiquities*, objecting that Josephus did not have these original volumes at his disposal.<sup>161</sup> The possible connection between these volumes and the *Antiquities* was also made by Nodet, who observes regarding the sacred books that Josephus received, "it is safe to surmise that these scrolls, certainly not private property, did not belong to an ordinary synagogue (see *AJ* 16.164) and were valuable and significant enough to necessitate Titus' approval."<sup>162</sup> On the basis of a detailed comparison of Josephus' *Antiquities* compared to existing Biblical manuscripts, he presents the possibility that the ultimate source of the *Antiquities* was in fact this set of volumes, which may have been taken from the temple library. Furthermore, he connects these sacred writings with the temple scroll of the Law that was carried prominently in the triumphal procession of the Flavians in Rome and later laid up in

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<sup>160</sup> *Life* 418: ἐγὼ δὲ τῆς πατρίδος πεσοῦσης μηδὲν ἔχων τιμιώτερον, ὃ τῶν ἐμαυτοῦ συμφορῶν εἰς παραμυθίαν λαβὼν φυλάξαιμι, σωμάτων ἐλευθέρων τὴν αἴτησιν ἐποιούμην Τίτον καὶ βιβλίων ἱερῶν (...) ἔλαβον χαρισσαμένου Τίτου. A few words are missing in the manuscripts, but the sense of the passage is clear; cf. Mason 2001: 166 n. 1720.

<sup>161</sup> Laqueur 1920: 271, "Also hatte Justus die richtige Übertragung der heiligen Schriften durch Josephus bestritten, und wenn dieser wiederum in einem damals entstandenen Stück (*vita* 418) hervorhebt, Titus habe ihm nach dem Falle Jerusalems auf seine Bitten die Mitnahme der heiligen Schriften gestattet, so gehört auch dies in denselben Zusammenhang: offenkundig hatte Justus dem Josephus vorgehalten, daß er in Rom nicht einmal über die heiligen Bücher verfügt habe, die er angeblich übertragen hätte." His theory, that the *Life* was written largely in response to attacks from Justus of Tiberias, has proven influential, although the theory has been revised frequently; see, for example, Thackeray 1929: 16-19; Gelzer 1952: 67-90; Rajak 1973: 245-68; 2002[1983]: 152-4; Cohen 2002[1979]: 126-8; cf. Bilde 1988: 104-13; Mason 1998a: 36-44.

<sup>162</sup> Nodet 1997: 192.

the royal palace,<sup>163</sup> suggesting that Josephus had this at his disposal only later. At *Life* 418 Josephus is, then, simply boosting “his own usual vanity”.<sup>164</sup>

We have no reason, however, to suspect that Josephus is lying here. As Mason has pointed out, his own interest in the sacred books (ἱερῶν βιβλίων/γραμμμάτων) is apparent elsewhere in the narratives and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple would surely have presented the opportunity to preserve some rare manuscripts.<sup>165</sup> Josephus writes that a temple priest, Jesus the son of Thebuthus, and the temple treasurer, Phineas, received pardon from Titus in exchange for a large number of temple treasures that had been rescued from the fire, including implements that had been used in the temple service.<sup>166</sup> Moreover, one of the key elements of the Roman *direptio* or way of sacking cities, almost all of which appear in Josephus’ narrative of the final destruction of Jerusalem, was the frenzied plundering of the city by the soldiers, out of the control of their commanders.<sup>167</sup> There was certainly opportunity, therefore, for the preservation of manuscripts that formed part of the extensive temple library or that were stored in one of the synagogues within the city. For the soldiers seeking wealth, these manuscripts would have held little value, and so might have proven an exception to the norm outlined by Ziolkowski in his examination of the *urbs direpta*, that “once a thing got lost under the legionary’s cloak, there was no power on earth which could snatch it away from there.”<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> *War* 7.150: ὁ τε νόμος ὁ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐφέρετο τῶν λαφύρων τελευταῖος; 7.162: τὸν δὲ νόμον αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ πορφυρᾶ τοῦ σηκοῦ καταπετάσματα προσέταξεν ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις ἀποθεμένους φυλάττειν; cf. Millar 2005: 108-109.

<sup>164</sup> Nodet 1997: 191-2; cf. 2007: 111-12.

<sup>165</sup> See *War* 3.352; *Ap.* 1.54; cf. Mason 2001: 166 n. 1719. Josephus also presents the Judaeans in general as maintaining an extraordinary commitment to their sacred writings; see *War* 2.229-31, 291-2; *Ap.* 1.37-44.

<sup>166</sup> *War* 6.387-91.

<sup>167</sup> Titus’ lack of control is noteworthy and will be discussed further below: see *War* 6.256-8, 260-66; cf. 6.345, 353. Regarding the Roman practice of sacking cities, see Ziolkowski 1993: 69-91.

<sup>168</sup> Ziolkowski 1993: 90.

The receipt of these sacred volumes makes sense, therefore, within the context of the campaign. As a token of Titus' favour (χαρισσαμένου Τίτου),<sup>169</sup> this gift was certainly not exceptional. Although it has recently been questioned whether or not the victorious general had complete freedom over the distribution of the spoils of war (*LA praeda*), he was certainly able to reward his troops and attendants with generous shares of the booty, which included much more valuable articles than the sacred volumes received by Josephus.<sup>170</sup> We should not accept at face value Josephus' protestation that he had refused to profit from the spoiling of his native place despite Titus' attempts to persuade him. While Josephus claims that he could receive nothing of greater value than "the freedom of persons and some sacred volumes", it is equally possible that Titus offered him nothing more, which would illustrate the limits of Josephus' position within the camp.

The value of the final benefaction that Josephus reports he received prior to their departure to Rome should also not be overestimated. He writes, "When Titus had brought an end to the disturbances in Judaea, figuring that the properties I held in the environs of Jerusalem would become unprofitable to me on account of the Roman garrison that was about to go into quarters there, he gave me a different area in the plain."<sup>171</sup> Although the coastal plain between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean was (and is) particularly fertile and perhaps on that account the new plot was more valuable than the land Josephus had held previously, he does not make this

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<sup>169</sup> *Life* 418.

<sup>170</sup> Shatzman 1972: 177-205, argues that the commanding general had full discretion over the distribution of booty; cf. Vogel 1953: cols. 1200-1213. His influential article, whose argument quickly attained dogmatic status (see e.g. Harris 1979: 74-5; Gruen 1996: 133-4; cf. *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. 'Manubiae' (1996), 919-20), has only more recently been challenged; see Churchill 1999: 85-116; Coudry 2009: 21-80. Regarding the *spolia*, see Östenberg 2009: 19-127, esp. 62-66.

<sup>171</sup> *Life* 422: Ἐπεὶ δὲ κατέπαυσεν τὰς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ταραχὰς Τίτος, εἰκάσας τοὺς ἀγροὺς οὓς εἶχον ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις ἀνονήτους ἐσομένους μοι διὰ τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐκεῖ Ῥωμαίων φρουρὰν ἐγκαθέζεσθαι, ἔδωκεν ἕτεραν χώραν ἐν πεδίῳ.

claim.<sup>172</sup> It is also unclear exactly why the estates in the vicinity of Jerusalem had become unprofitable (ἀνόνητος). The *Legio X Fretensis* was posted to Jerusalem after the revolt and so established a permanent camp there, which was a significant change from the period before the war when only an auxiliary cohort had occupied the Antonia fortress,<sup>173</sup> but Josephus does not suggest anywhere that his lands or others in the area were confiscated or used by the army.<sup>174</sup> Possible explanations for the economic drain may be the result of the imposition of taxes in kind or of forced purchase (*coemptio*) of crops to provide for the feeding of the garrison, although these burdens were usually spread over a larger area precisely to prevent such a drain on the local economy.<sup>175</sup> Whatever the case may be, the general sense of the passage is that the area around Jerusalem was dominated by the army after AD 70 and was accordingly unattractive for development, so that the grant of a presumably comparable plot of land in an alternate location was indeed a boon.

It is noteworthy, however, that the benefaction was essentially an exchange of property, not an outright gift as was the case of the land granted by Vespasian while Josephus was living in Rome.<sup>176</sup> It should be viewed, therefore, as more a restoration of what Josephus had possessed prior to the outbreak of the revolt than an increase in wealth or status. When viewed in this way, the benefaction becomes more commonplace. Josephus himself reports that it was Titus' practice to extend such a privilege to aristocratic deserters. Following one of Josephus' more successful speeches to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a number of members of the high priestly families

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<sup>172</sup> Mason 1998b: 74, points out that Josephus did not receive land in the prized hinterlands of Rome, which would certainly have indicated that Josephus occupied a favoured position at this point.

<sup>173</sup> *War* 7.17; cf. Mason 2001: 167 n. 1736.

<sup>174</sup> See Isaac 1984: 47, "It may be conjectured that land was assigned for the use of the army, but Josephus does not say so"; cf. Isaac and Roll 1982: 108 n. 12; *contra* Mommsen 1894: 539-40; Schürer 1973: 512 n. 141; Momigliano 1934a: 85 (*non vidi*); Abel 1967: 162; Avi-Yonah 1966: 111-12; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 9.

<sup>175</sup> See C.E.P. Adams 1999: 122; Roth 1999: 236-8; 2002: 383. On the other hand, Lo Cascio 2007: 195-206, argues that trade with fixed garrisons may have been an economic benefit to the outlying regions.

<sup>176</sup> *Life* 425; for further discussion about this gift of land, see p. 148.

along with many of the other elite went over to the Romans. They were welcomed by Titus and sent to Gophna, a small village in northern Judaea, where they were to remain until the end of the war, at which point Titus promised he would restore their possessions.<sup>177</sup> That this was standard treatment for elite deserters is suggested by the account later in the narrative of two of Simon bar Giora's henchmen who also deserted to Titus. Although his first inclination was to kill them for the atrocities they had committed against their compatriots, Josephus reports that "[Titus'] integrity overcame his emotions, and so he released them, *though he did not grant them the same portion/lot as the others.*"<sup>178</sup> Since they clearly received their freedom, the benefits they did not receive would appear to be the security that Gophna offered, if it was not simply a detention centre, and/or the restoration of property following the revolt.<sup>179</sup> That is, although they received their freedom, their delay in surrendering had "cost them their economic and political interests in the country," as was also the case with those who merely fled without presenting themselves before the Roman general.<sup>180</sup> To prevent this loss of standing many from the first wave of Judaeans deserters travelled all the way to Caesarea in order to present themselves before

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<sup>177</sup> *War* 6.114-115, esp. 115: Καῖσαρ δὲ αὐτοὺς τὰ τε ἄλλα φιλοφρόνως ἐδέξατο καὶ γινώσκων ἀλλοφύλοις ἦθεσιν ἀηδῆ τὴν διατριβὴν ἔξιν ἀπέπεμψεν αὐτοὺς εἰς Γόφναν, τῶς ἐκεῖ παραινῶν μένειν· ἀποδώσειν γὰρ ἐκάστῳ τὰς κτήσεις κατὰ σχολὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ πολέμου γενόμενος; cf. *War* 4.444 (Jamnia); [Caes.] *B.Afr.* 35; S. Schwartz 1990: 81. Recent excavations at a site 4 kms north of the Old City of Jerusalem by Rachel Bar Nathan and Deborah A. Sklar-Parnes have revealed the remains of a settlement whose main period of activity can be dated to the period between the first Judaeans revolt and the Bar Kokhba revolt; see Bar Nathan and Sklar-Parnes 2007: 57-64; Bijovsky 2007: 65-71. J. Price 2011: 415-6, suggests a possible connection between this site and the re-settlement of these members of the high-priestly families; cf. *War* 5.51. Regarding the possibility that Gophna should be seen as a centre for the detention of deserters, see Alon 1977: 277-81; J. Price 1992: 293-97.

<sup>178</sup> *War* 6.229-231; quotation from 231: ἐκράτει δ' ὁμῶς τοῦ θυμοῦ ἢ πίσις, καὶ ἀφίησι τοὺς ἄνδρας, οὐ μὴν ἐν ἴση μοίρᾳ κατέτασσε τοῖς ἄλλοις.

<sup>179</sup> See Whiston's (1737) translation/interpretation of the passage: "the security he had promised deserters overcame his resentments, and he dismissed them accordingly, though he did not give them the same privileges that he had afforded to others"; Thackeray, in the Loeb, (1929) renders it: "his good faith overcame his animosity, and he let them go, though he did not put them on equal footing with the rest."

<sup>180</sup> J. Price 1992: 297.

Vespasian.<sup>181</sup> Josephus was not alone among the Judaeans, therefore, in being restored to his pre-war condition by Titus.

In general the practice of handing out confiscated land following a military campaign was also not unusual, particularly within the context of the civil wars.<sup>182</sup> During the proscriptions of Sulla, men appeared on the list strictly for their property, which was subsequently either sold or given to supporters as a gift.<sup>183</sup> Julius Caesar also sold the properties of his enemies, either for the full price to enrich himself or at a nominal price to reward loyalty.<sup>184</sup> The degree to which this became an accepted practice is illustrated by Cicero's vivid description of the presumptive actions of Antony's followers in early 43 BC in marking out for themselves beautiful villas and *horti* at Alba and Tusculum even before they had achieved any successes.<sup>185</sup> In the end, their presumptions proved correct and in the triumviral proscriptions some of the properties or the proceeds of their sales were granted to members of the soldiery, in some cases at their express demand.<sup>186</sup> This was an effective way to honour the donatives that were often promised the troops as reward for successful combat.<sup>187</sup>

In this way also the land received by Josephus may have belonged to a prominent member of the revolutionaries, but was confiscated following the revolt and became available to Titus to grant as a gift for services rendered. It would be unsurprising if he were not alone in this

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<sup>181</sup> *War* 4.377-99; cf. J. Price 1992: 95-101.

<sup>182</sup> See Isaac 1984: 46; Millar 1992[1977]: 163-74; regarding the development of the treatment of confiscated land from the middle to late Republic, see Broadhead 2007: 148-63.

<sup>183</sup> See Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 2.6; *Verr.* 2.1.38; Sall. *Hist.* 1.55.

<sup>184</sup> Suet. *Iul.* 50.2; Cass. Dio 42.50.5; Plut. *Ant.* 10.3; 21.2-3; App. *B. Civ.* 5.79; [Caes.] *B. Afr.* 90.1; 97.1-2; 98.2; cf. Caes. *B. Civ.* 2.94.

<sup>185</sup> Cic. *Phil.* 8.9: *omnes Cafones, omnes Saxae ceteraeque pestes quae sequuntur Antonium aedis sibi optimas, hortos, Tusculana, Albana definiunt.*

<sup>186</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 4.35; 5.20, 22; Cass. Dio 47.14.4-5; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 15. Regarding the proscriptions during the late Republic and triumviral period, see Syme 1939: 187-201; Bengtson 1972; Gabba 1976: 31, 49, 138-144; Hinard 1985; Santangelo 2007: 78-87.

<sup>187</sup> In his *Res Gestae* (16), Augustus boasts of the amount of money he personally spent (860,000,000 *sesterces*) in purchasing rather than confiscating land for his veterans, a boast which was addressed to those who had negative sentiments towards his earlier involvement in the proscriptions.

regard. I have observed already that there were others who received their own property back after the revolt. In addition, however, Isaac has demonstrated with his interpretation of *War* 7.216 that all the land that was taken by Vespasian from those individuals and communities that had been involved in the revolt and had not honourably surrendered was ordered to be disposed of/sold (ἀποδίδωμι) by Sextus Lucilius Bassus, his legate in Judaea, and Laberius Maximus, the new procurator. In contrast to accepted practice, Vespasian did not found any cities of his own in order to reward the veterans of his legions but only assigned a modest contingent (800) of them to a settlement at Emmaus.<sup>188</sup> There was, therefore, a considerable amount of confiscated land that was available either for purchase or receipt. Given Vespasian's generosity in returning this land to the provincials, we might expect that the land was equally useful to Titus as a means of rewarding those who had demonstrated their loyalty. Josephus' exceptionality in this regard should then not be assumed.<sup>189</sup>

The sum total of the privileges granted Josephus in the aftermath of the revolt was, therefore, the freedom of captured family and friends, some sacred volumes rescued from the destruction of Jerusalem, and a plot of land in compensation for his previous estate. Each of

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<sup>188</sup> *War* 7.216-17: Περὶ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν ἐπέστειλε Καῖσαρ Βάσσω καὶ Λαβερίῳ Μαξίμῳ, οὗτος δὲ ἦν ἐπίτροπος, κελεύων πᾶσαν γῆν ἀποδόσθαι τῶν Ἰουδαίων. οὐ γὰρ κατώκισεν ἐκεῖ πόλιν ἰδίαν αὐτῷ τὴν χώραν φυλάττων, ὀκτακοσίοις δὲ μόνοις ἀπὸ τῆς στρατιᾶς διαφειμένοις χωρίον ἔδωκεν εἰς κατοίκησιν, ὃ καλεῖται μὲν Ἀμμαοῦς, ἀπέχει δὲ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων σταδίους τριάκοντα. Isaac 1984: 46, "About the same time Caesar sent instructions to Bassus and Laberius Maximus, the procurator, to dispose of all Jewish land. For he founded there no city of his own while keeping their territory, but only to eight hundred veterans did he assign a place for settlement called Emmaus" (cf. 44-50); cf. the translation of Thackeray in the Loeb (1929), "About the same time Caesar sent instructions to Bassus and Laberius Maximus, the procurator, to farm out all Jewish territory. For he founded no city there, reserving the country as his private property, except that he did assign to eight hundred veterans discharged from the army a place for habitation called Emmaus, distant thirty furlongs from Jerusalem." See also Roth 2002: 392.

<sup>189</sup> *Contra* Goodman 1987: 231 n. 2, "Josephus was exceptional in being permitted to keep his estates." He interprets the settlement of the elite deserters at Gophna as a testimony to their disloyalty and therefore doubts that Titus fulfilled his promise to reinstate them on their land (232-3). According to Goodman's interpretation, the promise was calculated to secure their intelligence information, but after the revolt their usefulness was over (cf. Alon 1977: 277-80). Although this may be correct, it does not follow that Titus did not keep his word. Restoring their estates carried with it no expectation that they would be reinstated as ruling class. Furthermore, Josephus, writing after the revolt, would likely have known if Titus had not kept his promise.

these *beneficia* is readily understandable within the context of a military campaign and belongs, therefore, to Josephus' time in the Roman camp. They illustrate little as far as his circumstances while residing in Rome are concerned. To be sure, the military was one of those unique places where lasting bonds of *amicitia* could form between those who served together.<sup>190</sup> Apuleius illustrates this in his use of a military metaphor to describe his relationship with the consular Aemilianus Strabo; he writes that Strabo in a memorial to him claimed that "between us the bonds of *amicitia* began honourably *a commilitio studiorum* under the same teachers."<sup>191</sup> As usual, the example of Pliny the Younger is also instructive. His service with Nymphidius Lupus in Syria with the *Legio III Gallica*, Pliny as military tribune and Lupus as *praefectus*, was the beginning of a friendship that continued into the time of Pliny's governorship in Bithynia when he requested Lupus to serve as assessor.<sup>192</sup> The *amicitia* between them also obliged Pliny to view the son of Lupus, of the same name, as his own and to recommend him for honours to Trajan.<sup>193</sup> Friendships forged in the context of the army could, therefore, be very important.<sup>194</sup> Nevertheless, Josephus never claims for himself the status of an *amicus Caesaris*, nor does what we hear of his later career suggest such a relationship.

In fact, although Josephus claims to have been welcomed as Titus' sailing companion on the return trip to Rome, the explicit evidence for contact between Josephus and Titus following their time together in the Roman camp is slim. Even his accompaniment of Titus to Rome may not have amounted to much. Josephus writes, "And when he was about to depart for Rome, he welcomed me as his sailing companion, assigning me every honour."<sup>195</sup> The generic claim of

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<sup>190</sup> Saller 1982: 182-3.

<sup>191</sup> Apul. *Flor.* 16.

<sup>192</sup> See Plin. *Ep.* 1.10; 3.11; 8.14; *CIL* 5.5262.

<sup>193</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 10.87; cf. Pliny's relationship with Claudius Pollio, the *praefectus* of an *ala*; *Ep.* 7.31.

<sup>194</sup> See also the example of M. Sempronius Liberalis and M. Gavius Maximus: *CIL* 16.173; Pflaum 1961: 251; Saller 1982: 183.

<sup>195</sup> *Life* 422: μέλλων τε ἀπαίρειν εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην σύμπλουν ἐδέξατο πᾶσαν τιμὴν ἀπονέμων.



honour (τιμή) from Titus is hardly substantive<sup>196</sup> and Josephus also glosses over a period of seven months, during which time Titus was busy arranging affairs in the east and planning a series of celebrations: first in Caesarea Philippi while spending the winter in Agrippa II's palace; then at Caesarea Maritima in honour of Domitian's birthday; subsequently at Berytus in Syria in celebration of his father's birthday; and finally in the Syrian capital of Antioch.<sup>197</sup> In the meantime Titus sent the *Legio XII Fulminata* to Melitene in Cappadocia on the Euphrates, left the *Legio X Fretensis* in Jerusalem, and appointed the *Legio V Macedonica* and *Legio XV Apollinaris* to guard the prisoners and booty at Caesarea Maritima. Following his triumphal journeys through the major cities of the Near East, when he at last came to Alexandria from where he would set out to Rome, these last two legions were returned to their posts in Moesia and Pannonia respectively.<sup>198</sup>

Josephus claims no involvement in this lengthy and expensive tour through the east. While it may be that Josephus accompanied Titus throughout the seven months of celebrations and diplomatic proceedings in the east, there is no evidence as to how Josephus got to Alexandria to become the "sailing partner" of Titus to Rome. The trip to Rome from Alexandria in the spring of 71 was, moreover, a hurried affair—Titus allegedly aroused the annoyance and suspicion of his father at his dilatory and extravagant behaviour<sup>199</sup>—which would likely have

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<sup>196</sup> Cf. *Life* 414; *War* 3.408.

<sup>197</sup> Caesarea Philippi: *War* 7.23; Caesarea Maritima: *War* 7.36 (October 24); Berytus: *War* 7.39-40 (November 17); Antioch: *War* 7.100-104; cf. B. Jones 1984: 56-7; Levick 1999: 119-20. Regarding the chronology, see Weber 1921: 270f.

<sup>198</sup> *War* 7.17-19; 7.116-19; cf. *Suet. Tit.* 5.3.

<sup>199</sup> See *Suet. Tit.* 5.3: *Unde nata suspicio est, quasi desciscere a patre Orientisque sibi regnum vindicare temptasset... Quare festinans in Italiam, cum Regium, dein Puteolos oneraria nave appulisset, Romam inde contendit expeditissimus inopinantique patri, velut arguens rumorum de se temeritatem: "Veni," inquit, "pater, veni."*; cf. *War* 6.34; 7.105; Philostr. *VA* 6.29; Cass. Dio 65.12; B. Jones 1984: 57-9, 72 n. 76; *contra* Levick 1999: 185-7.

been over in six to eight weeks.<sup>200</sup> We should also not rule out the possibility that they did not make the journey on the same vessel, since Titus very likely required more than one ship to transport himself, his *consilium*, the soldiers, and possibly even the prisoners.<sup>201</sup> In any case, we have no basis on which to assume that Josephus' accompaniment of Titus to Rome was of any significance in terms of his relative status.<sup>202</sup>

### Josephus as Imperial Client and Historian—The City of Rome

Upon his arrival in Rome, Josephus received the necessary provisions from Vespasian to establish himself comfortably in the imperial capital, as I have examined in the previous chapter.<sup>203</sup> Although it may be that Titus arranged to have Josephus receive these privileges from the emperor,<sup>204</sup> Josephus nowhere mentions his involvement. Furthermore, aside from Titus' *imprimatur* of the *War*, Josephus does not claim to have received any substantive *beneficia* from Titus, either while the latter was heir to the throne or when he was later emperor. He summarizes the extent of his contact with Titus over the course of a decade as follows, “The things given by the imperators remained much the same. When Vespasian died and Titus succeeded him in the

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<sup>200</sup> See above pp. 37-8; cf. Casson 1994: 151-2 (two months+); Noy 2000: 142 (two months); Mason 2001: 24 n. 105 (six weeks+); *contra* Orchard 1995: 250 (three weeks).

<sup>201</sup> *War* 7.118-119: τῶν αἰχμαλώτων δὲ τοὺς μὲν ἡγεμόνας Σίμωνα καὶ Ἰωάννην, τὸν τ' ἄλλον ἀριθμὸν ἑπτακοσίου ἀνδρᾶς ἐπιλέξας μεγέθει τε καὶ κάλλει σωμάτων ὑπερβάλλοντας, προσέταξεν εἰς τὴν Ἰταλίαν αὐτίκα μάλα κομίζεσθαι βουλόμενος αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ θριάμβῳ παραγαγεῖν. τοῦ πλοῦ δὲ αὐτῷ κατὰ νοῦν ἀνυσθέντος ὁμοίως μὲν ἡ Ῥώμη περὶ τὴν ὑποδοχὴν εἶχε καὶ τὰς ὑπαντήσεις ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ πατρὸς. Although Josephus reports that the voyage was favourable, an oral tradition developed and was recorded in the Babylonian Talmud that a terrible storm arose, at which point a gnat entered Titus' nostril and penetrated into his brain, causing him tremendous suffering for the remainder of his life in punishment for his destruction of the temple; see *Tractate Gittin* 56b; Genesis Rabbah 10:7; cf. Ginzberg 1925: 60 n. 292; Yavetz 1975: 413-14; Stemberger 1979: 351-8; Krieger 1994: 302-304, 328-9; Rajak 2002[1983]: 210; A. Feldman 2008: 107-110. Krieger sees Josephus' positive portrayal of Titus, to be discussed below, as a direct response to these negative Judaean sentiments about Titus and the Roman empire in general.

<sup>202</sup> *Contra* Hadas-Lebel 1993[1989]: 184, “The voyage was as pleasant for him as it was for Titus, who enjoyed his company and invited him to share his princely accommodations (*L* 422), while the prisoners, in chains, traveled in the hold.”

<sup>203</sup> *Life* 423; cf. pp. 134-8.

<sup>204</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 12, “Probably he owed much of his advancement to Titus.”

rule, he preserved the same sort of honour towards me as his father and, though I was often accused, he did not credit [the charges].”<sup>205</sup>

Even if we accept at face value the vague reference to “the same sort of honour” (ὁμοίαν τὴν τιμὴν) that Josephus received from Titus, the significance of the claim made here is reduced when we consider the external evidence for the nature of Titus’ reign. Cassius Dio reports that Titus, “also instituted various other measures designed to render men's lives more secure and free from trouble. Thus, he issued an edict confirming all gifts that had been bestowed upon any persons by the former emperors, thus saving them the trouble of petitioning him individually about the matter.”<sup>206</sup> Suetonius confirms this and claims moreover that Titus was the first of the emperors to ratify the favours granted by previous emperors in a single edict.<sup>207</sup> He also records the heartwarming account of Titus’ claim to have wasted a day when he failed to grant anyone a favour throughout the course of that day.<sup>208</sup> In this context, Josephus’ insinuation that he continued to occupy a special place with the imperial family loses its lustre. If Josephus were still receiving special privileges from Vespasian, these would then automatically have been carried forward under the new emperor with no need for Josephus to have personally approached Titus or vice versa. Furthermore, the edict itself was less reflective of Titus’ goodwill towards those who had been recipients of his father’s favour, than it was in keeping with his political

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<sup>205</sup> *Life* 428: διέμεινεν δὲ ὅμοια καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων: Οὐεσπασιανοῦ γὰρ τελευτήσαντος Τίτος τὴν ἀρχὴν διαδεξάμενος ὁμοίαν τῷ πατρὶ τὴν τιμὴν μοι διεφύλαξεν πολλακίς τε κατηγορηθέντος οὐκ ἐπίστευσεν.

<sup>206</sup> Cass. Dio 66.19.3: πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἄλλα πρὸς τε τὸ ἀσφαλὲς καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἄλυπον τῶν ἀνθρώπων κατεστήσατο· καὶ γὰρ γράμματα ἐξέθηκε βεβαιῶν πάντα τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν προτέρων αὐτοκρατόρων δοθέντα τισίν, ὥστε μὴ καθ’ ἐκάστους σφῶν αἰτοῦντας αὐτὸν πράγματα ἔχειν.

<sup>207</sup> He was followed in this by Domitian (Cass. Dio 67.2), Nerva (Plin. *Ep.* 10.58), and Hadrian (*Dig.* 27.1.6.8), and possibly all subsequent emperors; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 413-18.

<sup>208</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 8.1: *Natura autem benevolentissimus, cum ex instituto Tiberi omnes dehinc Caesares beneficia a superioribus concessa principibus aliter rata non haberent, quam si eadem iisdem et ipsi dedissent, primus praeterita omnia uno confirmavit edicto nec a se peti passus est. In ceteris vero desideris hominum obstinatissime tenuit, ne quem sine spe dimitteret; quin et admonentibus domesticis, quasi plura polliceretur quam praestere posset, non oportere ait quemquam a sermone principis tristem discedere; atque etiam recordatus quondam super cenam, quod nihil cuiquam toto die praestitisset, memorabilem illam meritoque laudatam vocem edidit: “Amici, diem perdidit.”*

propaganda, which sought to improve his public image by establishing a reputation for generosity and liberality, while concealing his actual frugality and financial acuity, and by dispelling the rumours of his earlier rapacity.<sup>209</sup>

Josephus' claim to have received from Titus protection from his accusers is also marked by apparent inactivity on the part of the emperor. We have already seen how, when Jonathan of Cyrene accused him of supporting revolutionary activities, Vespasian took direct action, putting the accuser to death and granting Josephus further landholdings in Judaea.<sup>210</sup> In contrast, when Josephus faced similar accusations during Titus' reign, which he claims happened often, the only benefit he mentions was that Titus did not believe the accusers (οὐκ ἐπίστευσεν).<sup>211</sup> It appears then that Titus refused to hear the cases against Josephus. Although this was certainly a demonstration of favour towards Josephus, the fact that he earlier credits Vespasian specifically with punishing the perpetrators of these accusations, and immediately thereafter does the same with regard to Domitian, may suggest that this benefaction from Titus was more commonplace, even more so when we consider that Titus had banished all informers from Rome and refused to entertain cases of *maiestas* in his attempt to erase his previous negative reputation.<sup>212</sup>

The final explicit link between Josephus and Titus in the city of Rome has been discussed already in the previous chapter, namely the presentation of the *War* by Josephus to Vespasian

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<sup>209</sup> See B. Jones 1992b: 140-46, 153-4, 171 n. 150; Griffin 2000a: 49-51. The edict may also have served to emphasize Titus' filial loyalty or *pietas* towards his father, which was another element of his political propaganda; see Plin. *HN* 1 praef. 3; 5; *ILS* 264= *CIL* 6.944; Griffin 2000a: 46-49.

<sup>210</sup> *Life* 424-5; cf. p. 148. In the parallel passage at *War* 7.447-50, where Josephus deals with the same incident, he claims that Titus was involved to the extent that his concern in the matter was the cause of Vespasian's actions. There is, however, no substantive involvement by Titus. See 7.450: Οὐεσπασιανὸς δὲ τὸ πρᾶγμα ὑποπτεύσας ἀναζητεῖ τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ γνοὺς ἄδικον τὴν αἰτίαν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐπενηνεγμένην τοὺς μὲν ἀφίησι τῶν ἐγκλημάτων Τίτου σπουδάσαντος (since Titus was eager/anxious), δίκην δ' ἐπέθηκεν Ἰωνάθῃ τὴν προσήκουσαν.

<sup>211</sup> *Life* 428: πολλακίς τε κατηγορηθέντος οὐκ ἐπίστευσεν; Mason 2001: 170-71 n. 1769, points out that exaggerating one's accusers was an effective way to suggest a certain level of success; see Mart. *Ep.* 1.40; 2.61; 3.9; 4.27, 77, 86; *passim*). So, even though it is certainly possible that Josephus faced many accusers, there are also rhetorical reasons for his drawing attention to them.

<sup>212</sup> Informers: Cass. Dio 66.19.3; Suet. *Tit.* 8.5. *Maiestas*: Cass. Dio 66.19.1; cf. Franchet d'Espèrey 1986: 3079.

and Titus.<sup>213</sup> At that point the lack of involvement of the Flavians in the writing process was emphasized and a minimalist view was taken regarding the significance of their endorsement of the *War*. Moreover, an appropriate context was presented for Josephus' submission of the account of the revolt to his patrons. The literary programme of Vespasian was examined in order to consider the possibility that the *War* served in some way as Flavian propaganda, a view that has always had strong support. Overall, it was suggested that although the relationship between the historian and the emperor can be characterized as typical within the *Klientelsystem*, nevertheless the literary efforts of the former were not motivated by this connection. The points made there should be kept in mind as I now consider further aspects of specifically Titus' involvement with the *War*.

The key passage for consideration here is found in Josephus' *Life*, where he writes that, "The emperor Titus, for his part, insisted that knowledge of events should be transmitted to the people from these alone, so that after he had inscribed the volumes with his own hand, he ordered them to be made public."<sup>214</sup> On the basis of this passage, scholars have argued that the *War* was an officially commissioned work of propaganda, and that Josephus "s'était docilement soumis aux besoins de la propagande officielle."<sup>215</sup> Although we should certainly not fail to appreciate the honour that was accorded Josephus by Titus' *imprimatur*, we should also not overestimate the significance of Titus' actions. When placed in its narrative context, this passage reveals that Josephus' concern was not to establish the official character of his narrative but to defend its accuracy against the opposing account of the revolt that was written by Justus of

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<sup>213</sup> See above pp. 119-21.

<sup>214</sup> *Life* 363: ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὐτοκράτωρ Τίτος ἐκ μόνων αὐτῶν ἐβουλήθη τὴν γνῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παραδοῦναι τῶν πράξεων, ὥστε χαράξας τῇ ἑαυτοῦ χειρὶ τὰ βιβλία δημοσιῶσαι προσέταξεν.

<sup>215</sup> Quotation: Saulnier 1989: 562; cf. Hölischer 1916: 1943; Laqueur 1920: 126-7; Weber 1921: 23, 44; Rasp 1924: 46; Thackeray 1929: 27-8; Shutt 1961: 5, 120; Cohen 2002[1979]: 86, 229, 232, 234; 1982: 366; S. Schwartz 1990: 1, 10, 13, 18, 153, 209; J. Price 1992: 175.

Tiberias.<sup>216</sup> Justus was a well-educated member of the city council of Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee who, at least according to Josephus, became involved in the early stages of the revolt, eventually allying himself with one of Josephus' principal opponents, John of Gischala.<sup>217</sup> He had connections by marriage to Agrippa II's prefect, Philip son of Iacimus, and seems to have favoured loyalty to the Herodian king.<sup>218</sup> He was rewarded for his loyalty by both Agrippa II and Berenice, who provided him protection and work despite the fact that Vespasian had allegedly ordered them to kill Justus.<sup>219</sup> Following the revolt, Justus appears to have written a work that contradicted elements of Josephus' account,<sup>220</sup> although what exactly this work consisted of is unclear.<sup>221</sup> This history was made public after the death of Agrippa II, some twenty years after Justus had first written it, according to Josephus.<sup>222</sup>

As part of his defence against the perceived attacks in Justus' narrative, Josephus appeals to a variety of qualities testifying to the validity of *his* unique version of the events, namely: his consultation of the field-notes (ὑπομνήματα; *LA commentarii*) of Vespasian;<sup>223</sup> his position as

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<sup>216</sup> For the classic view that Josephus' *Life* was written primarily in response to Justus' history, with varying interpretations, see Niese 1896: 227; Luther 1910; Hölischer 1916: 1994; Laqueur 1920: 78, 83; Drexler 1921: 293-312; Thackeray 1929: 16-7; Schalit 1933: 67-95; Gelzer 1952: 89; Shutt 1961: 6; Rajak 1973; Barish 1978: 64; Mason 1991: 316-24; Rappaport 1994: 280-82; Cohen 2002[1979]: 114-37. More recently, however, this view has been increasingly rejected; see Rajak 1987: 81-94; Bilde 1988: 104-13; Mason 1998a: 36-44; 2001: xxvii-l; Rajak 2002[1983]: 152-4.

<sup>217</sup> *Life* 34-42, 87, 391-3.

<sup>218</sup> *Life* 155, 175-76, 343, 352, 381, 390.

<sup>219</sup> *Life* 343, 355-7, 390-93.

<sup>220</sup> *Life* 40, 336-67.

<sup>221</sup> It may have been a separate work or part of a larger project, since the 9<sup>th</sup> century Patriarch of Constantinople, Photius, ascribed to Justus an account of the history of the Judaeian kings (*Phot. Bibl.* 33); cf. Rajak 1987: 82-4; 2002[1983]: 152-4.

<sup>222</sup> *Life* 359.

<sup>223</sup> *Life* 342; cf. 358; *Apion* 1.56 (which also mentions Titus' field notes); *Cic. Brut.* 262; *Att.* 1.19=Shackleton Bailey *CLA* 19; *Lucian Hist. conscr.* 16, 48; *Caes. B.Gall.* 8.praef (Hirtius); Mason 2001: 140 n. 1402; Barclay 2007: 226. Much has been made of these field notes, with many important Josephan scholars arguing in favour of Josephus' extensive direct or indirect use of the *commentarii*; see Schlatter 1893; Weber 1921; Thackeray 1929: 38-40; Schlatter 1932; Bardon 1968: 272; Lindner 1972; Broshi 1982: 381-83; cf. Rajak 2002[1983]: 215-16. Josephus, however, only implies his usage of them and employs them simply as testimony to his accuracy. It is unwise, therefore, to place too much emphasis on the *commentarii*.

eyewitness of many of the events from both sides of the combat;<sup>224</sup> and the endorsement (μαρτυρία) of many who had been involved themselves in the revolt, including Vespasian, Titus, and Agrippa II and members of his family.<sup>225</sup> Titus' inscription and order to make the volumes public are cited within this context, but are accorded less space even than the two letters that Josephus appends as examples of Agrippa II's espousal of his account.<sup>226</sup> Far from demonstrating, therefore, that Josephus' account was the official Flavian one, this passage underlines the fact that the *War* was a uniquely Josephan depiction and interpretation of the events. The significance of the involvement of Vespasian, Titus, and Agrippa II was simply that they, being still alive, were able to stand as witnesses. Justus' history, in contrast, released some twenty years after it was originally written when these protagonists had died, could not benefit from their testimony.<sup>227</sup>

As far as Josephus' claim that Titus insisted "that knowledge of the events should be transmitted to the people from these [volumes] alone"<sup>228</sup> is concerned, we should not place too much weight on it. Apart from calling Titus as witness to the fact that Judaea owed its ruin to civil strife,<sup>229</sup> Josephus makes no mention in the prologue to the *War* of Titus' approval of his account, despite his concern there also to legitimize his version. Furthermore, he claims from the

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<sup>224</sup> *Life* 358; cf. *War* 1.3; *Ap.* 1.53-6; Laqueur 1920: 15-17, has argued persuasively that the passage in *Ap.* 1.56 is also in reaction to Justus. There the emphasis is on the fact that Justus was not an eyewitness, since Josephus admits that his rival may have had access to the field-notes.

<sup>225</sup> *Life* 359-67. The fact that the claim of imperial approval occurs within this context does not, however, justify the suggestion of McLaren 2005b: 45, that "More likely...Josephus added the reference to imperial readership having never submitted his text for approval." Surely Josephus would not have dared to fabricate this claim before his audience, who would have been able to verify it.

<sup>226</sup> Josephus is especially concerned with distancing Justus from Agrippa II; see *Life* 354-6, 358-67; cf. McLaren 2005b: 45 n. 27.

<sup>227</sup> *Life* 360: πρὸ γὰρ εἴκοσι ἐτῶν εἶχες γεγραμμένην καὶ παρ' εἰδόντων ἔμελλες τῆς ἀκριβείας τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἀποφέρεσθαι: νῦν δ', ὅτ' ἐκεῖνοι μὲν οὐκέτ' εἰσὶν μεθ' ἡμῶν, ἐλεγχθῆναι δ' οὐ νομίζεις, τεθάρρηκας; cf. Rajak 1973: 345; Mason 2001: 148 n. 1486.

<sup>228</sup> *Life* 363.

<sup>229</sup> See also *War* 1.10: ὅτι γὰρ αὐτὴν στάσις οἰκεία καθεῖλεν, καὶ τὰς Ῥωμαίων χεῖρας ἀκούσας καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἐπὶ τὸν ναὸν εἴλκυσαν οἱ Ἰουδαίων τύραννοι, μάρτυς αὐτὸς ὁ πορθήσας Καῖσαρ Τίτος, ἐν παντὶ τῷ πολέμῳ τὸν μὲν δῆμον ἐλεήσας ὑπὸ τῶν στασιαστῶν φρουρούμενον, πολλάκις δὲ ἐκὼν τὴν ἄλωσιν τῆς πόλεως ὑπερτιθέμενος καὶ διδοὺς τῇ πολιτορκίᾳ χρόνον εἰς μετάνοιαν τῶν αἰτίων.

outset to be writing in reaction to existing narratives, which have twisted the truth either out of flattery to the Romans or hatred towards the Judaeans—they have not, that is, been written in Tacitean fashion *sine ira et studio*<sup>230</sup>—characterizations that suggest these accounts had a pro-Roman slant that would surely have been acceptable to Titus.<sup>231</sup> The claim of semi-official status at *Life* 363 should be seen, therefore, as an exaggeration of the significance of Titus’ *imprimatur*. In reality his endorsement may have been much more mundane, as a comparison with the benign approval requested by Pliny the Elder from Titus suggests.<sup>232</sup> As Rajak proposes, “it was the commendation of a literary *iudex* rather than the *imprimatur* of an autocrat which was attached to the *War*.”<sup>233</sup> The fact that Titus was long dead at the release of Josephus’ autobiography in AD 93/4, however, made it safe for him to spin it a different way.<sup>234</sup>

The more formal endorsement from Titus is, moreover, not surprising. For one, the release of a complete *War* most likely took place during Titus’ reign, so that Vespasian was only presented with a preliminary version or partial copy of the volumes.<sup>235</sup> It would not have made sense, therefore, for the founder of the Flavian dynasty to have honoured the account in this way. Furthermore, Titus realistically had little to fear from the pen of the Judaeen historian.<sup>236</sup> His

<sup>230</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.1.

<sup>231</sup> *War* 1.1-9, esp. 1-2: οἱ μὲν οὐ παρατυχόντες τοῖς πράγμασιν, ἀλλ’ ἀκοῆ συλλέγοντες εἰκαῖα καὶ ἀσύμφωνα διηγήματα σοφιστικῶς ἀναγράφουσιν, οἱ παραγενόμενοι δὲ ἢ κολακεία τῇ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἢ μίσει τῷ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους καταψεύδονται τῶν πραγμάτων, περιέχει δὲ αὐτοῖς ὅπου μὲν κατηγορίαν ὅπου δὲ ἐγκώμιον τὰ συγγράμματα, τὸ δ’ ἀκριβὲς τῆς ἱστορίας οὐδαμοῦ.

<sup>232</sup> Plin. *HN* praef.6: *Sed haec quis possit intrepidus aestimare subiturus ingenii tui iudicium, praesertim lacessitum? neque enim similis est condicio publicantium et nominatim tibi dicantium; HN* praef.8: *sed haec ego mihi nunc patrocina ademi nuncupatione, quoniam plurimum refert sortiatum aliquis iudicem an eligat, multumque apparatus interest apud invitatum hospitem et oblatum; cf. Rajak 2002[1983]: 200-201; Mason 2001: 149 n. 1498.*

<sup>233</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: 201.

<sup>234</sup> See McLaren 2005a: 293 n. 28; 2005b: 44-5. Regarding the dating of the *Life*, see pp. 304-6.

<sup>235</sup> See *Life* 361; *Ap.* 1.50-51. In addition to the impression given at *Life* 363 that Titus was emperor when he received the volumes, there is also the treatment of Titus in bks. 1-6, which will be discussed shortly; see S. Schwartz 1990: 13-6; Stern 1975b: 29-32 (*non vidi*); (*contra* Stern 1987: 78-9, n. 9); Cohen 2002[1979]: 84-6; C.P. Jones 2002: 113-21; D.R. Schwartz 2011a: 331-4. The possibility that Book 7 was later added or, more likely, altered does not affect our observations here; see Attridge 1984: 192-3; S. Schwartz 1986: 373-86; 1990: 21; Cohen 2002[1979]: 87-9; Rajak 2002[1983]: xiii; Barnes 2005: 139-40.

<sup>236</sup> See Mason 2001: 149 n. 1498, “It is not hard to see why, from the perspective of imperial interests, Titus would value this elaborate statement by a pacifistic Judean aristocrat, which characterized the Judaeans as excellent world



association with Josephus throughout the course of the revolt would have given him little cause for suspicion that Josephus sought to undermine the Flavian regime. The opposite was in fact the case. Based on his experiences with Josephus' efforts to mediate between the Romans and the Judaeans, seeking a peaceful resolution to the revolt, Titus may have been only too happy to have Josephus continue these services on his own initiative.<sup>237</sup> The difference was that, whereas earlier Josephus' freedom lay only in the adaptation of Titus' message to suit the sensibilities of his readership, now Josephus was free to convey his own message. Of course the political climate meant that any subversive elements to this message needed to be articulated in an extremely cautious manner, yet the artistic liberty remained.

For, however much the Flavians, and particularly Domitian, took a dim view of criticism of the regime,<sup>238</sup> there is little evidence to suggest that Titus took an active role during his brief reign in controlling or promoting the circulation of literary works, even if he was highly conscious of public opinion.<sup>239</sup> Suetonius reports that Titus was raised and educated with Britannicus at the imperial court and that, "his memory was extraordinary and he had an aptitude for almost all the arts, both of war and peace. Skilful in arms and horsemanship, he made speeches and wrote verses in Latin and Greek with ease and readiness."<sup>240</sup> The elder Pliny also praised his eloquence and genius in poetry, which manifested itself in a famous poem

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citizens, recalled their long-standing cooperation with Rome, and provided a thoughtful basis for the cessation of anti-Judean reprisals."

<sup>237</sup> See Yavetz 1975: 431, "It would be oversimplification to believe that Titus asked for a panegyric. Of course, he did not mind, just as Augustus may not have been totally indifferent to Livy's history."

<sup>238</sup> See, for example, Quint. *Inst.* 9.2.65-7; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 3.13; Suet. *Dom.* 10.1-4; Tac. *Agr.* 2.1; Plin. *Ep.* 7.19.5; Cass. Dio 67.13.2; cf. Fearnley 2003: 613-35; Mason 2003b: 561-65; McLaren 2005b: 38-9.

<sup>239</sup> See Yavetz 1975: 430-31.

<sup>240</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 2; 3: *memoria singularis, docilitas ad omnis fere tum belli tum pacis artes. Armorum et equitandi peritissimus, Latine Graeceque vel in orando vel in fingentis poematibus promptus et facilis ad extemporalitatem usque*; cf. Eutr. 7.21; *Epit. de Caes.* 10.2. His presence at Nero's court is doubted by H. Price 1945-6: 58, on account of his humble origins (see Suet. *Tit.* 1).

(*praeclarus carmen*) that he composed on a certain comet.<sup>241</sup> But apart from these testimonies to his intellectual qualities, we receive few other indications that Titus took an unusual interest in the arts. There is nothing in his relationships to Pliny the Elder and Martial to suggest that he did anything other than accept flattery that was offered to him.<sup>242</sup> So also, in his relationship to Josephus, which I have argued was not marked by significant contact in the city of Rome, there is little to support the view that Josephus served as the official court historian and much that suggests otherwise.

### **Titus' Image in the *War***<sup>243</sup>

The arguments advanced in this thesis regarding the actual nature of the relationship between Titus and Josephus, namely that it was informal and not marked by any particular intimacy, allow us to approach Josephus' narratives with heightened sensitivity. When we examine the *War* freed of the chains that have tied Josephus so closely to the imperial family in previous scholarship, serious cracks appear in the portrait of Titus himself, a portrait that has long been a mainstay in the arguments in favour of Josephus' position as a Flavian lackey. The traditional understanding of the portrait of Titus given by Josephus is that it assisted officially or unofficially the efforts of Titus to combat his reputation for cruelty and refurbish his image,<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> Plin. *HN* praef.5: *quanto tu ore patris laudes tonas! quanto fratris famam! quanto in poetica es! o magna fecunditas animi—quemadmodum fratrem quoque imitareris excogitasti!*; *HN* 2.89.

<sup>242</sup> See Franchet d'Espèrey 1986: 3085, "Puisqu'il ne les refusait pas, Titus acceptait donc ces flatteries. Mais son règne fut trop court pour qu'on puisse dire qu'il les a suscitées ou encouragées" (cf. 3086). There is little to justify the more positive statements of B. Jones 1984: 140, that "Vespasian's policies in education and the arts...remained unchanged", and that, "Although Titus' brief reign does not yield such detailed evidence for similar financial assistance [to artists], there can be little doubt that the precedent established by his father was followed" (170-71 n. 149).

<sup>243</sup> This final section of Ch. 4 follows closely the arguments presented by Mason 2005b: 243-88.

<sup>244</sup> See Laqueur 1920; Thackeray 1929: 47-8; Montefiore 1962: 162; Yavetz 1975: 411-32; Attridge 1984: 200-10; S. Schwartz 1990: 12-16; B. Jones 1992a: 408-20; Paul 1993: 56-66; Krieger 1994: 298-304; Leoni 2000: 455-70; Griffin 2000a: 17, 45; Cohen 2002[1979]: 84-6; Goldsworthy 2003: 290-315. Mader 2000: 152-7, suggests that Josephus wished to counteract the negative image of Titus current among the Judaeans. Chilton 1992: 77-9, proposes that Josephus wished to win the favour of the Flavians in order that they might allow the rebuilding of the

providing support for the new characterization of Titus as the “darling of the human race”—*amor et deliciae generis humani*.<sup>245</sup> The portrait of Titus in the *War* has, therefore, long been trotted out as proof positive that Josephus was marching to the beat of the Roman drum. Thackeray already remarked that, “The pro-Roman bias appears...above all in the eulogy of the hero Titus.”<sup>246</sup>

A cursory reading of the narrative fully bears out this impression. This is Josephus’ aim. The constraints of writing under the empire dictated extreme caution when expressing critique of the existing regime. As a result, those who did not wish to toe the party line had to resort to figured speech and artful writing within a ‘rhetoricized mentality’ to safely convey their sentiments.<sup>247</sup> Within traditional Josephan scholarship, however, Josephus was not considered to have qualified as such a skilful writer. The proponents of the source critical approach that dominated the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not credit Josephus with the requisite skill or indeed intelligence for such rhetorical artifice, characterizing him instead as a “stumpfer Abschreiber” or as “a rather unimaginative pen-pusher who had merely plagiarized the works of others and pieced together the stolen goods without adding much thought to the matter”, anachronistically evoking the modern abhorrence of plagiarism.<sup>248</sup> Conversely, those who reacted to this approach and did recognize Josephus as a creative author were constrained by their view of him as a *Römling*, a quisling, and a Flavian lackey, at least during the reigns of

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temple and the reestablishment of a Jewish state under the leadership of a priestly aristocracy, including Josephus as high priest. Rajak 2002[1983]: 203-17, has a more moderate view, namely that Josephus simply sought to repay the honour and protection granted him by the Flavians; cf. Yavetz 1975: 423-4.

<sup>245</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 1.1; Eutr. 7.21.1; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 10.6; *Epit. de Caes.* 10.6, 16. His previous reputation, marked by *saevitia*, *rapacitas*, *luxuria*, and *libido*, is attested by Suet. *Tit.* 6-7; *Epit. de Caes.* 10.7; cf. Yavetz 1975: 427-30; B. Jones 1984: 99-100, 114-7; 1992a: 408-9; Griffin 2000a: 47-8.

<sup>246</sup> Thackeray 1929: 47.

<sup>247</sup> See Ahl 1984: 174-208; Rudich 1993: xix-xxxi (“rhetoricized mentality”: xxvii), 225-30; Bartsch 1994: 63-147; Rudich 1997: 1-16, 255-6.

<sup>248</sup> These assessments of previous scholarship are presented by Laqueur 1920: viii; and Bilde 1988: 126. Examples of such previous scholarship are: von Destinon 1882; Hölscher 1916: 1934-2000.

Vespasian and Titus.<sup>249</sup> More recently and ever increasingly, however, stimulated in particular by the seminal works of Rajak (1983) and Bilde (1988), a new image of Josephus has emerged in scholarship, depicting him as “an earnest historian, ardent apologist, and creative author”.<sup>250</sup> This new perception has enabled a clearer understanding of the ways in which Josephus circumvented the constraints of writing under the empire and sought to “sound soft notes of self-assertion and resistance, at least for some ears”.<sup>251</sup>

Ironically, given Thackeray’s declaration quoted above, these soft notes of resistance have been most clearly recognized in the portrait of Titus. Previously the explanation for the cracks that appear in Titus’ image was Josephus’ incompetence and “inveterate sloppiness”.<sup>252</sup> For one scholar, these imperfections of Titus suggest that “the details provided in the *BJ* concerning the siege are not hopelessly inaccurate”, based on his assumption that Josephus wished to cast Titus in the heroic mode.<sup>253</sup> The other option is, however, that these deficiencies of Titus which appear in the narrative were included deliberately by Josephus and reveal his attempts to undermine the public image of Titus in a subtle fashion. They operate alongside Josephus’ figured speech, which further allowed him to veil his criticism. Even the blatantly positive aspects of Titus’ image in the *War*, such as his bravery and clemency, which were crucial elements of Titus’ public persona, are subjected to Josephus’ rhetorical aims. His praise of the Roman general is over-the-top, so that although he is describing Titus’ bravery, the reader

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<sup>249</sup> See Laqueur 1920: 247-58; cf. Rasp 1924: 27-47; Thackeray 1929: 15-22, 47-8; Attridge 1984: 200-203; S. Schwartz 1990: 10, 82-88; Cohen 2002[1979]: 86, 232.

<sup>250</sup> Mason 2005b: 244; cf. the summary of scholarship representing the “modern conception of Josephus” in Bilde 1988: 141-71.

<sup>251</sup> See Barclay 2005a: 315-32 (quotation: 332); cf. Spilisbury 2005: 209-227; Mason 2003b: 559-89; 2005a: 71-100; 2005b: 243-88; McLaren 2005a: 279-95; 2005b: 34-48; 2011: 133.

<sup>252</sup> Josephus’ “inveterate sloppiness” appears in Cohen 2002[1979]: 233-34, but in a different context.

<sup>253</sup> B. Jones 1992a: 411; cf. Yavetz 1975: 420, “It is possible to analyse whether the description of Titus in Josephus’ writings fits into his general framework and purpose. This method will certainly not disclose the whole truth, but it may help to clarify some obscure points.” See Mason’s essay addressing, in part, the methodological flaws in assuming that contradictions in Josephus’ narrative reveal historical truths or provide access to more reliable sources; Mason 2003a: 145-88.

understands it as needless recklessness, while Titus' much vaunted clemency in fact betrays his naivety. Josephus thus uses a rhetorical technique that had been known to the ancients since Aristotle.<sup>254</sup>

Under the cover of obsequious flattery, therefore, Josephus succeeds in creating a less than flattering portrait of Titus. This is cleverly exhibited in the many depictions of Titus' personal bravery, which, although impressive as displays of physical prowess, demonstrate a recklessness that scarcely befits a commanding officer.<sup>255</sup> Although it was a standard narrative *topos* that the general's personal intervention at key moments in the battle could turn the tide,<sup>256</sup> it was also understood that there was a fine line between exemplary courage and appropriate caution.<sup>257</sup> Josephus also makes it explicit in the narrative that Titus' actions were inappropriate. On the one hand, they stand in direct contrast to the expressed approach of Vespasian, who cautioned against recklessness and encouraged his men to wait for God to do his work in dismantling the opposition of the enemy.<sup>258</sup> This difference of opinion might seem understandable, given Vespasian's age and experience against Titus' youth and enthusiasm. Yet Titus also in a later speech to his troops "ordered his troops to prove their manhood without running personal risks, pronouncing inconsiderate impetuosity to be mere desperation, and valour only deserving of the name when coupled with foresight and a regard for the actor's

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<sup>254</sup> Arist. *Rhet.* 1367a33-63; see also Plut. *Mor.* 56C; cf. Bartsch 1994: 170-72.

<sup>255</sup> *War* 5.59-65, 79-84, 87-97, 288, 488; 6.132-4, 246-8.

<sup>256</sup> Caesar: *Caes. B.Gall.* 2.25; *B.Civ.* 3.69; *Vell. Pat.* 2.5.3-4; *Suet. Iul.* 62; *Plut. Caes.* 56.2; *Frontin. Str.* 2.8.13. Sulla: *Plut. Sull.* 21.2; 29.5; *App. Mith.* 49; *B.Civ.* 1.58; *Frontin. Str.* 2.8.12. Pompey: *Plut. Sert.* 21.2; *App. B.Civ.* 1.58; cf. *Livy* 10.36.6-15; 37.43.1-4; 39.31.7; *Sall. Cat.* 60.4. For further examples and discussion, see Rosenstein 1990: 118-21; Campbell 1984: 59-69.

<sup>257</sup> *Onas. Str.* 33.6; cf. B. Jones 1992a: 418-420; Goldsworthy 1996: 116-170, but see 283-6; McLaren 2005a: 282-5.

<sup>258</sup> *War* 4.368-76, esp. 372: εἰ δέ τις οἶεται τὴν δόξαν τῆς νίκης ἐωλοτέραν ἔσεσθαι δίχα μάχης, γνῶτω τοῦ διὰ τῶν ὀπλων σφαλεροῦ τὸ μετὰ ἡσυχίας κατόρθωμα λυσιτελέστερον.

security.”<sup>259</sup> His inconsistency is underlined by the better judgment shown by his own men, who on two occasions, once successfully, intervened to prevent Titus from risking himself, pointing out that he was too valuable to expose himself in that manner.<sup>260</sup> Moreover, his personal intervention in saving the *Legio X Fretensis* from disaster on the first of these occasions was only necessary because of his failure to take appropriate precautions when assigning them to set up their camp on the Mount of Olives.<sup>261</sup> The reputation of Titus as a brilliant general takes, therefore, a hit in the *War*.<sup>262</sup> Yet Josephus safely avoids any recrimination. Titus could hardly have objected to these accounts without compromising his courageous character.

The famed clemency (φιλανθρωπία; *LA clementia*) of Titus functions within the narrative similarly as a rhetorical *topos*.<sup>263</sup> In general, as we have seen, the *clementia principis* had become an integral part of the imperial persona,<sup>264</sup> but as a result of his actions as the regime’s enforcer prior to his accession to the throne, Titus was in particularly desperate need to recast his public image in this regard.<sup>265</sup> Suetonius reports that he declared “that he would accept the office of *pontifex maximus*, for the purpose of keeping his hands unstained”, and claims, moreover, that afterward, “he neither caused nor connived at the death of any man.”<sup>266</sup> Titus would certainly not have objected, therefore, to Josephus’ emphasis throughout the narrative on this virtue and his

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<sup>259</sup> *War* 5.316: Τίτος δὲ τῆς τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἀσφαλείας οὐχ ἤττον τοῦ κρατεῖν προνόει, καὶ τὴν μὲν ἀπερίσκεπτον ὀρμὴν ἀπόνοιαν λέγων, μόνην δ’ ἀρετὴν τὴν μετὰ προνοίας καὶ τοῦ μηδὲν τὸν δρώντα παθεῖν, ἐν ἀκινδύνῳ τῷ κατὰ σφᾶς ἐκέλευσεν ἀνδρίζεσθαι; compare, however, his speech at 6.36, 42-44.

<sup>260</sup> *War* 5.87-97; 6.132-4.

<sup>261</sup> *War* 5.70-84; cf. McLaren 2005b: 44.

<sup>262</sup> See, however, Paul 1993: 56-8.

<sup>263</sup> See, for example, *War* 4.118-9; 5.317-25, 422, 522, 553-61; 6.341-50, 356; cf. Yavetz 1975: 423-6; Pelletier 1978: 35-44; Théron 1981: 235-8; Hadas-Lebel 1987: 815-22; 1990: 78-85; S. Schwartz 1990: 79-80; McLaren 2005a: 281; Mason 2003c: 88; 2005b: 262-7.

<sup>264</sup> See Yavetz 1975: 424-6; Dowling 2006: esp. 272-83. See pp. 182-92.

<sup>265</sup> See Suet. *Tit.* 6.2: *Quibus rebus sicut in posterum securitati satis cavet, ita ad praesens plurimum contraxit invidiae, ut non temere quis tam adverso rumore magisque invitis omnibus transierit ad principatum*; cf. Suet. *Tit.* 7.1 (*saevitia*); Cass. Dio 66.17.1; Yavetz 1975: 430-32; B. Jones 1984: 99-100, 114-5; Griffin 2000a: 51, “the attribute that Titus most needed to acquire in the public eye was *clementia*.”

<sup>266</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 9.1: *Pontificatum maximum ideo se professus accipere ut puras servaret manus, fidem praestitit; nec auctor posthac cuiusquam necis nec conscius...*

frequent positive rendering of the Roman general in this regard. Scholars have consequently seen in Josephus' efforts an attempt to ingratiate himself with Titus, who was striving to create a positive public image.<sup>267</sup>

Nevertheless, the clement image of Titus is not entirely flattering.<sup>268</sup> On a number of occasions the naivety of his clemency is betrayed and taken advantage of by the wily Judaeans. When John of Gischala found himself surrounded by Titus' army in his home town, he rejected Titus' offers of peace, giving as reason for his refusal his inability according to Scriptural injunctions to negotiate a peace treaty or bear arms on the Sabbath.<sup>269</sup> Josephus makes it clear that John actually cared little for honouring the Sabbath, but wished instead to preserve himself.<sup>270</sup> When Titus granted him a day's respite, even withdrawing with his troops to a site some 10 kilometres away, John promptly fled to Jerusalem under the cover of darkness together with his armed followers, leaving behind the many women and children who could not withstand the pace.<sup>271</sup> Upon his discovery of John's trickery, Titus was mortified and had to find solace for his anger in the captured and slain, the latter of which numbered 6000.<sup>272</sup>

Titus' clemency let him down again later on in the narrative, when a certain Judaeian trickster named Castor convinced Titus that he was seeking mercy and wished to capitulate to the Roman side, when in actuality he was buying time for Simon bar Giora, who was deliberating on

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<sup>267</sup> See Yavetz 1975: 430-32; Pelletier 1978: 35-44; Hadas-Lebel 1987: 815-22; 1990: 76-85; cf. Théron 1981: 235-8.

<sup>268</sup> Théron 1981: 238, "l'historien juif sait nuancer le portrait des deux futurs empereurs. Il ne les présente pas toujours dotés des qualités les plus sublimes et les plus éclatantes." His explanation of this nuance is that Josephus was not merely a 'courtisan' of the emperors but that he wished to give a realistic historical description of Vespasian and Titus.

<sup>269</sup> *War* 4.99-116.

<sup>270</sup> *War* 4.102-4; Josephus also uses the breaking of the Sabbath rest (concerning which, see) to undermine the character of Judaeans such as John of Gischala; cf. *War* 2.456; *Life* 276-80; Weiss 1998: 363-90. Concerning the significance of the Sabbath, see Exod. 20:8-11; *Ant.* 1.33; 3.91, 143; 14.241-6; 16.163; Tac. *Hist.* 5.4; Plut. *Mor.* 169C; cf. Feldman 1993: 158-67; Mason 2001: 88 n. 733.

<sup>271</sup> Williamson 1964: 199, notes, "John... somehow managed to reach Jerusalem in safety, an astonishing achievement for a man travelling a hundred miles on foot with only a few hours' start."

<sup>272</sup> *War* 4.116: ὁ δὲ Τίτος ἤχθετο μὲν ἐπὶ τῷ μὴ παραχρῆμα τιμωρήσασθαι τὸν Ἰωάννην τῆς ἀπάτης, ἱκανὸν δὲ ἀστοχῆσαντι τῷ θυμῷ παραμύθιον ἔχων τὸ πλῆθος τῶν αἰχμαλώτων καὶ τοὺς διεφθαρμένους...

the best strategy to withstand the Roman offensive.<sup>273</sup> Josephus reports that “Titus, out of simplicity, believed him” and welcomed negotiations with Castor and the other five Judaeans with him who professed their desire to surrender.<sup>274</sup> When a Roman archer struck Castor in the nose with an arrow, Titus sent Josephus to offer his hand to the Judaeen rebel. The naivety of Titus is, however, contrasted with the shrewdness of Josephus, who saw through the ruse and refused the mission. This proved to be wise, since the deserter who did obey Titus’ request, Aeneas, narrowly escaped death when Castor hurled a boulder at him. Josephus concludes the episode by pointing out, perhaps sardonically, that Titus learned a valuable lesson, namely that compassion in warfare could be a mischievous thing.<sup>275</sup>

Nevertheless, it was not a lesson well learned. Immediately after this incident, Josephus describes Titus’ restraint in entering the city after breaking through the second wall.<sup>276</sup> Titus apparently wished to give the Judaeans an opportunity to repent of their obstinacy, so he failed to widen the breach in the wall and, moreover, he spared those he caught and preserved the houses and possessions of the captives. Josephus claims that this act of compassion was the direct cause of loss to Titus’ own troops,<sup>277</sup> since the Judaeen rebels took the opening to prevent their compatriots from surrendering and also managed to dominate the Roman troops in the narrow streets of the city, beating them back through the breach in the wall and inflicting heavy casualties. Josephus further reports that the rebels considered this clemency of Titus a mark of

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<sup>273</sup> War 5.317-30: ἐν ᾧ τῶν Ἰουδαίων τις ἀνὴρ γόης ὄνομα Κάστωρ...

<sup>274</sup> War 5.319: πιστεύσας δ’ ἐξ ἀπλότητος ὁ Τίτος...

<sup>275</sup> War 5.329: συννοήσας δὲ Καῖσαρ τὴν ἀπάτην πρὸς βλάβης μὲν ἔγνω τὸν ἐν πολέμοις ἔλεον, τὸ γὰρ ἀπηνέστερον ἦττον ὑποπίπτειν τῷ πανούργῳ, τὰς δ’ ἐμβολὰς τῆς ἐλεπόλεως ὀργῇ τῆς χλευῆς ἐποιεῖτο δυνατωτέρας.

<sup>276</sup> War 5.331-41.

<sup>277</sup> War 5.332: εἰ μὲν οὖν ἡ τοῦ τείχους εὐθέως πλέον διέλυσεν ἢ πολέμου νόμῳ παρελθὼν ἐπόρθει τὸ ληφθὲν, οὐκ ἂν οἴμαί τις ἐμίγη βλάβη τῷ κράτει.



weakness, a sentiment that encapsulates neatly the rhetorical message that these episodes seem designed to convey.<sup>278</sup>

The most obvious example of Titus' clemency in the *War* is his decision to preserve the temple in Jerusalem as an ornament of the Roman empire, even after his observation that sparing the temple had been the cause of injury and death to his troops.<sup>279</sup> Josephus' lengthy narrative of the subsequent destruction of the temple not only continues the emphasis on Titus' clemency but also reveals a further weakness in Titus' generalship, his so-called "impotence", that is his inability to control his troops and his ultimate subjection to divine will.<sup>280</sup> Although he had determined in his war council the previous day to preserve the temple as an ornament of the Roman empire, he was helpless once one of his legionaries, moved by a certain supernatural impulse (δαμονίῳ ὀρμῇ τινι), flung a flaming brand into the inner parts of the sanctuary.<sup>281</sup> This helplessness is repeatedly emphasized by Josephus.

First of all, Titus is discovered resting in his tent while the temple begins to burn. Then, once he hurried to the blaze and sought to signal to his soldiers to extinguish the fire, they:

neither heard his shouts...nor heeded his beckoning hand...The impetuosity of the legionaries, when they joined the fray, neither exhortation nor threat could restrain, but for all of them, passion was their general... As they drew nearer to the sanctuary they pretended not even to hear Caesar's orders... But their respect for Caesar and their fear of the officer who was trying to check them were overpowered by their rage, and their hatred of the Judaeans, and their lust for even more furious battle... Thus, against Caesar's wishes, was the temple set on fire.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> *War* 5.335: τοῖς μαχίμοις δ' ἔδοκει τὸ φιλόανθρωπον ἀσθένεια, καὶ τὸν Τίτον ἀδυναμία τοῦ τὴν ἄλλην πόλιν ἐλεῖν ταῦτα προτείνειν ὑπελάμβανον.

<sup>279</sup> *War* 6.228: ὁ δὲ Τίτος ὡς ἑώρα τὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις ἱεροῖς φειδῶ πρὸς βλάβης τοῖς στρατιώταις γινομένην καὶ φόνου, τὰς πύλας προσέταξεν ὑφάπτειν.

<sup>280</sup> *War* 6.182; cf. Parente 2005: 45-69.

<sup>281</sup> The entire episode can be found at *War* 6.236-70.

<sup>282</sup> Excerpted from *War* 6.256-66: οὔτε δὲ βοῶντος ἤκουον μείζονι κραυγῇ τὰς ἀκοὰς προκατελιημμένοι καὶ τοῖς νεύμασι τῆς χειρὸς οὐ προσεῖχον...τῶν δὲ ταγμάτων εἰσθεόντων οὔτε παραίνεσις οὔτ' ἀπειλὴ κατεῖχεν τὰς ὀρμάς, ἀλλ' ὁ θυμὸς ἀπάντων ἐστρατήγει...πλησίον δὲ τοῦ ναοῦ γινόμενοι τῶν μὲν τοῦ Καίσαρος παραγγελημάτων προσεποιούντο μηδὲ κατακούειν...τῶν δὲ καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸν Καίσαρα αἰδῶ καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ καλύοντος φόβον ἐνίκων

The fact of the matter is that Titus' troops have been removed from his control and subjected instead to God's plans.<sup>283</sup> Josephus makes this clear at both the beginning and the end of the episode. He frames the burning of the temple with the claim that its destruction had long been determined by God. In fact, he claims that this all took place on the precise day that the temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians centuries before.<sup>284</sup> Just as Titus' troops are removed from his grasp—despite his later declaration to the besieged inhabitants of Jerusalem that, “My soldiers, thirsting for your blood, I invariably restrained”<sup>285</sup>—so also any credit for the destruction of Jerusalem is denied him.

Regardless of the historicity of Josephus' account of the destruction of the temple,<sup>286</sup> his decision to characterize Titus' involvement in this way is striking. The sack of Jerusalem was Titus' only claim to fame,<sup>287</sup> and, regardless of what had actually happened, the official Roman version was that the destruction of the temple was deliberate.<sup>288</sup> Through their triumph, the *Iudaea Capta* coin series, the imposition of the *fiscus Judaicus*,<sup>289</sup> and the construction of monuments, which included the Templum Pacis, the two Arches of Titus,<sup>290</sup> and the Flavian

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οἱ θυμοὶ καὶ τὸ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους μῖσος, καὶ πολεμικὴ τις ὀρμὴ λαβροτέρα... ὁ μὲν οὖν ναὸς οὕτως ἄκοντος Καίσαρος ἐμπίπτραται.

<sup>283</sup> This lack of control cannot only be explained by the fact that generally speaking commanders in the ancient world were unable to control their troops under these circumstances, since Josephus has made a deliberate choice to describe the events in this fashion; see Mason 2005b: 265-6; cf. Ziolkowski 1993: 79-87.

<sup>284</sup> *War* 6.250, 267-70; cf. *War* 3.391-8; 6.435-42; *Jer.* 52:12f.; see also the text note in Thackeray's Loeb translation at 6.250.

<sup>285</sup> *War* 6.345: ἀεὶ φονῶντας τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐφ' ὑμῖν κατέσχον.

<sup>286</sup> The historicity of the account has been endlessly debated. For a useful recent discussion of the debate, including extensive interaction with the existing scholarship, and a reasoned argument in favour of Josephus' account, see Leoni 2007: 39-51. Mason 2011: 221-39, uses this episode to demonstrate the methodological issues that characterize previous attempts to reconstruct what happened from the surviving sources.

<sup>287</sup> *Tac. Hist.* 5.1; *Cass. Dio* 66.7; *Aur. Vict. De Caes.* 11.11; *Oros.* 7.9; *Eutr.* 7.21; *Sulp. Sev. Chron.* 2.30; *Sil. Pun.* 3.605-606; *Val. Flacc. Arg.* 1.13-14; cf. *Syme* 1929: 135, “Time had not dimmed nor had Titus himself done anything to supersede with fresh laurels his sole claim to glory, the sack of Jerusalem.”

<sup>288</sup> See *Barnes* 2005: 142-3.

<sup>289</sup> Regarding the *fiscus Judaicus*, see pp. 259-69.

<sup>290</sup> A third arch, an *Arcus ad Isis*, which is represented on one of the Haterii reliefs as near the Colosseum but was likely near the temple of Isis, may have been erected by Vespasian (cf. *Cass. Dio* 66.7) shortly after the capture of Jerusalem in honour of the victory; see *A.C. Levi* 1952: 10, “That it was erected for Vespasian and Titus' victory

Amphitheatre, the Flavians sought to publicize and perpetuate their victory over the rebellious Judaeans.<sup>291</sup> This was their signal accomplishment and the key source of prestige.<sup>292</sup>

Among the messages that were being broadcast in the city of Rome and beyond was that of the inscription on the Arch of Titus constructed in the Circus Maximus and dedicated to Titus in early 81. Although the arch itself is no longer extant, apart from remains of its foundation,<sup>293</sup> the inscription was preserved in the *Codex Einsidlensis*, which records the itinerary of an otherwise unknown monk from the monastery of Einsiedeln in Switzerland, who visited the city of Rome in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century. According to this monk's transcription, the inscription on the arch proclaimed stridently:

The Senate and People of Rome to Imp(erator) Titus Caesar Vespasianus, son of the Deified Vespasianus, pontifex maximus, with tribunician powers for the tenth time, (hailed as) Imp(erator) for the seventeenth time, consul for the eighth time, their princeps, because on the instructions and advice of his father, and under his auspices, he subdued the race of the Jews and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, which by all generals, kings or races previous to himself had either been attacked in vain or not even attempted at all.<sup>294</sup>

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over the Jews is demonstrated by the fact that in the Haterii relief we see on the attic of the arch, on each side of the central quadriga, a palm-tree with prisoners tied at its foot"; cf. De Maria 1988: 292-94; Kleiner 1989: 197; 1990: 131-34; Richardson 1992: 26-7.

<sup>291</sup> See Hart 1952: 180-92 + Plates I-VI; Beard 2003: 543-58; 2007: 93-101, 151-3; Cody 2003: 103-24; Millar 2005: 101-128. Especially Titus' role in the suppression of the revolt was highlighted: both arches were dedicated to him (*CIL* 6.944=*ILS* 264; *CIL* 6.945=*ILS* 265); he put on the spectacular games inaugurating the Flavian Amphitheatre in AD 80, which were memorialized by Martial in his *De Spectaculis* (but see Coleman 2006: xxxv, xlv-lxiv, for doubts regarding this interpretation; cf. Buttrey 2007: 101-112; Coleman's doubts are responded to by Edmondson 2008: 465-70, who concludes that they are still "best interpreted as poetic responses to the 100 days of spectacle that marked the opening of the Flavian amphitheatre in A.D. 80" (70)); Titus also altered the dedicatory inscription to accommodate the 'T' that distinguishes his nomenclature from that of his father (*CIL* 6.40454a; cf. Alföldy 1995: 208-10, 212-3); and he figures significantly on the coinage; see *BMCRE* II.115-118; cf. Hart 1952: 174-86; Edwards 1992: 301-3.

<sup>292</sup> See Goodman 1987: 235.

<sup>293</sup> See Ciancio Rossetto 1993: 108-109.

<sup>294</sup> *CIL* 6.944=*ILS* 264: *Senatus populusque Romanus imp. Tito Caesari divi Vespasiani f. Vespasian[o] Augusto pontif. max. trib. pot. X imp. XVII [c]os. VIII p.p. principi suo quod praeceptis patr[is] consiliisq. Et auspiciis gentem Iudaeorum domuit et urbem Hierusolyam omnibus ante se ducibus regibus gentibus aut frustra petitam aut omnino intemptatam delevit*; cf. Instinsky 1948: 370-71; Pfanner 1983: 50f.; De Maria 1988: 119, 285-87 (no. 73); Kleiner 1990: 130; Overman 2002: 217-18; Millar 2005: 120-21. This 'Lost Arch of Titus' is being treated extensively in a dissertation project by my colleague Tommaso Leoni.

The blatant falseness of the claim that Titus was the first to successfully capture the city has long been noticed.<sup>295</sup> Those reading Josephus' account would surely have recognized this as well, but were content to quietly accept the official story.<sup>296</sup> Even more significant for our purposes, however, is the fact that Josephus openly contradicted this version in his *War*. Immediately following his account of the successful end to the siege, Josephus concludes, "Thus was Jerusalem taken in the second year of the reign of Vespasian on the eighth of the month Gorpiaeus. *Captured on five previous occasions, it was now for the second time devastated.*"<sup>297</sup> He then goes on to mention Asochaeus (=Shishak), Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Pompey, and G. Sosius, all of whom had managed to take the city, and Nebuchadnezzar, who had destroyed the city in 587 BC.<sup>298</sup> Josephus had earlier described in greater detail some of these occasions, as well as those on which the Parthians, Herod, and Quintilius Varus had captured Jerusalem.<sup>299</sup>

Josephus, therefore, not only downplays the significance of Titus' success in achieving victory over the Judaeans and in capturing the city of Jerusalem, but also removes the ultimate credit for this success from the Flavian general by attributing the overall direction of events to God.<sup>300</sup> Thus, in his speech to his fellow Sicarii before their mass suicide at Masada, Josephus has Eleazar ben Yair encourage his audience, "Do not attach blame to yourselves, nor the credit to the Romans, that this war with them has been the ruin of us all; for it was not their might that

<sup>295</sup> An unconvincing argument for the historical reliability of its claim is made by Instinsky 1948: 370-71.

<sup>296</sup> See Newton 1901: 10, "Even if the Romans were not acquainted with the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and by Antiochus Epiphanes—an improbable supposition—they could not have been ignorant of its capture by their own Pompey in 63 B.C." In addition, the earlier capture of Jerusalem by Sosius had been advertised by a coin-type that served as precursor to the Flavian *Iudaea Capta* series; see Hart 1952: 180, Plate I, 6; Edwards 1992: 296-7. It is, however, unlikely that these were still in circulation—as Hart points out, "coins soon disappear from circulation"—and the issue and circulation were likely very localized. Barag 1978: 14-23, argues on this latter basis that the coinage of Sosius is an unlikely prototype for the Flavian coinage type. Nevertheless, Sosius had celebrated a triumph in Rome in 34 BC (Degrassi 1947: 86-7; *CIL* I.2 (1893), 50 and 70) and elements of the prior history between the Judaeans and the Romans had been recounted by Roman historians; see e.g. Tac. *Hist.* 5.1-13, esp. 9.

<sup>297</sup> *War* 6.435: Ἐάλω μὲν οὕτως Ἱεροσόλυμα ἔτει δευτέρῳ τῆς Οὐεσπασιανοῦ ἡγεμονίας Γορπιαίου μηνὸς ὀγδόῃ, ἀλοῦσα δὲ καὶ πρότερον πεντάκις τοῦτο δεύτερον ἡρημώθη.

<sup>298</sup> *War* 6.436-42; cf. *War* 1.32; 138-52; 342-56.

<sup>299</sup> *War* 1.265-70; 342-56; 2.66-79; cf. McLaren 2005a: 288-91.

<sup>300</sup> See Edwards 1991: 189-91; 1992: 307-9; Mason 2005a: 100.

brought these things to pass, but the intervention of some more powerful cause has afforded them the semblance of victory.”<sup>301</sup> Earlier, Josephus presented even Titus himself as acknowledging the supremacy of the Judaean God when he viewed in amazement the magnitude of the towers that had been abandoned by the Judaean defenders, exclaiming, “God indeed has been with us in the war. God it was who brought down the Jews from these strongholds; for what power have human hands or engines against these towers?”<sup>302</sup> By placing the ultimate responsibility with the Judaean God, then, Josephus also contradicts the message that had been proclaimed by the procession of the cultic vessels through the streets during the triumph and prominently displayed on one of the panels of the Arch of Titus on the Sacra Via, namely that the God of the Judeans had been captured and subjugated to Capitoline Jupiter.<sup>303</sup>

Far from demonstrating that Josephus’ sympathies lay with the Romans, the claim that God had directed the results of the war and that he now “rested over Italy”<sup>304</sup> subverted the Flavian message that it was their own might, blessed with the favour of the Roman gods,<sup>305</sup> that had restored peace to the empire. Despite the fact that God had been on the Roman side during revolt, they were simply an instrument in his hands. The Judeans remained the chosen people. That the Romans had the ascendancy was but temporary. Although Josephus was hesitant to claim it openly—it was scarcely a message to be trumpeted over the rooftops—he seems to have anticipated the inevitable decline and fall of the Roman empire, even if it could not be expected

<sup>301</sup> *War* 7.360: μή γὰρ αὐτοῖς ὑμῖν ἀνάπτετε τὰς αἰτίας μηδὲ χαρίζεσθε τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις, ὅτι πάντας ἡμᾶς ὁ πρὸς αὐτοὺς πόλεμος διέφθειρεν· οὐ γὰρ ἐκείνων ἰσχύι ταῦτα συμβέβηκεν, ἀλλὰ κρείττων αἰτία γενομένη τὸ δοκεῖν ἐκείνοις νικᾶν παρέσχηκε.

<sup>302</sup> *War* 6.411: “σὺν θεῷ γε ἐπολεμήσαμεν, ἔφη, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ τῶνδε τῶν ἐρυμάτων Ἰουδαίους καθελῶν, ἐπεὶ χεῖρες ἀνθρώπων ἢ μηχαναὶ τί πρὸς τοὺτους τοὺς πύργους δύνανται.”

<sup>303</sup> *War* 7.148-51; cf. Yarden 1991: 21-32; Magness 2008: 201-17.

<sup>304</sup> See *War* 5.367: μεταβῆναι γὰρ πρὸς αὐτοὺς πάντοθεν τὴν τύχην, καὶ κατὰ ἔθνος τὸν θεὸν ἐμπεριάγοντα τὴν ἀρχὴν νῦν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰταλίας εἶναι.

<sup>305</sup> See Suet. *Vesp.* 5.6; Cass. Dio 65.1.3; Sil. *Pun.* 3.570-629; cf. Goodman 1987: 237; Levick 1999: 67; Ando 2000: 283-4. The Flavian coinage also emphasized the gifting of peace by the gods (see e.g. *RIC* 50 no. 296, 303; 52 no. 516; 53 no. 323, 326, 327; 54 no. 338; 55 no. 343; 57 no. 356), and the *Templum Pacis* made it very clear that the Roman gods were to be thanked; cf. Noreña 2003: 25-43.

in his own lifetime, and alluded to it cautiously.<sup>306</sup> What is more, he seems to have shared with Daniel an eschatological hope for the ultimate establishment of the kingdom of stone, which was to shatter the final worldly kingdom, Rome,<sup>307</sup> although he lacked the same apocalyptic urgency that he suggests drove many of his compatriots to rebel against the Roman empire.

These characteristics of Josephus' narrative outlook force us to reconsider Josephus' relationship with the Flavians, and Titus in particular. The negative undercurrents that can be perceived in his portrait of Titus and the narrative themes that contradict the prevailing Flavian propaganda do not suggest his active involvement in "the development of Flavian policy", or his position as "an important source for Flavian and immediate post-Flavian writers who were actively developing the images and narrative around the Revolt which proved so important to the Flavian line".<sup>308</sup> While his apparent flattery of his imperial patrons can be explained simply by his keen interest in self-preservation, the cracks that appear in these images cannot be rationalized if he served as Flavian propagandist, even supposing this were an appropriate concept, unless we are to return to the view that he was an incompetent or careless author. Instead I am led to the same supposition in my analysis of these narrative themes that I observed in my examination of the precise details of Josephus' relationship with Titus, namely that the ties were not as close as has been assumed in traditional Josephan scholarship and that Josephus cannot be seen as a Flavian lackey,<sup>309</sup> an assumption that continues to appear from time to

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<sup>306</sup> See especially *Ant.* 10.207-10, 276; cf. *Ant.* 4.114-17, 125; Bilde 1988: 187-8; Gray 1993: 39; Mason 1994: 93-4, 172-3; Spilsbury 2002: 306-27; 2003: 1-24; Mason 2003c: 71-2, 121.

<sup>307</sup> See *Dan.* 2:31-45. Josephus is reticent to make an explicit connection between the final kingdom of iron and Rome, but the implication is clear and scholars have long suggested that this is the most reasonable interpretation; see Flusser 1972: 158-9; Blenkinsopp 1974: 245; Delling 1974: 117-8; Braverman 1978: 109-11; Gray 1993: 40; Feldman 1998a: 649.

<sup>308</sup> Overman 2002: 216.

<sup>309</sup> See McLaren 2005a: 292, "This option [i.e. that Josephus was deliberately cultivating a negative image of Titus] requires a radical shift in the existing framework for how we understand the relationship between Josephus and Titus, and more generally, regarding his attitude toward Roman rule."

time.<sup>310</sup> While Josephus certainly had opportunities to provide services to Titus, these seem to have been restricted by and large to the tenure of the revolt. Upon his arrival in Rome, Josephus pursued his own interests, and those of his people, seeking to remedy the negative atmosphere that had appeared in the aftermath of the revolt. While Vespasian and Titus were still alive, he sought to maintain the lines of communication, but the extent of his contact with them demonstrates clearly the limits of these relationships.

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<sup>310</sup> See e.g. Southern 1997: 20-22, 24, 133; Griffin 2000a: 4, 15, 17; Beard 2003: 543-58; Carter 2003: 50-52; Overman 2001: 213-21.

## CHAPTER 5

### JOSEPHUS AND DOMITIAN

One of the longest standing conceptions of the circumstances of Josephus' life in the city of Rome has been that the advent of Domitian to the imperial throne marked a watershed in the life of the Judaeen historian. A lynchpin of this hypothesis was the characterization of Josephus as the favoured propagandist of the Flavian regime during the reigns of Vespasian and Titus, which was revealed in the official presentation of the *War* and by the supposed *salarium* he had received. Since Domitian, however, failed to present Josephus with any monetary encouragement for his writing activities, and Josephus' new literary project, the *Antiquities*, did not remotely meet the demands of imperial propaganda, it has been suggested that with the accession of Domitian, Josephus lost imperial favour. Moreover, the traditional understanding of Domitian as the 'enemy of literature' prevented any thoughts of a possible relationship between Josephus and the last of the Flavians. In conjunction with this supposed alteration in Josephus' social circumstances, it was proposed that his outlook and aims changed, or perhaps that his true feelings, suppressed in the interests of the Flavians while writing the *War*, were finally revealed in the *Antiquities*, *Life*, and the *Apion*. Removed from the security of the imperial court, Josephus was freed also from the constraints of writing under the emperors and so became more religious and nationalistic.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The most vocal and extreme proponent of this view was Laqueur 1920: 259, "bei dem ganzen Gegensatz des Domitian gegen die Tätigkeit seines Vaters und Bruders verstand es sich schließlich von selbst, daß Josephus am kaiserlichen Hofe die Stütze verlor (vgl. S. 31 ff.): er war als officiosus abgetan"; cf. 30-31, 260, 266. See also Cohen 2002[1979]: 236, "During the reign of Domitian, many of Josephus' opinions and attitudes began to change. Why this happened is not entirely clear. Josephus was becoming more 'nationalistic', more conscious of religious considerations, less concerned about flattering Rome"; cf. 86, 237-41. The view that Josephus' outlook changed, became more nationalistic, can also be seen in Smith 1956: 74-81, who argues for Josephus' advocacy of the Pharisees to the Roman government; cf. variations on these views can be found in Luther 1910: 81-2; Rasp 1924:



We have seen, however, over the previous two chapters that the characterization of Josephus as a Flavian lackey has been completely misplaced. As a result, the assumption that the relationship between Josephus and Domitian was somehow different, less intimate, also needs to be re-evaluated on the basis of a close examination of the evidence.<sup>2</sup> It is striking, given the popularity of the traditional view, that the overall impression one receives from Josephus' characterization of his relationships with the emperors in *Life* 422-30 is one of continuity rather than change.<sup>3</sup> He says as much in his summary of the circumstances of his time in the city of Rome: "the things given by the imperators remained much the same."<sup>4</sup> In fact, Josephus even claims immediately below that Domitian "further *increased* the honours towards him".<sup>5</sup> Laqueur has pointed to the similarity between Josephus' characterization of his relationship to the Flavians in the *Life* (AD 93/4) and that of Tacitus in his *Histories*, which was published some

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27-47; Shutt 1961: 119-21; Neusner 1972: 224-54; Migliario 1981: 92-137; Attridge 1984: 226-7, who provides cautious support; Sterling 1992: 238-40, 308-10. For a discussion of the development of these views, see Mason 1991: 25-35, 190-95. Although Thackeray did not subscribe as strictly to the proposal of Laqueur and these other scholars that Josephus experienced major developments in his outlook, he did maintain that the accession of Domitian brought a clear change; see Thackeray 1929: 16, "The death of Titus in 79 marks a change for the worse in his external surroundings and a new departure in his literary activity. Deprived of his honoured patron, he shakes off the Roman fetters and becomes the historian and apologist of his nation" [*sic*]; cf. 22, 51-2. Echoes of this view can still be heard; see e.g. the almost verbatim reiteration of Thackeray's view in Sorek 2008: 19, "On the death of his patron, the emperor Titus, in AD 79 he finally shook off his Roman fetters and became the historian and apologist of his people" [*sic*]. More recently, D.R. Schwartz has also suggested a change in Josephus from the period in which he was writing the *War* to the time when he was writing the *Antiquities*, which he links to "his transformation from a Judean into a Jew of the Diaspora"; see D.R. Schwartz 2011b: 291-309 (quotation at 303); cf. D.R. Schwartz 2007c: 137-46.

<sup>2</sup> See also Waters 1964: 50, "There is no evidence that [Josephus] ever became particularly intimate with Domitian, and he owed his life and his good fortune to the clemency, not of Domitian but of Vespasian, who perceived his usefulness as a future tool. Hence we should not expect any violent prejudice in favour of Domitian, as compared with the other members of the family, though it is true that he continued to receive good treatment from both the Emperor and his wife."

<sup>3</sup> See Bilde 1988: 174-9; S. Schwartz 1990: 16-8; Sterling 1992: 234, "Circumstances under Domitian are not as certain, although Josephus' picture remains the same"; Mason 2001: 171 n. 1770, "It is remarkable that Laqueur (1920:258) could extract from § 429 the accusations against Josephus and attribute these to a new boldness on the part of Josephus' enemies because he had lost imperial favour, without noticing the clear implication of this passage that Josephus continued to enjoy Domitian's support"; Rajak 2002[1983]: 223-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Life* 428: διέμεινεν δὲ ὁμοία καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων.

<sup>5</sup> *Life* 429: διαδεξάμενος δὲ Τίτον Δομετιανὸς καὶ προσηύξησεν τὰς εἰς ἐμὲ τιμὰς.

years later in AD 104.<sup>6</sup> Tacitus opens by acknowledging, “I cannot deny that my political career owed its beginning to Vespasian; that Titus advanced it; and that Domitian carried it further.”<sup>7</sup>

Yet Laqueur failed to note the significance of this parallel, namely that both historians claimed to have experienced an increase in favour under the ‘enemy of literature’. It is important, therefore, to dismiss the assumptions made in much of previous scholarship and approach the question of the nature of Josephus’ relationship to Domitian anew.

Over the following chapter I will, therefore, explore the possibilities regarding Josephus’ place in Domitianic Rome vis-à-vis the emperor himself. An important starting point will be to consider the possible opportunities for contact between the two, both prior to Domitian’s accession and during his rule, a question that is not nearly as straightforward as was the case with Vespasian and Titus. I will then examine the explicit evidence provided by Josephus in his *Life* regarding the benefactions that he received from the last Flavian emperor in order to assess the level of honour that he was accorded. I will consider his position, therefore, as an imperial client, and as a client not only of Domitian but also of his wife, Domitia Longina, since Josephus claims to have received benefits from her as well.

It was, moreover, in Domitianic Rome that Josephus completed the bulk of his writings, the *Antiquities-Life* and possibly also the *Apion*. I will thus also need to consider his position as Judaean historian, taking into account especially the context and atmosphere towards literature in

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<sup>6</sup> Laqueur 1920: 34. His assumption that Josephus is making an allusion to the work of the Latin historian is based on his dating of a second edition of the *Life* to after the year 100, which originates with the tenth century patriarch Photius’ (*Bibl.* 33.32) claim that Agrippa II died in AD 100 and the assumption that Agrippa II was dead at the time of the writing of the *Life*; cf. Baerwald 1877: 18-19; Schürer 1901: I 88 n. 20, 599; Luther 1910: 55; *contra* Niese 1896: 226-7. Although Laqueur’s reconstruction was not always accepted wholesale, elements of his arguments can be found in Motzo 1924: 214-26; Thackeray 1929: 16-18; Gelzer 1952: 67. This dating and the proposal of a second edition has since been rejected by most scholars, partly on the basis of the fact that Josephus does not mention subsequent emperors and does mention Domitian in glowing terms; see Petersen 1958: 262-3; Frankfort 1961: 52-8; Rajak 1973: 358-63; Barish 1978: 61-75; Migliario 1981: 98-101; Bilde 1988: 104-6; Weaver 1994: 474; Mason 1998a: 31-45; 2001: xv-xix; Cohen 2002[1979]: 170-80; Rajak 2002[1983]: 237-8. For Josephus’ explicit dating of the work to the year 93/4, see *Ant.* 2.267; cf. *Life* 430.

<sup>7</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 1.1: *dignitatem nostram a Vespasiano inchoatam, a Tito auctam, a Domitiano longius provectam non abnuerim.*

which he was writing.<sup>8</sup> Building on our understanding of the position of Josephus as historian in Domitianic Rome, I will turn my attention to the impact of his ethnic background on the circumstances of his life and his freedom to write. Again, Domitian has often been understood also as the enemy of the Judaeans, and the period of his rule has been portrayed as a ‘period of horror’ for the Judaeans not only in Rome but also throughout the empire.<sup>9</sup> It will be important, therefore, to examine the possible impact of this negative atmosphere, to the extent that it existed, on Josephus’ relationship with the imperial court. This examination of the explicit evidence for contact between Josephus and Domitian and the possible parameters for this contact based on the prevailing attitudes of the regime will make it possible to form hypotheses regarding the nature of Josephus’ relationship with the last Flavian and to complete our reconstruction of his relationship with the dynasty as a whole.

### **Josephus as Imperial Client**

Unlike Vespasian and Titus, Domitian played no role in the suppression of the Judaeans revolt, although he was involved in the bloody clashes that occurred in the city of Rome in December of AD 69, which resulted in the destruction of the Capitol and led to his acclamation as Caesar by the Flavian troops.<sup>10</sup> At the time, his first real entry into the public record, he was only 18, some 12 years younger than his brother Titus, and so had neither the standing nor the

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<sup>8</sup> Domitian was traditionally seen as the ‘enemy of literature’; see Thackeray 1929: 51, “The *War* was written with all the advantages of imperial patronage and support: the *Archaeology* was compiled under the last of the Flavians, a man of very different character from his father and brother—the emperor Domitian, the enemy of literature”; cf. Thackeray 1926: xi. More recent scholarship has, however, provided considerably more nuance to our understanding of Domitian’s attitude towards literature; see e.g. Coleman 1986: 3088, “The contradiction between encouragement and restriction underlies the history of Domitian’s attitude to writing and writers.”

<sup>9</sup> See Vogelstein 1940: 88, “the Jews of the entire Empire were threatened, during this reign, with serious danger”; cf. Case 1925: 10-20.

<sup>10</sup> See Tac. *Hist.* 3.59-86; Suet. *Dom.* 1.2; Cass. Dio 65.17.2-5; *War* 4.645-9; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 14-5.

experience to assist his father in the field.<sup>11</sup> His absence from the Judaeen campaign is significant for our investigation, since it was this time period, I have argued, that was crucial for the establishment of a relationship between Josephus and the two older Flavians and is equally important for our understanding of the extent of these relationships.<sup>12</sup> As far as Josephus and Domitian are concerned, however, we must look for the beginnings of their relationship elsewhere.

Although we have no precise evidence of direct contact between the Judaeen ex-prisoner-of-war and the Flavian prince, it will be useful to survey the opportunities, the first of which occurred immediately upon Josephus' arrival in the city of Rome in the spring of 71. Although we should not place too much weight on Josephus' claim to have been welcomed as the sailing companion (σύμπλουον) of Titus,<sup>13</sup> we should not rule out the possibility that he was in the company of Titus when the latter was received in Rome by crowds of citizens as well as the emperor and Domitian himself. Josephus describes the scene in glowing terms,

After a voyage as favourable as he could have desired, Rome gave [Titus] such a reception and welcome as it had given to his father; but with the added lustre that Titus was met and received by his father himself. The crowd of citizens was thus afforded an ecstasy of joy by the sight of all three together.<sup>14</sup>

It is also possible that Josephus was invited to participate in the celebrations surrounding the triumph that followed quickly thereafter, what Beard has called “the Flavian *coronation*, the official launch party and press night of the Flavian dynasty”,<sup>15</sup> however painful the experience

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<sup>11</sup> He was born in Rome on 24 October AD 51 in the eleventh year of Claudius' reign (Suet. *Dom.* 1.1: on the ninth day before the Kalends of November of the year when his father was consul elect and was about to enter on the office in the following month; *Domitianus natus est VIII. Kal. Novemb. patre consule designato inituroque mense insequentis honorem*); cf. B. Jones 1992b: 1-3; Southern 1997: 1-12.

<sup>12</sup> See above pp. 78-9, 156-7.

<sup>13</sup> *Life* 422; see above pp. 200-201.

<sup>14</sup> *War* 7.119-20: τοῦ πλοῦ δὲ αὐτῶ κατὰ νοῦν ἀνυσθέντος ὁμοίως μὲν ἢ Ῥώμη περι τὴν ὑποδοχὴν εἶχε καὶ τὰς ὑπαντήσεις ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ πατρὸς, λαμπρότερον δ' ἦν Τίτῳ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ πατὴρ ὑπαντῶν καὶ δεχόμενος. τῶ δὲ πλήθει τῶν πολιτῶν δαιμόνιον τινα τὴν χαρὰν παρεῖχε τὸ βλέπειν αὐτοὺς ἤδη τοὺς τρεῖς ἐν ταῦτῳ γεγονότας.

<sup>15</sup> Beard 2003: 548.

may have been.<sup>16</sup> He was almost certainly present at the triumph itself, given the vividness of his description of the event and the fact that he himself claims that “not a soul among that countless host in the city was left at home: all issued forth and occupied every position where it was but possible to stand, leaving only room for the necessary passage of those upon whom they were to gaze.”<sup>17</sup> The imperial triumph in general was an event which Pliny claims even the sick would drag themselves out to see.<sup>18</sup> His deliberate failure to report in the *War* his presence or that of the large local community of his compatriots may mask the sorrow that he and they were unable safely to express at the occasion of this crucial event for the Flavian dynasty, or may simply reflect his general absence from the narrative in the latter books of the *War*.<sup>19</sup> In any case, his almost certain attendance,<sup>20</sup> whether that was at a ring-side seat or among the crowds,<sup>21</sup> put him in proximity to the youngest Flavian for perhaps the second time. For Domitian accompanied his father and brother in the triumph, riding alongside their chariot on a white horse, as he appears

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<sup>16</sup> Some scholars have observed the disturbing lack of emotion displayed by Josephus and by the literary audience; see Rajak 2002[1983]: 218-22; Chapman 2005a: 310-11. Apart from his winning of the Flavians’ favour, he himself would most likely have been on display as one of the generals on the floats (*War* 7.147), a fact which could surely not have escaped his attention.

<sup>17</sup> *War* 7.122: οὐδεις οἴκοι καταλέλειπτο τῆς ἀμέτρου πληθύος ἐν τῇ πόλει, πάντες δὲ ὄπη καὶ στῆναι μόνον ἦν οἶον προεληλυθότες τοὺς τόπους κατελήφεσαν, ὅσον τοῖς ὀφθησομένοις μόνον εἰς πάροδον ἀναγκαίαν καταλιπόντες. The triumphal route may have used existing structures such as the *fora* (Holitorium, Boarium, and Romanum), theatres (Theatre of Marcellus?), and circuses (Maximus and Flaminius) to maximize the numbers of spectators, while also erecting scaffolding in other places to accommodate more viewers; see also Plut. *Aem.* 32; *Luc.* 37; Suet. *Ner.* 25; cf. Makin 1921: 25-36; Künzl 1988: 14-44; Favro 1994: 152-60; Brilliant 1999: 221-5; Millar 2005: 103-7.

<sup>18</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 22.2.3: *te parvuli noscere, ostentare juvenes, mirari sense; aegri quoque, neglecto medentium imperio ad conspectum tui, quasi ad salutem sanitatemque prorrepere.*

<sup>19</sup> I have explored the possible impact of the Flavian triumph on the Judaeans in Rome at greater length in my Master’s thesis, “The Judaeans’ Revolt and the Jews at Rome” (2006), emphasizing in particular the procession of the sacred treasures from the Temple; *War* 7.148-52; cf. Yarden 1991: 21-32. Compare the reactions of the audience at Caesar’s triumph in 46 BC, who groaned at the depictions of the deaths of Lucius Scipio, Marcus Petreius, and Cato Minor during the civil war; App. *B. Civ.* 2.101. The suggestion of Cappalletti 2006: 91, that “According to Flavius Josephus, the community was apparently indifferent” is an unlikely interpretation of Josephus’ silence given the Roman Judaeans’ general concern for their compatriots also in Judaea.

<sup>20</sup> But see Eberhardt 2005: 259, “Offen bleibt allerdings die Frage, ob Josephus tatsächlich Augenzeuge des Triumphzuges war, und wenn ja, an welchem Ort er das Schauspiel erlebte”. His presence at the triumph is rejected by Weber 1921: 283-4; Michel and Bauernfeind 1969: 242.

<sup>21</sup> Beard 2003: 551, supposes that Josephus would have had a privileged vantage point: “but for the grace of Titus, Josephus himself would have been on display, re-enacting his own capture; not writing the show up from a (no doubt) ring-side seat.” Her supposition rests, however, on her characterization of Josephus as a Flavian propagandist; see Beard 2003: 543-8.

also on the surviving Arch of Titus on the Via Sacra.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, we can make little of his presence at this event.

Furthermore, Domitian's habits already prior to his accession may have inhibited the development of any sort of relationship, let alone the opportunity for any contact. The sources, which are uniformly hostile, report that he had a preference for his own company, which manifested itself in his habit of taking solitary walks after meals. What is more, he allegedly spent much time at his Alban villa, formerly Pompey's,<sup>23</sup> located some 20 kilometres from Rome, where he occupied his time hunting, reading literature, impaling flies, sulking, and feigning madness.<sup>24</sup> Although we should treat the hostile tone of the narratives carefully,<sup>25</sup> it is significant that the sources report consistently on Domitian's fondness of solitude. Furthermore, we have sound evidence that Domitian also used the Alban villa for meetings of his *consilium principis* even as emperor,<sup>26</sup> and that the special Alban games in honour of Minerva were held here as well.<sup>27</sup> In addition, other imperial estates throughout Italy served equally well as retreats

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<sup>22</sup> *War* 7.152; Suet. *Dom.* 2.1; Cass. Dio 66.12.1. This was usual procedure for a young prince; see also Suet. *Tib.* 6.4, which reports that Tiberius, at age 13, rode on the left trace-horse of Augustus' chariot during his triumph in honour of his victory at Actium; cf. Southern 1997: 24, "Josephus describes the scene rapturously, but his rhetoric should not obliterate the fact that this was normal procedure for a young prince."

<sup>23</sup> Regarding the Alban villa, which appears frequently in contemporary literature, see Tac. *Agr.* 45; Juv. 4.145; Suet. *Dom.* 19; Cass. Dio 67.1.1; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 96-8; Darwall-Smith 1994: 146-65.

<sup>24</sup> See Cass. Dio 66.9.3-5; Suet. *Dom.* 3.1; 12.3; 19; 21; Tac. *Hist.* 4.86.

<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the characterization of Domitian in modern scholarship has undergone a remarkable rehabilitation; see especially Pleket 1961: 296-315; Waters 1963: 198-218; 1964: 49-77, especially 49, "His character however is still allowed to be painted in terms of the malevolent attacks of hostile witnesses"; B. Jones 1979: 1-21; Syme 1983: 121-46; B. Jones 1992b: *passim*, especially vii, "the traditional portrait of Domitian as a bloodthirsty tyrant has not completely disappeared and still needs emendation"; and 196, "assessing Domitian's character and that of his reign is bedevilled by two separate factors, the bias of the literary sources and the judgmental standards adopted by the aristocracy... These factors have been responsible for much, but not all, of the hostility directed at Domitian"; Strobel 1994: 359-95; Vismara 1994: 413-20; Penwill 2003: 358-67. It is important, however, to keep in mind the correctives to this approach that have been presented by other recent scholarship; see Saller 1990: 4-18; Wiseman 1996: 19-24; Levick 2000: 200-201; Wilson 2003: 523-42, especially 542, "Historians who seek to exculpate Domitian by rejecting the consistent and coherent story told by these witnesses [i.e. Tacitus, Pliny, Juvenal, Suetonius] seem to be applying rules of evidence to which no judicial system would ever consent."

<sup>26</sup> *CIL* 9.5420=*FIRA* 1.75 is a letter of Domitian to the Falerienses drafted in *Albano*; cf. Juv. 4.145-7; Crook 1955: 49.

<sup>27</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 4.4; Cass. Dio 67.1.2; Juv. 4.99; Mart. *Ep.* 5.1.1; Stat. *Silv.* 3.5.28; 5.3.227-9.

for the allegedly reclusive emperor. Martial's poem, which he had to send to Domitian rather than deliver in person, visits the various possible locations in dramatic fashion:

This I send you, Caesar, whether you tarry on Alba's hills viewing Trivia on the one hand and Thetis on the other, or whether the truth-telling sisters learn your responses, where on the town's edge sleeps the level surface of the sea, or whether Aeneas' nurse please you, or the daughter of the Sun, or gleaming Anxur with her health-giving waters, o blest protector and saviour of the world, whose safety assures us of Jove's gratitude.<sup>28</sup>

Along with the emperor moved the imperial court. Luxurious villas with their own cisterns, fountains, fish ponds, and bath houses were built around the imperial estates at Alba, Circei, and Orbetello in order to accommodate the courtiers and members of the *consilium*.<sup>29</sup> Thus also the imperial business could be conducted away from Rome. In fact, the well-known *Lex Irnitana* was contracted at Domitian's villa near Circei.<sup>30</sup> So, although this was not yet the peripatetic court of the late Empire, the regular absence of Domitian from Rome underlines the increasing mobility of the imperial court.<sup>31</sup> Of course, the negative consequence was that the ordinary citizens of Rome, or those who travelled from far and wide to petition the emperor in the capital city could be neglected. In his panegyric to Trajan, Pliny explicitly contrasts the accessibility of that emperor to his subjects, who dined and worked in public, to Domitian, who avoided his subjects and spent his time behind locked doors, a comparison that, although almost

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<sup>28</sup> Mart. *Ep.* 5.1: *hoc tibi, Palladiae seu collibus uteris Albae, Caesar, et hinc Triviam prospicis, inde Thetin, seu tua veridicae discunt response sorores, plana suburbani qua cubat unda freti, seu placet Aeneae nutrix seu filia Solis sive salutiferis candidus Anxur aquis, mittimus, o rerum felix tutela salusque, sospite quo gratum credimus esse Iovem*; trans. Shackleton Bailey 1993: 1.353. The villas mentioned were at Tusculum, Antium, Gaeta, and Anxur. There was also one at Baiae; see Mart. *Ep.* 4.30; Plin. *Pan.* 82.1; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 97.

<sup>29</sup> Blake 1959: 134-41; Jones 1992b: 96-8; Darwall-Smith 1994: 145-65; cf. Marzano 2007: 171-3, regarding the important connection between the location of imperial residences and the concentration of villas around them.

<sup>30</sup> *Lex Irnitana* LXXXXVII.39-40; cf. González and Crawford 1986: 181, 199.

<sup>31</sup> See Millar 1992[1977]: 28-57; Wallace-Hadrill 1996: 285-88; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 150, "The imperial court was sometimes established in Rome, sometimes at the *arx Albana*, sometimes at Circeo and sometimes far further afield"; 198, "his was a mobile court and the word *rex* could quite reasonably have been applied to him"; regarding Domitian's court, see Jones 1994: 329-35; Winterling 1999: 70-74.

certainly exaggerated, must reflect an element of reality to be effective as praise.<sup>32</sup> Significant among these spurned subjects were the senators, since the evidence seems to indicate his habitual absence even from meetings of the senate, which would have had a serious impact on their relationship.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to voluntarily absenting himself from the city of Rome to spend time at his estates, Domitian was also frequently away from the capital on campaign, taking with him his imperial court, the first emperor since Tiberius to spend extended periods of time away from Rome. He personally conducted campaigns against the Chatti in Germany in AD 82/3 and against the Dacians on the Danube frontier in 85 and again in 86, and was personally involved with his Praetorian Guard in the suppression of the revolt of Saturninus on the Rhine in the year 89, after which he returned to the restive situation in Pannonia on the Danube frontier. A second outbreak in early 92 led Domitian on yet another expedition to the Danube to deal with the insurgent Sarmatians and Suebians, returning eight months later.<sup>34</sup> His personal involvement in the military zone on these occasions, often for months at a time, had as corollary of course his absence from Rome.

Nonetheless, it was not impossible for the citizens of the empire to reach their emperor even when he was absent from Rome. On his well known embassy to Gaius, Philo and his fellow Alexandrians remained in attendance on the emperor while he travelled from Rome to Puteoli on the Bay of Naples, where he leisurely passed from one luxurious villa to the next, enjoying the sea air and studiously ignoring the persistent petitioners.<sup>35</sup> Even Domitian received crowds at the

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<sup>32</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 49.2ff.: *quanto nunc tutior, quanto securior eadem domus, postquam non crudelitatis, sed amoris excubiis, non solitudine et claustris, sed civium celebritate defenditur...*; cf. Jones 1994: 335; Paterson 2007: 149.

<sup>33</sup> B. Jones 1992b: 22-3, 28; cf. 1979: 83-7.

<sup>34</sup> For Domitian's itinerary, see Halfmann 1986: 181-4; detailed accounts of the wars in which Domitian was involved can also be found in B. Jones 1992b: 126-59; Southern 1997: 79-109. Jones 1994: 332, suggests the possibility that Domitian spent the best part of three years, or twenty percent of his reign, outside of Rome and Italy.

<sup>35</sup> Philo *Leg.* 185.



doors of his Alban villa seeking admission, according to Juvenal's satire, not all of whom were senatorial members of his *consilium*.<sup>36</sup> This villa was within easy walking distance from Rome, located at the fourteenth milestone of the Via Appia,<sup>37</sup> and Josephus could certainly have made the trek when necessary, as perhaps when facing the accusation from his child's *paidagogos*.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the emperor was potentially available even while on an extended journey, and crowds could be expected to arrive from far and wide to join the imperial train.<sup>39</sup> We should certainly not discount, therefore, the possibility that Josephus left the city of Rome periodically to pay court to Domitian.<sup>40</sup>

Yet the logistical difficulties would surely have inhibited the development of any sort of relationship with Domitian, despite the fact that his period of rule was considerably longer than that of his brother Titus. We may be justified, therefore, in supposing that the *beneficia* granted to Josephus by Domitian, which I shall examine in greater detail shortly, were predicated on Josephus' previous relationships with Vespasian and Titus. This might seem unlikely on the basis of Cassius Dio's claim that, "Domitian quite outdid himself in visiting disgrace and ruin on the friends of his father and brother...for he regarded as his enemy anyone who had enjoyed his father's or his brother's affection beyond the ordinary or had been particularly influential."<sup>41</sup> Jones has suggested that this statement of Dio should be applied only to Titus' *domestici*, the imperial freedmen, who were dismissed in favour of Domitian's own household staff.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Juvenal *Sat.* 4.62-4: *obstitit intranti miratrix turba parumper. ut cessit, facili patuerunt cardine valvae; exclusi spectant admissa obsonia patres.*

<sup>37</sup> See Darwall-Smith 1994: 148.

<sup>38</sup> *Life* 429; see further pp. 238-9.

<sup>39</sup> See Philo *Leg.* 252-3; for other examples of the emperors receiving petitioners and embassies away from Rome, cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 24-40.

<sup>40</sup> We receive no indication that Josephus did leave Rome, but also none that he did not. For arguments in favour of Josephus' travel throughout the Diaspora, see Rajak 2005: 79-97; cf. Rajak 1984: 111 n. 13.

<sup>41</sup> Cass. Dio 67.2.1-2: *καὶ ἑαυτὸν ὑπερεβάλετο ἐν τῇ τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ τε ἀδελφοῦ φίλων ἀτίμῳ τε καὶ ὀλεθρίῳ μεταχειρίσει...πᾶν γὰρ τὸ ὑπὲρ τοὺς πολλοὺς ἀγαπήθεν τε ὑπ' αὐτῶν καὶ δυνήθεν ἐν ἐχθροῦ μοίρᾳ ἐτίθετο.*

<sup>42</sup> B. Jones 1992b: 50-71.

Nevertheless, it may not be necessary to attach a strict definition to Dio's category here. His exaggeration is undeniable and he is writing from hindsight, which allows him also to make the most of the senators who were killed later on to characterize the whole of Domitian's reign. In any case, it is hardly applicable to Josephus, since the Judaeian historian could certainly not be characterized as an *amicus* of either of Domitian's predecessors or as particularly influential. Furthermore, Dio also admits here, although characterizing it as 'mere vain show' (καλλώπισμα), that Domitian, "issued a proclamation confirming all the gifts made to any persons by them [i.e. Vespasian and Titus] and by other emperors,"<sup>43</sup> in much the same way as Titus had done earlier.<sup>44</sup>

In addition, modern scholars have reassessed Dio's characterization of Domitian's attitude towards those who were close to the imperial court under the previous emperors.<sup>45</sup> Suetonius reports in his account of Titus' life that, "he chose as his friends men whom succeeding emperors also retained as indispensable alike to themselves and to the State, and of whose services they made special use."<sup>46</sup> Although Domitian is not mentioned explicitly, this passage would seem to suggest that certain advisors and senior personnel of Titus and, by extension, of Vespasian, continued in their various capacities under Domitian.<sup>47</sup> Already from the early years of his principate after his accession on September 14<sup>th</sup> of AD 81,<sup>48</sup> he took special care to highlight Flavian continuities, in part by demonstrating his *pietas* to his father and

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<sup>43</sup> Cass. Dio 67.2.1-2: καίτοι καὶ αὐτὸς γράμμα ἐξέθηκεν τηρῶν πάντα τὰ πρὸς τε ἐκείνων καὶ πρὸς τῶν ἄλλων αὐτοκρατόρων δοθέντα τισίν.

<sup>44</sup> Cass. Dio 66.19.3; Suet. *Tit.* 9.1; see also the discussion above, pp. 202-204.

<sup>45</sup> See especially Waters 1964: 64-5; cf. Crook 1955: 49; Fabre 1994: 337-55; Devreker 1977: 223-43; Griffin 2000a: 58-60.

<sup>46</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 7.2: *Amicos elegit, quibus etiam post eum principes ut et sibi et rei p. necessariis adquireverunt praecipueque sunt usi*; cf. Crook 1955: 48-52.

<sup>47</sup> B. Jones 1975: 461-2, suggests that there was some discontinuity under Titus, but Devreker 1977: 234, disagrees. See also Fabre 1994: 337-55, in support of continuity in the *familia Caesaris* from the Julio-Claudian period to the Flavian period, highlighting the role of Domitian in establishing the Flavian *familia*.

<sup>48</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 11; Cass. Dio 66.26.3; *CIL* 6.2060; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 20-21, 202 n. 74.

brother, which he accomplished by deifying Titus and creating the priesthood of *Titiales*, and also by undertaking or completing public building projects that honoured his family members, including some that stretched into the later years of his reign—the *Templum Gentis Flaviae*, for example, was only completed in AD 94.<sup>49</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that we see senior senators and equestrians who maintained key positions throughout the period of the Flavian dynasty, some of whom took their place also at Domitian’s fictitious council meeting in Juvenal’s fourth *Satire*.<sup>50</sup> What is more, good administrative practice dictated continuity over the years and, whatever their attitude towards his character, most scholars acknowledge the effectiveness of Domitian’s administration.<sup>51</sup>

We should, therefore, give full weight to Dio’s testimony that Domitian followed his brother’s practice of renewing the imperial favours of the previous emperors. The Flavian poet Martial reports that he received the benefit of the *ius trium liberorum* from both Titus and Domitian.<sup>52</sup> Although he reports the benefaction as though it was entirely new, suggesting that the earlier grant had lapsed with the death of Titus, it is equally possible that he wished to give the appearance that what was actually received more or less automatically was instead a personal favour.<sup>53</sup> In the case of Josephus as well, therefore, it is not necessary to explain the benefactions

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<sup>49</sup> See Dabrowa 1996: 153-61; Griffin 2000a: 56-60; Boyle 2003: 12-14, mentions the Arch of Titus, the Baths of Titus, the Temple of Vespasian and Titus, the Colosseum, the Porticus Divorum in the Campus Martius, and the new temple to the Flavian *gens* on the Quirinal. Regarding Domitian’s building projects, see B. Jones 1992b: 79-98.

<sup>50</sup> Juv. 4.72-154; cf. Crook 1955: 48; Waters 1964: 64-5; Devreker 1977: 227-37; B. Jones 1975: 461-2; Southern 1997: 40-41, 55; cf. Dondin-Payre 1994: 271-88, for qualifications regarding the continuity of the senatorial aristocracy under the reign of Domitian.

<sup>51</sup> See for example Syme 1958: 1.43, who calls Domitian “a bloodthirsty Nero, but worse than Nero, for Domitian kept the armies under control and knew how to govern an empire”; cf. Suet. *Dom.* 8.1; Jones and Milns 2002: 140, “even hostile sources admitted his firmness as an administrator.”

<sup>52</sup> Mart. *Ep.* 3.95.3: *praemia laudato tribuit mihi Caesar uterque natorumque dedit iura paterna trium*; cf. 2.91-2.

<sup>53</sup> For the former explanation, see Shackleton Bailey 1993: 1.199 n. b at *Ep.* 2.91; for the latter, see Nauta 2002: 336-7; cf. Daube 1976: 145-7.

the Judaeen historian received by positing efforts on his part to win that favour.<sup>54</sup> Instead, we may accept that, in the absence of any evidence regarding the development of a relationship between the two, the most likely explanation for Josephus' position as imperial client of Domitian is his automatic adoption as such within the context of the general renewal of imperial benefactions at the outset of Domitian's rule. Domitian simply wished to maintain the loyalty of those who had existing ties to the Flavian house.

As I move forward to consider more carefully the exact benefits received by Josephus, it will be good to keep in mind both the distance between the emperor and his imperial client and the continuity implied in the account of Josephus' relationships with the emperors. It is useful to look at the passage in its entirety:

When Domitian succeeded Titus, he further increased the honours towards me. For example, he disciplined the Judaeans who had accused me, and he ordered that a eunuch slave and tutor of my son who had accused me be disciplined. He also gave me tax exemption for my territory in Judaea, which is the greatest honour for the recipient. And Domitia, the wife of Caesar, continued benefiting me in many ways.<sup>55</sup>

Josephus lists here explicitly only two honours, namely defence from accusations and exemption from land tax. His rather vague reference to benefactions from Domitia Longina cannot be substantiated, but will be explored as well.

In defending Josephus from accusers, Domitian was simply maintaining the practice that his father and brother had begun. Under Vespasian Josephus claims that he had faced the accusations of Jonathan of Cyrene, who was subsequently executed by the emperor, and of others who were envious of his success, while Titus refused to believe the frequent charges made

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<sup>54</sup> *Contra* S. Schwartz 1990: 16, "Whatever Domitian's instinctive reaction to Josephus may have been, in an edition of BJ issued soon after his accession, Josephus flattered him in a bid to win his favour; the bid was, in part at least, successful"; we will discuss this apparent flattery below.

<sup>55</sup> *Life* 429: διαδεξάμενος δὲ Τίτον Δομειτιανός καὶ προσηύξησεν τὰς εἰς ἐμὲ τιμὰς: τοὺς τε γὰρ κατηγορήσαντάς μου Ἰουδαίους ἐκόλασεν καὶ δοῦλον εὐνοῦχον παιδαγωγὸν τοῦ παιδός μου κατηγορήσαντα κολασθῆναι προσέταξεν, ἐμοὶ δὲ τῆς ἐν Ἰουδαίᾳ χώρας ἀτέλειαν ἔδωκεν, ἥπερ ἐστὶ μέγιστη τιμὴ τῷ λαβόντι. καὶ πολλὰ δ' ἢ τοῦ Καίσαρος γυνὴ Δομετία διετέλεσεν εὐεργετοῦσά με.

against Josephus by unnamed individuals.<sup>56</sup> In the case of both Titus and Domitian, Josephus mentions the accusations in conjunction with the transition from one emperor to the other. A possible explanation for the renewal of charges may then be that, with the advent of a new emperor, Josephus' enemies tested the waters again to see if the historian still held the sympathy of the ruling house. The subsequent defence he received from Titus and Domitian may have also functioned, therefore, within the context of their general affirmation of favours at the outset of their reign. In any case, the renewal of the charges under the reign of Domitian in no way justifies the position taken by Laqueur, namely that Josephus' position was now less secure and that the accusers met with greater success because of the emperor's desire to distance himself from his predecessors.<sup>57</sup> On the contrary, Josephus' position over his accusers was reaffirmed.

There are other details that also suggest that these events took place earlier on in Domitian's reign. First of all, Josephus claims that those who brought these accusations against him were his compatriots.<sup>58</sup> I will be exploring Domitian's relationship with the Judaeans more thoroughly later on in this chapter, but it may suffice to observe at this point that his attitude toward them in the latter part of his reign was decidedly less sympathetic than in the early period. Suetonius links the rigorous exaction of the *fiscus Judaicus* with other oppressive measures designed to address a financial crisis that followed upon Domitian's early generous expenditures on entertainment, public buildings, banquets, and the army, a crisis that should likely be dated to

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<sup>56</sup> See *War* 7.447-50; *Life* 416, 424-5, 428.

<sup>57</sup> Laqueur 1920: 258f; cf. Stern 2010: 93, "Perhaps the reign of Domitian, when this work was being written [i.e. the *Life*], was a period that had a climate conducive to accusations, and therefore the fetters placed on the tongues of Josephus' enemies were unbound, so that their words were liable to become a concrete threat to him at that time (*Life* 429)."

<sup>58</sup> It is unclear whether Justus of Tiberias should be considered among them. He certainly brought his attack against Josephus during this period (see *Life* 40-2, 336-67; cf. Bilde 1988: 108-9; Mason 2001: xxvii-xxxiv), but Josephus does not mention if these were directed to Domitian. *Contra* Luther 1910: 81-2, "Aber so viel ist sicher, daß die mit Beweisen belegten Behauptungen des Justus auf den regierenden Kaiser Domitian, der ein entschiedener Gegner der Juden war einen sehr schlechten Eindruck gemacht haben müssen, und es ist in der Tat nicht ausgeschlossen, daß Josephus von Domitian gestürzt wurde."

around the year 85, some four years after Domitian's accession to the throne.<sup>59</sup> Already long before the execution of Flavius Clemens and his wife Flavia Domitilla in AD 95 for their sympathies towards Judaean customs,<sup>60</sup> therefore, Domitianic Rome was not a place in which Judaeans were likely to have had confidence in being able to win the ear of the emperor.<sup>61</sup> Prior to AD 85, however, they may have had cause for more optimism.

In addition, Josephus records that his eunuch slave, the *paidagogos* of his son, accused him.<sup>62</sup> Schwartz observed that about the only charge that a slave could bring against his master was that of *crimen maiestatis populi Romani minutae* (i.e. *maiestas*).<sup>63</sup> Other scholars have commented on the significance of the fact that *maiestas* could include the charge of atheism, which was linked later on under Domitian with the aforementioned execution of Clemens and Domitilla for judaizing.<sup>64</sup> Within the context of this negative atmosphere towards Judaean sympathizers, the eunuch may have wished to take advantage of the fact that Josephus was in the midst of completing a 20-volume work that was directed, as some scholars have convincingly argued, precisely at those among the non-Judaeans who were interested in Judaean history and way of life.<sup>65</sup> Although initially words or writings were not punishable under the *leges*

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<sup>59</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 12.2; cf. Case 1925: 12; L.A. Thompson 1982: 339; M.H. Williams 1990: 204; B. Jones 1992b: 74-7, 118. The attempt of Smallwood 1956a: 12 n. 23, to link this crisis with the so-called 'reign of terror' towards the end of Domitian's reign (c. AD 93-96), based in part on Martial's references to the *fiscus Judaicus* in his book 7, which has been dated to AD 92 (Mart. *Ep.* 7.55; 82), should be dismissed, since it ignores the fact that Suetonius places this episode squarely in the context of events that occurred in the mid-to-late 80s. See further below.

<sup>60</sup> Cass. Dio 67.14.1-3; cf. dubious rabbinic references: *m.Deut. rab.* 2.24; *b.Abod. Zar.* 10b, 11a. See further below.

<sup>61</sup> Smallwood 1956a: 10, and 1981[1976]: 382-5, examines the rabbinic texts to illustrate that there was concern among the Judaeans regarding Domitian's attitudes and policies; cf. Sterling 1992: 299-302.

<sup>62</sup> The identity of this slave is unclear. Young 1987: 151, points out that most pedagogues were of foreign origin, perhaps from spoils of war (see Plut. *Mor.* 4A), which may suggest that Josephus took along with him a Judaean prisoner of war to educate his son. This might explain the origins of the slave's accusations, since the other accusations also appear to have been connected to Josephus' conduct during the revolt. The fact, however, that the slave was a eunuch may suggest otherwise.

<sup>63</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 18 n. 70. For references to the examination of slaves against their masters, only possible in the cases of incest and treason, see Cic. *Mil.* 22.59; Cic. *Part. or.* 34, 118; *Dig.* 48.18.4; 48.18.10.1; Tac. *Ann.* 2.30; 3.67; Cass. Dio 55.54; Paulus *Sent.* 5.13.3; cf. Buckland 1908: 83-90.

<sup>64</sup> Cass. Dio 67.14.1-2; 68.1.2. See Mason 2001: 171 n. 1771; Barclay 2007: li.

<sup>65</sup> See *Ant.* 1.5, 9, 12; 16.174; 20.262; cf. Sterling 1992: 298; Mason 1998b: 66-72, 79-80, 95-7; Feldman 1998b: 543. See also Bilde 1988: 102-3.

*maiestatis*, first under Augustus and then increasingly during the reign of Tiberius *maiestas* was extended to include any written or spoken words that might appear to be disrespectful of the *princeps*.<sup>66</sup> Thus a certain Hermogenes of Tarsus died at Domitian's order for incautious allusions in his history and even the slaves who had done the copying were ordered to be crucified.<sup>67</sup> The eunuch would certainly not have been unjustified, therefore, in thinking at this time that the emperor might be sympathetic to his charges, particularly in light of Josephus' rhetorical interaction with Domitianic Rome in his *Antiquities*, which I will explore further below.

If this were the case, however, we must account for the fact that Josephus was defended by Domitian from these accusations at precisely the time when the emperor was demonstrating his commitment to traditional Roman religion, in particular the god who had allegedly saved him during the tumultuous events that overtook Rome in AD 69, namely Jupiter.<sup>68</sup> What is more, Suetonius characterizes this latter part of Domitian's reign as being a time when the emperor was increasingly rapacious and willing to accept any charge from informants in order to benefit from the confiscation of the property of the accused. He writes, "The property of the living and the dead were seized everywhere on the accusations of anybody at all and on any charge at all. It was enough that any deed or word against the majesty (*maiestas*) of the *princeps* should be

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<sup>66</sup> It can be inferred from Tac. *Ann.* 1.72 that prior to Tiberius spoken and written words did not fall under these *leges*. For evidence following the reign of Tiberius, see Tac. *Ann.* 1.73-4; 2.50; 3.38, 66-7; Cass. Dio 57.9.2. Regarding the political history of *maiestas* charges in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, see Chilton 1955: 73-81; Bauman 1967; M.A. Levi 1969: 81-96; Bauman 1974; 1996: 61-4.

<sup>67</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 10.1. This Hermogenes of Tarsus is not to be confused with the rhetorician of the same name who flourished under the emperor Marcus Aurelius.

<sup>68</sup> He erected a shrine to *Iuppiter Conservator*, restored the Capitoline temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, was identified with the god on coinage and in literary works, and initiated the Capitoline Games in honour of Jupiter in 86; see Fears 1981: 74-80; cf. Charlesworth 1935: 22, Domitian was "a strong upholder of the state religion"; Keresztes 1973: 22, "Domitian was a keen upholder of the state religion, especially that of the Capitoline triad"; B. Jones 1992b: 99-109.

produced.”<sup>69</sup> Moreover, Dio provides evidence that among those who were taking advantage of this attitude of Domitian towards informers were significant numbers of slaves and freedmen. These conspired against their masters by bringing forward charges “of *maiestas* or of living the Judaeian way of life”, a situation that was rectified by Nerva.<sup>70</sup> It seems highly unlikely, therefore, that Josephus would have been allowed to escape unpunished at this time, given that the charges against him fit precisely within these categories, nor does the punishment of his accusers by Domitian jibe with the evidence provided by Suetonius and Dio. Apart from concluding that Josephus was somehow an exception during this period,<sup>71</sup> then, we are left to surmise that the accusations against him should be placed at the beginning of Domitian’s reign.

And indeed the scenario as Josephus describes it fits much more neatly within the early years, when Domitian had not yet faced the financial crises that began in 85.<sup>72</sup> We can turn again to Suetonius who claims that “[Domitian] dispensed justice with diligence and industry, very often even in the forum, in front of the tribunal, outside the normal procedure” and, what is more relevant, that “He suppressed false charges concerning the Privy Purse by means of the heavy punishment of those bringing false charges; and a saying of his was reported that ‘an emperor

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<sup>69</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 12: *Bona vivorum ac mortuorum usquequaque quolibet et accusatore et crimine corripiebantur. Satis erat obici qualecumque factum dictumve adversus maiestatem principis*; cf. Tac. *Agr.* 45; Plin. *Pan.* 42. B. Jones 1992b: 180, points out that other emperors also resorted to informers in financial crises in order to boost the *fiscus*.

<sup>70</sup> Cass. Dio 68.1.2, “Nerva also released all who were on trial for *maiestas* 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 *maiestas* or of adopting the Jewish mode of life”; και ὁ Νέρουας τοὺς τε κρινομένους ἐπ’ ἀσεβείᾳ ἀφήκε καὶ τοὺς φεύγοντας κατήγαγε, τοὺς τε δούλους καὶ τοὺς ἐξελευθέρους τοὺς τοῖς δεσπότηαις σφῶν ἐπιβουλεύσαντας πάντας ἀπέκτεινε. καὶ τοῖς μὲν τοιοῦτοις οὐδ’ ἄλλο τι ἔγκλημα ἐπιφέρειν ἐπὶ τοὺς δεσπότηας ἐφήκε, τοῖς δὲ δὴ ἄλλοις οὐτ’ ἀσεβείας οὐτ’ Ἰουδαικοῦ βίου κατατιᾶσθαί τινας συνεχῶρησε; cf. 67.1.3.

<sup>71</sup> Charlesworth 1954: 35, describes the situation under Domitian as follows, “Pliny avers that any means was employed to rake money into the *Fiscus*-prosecutions under obsolescent laws..., trials for *maiestas* with subsequent confiscations, the encouragement of slaves to lay information against their masters, and so on.” In his footnote he points out, “Yet in the one recorded instance where a slave accused his master, Domitian punished him, Josephus, *Vita* [76], 429” (n. 3). He assumes, therefore, that the accusation against Josephus falls within the latter period of Domitian’s reign. This is, however, an unnecessary assumption.

<sup>72</sup> The date cannot be established more securely than this. S. Schwartz 1990: 18 n. 70, has pointed out, “The date cannot be accurately determined: a paedagogue was normally hired for a seven-year-old and retained until the child assumed the *toga virilis*...Josephus’ oldest son was seven in 80, the youngest sixteen in 94.” This suggests the possibility of the presence of a *paidogogos* within Josephus’ household for the entire period of Domitian’s reign.



who does not chastise informers encourages them’.”<sup>73</sup> This confirms, on the one hand, that there were a significant number of informers during this period and, on the other hand, that Domitian was not particularly sympathetic towards their accusations. Within this context it is not surprising that Josephus, with his history of loyalty towards the Flavians and his presence at the imperial court on previous, similar, occasions, received the clemency of the emperor, and that the informers themselves, both the unnamed Judaeans and his slave, were punished for their attempts. It is unclear precisely what charges they brought; the vagueness of *maiestas minuta populi Romani*—it covered anything from the loss of a battle to a false claim to citizenship to visiting a brothel while in an official capacity—made it a portmanteau charge that could be deployed for various perceived offences.<sup>74</sup> What is clear, in any case, is that Domitian demonstrated his favour to Josephus in dismissing the accusations and also, unlike Titus, punishing the informants.

This may, in fact, have been the first direct encounter between the Judaeen historian and the new emperor, if in fact Josephus personally defended himself and did not enlist the assistance of a broker. We cannot assume that he was directly involved. Someone such as Epaphroditus, if he were indeed an imperial freedman,<sup>75</sup> could have represented Josephus in the imperial court, a context that is suggested by Domitian’s personal involvement. More generally, there was a development that accompanied the establishment of the Principate in which the cases that actually fell under the *crimen maiestatis* were increasingly dealt with not before the *quaestio maiestatis* but in a *cognitio* held in the presence of the emperor himself.<sup>76</sup> This gradual change

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<sup>73</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 8.1: *Ius diligenter et industrie dixit, plerumque et in Foro pro tribunali extra ordinem*; 9.3: *Fiscales calumnias magna calumniantium poena repressit, ferebaturque vox eius: “Princeps qui delatores non castigat, irritat”*; cf. the adage appears also in Cass. Dio 67.1.4.

<sup>74</sup> See Bauman 1967: viii, 1-15.

<sup>75</sup> See further on Epaphroditus at pp. 312-19.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Tac. *Ann.* 3.10-12; cf. Bauman 1967: 232-3; Garnsey 1970: 19; Bauman 1996: 50-76.

was a natural result of the increasing ‘majesty’ of the *princeps* and the association of the *maiestas* of the State with that of the emperor. In this case as well, then, Domitian’s role in dealing with the accusations need not have been unusual. Nevertheless, the trial was a significant moment for Josephus since it reaffirmed the direct patronage he had come to expect from the Flavians and it may have given him reason again to enter the imperial residences on the Palatine hill, with which he was likely already familiar from visits to Poppaea Sabina, Vespasian, and Titus.<sup>77</sup>

It is possible that the other benefaction Josephus received from Domitian, namely the exemption from tax on his land in Judaea,<sup>78</sup> was granted in conjunction with this appearance in the imperial court. In an earlier chapter I proposed that the grant of land in Judaea that Josephus received from Vespasian may have been a reassertion of the emperor’s favour in response to the accusations that emerged at that time and a similar scenario suggests itself here.<sup>79</sup> When Josephus appeared in Domitian’s court to respond to the accusations against him, it was appropriate for the emperor to re-establish him in his position by first of all protecting him and then also sending him off again with a further benefaction.<sup>80</sup> The two processes, the granting of justice and the giving of gifts, were indivisible.<sup>81</sup> The nature of the benefaction would be determined by the status of the recipient and the intimacy of his relationship with his patron.

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<sup>77</sup> Mason 2008a: 55 n. 493, observes that Josephus’ description of the Palatine buildings in his account of Gaius’ death and Claudius’ succession (*Ant.* 19.75-6, 85-6, 223, 266-8) suggests familiarity with the Palatine hill. It is equally possible, however, that he obtained these details from his sources, such as Thaumastus or even Agrippa I, both of whom were present in Rome in AD 41; regarding his sources, see pp. 320-21.

<sup>78</sup> The precise nature of this exemption is unclear due to the ambiguity of the Greek word ἀτέλεια. Millar 1992[1977]: 483, points out that it could mean either exemption from taxation or from local obligations. In either case, it was a financial benefit for Josephus.

<sup>79</sup> See above p. 148.

<sup>80</sup> See the description of the gift-giving process provided by White 1978: 85-88; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 137-9, 496-506.

<sup>81</sup> See Millar 1992[1977]: 466, “it is possible to discern the essential fact that at least a large area of the emperor’s jurisdiction was seen as a form of granting aid and succour to individuals and groups, and to take this as continuous with the related activities of hearing complaints, solving problems, conferring or affirming rights or privileges or making actual gifts”; cf. Saller 1982: 55-6.

When Josephus claims, therefore, that this exemption was “the highest possible honour” (μεγίστη τιμή), he reveals the limits of his connection to Domitian. On the one hand, we can observe “how circumscribed Josephus’ ambitions for imperial benefits are”;<sup>82</sup> but, on the other hand, we can also recognize Domitian’s affirmation of Josephus’ previous relationships with Vespasian and Titus, from whom he received benefactions of similar value. I would emphasize again, therefore, the continuity in Josephus’ social circumstances over the Flavian period, at least as far as his relationship with the emperors was concerned.

Although it is certainly correct to emphasize more generally the unimpressive nature of Josephus’ imperial benefactions, we should not disregard too quickly the tax exemption that Josephus received at this point. The tax on land (*tributum soli*), and particularly that of smaller farmers, throughout the empire, excepting Italy, was an important source of revenue for the state and especially the city of Rome, where it covered the bulk of expenditures in feeding the plebs and in paying for the public building projects and services unique to the capital, while also serving to bolster the defense of the empire.<sup>83</sup> What is more, this exemption was granted by Domitian, who was in all likelihood a careful administrator of finances and may have inherited insurmountable financial problems from his predecessor that led to his more ruthless collection of taxes later on in his reign.<sup>84</sup> One would suspect, therefore, that exemptions from tax were not granted lightly. For Josephus, moreover, the exemption may have been even more significant. The financial burdens of citizenship in the Roman world are well-known, and were mostly a result of the many indirect taxes that were levied upon citizens, particularly the five percent

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<sup>82</sup> Mason 2001: 171 n. 1773; cf. Yavetz 1975: 431-2; Mason 1998b: 74-6; 2001: 168 n. 1742; Cotton and Eck 2005: 39-41.

<sup>83</sup> See Neesen 1980: 19-98; Kehoe 2007: 1-3, 9, 41, 164-7; Wolters 2007: 413-15. Our general knowledge of land taxation is scant, even for the late Empire where the evidence is moderately better; see Duncan-Jones 1990: 199-210.

<sup>84</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 12.1; cf. Syme 1930: 70; B. Jones 1979: 7; Rogers 1984: 60-78; Southern 1997: 63; Griffin 2000a: 69-76.

inheritance tax (*vicesima hereditarium*), the special five percent tax on the price of manumitted slaves (the *vicesima libertatis vel manumissionum*), the one percent tax on auctions (*centesima rerum venalium*), the four percent tax on the sale of slaves (*quinta et vicesima venalium mancipiorum*), and the many customs-dues (*portoria*).<sup>85</sup> Pliny extolled Trajan's relief of citizens from one of the burdens of citizenship by expanding the categories of those exempted from the *vicesima hereditarium* that had been re-introduced by Augustus,<sup>86</sup> while Cassius Dio accused Caracalla of having financial aims in mind when he extended the citizenship in 212 to all the freeborn within the bounds of the empire.<sup>87</sup> Along with the grant of citizenship from Vespasian then, Josephus had received heavy pecuniary obligations.

In light of this, one might well imagine that this exemption was requested by Josephus himself, a detail hidden in the narrative to accentuate the imperial favour. Even though in general practice this was normally achieved only by individuals of status, Josephus was certainly more privileged than the otherwise unknown woman from the Leontopolite nome in Egypt who petitioned "the masters of land and sea of all the race of men" for this very benefaction,<sup>88</sup> and so had even greater cause for optimism. While I am speculating, I might further suggest the possibility that an open-ended gift accompanied Domitian's positive ruling in the case of the accusations against Josephus, in response to which Josephus requested release from the heavy tax burdens that lay on his properties in Judaea. Josephus recounts the episode in which Agrippa I was granted by Gaius after a particularly lavish dinner the right to ask for whatever he wished,

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<sup>85</sup> See Günther 2008, for extensive discussions of these indirect taxes and a useful review of previous scholarship (8-14); cf. de Laet 1947: 29-36; 1949; Jones 1974: 82-89, 151-85; Neesen 1980: 135-41; Brunt 1981: 161-72; Rathbone 1996: 312-15; regarding the situation in the Republican period, see Nicolet 1980: 169-77; for Roman Judaea, see Pastor 1997: 123-4.

<sup>86</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 37; cf. Gardner 2001: 51-60, points out that most of the concessions were actually made by Nerva and that Trajan's contribution was relatively limited.

<sup>87</sup> Cass. Dio 78.9.5; cf. Levick 1999: 102, "Financial considerations must have played their part too in Vespasian's attitude towards the granting of citizenship."

<sup>88</sup> *P.Ryl.* IV 617; cf. *CJ X.42.6*; Millar 1992[1977]: 499-500.

an opportunity Agrippa I took to ensure the cancellation of the emperor's plan to erect his statue in the Temple in Jerusalem.<sup>89</sup> Josephus himself, moreover, was granted by Titus the right to take whatever he wanted from the ruins of Jerusalem.<sup>90</sup> Lucian recounts the story of a man who was granted the right to make an open request by Nero and decided to ask for a mime dancer to assist in bridging the communication gap with the barbarians near the Black Sea, since the man came from the Bosporan kingdom.<sup>91</sup> A similarly amusing episode involving Septimius Severus is described by Philostratus, in which the sophist Hermocrates of Phocaea requested fifty talents of frankincense to assist him in fulfilling his duties towards Asclepius of Pergamum, who had ordered him to eat a partridge scented with that spice.<sup>92</sup> Although the historicity of these entertaining tales is questionable, these accounts, and others like them,<sup>93</sup> do serve to illustrate the importance of this element of the imperial ideology. Regardless of the precise origin of the benefaction, the lessening of this financial burden reflects an unequivocal statement from Domitian regarding Josephus, namely that he remained a Flavian client.

If I am right in my proposal that these events should be dated to the beginning of Domitian's reign, it is possible that they also marked the last encounter between Josephus and the emperors of Rome. Nevertheless, contact with the imperial court persisted. Josephus reports that Domitia Longina, the wife of Domitian, 'continued benefiting [him] in many ways' (διετέλεσεν εὐεργετοῦσα με).<sup>94</sup> There are two clear reasons for mentioning her support in the

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<sup>89</sup> *Ant.* 18.289-301; cf. the alternative account in Philo *Leg.* 276-333.

<sup>90</sup> *Life* 417-21.

<sup>91</sup> Lucian *Salt.* 64.

<sup>92</sup> Philostr. *VS* 2.25.

<sup>93</sup> See *IJLS* III.718.91-3; Gal. 5.17-18 (Kühn); Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 9.7; Epiph. *Pan.* 30.4-12; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 467-8.

<sup>94</sup> Kokkinos 1998: 396, has suggested that the Greek phrase implies that Domitia's favours continued after the death of Domitian, thus supporting his dating of the publication of the *Life* to after 100; see, however, the comments of Mason 2001: 172 n. 1776. It is more likely, if Kokkinos' grammatical rendering is correct, that the implication here is that Josephus no longer had any direct contact with Domitian following the events described above but did with his wife.

*Life*. First of all, its placement here at the end of the *Life* serves as a balance to the earlier mention at the outset of Josephus' public career of another emperor's wife who also gave benefits to Josephus, namely Poppaea Sabina, the wife of Nero. Domitia's presence here serves, therefore, the concentric structure of the work as a whole.<sup>95</sup> In addition, Josephus' claim that Domitia continued to present him with benefits provides further proof of his own high standing.

The wife of Domitian was certainly an attractive person in her own right for Josephus to emphasize as an acquaintance. She was the daughter of the great Neronian general Cn. Domitius Corbulo, a "magnificent prize" for the young Domitian in AD 70,<sup>96</sup> who—despite the lurid details surrounding her dismissal not long after Domitian's accession and her subsequent return to the imperial court to be "ever the object of Domitian's hatred"<sup>97</sup>—likely had a close relationship with her husband for the majority of his rule.<sup>98</sup> Perhaps most telling in this regard are the brick stamps from her Sulpician brickyards dated some 25 years after Domitian's death (AD 123) on which she still referred to herself as "Domitia [wife of] Domitian", despite the fact that he had experienced what modern historians term *damnatio memoriae*.<sup>99</sup> In any case, we hear nothing of this troubled relationship in the *Life*. Josephus simply presents her as evidence of his favoured position.

As far as determining precisely what the favours were that Domitia continued to bestow on Josephus, there is little to be said. It is certainly possible that Domitia was interested in

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<sup>95</sup> Poppaea Sabina: *Life* 16; cf. Mason 2001: 172 n. 1776. Regarding the concentric structure, see Mason 2001: xxiii-xxvii. This rhetorical placement should not, however, undermine the historicity of Josephus' claim. Given the fact that Domitia was still alive at the time of the publication of the *Life* in 93, it would have been foolish for Josephus to fabricate this support. As far as her rhetorical importance is concerned, we can also observe that she serves as a further example of foreign noblewomen serving as patrons for the Judaeian community; see Matthews 1999: 199-200, 207.

<sup>96</sup> Levick 1999: 191.

<sup>97</sup> Regarding the troubled relationship between the two, see Suet. *Dom.* 3.1; Cass. Dio 67.3.1-2; 67.15.2 (quotation).

<sup>98</sup> For the revisionist view of the relationship between Domitian and Domitia, see Vinson 1989: 431-50; B. Jones 1992b: 33-8; Southern 1997: 41-2, 118.

<sup>99</sup> *CIL* 15.548a-9d. These can be compared to the brick stamps marked after her death, in which she is styled "Domitia Augusta, daughter of Cn. Domitius Corbulo"; *ILS* 272.

Josephus' literary activities or that she, like Poppaea Sabina,<sup>100</sup> was to some degree sympathetic to Judaeen customs (i.e. she was also θεοσεβής), a detail he then avoided in light of Domitian's attitude towards those who were sympathetic to the ancestral traditions of the Judaeans.<sup>101</sup> But we are not told of either. More generally, the imperial women, or *Augustae*, served as valuable conduits for benefactions in much the same manner as the emperors themselves, as we have seen with the wife of Nero, even though their influence was often viewed with disapproval.<sup>102</sup> The fact that Josephus does not mention any material gains might suggest that her favour was displayed in less visible ways, perhaps in the promotion of his *Antiquities* or the provision of the necessary venues for the publication process.

Whether or not Josephus had cause to make an appearance in the imperial courts again after the accusations were dismissed does not affect his relative status. His visits to the Palatine throughout the Flavian period were likely sporadic, sparked by special circumstances or situations. The emperor was, ideally and in theory, available to be approached by all the subjects the empire, among whom the inhabitants of the city of Rome would have had a logistical advantage. The fact that the emperors spent considerable amounts of time away from the imperial capital, however, either travelling throughout the empire or retreating to imperial villas in the Italian countryside,<sup>103</sup> meant that even those living in Rome faced practical difficulties, particularly during the reign of emperors such as Tiberius and Domitian, who were absent from Rome more often than the other emperors of the first-century.<sup>104</sup> To a degree, therefore, Josephus was just as limited by the emperor's availability as any subject. Nevertheless, the level of success

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<sup>100</sup> See above, pp. 66-9.

<sup>101</sup> Mason 1998b: 101, "Josephus's pointed reference to her good offices is tantalizing, and it may be that she was more sympathetic to the Judaeen priest's efforts than her husband was."

<sup>102</sup> See Kunst 2010: 145-161; cf. Saller 1982: 64-6; Dixon 1983: 91-112.

<sup>103</sup> See Halfmann 1986: 157-62 (Augustus); 170-72 (Gaius); 172-3 (Claudius); 173-77 (Nero); 177-8 (Galba/Vitellius); 178-80 (Vespasian); 180-81 (Titus).

<sup>104</sup> Regarding the theoretical availability of the emperor and the reality of the limitations, see Millar 1992[1977]: *passim*, esp. chs. 1 and 8.

he achieved in receiving positive judicial decisions and new or renewed benefactions reveal that he was held in some honour by the Flavians. If we are to imagine any change in Josephus' circumstances, we should probably place this after the death of Domitian, when the ever-present accusers may have found a more sympathetic imperial ear.

### **Josephus as Historian**

In the case of Vespasian and Titus, we have explicit evidence from Josephus himself that there was some connection between his literary efforts and his relationship with the two emperors, evidence I have explored in the two previous chapters. I argued that it would be a mistake to view them as his literary patrons, or as commissioners of the *War*. Nevertheless, he did exploit his existing position as imperial client by involving them in the final release of the work in an effort to reach as wide a readership as possible. In the case of Domitian, however, Josephus makes no mention of any connection between his substantial literary efforts during the period of his rule and the emperor himself. It is important, nonetheless, to examine, on the basis of external evidence, the possibility that Domitian did demonstrate an interest in the activities of the Judaeian historian and to consider the significance of the results of this examination for our understanding of the relationship between Josephus and Domitian.

At first glance, the answer may seem rather straightforward. I noted earlier the traditional characterization of Domitian as “the enemy of literature”.<sup>105</sup> In addition, Domitian had also been condemned as poorly educated in his youth.<sup>106</sup> These judgments have, however, been soundly

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<sup>105</sup> See Thackeray 1926: xi; 1929: 51.

<sup>106</sup> See especially Charlesworth 1954: 22, “there is nothing to show that he had received a good education, and throughout his reign he was content to let others draft his letters, speeches, and edicts.”



refuted.<sup>107</sup> Much of the basis for these characterizations emerges from the aspersions cast on Domitian by the hostile sources. Suetonius, for example, claims at one point that Domitian never bothered to become familiar with poetry and at another that he only feigned an interest, yet reports elsewhere that he was able to quote Homer and Vergil.<sup>108</sup> What is more, Pliny the Elder used the poetry of Domitian as a benchmark for that of Titus; a reference in one of Martial's epigrams suggests that he wrote a poem on the fall of the Capitol in 69, while Valerius Flaccus may provide evidence for a poem on the capture of Jerusalem, although neither has survived.<sup>109</sup> Numerous sources also praise his skill at poetry and his capabilities in oratory, despite Suetonius' claim that he relied on the talents of others for the latter.<sup>110</sup> This is hardly evidence of either poor education or hostility towards literature.

Furthermore, although Suetonius claims that he abandoned his literary 'pretensions' upon his accession, reading nothing but the "*commentarios et acta Tiberi Caesaris*",<sup>111</sup> his cultural programme included the promotion of literary pursuits. His own lack of further literary activities may be ascribed to a conscious effort on his behalf to distance himself from Nero,<sup>112</sup> or, more simply, to his busyness with administrative concerns.<sup>113</sup> His concern to encourage the cultural climate revealed itself in his restoration of a number of unidentified libraries that had been

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<sup>107</sup> B. Jones 1979: 8-9; 1992b: 12-13, 18-20; Southern 1997: 11-2; cf. Morford 1968: 69-70; Coleman 1986: 3088-95.

<sup>108</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 2.2: *simulavit...poeticae studium*; 9.1; 12.3; 18.2; 20; cf. Suet. *Dom.* 14.2; Tac. *Hist.* 4.86: *simplicitatis ac modestiae imagine in altitudinem conditus studiumque litterarum et amorem carminum simulans, quo velaret animum et fratris se aemulationi subduceret, cuius disparem mitioremque naturam contra interpretabatur.*

<sup>109</sup> Plin. *HN* praef. 5; Mart. *Ep.* 5.5.7; Val. Flacc. *Argon.* 1.10-12; cf. Penwill 2000: 60-83.

<sup>110</sup> Stat. *Achil.* 1.15; Sil. *Pun.* 3.618, 621; Quint. *Inst.* 4 *proem*; 10.1.91; Suet. *Dom.* 20. Suetonius' claim that others prepared Domitian's *epistulas orationesque et edicta* is accepted uncritically by Millar 1967: 19, as an exception to the general principle that the emperor should prepare his own edicts and pronouncements.

<sup>111</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 20.

<sup>112</sup> See Bardon 1968: 283-8; Hardie 2003: 126-7.

<sup>113</sup> See, for example, Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.91: *Germanicum Augustum ab institutis studiis deflexit cura terrarum, parumque dis visum est esse eum maximum poetarum*; cf. Coleman 1986: 3088, 3095, "when Domitian acceded to power he displayed a conscientious concern for government and legislature which afford a reason for the abandoning of his literary pursuits."

destroyed by fire, a restoration that included not only the reconstruction of the buildings, but also the restocking of the shelves with newly commissioned copies of works from the library at Alexandria.<sup>114</sup> In addition, he instituted the quinquennial *Capitolia* in AD 86<sup>115</sup> and the Alban games on the *Quinquatria*, the festival that took place almost every year between March 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> in honour of Minerva,<sup>116</sup> featuring contests in poetry and oratory, over which he presided and for which he built an Odeum in the Campus Martius and a theatre on his Alban estates.<sup>117</sup> The poetry that featured in the contests from year to year was generally on panegyric themes, as the poets sought to achieve imperial recognition; so, for example, Statius' prize-winning poem at the Alban games recounted Domitian's triumphs of 89 in Germany and Dacia.<sup>118</sup>

In addition to presenting their work publicly to the emperor at the festivals, aspiring or established poets could also access Domitian directly. The poetry of Martial and Statius suggests that certain poems were presented to the emperor prior to their publication.<sup>119</sup> Martial's epigram in celebration of Domitian's birthday on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October would have been meaningless had it only been published along with the rest of Book 4 at the Saturnalia of 88, while the poem that Statius composed to thank Domitian for inviting him to join him at dinner would have made little sense unless it had been sent directly after the event.<sup>120</sup> Other examples could be adduced, but these suffice to demonstrate that Domitian was a (willing) recipient. Moreover, he rewarded these poets as well, as can be seen from his grant of a water-supply for Statius' Alban home and

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<sup>114</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 20: *bibliothecas incendio absumptas impensissime reparare curasset, exemplaribus undique petitis missisque Alexandream qui describerent emendarentque*. The usual identification of the library is the one housed in the Porticus Octaviae, originally built by Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 29) with the Bibliotheca added by Octavia in memory of Marcellus in 23 BC (Suet. *Gram.* 21; Plut. *Marc.* 30) and subsequently destroyed in the fire of AD 80 (Cass. Dio 66.24.2); see Platner and Ashby 1929: 85; Richardson 1992: 59, 317-8. Precise identification is, however, debated; see Coleman 1986: 3095-6.

<sup>115</sup> Censorinus *DN* 18.15; on the *Capitolia*, see Rieger 1999: 171-203.

<sup>116</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 4.4; Cass. Dio 67.1.2.

<sup>117</sup> Regarding these festivals, see Coleman 1986: 3097-100; Jones 1992b: 103-105; Darwall-Smith 1994; Hardie 2003: 125-47.

<sup>118</sup> Stat. *Silv.* 4.2.66-7.

<sup>119</sup> See White 1974: 40-61; cf. Coleman 1986: 3100-103.

<sup>120</sup> Mart. *Ep.* 4.1, 2.

possibly also the reward of the *ius trium liberorum* to Martial.<sup>121</sup> It is certainly misleading, therefore, to characterize Domitian as ‘the enemy of literature’.

At the same time, however, he did exercise significant control over the content of the literature that passed by his imperial eye. As Coleman has pointed out, “the contradiction between encouragement and restriction underlies the history of Domitian’s attitude to writing and writers.”<sup>122</sup> On the one hand, he promoted literature that flattered himself, as the surviving literature attests, but on the other hand, he reacted strongly against those who published anything that resembled criticism of the regime, at least towards the end of his rule. The opening lines of Tacitus’ biography of his father-in-law Agricola illustrate this clearly:

We read that when Paetus Thrasea was praised by Arulenus Rusticus and Priscus Helvidius by Herennius Senecionus it was a capital offense, and there was rage not only against the authors themselves but even against their books...and just as the past times had seen what would be the height of liberty, so we saw the lowest in servitude, when communication by speaking and hearing was taken away by the informers. We would have lost even memory itself together with our voice, if it had been as easy to forget as to remain silent.<sup>123</sup>

These executions of the members of the so-called Stoic opposition which included also the younger Helvidius, accompanied by the exile of the women members of this circle, are usually dated to the ‘reign of terror’, as the final years of Domitian’s reign (AD 93-96) have been characterized,<sup>124</sup> but reveal more generally the sensitivity of the emperor towards opposition and

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<sup>121</sup> Stat. *Silv.* 3.1.61-4; Mart. *Ep.* 2.91.5. Martial also requested water-supply for his houses at Nomentum and Rome; *Ep.* 9.18.

<sup>122</sup> Coleman 1986: 3088.

<sup>123</sup> Tac. *Agr.* 2: *Legimus, cum Aruleno Rustico Paetus Thrasea, Herennio Senecioni Priscus Helvidius laudati essent, capitale fuisse, neque in ipsos modo auctores, sed in libros quoque eorum saevitum... et sicut vetus aetas vidit quid ultimum in libertate esset, ita nos quid in servitute, adempto per inquisitiones etiam loquendi audiendique commercio. memoriam quoque ipsam cum voce perdidissemus, si tam in nostra potestate esset oblivisci quam tacere.*

<sup>124</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 10; Gsell 1894: 264; on Gsell’s influential work, see Lengrand 1994: 57-67; cf. Syme 1983: 121-46; Haaland 2005: 299-300.

specifically that which was concealed in literature.<sup>125</sup> One of the women thus implicated as well, Fannia, the daughter of Thrasea Paetus and wife of the elder Helvidius Priscus, both of whom had been executed for subversive behaviour by Nero and Vespasian respectively, was accused particularly of having lent her husband's diaries to Senecio to assist in his publication of his eulogy.<sup>126</sup> This sensitivity was revealed also in Domitian's expulsion of the philosophers from Rome, among whom were highly vocal critics, although he was not alone among the emperors in doing this.<sup>127</sup>

It was this inhibiting atmosphere that led successful figures such as Tacitus and Pliny, who advanced in their careers under Domitian, to curb their tongues, and also resulted in a spate of publication, particularly of poetry, during the subsequent reigns of Nerva and Trajan.<sup>128</sup> It is important also to view the writings of Josephus during this period, the *Antiquities/Life* and possibly also the *Apion*,<sup>129</sup> that is the bulk of his literary output, within this context. Goodman has rightly noted, "In all the discussions of Josephus' tortuous attempts to justify his past tortuous career, modern scholars too infrequently recall that he did not have to write anything at all. Unlike modern academics, Josephus... was under no compulsion to publish."<sup>130</sup> This lack of compulsion highlights also the distance between Josephus as historian and the emperor Domitian. Although previous scholars have by no means linked Josephus' writing under Domitian as closely to the emperor as the *War* was tied to the official propaganda of Vespasian

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<sup>125</sup> Herennius Senecio: Plin. *Ep.* 3.11; Cass. Dio 67.13.2. Arulenus Rusticus: Suet. *Dom.* 10.3; Plin. *Ep.* 1.14; 2.18; 3.11; Cass. Dio 67.13.2. Helvidius the Younger: Tac. *Agr.* 45; Suet. *Dom.* 10.4. Cf. B. Jones 1992b: 119-25; Southern 1997: 114-5. We have mentioned already the case of Hermogenes of Tarsus; Suet. *Dom.* 10.1.

<sup>126</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 7.16.5.

<sup>127</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 10.3; on the subversive nature of philosophers, see MacMullen 1966: 53-7; Haaland 2005: 300-306. Vespasian also expelled the philosophers from Rome; see e.g. Cass. Dio 66.13.

<sup>128</sup> See Plin. *Ep.* 1.10.1; 1.13.1; 3.18.5; Tac. *Hist.* 1.1.4. For further evidence of the restriction of expression under Domitian, see Coleman 1986: 3111-5.

<sup>129</sup> The precise dating of *Apion* has not been firmly established. We know for certain only the *terminus post quem*, namely the publication of *Antiquities/Life* in 93/4; see Gerber 1997: 64ff.; Barclay 2007: xxvi-xxviii.

<sup>130</sup> Goodman 1994b: 338.

and Titus—indeed, he is ignored in the standard treatment of Domitian’s relationship to literature<sup>131</sup>—nevertheless, his continued relationship with the imperial family has often coloured the view of his later works as well.

The most common understanding of Josephus’ portrait of Domitian in his first work, the *War*, is, therefore, that the Judaeian historian shamelessly flatters the young Flavian prince, on the basis of which some scholars have proposed a dating of the seventh book of the *War* to after the accession of Domitian to the imperial throne.<sup>132</sup> As Mason has recently demonstrated, however, when we look more closely at the account of Domitian’s northern ‘campaign’ of AD 70, to describe it as mere flattery is no longer satisfactory.<sup>133</sup> Taken at face value, the distinction between Tacitus’ account, written after the death of Domitian, and that of Josephus is striking. In the former, Domitian departs from Rome with his father’s loyal general, Mucianus, to deal with the outbreak of the revolt led by Civilis and Classicus, but learns prior to his crossing the Alps that the affairs have been settled. Tacitus then reports that Mucianus, through subterfuge, managed to deprive Domitian of his own command though the young Flavian tried his best to seek glory in this manner. The end result, according to Tacitus, was that Domitian withdrew himself from public affairs and pretended an interest in literature.<sup>134</sup> In his own account of the campaign, Suetonius similarly uses the opportunity to cast Domitian in a negative light, portraying him as rashly and unadvisedly taking on an unnecessary venture, for which he was sternly rebuked by his father and condemned to stay close by his side.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Coleman 1986.

<sup>132</sup> Cohen 2002[1979]: 87; cf. Attridge 1984: 192-3; S. Schwartz 1986: 377-9; 1990: 16; Barnes 2005: 139-40; cf. Weber 1920: 55; Heubner 1976: 174; Southern 1997: 20-21, “Josephus’ account of Domitian’s heroism in this war can probably be discounted as literary license and Flavian propaganda, since the young Caesar took very little part”.

<sup>133</sup> The following discussion, regarding the image of Domitian in the *War* and the resonances of Domitianic Rome in the *Antiquities*, is inspired by Mason 2003b: 559-590; 2005b: 243-88.

<sup>134</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.85-6; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 16 n. 56.

<sup>135</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 2.

In Josephus' rendering, however, Domitian is given a heroic role in the proceedings. The description of the young prince alone reveals the tone of the passage, "Enjoying his father's manliness by natural inheritance and having perfected his training beyond that suited to his age, against the barbarians he immediately marched..."<sup>136</sup> What is more, direct action is unnecessary because the revolting subjects surrendered in fear at the mere rumour of Domitian's advance, leaving him to return to Rome covered in glory and honour unusual for one his age.<sup>137</sup> Given the obvious exaggeration, we might be forgiven for considering the passage pure and simple flattery. We have seen, however, the artifice with which Josephus has crafted his narratives elsewhere and his portrayal of Domitian here is no different. Mason has rightly questioned, "Is it more likely that Josephus' Roman audience, blank slates all, were happy to be persuaded of these events, or rather that he and they both understood this as mocking flattery of Domitian—saying the opposite of what everyone knew to be the case?"<sup>138</sup> The answer is obvious in light of Josephus' penchant for figured speech and the general knowledge among Josephus' readers of what had really transpired, as revealed by the accounts of Tacitus and Suetonius. The beauty of it all was that Domitian could hardly object, particularly given his general lack of military experience, compared to Vespasian and Titus.<sup>139</sup>

This desire to safely criticize the final member of the Flavian dynasty can be recognized in Josephus' later works as well, which reveal again the limits of his relationship with the emperor. Although I do not have the space here to explore in detail the many intersections between Josephus' descriptions of past occurrences and contemporary events as examples of his

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<sup>136</sup> *War* 7.87: ἔχων δὲ πατρόθεν ἔμφυτον τὴν ἀνδραγαθίαν καὶ τελειοτέραν τὴν ἄσκησιν τῆς ἡλικίας πεπονημένος ἐπὶ τοὺς βαρβάρους εὐθὺς ἤλαυνεν. Compare *Sil. Pun.* 3.607-8, "even when you were a boy, the yellow-haired Batavians feared you"; cf. Jones and Milns 2002: 124.

<sup>137</sup> See *War* 7.75-88.

<sup>138</sup> Mason 2005b: 260.

<sup>139</sup> See Mason 2005b: 260-62; cf. Ahl 1984: 198-99, who points out that the object "is not simply to flatter, but to control by flattery and, simultaneously, to mock before those who know better"; regarding the importance of a military ideology for Domitian, see Balbuza 2004: 25-33.

attempts to speak subversively about the current regime, it is useful to outline some of the veiled critique that has been exposed recently.<sup>140</sup> Most striking is his favourable depiction of the speech of Gnaeus Sentius Saturninus before the Senate following the murder of the emperor Gaius, which he describes as an oration “fit for free and noble men” and in which the consul requested a return to the liberty of the Republic. Although Claudius has already been designated in Gaius’ place, Saturninus praises the key conspirator, Cassius Chaerea, and criticizes Brutus and Cassius for their lack of success in preventing the establishment of tyranny despite their removal of Julius Caesar.<sup>141</sup> The condemnation of the new monarchic system of imperial rule that pervades Josephus’ account of these events is arresting in its baldness—‘tyranny’ is the watchword for Roman autocracy<sup>142</sup>—particularly when we consider Domitian’s sensitivity towards criticism, even when directed at past emperors.<sup>143</sup>

Similarly relevant to the atmosphere in which Josephus was writing are his descriptions of the succession crises faced by various rulers in the *Antiquities*. In a rather amusing anecdote concerning Tiberius’ attempts to secure from the gods assurance that his successor of choice, his grandson Tiberius Gemellus, would indeed follow in his footsteps, Josephus highlights the powerlessness of the emperor in ensuring the stability of the imperial throne. It is revealed to Tiberius that Gaius, the son of his nephew Germanicus, will in fact inherit the throne and, what is more, Josephus observes that Tiberius’ wish that Gaius preserve the life of Tiberius Gemellus

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<sup>140</sup> See especially Mason 2000: xiii-xxxv; 2003b: 559-90. For other recent scholarship considering his works in the context of the city of Rome, particularly regarding his *Against Apion*, see e.g. Goodman 1994b: 99-106; Hall 1996: 229-49; Goodman 1999: 45-58; Barclay 2000: 231-45; Haaland 2005: 297-316.

<sup>141</sup> *Ant.* 19.166-84; quotation from 166: ἐλευθέροις τε καὶ γενναίοις ἀνδράσι πρεπόντως ποιεῖται παραίνεσιν.

<sup>142</sup> See also *Ant.* 18.169; 19.18, 79, 133, 135, 155, 185-9, 230; cf. Mason 2003b: 583-4.

<sup>143</sup> Previous commentators failed to accord Josephus’ description of the events that took place in Rome any significance within the narrative, linking instead the inclusion of these accounts to his desire to reach the 20 volumes of Dionysius’ *Roman Antiquities* or ascribing the extra detail to his sources. His authorial hand has rarely been acknowledged in this regard; see Thackeray 1929: 56; Wiseman 1991: xii; cf. Feldman’s comments *ad loc.* in the Loeb edition (1965), 213 n. a. Mason 2003b: 559-89, has, however, established beyond a doubt that Josephus was in full control of his narrative here; the themes of this section continue those explored throughout the *Antiquities*.

was also not fulfilled.<sup>144</sup> This theme also appears in Josephus' earlier account of Herod's difficulties in establishing an heir to his throne, which end comically in a referral to Augustus in Rome, who notoriously experienced his own succession issues.<sup>145</sup>

That Josephus only inadvertently highlighted the difficulties of previous autocrats in this regard is unlikely given the currency of these discussions for Domitian, who was himself struggling in this regard. Titus' early death may have heightened the pressure on Domitian to produce an heir as well. Although Domitia had borne him a son already in AD 73, this son later died, sometime between 74 and 80, of unknown causes, and was likely the only one borne to Domitian.<sup>146</sup> The importance of this heir for Domitian is clear from his deification of the boy—making him the son, brother, uncle, and father of *divi*<sup>147</sup>—and the production of a coin series shortly after his accession in AD 81 that commemorated this event, which portrayed his son as an infant sitting on a celestial globe playing with seven stars and on which was inscribed DIVI CAESAR IMP DOMITIANI F[ILIVS].<sup>148</sup> The concern to produce another heir may lay behind the marital issues that plagued Domitian from 83 onward,<sup>149</sup> as is suggested by a further coin series, minted in 92 after the restoration of Domitia to favour, which depicts her seated on a throne, veiled and draped, reaching her hand out to touch a small boy who holds in his left hand a sceptre while extending his right hand in blessing.<sup>150</sup> The ashes of his son, moreover, may have found a home in the family shrine that he had constructed on the Quirinal, the *Templum Gentis*

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<sup>144</sup> *Ant.* 18.205-223.

<sup>145</sup> See *Ant.* 16.133-5; 17.52-3, 146-8, 304-20; 18.127; concerning Augustus' succession crises, see Syme 1939: 418-39; cf. Case 1925: 17 n. 29; Mason 2003b: 584.

<sup>146</sup> *Suet. Dom.* 3.1; *Mart. Ep.* 4.3; 9.86; *Stat. Silv.* 1.1.97; *Sil. Pun.* 3.629; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 35-7. The difficulties with the precise dates are discussed by Southern 1997: 28-9.

<sup>147</sup> See Sablayrolles 1994: 134.

<sup>148</sup> *BMC* 2, 311 no. 62-3 and plate 61.6; cf. Desnier 1979: 54-65; Carradice 1983: 20-21. This coin has been connected to the depiction of Jesus in the book of Revelation (1:13, 16; cf. 12:1) among the seven lampstands, holding seven stars in his right hand; cf. Janzen 1994: 645-7.

<sup>149</sup> B. Jones 1992b: 35-5, "possibly her failure to produce another son annoyed him"; the numismatic evidence suggests, however, that her failure would have produced more than simple annoyance.

<sup>150</sup> *BMC* 2, 413 no. 501 and plate 82.8. The accompanying inscription reads DIVI CAESAR[IS] MATRI.



*Flaviae*, alongside Vespasian, Titus, and his niece Julia Augusta.<sup>151</sup> Dynastic succession was, therefore, a preoccupation for many of those living in Domitianic Rome, especially since Domitian was more generally reluctant to share his power with other members of the imperial family, whose ranks he thinned out over time.<sup>152</sup>

Josephus' decision to explore these themes at this time was surely not coincidental. Rather, he was fully engaged in an attempt to make sense of the current regime. Furthermore, although he avoided dealing directly with the contemporary situation, taking an appropriate distance, his sentiments regarding especially the Roman monarchy are remarkably explicit. If we accept as valid the anxiety that Domitian felt about the lack of a clear heir, then Josephus' rather amusing rendering of the similar crisis experienced by Tiberius and his rather lengthy exploration of Herod's problems seem to be rather risky endeavours, particularly if we consider that the *Antiquities* was completed some time in late 93 or early 94,<sup>153</sup> precisely when these concerns were reaching a head and when Domitian's patience with dissenters was wearing increasingly thin. Even more so, the criticism of Brutus and Cassius for not having gone far enough in their destruction of the tyrant that Josephus placed in the mouth of Saturninus seems foolhardy to the extreme when we consider that already under Tiberius the historian Cremutius Cordus was prosecuted for 'eulogizing Brutus, and styling Cassius the last of the Romans'.<sup>154</sup> Yet, in the writings of Josephus we find none of the anxiety that characterizes Martial's famous plea to Domitian not to misinterpret his epigrams:

If you happen, Caesar, to touch my booklets,

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<sup>151</sup> As suggested by Sablayrolles 1994: 134; on the *Templum Gentis Flaviae*, see pp. 135, 235.

<sup>152</sup> See B. Jones 1992b: 42-9. Newlands 2004: 316-19, has observed this preoccupation with dynastic succession in the *Silvae*, noting in particular the concern about the civil war that could erupt when no clear heir existed.

<sup>153</sup> See *Ant.* 20.267: ...ἥτις ἐστὶν τρισκαίδεκάτου μὲν ἔτους τῆς Δομετιανοῦ Καίσαρος ἀρχῆς, ἔμοι δ' ἀπὸ γενέσεως πεντηκοστοῦ τε καὶ ἕκτου.

<sup>154</sup> *Tac. Ann.* 4.34-5: *laudatoque M. Bruto C. Cassium Romanorum ultimum dixisset*. For similar instances of sensitivity towards treatment of Brutus and Cassius, see *Tac. Ann.* 3.76; 16.7, 22; *Plin. Ep.* 1.17.3; cf. Mason 2003b: 560.

Lay aside the frown that rules the earth.  
Even your triumphs have allowed for jesting,  
Generals feel no shame at their abuse.  
Please read my poems in the very way you watch  
Thymele and the joking Latinus.  
Censorship can allow innocuous games:  
My page is wanton, my life virtuous.<sup>155</sup>

We are left, therefore, with a number of observations regarding the possible place of Josephus as historian in Domitianic Rome. First of all, his compositions during this time were far from servile and cannot appropriately be viewed as Flavian propaganda. On the contrary, his courage should be emphasized in not only refusing to curtail his literary production, by which he would have joined the likes of Pliny and Tacitus, but also persisting in his critique of the Rome in which he lived. Secondly, although Domitian promoted a certain literary climate, it is unlikely that Josephus' later works passed by the emperor. On the one hand, Domitian's interests seemed to have revolved around poetry and, on the other hand, Josephus seems to have escaped the close scrutiny and resulting punishment to which contemporary works were subjected. This distance is in itself unsurprising. The presentation of the completed *War* to Vespasian and Titus was only natural, given the subject matter and Josephus' participation with them in the events that are described, while Josephus' *Antiquities/Life* and his *Apion* were written for a readership that was already sympathetic to his viewpoint and thus interested in his (lengthy) description of Judaean culture. As I shall demonstrate, Domitian did not fit into this category.

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<sup>155</sup> Mart. Ep. 1.4: *contigeris nostros, Caesar, si forte libellos, terrarium dominum pone supercicilium. consuevere iocos uestri quoque ferre triumphi, materiam dictis nec pudet esse ducem. qua Thymelem spectas derisoremque Latinum, illa fronte precor carmina nostras legas. innocuos censura potest permittere lusus: lasciua est nobis pagina, uita proba*; trans. Boyle 2003: 22.

## Josephus as Judaeans

For we should also consider the fact that Josephus was writing his works under an emperor who displayed a decided lack of sympathy for the Judaeans, which must have had an impact on the parameters of a relationship between the Judaeans and Domitian. Although scholarship has moved beyond the characterization of the situation as a ‘period of horror’ for the Judaeans of Rome and a time in which “the Jews of the entire Empire were threatened...with serious danger”, as Vogelstein described it at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>156</sup> we should not dismiss entirely the possibility of an increase in anti-Judaean sentiment.<sup>157</sup> The sources do provide evidence that the negative atmosphere towards the Judaeans that Josephus was already combating in his *War* in the aftermath of the revolt<sup>158</sup> took a turn for the worse during the reign of Domitian, even if it still did not manifest itself physically to any greater degree.

In the first place, Suetonius reports, within his discussion of the measures taken by Domitian to address the financial difficulties he faced as a result of vast expenditures on public buildings, games, and the army, that various taxes were exacted most rigorously (*acerbissime*), including that administered by the *fiscus Judaicus*. This tax had been imposed by Vespasian in the early seventies on Judaeans throughout the empire and was essentially the re-routing of the two-drachma temple-tax into the imperial treasuries, from which it was drawn to pay for the

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<sup>156</sup> Vogelstein 1940: 68 [a revised and translated edition of Vogelstein and Rieger 1895-6: 2 vols.]; cf. Case 1925: 10-20.

<sup>157</sup> *Contra Bilde* 1988: 102.

<sup>158</sup> See *War* 1.2, 6-8. This was especially the case in the city of Rome, where the public building projects and coinage perpetuated the defeat of the Judaeans publicly; cf. Goodman 1994b: 331-2. This negative atmosphere was discussed further in my Master’s thesis, “The Jewish Revolt and the Jews of Rome” (2006).

reconstruction of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.<sup>159</sup> The relatively brief account of the administration of this tax under Domitian is worth recording in full:

Besides other taxes, that on the Judaeans was levied with the utmost rigour, and those were prosecuted who without publicly acknowledging it yet lived as Judaeans, as well as those who concealed their origin and did not pay the tribute levied upon their people. I recall being present in my youth when the person of a man ninety years old was examined before the procurator and a very crowded court, to see whether he was circumcised.<sup>160</sup>

Although the exact dating of this account is unclear, Suetonius' reference to his own youthfulness (*adulescentulus*) suggests the possibility that this event, the humiliation of the old man, may have taken place relatively early on in Domitian's reign, perhaps already in 85,<sup>161</sup> which is significant when we consider the impact on the Judaeans living in Rome. Nevertheless, as Smallwood has pointed out, the description of Suetonius as *adulescens* is no basis for precision, since the term was used regularly for men in their twenties and beyond.<sup>162</sup>

The precise way in which we should understand the administration of this tax to have been administered harshly by Domitian has also been the subject of much scholarly debate. It has been connected to two other passages that are also relevant for our consideration of the position of the Judaeans in Domitianic Rome. The first of these is Cassius Dio's account of Domitian's

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<sup>159</sup> *War* 7.218: φόρον δὲ τοῖς ὀπουδηποτοῦν οὖσιν Ἰουδαίοις ἐπέβαλεν δύο δραχμὰς ἕκαστον κελεύσας ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος εἰς τὸ Καπετώλιον φέρειν, ὡς περ πρότερον εἰς τὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις νεῶν συνετέλουν; cf. *Cass. Dio* 66.7.2. The original temple tax is described at *Ant.* 3.194-6; cf. *Ant.* 18.312; *Exod.* 30:11-16; *Matt.* 17:24-7. For discussion, see Smallwood 1981[1976]: 124-7; Rives 2005: 152-3; Heemstra 2010: 9-23.

<sup>160</sup> *Suet. Dom.* 12.2: *Praeter ceteros Iudaicus fiscus acerbissime actus est; ad quem deferebantur, qui vel inprofessi Iudaicam viverent vitam vel dissimulata origine imposita genti tributa non pependissent. Interfuisse me adulescentulum memini, cum a procuratore frequentissimoque consilio inspiceretur nonagenarius senex, an circumsectus esset.*

<sup>161</sup> Suetonius reports elsewhere that he was an *adulescens* in AD 88 (*Nero* 57.2); regarding a dating around 85, see B. Jones 1992b: 76; 1996: 104; Heemstra 2010: 26-7.

<sup>162</sup> Smallwood 1956a: 12 n. 23, "these terms are of too wide application for the episode of the old man to be dated ca. 88 from their use"; she prefers to link this episode with the 'reign of terror' (AD 93-96); cf. Baldwin 1983: 4; Jones and Milns 2002: 152. Varro defined *adulescentes* as those in their sixteenth to thirtieth year, according to Censorinus *DN* 14; cf. *Cic. Brut.* 43; *De or.* 2.2; *Phil.* 2.44.113, 2.46.118. Smallwood's seems to be the generally accepted view, although most scholars simply cite the passage to confirm roughly the date of Suetonius birth around AD 70; see e.g. Wallace-Hadrill 1995: 3; Hurley 2001: 2; 2011: ix.

execution of his cousin, the former consul Flavius Clemens, and the exile of the consul's wife,

Flavia Domitilla:

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 also a relative of the emperor's. The charge brought against them both was that of atheism, a charge on which many others who drifted into Judaean ways were condemned. Some of these were put to death, and the rest were at least deprived of their property. Domitilla was only banished to Pandateria.<sup>163</sup>

Connected with this passage is his later description of the measures taken by Nerva upon his accession after the murder of Domitian to redress the wrongs that had occurred under the previous regime:

Nerva also released all who were on trial for *maiestas* 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 *maiestas* or of living the Judaean way of life.<sup>164</sup>

We should also add to these literary accounts the evidence of a series of *aes* coins that were produced by the mint in Rome after the accession of Nerva with two separate issues in AD 96 and a third early in AD 97. These coins proclaim FISCI IVDAICI CALVMNIA SVBLATA<sup>165</sup> around the edge of the reverse, framing a palm tree, characteristically used to represent Judaea on Roman coinage as manifested on the *Iudaea Capta* coinage,<sup>166</sup> which is flanked by the initials

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<sup>163</sup> Cass. Dio 67.14.1-2: κἀν ττ αὐττ ἔτει ἄλλους τε πολλοὺς καὶ τὸν Φλάουιον τὸν Κλήμεντα ὑπατεύοντα, καίπερ ἀνεπιὸν ὄντα καὶ γυναῖκα καὶ αὐτὴν συγγενῆ ἑαυτοῦ Φλαουίαν Δομιτίλλαν ἔχοντα, κατέσφαξεν ὁ Δομιτιανός. ἐπηνέχθη δὲ ἀμφοῖν ἔγκλημα ἀθεότητος, ὑφ' ἧς καὶ ἄλλοι ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἦθη ἐξοκέλλοντες πολλοὶ κατεδικάσθησαν, καὶ οἱ μὲν ἀπέθανον, οἱ δὲ τῶν γούν οὐσιῶν ἐστερήθησαν· ἡ δὲ Δομιτίλλα ὑπερωρίσθη μόνον ἐς Πανδατερίαν. Loeb translation (Cary 1925), adapted.

<sup>164</sup> Cass. Dio 68.1.2: καὶ ὁ Νέρουας τοὺς τε κρινομένους ἐπ' ἀσεβείᾳ ἀφῆκε καὶ τοὺς φεύγοντας κατήγαγε, τοὺς τε δούλους καὶ τοὺς ἐξελευθέρους τοὺς τοῖς δεσπότηαις σφῶν ἐπιβουλεύσαντας πάντας ἀπέκτεινε. καὶ τοῖς μὲν τοιούτοις οὐδ' ἄλλο τι ἔγκλημα ἐπιφέρειν ἐπὶ τοὺς δεσπότηας ἐφήκε, τοῖς δὲ δὴ ἄλλοις οὐτ' ἀσεβείας οὐτ' Ἰουδαικοῦ βίου κατατιτῆσθαι τινας συνεχώρησε. Loeb translation (Cary 1925), adapted.

<sup>165</sup> Heemstra 2010: 8, provides the most effective translation, "The removal of the wrongful accusation of the *fiscus Judaicus*."

<sup>166</sup> See *BMCRE* 2.Vespasian: 43 (pl. 1.13), 532, 533 (pl. 20.4), 534, 535 (pl. 20.5), 536, 537 (pl. 20.7), 538, 539 (pl. 20.6), 540, 541, 542 (pl. 20.9), 543 (pl. 20.8), 544, 545, 546 (pl. 20.10), 547, 604 (pl. 23.10), 605 (pl. 23.11), 606-609, 631 (pl. 25.1), 632, 642, 672, 736 (pl. 30.4), 761 (pl. 33.1), 762 (pl. 33.2), 763 (pl. 33.3), 764, 765 (pl. 33.4), 793, 796 (pl. 37.1), 800 (pl. 37.7), 812 (pl. 39.1), 826 (pl. 40.1), 845 (pl. 40.11), 862 (pl. 42.1), 863-5; Titus: 161,

S C (*senatus consultum*); while the obverse depicts the head of Nerva and his titles (IMP NERVA CAES AVG P M TR P COS II PP).<sup>167</sup> The very existence of these special issues alone reveals the significance of the issues surrounding the administration of the *fiscus Judaicus* during Domitian's reign.

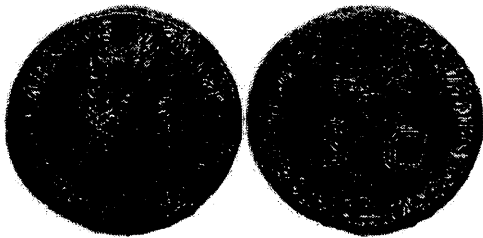


Fig. 1. Nerva: FISCUS IVD AICI CALVMNIA SVBLATA<sup>168</sup>  
Classical Numismatic Group, Inc. <http://www.cngcoins.com>

The key element in seeking to understand the impact of these proceedings for the Judaeans is the identification of the categories of individuals involved. In his most recent and extensive examination of these events, Heemstra has usefully provided a chart detailing the alignment of scholarship regarding the identities of the individuals who are presumed to have been affected by the harsh administration of the tax.<sup>169</sup> The possibilities presented in scholarship include proselytes and sympathizers to Judaism, apostate Jews, Judaeans tax evaders, other circumcised individuals, and Jewish or Gentile Christians.<sup>170</sup> Although it will not be possible to

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164 (pl. 48.9), 165-8, 169 (pl. 48.10), 170, 211, 259 (pl. 53.9), 308 (pl. 57.4). The palm tree also represents Judaea on the *Judaea Devicta* coin series: Vespasian: 371 (pl. 12.11), 388 (pl. 13.8), 524 (pl. 19.12), 526; and on some of the coins inscribed with *Victoria Augusti S.C.*: Vespasian: 577 (pl. 22.12), 582, 586 (pl. 23.1), 637, 652 (pl. 26.2), 749 (pl. 31.6), 783 (pl. 35.7), 785 (pl. 36.1), 786 (pl. 36.2). See also the IOYΔAIAΣ EAAΩKYIAΣ (i.e. *Judaea Capta* or *Devicta*) coins minted in Caesarea: Meshorer 1967: no. 235-8 (pl. 31); for discussion see Meshorer 1982: 2.190-97 (pl. 35). The palm tree is absent on Hadrian's imperial *Adventus* coins for Judaea minted in AD 130: *BMCRE* 3. Hadrian: 1655-61 (pl. 92.8, 9), a change that Goodman 2005b: 166, interprets as a significant divergence.

<sup>167</sup> *RIC* 2.227-8 no. 58, 72, 82; Mattingly 2005: 15 no. 88; 17 no. 98; 19 no. 105; cf. Shotton 1983: 218.

<sup>168</sup> *RIC* II 82; *BMCRE* 3. Nerva: 106.

<sup>169</sup> See Heemstra 2010: 33 table 1.

<sup>170</sup> The advocacy of these categories varies among the scholars presented: Smallwood 1956a: 1-13; Sordi 1960: 1-26; Bruce 1964: 34-45; Hemer 1973: 6-12; Keresztes 1973: 1-28; Smallwood 1981[1976]: 371-85; L.A. Thompson 1982: 329-42; Stenger 1988: 98-108; Goodman 1989: 40-44; M.H. Williams 1990: 196-211; Leon 1995[1960]: 33-6; Schäfer 1997: 114-6; Goodman 2007[1990]: 21-32.

reiterate the various positions here, nor to argue extensively for one position or another, it will be important to determine who was directly affected. For this, all three passages are important.

First of all, there were those who led a Judaic life—i.e. followed Judaeen customs—while not publicly acknowledging it (*improfessi Iudaicam viverent vitam*).<sup>171</sup> These were clearly not Judaeans themselves and so may be assimilated with those referred to by Cassius Dio as having “drifted into Judaeen ways” (ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἤθη ἐξοκέλλοντες) or “lived a Judaic life” (Ἰουδαικοῦ βίου).<sup>172</sup> These are, therefore, those individuals whom we know as proselytes or sympathizers, whose precise adherence to Judaeen customs varied.<sup>173</sup> They were not in fact liable to the tax, but their practice of religious customs that were traditionally associated with the Judaeans laid them open to accusation as such. When they were accused of being tax evaders then, it was necessary to determine whether or not this was indeed the case. The litmus test for males was a public examination of the sort witnessed by Suetonius, in which the elderly man was publicly humiliated. If it was indeed determined on this basis that the individual was Judaeen, with the officials operating under the assumption that the combination of Judaeen ways and circumcision were decisive in this regard, he would henceforth be subject to the tax and perhaps have his property confiscated.<sup>174</sup> If, however, he was discovered not to be Judaeen, and yet was following Judaeen customs, he was not compelled to pay the tax but was instead liable to condemnation as an atheist (ἄθεότητος), possibly under the laws of *maiestas*, which was also

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<sup>171</sup> What follows is largely in line with the views presented by Heemstra 2010: 24-66.

<sup>172</sup> See especially the close parallel between Ἰουδαικοῦ βίου (Cass. Dio 68.1.2) and *Iudaica vita* (Suet. *Dom.* 12.2).

<sup>173</sup> For a list of scholarship on the question of the existence and nature of ‘proselytes’ and ‘sympathizers’, see pp. 66-7 n. 155. Among these, in the case of liability to the tax, may be included non-Judaean Christians, who would likely have been largely indistinguishable at this time from the Judaeans themselves from an outsider’s perspective.

<sup>174</sup> The possibility of land confiscation is raised by Josephus’ reference (*Ant.* 16.163-4) to a decree of Augustus in which it is stated that anyone who violates the ‘sacred money’ of the Judaeans, then directed to the Temple or collected in the synagogue, will forfeit his property to the *aerarium populi Romani*; cf. Heemstra 2010: 22-3.

punishable with the confiscation of property or even death.<sup>175</sup> In this case there may have been a further test in which the accused was asked to worship the emperor, an impossibility for those who had fully adopted the Judaeian way of life.<sup>176</sup> Those who passed both tests were then free to go.

The other category of persons who faced prosecution during this time were those who allegedly sought to conceal their actual ethnic status as Judaeians in order to avoid paying the tax (*dissimulata origine imposita genti tributa non pependissent*). The majority of these were likely Judaeians who no longer held to their ancestral customs, so-called “apostate Jews”,<sup>177</sup> but were still considered by the Romans to be Judaeian because of their ethnic origin.<sup>178</sup> Josephus describes the imposition of the tax as imposed on “all Judaeians regardless of location” (τοῖς ὅπουδηποτοῦν οὖσιν Ἰουδαίοις... ἕκαστον)—and it is unlikely that he has it wrong, given that he himself would have paid the tax, barring an exemption<sup>179</sup>—while Suetonius defines the tax as one levied upon an ethnic group (*imposita genti tributa*).<sup>180</sup> Tax records from Egypt also confirm that the tax was not simply demanded from those who had previously paid the two-drachma

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<sup>175</sup> This reconstruction avoids the ‘fundamental contradiction’ pointed out by L.A. Thompson 1982: 336, “That notion requires one to assume... a Domitianic neglect of the rule of law to the extent that a Roman citizen could legally be compelled to pay a tax to which his *Iudaeus* status rendered him liable, and *at the same time* be punished on the ground that he was not legally entitled to that status”; cf. Goodman 2007[1990]: 27-8.

<sup>176</sup> See Heemstra 2010: 30-31. This suggestion is based on the treatment of Christians in legal situations, at which sacrifice to the emperor or the denunciation of Christ served as proof that they were not in fact ‘atheists’ but were loyal to the empire; cf. Plin. *Ep.* 10.96; Rev. 13:15; 20:4. Josephus also mentions a sacrifice test in the context of the clashes between the Judaeians of Antioch and their neighbours at which point the refusal of the Judaeians to indicate their loyalty to the city in this manner resulted in their deaths; see *War* 7.47-62. The question of Christian persecution during the reign of Domitian cannot be dealt with here, except where it intersects with the treatment of the Judaeians; cf. Knudsen 1945: 17-32; Smallwood 1956a: 7-9; Keresztes 1973: 15-28; L.L. Thompson 1990: 15-7; B. Jones 1992b: 114-17; Riemer 2000: 75-80.

<sup>177</sup> Cf. Barclay 1998: 80-98, esp. 94 n. 7.

<sup>178</sup> See *Ant.* 20.100, concerning Tiberius Julius Alexander: τοῖς γὰρ πατρίοις οὐκ ἐνέμεινεν οὗτος ἔθεσιν.

<sup>179</sup> *War* 7.218: φόρον δὲ τοῖς ὅπουδηποτοῦν οὖσιν Ἰουδαίοις ἐπέβαλεν δύο δραχμὰς ἕκαστον κελεύσας ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος εἰς τὸ Καπετάλιον φέρειν, ὥσπερ πρότερον εἰς τὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις νεῶν συνετέλουν. The reference in Cass. Dio 66.7.2 to the effect that liability was limited to people of Judaeian origin ‘who maintained their ancestral customs’ (τοὺς τὰ πάτρια αὐτῶν ἔθη περιστέλλοντας) may reflect a later development in the administration of the tax; cf. Goodman 1989: 41; Heemstra 2010: 80. This could also have played a role in the transition in meaning from Judaeian (ethnic identifier) to Jew (religious identifier).

<sup>180</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 12.2.



contribution to the Temple in Jerusalem, namely the males between the ages of twenty and fifty,<sup>181</sup> but that women, children, and slaves were also liable, including those who were Roman citizens.<sup>182</sup> These non-observant Judaeans who had not been paying the tax were, therefore, also legally obligated to do so. It is not necessarily the case that they deliberately sought to avoid paying the tax; they may simply have been absent, given their rejection of their ancestral practices, from the synagogue registers of Temple tax payers, if such did indeed exist and were used by the administrators of the tax in their determination of who was liable.<sup>183</sup> Others, however, may have intentionally sought to hide their ethnic background. Martial refers to a comic actor named Menophilus, who sought to conceal his circumcision by the use of a *fibula*, which fell off while he was engaged in sports, to his great dismay.<sup>184</sup> It is, however, unclear how common was the practice of infibulation or the *epispasmos* operation, which both sought to address the visible marker of circumcision.<sup>185</sup> In any case, once their ethnic origin was established, they would have been forced to pay the tax and, perhaps, have had their property confiscated as well.

Other possible targets may have been simple tax evaders, that is, practicing Judaeans who had in some manner or another managed to keep their names off the registers; proselytes who had been circumcised and who were therefore for the Romans indistinguishable from the Judaeans themselves; circumcised non-Judaeans who were maliciously brought before the court; and Judaeans who may have already separated themselves from the synagogues prior to the

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<sup>181</sup> See Exod. 30:13; Neh. 10:32; Philo *Mos.* 2.3; *Ant.* 3.194-6. The ninety-year-old man examined in Suet. *Dom.* 12.2 was, therefore, also outside the traditional age range for the Temple tax.

<sup>182</sup> *CPJ* 160-229, 321, 421.

<sup>183</sup> As suggested by L.A. Thompson 1982: 333; cf. Heemstra 2010: 21-3. But the evidence for such registers is slim; see Cohen 1999: 49-52.

<sup>184</sup> Mart. *Ep.* 7.82. Another possible reference can be found in *Ep.* 11.75: "your slave goes into the bath with you, Caelia, covered with a brass sheath"; cf. 7.30, 55; 11.94; Petron. *Sat.* 102.13-5.

<sup>185</sup> The references do not justify the statement of L.A. Thompson 1982: 338, "Hence many apostates had sought to conceal their circumcision by means of the *epispasmos* operation, or by wearing the *aluta* or the *fibula*, in order to facilitate their full integration in Roman society." We receive no indication of numbers.

assessment of the tax and so had escaped the register.<sup>186</sup> Of the individuals who were accused of concealing their ethnic status, those who would be willing to perform the sacrifice test to repudiate their ‘atheism’, namely the Judaeans who no longer followed the ancestral customs and the circumcised non-Judaeans, may have been given the opportunity to demonstrate their lawful exemption from the tax in this manner. Nevertheless, they would have first been subjected to a public examination of the sort experienced by the ninety-year-old man when Suetonius was present.

Now the rigorous administration of the tax was in itself not unjust.<sup>187</sup> In the context of the financial disaster that Domitian was experiencing, it is not surprising that he would desire to ensure that his tax officials were collecting the maximum amount of revenue. If we follow Josephus and Suetonius in supposing that all Judaeans were subject to the tax,<sup>188</sup> which suggests an ethnic basis for the imposition,<sup>189</sup> but consider that practically speaking it was extracted under Vespasian and Titus only from those who had already been paying the Temple tax and who may have had their names on some sort of synagogue registry, then it is possible that there were considerable numbers of individuals who were “unjustly” escaping the tax. These were those who were not immediately recognizable as Judaeans by their practice of Judaeian customs and were justifiably brought before the courts, examined, and condemned for tax evasion.<sup>190</sup> Among the Romans, however, there may have been sympathy for those who were dragged before the

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<sup>186</sup> See Heemstra 2010: 64-66.

<sup>187</sup> Thus M.H. Williams 1990: 200, “All he was doing was simply enforcing the payment of the tax from those who were already obliged to pay.”

<sup>188</sup> *War* 7.218; *Suet. Dom.* 12.2.

<sup>189</sup> See Goodman 1989: 40, “The assumption that ethnic origin presupposed religious practices is entirely in accordance with standard pagan use of the Greek term Ἰουδαῖος, Latin *Judaeus*, before A.D. 70. Nor is this very surprising, since it was also the standard Jewish assumption as found in Philo and Josephus”; he cites: Hecataeus of Abdera *ap. Diod. Sic.* 40.3 and *Ap.* 1.183-204; Agatharchides of Cnidus *ap. Ap.* 1.205-11; *Cic. Flac.* 28.66-9; *Prov. cons.* 5.10; *Varro ap. August. De civ. D.* 4.31; cf. Stern 1974: vol. 1. The ancient designation of Ἰουδαῖος as an ethnic identifier (i.e. Judaeian) rather than a religious one in the modern sense (i.e. Jew) has been explored at length by Mason 2007a: 1-56; see also Boyarin 2003: 68; 2009: 7-36. For alternative views, see D.R Schwartz 1992a: 5-15; Cohen 1999: 109-39; D.R Schwartz 2005: 68-78; S. Schwartz 2011: 208-38.

<sup>190</sup> Regarding the difficulty in identifying Jews in antiquity, see Goodman 1989: 41-2; Cohen 1993: 1-45.

courts.<sup>191</sup> We should imagine that the *delatores* targeted the wealthy, since otherwise there would have been little to gain, among whom there may have been influential figures. It is indeed conceivable that a figure such as Tiberius Julius Alexander himself, who had achieved the prestigious position of praetorian prefect in the city of Rome and who may still have been alive at this time, could have been subjected to payment of the tax, if he was not paying it already.<sup>192</sup> Furthermore, we might well imagine that there were also wealthy non-Judaeans who may have exhibited practices that were similar to those of the Judaeans and could therefore have also been drawn up before the court, in this case unjustly. Around the time of the expulsion of the Judaeans from the city of Rome by Tiberius (AD 19), when the emperor was more generally seeking to strengthen traditional Roman religious practices,<sup>193</sup> Seneca saw fit to give up his vegetarian diet for fear of being implicated in the ‘superstition’, with which some associated the rejection of animal food.<sup>194</sup> This would imply that others were thus associated falsely, and supports the existence of similar occurrences under Domitian. Although these individuals would have escaped punishment and subjection to the tax, the indiscriminate accusations would have created a poisonous atmosphere.

Nevertheless, the real calumny that occurred in the rigorous administration of the tax was that it became the instrument also for the resulting trials for ‘atheism’ that took place when those who were examined proved not to be circumcised, but were subsequently condemned for having

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<sup>191</sup> See also Goodman 1989: 41, “It may be assumed that Romans accepted the right of ethnic Jews like other people to assimilate into the Roman citizen community or other peregrine communities so long as they gave up their peculiar customs, and Domitian’s behaviour was an affront to this attitude.”

<sup>192</sup> See Turner 1954: 61-4, regarding the prefecture and the possible dates for his death; cf. Goodman 1989: 41; 2007[1990]: 28.

<sup>193</sup> See Leon 1995[1960]: 19.

<sup>194</sup> Sen. *Ep.* 108.22: *His ego instinctus abstinere animalibus coepi...Quaeris, quomodo desierim? In primum Tiberii Caesaris principatum iuventae tempus inciderat. Alienigena tum sacra movebantur, sed inter argumenta superstitionis ponebatur quorundam animalium abstinencia. Pater itaque meo rogante, qui non calumniam timebat, sed philosophiam oderat, ad pristinam consuetudinem redii;* for the connection to the Judaeans expulsion, see M.H. Williams 1989: 772; Gruen 2002: 30.

“drifted into Judaeen ways”.<sup>195</sup> While prosecution for tax evasion was appropriate for the *fiscus* to oversee—and thus was not a *calumnia*—the prosecution of individuals who were accused of “living a Judaeen life” did not fall under the jurisdiction of the *fiscus*. Moreover, Cassius Dio reports that, besides Flavius Clemens and Flavia Domitilla, many were condemned under the charge of atheism for this very reason.<sup>196</sup> Whether or not these individuals were justly condemned as atheists or not is unclear, although if a test was involved we might suspect that unfounded accusations would have been unsuccessful. It was, in any case, this abuse of the *fiscus* that Nerva very publicly ended as one of his first acts as emperor, proclaiming the change with a series of low denomination coin issues calculated to circulate amongst all the social classes in the city of Rome.<sup>197</sup> What is more, he condemned to death the slave and freedmen *delatores* who had conspired against their masters in their charges of *maiestas* and “living a Judaeen life”.<sup>198</sup> Significantly, the precise charge for which a *delator* could himself be arraigned was *calumnia*.<sup>199</sup> The misuse of the *fiscus Judaicus* was, therefore, tied closely to the charges of ‘atheism’.

The prominence accorded these actions by Nerva correspondingly highlights the significance of these events for the climate in Domitianic Rome. At the same time the actual impact on the large majority of the Judaeans living in the city of Rome may have been minimal. Those who were paying the tax already, which surely constituted a majority, would have been unaffected directly.<sup>200</sup> It is, therefore, incorrect to speak of “something very much like a

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<sup>195</sup> This interpretation, the most convincing, is made by Heemstra 2010: 67-84.

<sup>196</sup> Cass. Dio 67.14.1-3. The charge of atheism was one that had been applied to the Judaeans already by Apollonius Molon in the first century BC (*Ap.* 2.148), while other writers apply similar criticism; Plin. *HN* 13.4.46: *gens contumelia numinum insignis*; Tac. *Hist.* 5.5: *contemnere deos*; 5.13.1.

<sup>197</sup> *RIC* 2.227-8 no. 58, 72, 82; Mattingly 2005: 15 no. 88; 17 no. 98; 19 no. 105; cf. Goodman 2006: 81-9; 2007b: 468-9.

<sup>198</sup> Cass. Dio 68.1.2.

<sup>199</sup> See Suet. *Dom.* 9.3: *fiscales calumnias magna calumniantium poena repressit*; cf. de Ste. Croix 1963: 15.

<sup>200</sup> See Edwards 1992: 305, “Such activities by Domitian, however, probably had little additional impact on those who professed their Jewish heritage and religion”; cf. Smallwood 1956a: 9.

persecution”.<sup>201</sup> At the same time, a concern for replenishing the imperial coffers does not alone account for the abuses that were suffered by those associated in some way with the Judaeans. Certainly Suetonius includes his account in the context of the financially straitened circumstances of Domitian’s rule.<sup>202</sup> And more specifically, the destruction of the Capitoline temple by fire for a third time in AD 80,<sup>203</sup> already rebuilt after its earlier destruction in AD 69 by Vespasian with the proceeds of the *fiscus Judaicus*,<sup>204</sup> may have led to Domitian’s desire to increase the return from this tax specifically.<sup>205</sup> Nevertheless, the extreme measures taken in the examination process, the stripping of a ninety-year-old man, and the condemnation of such highly placed individuals as Flavius Clemens for Judaeau sympathies indicate that the liberties taken by the *delatores* had the tacit approval of the emperor himself.

A lack of sympathy for the plight of the Judaeans, and perhaps hostility towards them and those who were attracted to their ancestral customs, also fits well within Domitian’s attention to the religious climate of the city of Rome. As Augustus had before him, Domitian took very seriously his position as the “supervisor of laws and morals” (*curator legum et morum*),<sup>206</sup> as is revealed particularly by his severe treatment of the Vestal Virgins whose moral turpitude threatened the sanctity of the community.<sup>207</sup> Indeed, in AD 85 he even took on the position of *ensor perpetuus*, a title that then appeared consistently on his coinage.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Syme 1930: 67 n. 2; cf. M.H. Williams 1990: 210-11.

<sup>202</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 12: *Exhaustus operum ac munerum inpensis stipendioque...*; cf. Levick 1982: 60.

<sup>203</sup> The first time was in 83 BC; see App. *BCiv.* 1.83, 86; cf. Cic. *Cat.* 3.4.9; Sall. *Cat.* 47.2; Ovid *Fast.* 1.201; Plin. *HN* 33.5.16; Plut. *Sulla* 27.6; Tac. *Hist.* 3.72.

<sup>204</sup> See *War* 7.218; Suet. *Vit.* 15.3; Cass. Dio 66.7.2.

<sup>205</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 5.

<sup>206</sup> *Res Gestae* 6.1; cf. Cass. Dio 54.10.5; Brunt & Moore 1967: 45-6; Scheid 2007: 36; Vervaet 2010: 141 n. 20. There are some discrepancies between the *Res Gestae* and Suet. *Aug.* 27.5 and Cass. Dio 54.30.1.

<sup>207</sup> See Suet. *Dom.* 8.3-5; cf. B. Jones 1992b: 99.

<sup>208</sup> See Buttrey 1975: 26-34; *contra* B. Jones 1973: 276-7; cf. Carradice 1983: 29.

He has in this connection also been recognized as a “strong upholder of the state religion”.<sup>209</sup> Chief among the objects of his veneration was Jupiter himself, even more so than was the case with the previous Flavian rulers. He recognized Jupiter as the saviour of his life in AD 69 and so erected a shrine to *Iuppiter Conservator*, while also undertaking the restoration of the great Capitoline temple of Jupiter, destroyed in 80. The *sodales Flaviales* were also transformed with Jupiter as recipient of the cult activities. Also the poets writing under his regime indulged his desire to be connected with that god by linking the two together frequently as well.<sup>210</sup> It was during such times of re-established commitment to traditional Roman religious practices that the emperors were accustomed on the one hand to reclaim their associations with the ‘official’ Roman divinities and on the other hand to highlight this devotion by distancing themselves from foreign *superstitiones* represented by targets such as the astrologers, magicians, followers of Isis, or the Judaeans, either by expulsion, the curtailing of activity, or some other public means, while also taking a dim view of those who sympathized with these marginal groups.<sup>211</sup>

Another feature of Domitian’s religious policy that may have made the atmosphere in Rome uncomfortable for the Judaeans, and may have contributed to his ill-will towards them, was an increased focus on the divinity of that emperor. Although this aspect has frequently been overblown,<sup>212</sup> the evidence suggests that Domitian was a greater object of veneration than his

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<sup>209</sup> See Charlesworth 1935: 22; cf. Keresztes 1973: 22.

<sup>210</sup> See Suet. *Dom.* 4.4; Stat. *Silv.* 1. *praef.*; 1.1.79-81; 1.6.39-50; 4.3.128-9; 4.4.58; Sil. *Pun.* 3.570-629; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.91; Mart. *Ep.* 4.8.12; 7.99; cf. Fears 1981: 74-80.

<sup>211</sup> See Val. Max. 1.3.3; *Ant.* 18.81-4; Suet. *Tib.* 36; Tac. *Ann.* 2.85; Cass. Dio 57.18.5a; Suet. *Claud.* 25.4; Oros. 7.6.15; Acts 18:2; cf. Leon 1995[1960]: 19; Beard, North, and Price 1998: 1.228-44; Gruen 2002: 29-41, 52-3. For alternative interpretations of the expulsions, see M.H. Williams 1989: 765-784; Slingerland 1997; Rutgers 1998b: 93-117; M.H. Williams 2010: 79-102.

<sup>212</sup> See e.g. Case 1925: 19; Scott 1975[1936]: 102-12; Smallwood 1956a: 5-6; Keresztes 1973: 22.

predecessors, excepting Gaius.<sup>213</sup> It is unlikely that Domitian himself demanded to be addressed as *Dominus et Deus*, since no staunch Roman would have accepted a blurring of the clear distinction between the deified emperors (*divi*) and the traditional Roman gods (*dei*) or between the *divi* and the living emperor.<sup>214</sup> Furthermore, this would have contradicted the spontaneous nature of imperial cult activity, which does not appear to have changed during the reign of Domitian.<sup>215</sup> Nevertheless, the pervasiveness of the address in the sources suggests a widespread usage among the subjects of the empire who would surely not have employed it without permission or even encouragement from the emperor himself.<sup>216</sup> He would also have done little to discourage the obeisance that may have accompanied this address, if we attach historical value to Pliny's denigrating comparison of Domitian to Trajan, the *optimus princeps*.<sup>217</sup> The Judaeans and proselytes, however, would have been unable to ingratiate themselves with the emperor in the same manner as a certain Juventius Celsus who, facing death for his part in a conspiracy, grovelled before the emperor and repeatedly addressed him as 'Lord and Master'.<sup>218</sup> Furthermore, the destruction of the temple in AD 70 had already removed from them the significant concession they had traditionally made towards the imperial cult, namely the daily sacrifice of two lambs and a bull on behalf of the emperor.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Waters 1964: 74, "All the evidence undoubtedly points to an increasing emphasis on the divinity of the emperor; this was inevitable, a process which had begun long before Domitian and would continue almost uninterrupted for two centuries."

<sup>214</sup> Statius (*Silv.* 1.6.83-4) provides explicit evidence that Domitian was reticent to be called *dominus*. For this view of the imperial cult under Domitian, see Waters 1964: 67; L.A. Thompson 1984: 469-75; B. Jones 1992b: 108-9; L.L. Thompson 1990: 104-7; cf. Southern 1997: 46, "Sober judgement dictates that he cannot have thought of himself as a god; to accept that he did necessitates a more detailed examination of his sanity."

<sup>215</sup> See Harland 2003: 185-7.

<sup>216</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 13.1-2; Cass. Dio 67.4.7; 67.13.3-4; Plin. *Pan.* 2.3; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 11.2; *Epit. de Caes.* 11.6; Eutr. 7.23; Oros. 7.10; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 45.1; cf. Griffin 2000a: 81, "it was a matter of flattery on one side and arrogance on the other, not of theological aberration."

<sup>217</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 24.2; cf. Epict. 4.1.17.

<sup>218</sup> Cass. Dio 67.13.4.

<sup>219</sup> See War 2.197, 409-10; *Ap.* 2.77; Philo *Leg.* 157, 317, 357; cf. Plin. *Ep.* 10.100. This practice may originate in the Persian period; see Ezra 6:9-10; *Ant.* 11.119; 1 Macc. 7.33. Cf. S. Price 1984: 209-10; McLaren 2005c: 272-3; Mason 2008a: 164 n. 1240, 314 n. 2575; Barclay 2007: 210-11 ns. 267-8.

So, although there is little evidence to suggest that the Judaeans as a group faced direct persecution at this time, the sources provide ample reference to situations that may have increased the anxiety of the Judaeans living in the city of Rome.<sup>220</sup> In the immediate aftermath of the revolt already, the city of Rome was not a particularly welcome place for the Judaeans, and the accession of an emperor who displayed even less sympathy towards them contributed to the hostile atmosphere. This was reflected within the literary climate, as is clear from the snide remarks concerning the Judaeans of writers such as Quintilian and Martial, who were generally known “to toe the party line”, at least outwardly.<sup>221</sup> It is also apparent in the writings of Tacitus and Juvenal, who, although writing after the death of Domitian, cut their teeth on public life in Domitianic Rome.<sup>222</sup> These xenophobic attitudes did not originate in the Flavian period, but we should certainly not discount the evidence that suggests a general increase in hostility towards the Judaeans in some quarters, which may have been caused incidentally by the emphasis placed on the suppression of the Judaeian revolt by Vespasian and Titus but was furthered more intentionally by Domitian’s policy regarding the *fiscus Judaicus* and the trials for ‘atheism’.<sup>223</sup>

Within this political, social, and cultural climate Josephus wrote and released his *magnum opus*, the *Antiquities*. I have already noted that this was a work that was specifically targeted

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<sup>220</sup> There is also rabbinic evidence that may suggest that there was unease among the Judaeans at this time, but these references are of dubious value. See *b.Sukkah* 23a, 41b; *y.Sukkah* ii, 4, 52d; *m.Ma’as. S.* v, 9; *m.Sabb.* xvi, 8; *m.Erub.* iv, 2; *m.Abod. Zar.* 10b-11a; *Deut. Rab.* 2.24; cf. Smallwood 1956a: 9-10 n. 50; B. Jones 1992b: 118; Griffin 2000a: 76 n. 380. But see Goodman 2005a: 167 n. 1, “it is significant that these texts are entirely ignored by Schäfer [*Judeophobia*] (1997), who is acutely aware of the need for greater sophistication in the use of such rabbinic material for history.” We should also note the questionable historicity of such apocryphal texts as the *Acta Iohannis*, which recounts that Domitian was anxious to expel the Judaeans from Rome, but persecuted the Christians instead when the Judaeans protested their innocence of any subversive activity.

<sup>221</sup> Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.21; Mart. *Ep.* 4.4; 7.30.5; 7.35.3-4; 7.82.5-6; 11.94; 12.57.13. These sentiments were not new (see e.g. Cic. *Flac.* 67), but appear to have increased nonetheless; cf. Hild 1885: 166-72; Stern 1974: 1.512; M.H. Williams 1990: 197 (quotation), 205-6.

<sup>222</sup> Juv. 3.10-18; 3.296; 6.153-60; 6.542-47; Tac. *Hist.* 5.1-13.

<sup>223</sup> See Barclay 1996: 310-16. That Domitian was the origin for the sentiments found in the writers listed above is strongly suggested by the fact that Quintilian’s negative reference likely originated after the death of his patron, who was Flavius Clemens himself (cf. Auson. *Grat. act.* 7), and may reflect a concern to distance himself from the Judaeian sympathies of his patron; see Clarke 1967: 34-5, “One cannot be too careful under a despotism.”



towards those who were already sympathetic to Judaeen customs.<sup>224</sup> It was, therefore, in direct contravention to the attitude that Domitian was cultivating among the inhabitants of Rome. Mason has even presented the possibility that among Josephus' readership were the very representatives of those who had fallen out of Domitian's favour for their having "drifted into Judaeen ways", namely T. Flavius Clemens, Flavia Domitilla, and M. Acilius Glabrio, citing the coincidence between Josephus' publication of the *Antiquities/Life* in AD 93/4 and the subsequent execution of the two ex-consuls and banishment of Clemens' wife in 95.<sup>225</sup> While we can only speculate regarding potential connections between Josephus and these specific individuals, they do provide confirmation that there were those who may have been eager to read or sit through the recitation of a 20-volume work that took approximately 12 years of Josephus' life to produce at a pace of some ten lines of Greek per day.<sup>226</sup> At the same time, they illustrate the possible dangers inherent with being among Josephus' readership. At its most basic level the *Antiquities* was subversive literature.

Moreover, Josephus interacted with the contemporary state of affairs in the *Antiquities* as well. The setting of Domitianic Rome, with all of the features described above, provides a key to explaining certain elements of the work.<sup>227</sup> Perhaps the most pervasive and obvious of these is Josephus' consistent concern to present the appropriate ways in which to deal with the Judaeans, often by presenting either positive or negative examples.<sup>228</sup> The clearest illustration of this is in his lengthy digression on the reign and death of Gaius in which the impious actions of that emperor in attempting to erect a statue of himself within the temple at Jerusalem are contrasted

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<sup>224</sup> See *Ant.* 1.5, 9, 12; 16.174; 20.262; cf. Bilde 1988: 102-3; Mason 1998b: 66-72, 79-80, 95-7. Regarding the traditional approaches to questions regarding the aims and audience(s) of the *Antiquities*, see Mason 1998b: 64-72; 2000: xiii-xvi. For examples of previous explanations of aim and audience see Thackeray 1929: 51-9; S. Schwartz 1990: 209; Mason 1991: 182-3; Sterling 1992: 298-308; Cohen 2002[1979]: 237-8; Rajak 2002[1983]: 226-7.

<sup>225</sup> Mason 1998b: 97-8; 2000: xxxiv-v; cf. Cotton and Eck 2005: 45.

<sup>226</sup> See Feldman 1982: 97 n. 94; 1998a: 668; 1998b: 540.

<sup>227</sup> See Case 1925: 10-20; McLaren 2005c: 277-8.

<sup>228</sup> Josephus' narrative tends to focus on great individuals; see Feldman 1998a: 74-5.

with those of Petronius, the Roman legate of Syria, who risked his life to stand up for the Judaeans begging for his assistance.<sup>229</sup> Although Josephus had already recounted this story in his *War*,<sup>230</sup> here the narrative is extended and presents a much more overt and consistent message: the God of the Judaeans is intimately involved in protecting the rights of his people. Indeed, Agrippa I claims in his advice to Gaius that abandoning his plans will “bring you a reputation for piety and will induce the Deity to help you in everything that you wish.”<sup>231</sup> Josephus also admits that his inclusion of an account of Gaius’ subsequent death is to further explicate this message:

I have another particular motive in that the story provides good evidence of God’s power. It will comfort those who are in unhappy circumstances, and will teach a lesson in sobriety to those who think that good fortune is eternal and do not know that it ends in catastrophe unless it goes hand in hand with virtue.<sup>232</sup>

Although it is unlikely that Josephus was directly addressing the emperor at this point, Case’s observation is pertinent: “...nor could he well venture to express more pointedly his warning to Domitian against treading in the footsteps of Gaius whose fatal blunder had been the violation of Jewish religious liberty.”<sup>233</sup>

A second clear example of Josephus’ conscious interaction with the circumstances in which he was writing the *Antiquities* can be found in his lengthy enumeration of the various rights and privileges granted to the Judaeans, which have often been categorized under the umbrella of a “Roman Charter for the Jews”.<sup>234</sup> These decrees are not found in his *War* and they serve here as illustrations of the freedoms traditionally granted to the Judaeans by the Romans,

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<sup>229</sup> *Ant.* 18.257-308; 19.1-211.

<sup>230</sup> *War* 2.184-203.

<sup>231</sup> *Ant.* 18.297: ὁ τι δ’ ἂν σοὶ δόξαν προσποιῶ τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς καὶ τὸ θεῖον σύμμαχον ἐφ’ οἷς θελήσειας παρακαλοῖ.

<sup>232</sup> *Ant.* 19.16: ἄλλως τε ἐπειδὴ καὶ πολλὴν ἔχει πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ παραμυθίαν τοῖς ἐν τύχαις κεϊμένοις καὶ σωφρονισμὸν τοῖς οἰομένοις ἀίδιον τὴν εὐτυχίαν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἐπιμεταφέρειν κακῶς ἀρετῆς αὐτῆ μὴ παραγενομένης; cf. 18.305-308.

<sup>233</sup> Case 1925: 19.

<sup>234</sup> *Ant.* 16.160-78; 19.281-85, 287-91, 303-311; for a reasoned rejection of these decrees as evidence of the status of Judaism as a *religio licita* and of the Judaeans as recipients of special privileges as a rule, see Rajak 1984: 107-23.

some of which had already been requested and received from the Seleucids.<sup>235</sup> Josephus explicitly states his intention with these illustrations as follows, “I frequently make mention of these decrees, in order to reconcile other people to us, and to take away the causes of that hatred which unreasonable men bear to us.”<sup>236</sup> The resonance of this statement in Domitianic Rome is immediately obvious, particularly when we consider that one of the primary concerns in the decrees is with the economic privileges granted the Judaeans in various places and times, including the freedom to contribute to the Temple, which Josephus may be holding up against the recent rigorous application of the tax by the *fiscus Judaicus*.<sup>237</sup>

Other elements of the narrative intersect directly with Domitian’s actions against those who “drifted into Judaeian ways”. This occurs most plainly in Josephus’ account of the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene, which happened around AD 30.<sup>238</sup> According to the narrative, the young prince Izates, while taking refuge in the court of the king of Charax Spasini, came into contact with a Judaeian merchant named Ananias, who taught him to worship God according to the tradition of the Judaeians (τὸν θεὸν σέβειν, ὡς Ἰουδαίοις πάτριον ἦν). Upon his return to Adiabene, he discovered that his mother, the queen Helena, had also been taught by a certain other Judaeian to be carried over to their laws (εἰς τοὺς ἐκείνων μετακεκομίσθαι νόμους).<sup>239</sup> Although much scholarship on this passage has focused on the historical background of conversion to Judaism and proselytism in the ancient world or on the sources behind this

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<sup>235</sup> For scholarship on these documents, see Motzo 1926-27: 279-82; Moehring 1975: 124-58; Rajak 1984: 120-21; Pucci Ben Zeev 1998; Rajak 2002[1983]: 228; 2007: 177-89.

<sup>236</sup> *Ant.* 16.175: ποιῶμαι δὲ πολλάκις αὐτῶν τὴν μνήμην ἐπιδιαλλάττων τὰ γένη καὶ τὰς ἐμπεφυκυίας τοῖς ἀλογίστοις ἡμῶν τε κἀκείνων μίσους αἰτίας ὑπεξαιρούμενος.

<sup>237</sup> See Case 1925: 14.

<sup>238</sup> *Ant.* 20.17-96; the conversion is also referred to in rabbinic literature; see e.g. *m.Naz.* 3.6; *t.Sukkah* 1.1; *Ber. Rab.* 46.11.

<sup>239</sup> *Ant.* 20.34-5: Καθ’ ὃν δὲ χρόνον ὁ Ἰζάτης ἐν τῷ Σπασίνου χάρακι διέτριβεν Ἰουδαῖός τις ἔμπορος Ἀνανίας ὄνομα πρὸς τὰς γυναῖκας εἰσιῶν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐδίδασκεν αὐτὰς τὸν θεὸν σέβειν, ὡς Ἰουδαίοις πάτριον ἦν, καὶ διὰ δι’ αὐτῶν εἰς γνώσιν ἀφικόμενος τῷ Ἰζάτῃ κἀκείνων ὁμοίως συνανέπεισεν μετακληθέντι τε ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς εἰς τὴν Ἀδιαβηνὴν συνεξῆλθεν κατὰ πολλὴν ὑπακούσας δέησιν: συνεβεβήκει δὲ καὶ τὴν Ἑλένην ὁμοίως ὑφ’ ἑτέρου τινὸς Ἰουδαίου διδαχθεῖσαν εἰς τοὺς ἐκείνων μετακεκομίσθαι νόμους.

narrative,<sup>240</sup> Mason rightly identifies the passage as fully Josephan and, therefore, as an important episode for understanding Josephus' own attitude towards conversion.<sup>241</sup> Using the conversion of Izates as an example, Josephus demonstrates that adherence to the laws of the Judaeans, even to the point of circumcision, has a beneficial effect on the course of the convert's life, which was directly attributable to divine favour. Queen Helena's famous visit to Jerusalem in AD 46, at which time she provided relief to the inhabitants from the famine that was oppressing them,<sup>242</sup> was inspired, according to Josephus, by her recognition that "her son was blessed, and admired by all men, and even among foreigners, on account of God's providence over him."<sup>243</sup> Furthermore, when Izates faced hatred as a result of his conversion and had to deal with the invasion of the Parthian king, Vologaeses, Josephus reports that the Adiabenian king placed himself in God's hand and acknowledged his power over the might of the Parthian empire; his confidence was then also rewarded.<sup>244</sup> So, although his conversion brought significant difficulties to him, including hatred from his own subjects for his abandonment of their ancestral traditions in favour of foreign customs, Izates serves nonetheless as a supremely positive example of one who decided to "live a Judaeian life".<sup>245</sup> Herein Josephus demonstrates to his sympathetic readers that the adoption of Judaeian customs despite opposition from hostile

<sup>240</sup> Neusner 1964: 60-66; Collins 1985: 163-86; Schiffman 1987: 293-312; McKnight 1991: 56, 59-60, 75, 80; Goodman 1994a: 84; Dickson 2003: 33-7.

<sup>241</sup> Mason 1996a: 201-207; 1998b: 90-95.

<sup>242</sup> Cf. *Ant.* 20.101; Acts 11:27-30.

<sup>243</sup> *Ant.* 20.49: τὸν δὲ υἱὸν αὐτῆς μακάριον καὶ παρὰ πᾶσι ζηλωτὸν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοεθνεῖσι διὰ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν. God's πρόνοια has been identified as one of the main themes in the *Antiquities*; see Attridge 1976: 66-70.

<sup>244</sup> See especially *Ant.* 20.89: "Izates replied that he was aware that the Parthian empire was far larger than his own, but for all that he was even more certain that God is mightier than all mankind"; ὁ Ἰζάτης εἰδέναι μὲν τὴν Πάρθων δύναμιν ἔφη πολὺ τῆς αὐτοῦ διαφέρουσιν, γινώσκειν δ' οὖν ἔτι μᾶλλον πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἔλεγεν κρείσσω τὸν θεόν; cf. *Ant.* 20.90-91.

<sup>245</sup> This narrative theme can be recognized throughout; see e.g. *Ant.* 1.20: "...God, who is the Father and Lord of all and who looks upon all things, grants a happy life to those who follow Him and surrounds with great misfortunes those who transgress virtue"; ὅτι πάντων πατήρ τε καὶ δεσπότης ὁ θεὸς ὢν καὶ πάντα ἐπιβλέπων τοῖς μὲν ἐπομένοις αὐτῷ δίδωσιν εὐδαιμόνια βίον, τοὺς ἔξω δὲ βαινόντας ἀρετῆς μεγάλας περιβάλλει συμφοραῖς. See Feldman 1998b: 566-7, "The main lesson, says Josephus, to be learned from his history is that those who obey the laws of G-d prosper, while those who do not suffer irretrievable disaster (*Ant.* 1.14)."

rulers was not only possible but also advantageous, a sentiment he certainly did not share with Domitian.<sup>246</sup>

When the *Antiquities* was finally completed in AD 93-94, we are unaware of any backlash from Domitian. If the subsequent actions against Clemens and Glabrio were in any way related to its release, it seems not to have affected the continued existence and propagation of Josephus' works, even if some of its readers remained unconvinced of its claims about Judaeian culture.<sup>247</sup> In any case, his final work, the treatise *Against Apion*, which was aimed precisely at such readers, was released some time after this and does not demonstrate a significant change in Josephus' attitude and approach, even if we accept that he may have been more cautious in his use of the language of philosophy in the wake of Domitian's expulsion of the philosophers from Rome.<sup>248</sup> This work again presupposes a sympathetic readership of non-Judaeians<sup>249</sup>—while not excluding others—and takes the form of a defence of Judaeian culture by demonstrating its antiquity (1.60-218), refuting the slanderous charges presented by hostile literary sources (1.219-

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<sup>246</sup> But, compare Feldman 1998b: 50-54, concerning Josephus' perceived hesitation in labelling Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, as a proselyte. Feldman notes this sensitivity throughout his analysis of the 'rewritten Bible'; cf. Balaam: 120-21, 135; Ruth: 197-99, 201-202; Asa: 269-72; Jonah: 409-11; 559-60. See also Feldman 1998a: 157-60, 662. His dismissal of the Adiabene passage on the basis of the fact that Adiabene "was after all, under Parthian domination, and hence of no immediate concern to the Romans" (158; cf. 1998b: 198, 409) is, however, unwarranted. The fact is that at this point in the narrative Josephus propounds the benefits of full conversion openly, clearly, and at length.

<sup>247</sup> See *Ap.* 1.2-3: "However, since I see that a considerable number of people pay attention to the slanders spread by some out of malice, and disbelieve what I have written on ancient history...I thought it necessary to write briefly on all these matters..."; ἐπει δὲ συχνοὺς ὄρω ταῖς ὑπὸ δυσμενεῖαις ὑπὸ τινῶν εἰρημέναις προσέχοντας βλασφημίαις καὶ τοῖς περὶ τὴν ἀρχαιολογίαν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ γεγραμμένοις ἀπιστοῦντας...περὶ τούτων ἀπάντων ᾤθηθην δεῖν γράψαι συντόμως...

<sup>248</sup> See Haaland 1999: 282-304; 2005: 297-316. Despite Haaland's arguments, Josephus' presentation of Judaism as a philosophy can certainly be recognized implicitly, even if it is not described as explicitly as it might have been; see Krüger 1906: 18-22; Bilde 1988: 120; Mason 1993: 1-28; 1996a: 187-228; 1996b: 31-58; van der Horst 1996: 85; Kasher 1996: 154.

<sup>249</sup> The discussion of the potential audience(s) in Barclay 2007: xlv-li, although useful, confuses matters by distinguishing between 'declared', 'implied', and 'intended' audiences. A relatively continuous readership throughout Josephus' works, among whom sympathetic non-Judaeians figured most prominently, remains the best explanation, since Josephus seems to assume his readers' familiarity with his earlier works; see *Ant.* 1.4, 203; 13.72, 298; 18.11, 259; *Life* 413; *Ap.* 1.1; 2.1, 196; cf. Mason 1996a: 200, 208-211; 2000: xvii-xx; 2003b: 563. The possible members of this readership and possibly also audience are explored in Ch. 6.

320; 2.1-144), and praising it on its own terms (2.145-286).<sup>250</sup> Although the suggestion that the *Apion* “is primarily a work of missionary literature, a work of apologetic and propaganda of ‘hortatory nature’”<sup>251</sup> may reach too far, Josephus might certainly have hoped that his rebuttal of slanderous accusations and his positive portrayal of Judaeans customs would render an already interested reader even more sympathetic;<sup>252</sup> that is, the work had both apologetic and protreptic functions.<sup>253</sup>

As with his *Antiquities*, therefore, *Apion* stands out against the hostile attitudes that circulated in some quarters, attitudes which had originated with the Flavian suppression of the Judaeans revolt and were amplified by the maltreatment of the Judaeans sanctioned by Domitian. Although we cannot firmly date this treatise within the period following 93/4 or even provide a precise *terminus ante quem* given our ignorance of the date of Josephus’ death,<sup>254</sup> we have little reason to believe that there was any significant change in the political climate. Although the Judaeans’ anxiety would have been somewhat abated by his reversal of the direct abuses experienced under Domitian, Nerva’s widely advertised reforms masked a significant continuity with his predecessors and he does not otherwise appear to have been especially favourable towards the Judaeans during his brief reign.<sup>255</sup> In any case, the swift adoption and subsequent

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<sup>250</sup> See the framework provided in Mason 1996a: 209-10.

<sup>251</sup> Bilde 1988: 120-21 (emphasis added). For a negative reaction to Bilde’s proposal, see Kasher 1996: 153-5.

<sup>252</sup> As suggested by Mason 1996a: 187-228; cf. Barclay 2007: lii-liii, “One cannot rule out the possibility that Josephus may have wished to see non-Judeans who presently sympathized with Judean culture come to “live under our laws”, but nothing in the text points to that as an intention of the treatise, and nothing in the context requires it.”

<sup>253</sup> Thus Siegert 2008: 16, “Sagen wir: Josephus schreibt einen Protrepikos aus der Defensive heraus.”

<sup>254</sup> There is no consensus regarding the emperor under which *Apion* was published, although Nerva is most commonly cited in contemporary scholarship. The dating rests partly on the precise identification of the patron, Epaphroditus, who will be examined more closely in the following chapter. Domitian: Niese 1914: 570-71, 575; Shutt 1961: 15; Haaland 2005: 309-16. Nerva: S. Schwartz 1990: 19; Mason 1996a: 223; Barclay 1996: 317; Goodman 2007a: 54-55; cf. Laqueur 1920: 25.

<sup>255</sup> Regarding the continuities and connections with the Flavians, see Syme 1930: 55-70; 1958: 1.1-18; Yavetz 1987: 135-81; Jones 1992b: 195; Bennett 1997: 35-42; Griffin 2000b: 87-88, 106-8; Murison 2003: 147-57.

advent of Trajan, which focused equally on his illustrious father, M. Ulpius Traianus,<sup>256</sup> the commander of the *Legio X Fretensis* during the Judaeen revolt,<sup>257</sup> promised little improvement in this regard.<sup>258</sup> Regardless of the precise dating, therefore, Josephus' literary work continued to further his own aims, which put him at odds with the negative atmosphere that prevailed in some areas of society, including the imperial court.

This conclusion is perhaps obvious. Previous scholarship by no means characterized Josephus' later literary efforts as imperial propaganda. On the contrary, Josephus' position as historian was seen to have undergone a fundamental change with the accession of Domitian, as I have observed above. Although generally advocating a certain continuity in Josephus' circumstances in the city of Rome, even Rajak commented that Domitian "had less personal connection with Josephus and may never have acted as his patron at all."<sup>259</sup> We can certainly not deny that the personal connections between Domitian and Josephus were fewer than those between Josephus and the previous emperors. Nevertheless, this depiction of the situation obscures what Josephus himself explicitly states in the summary of his "household affairs" (τὰ κατὰ τὸν οἶκον) at the close of his *Life*, namely that "the things given by the imperators remained much the same".<sup>260</sup> This phrase, opening a recapitulation of his relationships with the emperors, highlights the continuity characterizing these relationships, which is explicitly confirmed when he maintains that Titus "preserved the same sort of honour towards [him] as his father" and Domitian "further increased the honours towards [him]".<sup>261</sup> Josephus has thereby demonstrated that throughout the Flavian regime he could count himself among the many imperial clients as a

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<sup>256</sup> See Plin. *Pan.* 9.2; 14.1; 58.3; 89.2; *BMCRE* 3.100 no. 498; cf. Oliver 1949: 36-7; Bowersock 1973: 133-40; Isaac and Roll 1976: 15-19; Alföldy 1998: 367-99; 2000: 11-24.

<sup>257</sup> See *War* 3.289-306, 458-61, 485; 4.450.

<sup>258</sup> Goodman 2005a: 176-7; 2007a: 55; 2007b: 468-75; cf. Waters 1969: 385-405.

<sup>259</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: xiii.

<sup>260</sup> *Life* 428: διέμεινεν δὲ ὅμοια καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων.

<sup>261</sup> *Life* 428-9: Τίτος...ὅμοιαν τῷ πατρὶ τὴν τιμὴν μοι διεφύλαξεν... Δομετιανὸς...προσηύξησεν τὰς εἰς ἐμὲ τιμὰς.

direct recipient of imperial favour, expressed through tangible benefactions. Strictly speaking, therefore, Domitian was as much Josephus' patron as his predecessors.

When we understand the situation in this way, Domitian's apparent lack of interest in Josephus' literary production takes on greater significance or, more correctly, reduces the significance of the alleged interest shown by Vespasian and Titus in the production and publication of the *War*. The reception of the *War* by Vespasian and Titus, the addition of the latter's *imprimatur*, and its deposit in the imperial library were all features of Josephus' relationship as imperial client with his patrons, as I have argued in the previous chapters. They were certainly signs of imperial favour, but only to the same degree as the defence from accusations, the gifts of money and land, or the exemption from taxation. They do not, therefore, necessitate a characterization of Josephus as a court historian or Flavian propagandist, nor do they presuppose a major change in circumstances under Domitian. Throughout his literary career in Rome, Josephus was writing for his own purposes, to his own readership, and on his own initiative. During that time he made full use of his connections with the imperial court, which had been established during the revolt and were confirmed upon his arrival in Rome. Whenever necessity demanded—as in the case of the accusations he faced—or opportunity knocked—as when he sought support for his publication of the *War*—he called upon the emperors within their imperial court, where he was perhaps more likely than the average Roman citizen to receive a positive response. His testimony in the *Life* suggests that he felt equally comfortable doing so under Domitian as he had under Vespasian and Titus. The only difference was that he could not expect Domitian to view his later literary works as favourably as Vespasian and Titus had his *War*. But this did little to diminish his status.



## CHAPTER 6

### JOSEPHUS AND THE INHABITANTS OF ROME

My investigation thus far has been focused on establishing that Josephus was *not* a cosseted member of the Flavian court, undertaking a systematic investigation into Josephus' relationships with the emperors in order to build on the consensus that has grown at least within specialized scholarship on Josephus. In my final chapter, however, I will attempt to reconstruct the social circles within which Josephus *did* find a place. I established some preliminary lines in this regard in Chapter 2, where it was suggested that Josephus' first visit to Rome was of possible significance for his later permanent residence in the capital. At this point I will turn to an examination of those individuals with whom Josephus had contact at this later point in his life in order to establish his social milieu in Rome as much as possible.

Perhaps the most important question that will be considered through the course of this chapter is whether or not Josephus was lonely and isolated within the city of Rome. This has long been the judgment of scholars, who have argued for his separation from his compatriots or his distance from his Roman neighbours or both.<sup>1</sup> He was "out of touch" with the "realities of Palestine";<sup>2</sup> his Judaism was "colorless, not false and not trivial, but rhetorical, generic, and rather unreal";<sup>3</sup> and "his interests and literary purposes, as well as his artistic technique,

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Bentwich 1914: 59, "And apart from the involuntary and undeliberate adoption of Roman standards, which, living isolated from Jewish life in Rome, he could not escape, he had in writing, and no doubt in conversation, deliberately and consciously to assume the deepest-seated of the Roman prejudices towards his own people."

<sup>2</sup> See Rajak 2002: 238, summarizing and lending her support to the 'seductive portrayal' presented by Momigliano 1987: 108-119. Cf. Rappaport 1930: xxiv, who emphasized particularly Josephus' isolation from Palestine; but see the critical comments in reaction to Rappaport by Spilsbury 1998b: 28.

<sup>3</sup> Momigliano 1987: 119; cf. Bilde 1999: 34, "Momigliano hat sicher Recht in seiner Aussage, daß Josephus in der Judentum seiner Zeit 'isoliert' war, aber eigentlich wissen wir auch darüber so gut wie nichts."

remained profoundly provincial.”<sup>4</sup> Thus Yavetz concluded, “In spite of his efforts, Josephus must have been a very lonely man in his old age.”<sup>5</sup> More recently Cotton and Eck also surmised that, “Josephus was in all likelihood extremely lonely and extremely isolated in Rome—at least from the socio-political elite”, in which they were echoed by Price, who concluded that, “Josephus’ self-professed identity, his manner and style of writing, and his own interests, kept him isolated at Rome for the last thirty years of his life.”<sup>6</sup>

This stands in direct contradiction, however, to the statement made by the early church historian Eusebius early in the fourth century, who described Josephus as “the most renowned man of the Judaeans at that time, not only with his compatriots but also among the Romans, such that he indeed was honoured by the erection of a statue in the city of the Romans, and the works composed by him were considered worthy [of deposit] in the library.”<sup>7</sup> According to this summary of Josephus’ social situation, then, the source for which may be independent of Josephus’ own writings,<sup>8</sup> the Judaeian historian was well-placed among both his fellow Judaeans and his new neighbours. Furthermore, Josephus’ own claims at various places in his writings seem also to suggest that he “moved in the highest Roman and Jewish circles”<sup>9</sup>, and that he was “a conspicuous figure at Rome”.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, his entire literary output suggests implicitly the possibility of a certain level of interaction with literate, cultured audience members. Some

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<sup>4</sup> Price 2005: 118.

<sup>5</sup> Yavetz 1975: 432.

<sup>6</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 52; Price 2005: 118.

<sup>7</sup> Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3.9.1-2: μάλιστα δὲ τῶν κατ’ ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ Ἰουδαίων οὐ παρὰ μόνοις τοῖς ὁμοεθνέσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις γέγονεν ἀνὴρ ἐπιδοξότατος, ὡς αὐτὸν μὲν ἀναθέσει ἀνδριάντος ἐπὶ τῆς Ῥωμαίων τιμηθῆναι πόλεως, τοὺς δὲ σπουδασθέντας αὐτῷ λόγους βιβλιοθήκης ἀξιοθῆναι; cf. Hieronymus *De Viris Illustribus* 13. A bust in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen (Inv. No. 646) has been proposed as a part of this statue of Josephus; see Eisler 1930: 29-38; cf. Bilde 1988: 60. For further discussion of this passage, including possibilities regarding the library mentioned, see above pp. 149-52.

<sup>8</sup> It is also possible that Eusebius is simply interpreting Josephus’ own assertion that Titus “ordered [the volumes] to be made public” (δημοσιῶσαι προσέταξεν; *Life* 363) to mean that they were placed in one of the imperial libraries; cf. above p. 150. Nevertheless, there is no mention in Josephus’ works of a statue.

<sup>9</sup> See Bilde 1988: 60, concerning *Life* 361-7 and *Ap.* 1.50-52. Both passages will be considered further below.

<sup>10</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 21.

scholars have, therefore, reacted implicitly or explicitly against this rather gloomy portrayal of Josephus' final years, positing a higher level of engagement with his social environment.<sup>11</sup>

In order to determine, as much as is possible, the historical basis for either scenario, it will be necessary both to examine the explicit evidence for interaction provided by Josephus and to consider the inherent possibilities presented by further consideration of his narratives.

Attempts have certainly been made to flesh out certain elements of Josephus' social circumstances in the city of Rome, predominantly by exploring his known relationships with figures such as the Herodians, Agrippa II and Berenice, and the elusive freedman Epaphroditus, but also by considering possible linkages to members of the Roman elite.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the primary aim of these explorations was not always to elucidate Josephus' social conditions; nor did they endeavour to present a comprehensive picture, which has resulted in incomplete conclusions.<sup>13</sup> The following chapter will build on this work by piecing together the insights of existing studies, while also adding new possibilities for consideration in order to arrive at as comprehensive an understanding as possible.

We have seen how the relationships between Josephus and the first two Flavian emperors formed already prior to his arrival in Rome while the three were involved with the suppression of the Judaeian revolt. This will also be the stage at which I will begin my investigation here, namely by considering the other contacts that Josephus made within the Roman camp. Although the evidence for such relationships is very slight, it does provide useful insights into Josephus' relative status within the camp, with possible implications for his position later in Rome. From

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<sup>11</sup> See especially Goodman 1994b: 329-38; Mason 2005a: 71-100; Bowersock 2005: 53-62; Curran 2011: 65-86. Note also the incidental observation of Woolf 2011: 32, "Josephus too, is hardly marginal in Jewish society, Hellenistic culture or Roman politics."

<sup>12</sup> With varying focuses, see e.g. S. Schwartz 1990: 110-60; Mason 1998b: 97-101; 2003b: 561-5; Cotton and Eck 2005: 37-52; Bowersock 2005: 53-62; D.R. Schwartz 2005: 63-78; Mason 2005a: 71-100.

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. Cotton and Eck 2005: 52, quoted above, "Josephus was in all likelihood extremely lonely and extremely isolated in Rome—at least from the socio-political elite" (emphasis mine).

here I will move to the city of Rome itself, to examine the precise nature of the relationships that Josephus expressly claims to have had during his writing career with figures such as the Herodians, Epaphroditus, and his ‘assistants’, focusing particularly on his literary circle. I will then move on to less secure ground, considering the possibility that Josephus had contact with members of the substantial Judaean community in Rome, perhaps a renewal of existing bonds, established already on his visit to Neronian Rome. In the background of this entire chapter lurks the shadowy figure of Josephus’ possible readership and audience, which will be fleshed out by my investigation and which I suggest formed a crucial element of Josephus’ social circle. I will then also be able to evaluate more fairly the extent to which Josephus found himself isolated in the city of Rome. I have suggested already in the previous three chapters that the surviving evidence gives us no reason to think that Josephus’ contacts with the emperors were anything more than incidental; that is, we should not search for Josephus in the corridors of the imperial palaces. This prompts the question, however, as to where in the city of Rome we should begin to look, a question for which I will finally be able to present a potential answer by the end of this chapter.

### **Josephus and the Roman Camp**

In the important passages from the *Life* and *Apion* that provide our evidence for Josephus’ circulation of his *War*, we are told in the one instance that Josephus, after passing on the volumes to the *imperatores*, “also immediately delivered the history to many others, some of whom had even chanced to be involved in the war—for example, King Agrippa and certain of his relatives.”<sup>14</sup> The second passage, in the *Apion*, elaborates slightly on the first, claiming that

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<sup>14</sup> *Life* 362: καὶ ἄλλοις δὲ πολλοῖς εὐθὺς ἐπέδωκα τὴν ἱστορίαν, ὧν ἔνιοι καὶ παρατετεύχρισαν τῷ πολέμῳ, καθάπερ βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας καὶ τινες αὐτοῦ τῶν συγγενῶν.

Josephus “sold copies to many Romans who had fought with them [i.e. Vespasian and Titus] in the war, and to many of our own people, men also steeped in Greek wisdom, among whom were Julius Archelaus, the most distinguished Herod, and the most renowned king Agrippa himself.”<sup>15</sup> I have discussed already the nature of the Flavians’ involvement in the circulation of the *War* and its implications for our understanding of the relationships between them and Josephus, and will shortly examine more carefully the links between the Judaeen historian and the Herodian house, which are also referenced here, but the key elements that concern us now are the mentions of certain Romans who participated in the war as recipients of the *War*. Who were these individuals and how did they relate to Josephus?

The most prominent possibilities, apart from the *imperatores* themselves, would be the Roman generals who were involved in commanding the various military units that were employed in the suppression of the revolt, many of whom won the favour of the Flavians and so advanced in the *cursus honorum* after the war.<sup>16</sup> Of these, the most obvious are those who were present in Titus’ *consilium* called together to deliberate the fate of the temple, whom Josephus calls the “six principal persons” (ἕξ τῶν κορυφαιοτάτων).<sup>17</sup> These included the senatorial legionary legates: S. Vettulenus Cerialis, legate of the *Legio V Macedonica*;<sup>18</sup> A. Larcius Lepidus Sulpicianus, legate of the *Legio X Fretensis*;<sup>19</sup> and M. Titius Frugi, legate of the *Legio XV Apollinaris*;<sup>20</sup> as well as the equestrian officials: Ti. Julius Alexander, the “prefect of all the

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<sup>15</sup> *Ap.* 1.51: πολλοῖς μὲν Ῥωμαίων τοῖς συμπεπολεμηκόσι, πολλοῖς δὲ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐπίπρασκον, ἀνδράσι καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς σοφίας μετεσχηκόσιν, ὧν ἔστιν Ἰούλιος Ἀρχέλαος, Ἡρώδης ὁ σεμνότατος, αὐτὸς ὁ θαυμασιώτατος βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας.

<sup>16</sup> See Mellor 2003: 69-101, regarding the importance of the commanders of the legions in the Flavian party, among others.

<sup>17</sup> *War* 6.237-8. The following discussion owes much to Cotton and Eck 2005: 41-4; cf. B. Jones 1984: 50, 69 nn. 55-7.

<sup>18</sup> See e.g. *War* 3.310-15; 4.552-55; 6.236-7; 7.163; *PIR*<sup>1</sup> V 351; Franke 1991: 111-12.

<sup>19</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> L 94; Franke 1991: 196-8. His death in AD 74-5 (*ILS* 987) removes him from the list of possible recipients of the *War*.

<sup>20</sup> *PIR*<sup>1</sup> T 208; Franke 1991: 254-5.

forces”;<sup>21</sup> C. Aeternius Fronto, *praefectus castrorum* of the two legions from Alexandria;<sup>22</sup> and M. Antonius Julianus, the procurator of Judaea.<sup>23</sup> Although Josephus himself may not have been present at this meeting, his involvement at other times as interpreter and mediator in the Roman camp would surely have provided opportunities for him to at least encounter these individuals, particularly given his accompaniment of Titus on a number of occasions.<sup>24</sup> At the very least most of them may have been present at Josephus’ ceremonial release when his predicative powers were honoured by Vespasian,<sup>25</sup> although only C. Licinius Mucianus, the governor of Syria, is mentioned by name.<sup>26</sup> Only in the case of Cerialis do we have explicit evidence of their acquaintance, since Josephus claims that he was sent by Titus to assist the general in determining an appropriate site for the establishment of a fenced camp near Tekoa.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, as Cotton and Eck have pointed out, there is nothing in the *War* to suggest personal ties between Josephus and any of the commanders of the army.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps, as Seth Schwartz has pointed out, it is unlikely that influential figures such as these “would have deigned to associate with a former rebel and captive, who was still proving his reliability to Titus”.<sup>29</sup>

While these prominent Romans may have yet received copies of the *War* despite their lack of personal ties to Josephus (they would presumably still have been interested in an account of the war in which they had been personally involved), Josephus’ silence in this regard is

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<sup>21</sup> See e.g. *War* 5.45, 510; 6.237ff.; *PIR*<sup>2</sup> J 139; cf. Turner 1954: 54-64. It is unlikely, however, that he was alive at the time that Josephus published his *War*; see Turner 1954: 63-64; Cotton and Eck 2005: 42.

<sup>22</sup> See e.g. *War* 6.236; 6.414-19; *PIR*<sup>2</sup> L 287.

<sup>23</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> A 846; Schürer 1973: 1.33-4. This figure has been identified with the Antonius Julianus who wrote a history of the Judaeen war; cf. Min. Fel. *Oct.* 47.22-48.2.

<sup>24</sup> *War* 5.114, 323-7, 361-420; 6.93-113, 118, 129.

<sup>25</sup> *War* 4.624-7.

<sup>26</sup> Governor of Syria: *War* 4.622; *PIR*<sup>2</sup> L216. His death in AD 77 precludes his presence among those who received copies of Josephus’ work.

<sup>27</sup> *Life* 420.

<sup>28</sup> Turner 1954: 63, has suggested that Josephus was seeking Tiberius Julius Alexander as patron, based on the more sympathetic portrayal of Ti. Alexander in the *War* as opposed to the *Antiquities* (esp. 20.100). Feldman 1984b: 820, points out, however, that there is nothing to suggest any relationship between the two men and poses an alternative explanation for the changes from *War* to *Antiquities*.

<sup>29</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 8.

telling.<sup>30</sup> Caution is, as always, necessary when dealing with arguments *e silentio*, but it is useful nonetheless to note their absence. Josephus is at pains in both passages to demonstrate the accuracy and authority of his work, in support of which he refers to his most powerful acquaintances, namely Vespasian, Titus, Agrippa II, and some lesser Herodians, as providing their endorsement (τὴν μαρτυρίαν). It would be surprising, therefore, if the surviving generals, of whom Cerialis, Titius Frugi, Mucianus, and the as yet unmentioned M. Ulpus Traianus (i.e. the father of the later emperor), Cn. Pompeius Collega, and A. Caesennius Gallus had risen to the eminent position of consul,<sup>31</sup> had in fact also been recipients of his completed work, since we might otherwise expect him to have trotted out their names as exhibits in defence of his authority in these matters.<sup>32</sup> In any case, the narratives provide no indication that those Romans with whom Josephus had contact in the city of Rome included these most prominent officers in the Roman army.

While we can only speculate regarding possible encounters between Josephus and the legionary legates within the Roman camp, either in its travels to and from Alexandria or at the siege of Jerusalem, we are provided with a number of definite references in the narratives to individuals with whom Josephus did have contact. Although we can place none of these firmly in Rome after the suppression of the revolt, they may illustrate the social levels at which Josephus circulated, both in the camp and in the city of Rome. The first of these figures we have encountered already, the military tribune Nicanor. He makes his appearance at the siege of Jotapata, when Vespasian sends him in to persuade Josephus to surrender himself. He is

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<sup>30</sup> Mason 2005a: 87, suggests that to account for the ‘many Romans’ mentioned by Josephus, we “should probably look for a few prominent officials worthy to be mentioned alongside the *principes*”, and provides as candidates the legionary legates discussed above.

<sup>31</sup> M. Ulpus Traianus: *legatus* of the *Legio X Fretensis* and father of the future emperor; *PIR*<sup>1</sup> V 574; *War* 3.289-306. Cn. Pompeius Collega: *legatus* of the *Legio IV Scythica*; *PIR*<sup>1</sup> P 458; *War* 7.58-9. A. Caesennius Gallus: *legatus* of the *Legio XII Fulminata*; *PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 170; *War* 2.510-13; 3.31.

<sup>32</sup> The same could be said for the senatorial legates of Syria and their families, whose status in the city of Rome would have also made them attractive contacts for Josephus to cultivate, as suggested by Eck 2011: 48-49.

presented there as “an old and well-known acquaintance of Josephus” and also as a “friend”.<sup>33</sup> On a later occasion, the two are found approaching the walls of Jerusalem together to counsel the inhabitants to surrender. At this point Josephus reveals further that he was a friend of Titus and also known to the Jerusalemites.<sup>34</sup> Both details are significant. Although Schwartz has sought to minimize Nicanor’s friendship with Titus,<sup>35</sup> Josephus’ description may be more accurate than has been supposed. As military tribune, Nicanor was among the “procurators and tribunes” who were members of Titus’ *consilium* prior to the destruction of the temple,<sup>36</sup> and so may even have served as Josephus’ source for the proceedings, which the historian describes vividly. The military tribunes were also among those officers who surrounded the *imperator* while on the march, along with the legionary legates, the prefects of the auxiliaries, and the *ἐπίλεκτοι* (i.e. select troops of infantry, cavalry, and spearmen).<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, by virtue of his office Nicanor may also have shared in the *contubernium militum* of Titus, which involved being present at the table of the commander-in-chief for meals.<sup>38</sup>

As far as his previous acquaintance with the locals is concerned, we are on less certain ground. Since he was also already acquainted with Josephus, it is likely that he had spent some time in Judaea prior to the revolt, although we cannot rule out the possibility that the two met in Rome during Josephus’ first trip there. Whether or not he himself was a Judaeian is unclear.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> War 3.346-49: χιλίαρχον Νικάνωρα γνώριμον τῷ Ἰωσήφῳ καὶ συνήθη πάλαι. . .προσετίθει δ’ ὡς οὐτ’ ἂν Οὐεσπασιανὸς ἐνεδρεῦων φίλον ἔπεμπεν, ἵνα τοῦ κακίστου πράγματος προστήσῃται τὸ κάλλιστον, ἀπιστίας φιλίαν, οὐδ’ ἂν αὐτὸς ἀπατήσων ἄνδρα φίλον ὑπήκουσεν ἐλθεῖν.

<sup>34</sup> War 5.261: ἐν δὲ τούτῳ περιόντος αὐτοῦ τοξεύεται τις τῶν φίλων, ὄνομα Νικάνωρ, κατὰ τὸν λαῖον ὤμον, ἔγγιον μετὰ τοῦ Ἰωσήφου προσελθὼν καὶ πειρώμενος εἰρηνικὰ τοῖς ἐπὶ τοῦ τείχους, οὐ γὰρ ἄγνωστος ἦν, διαλέγεσθαι.

<sup>35</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 7 n. 16, “It is odd that a military tribune...should be called a friend of Titus, but he may have been a friend in the same way that Josephus later was—a native who had proved his zeal for the Roman cause and might be useful.”

<sup>36</sup> War 5.238: καὶ μετὰ τούτους ἐπιτρόπων καὶ χιλιάρχων ἀθροισθέντων.

<sup>37</sup> War 3.122-6; regarding the unusual spearmen (λογχοφόροι), see Saddington 1995: 55.

<sup>38</sup> See e.g. Plut. *Pomp.* 3.1-2; Sall. *Iug.* 59.4; Frontin. *Str.* 4.1.11-12; cf. Roth 2006: 58. See further below regarding the rank of military tribunes within the army structure.

<sup>39</sup> Avidov 1998: 264 n. 3; *contra* S. Schwartz 1990: 7 n. 16, 8. Devijver 1977: N 29, suggests the possibility that his origins were in the east more generally, presenting for comparison a certain C. Iulius Nicanor (*PIR* IV<sup>2</sup> 440) from



Perhaps the most reasonable explanation for his familiarity with both Josephus and the inhabitants of Jerusalem is that Nicanor had previously served as prefect of one of the auxiliary cohorts that were stationed in Judaea, a position that was the traditional stepping-stone in the *militia equestris* for service as a military tribune in one of the legions.<sup>40</sup> Another distinct possibility is that he had been a member of the *Legio X Fretensis*, which had served in the east prior to the revolt.<sup>41</sup> If the suggestion that Nicanor served in the army of King Agrippa II is correct,<sup>42</sup> it is unclear how he would have been promoted to the rank of military tribune in one of the legions that came to suppress the Judaeian revolt.

A few observations based on his official position are pertinent for our understanding of his status within the Roman camp. First of all, as one of five *tribuni angusticlavi* assigned to each legion he was a Roman citizen of equestrian status.<sup>43</sup> By the climax of the Judaeian revolt, the siege of Jerusalem, the Romans had fielded four legions (*V Macedonica*; *X Fretensis*; *XV Apollinaris*; *XII Fulminata*), minus the vexillations that accompanied Mucianus to Italy, who were replaced by detachments from two legions in Egypt (*III Cyrenaica*; *XX Deiotariana*);<sup>44</sup> there were also three thousand from the *Legio IV Scythica* stationed on the Euphrates.<sup>45</sup> There

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Hierapolitanus, a son of a certain Alexandrinus, who was given Roman citizenship from Augustus; cf. Bernard 1969: 2.142-44, for an inscription with “Κατῆλιου τοῦ καὶ Νικάνορος τοῦ Νικάνο[ρος]”.

<sup>40</sup> According to Suet. *Claud.* 25.1 (*equestres militias ita ordinavit, ut post cohortem alam, post alam tribunatum legionis daret*), the emperor Claudius proposed a new hierarchy for the *militia equestris* that began with the prefecture of a *cohortis* (infantry), followed by the prefecture of an *ala* (cavalry), and then the military tribunate in a legion. There is, however, scant evidence that this change lasted long (see Devijver 1995: 180 n. 50, for examples). After the Julio-Claudians and especially from the Flavian period onward the last two positions were generally reversed (i.e. *praefectus cohortis, tribunatus angusticlavii legionis, praefectura alae*); cf. Stat. *Silv.* 5.1.95-8; Birley 1953: 133-53; Domaszewski 1967: 129-31; Devijver 1989: 16-55; 1995: 179-80.

<sup>41</sup> Suggested by Ritterling 1925: 1676; cf. Devijver 1977: N 29.

<sup>42</sup> See Thackeray 1997[1927]: 101 n. b; Avidov 1998: 264 n. 3.

<sup>43</sup> On the ranking of the equestrian officers in the Roman army more generally, see Domaszewski 1967: xxxiv-xxxv, 122-35; Birley 1988: 147-66; Devijver 1989: 29-55, 111-14; 1992; 1995: 175-92.

<sup>44</sup> See *War* 5.43.

<sup>45</sup> See Tac. *Hist.* V.1; *War* 5.41-6; cf. Millar 1993: 75; 2005: 101. It is unclear whether or not the *vexillationes* of the Egyptian legions and the *Legio IV Scythica* would have been accompanied by tribunes, since these were not assigned to specific divisions of the legion but were attached to the legate. Regarding the initial army that accompanied Vespasian into Judaea, see *War* 3.67; cf. Kennedy 1983: 253-63.

would have been, therefore, around 24 *tribuni militum* serving in the formidable army commanded by Titus.<sup>46</sup> If we exclude the senatorial tribunes (the *tribuni laticlavii*)<sup>47</sup> that were assigned to each legion and served as seconds-in-command to the legates, then we may place Nicanor among a group of approximately twenty officers of similar rank. Although there was certainly differentiation in status among these, his official position placed him below only Titus himself, the legionary legates, the senatorial tribunes, and the *praefecti castrorum*, of whom Aeternius Fronto was one.<sup>48</sup> He was thus significantly beyond the status and rank of the *caligati*, the ordinary soldiers, and even the centurions, despite their significant position both within and outside the Roman army.<sup>49</sup> The clear divide between the senatorial and equestrian officers and the rank-and-file soldiers is illustrated plainly in a letter of the younger Pliny, in which we hear of the disgrace visited on a military tribune when his wife had a love affair with a centurion.<sup>50</sup>

Apart from the future emperors, Nicanor marks the highest ranking officer in the Roman army with whom we can securely posit a relationship with Josephus. He was not, however, the only one in the Roman camp whom Josephus describes in terms of friendship (φιλία). In an episode discussed already above in the context of Josephus' role as interpreter and mediator in the Roman army, we are told that Josephus, who himself was at the side of Titus, restrained his friends (τῶν φίλων) who were eager to extend a helping hand to the con-man Castor, seeing

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<sup>46</sup> Regarding the place and function of the military tribunes more generally, see Keppie 1984: 149-51; Webster 1998: 112-13.

<sup>47</sup> Regarding the *tribuni laticlavii*, see Domaszewski 1967: lv, 172.

<sup>48</sup> For detailed discussions of the hierarchy in the Roman army, see Domaszewski 1968; see also the contributions in Le Bohec 1995 ("La hiérarchie et les unités": 127-54; "La hiérarchie des officiers": 155-208; "La hiérarchie des centurions": 209-48; "La hiérarchie des soldats": 249-310); cf. Dobson 1995: 41-6, for a useful bibliography of *Rangordnung*; Isaac 1998: 388-402. The unusual position of Tiberius Julius Alexander should also be mentioned. Josephus calls him the "prefect of all the forces" (τοῦ πάντων τῶν στρατευμάτων ἐπάρχοντος; *War* 6.237; cf. *War* 5.45-6; *OGIS* 586; *Tac. Ann.* 15.28); cf. Turner 1954: 62-4. It is unclear what his exact title or position was, but he certainly ranked far beyond a figure such as Nicanor as well.

<sup>49</sup> See Dobson 1970: 99-116; 1974: 393-434; 2000: 139-52.

<sup>50</sup> *Plin. Ep.* 6.31.4-6.

through his ruse.<sup>51</sup> In the earlier chapter I suggested that these may have been, like Josephus, (ex)prisoners-of-war or deserters who were serving Titus in some capacity as local specialists.<sup>52</sup> It is equally possible, however, that these were Roman soldiers whose acquaintance Josephus had made during his time in the Roman camp.

This possibility, apart from its inherent plausibility, is supported by a hint elsewhere in the narrative that such contacts were indeed made. In the course of his descriptions of various individuals on either side of the combat who distinguished themselves by dying noble deaths,<sup>53</sup> Josephus includes “a certain Julianus, a centurion in the Bithynian contingent, a man of some mark, and distinguished above all *whose acquaintance I made* during that war in the science of arms, strength of body and intrepidity of soul...”<sup>54</sup> Although the translation of the phrase ‘ὧν ἐγὼ κατ’ ἐκεῖνον ἱστόρησα’ is difficult—Whiston rendered it unsatisfactorily as “whom I had formerly seen”—the use of the verb ἱστορέω (cf. ἱστορία: inquiry) suggests an encounter that provided familiarity with the individual in question.<sup>55</sup> This is also the sense in which the apostle Paul uses the verb when he describes his trip from Damascus to Jerusalem “to visit Peter for the purpose of inquiry” or, alternately, “to get to know Peter personally” (ἱστορηῆσαι) over the course of a fortnight. In this passage there is an explicit contrast between Paul’s close contact with Peter and his mere courtesy call (ἰδεῖν) on James, the brother of Jesus.<sup>56</sup> We might imagine, then, that the encounter(s) between Josephus and Julianus resulted in more than a simple acquaintance.<sup>57</sup> Unfortunately, this centurion had the misfortune of slipping on the pavement of the temple with

<sup>51</sup> *War* 5.323-7.

<sup>52</sup> See above pp. 172-3.

<sup>53</sup> Concerning this narrative *topos*, see van Henten 2007: 195-218.

<sup>54</sup> *War* 6.81: Ἰουλιανὸς δὲ τις ἑκατοντάρχης τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Βιθυνίας, οὐκ ἄσημος ὧν ἀνὴρ, ὧν ἐγὼ κατ’ ἐκεῖνον ἱστόρησα τὸν πόλεμον ὄπλων τε ἐμπειρία καὶ ἀλκῆ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς παραστήματι πάντων ἄριστος...

<sup>55</sup> See a similar usage at *Ant.* 8.46.

<sup>56</sup> Gal. 1:18: Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορηῆσαι Κηφᾶν, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε, ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου; cf. Dunn 1990[1982]: 110-12 (“to visit Peter for the purpose of inquiry”); Hofius 1984: 73-85 (“to get to know Peter personally”).

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Gilliam 1946: 186 n. 22; Goldsworthy 1999: 199.

his military boots (*caligae*) in the midst of his valiant rush against the Judaeans, at which point he was surrounded by them and slaughtered.<sup>58</sup> So he certainly cannot be considered among the possible recipients of the *War*.

Nevertheless, he may serve as a further example of those who constituted Josephus' social circle in the Roman camp. As such, his rank of centurion may be significant. As I have noted above, this was a considerable step down from the equestrian and senatorial officers in the Roman army and was moreover a rank shared by sixty within each legion, who were graded by seniority. Nevertheless, the centurionate was also the pinnacle of success for the ordinary soldier and could either serve as the stepping stone towards appointment to higher ranks and, accordingly, membership in the *ordo equester*, or lead to an honourable discharge accompanied by a financial grant sufficient to acquire equestrian status.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the centurions played a significant role in both the legions and *auxilia* as far as the cohesion and effectiveness of the army was concerned, particularly those of the first rank, the *primipilares*, whose responsibilities were wider than simply acting as commanders of the first century of the first cohort.<sup>60</sup> In the case of Julianus, his precise status within the centurionate is unclear. The translation of τῆς ἑκατοντάρχης τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Βιθυνίας is vexed. Josephus' mention of Bithynia has been interpreted either as a detail regarding Julianus' own background and origin or as a reference to a Bithynian contingent, an auxiliary cohort, over which he had command.<sup>61</sup> Although the latter

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<sup>58</sup> *War* 6.81-91.

<sup>59</sup> See Domaszewski 1967: xx-xxviii, 80-111; Dobson 1970: 99-116; 1974: 393-434; Birley 1988: 189-220; Dobson 2000: 139-52; more generally, see Watson 1969: 86-89; Keppie 1984: 151-2; Webster 1998: 114-16.

<sup>60</sup> See Gilliam 1957: 155; Domaszewski 1967: xxix-xxxiii, 112-121; Dobson 1974: 393-434; Isaac 1998: 391-9; Dobson 2000: 139-52.

<sup>61</sup> See Saddington 1982: 132; cf. Saddington 1975: 176-201. The first option appears to have been the interpretation of Whiston (1737), who translated the passage as "there was one Julian, a centurion, that came from Bithynia..." The other possibility seems to be followed by Thackeray in the Loeb (1997[1928]), who translates as follows, "one Julianus, a centurion in the Bithynian contingent." Regarding ethnic units within the Roman imperial army, see Speidel 1975: 202-31. The best examples of the maintenance of ethnic identity within the Roman army are the

seems to suit the sense of the passage more accurately, we know of no such unit despite Pliny's reference to the recruitment of soldiers from that province,<sup>62</sup> it is also noteworthy that Saddington, a major authority on auxiliary forces in the first-century, favours the former interpretation.<sup>63</sup> In any case, his rank of centurion located him precisely between the rank-and-file soldiers and the equestrian and senatorial officers of the Roman army.

The hints we receive about Josephus' contacts within the Roman army in Judaea may shed some light on his own position within the camp, although the scant evidence does not allow us to make any firm conclusions. While he did have access to the commander-in-chief himself, by virtue of his services as interpreter, mediator, and guide, we should probably not look for him within Titus' *consilium*, if we view the men who met to deliberate the destruction or preservation of the temple as members of a quasi-official advisory group. As far as we can establish from his narratives, his closest link to the inner circle was the tribune Nicanor, whose rank did not justify specifically mentioning his presence among those who deliberated with Titus concerning the temple. Apart from this, we catch glimpses of Josephus among middling members of the army, such as Julianus, and accompanied by others who may have provided similar services. These are not mentioned by name, except when they serve as examples of bravery and the capriciousness of fortune. Perhaps we should not expect anything more, considering Josephus' status as an ex-prisoner-of-war. Moreover, although he establishes clearly his social location among the elite of Judaea in his *Life*, which serves in part as a testimony to his character and authority on Judaeian affairs, his status and that of his circle of 'friends' were relative to their position in provincial

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Batavians, who served notably as bodyguards of the Julio-Claudian emperors, the so-called *manus Germanorum*; see Roymans 2004: 222-27.

<sup>62</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 10.29-30; cf. Ritterling 1927: 28, who notes the presence of a *cohors VI equestris* in Bithynia-Pontus under Trajan; cf. *IGR* 3.1396 (Prusa), 1411 (Ak-hissar); Plin. *Ep.* 10.107.

<sup>63</sup> Saddington 1982: 132.

politics;<sup>64</sup> it did not necessarily win them a position among the Roman elite, whose values did not coincide entirely with those of the Judaeans.<sup>65</sup> It may be, therefore, that Josephus' status in the Roman world was accordingly circumscribed and that his social peers consisted largely of those whose names would not have resonated with Josephus' readership and were thus not recorded. While his presentation of the *War* to Vespasian, Titus, and Agrippa II was noteworthy, as both a testimony to his accuracy and an assertion of his status, the "many Romans who had fought with them in the war" may have remained unnamed because of their relative obscurity. If this were in fact the case, then they were from among that substantial element of the population which often disappears from the pages of history,<sup>66</sup> but whose presence is revealed incidentally in such figures as Nicanor and Julianus.

### **Josephus and the Herodians**

We should not ignore, however, the fact that Josephus' time in the Roman camp also provided opportunity for contact with individuals beyond his immediate social rank. I have already presented the possibility that Josephus encountered the legionary legates and that he eventually passed on to them a copy of the *War*, although I supported the arguments of Cotton and Eck regarding the unlikelihood that he established any sort of personal relationship with them.<sup>67</sup> We do, however, have definite evidence that Josephus developed relationships with Agrippa II and others of the Herodian house, which may have had their origins in Judaea as well,

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<sup>64</sup> See e.g. *Life* 79, 99, 144, 205, 220, 234, 241, 274, 294, 326, 368, 378, 419. Regarding Josephus' use of φίλοι (*LA amici*), see Mason 2001: 66 n. 428.

<sup>65</sup> Shaw 1995: 360, 367-8, analyzes key differences in conceptions of power between the Romans and the Judaeans. Goodman 1989: 29-50, identifies the discrepancy between local and Roman values as the key problem leading to the failure of the ruling class in the early first-century, which he suggests was the main contributing cause to the outbreak of the revolt in AD 66.

<sup>66</sup> This element does not exclude members of the Roman elite entirely, since the majority of the ordinary members of the *equester ordo*, that is those *equites Romani* who were not directly involved in service to the emperor, also do not appear in the historical record; see Cotton and Eck 2005: 37.

<sup>67</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 41-44.

even though Josephus does not reveal this explicitly. It has been suggested that the historian was present at the moment of Agrippa II's famous speech prior to the outbreak of the war to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,<sup>68</sup> but, even if he was in attendance, there is no reason to suppose that he had met Agrippa II at this time. Nor is there any indication that Josephus met the king personally when he returned the goods that had been stolen by a group of young rebels from the procurator of Agrippa II and Berenice, a certain Ptolemy, an episode described in both the *War* and *Life*.<sup>69</sup> Although he implicitly claims in this passage the status of friendship with Agrippa, this is for the benefit of his readership and likely reflects his later relationship.<sup>70</sup>

If they had not yet met on these earlier occasions, the first encounter between Agrippa II and Josephus may have occurred within the bounds of the Roman camp. During the time in which Josephus was still in chains, Agrippa II was away from his home province, having accompanied Titus who was on his way to Rome to salute Galba on his accession to the imperial throne. While the young Flavian returned to Caesarea to rejoin Vespasian, Agrippa II continued on from Greece to the city of Rome, where he remained until private messages from his friends reached him sometime after July 15<sup>th</sup> of AD 69 regarding the declaration of Vespasian as emperor, upon which he sailed quickly home.<sup>71</sup> From that point on the Herodian king was fully involved in the suppression of the revolt and the machinations in support of Vespasian's bid for the throne. His own forces constituted a part of the Roman forces, and he himself was present at the siege of Jerusalem and likely participated fully in the engagements there, if his involvement

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<sup>68</sup> *War* 2.344-401; see Smallwood 1981[1976]: 291 n. 116; Gabba 1976-77: 189. Regardless of his attendance, it is generally agreed that Josephus has complete control of the narrative at this point, although the interpretation of his message varies; see e.g. Stern 1987: 75-7; Rajak 1991: 122-5; Saulnier 1991: 199-221; Barclay 1996: 349; Rajak 2002[1983]: 80-81.

<sup>69</sup> *War* 2.595-609; *Life* 126-44.

<sup>70</sup> *War* 2.605 (concerning Agrippa II): μή γὰρ ἠγησαίμην ποτὲ ἢ φίλον τὸν ὑμῖν διάφορον. He is speaking duplicitously here to the Tarichaeans (cf. 597), which has the effect of reversing his statement.

<sup>71</sup> See *War* 4.498-502; Tac. *Hist.* 2.81.

in the siege of Gamla, when he was struck on the elbow by a stone, is any indication.<sup>72</sup> His involvement with the Roman army during these final stages of the revolt would have given ample opportunity, then, for Josephus either to have established a relationship with him or to have further developed an existing relationship. In addition, the extravagant games put on by Titus at Agrippa II's palace in Caesarea Philippi might have provided further occasion for contact, although Josephus does not happen to say that Agrippa II was in attendance.<sup>73</sup>

Unlike Josephus, however, Agrippa II did not accompany Titus to Rome in the spring of AD 71.<sup>74</sup> We know nothing of his whereabouts until his arrival in Rome in 75.<sup>75</sup> Some scholars have suggested that his appearance in Rome can be attributed to an opening provided by Mucianus' death for Titus to summon Berenice, with whom he had been conducting a notorious affair, to the imperial court, accompanied by her brother, proposing that Mucianus had been the obstacle to the lovers' reunion.<sup>76</sup> This reconstruction has not, however, been universally accepted, particularly since the alleged hostility between Mucianus and Titus is not supported by the evidence.<sup>77</sup> A simpler explanation may be that Vespasian was waiting to honour the royal pair until after the complete suppression of the revolt, which did not happen until the fall of Masada in AD 73/74,<sup>78</sup> or that Vespasian (and perhaps Titus as well) found it wise to avoid bringing a second Cleopatra—a “Kleopatra im kleinen”—to Rome in the aftermath of another

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<sup>72</sup> Jerusalem: *War* 5.41-2; Tac. *Hist.* 5.1; cf. B. Jones 1984: 50; S. Schwartz 1990: 114-5 and n. 24; *contra* Schlatter 1923: 30-31. Gamala: *War* 4.14.

<sup>73</sup> *War* 7.23-5; cf. Schürer 1973: 1.477, “King Agrippa was no doubt also present”; S. Schwartz 1990: 114, “It is hard to imagine that Agrippa was not present at the time”; D.R. Schwartz 1990: 175.

<sup>74</sup> The arguments of Jordan 1974: 209-11, in favour of their arrival in 71 have little to recommend them. She makes too much of Dio's claim that Berenice was “at the height of her power” (65.15.1).

<sup>75</sup> Cass. Dio 65.15.1. Although the date of their arrival is not mentioned specifically, the reference occurs in conjunction with the dedication of the *Templum Pacis*, which is firmly dated by Dio to AD 75. Kokkinos 1998: 329, speculates that Agrippa II and Berenice were present at the opening ceremony of the *Templum Pacis*, in which the spoils of the temple in Jerusalem were displayed; cf. *War* 7.158-62.

<sup>76</sup> See esp. Crook 1951: 162-75; cf. B. Jones 1975: 454-62; Braund 1984a: 120-23; S. Schwartz 1990: 115. We will consider the relationship between Titus and Berenice more carefully below.

<sup>77</sup> With varying arguments, see Rogers 1980: 86-95; B. Jones 1984: 87-99.

<sup>78</sup> See Barag 1978: 22 and n. 35. For the dating of the fall of Masada to AD 74, see Eck 1969: 282-9; 1970: 93-103; rejected in a review by C.P. Jones 1974: 89-90.



civil war.<sup>79</sup> In any case, the presence of Agrippa II in Rome in AD 75 put him once again in proximity with Josephus, and now we may be certain that the two had close contact.

For Josephus, besides mentioning that Agrippa II was one of the recipients of the *War* as we have already seen, also refers to his direct involvement in the production of that work. What follows is the relevant passage in its entirety:

And the king, Agrippa, wrote sixty-two letters attesting to [my] transmission of the truth. Two of these, in fact, I have appended, in case you insist on knowing from them what was written.

King Agrippa: To dearest Josephus Greetings! I went through the volume with greatest pleasure, and it really seems to me that with superior care you have precisely described what you have portrayed. Send me the rest also. Be well.

King Agrippa: To dearest Josephus Greetings! From what you have written, you look as though you need no instruction—[we can read your work] instead of our learning everything from the start. Whenever you should next meet me, I myself will inform you of many things that are not [widely] known.<sup>80</sup>

Although we should certainly not accept these letters uncritically as facsimiles of the actual correspondence between Agrippa II and Josephus—especially since the letters contain characteristic Josephan language<sup>81</sup>—, nor should we necessarily assume that all sixty-two letters, if there were indeed that many, were equally laudatory,<sup>82</sup> they are valuable nonetheless for what they indicate regarding the interactions between the two at this point.

First of all, the letters explicitly locate Agrippa II's involvement in the composition phase of the work, contrary to the impression given in the *Apion*, which suggests only that the

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<sup>79</sup> See Braund 1984a: 122-3; B. Jones 1992b: 91-2. The quotation is from Mommsen 1894: 5.540; compare Feuchtwanger 1991[1935]: 192, who called her “die ‘hebräischen Venus’” in his famous trilogy.

<sup>80</sup> *Life* 364-6: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας ἐξηκονταδύο γέγραφεν ἐπιστολάς τῇ τῆς ἀληθείας παραδόσει μαρτυρῶν. ὧν δὴ καὶ δύο ὑπέταξα καὶ βουλευθέντι σοι τὰ γεγραμμένα γνῶναι πάρεστιν ἐξ αὐτῶν: “ βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας Ἰωσήφω τῷ φιλιτάτῳ χαίρειν. ἥδιστα διήλθον τὴν βύβλον, καὶ μοι πολὺ ἐπιμελέστερον ἔδοξας τῶν ταῦτα συγγραψάντων ἠκριβοκέναι πέμπε δέ μοι καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς. ἔρρωσο.” “ βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας Ἰωσήφω τῷ φιλιτάτῳ χαίρειν. ἐξ ὧν ἔγραψας οὐδεμιᾶς ἔοικας χρῆζειν διδασκαλίας ὑπὲρ τοῦ μαθεῖν ἡμᾶς ὅλους ἀρχῆθεν. ὅταν μέντοι συντύχῃς μοι, καὶ αὐτός σε πολλὰ κατηγήσω τῶν ἀγνοουμένων.” The translation is taken directly from Mason 2001: 150.

<sup>81</sup> See Mason 2001: 150 n. 1501.

<sup>82</sup> See Cohen 2002[1979]: 115-6 n. 59; cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 117 n. 34.

completed volume was sold to Agrippa II.<sup>83</sup> It is apparent, however, from the first letter, which ends with a request that Josephus send the remainder of the work to Agrippa II, that they had contact considerably before the completion of the *War*.<sup>84</sup> This is supported by the second important detail, namely that Agrippa II served as a source for information about which Josephus, and others, were not familiar. It is significant that this occurred in personal encounters that were likely frequent and easily arranged, given Agrippa II's apparent willingness to await whatever opportunity arose next. As Mason points out, "no travel plans need to be discussed".<sup>85</sup> His probable value as a source has long been recognized, both for the events that had just passed and those involving his father, Agrippa I, who appears prominently in both the *War* and the *Antiquities*.<sup>86</sup> Unlike the emperors, therefore, Agrippa II appears to have been fully a member of Josephus' audience, not only as a passive recipient of the complete *War* but also as an active participant in its production.<sup>87</sup>

In addition to his assistance in ensuring the accuracy of the work, Josephus may also have made active use of Agrippa II as a broker of the work to assist in its circulation among the intended recipients.<sup>88</sup> The fact that the Herodian king also befriended Justus of Tiberias, who was likewise writing a history of the revolt, against which Josephus is reacting here in the *Life*, may suggest that Josephus was only one of the literary clients whom Agrippa II took under his

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<sup>83</sup> Mason 2001: 149 n. 1499, reasonably explains this apparent discrepancy as a careless mistake by Josephus; that is, he mentions Agrippa II and his relatives as an afterthought and so they should not be included among those fellow-Judaeans to whom Josephus sold copies.

<sup>84</sup> *Contra* S. Schwartz 1990: 117, "The letters probably date to either shortly before or soon after the publication of the work as a whole."

<sup>85</sup> Mason 2005a: 85; cf. 1998b: 78-9.

<sup>86</sup> See e.g. Bloch 1879: 121, 153-4; Thackeray 1997[1927]: xxiii; Scramuzza 1940: 14; Feldman 1996[1962]: 175-6; Nicols 1975: 54-55; Goud 1996: 479-80; Kokkinos 1998: 275; cf. D.R. Schwartz 1990: 11, 32-8; S. Schwartz 1990: 129 n. 174.

<sup>87</sup> Regarding this process, which was more important in many ways than the circulation of the final product, see White 1975: 299; cf. Starr 1987: 213-15; Harris 1989: 222-29; Fantham 1996: 2-19, 211-21; Nauta 2002: 120-24.

<sup>88</sup> Mason 1998b: 78-9.

wing.<sup>89</sup> In general, Agrippa II does not appear to have harboured any feelings of reproach towards those who had been involved on the Judaeian side of the revolt.<sup>90</sup> In any case, he was well-placed in the imperial capital to serve in some fashion as literary patron. Regardless of the aspersions cast against his sister, Agrippa II's status in Rome after the revolt was secure. His indispensable<sup>91</sup> involvement in the accession of the Flavians to the imperial throne was rewarded at his arrival in AD 75 with the *ornamenta praetoria*, which gave him the senatorial rank of praetor that had previously been enjoyed by his uncle, Herod of Chalcis.<sup>92</sup> His prominent place in Flavian Rome is confirmed inadvertently by Juvenal's disgusted dismissal of him as *barbarus*, accusing him as well of incest while imprecisely referring to him as king of Judaea, "the land where kings observe festive Sabbaths barefoot, and an ancient indulgence allows pigs to grow old."<sup>93</sup> His sister's notorious dalliances with Titus would have further familiarized the Roman public with him,<sup>94</sup> although the frequent presence of members of the Herodian family from the Augustan period on may already have been enough to secure his position among the public of Rome.<sup>95</sup> Josephus may well have relied heavily, therefore, upon the services of Agrippa II in circulating the *War* among the many contacts he had made in the city of Rome.

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<sup>89</sup> See *Life* 355-56. Justus became the chief of Agrippa II's secretarial staff (*taxis epistolon*). Concerning the relationship between Justus and Agrippa II, see Rajak 1973: 345; S. Schwartz 1990: 143-5.

<sup>90</sup> See S. Schwartz 1990: 145-6.

<sup>91</sup> See Sullivan 1953: 70; cf. D.R. Schwartz 2005: 63-5.

<sup>92</sup> Cass. Dio 65.15.4. Herod: Cass. Dio 60.8.3. Agrippa I was granted the status of consul (*ornamenta consularia*) on the same occasion as his younger brother Herod became praetor: Philo *In Flacc.* 40; Cass. Dio 60.8.2; Sohaemus of Emesa is described in a dedication from Heliopolis as *honoratus ornamentis consularibus*, but it is unclear when he received these honours: *IGLS* 6.2760=ILS 8958; cf. Mommsen 1887: 455-67; Rémy 1976-77: 160-98; Braund 1984b: 28-29.

<sup>93</sup> Juv. 6.157-60: *hunc dedit olim barbarus incestae dedit hunc Agrippa sorori observant ubi festa mero pede sabbata reges et vetus indulget senibus clementia porcis*; trans. Stern 1976: 2 no. 298. The charge of incest is repeated by Josephus at *Ant.* 20.145-6.

<sup>94</sup> Berenice: Tac. *Hist.* 2.2; Suet. *Tit.* 7.1; cf. Kokkinos 1998: 321-2, 329-30. See further below.

<sup>95</sup> See e.g. *War* 1.573, 602; *Ant.* 15.342-3; 16.86-7; 17.20, 53; 18.143, 166-7. Agrippa I himself had been brought up at Rome in the household of Claudius; see *Ant.* 19.360-62; 20.12, 135; cf. Braund 1984b: 10-11; S. Schwartz 1990: 77-89; D.R. Schwartz 1990: 39-54, 77-92; Kokkinos 1998: 190-91, 287-90. Regarding the more general practice of the children of client kings receiving their education in Rome, also as "hostages", see Braund 1984b: 12-17.

At the same time, while thoroughly conversant with Roman culture and integrated into the Roman social scene, Agrippa II may also have served as a valuable conduit to the large Judaeian community in Rome. Despite their high level of integration into Roman society, the Herodians remained provincial. Cassius Dio recounts an episode in which the emperor Claudius granted Agrippa I and Herod of Chalcis permission to address the senate in Greek rather than the customary Latin as a concession towards their lack of ease in the Roman tongue.<sup>96</sup> Josephus' observation that Agrippa II and his relatives had "reached the highest degree of Greek education" and were "steeped in Greek wisdom" does not necessarily indicate, therefore, their *Romanitas*.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, Agrippa II had begun to demonstrate an interest in Judaeian affairs already during his younger years in Rome. He used his special place in the imperial court of Claudius on two occasions to plead on behalf of Judaeian embassies that had made their way to Rome.<sup>98</sup> On the first, which was in support of an embassy requesting permission to maintain control of the high-priestly garments for service in the Temple, Josephus has Claudius attribute the success of the appeal to the fact it was Agrippa II himself who had brought the envoys before the imperial court.<sup>99</sup> On the second occasion, Agrippa II successfully intervened at a critical moment in the dispute between competing embassies of Samaritans and Judaeians who were seeking to absolve

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<sup>96</sup> Cass. Dio 60.8.3: καὶ ἕξ τε τὸ συνέδριον ἐσελθεῖν σφισι καὶ χάριν οἱ ἑλληνιστὶ γῶναι ἐπέτρεψεν; "And he permitted them to enter the senate and to express their thanks to him in Greek." This passage was drawn to my attention by Prof. D.R. Schwartz (April 19, 2010).

<sup>97</sup> *Life* 359: ἀνδρῶν τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς παιδείας ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἠκόντων; *Apion* 1.51: ἀνδράσι καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς σοφίας μετεσχηκόσιν.

<sup>98</sup> He is possibly also the Agrippa of the so-called *Acta Isidori* (*P.Lond.Inv.* 2785 and *P.Berol.* 8877=Musurillo 1954: 21-3, 118-30) who defends the rights of the Alexandrian Judaeians before Claudius against the notorious anti-Judaeian Isidorus. The historicity of the document is, however, questionable. Cf. S. Schwartz 1990: 111-2 n. 10.

<sup>99</sup> *Ant.* 20.9-14, especially 12: Ἀγρίππα τοῦ ἐμοῦ, ὃν ἐγὼ ἔθρεψα καὶ ἔχω σὺν ἐμαυτῷ εὐσεβέστατον ὄντα, προσαγαγόντος μοι τοὺς ὑμετέρους πρέσβεις...; "My friend Agrippa, whom I have brought up and now have with me, being most pious, brought your envoys before me"; cf. Kokkinos 1998: 318.

themselves from responsibility for the cycle of violence that had arisen between the two groups in Judaea.<sup>100</sup>

We might also imagine that Agrippa II had further contact with the Judaeian community in Rome to maintain his observance of the ancestral customs, which he was accustomed to do, at least publicly.<sup>101</sup> The Herodians had long had to defend themselves against charges of being ‘half-Judaeian’ because of their Idumean background and Agrippa II himself, according to Josephus, certainly considered himself to have been a Judaeian.<sup>102</sup> Even the conflicts that arose between the Herodian king and his Judaeian subjects suggest that they held him to their religious standards.<sup>103</sup> He himself broke off a marriage between his sister Drusilla and Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus IV of Commagene, because the latter refused to be circumcised, marrying her off instead to Azizus, king of Emesa, who accepted these terms.<sup>104</sup>

It may be, therefore, that, while in Rome, Agrippa II sought out one of the several synagogues that were already present in the first century in order to maintain his standing among Judaeians both locally and in his home province.<sup>105</sup> The name of the one, the synagogue of the “Agrippesians” (Ἀγριππησίων), presents the intriguing possibility that the community was named after Agrippa II himself, or his father, although most scholars favour the identification with Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, the right-hand man of Augustus, who upheld Judaeian privileges

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<sup>100</sup> *Ant.* 20.134-6.

<sup>101</sup> See Brann 1870: 547; S. Schwartz 1990: 112.

<sup>102</sup> See *Ant.* 14.403; 19.332; *m.Sotah* 7.8; cf. D.R. Schwartz 1990: 124-30, 219-22. Agrippa II: *Ant.* 20.16, 104, 139, 179; cf. D.R. Schwartz 2005: 71, 75.

<sup>103</sup> *Ant.* 20.189-96, 216-18; cf. *Ant.* 18.127-8, 141; 20.141-7.

<sup>104</sup> *Ant.* 20.139, 145; cf. Schürer 1973: 1.475-6; Sullivan 1977: 215-16; B. Jones 1984: 75 n. 104.

<sup>105</sup> At least four synagogues are likely to have been present in Rome in the first century AD, namely that of the Agrippesians (*CIJ* 365, 425, 503), of the Augustesians (*CIJ* 284, 301, 338, 368, 416, 496), of the Volumnesians (*CIJ* 343, 402, 417, 523), and of the Hebrews (*CIJ* 291, 317, 510, 535); cf. La Piana 1927: 356 n. 26; Leon 1995[1960]: 140-49; Richardson 1998: 20-22. A total of 13 different names for Roman synagogues have been found. A possible fifth first-century synagogue is that identified by Richardson (23-8) as the ‘Synagogue of the Herodians’, based on his reading of the very fragmentary inscription (*CIJ* 173), an intriguing possibility, but one that is not generally accepted; cf. Ferrua 1941: 34; De Spirito 1999: 391. Regarding the synagogues in Rome, see also La Piana 1927: 341-71; M.H. Williams 1994: 129-41; 1998: 215-28; De Spirito 1999: 389-93; Lampe 2003[1987]: 38-40; Cappalletti 2006: 3-30.

in Asia Minor.<sup>106</sup> In any case, there are strong reasons for supposing that Agrippa had contacts with the Judaeans in Rome so that, regardless of Josephus' own possible connections with that community, which will be discussed shortly, Agrippa II may also have been useful in disseminating the *War* to the "many of our own people" who Josephus claims also purchased copies, among whom Agrippa II serves only as the most prominent representative.<sup>107</sup> We might even imagine that this was accomplished within the setting of the synagogue, which may have served as a place to meet for learned discussions even outside of the Sabbath gatherings, although the evidence for the first-century is scant.<sup>108</sup>

Throughout the time that Josephus was writing the *War*, therefore, he seems to have had a close (working) relationship with Agrippa II. At the same time, they were scarcely social equals and the bond between them resembles a patron-client relationship. Josephus' naming of his youngest son, who was born in AD 77/8 to the Cretan-Judaeian wife Josephus met in Rome, Simonides Agrippa, presumably in honour of the king, fits neatly within such a context.<sup>109</sup> So does the generally glowing portrait of Agrippa II in the *War*. Some scholars have suggested that Josephus had an apologetic motive in the way in which he characterized not only Agrippa II, but

<sup>106</sup> See e.g. Schürer 1879: 15; Leon 1995[1960]: 140-49; Lichtenberger 1996: 2160; Levinskaya 1996: 182-3; Richardson 1998: 21 and n. 17; De Spirito 1999: 389.

<sup>107</sup> *Ap.* 1.51: πολλοῖς δὲ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐπίτρασκον.

<sup>108</sup> See e.g. Philo *Leg.* 156: "[Augustus] knew they had synagogues, and that they were in the habit of visiting them, especially on their sacred Sabbath days, when they publicly cultivate their national philosophy"; *Somn.* 2.127: "And will you sit in your synagogues and assemble your regular company and read in security your holy books, expounding any obscure point and in leisurely comfort discussing at length your ancestral philosophy?" Regarding synagogues as 'schools' (διδασκαλεῖα), see Philo *Mos.* 2.215-16; *Spec.* 2.62-4; cf. Safrai 1976: 945-70; Cohen 1987: 111-15; Levine 1996: 430-32; 2005: 155-7. Josephus' own work, particularly the *Antiquities* and *Apion*, made a clear effort to portray Judaism for his audience as a national philosophy with its own schools; see Mason 1996b: 44-6; cf. Taylor 2003: 112-25.

<sup>109</sup> *Life* 5, 427; cf. Kokkinos 1998: 330; Mason 2001: 10 n. 39. This son has been identified with a M. Flavius Agrippa named in an inscription discovered in Caesarea Maritima: *CIL* III.12082=*ILS* 7206: *M. Flavius Agrippam pontif. Iviral. Col. I Fl. Aug. Caesareae oratorem, ex dec. dec. pec. publ.*; see Zangemeister 1890: 25-30; cf. Niese 1914: 570. Note, however, the comment of Dessau 1902: 2.1.736, "sine causa hic creditur Iosephi Iudaei rerum scriptoris filius natu minimus." S. Schwartz 1990: 11 and n. 31, has proposed that the eldest son, Hyrcanus, was similarly named after Julius Hyrcanus, the son of Berenice II and Herod of Chalcis, which may suggest that Josephus was soliciting equally the patronage of Berenice; cf. *War* 2.221; *Ant.* 20.104.

also Berenice and the Herodians in general, perhaps with the intention of promoting the re-establishment of the Herodian monarchy, with Agrippa II as King of Judaea, in place of the newly instituted provincial administration.<sup>110</sup> Even if Agrippa II and/or Josephus entertained no such hopes, however, the positive portrayal in the *War* is hardly surprising in light of the interactions between Agrippa II and Josephus throughout the course of the writing project. It simply confirms the picture that has been described above.

If then the positive portrayal in the *War* signifies a relationship between the two figures during the production of that work, the rather “gossipy”<sup>111</sup> character of the portrait in the *Antiquities* suggests the opposite for the latter period of Josephus’ life in Rome. Here he admits that his portrayal of the Herodians might cause offence, stating, “although we respect many of [Herod’s] descendants, who still reign, yet we honour the truth more than them, and this even though it sometimes happens that we incur their displeasure by so doing.”<sup>112</sup> Consequently, although Josephus has occasion for praise of Agrippa II also in the *Antiquities*,<sup>113</sup> much of his characterization of the Herodian king is derogatory.<sup>114</sup> It is here that he reports the scandalous rumours of incest between Agrippa II and his sister Berenice,<sup>115</sup> and highlights Agrippa’s repeated offences against Judaeian customs and laws, which he ties directly to the calamities that were soon to fall on the Judaeans.<sup>116</sup> Even those passages that appear to highlight Agrippa II in a

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<sup>110</sup> See Laqueur 1920: 62-3, 67-76; S. Schwartz 1990: 110-60, esp. 131-42; D.R. Schwartz 2005: 63-7.

<sup>111</sup> Mason 1998b: 99-100.

<sup>112</sup> *Ant.* 16.187: πολλοὺς μὲν τῶν ἐγγόνων τῶν ἐκείνου καὶ βασιλεύοντας ἔτι δι’ ἐντροπῆς ἔχοντες, τὴν δ’ ἀλήθειαν πρὸ ἐκείνων τιμηκότες, ἦν ὅτε δικαίως ἐγένετο συνέβη τε παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἐκείνοις ὀργῇ τυγχάνειν.

<sup>113</sup> *Ant.* 20.9, 12, 135.

<sup>114</sup> D.R. Schwartz 1982: 241-68, attributes this negative portrayal to an anti-Herodian source; cf. 1990: 157 n. 41. His more recent work tempers his conclusions somewhat; see 2005: 74-5. See also the comparison of the portrayals of Herod the Great and Archelaus in the *War* and *Antiquities* in van Henten 2011: 241-70, where he suggests that the latter work characterizes these figures, particularly Herod, in a more negative fashion than the former.

<sup>115</sup> *Ant.* 20.145.

<sup>116</sup> *Ant.* 20.189-96, 202-18. See especially the summary statement at 20.218: πάντα δ’ ἦν ἐναντία ταῦτα τοῖς πατρίοις νόμοις, ὧν παραβαθέντων οὐκ ἐνῆν μὴ οὐχὶ δίκας ὑποσχεῖν; “All this was contrary to the ancestral laws, and such transgression was bound to make us liable to punishment.”

positive role, such as his intervention in the trial of Cumanus before Claudius, when compared to the parallel account in the *War*, can be seen to minimize the significance of his involvement.<sup>117</sup>

This contrast between Josephus' earlier and later writings has provoked considerable scholarly discussion. How could Josephus have painted such a negative picture of Agrippa II? The simplest explanation is that the king was no longer alive by the time of the completion of the *Antiquities/Life* in AD 93/4, a position that has been adopted by many scholars.<sup>118</sup> This is apparently confirmed by *Life* 359, where Josephus questions Justus' motivation for not releasing his own account of the revolt "while king Agrippa was still around", a criticism that may also have been levelled at Tacitus regarding his *Agricola*, written after the demise of Domitian, which would account for the defensive tone of the opening sections.<sup>119</sup> This date of AD 93/4 is, however, explicitly contradicted by the claim of the ninth-century Patriarch of Constantinople Photius that Agrippa II died in the third year of Trajan, that is, AD 100.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, the abundant coinage of Agrippa II may indicate that he was alive in AD 95, depending on which era one adopts when interpreting the regnal years on the coins.<sup>121</sup> This has led some to posit, after Laqueur, a second edition of the *Antiquities/Life* after the death of Agrippa II in AD 100, which would account for the apparent contradictions.<sup>122</sup> This theory has, however, largely been discredited,<sup>123</sup> which has led those scholars interested in maintaining the implicit evidence in Josephus for Agrippa II's death before 93/4 to reject the dating of Photius and to adopt an

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<sup>117</sup> *Ant.* 20.135-6; cf. *War* 2.245; Matthews 1999: 203.

<sup>118</sup> Erbes 1896: 415-35; Luther 1910: 56-9; Hölscher 1916: 1941; Macurdy 1935: 250; Frankfort 1961: 54; Schürer 1973: 1.481-2; Rajak 1973: 361-2; Smallwood 1981[1976]: 572-4; Barish 1978: 74; Attridge 1984: 210; Mason 1991: 311-24; 1998b: 99-100; 2001: 147 n. 1483; Cohen 2002[1979]: 177-80; Rajak 2002[1983]: 237-8; C.P. Jones 2002: 113-21; Kushnir-Stein 2002: 123-31.

<sup>119</sup> *Life* 359: εἰ δὲ θαρρεῖς ἄμεινον ἀπάντων συγγεγραφεῖναι, διὰ τί ζώντων Οὔεσπασιανοῦ καὶ Τίτου τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων τῶν τὸν πόλεμον κατεργασαμένων καὶ βασιλέως Ἀγρίππα περιόντος ἔτι καὶ τῶν ἐκ γένους αὐτοῦ πάντων...; cf. Tac. *Agr.* 1-3; Syme 1958: 129-31.

<sup>120</sup> Phot. *Bibl.* 33, ostensibly on the basis of Justus' history.

<sup>121</sup> This dating, which rests on an era beginning in AD 60/61, is accepted by Barag 1978: 23; Meshorer 1982: 2.65-73; S. Schwartz 1990: 19-20; Kokkinos 1998: 398-99.

<sup>122</sup> Laqueur 1920; Thackeray 1929: 16-9; Gelzer 1952: 67-90; Pelletier 1959: xiii-xiv.

<sup>123</sup> See esp. Barish 1978: 61-75.



alternate dating system for the coins, which were presented already by Mommsen as one of the most perplexing numismatic problems facing the ancient historian.<sup>124</sup> While the common scholarly opinion seems, therefore, to support an early date for the death of Agrippa II, the debate is by no means over.<sup>125</sup>

For our purposes, however, a firm date for Agrippa II's death is not necessary. Of course, if we were able to date the death of Agrippa II decisively, we would have a clear *terminus ante quem* for the end of the relationship between Josephus and Agrippa II. Nevertheless, the generally unsympathetic portrayal of Agrippa II in the *Antiquities* and the absence of any evidence for contact between the two after the initial circulation of the *War* suggests strongly that their relationship did not continue long beyond that point. Moreover, the fact that Josephus felt no compulsion against slandering Agrippa II, whether that was posthumous or not, further hints at the limits of the relationship that had existed.<sup>126</sup> While the bonds were convenient during the early years in Rome, both in terms of proximity and the advantages to both parties described above, they easily dissolved either at the completion of the *War* or the return of Agrippa II to his kingdom.<sup>127</sup> As Feldman has pointed out, "Josephus, writing the *Antiquities* in Rome, had hardly anything to fear from a petty prince thousands of miles away."<sup>128</sup> On the whole, therefore,

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<sup>124</sup> Mommsen 1871: 449-57.

<sup>125</sup> See, more recently, in favour of an early date, C.P. Jones 2002: 113-21; Kushnir-Stein 2002: 123-31; *contra* Kokkinos 2003: 163-80. For a useful and extensive discussion of the complicated progression of scholarly opinions on this subject, at least up to the time of publication, see D.R. Schwartz, 1992: 243-82; cf. Kushnir-Stein 2007: 55-60.

<sup>126</sup> See Rajak 1991: 125, "if these [negative passages] are to be explained by the fact that Agrippa was dead by the time that this passage was written and that Josephus was, therefore, able to be open about certain earlier reservations, then the relationship was not an entirely unclouded one." The suggestion of Cohen 2002[1979]: 170-80, 236-7, that the criticism reflects Josephus' new nationalistic religious bias should be dismissed for the same reasons outlined in the previous chapter regarding Josephus' allegedly changing circumstances.

<sup>127</sup> Given the lack of evidence for Agrippa II's later years, it is unclear for what length of time he remained in the city of Rome. It may be that he left with Berenice when she was dismissed in 79 at the accession of Titus; see Suet. *Tit.* 7.2; cf. Cass. Dio 66.15.4-5. For the chronology, see Braund 1984a: 120-23.

<sup>128</sup> Feldman 1989b: 397. See also Macurdy 1935: 250, "Either Agrippa was dead at the time when this unpleasant chapter was published, or else it was written at a time when Josephus felt himself safe under a new patron and in a position to pay off an old score against Agrippa because of the latter's patronage of Justus of Tiberias."

Josephus' relationship with Agrippa II seems to have been circumscribed, much in the manner as I have argued for his relationship with the Flavians. Although there were times when contact might have been frequent, as the letters attest, it would be misleading to include Agrippa II within Josephus' social circle.

The same should be said concerning the other two Herodian figures, who appear very briefly alongside Agrippa II as recipients of the *War*, namely Julius Archelaus and an unidentified Herod.<sup>129</sup> The former of these has been identified as a son of the eparch of Agrippa I, Helkias, and a Hasmonean granddaughter of Herod, Cypros. He married one of the daughters of Agrippa I, Mariamme, with the blessing of Agrippa II.<sup>130</sup> He was, therefore, well connected, a Roman citizen, and, presumably, a familiar figure to any of Josephus' possible readers in Rome, which explains the addition of his name in the *Apion*.<sup>131</sup> His inclusion among those who received or purchased copies of Josephus' completed work may suggest that he was present in Rome at the time.<sup>132</sup> The same goes for the '*semnotatos*' Herod whose precise identity remains obscure,<sup>133</sup> although some scholars have suggested that he was the son of Aristobulus III, a son of Herod of Chalcis and Mariamme, and Salome, the daughter of Herodias, who was most well-known for requesting the head of John the Baptist on a platter.<sup>134</sup> This Herod was likely raised at Rome but we know little further.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> *Ap.* 1.51: πολλοῖς δὲ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐπίπρασκον, ἀνδράσι καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς σοφίας μετεσχηκόσιν, ὧν ἔστιν Ἰούλιος Ἀρχέλαος, Ἡρώδης ὁ σεμνότατος, αὐτὸς ὁ θαυμασιώτατος βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας; cf. *Life* 359, 362.

<sup>130</sup> See *Ant.* 18.138; 20.140; cf. Stern 1966: 237-8 (*non vidi*); 1982: 40-62; S. Schwartz 1990: 148; Kokkinos 1998: 197-8; Barclay 2007: 37 n. 209.

<sup>131</sup> His citizenship can be inferred from his name, Julius, and was likely passed down, given that it is not Tiberius or Claudius; see Kokkinos 1998: 197.

<sup>132</sup> See Kokkinos 1998: 253 n. 26, 313.

<sup>133</sup> Barclay 2007: 37-8 n. 211, points out that grammatically it is unclear whether or not the entire phrase is referring to Agrippa II. As he points out, however, it is unlikely that Josephus would have applied two epithets to Agrippa II; cf. von Gutschmid 1893: 4.410.

<sup>134</sup> See Mark 6:17-29 for Salome's involvement in the death of John the Baptist.

<sup>135</sup> See von Gutschmid 1893: 4.345; *PIR*<sup>I</sup> H 113; S. Schwartz 1990: 149 n. 133; Kokkinos 1998: 313, presents the intriguing possibility that he is also the 'Herodion' within the household of Aristobulus to whom Paul directs greetings in Rom. 16:10-11. Another candidate, the son Phasael and Salampsio (*Ant.* 18.131, 138), has been

The Herodian who made the largest splash in Roman society was, however, the sister of Agrippa II, Berenice. Her prominent role in Flavian Rome was due in part to her participation in the events leading up to Vespasian's accession—she seems to have supported his party financially<sup>136</sup>—but principally to her relationship with Titus, to which popular rumour attributed Titus' abortive trip to Galba already in AD 69.<sup>137</sup> Even apart from her involvement with the Flavian house, however, Berenice had achieved great prominence, not least through her marriages. Her first marriage, to Marcus Julius Alexander, the son of the Alexandrian alabarch Alexander Lysimachus, who was himself a wealthy businessman with connections to the well-known Nicanor of Alexandria,<sup>138</sup> connected her to the preeminent Judaeian family of Roman Egypt made famous by the philosopher Philo and his nephew, Berenice's brother-in-law, Tiberius Julius Alexander.<sup>139</sup> Although this marriage ended early with the death of Marcus Alexander, the ensuing connection between the two families can be recognized in Agrippa II's trip to Egypt to congratulate Tiberius Alexander on his appointment to the prefecture of Egypt.<sup>140</sup> Her second marriage with her uncle Herod, the king of Chalcis, raised her moreover to the status of queen. When her husband died in AD 49, the kingdom was granted by Claudius to her brother Agrippa II and they became in essence joint rulers.<sup>141</sup> She accordingly received also the title of

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suggested by Otto 1913: 162; Reinach 1930: 114; *PIR*<sup>2</sup> H 159; Troiani 1977: 81. Both possibilities are presented by Barclay 2007: 37 n. 210. Schwartz 1990: 149 n. 133, convincingly diminishes the likelihood of the latter identification.

<sup>136</sup> See Tac. *Hist.* 2.81: *nec minore animo regina Berenice partis iuvabat, florens aetate formaque et seni quoque Vespasiano magnificentia munerum grata*; "Queen Berenice showed equal spirit in helping Vespasian's party: she had great youthful beauty, and commended herself to Vespasian for all his years by the splendid gifts she made him." Her wealth is reported by Josephus, *Ant.* 20.146; *War* 2.426; *Life* 119; cf. B. Jones 1984: 61 and 75 n. 105. Regarding her role in AD 69, see Sullivan 1953: 69-70.

<sup>137</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.2; cf. Suet. *Tit.* 7; regarding the image of the couple in the ancient sources, see Wesch-Klein 2005: 163-73. The precise origin of the relationship is unclear. An early date of 67, proposed by Crook 1951: 163, and followed by Nicols 1978: 128, is based on very slender evidence; cf. Braund 1984a: 122 n. 6. If they first met in 67, Titus would have been twenty-eight to Berenice's thirty-nine.

<sup>138</sup> See Fuks 1951: 214-6.

<sup>139</sup> *Ant.* 19.277; cf. Sullivan 1953: 67-8; Modrzejewski 1995: 185-90.

<sup>140</sup> *War* 2.309, 335; cf. Kokkinos 1998: 393-4.

<sup>141</sup> *Ant.* 19.276-7, 354; 20.104; *War* 2.223.

queen, both popularly and officially, the only Herodian woman to receive that designation in Josephus' narratives.<sup>142</sup> A third marriage in AD 63, to a certain Polemo, king of Cilicia, which was apparently initiated to counteract the rumours of incest between her and Agrippa II, did not last long and she soon returned to her brother's palace at Caesarea Philippi.<sup>143</sup>

Even prior to her encounter with Titus, therefore, Berenice was a powerful figure. Upon her arrival in Rome in AD 75, however, she achieved yet a greater level of influence. Although it is doubtful that the rumours regarding a marriage proposal were true, she certainly appears to have behaved as an imperial wife, an Augusta.<sup>144</sup> Quintilian recalls an occasion on which he was defending Berenice on some charge in the context of a trial in which she also served in some capacity as judge.<sup>145</sup> Although the precise interpretation of the events that lie behind his brief reference is unclear, it appears that Vespasian may have invited Berenice to join his *consilium* when they were dealing with a matter that concerned her, and perhaps her brother, in a fashion similar to their involvement in the apostle Paul's case before Festus, the procurator of Judaea.<sup>146</sup> She was, however, destined for failure. The Roman public was not ready for an eastern queen, a "reversal of Actium".<sup>147</sup> Moreover, according to Suetonius at least, the people saw his passion for Berenice, together with his gangs of catamites and eunuchs, as indicative of his general

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<sup>142</sup> *IG* III.556=CIG 361 (Athens); *Life* 119; Tac. *Hist.* 2.81; Suet. *Tit.* 7; Quint. *Inst.* 4.1.19; Cagnat 1928: 158-60 (an inscription from Beirut); cf. *Life* 49, 180-81, 343, 355; *War* 2.595, 598; Acts 25:13, 23; 26:30; Macurdy 1935: 46-49; 1937: 84-91.

<sup>143</sup> *Ant.* 20.145-6; cf. Juv. 6.157-8. The identity of Polemo is problematic; see Kokkinos 1998: 381-2, for discussion. The alleged incestuous relationship is apparently accepted by Laqueur 1920: 58, who interprets *War* 2.596-7 as referring to "dem Agrippa und seiner Frau". See also the judgment in the first English translation of Schürer 1890: 2.197, where she is called "a bigot as well as a wanton".

<sup>144</sup> Cass. Dio 66.15.3-5; cf. Levick 1999: 194; Keaveney and Madden 2003: 39-43.

<sup>145</sup> Quint. *Inst.* 4.1.19: *et ego pro regina [Iulia] Berenice apud ipsam eam causam dixi*; "I myself, when I appeared on behalf of Queen Berenice, actually pleaded before her."

<sup>146</sup> Acts 25; for this interpretation and comparison, see Young-Widmeier 2002: 124-9; cf. Crook 1951: 169-70, who compares the situation to Agrippina's appearance at Nero's court at Cass. Dio 61.3.3-4; Stern 1974: 1.514 n. 231.

<sup>147</sup> See Vasta 2007: 46, 52, 75-6.

licentiousness and openly expressed their fear that he would turn out to be a second Nero.<sup>148</sup> He accordingly sent Berenice away immediately upon his accession in AD 79, allegedly against both their wishes.<sup>149</sup> Although she may not have gone far—Suetonius says only *ab urbe*—her second appearance in 81 elicited no apparent response from Titus and she disappeared from the Roman social scene subsequently.<sup>150</sup>

Nevertheless, during the period of Josephus' writing of the *War* and perhaps at its moment of completion, Berenice was available in the city of Rome. The positive portrayal in the *War*, particularly the courageous yet pathetic picture Josephus paints of her, barefoot and penitent, begging Florus to prevent his soldiers from avenging the insults he had suffered by slaughtering the Jerusalemites,<sup>151</sup> may suggest that Josephus sought or had received her patronage in addition to that of Agrippa II.<sup>152</sup> Correspondingly, her absence from Rome during the writing of the *Antiquities* left Josephus free to retract the pious portrayal of the *War* and air freely the malicious rumours about her general licentiousness (*ἀκολασία*), which he reports was widely held to be the reason for her separation from her last husband, Polemo.<sup>153</sup> During her time in Rome, however, Berenice would have been an attractive figure for Josephus to solicit as far as the publication and dissemination of his works was concerned.<sup>154</sup> We might even be tempted to

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<sup>148</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 7.1; Cass. Dio 66.15.5 reports, in the context of popular dislike of the situation, that two Cynics, Diogenes and Heras, publicly denounced the couple in a crowded theatre, for which the former was flogged and the latter beheaded.

<sup>149</sup> Suet. *Tit.* 7.1-2: *Berenicen statim ab urbe dimisit invitum invitam.*

<sup>150</sup> Cass. Dio 66.18.1. The chronology is disputed, but the reconstruction of Braund 1984a: 120-23, is convincing. Compare Kraemer 2003: 136.

<sup>151</sup> *War* 2.309-14. The laudatory portrayal is even more striking in view of Josephus' characteristically negative view of women; see Mason 2008a: 100 n. 757, 250 n. 2008; cf. E. & F. Stagg 1978: 45-8; D.R. Schwartz 1983: 555 n. 24; Kasher 2005: 103-5.

<sup>152</sup> It is also possible that he was simply sensitive to her relationship with Titus; see Krieger 1997: 9.

<sup>153</sup> *Ant.* 20.145-6. This negative portrayal is explained by some as originating with Berenice's protection of Justus of Tiberias (*Life* 343, 356), the bitter enemy of Josephus; see Macurdy 1935: 250; Krieger 1997: 9; Kraemer 2003: 135. D.R. Schwartz 1982: 241-68, suggests, however, that the texts denigrating Berenice are linked with the anti-Agrippan sentiment of one of Josephus' sources; cf. Ilan 1996: 233.

<sup>154</sup> See Mason 1998: 78-9; Gillman 2003: xviii, 118, 124-5.

imagine that it was she who brought the volumes to the attention of the *imperatores*.<sup>155</sup>

Nevertheless, the silence of Josephus regarding contact with her speaks loudly in light of his explicit references to Agrippa II and it may be that the two never met.

At the same time, we should not exclude the possibility that there were other Herodians who were members of Josephus' readership, if not of his social milieu. In the *Life* he is vague about the number and identity of the relatives of Agrippa II who received the *War*.<sup>156</sup> Moreover, we are aware of the presence of other Herodians in Rome or the surrounding area at this time who may also have been useful contacts for Josephus to cultivate, for the same reasons explored above. Josephus alludes to the tragic death of the young Agrippa III, the nephew of Agrippa II, and his wife in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, although he never fulfills on his promise to provide further details.<sup>157</sup> Presumably this couple had a villa in the region of Campania on the Bay of Naples, which long served as a vacation destination for the wealthy inhabitants of Rome, but they may have resided more permanently in Rome. The parents of this Agrippa III, namely Drusilla and the former procurator of Judaea, Felix, an imperial freedman well-known for his taste for royal wives—he had three<sup>158</sup>—apparently also lived in Rome at the time.

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<sup>155</sup> So Mason 2003b: 564, "Members of the Herodian family in Rome are *a priori* more likely than the Flavians to have taken an interest in the labours of their capable compatriot."

<sup>156</sup> *Life* 362: καὶ ἄλλοις δὲ πολλοῖς εὐθὺς ἐπέδωκα τὴν ἱστορίαν, ὧν ἔνιοι καὶ παρατετεύχεισαν τῷ πολέμῳ, καθάπερ βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας καὶ τινες αὐτοῦ τῶν συγγενῶν.

<sup>157</sup> *Ant.* 20.144; see Kokkinos 1998: 321. On Josephus' promise that is nowhere fulfilled; cf. Petersen 1958: 273. In his delightful Tacitean fantasy, Syme 1991: 647-62, speculated wildly that Berenice also perished in the eruption of Vesuvius.

<sup>158</sup> Suet. *Claud.* 28 calls him *trium reginarum maritum*; cf. *Ant.* 20.141; Tac. *Hist.* 5.9; Schürer 1973: 460-62; Brenk and Canali de Rossi 2001: 410-17. Felix's three wives: 1) Drusilla, the daughter of Agrippa I and sister of Agrippa II (mentioned above); 2) Drusilla(?), the grand(?)-daughter of Kleopatra Selene and Juba of Mauretania, great-granddaughter(?) of Mark Antony and Cleopatra (her precise relationship with these figures is unknown); 3) unknown.

In addition, there was the royal family of Commagene, who, although not strictly speaking of the Herodian dynasty, had intermarried with members of that family.<sup>159</sup> The former king of Commagene, Antiochus IV, who had been deposed from his throne in AD 72/3 for an alleged conspiracy to revolt alongside the Parthians, came to Rome with his son, Epiphanes, whose own son, C. Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus, colloquially known as “King Philopappus”, would eventually be appointed to the consulship in Rome in AD 109.<sup>160</sup> Schwartz has suggested, based on the rather flattering account of these events, that Josephus “was trying to win the favour of its increasingly influential surviving members”,<sup>161</sup> which is certainly a possibility and may lend support to their presence among the recipients of the *War*.

There was, in any case, no shortage of prominent individuals in the city of Rome with whom Josephus may have been able to claim some connection.<sup>162</sup> The hints in his narratives regarding the distribution of his works suggest that he made a concerted effort to reach the highest levels of Roman society. His silence regarding the other candidates mentioned above may indicate either his failure to attract their attention or their relative insignificance for his readership. At the same time, while these individuals remain a possibility as recipients and purchasers of the *War*, there is no evidence to suggest that Josephus moved in the same social circles as any of these figures.<sup>163</sup> A Judaeen priest, however distinguished his ancestry, was a far cry from a Herodian prince.

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<sup>159</sup> See Kokkinos 1998: 251-2. The great-great-grandson of Herod, Alexander IV, married a daughter, Jotape, of the last king of Commagene, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

<sup>160</sup> See *War* 7.219-43; cf. *War* 5.461; *PIR*<sup>7</sup> I 151; Halfmann 1979: 131; Bowersock 2005: 58-61.

<sup>161</sup> S. Schwartz 1990: 21; cf. 1986: 379-82.

<sup>162</sup> Niese 1914: 570, also presents the possibility that Josephus kept in touch with the ‘Adiabeanian chiefs’ who also lived in Rome at the time; cf. *War* 6.356.

<sup>163</sup> *Contra* Bowersock 2005: 53-62.

## Josephus and his Literary Circle

At the same time, I should not discount the fact that Josephus' literary efforts did put him at least in contact with these lofty compatriots in Rome who moved in the highest social circles, something to which few among the teeming population of Rome could lay claim. Nor were they the only ones who played a role in the publication of Josephus' narratives in Rome. Most prominent among the other individuals I should examine in my quest to reconstruct Josephus' social setting is of course his only expressly named literary patron, Epaphroditus, to whom he dedicated his later works.<sup>164</sup> The identity of this figure is elusive. Apart from the formulaic descriptions in the *Life* and *Apion*, in which Josephus refers to him as "most eminent Epaphroditus"<sup>165</sup> and, for the sake of variety, "my most esteemed Epaphroditus",<sup>166</sup> we have only the description at the beginning of the *Antiquities* to follow, which reads:

But there were certain people who, through their longing for the history, encouraged me to do it, and, most of all, Epaphroditus, a man who has had a love for every form of culture, but who particularly enjoys the experiences of histories, since, indeed, he himself has been associated with great events and diverse vicissitudes, in all of that he has exhibited a marvellous strength of character and an unshakable preference for excellence.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> See *Ant.* 1.8-9; *Life* 430; *Ap.* 1.1; 2.1.

<sup>165</sup> *Life* 430: κράτιστε ἀνδρῶν Ἐπαφρόδιτε; *Apion* 1.1: κράτιστε ἀνδρῶν Ἐπαφρόδιτε. The adjective κράτιστε cannot be used as proof of equestrian rank, even though in certain contexts and periods it could have this meaning (cf. Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25); cf. the description of Theophilus in Luke 1:3 as κράτιστε Θεόφιλε; Cadbury 1922: 505-7; Moulton and Milligan 1949: 358; Alexander 1993: 132-3; Cotton and Eck 2005: 49; Barclay 2007: 3 n. 3. It is worth quoting in full the observations of Dickey 1996: 143, "Κράτιστε 'strongest, mightiest' is always followed by ἀνδρῶν 'of men' or γυναικῶν 'of women' as part of a more complex address. Although κράτιστος sometimes functioned as a specific title (=Lat. *egregius*) in late Greek...the occurrences in the works surveyed do not seem to be titles, but rather straightforward expressions of affection or esteem. Κράτιστε is always thoroughly positive in the works surveyed." The only other examples she adduces in her Appendix B (281-2) are Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 8.41.3 and *Ant.* 4.134 (plural).

<sup>166</sup> *Ap.* 2.1: τιμιώτατέ μοι Ἐπαφρόδιτε; cf. Lucian *Catapl.* 16: Τιμιωτάτη μοι θεῶν ("most honoured of the gods to me"); Dickey 1996: 283, does not list our passage.

<sup>167</sup> *Ant.* 1.8: ἦσαν δέ τινες, οἱ πόθῳ τῆς ἱστορίας ἐπ' αὐτήν με προύτρπεον, καὶ μάλιστα δὴ πάντων Ἐπαφρόδιτος ἀνὴρ ἄπασαν μὲν ἰδέαν παιδείας ἡγαπηκῶς, διαφερόντως δὲ χαίρων ἐμπειρίας πραγμάτων, ἅτε δὴ μεγάλοις μὲν αὐτὸς ὀμιλήσας πράγμασι καὶ τύχαις πολυτρόποις, ἐν ἅπασι δὲ θαυμαστήν φύσεως ἐπιδειξάμενος ἰσχὺν καὶ προαίρεσιν ἀρετῆς ἀμετακίνητον.



Despite the paucity of evidence, the debate about the identity of this patron has a long history, largely because of the survival in the historical record of two other prominent Epaphroditai who were alive at this very time, both of whom have been proposed by various scholars as the dedicatee of Josephus' later works. The first candidate is an imperial freedman, Ti. Claudius Aug(usti) lib(ertus) Epaphroditus, who served under Nero as *a libellis* ('secretary for petitions') and played a significant role in uncovering the Pisonian conspiracy against Nero in AD 65, for which he was rewarded with military honours (*hastae purae* and *coronae aureae*) normally only granted to a freeborn individual. He also accompanied the emperor on his final escape from Rome, when he allegedly assisted in the infamous suicide.<sup>168</sup> Following the death of his imperial patron, he continued to cut a significant figure in the city of Rome, not least due to his wealth and probable ownership of the substantial *horti Epaphroditiani*,<sup>169</sup> even though it is unlikely that he attained a comparable position of power under the Flavians.<sup>170</sup> In any case, his public career was decisively ended by Domitian, who first exiled him from the city of Rome around the year 90 and then had him executed in 94/5, ostensibly for his involvement in the death of Nero to serve as a warning to any of Domitian's own intimates who might be plotting against him.<sup>171</sup>

This latter detail presents some difficulty to an identification with Josephus' patron, who was the dedicatee of his final works, all likely published in the final years of Domitian's reign

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<sup>168</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.55; Suet. *Nero* 49.3; *Dom.* 14.4; Cass. Dio 63.27.3; 67.14.4; *ILS* 9505; cf. *PIR*<sup>2</sup> E 69. Regarding his role in the Pisonian conspiracy with an analysis of *ILS* 9505, which records his military honours, see Eck 1976: 381-84.

<sup>169</sup> Regarding his wealth and properties, see Epict. *Diss.* 1.26.11; Frontin. *Aq.* 2.68-9; cf. Constans 1914: 383-7; Richardson 1992: 198; Manciola 1996: 60. According to Millar 1965b: 141-8, this Epaphroditus was the master of Epictetus, but see Weaver 1994: 475-9, for possible doubts.

<sup>170</sup> See Weaver 1994: 468-74, who rejects the possibility that he served as *a libellis* also under Domitian, a standard view in previous scholarship; see e.g. Scramuzza 1940: 17.

<sup>171</sup> Suet. *Dom.* 14.4; Cass. Dio 67.14.4.

before his death in 96.<sup>172</sup> Nevertheless, the difficulties with the dating can be resolved, albeit with a rather compressed chronology.<sup>173</sup> Furthermore, Josephus' description of his patron's life experiences, as one who had encountered many twists of fortune, seems to mesh well with the vicissitudes experienced by the freedman of Nero and has been the strongest argument in favour of this identification.<sup>174</sup> Josephus himself may have become aware of the high position that this Epaphroditus had occupied from his first trip to Rome; indeed the relationship between them could have had its origins in an encounter at this time.<sup>175</sup> On Josephus' return to Rome with Titus in AD 71, Epaphroditus' fall from favour, at least with respect to the imperial court, would have been apparent. This distance would not, however, have served as an obstacle to Josephus' adoption of him as patron, given the limited nature of the Josephus' own relationship with the Flavians.<sup>176</sup> In any case, while I cannot identify Josephus' patron with this figure with any confidence, it is worth noting that, while his wealth and background assured him a place among the elite of Rome, his position with respect to the imperial court during the Flavian period was circumscribed. That is, although he was well enough known to warrant Domitian's use of him as example, he seems to have held no position of importance in the Flavian regime.

The second figure who has been proposed as a candidate was also a wealthy freedman, but reached nowhere near the same levels of influence. This Epaphroditus is described in the massive Byzantine encyclopaedia of the ancient Mediterranean world, the *Suda*, as follows:

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<sup>172</sup> See especially the observations of C.P. Jones 2002: 114; 2005: 207; Cotton and Eck 2005: 50-51.

<sup>173</sup> See e.g. Luther 1910: 61-3; Mason 1998b: 98-101. But see C.P. Jones 2002: 114. The dating of his works is obviously also linked to the question of the date of Agrippa II's death, as discussed above.

<sup>174</sup> The scholars favouring this identification are: *PIR*<sup>1</sup> 2.36; Niese 1914: 570-71; Luther 1910: 61-3; Reinach 1930: xv; Scramuzza 1940: 17-18; Shutt 1961: 43; Nodet 1992: 4 n. 1; Feldman 1996[1962]: 176; Gerber 1997: 65-66; Mason 1998b: 98-101; 2001: xviii.

<sup>175</sup> See Scramuzza 1940: 17. See also Mason 1998b: 100, "We might even conjecture, wildly, that this Epaphroditus developed an initial interest in Judaism from Nero's consort and wife Poppaea Sabina, whose own interest in Judaism was widely reported."

<sup>176</sup> *Contra* Cotton and Eck 2005: 51, "Would Josephus have dedicated his works to a man who had fallen out of favour with the regime? Could Josephus have afforded to parade this literary patron unabashedly in his works? Could this pose have coexisted with his allegedly close connection to Domitian and his wife Domitia Augusta?"; but Eck 2004: s.v. "Epaphroditus [2]", links Josephus with this Neronian Epaphroditus unequivocally.

Of Chaeronea. Grammarian. He was a slave born in the house of the grammarian Archias of Alexandria, who educated him; he was then bought by Modestus, governor of Egypt, and taught his son Petelinus. He spent time in Rome under Nero and until Nerva; this was the time when Ptolemy son of Hephaestion was alive, and numerous other distinguished figures in education. By constantly buying books he acquired 30,000 volumes, all of them serious and recondite. Physically he was large and dark, like an elephant. He lived in the so-called Phainianokoria, where he bought two houses. He died at the age of 75, having fallen ill with dropsy. He left behind a considerable body of writings.<sup>177</sup>

There are two key details that make this Epaphroditus an attractive possibility for identification with Josephus' patron, namely his literary interests and his considerable wealth, which enabled him to acquire an extensive library, perhaps housed in his two houses or warehouses in the city of Rome.<sup>178</sup> Josephus' description of Epaphroditus as "a man who has had a love for every form of culture",<sup>179</sup> would certainly describe well the bibliophile of the *Suda*. The latter would also have been well-equipped to support Josephus in the publication of his works by providing venues for public recitations prior to their completion, covering the costs of transcribing the volumes, and promoting them within his literary circles, roles that Josephus implicitly ascribes to his patron in the concluding words of his *Apion*, where he states, "May both this and the previous book be dedicated to you, Epaphroditus, as you especially love the truth, and, *on your account* [i.e. 'by your aid'], to those who will likewise wish to know about our people."<sup>180</sup> Moreover, this Epaphroditus' apparent connection to other contemporary literary figures may have provided

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<sup>177</sup> *Suda*, s.v. *Epaphroditus*: Ἐπαφρόδιτος, Χαιρωνεύς, γραμματικός, Ἀρχίου τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως γραμματικοῦ θρεπτός, παρ' ᾧ παιδευθεὶς ὠνήθη ὑπὸ Μοδέστου, ἐπάρχου Αἰγύπτου, καὶ παιδεύσας τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ Πετηλῖνον ἐν Ῥώμῃ διέπρεψεν ἐπὶ Νέρωνος καὶ μέχρι Νέρβα, καθ' ὃν χρόνον καὶ Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Ἡφαιστίωνος ἦν καὶ ἄλλοι συχνοὶ τῶν ὀνομαστῶν ἐν παιδείᾳ. ὠνούμενος δὲ αἰεὶ βιβλία ἐκτήσατο μυριάδας τρεῖς, καὶ τούτων σπουδαίων καὶ ἀνακεχωρηκῶτων. τὸ δὲ σῶμα ἦν μέγας τε καὶ μέλας, ὡς ἐλεφαντώδης. ᾤκει τε ἐν τοῖς καλουμένοις Φαινιανοκορίοις δύο οἰκίας αὐτόθι κτησάμενος. ὁ δὲ καὶ ἐμπτον ἔτος ἄγων ἐτελεύτησεν ὑδέρῳ περιπεσών. συγγράμματα δὲ κατέλιπεν ἱκανά; trans. Adler 1931: 2.334-5; cf. *PIR*<sup>2</sup> M 563.

<sup>178</sup> Regarding the possible identification and location of these dwellings, see Rigsby 1997: 249-50; Cairns 1999: 218-19.

<sup>179</sup> *Ant.* 1.8: ἀνὴρ ἅπασαν μὲν ιδέαν παιδείας ἠγαπηκῶς.

<sup>180</sup> *Ap.* 2.296: καὶ λοιδορεῖν χαίρουσιν ἐξεληλέγχθωσαν. σοὶ δέ, Ἐπαφρόδιτε, μάλιστα τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀγαπῶντι καὶ διὰ σὲ τοῖς ὁμοίως βουλησομένοις περὶ τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν εἰδέναι τοῦτο καὶ τὸ πρὸ αὐτοῦ γεγράφθω βιβλίον. For this point, see Laqueur 1920: 25-6; Barclay 2007: 334 n. 1196.

Josephus entry onto the broader literary scene, a scenario that is supported by Josephus' description of his patron as one who "is always joining in love of the beautiful with those who are able to produce something useful or beautiful", which appears to link Epaphroditus with the endorsement of other writers.<sup>181</sup> Most recent scholarship has, therefore, favoured this individual as the patron of Josephus' works.<sup>182</sup>

This identification would again, by extension, have implications for Josephus' social standing. As Cotton and Eck point out, the status of the freedman was directly correlated to that of his former master,<sup>183</sup> so there might be grounds for establishing Epaphroditus' position with some confidence on the basis of any knowledge of the Modestus mentioned in the *Suda*. Previously, it was widely accepted that this Modestus could be identified with one of two individuals named M. Mettius Modestus that are attested epigraphically,<sup>184</sup> largely on the basis of a prior identification of Epaphroditus himself with a statue whose base is inscribed with the name M. METTIVS / EPAPHRODITVS / GRAMMATICVS GRAECVS, which would have been Epaphroditus' full name were his master indeed a Mettius Modestus.<sup>185</sup> A M. Mettius Modestus was, therefore, inserted into the *fasti* of Egypt, since the *Suda* asserts that this Modestus was a prefect,<sup>186</sup> and we are left with a rather distinguished master for Josephus'

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<sup>181</sup> *Ant.* 1.9: ὡς αἰεὶ τοῖς χρήσιμον ἢ καλὸν τι πράττειν δυναμένοις συμφιλοκαλοῦντι; cf. Laqueur 1920: 30. Regarding Josephus' possible association with other literary figures, see S. Schwartz 1990: 17; C.P. Jones 2005: 201-8. As Jones demonstrates, however, we are unable to link Josephus with any known contemporaries; cf. Price 2005: 104-5. The optimism of Sterling 1992: 235, is unsubstantiated: "the *Antiquities* was written in Rome in association with the highest literary circles of the empire."

<sup>182</sup> See Schürer 1901: 1.80 n. 8; Laqueur 1920: 25-30; Thackeray 1929: 53; Frankfort 1961: 57; Momigliano 1979: 442; Attridge 1984: 187 n. 2; S. Schwartz 1986: 385 n. 45; 1990: 16-7; Sterling 1992: 239-40 n. 66; Feldman 2000: 5 n.9; Rajak 2002[1983]: 223-4; Labow 2005: lxxiv-lxxv; Cotton and Eck 2005: 51-2; Barclay 2007: 3-4 n. 3.

<sup>183</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 51.

<sup>184</sup> M. Mettius Modestus: *PIR*<sup>2</sup> M 566 (a *procurator Augusti*) and 567. There is also a Mettius Modestus (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> M 565) who was suffect consul in AD 82, but his senatorial status precludes him from service in the equestrian prefecture of Egypt.

<sup>185</sup> M. Mettius Epaphroditus: *CIL* 6.9454. The full text reads: *M(arcus) Mettius / Epaphroditus / grammaticus Graecus / M(arcus) Mettius Germanus l(ibertus) f(ecit)*; cf. Augusta-Boularot 1994: 674. The statue itself is now exhibited in the Palazzo Altieri in Rome.

<sup>186</sup> See e.g. Stein 1950: 32-3; Pflaum 1973: 548.

supposed patron. Unfortunately, however, the *Suda*'s identification of this Modestus as a *praefectus Aegypti* is likely inaccurate—he cannot be accommodated within the *fasti* of Egypt<sup>187</sup>—and the identification of our Epaphroditus with the statue is by no means secure since it likely dates to the Antonine or Severan period, i.e. some time after the death of the grammarian,<sup>188</sup> which means that the fragile edifice built on the complicated coincidence of names falls apart.<sup>189</sup> Correspondingly we are also left with little on which to base our reconstruction of this Epaphroditus' social location, aside from noting the unlikelihood that he occupied a position among the elite of the city.

In both of these cases, there is no secure evidence to link them to Josephus' patron;<sup>190</sup> the arguments are inconclusive.<sup>191</sup> Furthermore, as has often been pointed out, the name Epaphroditus itself was fairly common and we need not assume that Josephus' Epaphroditus should be attested elsewhere.<sup>192</sup> What is fairly certain, however, is that this patron was a freedman, since there are among the known Epaphroditoi of Rome only two unquestionably

<sup>187</sup> See Reinmuth 1967: 81-2; Bastianini 1975: 273 n. 1; 1988: 505; Jördens 2009: 528-31; cf. Eck 1980: 58; Cairns 1999: 218-22.

<sup>188</sup> See Richter 1965: 285 fig. 2033 (Antonine); Zanker 1995: 233 fig. 126 (Severan); cf. Cairns 1999: 219-21. In their commentary on the inscription, Braswell and Billerbeck 2007: 77, suggest that the statue was dedicated by a descendant or freedman of the grammarian, perhaps the M. Mettius Germanus of the inscription, which may obviate the chronological difficulty.

<sup>189</sup> For an example of the uncritical assembling of the various references (*Suda*, Josephus, statue, inscriptions) see Bernoulli 1901: 2.200-202.

<sup>190</sup> The confidence of Laqueur 1920: 25-30, is unjustified; see esp. 30, "Da ist nun kein Zweifel mehr möglich: der bekannte Grammatiker und Büchererwerber Epaphroditos ist der Gönner des Josephus." His interpretation of the phrase ἐν ἅπασιν δὲ θαυμαστὴν φύσεως ἐπιδειξάμενος ἰσχύον as referring to the physical strength of Josephus' patron, which he then links with the description of the grammarian in the *Suda* as τὸ δὲ σῶμα ἦν μέγας τε καὶ μέλας ὡς ἔλεφαντώδης and even to the statue (Bernoulli 1901: vol. 2 plate 28), rests on an excessively literal rendering of the passage in Josephus; compare the Brill translation quoted above.

<sup>191</sup> As pointed out by Cohen 2002[1979]: 174 n. 230; cf. the new Schürer 1973: 1.48 n. 9; Weaver 1994: 475; C.P. Jones 2002: 114-15; Mason 2003b: 564 n. 24; Gussmann 2008: 252-3 n. 220; Siegert 2008: 12-13. The inconclusive nature of the evidence is also recognized by the majority of those who prefer one or the other Epaphroditoi.

<sup>192</sup> See e.g. Phil. 2:25; 4:18; Phlm. 23. A total of 320 are attested in the city of Rome alone; see Solin 2003[1982]: 1.343-48. See also Weaver 1994: 468, "These lists also contain eighteen *Augusti liberti*—including one *ab epistulis* (CIL 6.1887), three *T. Flavii Aug. liberti Epaphroditoi* (CIL 6.5323, 10518, 33468), and six *Caesaris servi*." The Flavii *ab epistulis* is cited as a strong possibility by C.P. Jones 2002: 115. Mason 2001: 173 n. 1780, also points out that the name "could even be used as an adjective (Herodotus 2.135) or an honorific, corresponding to the Latin Felix (cf. ἐπαφροδίσια; Plutarch, *Sull.* 34)."

freeborn men, compared to 120 who can definitively be categorized as slaves or freedmen and a further 16 who are in all likelihood freedmen.<sup>193</sup> It is also a strong possibility, therefore, if this Epaphroditus was not one of the imperial freedmen, that Josephus' patron was far removed from the imperial court. Even the former *a libellis* of Nero, who was an imperial freedman, held nowhere near the prominent place he had enjoyed in Neronian Rome, while the grammarian cannot be located among the senatorial and equestrian elite of Flavian Rome.<sup>194</sup> The conclusion of Cotton and Eck that Josephus was in all likelihood isolated from the socio-political elite is, therefore, apposite, also in light of our examination of Josephus' relationship with the emperors.<sup>195</sup>

Their subsequent observation, positing the "total isolation of the Jewish historian in Rome" is, however, unwarranted. Failure to penetrate the senatorial or equestrian ranks or distance from the imperial court by no means entailed extreme isolation and loneliness. I have explored already the contacts between Josephus and the local members of the Herodian family, who may also have provided access to other sympathetic readers or audience members.<sup>196</sup> Now Epaphroditus as well may represent only the most prominent and supportive of Josephus' literary patrons and recipients of his later works. This is certainly suggested by Josephus when he attributes his motivation in overcoming his hesitancy to provide an account of the Judaean antiquities in a foreign language to "certain people who, through their longing for the history,

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<sup>193</sup> See Solin 1996: 2.181-3; 2003[1982]: 1.348; cf. Cotton and Eck 2005: 49.

<sup>194</sup> See also Goodman 1994b: 338, "One may doubt how useful an ally Epaphroditus was in Roman society", although ignoring here the literary benefits and advantages.

<sup>195</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 52; cf. Price 2005: 106, "by lavishly thanking an obscure figure of (probably) servile birth as his patron, Josephus is inadvertently revealing his own obscurity in Roman society of his day."

<sup>196</sup> See thus also Gussmann 2008: 253-4 n. 225, "Die These erscheint sehr einseitig, weil Cotton und Eck die Beziehungen des Josephus zur jüdischen Prominenz in Rom, z. B. zu den Herodianern außer Acht lassen."

encouraged me to do it, and most of all, Epaphroditus...”<sup>197</sup> It was indeed not uncommon for writers to have multiple patrons while singling out only one of them for dedication.<sup>198</sup>

That his literary work was not accomplished in seclusion is confirmed by the presence of the familiar ‘assistants’—or, better, ‘accomplices’ or ‘collaborators’—who were of some use to Josephus in his writing of the *War*. In the famous passage of the *Apion*, Josephus writes, “Then, when I had leisure in Rome, and when all the work was prepared, having made use of some collaborators for the Greek language, I thus constructed my account of the events.”<sup>199</sup> The precise identity and role of these individuals has long been the subject of debate, largely inconclusive. The classic position, presented by Thackeray long ago, held that these were largely responsible for the style and much of the content of Josephus’ writings, particularly the *Antiquities* (for which Josephus does not claim their assistance), in which Thackeray found traces, or “thumb-marks”, of a Thucydidean hack and a Sophoclean assistant, which “need no Sherlock Holmes to detect them”. He suggested, moreover, that these were likely slaves in Josephus’ household, like the eunuch *paidagogos* we encountered in the previous chapter, although he was first led to think of them as Josephus’ “literary friends in Rome”.<sup>200</sup>

Since then, however, scholars have increasingly given Josephus more credit for the quality of the narratives and have exposed the weaknesses in Thackeray’s attribution of the discernable influences in the narratives, which are ubiquitous,<sup>201</sup> to ghostwriters.<sup>202</sup> The final products are wholly Josephan; there is no need to speak of “Josephus and Co.”, as Thackeray

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<sup>197</sup> *Ant.* 1.8: ἦσαν δέ τινες, οἱ πόθω τῆς ἱστορίας ἐπ’ αὐτὴν με προύτρεπον, καὶ μάλιστα δὴ πάντων Ἐπαφρόδιτος.

<sup>198</sup> See Mart. *Ep.* 3.5; cf. Mason 2001: 173 n. 1780. Regarding the possibility of having multiple patrons, see White 1975: 265-300.

<sup>199</sup> *Ap.* 1.50: εἶτα σχολῆς ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ λαβόμενος, πάσης μοι τῆς πραγματείας ἐν παρασκευῇ γεγενημένης χρησάμενός τισι πρὸς τὴν Ἑλληνίδα φωνὴν συνεργοῖς οὕτως ἐποίησάμην τῶν πράξεων τὴν παράδοσιν.

<sup>200</sup> Thackeray 1929: 104-22; quotations from 105, 114; translated into German by Jakob Mittelman 1973: 139-66.

<sup>201</sup> See e.g. Ek 1946: 27-62, 213; Mader 2000: 55-103.

<sup>202</sup> See especially Stein 1937: 2-14; Richards 1939: 36-40; Petersen 1958: 260-61 n. 5; Shutt 1961: 29-35, 59-78; Feldman 1984a: 827-30; Mason 1991: 48-51; Feldman 1998a: 171-9; Rajak 2002[1983]: 62-3, 233-6; Ullmann and Price 2002: 97-111; Chapman 2005b: 121-46; Barclay 2007: 36 n. 202.

advocated.<sup>203</sup> Instead their involvement was restricted to fine-tuning, with the aesthetic appeal of the final product largely in mind. Moreover, Thackeray's supposition that these collaborators were slaves of Josephus should also be reconsidered. The honourable mention of them here, immediately prior to his reference to the involvement of Vespasian, Titus, and the Herodians, is better explained if they were in fact friends or acquaintances of Josephus, as Rajak has pointed out.<sup>204</sup> If there were slaves involved, it is much more likely that it was at the level of copying the work out in advance of its distribution.<sup>205</sup> At the same time, the anonymity of these collaborators and the fact that Josephus claims to have "made use of them" (χρησάμενός) may suggest that they were of inferior status.<sup>206</sup> They may represent, therefore, the unnamed 'others' whom I posited above were also members of Josephus' literary circle, those whose precise names would have held little meaning outside of his immediate social circle, but who may have appreciated nonetheless this acknowledgement of their assistance.

Some scholars have suggested that a former slave of the emperor Gaius, Thaumastus, may have served as an oral source for Josephus. This slave had shown compassion on Agrippa I during the latter's imprisonment by Tiberius, providing him water to slake his thirst, for which Agrippa I promised him freedom as soon as he should be restored to favour by Gaius. These events took place as planned and Thaumastus became steward (ἐπίτροπος; *LA procurator*) over Agrippa I's estate, a position he subsequently held for Agrippa II and Berenice as well. Josephus reports, "the man also grew old and died in that honourable post, although these things happened

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<sup>203</sup> Thackeray 1929: 100.

<sup>204</sup> Rajak 2002[1983]: 63; cf. Mason 2005a: 85-6, "In Josephus' enlistment of co-workers (συνεργοί) or literary friends in the capital for this massive project, we again witness a social affair and not the work of an isolated individual."

<sup>205</sup> See Starr 1987: 213.

<sup>206</sup> See Barclay 2007: 36 n. 202. There is no basis for the supposition of Smith 1999: 501-2, that these were 'secretaries assigned to him by Titus'.



later.”<sup>207</sup> On the basis of these final words, Hadas-Lebel has suggested that “Josephus can hardly be more explicit about having known Thaumastus”.<sup>208</sup> Although her confidence is perhaps misplaced, there is some evidence to support the possibility that this former imperial slave served as an important source for Josephus’ discussion of events in Rome during the reign of Tiberius and Gaius, namely the inclusion of the names of slaves unknown elsewhere, details that one would expect only an intimate of the imperial court to have known.<sup>209</sup> It is certainly not unlikely that Josephus would have sought out such individuals, including conceivably his former acquaintance, Aliturus, if he were still alive,<sup>210</sup> who would be able to provide depth to his narratives through their own experiences. It is clear in any case that the literary efforts of the Judaeon historian did not take place in isolation, but were instead the occasion for ongoing interaction both with those who were able to assist him in this monumental task and those who were interested in the product of his exertions, categories that were by no means distinct, as the involvement of figures such as Epaphroditus demonstrates.

The composition of his historical works contributed significantly, therefore, to Josephus’ social life in the city of Rome, placing him in contact with a virtual cross-section of Roman society, from the emperors to his literary collaborators. We should also consider, however, the possibility that his literary efforts played a further role in his social life by providing him with an audience in the literal sense of the word, that is, a circle of individuals who listened to presentations of his works as he was in the process of completing them. That Roman literary

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<sup>207</sup> *Ant.* 18.187-94; quotation from 194: ἐν τιμῇ τε ὧν ταύτη γηραιὸς τελευτᾷ. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὕστερον.

<sup>208</sup> Hadas-Lebel 1994: 103; cf. Bloch 1879: 152; Scramuzza 1940: 16, 231 n. 50; D.R. Schwartz 1990: 10 n. 13; Feldman 1996[1962]: 176; Goud 1996: 480 n. 18; Kokkinos 1998: 275 n. 40; Cotton and Eck 2005: 41; Price 2005: 106.

<sup>209</sup> E.g. Ballas: *Ant.* 18.182; Eutychnus: *Ant.* 18.179; Marsyas and Stricheus: *Ant.* 18.184; Evodus: *Ant.* 18.205; Callistus: *Ant.* 19.64-9; cf. Hadas-Lebel 1994: 103, “These were all companions of Thaumastus’ youth, saved by Josephus from oblivion.”

<sup>210</sup> For this suggestion, see Scramuzza 1940: 17; Hadas-Lebel 1994: 102; Feldman 1996[1962]: 176; Goud 1996: 480 n. 18.

culture was significantly oral in nature has been generally established.<sup>211</sup> One of the reasons for this was that publication in the modern sense did not exist in the ancient world. The release of a completed literary work by the author through distribution to close friends and associates or by deposit in a library signalled the end of his control, as I have pointed out above.<sup>212</sup> There were no legal safeguards against copying or plagiarizing books, which meant that the author needed to be confident that the completed work was truly ready for circulation. This was accomplished by the submission of the work to prior critical opinion by oral readings (*recitationes*) to an audience, generally small, of friends and associates, with the writer free to reach a wider public either by making the recitations open to a broader audience or by distributing a written form.<sup>213</sup>

By the first century then, the *recitatio*, whether private or public or somewhere in between, had become a standard element of literary life in Rome. This is indicated most clearly in the letters of Pliny the Younger, which Johnson has recently described as constituting “Pliny’s interventionist attempts at defining what elite culture and community are, or should be, about.”<sup>214</sup> One of the mainstays of this culture was the practice of group reading and discussion, which served in some measure to set apart the man of wealth, leisure, and culture from the rest of society; these sessions appear frequently throughout the *Epistulae*.<sup>215</sup> What is more, these formal or informal recitations were not restricted to a particular genre. We hear of readings of comedy,

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<sup>211</sup> See especially Kenney 1982: 11-13; Salles 1992: 111-35; Fantham 1996: 7-11, 183-221; cf. regarding the practice of reading texts or having texts read aloud, which was an important element of literary culture even if the ancients, as has been established firmly, were able to read silently, see Johnson 2000: 593-647; 2010: 3-16.

<sup>212</sup> White 1975: 299; Kenney 1982: 10-11; Starr 1987: 215; Fantham 1996: 219-20; see above, pp. 120-21.

<sup>213</sup> Quinn 1982: 83 n. 23; Starr 1987: 213-15; Harris 1989: 222-29; Fantham 1996: 2-19, 211-21; cf. Mason 2001: 149 n. 1498; 2005a: 78-91; Rajak 2007: 184-5. See also Huitink and van Henten 2009: 49-60, who, despite seriously misrepresenting Mason’s views on the subject, still provide useful insights into the book creating process in the ancient world.

<sup>214</sup> Johnson 2010: 36.

<sup>215</sup> See e.g. Plin. *Ep.* 1.13; 3.18; 4.27; 5.12; 8.12; for further discussion, see Sherwin-White 1966: 115-16; Johnson 2010: 39-62.

tragedy, lyric poetry, elegy, and history.<sup>216</sup> The last category is obviously most relevant for our purposes. In fact, the origin of the semi-public *recitatio* was attributed by Seneca to a historian, Asinius Pollio, and not a poet, probably some time after 38 BC.<sup>217</sup> There are numerous other examples as well of historians presenting their work prior to the circulation of a written version, a practice that may well have originated already with Herodotus in the fifth century BC.<sup>218</sup> Considering the length of the latter work, the recitation of which may have occupied some fifty hours,<sup>219</sup> it would certainly not be out of the question that Josephus presented his works in a similar fashion. In any case, the longest of his works, the *Antiquities*, was composed over the course of approximately 12 years, which was surely enough time for an audience to sit through various stages of recitation.

Given the general practice, then, it has been assumed in the past that Josephus' works were also presented in a similar fashion. Thackeray has given some prominence an assertion of Canon Streeter, although he cites it with caution, that:

Josephus would certainly have recited parts of the *Antiquities* at intervals during the ten years before its publication. Fashionable Rome felt bound in etiquette to attend the recitations of its noble friends; but a parvenu like Josephus would have been only too glad to fill up the back seats with unimportant people like Luke.<sup>220</sup>

But Josephus' recitation of his works is surely not self-evident nor do we receive the impression that *all* historians conducted themselves in this common manner. We have seen already the local

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<sup>216</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 6.21.2; Tac. *Dial.* 2.1; Plin. *Ep.* 7.17.3; Juv. 1.4; Sen. *Controv.* 10 pr. 8.

<sup>217</sup> Sen. *Controv.* 4 pr. 2; cf. Kenney 1982: 12.

<sup>218</sup> Lucian *Her.* 1-2; cf. Aelius Theon *Prog.* 70; Tac. *Dial.* 3; Lucian *Hist. conscr.* 14-5, 23; Mason 2005a: 83-4; regarding Herodotus, see Parke 1966: 80-95; Kurke 2000: 118-22.

<sup>219</sup> Based on experiments by Flory 1980: 12, who argues on this basis that the audience would have been small and the recitations infrequent, which may be a sound observation in the case of a work like the *Antiquities* as well; cf. Kurke 2000: 119 (between one and two 24-hour days). Compare the estimate of Davison 1965: 24, of 24 hours for the performance of the *Iliad*.

<sup>220</sup> Streeter 1924: 558; quoted by Thackeray 1929: 128. The possibility that Luke was familiar at least with the published works of Josephus, based in part on striking similarities in the style of writing and their coincidence in Rome, has been explored by various scholars; see Krenkel 1894; Downing 1980: 30-48; Schreckenberg 1980: 179-209; 1987: 316-7; Mason 2003c: 251-95.

and social nature of the production of his works in his interactions with Agrippa II, Epaphroditus, and his collaborators. The possibility of oral presentations of his work and the consequent existence of an audience—in the literal sense of the word—in the city of Rome needs, however, further teasing out.

There are explicit statements in Josephus' works regarding his intended readership, if not his audience. He addresses "those under the hegemony of the Romans"; "the Greeks and Romans who had not participated in the war"; "the Greeks and the Romans"; "all of the Greeks"; and other similar groups.<sup>221</sup> On the basis of such statements, some scholars have posited an empire-wide readership, which may have included "the Greek-educated Roman upper class in Rome and the cities of the empire, the Greek-speaking intelligentsia of the eastern provinces and the Greek-reading Jewish inhabitants of the eastern provinces."<sup>222</sup> We should certainly not discount the possibility that Josephus hoped his works would spread throughout the empire and even took steps to that end, providing copies to individuals who were travelling away from Rome.<sup>223</sup> Perhaps he even dreamed of a reputation such as that of Livy, whose name and *gloria* even reached Spain and reportedly inspired a man from Cadiz to travel all the way to Rome just to catch a glimpse of the historian and then, having accomplished his goal, to turn immediately back.<sup>224</sup> Even apart from the logistical difficulties in achieving this goal,<sup>225</sup> however, these would have been steps taken after the process of producing the texts in the city of Rome, for a local readership and/or audience, was complete. We need not concern ourselves here, therefore, with

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<sup>221</sup> See e.g. *War* 1.3: τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίαν; 1.6: Ἕλληνας καὶ Ῥωμαίων τοὺς μὴ ἐπιστρατευσαμένους; 1.16: Ἕλλησί τε καὶ Ῥωμαίους; 7.454: τοῖς βουλομένοις μαθεῖν; *Ant.* 1.5: ἅπασι τοῖς Ἕλλησιν; 1.9: τῶν Ἑλλήνων τινες; 16.174: ἀναγραφαὶ τὸ πλεόν εἰς τοὺς Ἕλληνας; 20.262: εἰς Ἕλληνας.

<sup>222</sup> Thus Price 2005: 102; cf. Sterling 1992: 298-308; Gera 2008: 118-21.

<sup>223</sup> Such a wide-spread audience was the aim of any ancient (and modern!) writer; see e.g. Thuc. 1.22.4; Plin. *Ep.* 7.17.15; cf. Mason 2005a: 91.

<sup>224</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 2.3.8.

<sup>225</sup> See Mason 2005a: 78-91; cf. the general observations of Harris 1989: 227, "There was no such thing as 'popular literature' in the Roman Empire, if that means literature which became known to ten or hundreds of thousands of people by means of personal reading...As for works written expressly for the masses, there were none."

further consideration of the possibility that Josephus' work reached a wider readership beyond the immediate boundaries of the city, since my focus is on his social circumstances within Rome.

Instead we can turn to consider a few clues within the narrative that present the possibility that this local enterprise included the recitation of Josephus' works to an audience. To begin with we return to the collaborators. Josephus credits them with assisting him "with the Greek language" (πρὸς τὴν Ἑλληνίδα φωνήν).<sup>226</sup> In a note to his translation of this passage, Barclay rejects the possibility that the φωνή expressed here is oral, i.e. related to pronunciation, citing parallels from Josephus' works.<sup>227</sup> Nevertheless, Josephus' sensitivity elsewhere regarding his Greek pronunciation may suggest that this interpretation is valid. At the close of his *Antiquities* he expresses regret for his distortion of the Greek pronunciation (προφορά), since he has long been accustomed to speak in his own tongue.<sup>228</sup> While Price interprets this passage as evidence that Josephus likely avoided public performance, for which he is apologizing,<sup>229</sup> a more logical explanation is that Josephus did in fact present his work orally and that his audience was therefore aware of his accent, which had persisted even after some twenty years of living in the city of Rome. Otherwise there was no need to even mention the accent, particularly if, as Price suggests, the intended readership was remote. We may legitimately suggest, then, that Josephus' collaborators also assisted him in his oral presentation at *recitationes*, albeit not entirely successfully,<sup>230</sup> particularly in light of the contemporary emphasis on proper diction for oral performances.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> *Ap.* 1.50.

<sup>227</sup> Barclay 2007: 36 n. 202, referring to *Ap.* 1.1, 73, 319; *War* 1.17; *Ant.* 1.10.

<sup>228</sup> *Ant.* 20.263: ἔχω γὰρ ὁμολογούμενον παρὰ τῶν ὁμοειδῶν πλείστον αὐτῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐπιχώριον παιδείαν διαφέρειν καὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν δὲ γραμμάτων ἐσπούδασα μετασχεῖν τὴν γραμματικὴν ἐμπειρίαν ἀναλαβὼν, τὴν δὲ περὶ τὴν προφορὰν ἀκρίβειαν πάτριος ἐκόλυσεν συνήθεια; cf. for passages demonstrating his general sensitivity regarding his incomplete mastery of the Greek, *Life* 40; *War* 1.16; *Ap.* 1.23-27.

<sup>229</sup> Price 2005: 105.

<sup>230</sup> See also Mason 2005a: 89.

<sup>231</sup> See Quint. *Inst.* 1.1.13; Lucian *Pseudol.*; Swain 1998: 43-64; Price 2005: 105; Mason 2005a: 89.

A further point has been made by Mason on the basis of the prologue of the *War*.<sup>232</sup> He demonstrates that existing translations obscure the lively literary scene that Josephus describes here by translating in the past tense what Josephus actually presents as ongoing by using the present tense. Thus Josephus is reacting in his writing of the *War* to accounts of historians who “are collecting random and incoherent tales through hearsay, are writing them up sophist-like...are misrepresenting the events.”<sup>233</sup> Given that these are not completed accounts, Josephus must have been involved in the pre-release stage of the production of these literary works, either as audience member or as recipient of some extracts, directly or indirectly. Furthermore, his later criticism of other historians, who choose not to narrate contemporary events and yet abuse those who choose to do so, seems to be a defence against those who have already levelled criticism at him, *prior to the release of his work*.<sup>234</sup> Finally, in another passage shortly thereafter, Josephus states that, “I shall not conceal any of my own misfortunes, since I am about to speak (ἐρεῖν) to those who know [them].”<sup>235</sup> The verb ἐρεῖν gives the impression that Josephus is referring to an oral presentation of his work, although this is not the only possible meaning, and, at the very least, further supports the local and social dimension to the process of producing ancient texts, as Mason has pointed out.<sup>236</sup> There are certainly enough hints, therefore, to suggest the possibility that Josephus was similarly engaged in the recitation of his works before a literal audience.

As far as the composition of this possible audience is concerned, we need look no further than those who received or purchased copies of his works. Moreover, unless we are to imagine that Josephus has specifically named every single individual who received or bought a copy of

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<sup>232</sup> *War* 1.1-3; Mason 2005a: 88-9.

<sup>233</sup> *War* 1.1-2: οἱ μὲν οὐ παρατυχόντες τοῖς πράγμασιν, ἀλλ’ ἀκοῆ συλλέγοντες εἰκαῖα καὶ ἀσύμφωνα διηγήματα σοφιστικῶς ἀναγράφουσιν, οἱ παραγενόμενοι δὲ ἢ κολακεία τῇ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἢ μίσει τῶ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους καταπυροδοῦνται τῶν πραγμάτων, περιέχει δὲ αὐτοῖς ὅπου μὲν κατηγορίαν ὅπου δὲ ἐγκώμιον τὰ συγγράμματα, τὸ δ’ ἀκριβὲς τῆς ἱστορίας οὐδαμοῦ...; trans. Mason 2005a: 88.

<sup>234</sup> *War* 1.13-16.

<sup>235</sup> *War* 1.22; trans. Mason 2005a: 90.

<sup>236</sup> Mason 2005a: 90.

his work and is deliberately deceptive in his representative use of them, these figures are only the most prominent members of a wider circle of interested, sympathetic, literate inhabitants of the city of Rome who read his works. From among them there may have been those who also attended the recitations, if they indeed took place. Although the presence on such occasions of the emperors and perhaps members of the senatorial and equestrian elite is unlikely,<sup>237</sup> surely figures such as Epaphroditus, or the collaborators, who were interested in the writing process and involved to varying degrees, would also have been keen to hear portions of the work in advance of its final release. Perhaps Epaphroditus even provided the venue and attracted others from his literary coterie.<sup>238</sup> Far from isolating him, therefore, there is enough evidence to suggest the possibility that Josephus' literary efforts were at least in part the foundation of his social life.<sup>239</sup>

### **Josephus and the Judaeans of Rome**

I have not yet exhausted the evidence regarding possible individuals who either received or purchased copies of Josephus' works and hence may also have been members of his audience at *recitationes*, if they took place. I have already explored the possibilities behind Josephus' claim to have reached "many Romans who had fought with them [i.e. Vespasian and Titus] in the war" and also examined further the details of the involvement of the Herodians in Rome.<sup>240</sup>

These latter appear, however, only as representatives of a larger group, namely the "many of our

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<sup>237</sup> This does not, however, justify Barclay 2007: xlv n. 100, "it is not clear that Josephus moved in sufficiently exalted circles to have his works 'published' in literary readings."

<sup>238</sup> For examples of patrons providing venues, often in *auditoria* in their homes, see e.g. Sen. *Suas.* 6.27; Mart. 4.6; Plin. *Ep.* 8.12.2; Juv. 1.12-13, 7.39-47; Tac. *Dial.* 9.3; regarding the literary and archaeological evidence for *auditoria*, see Tamm 1963: 7-23, 113-88.

<sup>239</sup> *Contra* Price 2005: 118.

<sup>240</sup> See above, pp. 284-94.

own people, men also steeped in Greek wisdom”, to whom I now turn.<sup>241</sup> The intrinsic appeal of Josephus’ works to Judaeans audience members and readers has already been established, as have certain elements that seem to presuppose their presence, such as his assumption that some members of his readership will be able to consult the sacred texts.<sup>242</sup> It has become common, therefore, to recognize within Josephus’ readership at least a Judaeans contingent, even if they were not the main addressees.<sup>243</sup> Furthermore, when we acknowledge again the local nature of the primary readers,<sup>244</sup> then the reference in *Apion* to Josephus’ compatriots as recipients of the *War* provides us with an important indication of some level of contact between Josephus and the large community of Judaeans living in the city of Rome.<sup>245</sup> Eusebius’ claim, therefore, that Josephus was the most-renowned Judaeans of his day among both the Romans *and* his compatriots receives crucial support.<sup>246</sup>

The possibility of a connection between Josephus and the Judaeans of Rome has not, however, been fully explored.<sup>247</sup> In light of Josephus’ near complete silence regarding the Judaeans community some scholars have suggested that he was never able to gain access into the large group of compatriots within the city of Rome.<sup>248</sup> Indeed, there is relatively little in

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<sup>241</sup> *Ap.* 1.51: πρώτοις γὰρ δέδωκα τὰ βιβλία καὶ μετ’ ἐκείνους πολλοῖς μὲν Ῥωμαίων τοῖς συμπεπολημένοι, πολλοῖς δὲ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐπίπρασσον, ἀνδράσι καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς σοφίας μετεσχηκόσιν, ὧν ἔστιν Ἰούλιος Ἀρχέλαος, Ἡρώδης ὁ σεμνότετος, αὐτὸς ὁ θαυμασιώτετος βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας.

<sup>242</sup> See e.g. *Ant.* 1.88; cf. his apology to his fellow countrymen (ὁμόφυλοι) for his arrangement of the Mosaic laws, *Ant.* 4.197.

<sup>243</sup> See e.g. Williamson 1964: 279-83; Bartlett 1985: 75; Momigliano 1987: 116; Bilde 1988: 76-8, 121-2; Sterling 1992: 306-8; Feldman 1998a: 164 n. 1, 656-7; Rajak 1998: 224; Cohen 2002[1979]: 147; Rajak 2002[1983]: 178; Mason 2005a: 73, 86-7; Curran 2011: 77-84. The view of Migliario 1981: 96-8, 136-7, that all of Josephus’ works are addressed primarily to Judaeans readers, has little to commend it.

<sup>244</sup> See also the convincing arguments of Mason 2005a: 71-100. For a recent critique, see Gera 2008: 118-21.

<sup>245</sup> Cf. Gussmann 2008: 254; Curran 2011: 76-7; see, however, the caution expressed by Mason 2003b: 562, “Aside from Josephus’ allusions to more or less constant accusations against him by his compatriots (*Vit.* 424-29), his personal relationship to the Judean community is a matter of speculation.” His caution is well-placed: we certainly cannot presume on the basis of their purchase of the *War* any ‘personal relationship’.

<sup>246</sup> Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3.9.1-2.

<sup>247</sup> Exceptions are Goodman 1994b: 329-38; Curran 2011: 65-86.

<sup>248</sup> Berliner 1893: 33; Momigliano 1987: 116-9; Schalit 1973: ix; Moehring 1984: 865, 913; Bilde 1988: 16; Barclay 1996: 350; Bohrmann 1999: 222; Noy 2000: 258.



Josephus' narrative that provides direct evidence for our understanding of the Judaeans community in Rome, let alone for placing him within it. In the first instance, Josephus claims that some 8000 Judaeans of Rome joined an embassy of fifty from Judaea itself to protest the appointment of Archelaus to the kingdom of his father, Herod the Great, who had recently died.<sup>249</sup> Instead of monarchy, these Judaeans paradoxically requested autonomy under Roman rule. This episode is recounted in both the *War* and the *Antiquities*, with insignificant differences, and has been used mainly for the extrapolation of figures for the total population of Judaeans in the city of Rome and as an example of the interest that Diaspora Judaeans displayed regarding the mother-land.<sup>250</sup> In a later episode, found again in both works, Josephus describes the entire Judaeans community as coming out to welcome a man impersonating one of the murdered sons of Herod, the so-called pseudo-Alexander who fooled Judaeans throughout the Diaspora but could not deceive the wise Augustus.<sup>251</sup> Again the community both acts en masse and betrays a concern for events in Judaea.<sup>252</sup>

The final episode involving the Judaeans of Rome is found only in the *Antiquities* and concerns the expulsion of the Judaeans from Rome under Tiberius in AD 19.<sup>253</sup> After four Judaeans were found guilty of swindling Fulvia, a wealthy Roman matron and “follower of Judaeans customs” (νομίμοις προσεληλυθυῖαν τοῖς Ἰουδαϊκοῖς), of prize items intended for the temple in Jerusalem, Tiberius ordered the whole community (πᾶν τὸ Ἰουδαϊκὸν τῆς Ῥώμης) to leave Rome, while four thousand of the eligible men were drafted into military service on the island of Sardinia. For obvious and disparate reasons, this incident has attracted much attention

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<sup>249</sup> *War* 2.80-81; *Ant.* 17.300-301.

<sup>250</sup> See e.g. Vogelstein and Rieger 1896: 1.38; Vogelstein 1940: 17; Goodman 1994b: 330; Leon 1995[1960]: 135; Richardson 1998: 19; Brändle and Stegemann 1998: 120.

<sup>251</sup> *War* 2.105: τό γε μὴν Ἰουδαϊκὸν ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ἅπαν; *Ant.* 17.330-31: πᾶν τὸ τῆδε Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος.

<sup>252</sup> Mason 2009d: 323-49, also uses these episodes to demonstrate Josephus' literary concern with succession problems.

<sup>253</sup> *Ant.* 18.81-4.

in scholarship,<sup>254</sup> but as with the other anecdotes it does little for our understanding of Josephus' place among the descendants or successors of these Judaeans in Rome. He betrays no insider knowledge nor does he in any way claim an intimate connection with those affected, directly or indirectly, by these events. Nevertheless, in view of Josephus' explicit claim to have had some contact with his compatriots in Rome, this silence need not be significant; the Judaeans of Rome simply did not feature in the events that unfolded.

In fact, there is strong evidence to suggest that there were among the Judaeans of Rome those who could be described as “steeped in Greek wisdom” equally as well as the Herodians who received copies of the *War*. The Judaeans had their origins there already in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, and possibly earlier,<sup>255</sup> which makes it unsurprising that by the late 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries at least, and likely earlier, the principal language according to the inscriptional evidence appears to have been Greek, with only negligible traces of Hebrew and Aramaic.<sup>256</sup> This predominance of Greek has long been recognized as a general feature of Diaspora life; as Rajak neatly puts it, “around the Roman empire lived Jews who knew no Hebrew, spoke no Aramaic, lived their lives, heard their Bible in a special form of Greek—the language of their Septuagint, did their reading (if they did it) in high Greek.”<sup>257</sup>

Moreover, although it is likely, based on the nature of the locations of the city where the Judaeans were primarily settled, that the majority of the Roman Judaeans were of low social standing, humble dockworkers living in cramped quarters across the Tiber in the zone known as ‘Transtiberim’ or beggars eking out a living at the Porta Capena, there is evidence to

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<sup>254</sup> See Heidel 1920: 38-47; Merrill 1919: 365-372; Moehring 1959: 293-304; Smallwood 1956b: 314-329; Abel 1968: 383-386; M.H. Williams 1989: 765-784; Leon 1995[1960]: 16-27; Rutgers 1998a: 171-197; 1998b: 93-117; Gruen 2002: 15-53; M.H. Williams 2010: 79-81, 94-100.

<sup>255</sup> Val. Max. 1.3.3; cf. Kasher 1987: 46-75; Gruen 2002: 16-7.

<sup>256</sup> See Leon 1995[1960]: 76-8; Rutgers 1995: 176-84. For the dating of the evidence derived from the catacombs of Rome, see Rutgers 1990: 140-57.

<sup>257</sup> Rajak 2002: 4.

suggest that there were among them individuals of higher status.<sup>258</sup> These may even have lived side by side with their poorer compatriots, since the ‘Transtiberim’ also had its share of *horti* and *domus*, even if the majority dwelled in the crowded *insulae*.<sup>259</sup> In any case there were among them a considerable number who held Roman citizenship as a result of their servile background, as Philo, who writes of them in the Augustan period, attests, “Most of them were Roman freedmen. For they had been brought to Italy as prisoners of war and then freed by their owners.”<sup>260</sup> The citizenship of the freeborn descendents of these former slaves alone would have endowed them with a certain level of status. Furthermore, the rich paintings, marble slabs, and finely carved sarcophagi that have been found in some of the catacombs, although far outnumbered by simple unadorned *kokhim*, testify to a sector of the Judaean population, at least by the third century, that was considerably wealthy as well.<sup>261</sup> This is consonant with the penetration of Judaean ancestral traditions into general society that can be observed already in the first century, and particularly its attraction to such socially elevated members as Fulvia, the consul Flavius Clemens, and his wife Flavia Domitilla.<sup>262</sup> Among these wealthier Judaeans were perhaps the officials of the synagogues whose responsibility for the management of the

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<sup>258</sup> For references to the Judaeans in Rome, see Philo *Leg.* 155; Mart. *Ep.* 12.57.13; Juv. 3.10-16, 296; 6.542-7; for a general discussion of the Judaeans’ social location and status, see Leon 1995[1960]: 136-7, 236-7; cf. Lampe 2003[1989]: 38-40, 48-66. The general nature of the ‘Transtiberim’ and the isolated Roman sources that lend support to the characterization of the Judaeans as largely poor and isolated have often contributed in scholarship to the stereotypical portrayal of the ancient Judaeans in terms that were heavily influenced by contemporary attitudes towards modern Jews; see e.g. Vogelstein and Rieger 1896: 36; cf. Rutgers 1995: 47 n. 103-4, for a more comprehensive list of scholarship.

<sup>259</sup> For detailed discussions of the nature of the ‘Transtiberim’, which seems to have been predominantly settled by immigrants as evidenced by the general proliferation of oriental cults, see Savage 1940: 26-56; Palmer 1981: 368-97; Golb 1996: *passim*; Maischberger 2000: 77-83.

<sup>260</sup> Philo *Leg.* 155: Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ ἦσαν οἱ πλείους ἀπελευθερωθέντες. αἰχμάλωτοι γὰρ ἀχθέντες εἰς Ἰταλίαν ὑπὸ τῶν κτησαμένων ἠλευθερώθησαν; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 2.85.5; Leon 1995[1960]: 237-80; M.H. Williams 2010: 80-82; *contra* Gruen 2002: 22, 34. Regarding the receipt of citizenship in conjunction with manumission, see Lintott 1993: 161.

<sup>261</sup> See Leon 1995[1960]: 137; Rutgers 1995: 73-95; Rajak 2002: 440-41.

<sup>262</sup> Barclay 1996: 318. It also accords well with the naming of synagogues after Augustus and Marcus Agrippa and the exemption of Judaean synagogues in the ban on meetings of *collegia*; cf. Richardson 1998: 29, “It was self-confident enough and sufficiently closely connected politically that it named two of these five after the most powerful men in Rome, Augustus and his son-in-law Marcus Agrippa”; White 1998: 57, 67.

community(-ies) would surely have necessitated an appropriate level of education, wealth, and leisure.<sup>263</sup> Such figures may have fit comfortably in “a sophisticated Roman audience...one that was fully at home in elite discourse...and that had a taste for fine writing.”<sup>264</sup>

These would in all likelihood also have been more inclined to sympathize with Josephus’ actions during the revolt given their own successful navigation of the Roman social scene. We need not suppose that the seemingly constant barrage of accusations that Josephus faced throughout the Flavian period from his compatriots reflects a universal condemnation of him as traitor.<sup>265</sup> Although his surrender and service to the Romans may have raised the ire of many of his compatriots also in the city of Rome, we might expect a similar range of reactions to those he describes took place among the inhabitants of Jerusalem when he was struck senseless by a stone on one of his rounds of the besieged city. He writes that, “while the rebels, supposing they had killed the man for whose blood they thirsted most, shouted with delight, when the rumour spread to the town, the remainder of the populace was deeply dejected, believing that he who gave them courage to desert had really perished”, and that his subsequent recovery “animated the people and filled the rebels with dismay”.<sup>266</sup>

Although Josephus clearly has a rhetorical interest in claiming broad support from the populace, such sympathy is plausible, particularly since Josephus’ readers and audience members would have been aware of his position at least among his fellow Judaeans in Rome, limiting his ability to invent the situation. Moreover, the general lack of compulsion among the

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<sup>263</sup> The officials of the synagogues of Rome appear in great number in the inscriptional evidence of the late 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, although their relation to the organization of the community is a matter of some debate; see Vogelstein and Rieger 1896: 1.41-8; Vogelstein 1940: 29-33; La Piana 1927: 359-63; Leon 1995[1960]: 167-94; Levine 1998: 195-213; M.H. Williams 1994: 129-41; 1998: 215-28; Rüpke 2008: *passim*, esp. 331-32.

<sup>264</sup> Mason 2005a: 99.

<sup>265</sup> Accusations: *War* 7.437-53; *Life* 424-5, 429.

<sup>266</sup> *War* 5.542-3: οἱ στασιασταὶ δ’ ὡς ἀνελόντες ὃν ἐπεθύμουν μάλιστα μετὰ χαρᾶς ἀνεβόων. διαγγέλλεται τε εἰς τὴν πόλιν, καὶ τὸ καταλειπόμενον πλῆθος ἐπέσχευ ἀθυμία πεπεισμένους οἴχεσθαι τῷ ὄντι δι’ ὃν αὐτομολεῖν ἐθάρρουν; 547: θάρσος δὲ τῷ λαῷ καὶ τοῖς στασιασταῖς ἐκπληξίς ἐμπίπτει πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν αὐτοῦ; cf. *War* 6.113-4.

Diaspora Judaeans to join the revolt would suggest that they also had less cause to criticize Josephus' actions.<sup>267</sup> Instead they may have viewed him as a key eyewitness who would be able to provide an accurate rendering of what had happened, satisfying natural curiosity on the one hand and on the other hand answering deep questions as to how God had allowed it all to happen, particularly the destruction of the temple.<sup>268</sup> For the Judaeans in Rome, where the Judaeans' defeat and the Roman victory were being trumpeted about by triumphal celebrations, arches, coinage series, and building foundations, Josephus' explanations would have been invaluable. At the same time, his elaborate descriptions of the Roman triumph and the Temple of Peace—and particularly the objects from the temple that received a prominent place in both—allowed the audience to view these Roman sights “through Judaeans' eyes”, as Chapman has recently pointed out.<sup>269</sup> It should not surprise us, therefore, that Josephus counted fellow Judaeans among those to whom he sold (ἐπίπρασκον) copies of his *War*.<sup>270</sup>

Nonetheless, their interest in his literary production does not necessitate the existence of a personal relationship between them, and it may well be that there were those who wished to hear what Josephus had to say but refused to admit him into their circles. Nevertheless, there are some further clues in his narratives that provide additional evidence of contact. The first of these are, paradoxically, the accusations Josephus faced throughout his life in Rome, which he presents as arising from envy over the special honours he was accorded by the *imperatores* and from which he escaped only by “the provision of God” (θεοῦ προνοία).<sup>271</sup> Although we may question the extent of these accusations, particularly since claiming jealous accusers was a rhetorical

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<sup>267</sup> See Momigliano 1987: 100-101.

<sup>268</sup> Curran 2011: 78-9.

<sup>269</sup> Chapman 2009: 107-113.

<sup>270</sup> *Ap.* 1.51: πολλοῖς δὲ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐπίπρασκον.

<sup>271</sup> *Life* 423-9; cf. 336-7, 416-17.

commonplace to emphasize the importance of the accused,<sup>272</sup> they should not be discarded outright.<sup>273</sup> If he had simply reported them in a general manner, we might rightly dismiss them as an underhanded way to boost his status. The presence of one detailed episode that appears in both the *War* and the *Life* and involves figures who were well known among Josephus' readership prevents us, however, from coming to this conclusion.<sup>274</sup>

Josephus reports that a certain Jonathan, a weaver by trade and a *sicarius*, having been caught fomenting revolt in Cyrene, implicated Josephus among others of having supplied the revolutionaries with weapons and funds.<sup>275</sup> This was at the instigation of the proconsul of Crete and Cyrenaica, Catullus,<sup>276</sup> who, Josephus writes, “persuaded Jonathan to bring a charge of sedition against the most reputable Judaeans both in Alexandria and Rome. One of those thus insidiously incriminated was Josephus, the author of these things.”<sup>277</sup> Since these accusations made their way to Vespasian himself and involved a member of the senatorial aristocracy, it is unlikely that Josephus could have fabricated his involvement in this case. Two hypotheses may be permitted, therefore, on the basis of these accounts. First of all, Josephus was sufficiently well-placed within Rome for those compatriots of his who were ill-disposed towards him to

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<sup>272</sup> See e.g. *Mart. Ep.* 1.40; 2.61; 3.9; 4.27, 77, 86; 7.72; cf. Mason 2001: 170-71 note 1769.

<sup>273</sup> See Rajak 2002[1983]: 146.

<sup>274</sup> The conflict between Josephus and Justus of Tiberias (*Life* 336-367) is included here only as an example of the accusations faced by Josephus. The attendant issues, regarding the relationship between the attack of Justus and Josephus' *Life*, need not occupy us here. For the classic conception, see Niese 1896: 227; Luther 1910: 5-9; Hölscher 1916: 1994; Laqueur 1920: 44-55, 75-83; Thackeray 1929: 5-12; Shutt 1961: 6; Rajak 1973: 344-68; Barish 1978: 64; Gelzer 1952: 89; Cohen 2002[1979]: 114-37; Mason 1991: 316-24. More recently, however, see Bilde 1988: 104-13; Mason 1998a: 36-44; 2001: xxvii-l; Rajak 2002(1983): 152-4.

<sup>275</sup> *War* 7.437-53; *Life* 424-5; cf. Brighton 2009: 138-40.

<sup>276</sup> The exact identity of this figure is unclear. One possibility that has been raised is Valerius Catullus Messalinus, consul of AD 73; see Ritterling 1927: 28-9; Wagner 1938: 163-4; Smallwood 1981[1976]: 370 n. 50; Applebaum 1979: 220 n. 70; S. Schwartz 1986: 373-86; Cotton 1989: 160; S. Schwartz 1990: 11-12 note 35, 21; Roxan 1997: 292; Várhelyi 2000: 474; Mason 2001: 169 n. 1750. This would support a later dating of Book 7 of the *War*. See now, however, the convincing arguments made by Cotton and Eck 2005: 46-8, rejecting this identification; cf. Reynolds 2000: 552; C.P. Jones 2002: 114; Barnes 2005: 139 n. 18; Brighton 2009: 38; D.R. Schwartz 2011a: 333-4, 345-50.

<sup>277</sup> *War* 7.447-8: καὶ πείθει τὸν Ἰωνάθην καὶ τινὰς τῶν ἄμ' ἐκείνῳ συνειλημμένων νεωτερισμοῦ κατηγορίαν ἐπιφέρειν τοῖς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ τε καὶ Ῥώμῃ τῶν Ἰουδαίων δοκιμωτάτοις. τούτων εἰς τῶν ἐξ ἐπιβουλῆς αἰτιαθέντων ἦν Ἰώσηπος ὁ ταῦτα συγγραψάμενος.

consider it worthwhile to bring accusations against him.<sup>278</sup> Secondly, he was recognized even in distant North Africa as a member of an exclusive class of Judaeans who were noteworthy, most likely on account of their standing both in local society and among their ethnic counterparts.<sup>279</sup>

In light of this, it is not surprising that Josephus was also able to contract a fourth marriage to “a woman who, though she had settled in Crete, was by ancestry a Judaeans, of parents who were the most noble and most distinguished in that region.”<sup>280</sup> Whether Josephus met her in Rome or on the island of Crete itself on an undocumented journey is unclear.<sup>281</sup> In any case, with this, his last, wife, Josephus had two children, Justus and Simonides Agrippa. Although we are reliant on Josephus’ testimony as far as the exceptional bloodlines of his new wife and her excellent character are concerned,<sup>282</sup> her probable familiarity to his readers and audience members would have limited his ability to exaggerate her position and so we should not reduce the significance of this final marriage. In the context of ancient Mediterranean society the alliance with this noble family presupposes Josephus’ own comparable status.

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<sup>278</sup> The account here seems to imply that Catullus was responsible for the inclusion of Josephus’ name, which may suggest that he had become acquainted with Josephus in Rome prior to his proconsulate; see Cotton and Eck 2005: 46. But this interpretation is not necessary. As D.R. Schwartz 2011a: 347, points out, “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...it is more likely that [Jonathan], rather than Catullus, would know (of) Josephus, have a grudge against him, and put his name on the list of accused.” This corresponds with the account in *Life* 424-5, where Catullus does not make an appearance.

<sup>279</sup> See also Rajak 2005: 88, “A necessary inference is that Josephus was visible and active in Jewish politics on an empire-wide scale at this point...the story at least proves Josephus to be well-known among the Jews of that region.” *Contra* Shutt 1961: 120-21, “The attack of Jonathan must have been typical of the hatred felt against him...The Jews did and still do reject him...Josephus died hated by most of the Jews.”

<sup>280</sup> *Life* 427: μετὰ ταῦτα ἡγαγόμεν γυναικα κατακηκυῖαν μὲν ἐν Κρήτῃ, τὸ δὲ γένος Ἰουδαίαν, γονέων εὐγενεστάτων καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν χώραν ἐπιφανεστάτων, ἦθει πολλῶν γυναικῶν διαφέρουσας, ὡς ὁ μετὰ ταῦτα βίος αὐτῆς ἀπέδειξεν. ἐκ ταύτης δὴ μοι γίνονται παῖδες δύο, πρεσβύτερος μὲν Ἰοῦστος, Σιμωνίδης δὲ μετ’ ἐκείνον ὁ καὶ Ἀγρίππας ἐπικληθεῖς; cf. *Life* 5.

<sup>281</sup> Rome: Mason 2001: 10 n. 37; Crete: Rajak 2005: 87.

<sup>282</sup> She may not have had Roman citizenship, since we might have expected Josephus to mention this otherwise; see Goodman 1994b: 337; Rajak 2005: 87. The possibility that Josephus was granted *conubium* or the *patria potestas* to preserve the legal connections with his children is presented by Cotton and Eck 2005: 39 and n. 6; cf. Millar 1992[1977]: 483-6.

This exhausts the direct evidence for links between Josephus and the Judaeans of Rome, apart from some references in the Talmud to an unnamed Judaeian philosopher, who lived in the city of Rome and received visits from prominent Judaeian rabbis, a figure some scholars have connected with Josephus.<sup>283</sup> Regardless of their questionable relevance to Josephus, however, these Talmudic episodes do evoke the antecedent possibility that Judaeans seeking access to the imperial court may have seen in Josephus a useful conduit, much in the same way as Aliturus had served Josephus himself.<sup>284</sup> In this case, the four well-known sages—Joshua ben Hananiah, Aqiba, Gamaliel, and Eleazar ben Azariah—seek out this Judaeian philosopher to assist them in petitioning Domitian to rescind his decision to kill all the Judaeans in the Roman empire. Apart from the absence of any evidence for such a decision, the episode is at least plausible, as is the involvement of Josephus in such a scenario, as a broker of sorts. His connections particularly with the imperial court and the Herodians, even in light of our cautionary approach, still placed him far above the vast majority of the inhabitants of Rome. This made him, therefore, an attractive figure to cultivate. As Bowersock has pointed out, “Those who were not elites were capable, by virtue of sheer numbers, of bringing pressure on their grandiose compatriots who took up residence in their midst.”<sup>285</sup> It is not entirely implausible, therefore, that Josephus also

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<sup>283</sup> *Der. Er. Rab.* 5; cf. *b.Abod. Zar.* 54b; *Midr. Gen.* 13.9, 20.4; *Midr. Ex.* 30.9; *Midr. Deut.* 2.24; *Midr. Eccl.* 10.7. For this connection, see Brüll 1879: 40-42; Leshem 1967: 92-95 (*non vidi*); Dinur 1972: 137-146 (*non vidi*). Vogelstein and Rieger 1896: 1.29, suggested that these rabbis stayed at Josephus’ home; cf. Vogelstein 1940: 68. Regarding the historicity of these accounts, see Hezser 1997: 170; Noy 2008: 373-85. Other references, even less plausible, have been connected to Josephus from the Babylonian Talmud (*b.B.Qam.* 82b, *b.Sotah* 49b, and *b.Menah.* 64b), the Mishnah (*m.Miqw.* 10.1), and the Tosefta (*t.Sabb.* 13.13); in addition to the aforementioned scholarship, see Wiesenberg 1956: 230-31. For discussion and cautious support in the case of the Talmudic reference, see Feldman 1984a: 76-9; 1984b: 779-80; 1988: 462, 472; 1998a: 67 n. 88.

<sup>284</sup> Chapman 2009: 113, also wonders whether Josephus could have served as a tour-guide for visitors who wished to see the Temple of Peace.

<sup>285</sup> Bowersock 2005: 54.



received lower level Judaeans, perhaps the dockworkers and tanners of Trastevere, at his own morning *salutatio*, seeking his assistance and his *amicitia*, as Goodman has suggested.<sup>286</sup>

These members of the Roman plebs would surely have known Josephus by reputation, perhaps already from his first trip to Rome if he had sought out the Judaeen community upon his arrival as I suggested in Chapter 2,<sup>287</sup> and may also have had occasion to encounter him in one of the various synagogues of first-century Rome once he settled into the city after the revolt. Synagogues were often places where the wealthy and the poor alike came together, even if they might not receive the same treatment, as Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees for their love of "the most important seats in the synagogues" (τὰς πρωτοκαθεδρίας ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς) suggests.<sup>288</sup> It was the wealthy, including women,<sup>289</sup> who were often responsible for the provision and maintenance of a building or meeting place for the synagogue gatherings, an honour the poor members of the community could obviously not afford, and who consequently received leadership titles and/or positions<sup>290</sup>—much the same system of benefaction as that found in other Graeco-Roman associations.<sup>291</sup>

The same arguments can be made for Josephus' participation in synagogue life on his return to Rome as were made in Chapter 2. His continued preoccupation with the history of his people and the presentation of their ancestral customs and traditions certainly demonstrate that he in no way lost interest in them, while his narrative concerns about devotion to God and the

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<sup>286</sup> Goodman 1994b: 332-3.

<sup>287</sup> See pp. 58-64.

<sup>288</sup> Matt. 23:6; Mark 12:39; Luke 11:43, 20:46; cf. Luke 14: 7-14.

<sup>289</sup> Regarding the evidence for female leadership in the ancient synagogue, see Cohen 1980: 23-9; Brooten 1982; Binder 1999: 372-9; Brooten 2000: 215-23; Levine 2005: 499-518; cf. Cohick 2009: 195-224, 298-320.

<sup>290</sup> *SEG* 17.823 (Berenike, Cyrenaica); *CIJ* 336 (Rome), 738 (Phocaea, Ionia—in which the benefactress, Tation, receives the privilege of a front seat, presumably in the synagogue), 756 (Myndus, Caria), 766 (Acmonia, Phrygia), 694 (Stobi, Macedonia), 1404 (Jerusalem—the well-known 'Theodotos inscription'); Luke 7:5; cf. Kant 1987: 694-8; Rajak and Noy 1993: 75-93; Leon 1995[1960]: 167-94; Rajak 1996: 305-19; Levine 2005: 386-90. See also Rüpke 2008: *passim*, for a prosopography of all the known synagogue officials in the city of Rome in a chronological format.

<sup>291</sup> See e.g. Harland 2003.

strict interpretation and obedience to his laws suggest that he found an outlet for these sentiments. His own presentation of the regular study of the Torah as a prominent feature of Judaeans life, the origins of which he ascribes to the Mosaic period and which we know from elsewhere frequently took place in the context of the first century synagogue, supports this as well.<sup>292</sup> We might even imagine that behind the repeated emphasis on his priestly status lies his campaigning for a position of leadership in one of these synagogues.<sup>293</sup>

The possibility that Josephus could regularly be found among his fellow Judaeans, even those of lower social standing, should not, therefore, be dismissed too easily.<sup>294</sup> It would go some way towards explaining how Josephus could still confess more than twenty years after his arrival in Rome that,

the habitual use of my native tongue has prevented me from attaining precision in the pronunciation [of Greek]. For our people do not favour those persons who have mastered the speech of many nations, or who adorn their style with smoothness of diction, because they consider that not only is such skill common to ordinary freedmen, but that even slaves who so choose may acquire it.<sup>295</sup>

While those of the Judaeans whom he counted among his readership were “steeped in Greek wisdom” and may have assisted in the fine-tuning of his own Greek language skills, the majority of them were likely illiterate and may have spoken primarily their native tongue. His frequent presence in such circles would also explain the scant evidence for his knowledge of Latin;<sup>296</sup> the

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<sup>292</sup> See *Ap.* 2.175; *Ant.* 16.43. For other references to Torah readings on the Sabbath, see Philo *Leg.* 156-7, 312-13; Mark 1:21-22; Luke 4:16-19; Acts 13:42; 15:21; 17:2; 18:4; cf. Barclay 2007: 269 n. 693. Regarding the importance of Torah study in the context of Sabbath observance in the synagogues, see Safrai 1974: 945-70; McKay 1994: 61-88; van der Horst 1999: 16-37; Schiffman 1999: 38-49.

<sup>293</sup> See especially *Life* 1-2; *Ap.* 2.184-9; *War* 3.352; cf. Tuval 2011: 399-402.

<sup>294</sup> This does not mean, of course, that he necessarily resided in one of the areas in which the Judaeans predominantly settled, such as Trastevere; *contra* Hata 1994: 327.

<sup>295</sup> *Ant.* 20.263: τὴν δὲ περὶ τὴν προφορὰν ἀκριβείαν πάτριος ἐκάλυπεν συνήθεια. παρ’ ἡμῖν γὰρ οὐκ ἐκείνους ἀποδέχονται τοὺς πολλῶν ἔθνῶν διάλεκτον ἐκμαθόντας διὰ τὸ κοινὸν εἶναι νομίζειν τὸ ἐπιτήδευμα τοῦτο μόνον οὐκ ἐλευθέροις τοῖς τυχοῦσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν οἰκετῶν τοῖς θέλουσι; for this point, see Hata 1994: 327.

<sup>296</sup> He does mention Livy as a source: *Ant.* 14.68; see Hölischer 1916: 1977, who claims, unjustifiably, that he served as a chief source. See also *Ant.* 19.270; cf. Niese 1914: 570; S. Schwartz 1990: 37 n. 48. For a more positive view of Josephus’ facility in Latin, see Ward 2007: 632-49.

occasions for him to speak it were likely few. In this light, it is also unsurprising that the Roman biographer, *a bibliothecis* and *a studiis* of Trajan, and *ab epistulis* of Hadrian, Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, who made his entry into Roman public life during the reign of Domitian, knew Josephus only as “one of the noble captives”.<sup>297</sup> From the perspective of those who stood higher on the social ladder he failed to stand out as especially privileged, even if those below looked up at him as a link to the rungs above.

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<sup>297</sup> Suet. *Vesp.* 5.6: *unus ex nobilibus captivis Iosephus*; cf. Cass. Dio 65.1.4.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The foregoing examination has not presented any new evidence providing fresh biographical details of Josephus' social life in the city of Rome; it remains the case, that is, that "of his thirty or more years in Rome there is little to record."<sup>1</sup> Inevitably, therefore, this study has been established primarily on the existing foundations of scholarship that has grappled with the details of Josephus' life for centuries. In a situation such as this, the demand to present something new and original may seem daunting indeed. The prospects of advancing the discussion appear much less bleak, however, when we consider that history is a process of inquiry for which the possible questions, and hence answers, are virtually limitless. This emerges clearly in Collingwood's cautionary words regarding our discipline: "If anyone thinks that in any field, however narrow, he has exhausted the possibilities of knowledge, he is not only under a dangerous delusion, he is demonstrating the feebleness and sterility of his thought concerning that field itself."<sup>2</sup>

Originality need not mean anything more, therefore, than posing a new question and asking it of the evidence, for our questions are our own. In the case of the present study, my question was, quite simply, "What were the circumstances of Josephus' social life in the city of Rome?" The novelty of the inquiry was not that the elements that made up the investigation had not been discussed or examined previously, for that was clearly not the case, but it was the comprehensiveness of the question and, consequently, the investigation that determined its uniqueness.

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<sup>1</sup> Thackeray 1929: 15.

<sup>2</sup> Collingwood 1999: 189 (based on his writings of 1938-9).

The burden of originality is further lightened when we acknowledge the incompleteness of what we know, i.e. that the results of historical inquiry are possibilities rather than certainties. Thus, when a range of possibilities is presented without hope of determining what really happened, this is not a failure to reach the goal. Rather, the journey is the destination. In the course of this examination, therefore, the aim of the many excursus, which held the specifics of Josephus' life against the general ancient context, was not to claim any greater certainty in our reconstruction of Josephus' social situation in the city of Rome, but to assist us in imagining the possibilities, in exercising our historical imagination.

While confident conclusions may elude us, it is useful nonetheless to provide a summary of the high points of the investigation in an effort to produce in the end an overview of the "web of imaginative construction"<sup>3</sup> that I set out to weave. From the beginning I argued that in order to understand Josephus' social life in the city of Rome after his arrival with Titus in the spring of AD 71 we have to begin with his first encounters with the city and its inhabitants. His appointment to an embassy to Rome meant that he had to travel to the imperial capital either at the end of the sailing season in AD 63 (Sept. 14-Nov.) or at some point in the sailing season of 64 (Mar.-Nov.). He may have stayed there until the spring of AD 66, which would have given ample opportunity for him to become familiar with the city of Rome and some of its inhabitants. Such a long layover in the imperial capital was not unusual, we saw, since embassies more generally could be delayed either through the dilatoriness of the emperor or a backlog of pending cases. According to his own testimony, Josephus managed to secure the release of the priests on whose behalf he had been sent to plea through the services of a Judaeian mime-actor named Aliturus, whose close relationship with Nero enabled him to arrange an audience for Josephus with the emperor's wife, Poppaea Sabina. On the basis of the ethnic identity of the mime-actor

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<sup>3</sup> Collingwood 1993[1946]: 242.

and the general conditions of travel in the ancient world, which often saw newcomers to a city first seek out their compatriots for hospitality, I presented the possibility that Josephus also became acquainted with the established Judaeen community in the city of Rome. The significance of this first visit to the imperial capital was, therefore, that Josephus returned not as a newcomer but as one who was familiar with the city. He was already acquainted with the inner workings of the imperial court and, quite possibly, had existing social ties that had been established as little as five years earlier. He was not a stranger. This point, although banal, needs to be stressed, not only because it has not been adequately acknowledged in previous scholarship but also because it affects significantly our perception of the degree of dependency of Josephus upon the emperors at his arrival in Rome in AD 71.

When he returned to Judaea after his embassy to Rome, Josephus became involved in the nascent revolutions against Roman rule. His presence as commander at the siege of Jotapata and his eventual capture by Vespasian in July of AD 67 set the course for the next stage of his life. As I argued the embassy was significant to Josephus' later life in Rome because it marked his first encounter with the city, so I argued that the initial meeting between the Roman general and the Judaeen prisoner-of-war and the subsequent period spent in proximity to one another throughout the course of the revolt were important to investigate fully in order to develop as clear a picture as possible of the relationship between Josephus and the first Flavian emperor. My investigation of this period confirmed the growing consensus in scholarship, namely that Josephus was not particularly privileged, nor did he have an intimate relationship with the imperial house. During his time as captive in the Roman camp he did receive clothing and permission to have sexual relations with one of his fellow female prisoners, but at the time of his release he appears in the narrative still chained and apparently almost forgotten by the Roman

commanders. Similarly, although his famous prophetic announcement was useful for the members of the fledgling Flavian dynasty in their attempts to establish the divine nature of their ascent, along with other portents and omens, there is no evidence to suggest that this service led to any long-term close connection to the Flavian court. It is not surprising, then, to find that the contact between Josephus and Vespasian when they both settled into Rome after the revolt appears to have been relatively minimal. The privileges that Josephus received, namely citizenship, accommodations, and a stipend for supplies, were relatively common, while the latter two were possibly meant simply to assist him in establishing himself within the city of Rome. The long entrenched view of Josephus as the official historian of the Flavian regime, despite the general absence of such figures in the imperial courts, a view that has now been firmly set aside in at least Josephan scholarship, appears an even less likely scenario in light of the limited evidence for Josephus' contact with the imperial court.

Although Josephus had more occasions during the course of the revolt to be of service to Titus when he took over command of the Roman forces suppressing the revolt from his father, assisting in such ways as interviewing or interrogating deserters and captives, mediating between the Roman command and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and more generally serving as local guide, the evidence that survives does not indicate that his relationship with the eldest Flavian son was any more (or less) intimate than that with his father. We saw how, in his capacity as local collaborator, Josephus was not unusual, either in the general ancient or in the specific Judaeian contexts. Although he was rewarded for his efforts with land, freedom for some of his family members and friends, and some precious scrolls, these gifts did not mark him out as particularly favoured either. Upon his arrival in Rome with Titus in the spring of AD 71, after having accompanied him on the voyage, we do not hear of any specific benefactions from the

heir apparent to the Judaeian ex-captive. Moreover, when Titus acceded to the throne, Josephus simply reports that the new emperor preserved the same honour towards him as his father had, the significance of which is reduced when we consider that one of Titus' opening decisions was to confirm the gifts and benefactions of previous emperors. Nevertheless, Josephus did reportedly present a finished copy of his *War* to Titus, who signed the volumes and ordered them to be made public, i.e. placed in one of the imperial libraries. That this gesture in no way betokened an official recognition, however, is clear from the image of Titus in that very work, which in its employment of "figured speech" and "artful" writing, to use concepts developed extensively by Mason, is at the very least unflattering and possibly even malicious.

Josephus' own characterization of the circumstances of his life in the city of Rome provides no indication that his situation changed with the accession of Domitian. It is unclear whether or not Josephus had occasion prior to this point to meet the youngest member of the Flavian dynasty. In any case, Domitian followed his brother's example in proclaiming a renewal of benefits, which may have entailed the continuation of any unnamed privileges Josephus still held. Actually he claims even to have received an increase in honours at this time, a surprising detail given the common scholarly assumption that things changed for Josephus when Domitian became emperor. Josephus was defended from his accusers, who were disciplined accordingly, and received, perhaps in connection with these accusations, exemption from taxes on his land in Judaea. As far as his position as historian is concerned, no one would claim that Josephus was Domitian's propagandist or *officiosus*. Domitianic Rome was in general an unsympathetic place for Judaeans, and Josephus was one who devoted his time to defending and promoting their interests. In light of this observation, it is noteworthy that Josephus chose to give the impression of continuity over his years in Flavian Rome. We may be justified, therefore, in using the



apparent distance between the final emperor and the Judaean historian as a limiting control on the intimacy of the relationship between Josephus and the earlier Flavian emperors.

While the main emphasis in the investigation of Josephus' relationships with the Flavian emperors was his distance from the imperial court, we should not fail to recognize that, even in his (limited) contact, Josephus still stood far above the vast majority of both citizens of the empire and residents of Rome. In the Roman world, official status did not necessarily mean as much as proximity did. This was as true for all the inhabitants of the empire as it was for the imperial freedmen, who provide perhaps the most obvious example of this reality. We should not completely downplay, therefore, the fact that Josephus *did* have the opportunity to serve the (future) emperors directly and *did* receive benefactions from them. His role as prophetic agent was remembered by subsequent historians such as Suetonius and Cassius Dio, while his service in the Roman camp may have been the cause of the envy he claims he later faced. His immediate needs were looked after upon his arrival in Rome; his literary efforts were acknowledged and promoted to a degree; and he was protected from malicious accusers on more than one occasion. Even if his presence in the imperial courts was infrequent, he appears to have felt confident enough of a favourable reception to have approached the emperors with requests that were less than ordinary.

In addition, as a result of his unique position as participant in the revolt against Rome, as ex-prisoner-of-war, and now as historian of the conflict, Josephus was also able to forge relationships with other prominent individuals. Although the Romans who joined Vespasian and Titus in the suppression of the revolt and who apparently received a copy of the *War* remain unidentified, Josephus does mention specifically, as we have seen, that he passed on his first work to three members of the Herodian family, including Agrippa II, who was not an

insignificant figure in Flavian Rome, not least due to the relationship between his sister Berenice and Titus. Josephus' relationship with Agrippa II was, moreover, not merely incidental. Rather, Josephus claims to have consulted the Herodian king throughout the writing of the *War* and to have exchanged no less than sixty-two letters. It may be, as I suggested, that Agrippa II also promoted the work among his contacts in the city of Rome, including members of the Judaeen community, serving as a valuable patron to the Judaeen historian.

So, although I would in no way advocate returning to the view that Josephus was a Flavian lackey and propagandist, we should not allow the pendulum to swing too far in the opposite direction. Surely even the limited extant evidence for contact between Josephus and the Flavian and Herodian houses precludes the conclusion that "Josephus was in all likelihood extremely lonely and isolated in Rome—at least from the socio-political elite"<sup>4</sup> or that "In spite of his efforts, Josephus must have been a very lonely man in his old age."<sup>5</sup> While my investigation has confirmed the distance between Josephus and the socio-political elite as expressed so clearly by Cotton and Eck, their conclusion is untenable in that it discounts the evidence that *does* exist. Josephus stood far above the ordinary masses by virtue of the limited connections that he did have. These relationships alone, if we view them from below, made him an enviable figure on the Roman social scene, potentially able to serve as broker within the ancient Mediterranean world of patron-client relations to powerful individuals. He belonged, then, to that large fluid element of the Roman population immediately below the elite, consisting of those who could be characterized by their wealth, education, and leisure, but did not hold the requisite political position or possess an intimate enough connection to the emperor to gain them admittance to the ranks of the elite. This middling social location was significant in affording

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<sup>4</sup> Cotton and Eck 2005: 52.

<sup>5</sup> Yavetz 1975: 432.

him not only the ability and opportunity to devote himself to his literary efforts, but also and more importantly the freedom to pursue his own aims and agenda, those of a Diaspora Judaeans living at the centre of the Roman world.

Moreover, it is in his activities as historian that we catch the most enticing glimpses of what we might call his social circle. His narratives furnish us with enough hints at his literary efforts to suggest that his activities were no less demanding or involved than those of any other literary figure of his day and there is no reason to think that he avoided the active social scene that accompanied literary activities in the ancient world. Consultation occurred most naturally at face-to-face meetings and the release of drafts of books or volumes often happened orally in communal settings. His literary production was the source of new relationships, especially with Epaphroditus and the other, unnamed, Greek literati who encouraged his efforts, but also those among his countrymen who could appreciate his artistry. As we move away from the imperial court to the Herodian circles and from there to the world of the Greek freedman, we come closer to understanding the place of Josephus in Roman society. His exact social location and the precise nature of his social circle remain unclear, but the brief glimpses into his literary community and the even briefer hints at his domestic life reveal an individual who found his niche in the imperial capital, as so many had before him.

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