PAUL SPILSBURY

The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus' Paraphrase of the Bible

Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum
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Herausgegeben von
Martin Hengel und Peter Schäfer

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For Bronwyn

Preface

The following study represents the convergence of my interests in the Bible as a sacred text and the historical role it has played in the shaping of both individual and group identities. The study also touches on the complex ways in which such identities are formed in diaspora contexts. As a resident of a country other than the one in which I was born, I feel a certain kinship with those who, like Josephus, have had to adjust their perceptions of life to suite new surroundings and new cultures.

And I too, like Josephus, have to acknowledge the assistance of many friends and colleagues along the way, though I trust they will sense that I do so with none of the reluctance or chagrin for which Josephus is well known. The work presented here first took shape in a somewhat shorter form as a doctoral dissertation submitted at the University of Cambridge in 1994. During my sojourn in that delightful city I was guided in my research by Dr William Horbury, to whom I owe an immense debt of gratitude not only for the wealth of scholarly expertise which he unstintingly put at my disposal, but also for his kindness and personal interest throughout the course of my studies. I am also grateful to many others in Cambridge who contributed to my work in a multitude of ways. Among these is Dr Nicholas de Lange who supervised my study for one term, and contributed much else through lectures and seminars.

My examiners, Dr Graham Davies of the University of Cambridge and Dr Tessa Rajak of Reading University also provided much useful insight which has been incorporated into the final product. Dr John Barclay of the University of Glasgow and Prof. L.H. Feldman of Yeshiva University read an earlier draft of the work in its entirety and made many useful comments and suggestions for which I am very grateful. Dr Bob Webb of Regina contributed much by a thorough and perceptive reading of significant portions of the final draft. Mr Brendan Morey of Saskatoon very kindly prepared the index of passages. Finally, I am very grateful indeed to Professors Martin Hengel and Peter Schäfer for including this study in the current series, and to Mr Siebeck and his staff for their professional handling of the publication process.

Along with these mentioned by name is a whole host of unnamed friends and colleagues whose companionship, encouragement and prayers have made the burden of study very much lighter. I don't think I could have survived

without them. Chief among my supporters, has been my wife Bronwyn whose moral support, loyalty and courage have undergirded me and inspired me to bring this project to completion. I dedicate this volume to her with deep gratitude.

I am grateful to the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom for their financial support in the form of an Overseas Research Students Award. Queens' College provided financial aid and generously funded travel to several important academic conferences. I have also been the grateful beneficiary of funds from persons who have expressed a wish to remain anonymous. I tender them my heart-felt thanks.

Regina, Saskatchewan
17 November, 1997

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Abbreviations

AAU	Aarsskrift for Aarhus Universiteit
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJPh	*American Journal of Philology*
AJSR	*Association for Jewish Studies Review*
ALGJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergand der römischen Welt*
Ant	Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*
APF	*Archiv für Papyrusforschung*
Apion	Josephus, *Against Apion*
ASTI	*Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute*
AUSS	*Andrews University Seminary Studies*
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BO	Biblica et Orientalia
BR	*Biblical Research*
BUS	Brown University Studies
BZNW	Beiträge zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBNT	Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series
CBQMS	The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CJ	*Conservative Judaism*
CPh	*Classical Philology*
CPJ	*Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCT	Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition
DBS	*Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Supplément
EF	Erträge der Forschung
ÉPROER	Études préliminaires aux Religions orientales dans L'Empire Romain
ET	*Evangelische Theologie*
ETL	*Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FSRKA	Frankfurter Studien zur Religion und Kultur der Antike
GBLS	Greifswalder Beiträge zur Literatur und Stilforschung
Gen.Apoc	*Genesis Apocryphon*
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HT	*History Today*

HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
Hum.Ser	Humanistisk Serie
HUT	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
HZ	*Historische Zeitschrift*
IOS	*Israel Oriental Studies*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNSL	*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
Jub	*The Book of Jubilees*
LAB	Pseudo-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities*
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
Life	Josephus, *The Life of Josephus*
LQR	*Law Quarterly Review*
LXX	The Septuagint
MGWJ	*Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*
MHUC	Monographs of the Hebrew Union College
MT	Masoretic Text
NJ	*Nordisk Judaistik*
n.s.	new series
NT	*Novum Testamentum*
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
PAAJR	*Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research*
Pauly-W.RE	Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertums-wissenschaft*
RB	*Revue biblique*
RQ	*Revue de Qumran*
RSR	*Recherches de Science Religieuse*
SANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SCI	*Studia Classica Israelica*
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity

SLSR	Sage Library of Social Research
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SPB	Studia Post-Biblica
ST	*Studia Theologica*
SupNT	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
TAPA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*
TLZ	*Theologische Literaturzeitung*
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TU	*Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
War	Josephus, *Jewish War*
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YCS	*Yale Classical Studies*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZRGG	*Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*

Introduction

1. The Image of the Jew

The closing years of the first century CE were critical ones for Jewish people living in the Roman world. The subjugation of the revolt in Judaea, along with the destruction of the Temple, raised a host of questions and challenges concerning the nature of Jewish life and identity. The public humiliation of defeat, rubbed in painfully by Titus' triumphal procession through Rome with the holy spoils of Jerusalem, and the indiscriminate imposition of a punitive tax on all Jews in the empire seemed to assert a fundamental dichotomy (even hostility) between "the Jews" and "the Romans". This distinction would, perhaps, have raised few problems for Jews living in communities that, for one reason or another, were already isolated from the outside world. However, for those Jews attempting to live lives integrated into the mainstream of the non-Jewish world, the crisis of 66–70 CE and its aftermath presented perplexing dilemmas. The official opposition between Rome and the Jews implied by the war, and the punishments meted out afterwards greatly increased the need among the Jews for an apologetic that could give an account of themselves in the face of Gentile hostility and suspicion. Who were the Jews and what did they stand for? What was the basis of their laws and traditions? Was their mode of life in some fundamental way at odds with the values and aspirations of Rome? Should they be regarded as perpetual enemies, or could the Judaean war be regarded as an anomaly irrelevant to Jewish-Roman relations in the long term? These are some of the questions Jewish apologists were confronted with as they tried to reestablish an honourable place for the Jews at the Roman table.[1]

The questions raised by the destruction of the Jewish state were not restricted to the external issues of how the Jews might relate to the rest of the world. Some of the most crucial questions related to theodicy. If the Jews were the people of God, how was the disaster that had befallen Jerusalem possible? What were its implications for their status as God's special

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[1]Note the comment of A. Momigliano on Jewish apologetics: "To study Judaism through its apologetics . . . means to understand it in its efforts to take a stance before the surrounding world and its efforts to define itself in relation to that world" (*Essays*, 58).

possession? Other questions related to the internal structures of Jewish life. How were Jews to live as Jews on a day-to-day basis in the light the non-functioning of the Temple and its priesthood? Could Judaism even survive in such circumstances? These were issues debated by the Jews among themselves as they tried to come to terms with the implications of their recent history for their own essential identity.

In other words, we might say that Jews all over the Roman world were faced with the challenge of redefining Judaism both for themselves and for "outsiders". They were called upon to draw an "image of the Jew" that would serve at least these two purposes. On the one hand there was the apologetic need to provide an answer to the Roman world concerning the nature of the Jewish people. And on the other hand there was the need for Jews to reformulate their own understanding of themselves in the light of the new realities that shaped their lives. We cannot assume that this challenge was met in the same way by all Jews; or that the "images" presented by different "artists" were all identical. As different individuals and communities grappled with the issues in the specific contexts of their own local circumstances throughout the Roman world, different answers emerged to the fundamental questions they faced. Different images were offered as explanations of what the Jews were really all about.

This was not the first time that Jews had been confronted with the need to explore their essential identity in the context of changing realities, either internal to the Jewish community and external in the world at large. Indeed, recent scholarship has shown how at least since the Persian period, when much of the nation found itself in exile (an involuntary Diaspora) they had been confronted with the need to redefine and fine-tune their emerging sense of identity. D.R. Schwartz has argued that each succesive stage of Jewish history required a rearrangement of the basic building blocks of Jewish peoplehood.[2] Thus, in one period it was physical connection to Abraham that was paramount. In another period it was the monarchy and the Land that defined Jewish identity. In yet another period it was adherence to the Law and the carefully defined cultural agenda associated with it.[3] It is the fluidity of the issues contributing to Jewish identity and the complex ways in which they

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[2]D.R. Schwartz, *Studies*, 5 ff.

[3]It was during the Hellenistic period, Schwartz argues, when it was necessary to define the cultural agenda by which Jews were to govern their lives, that different points of view within Judaism crystallized into opposing schools or sects (*Studies*, 13).

relate to each other under new circumstances and in different environments that makes the study of Jewish identity so interesting. The encounter between the Jewish people and the forces of Hellenism unleashed by Alexander the Great has been a particularly fruitful field of enquiry.[4] For, here was a new Spirit sweeping the world which was at once both threatening and appealing to the Jews. For some, the Greek language and Greek modes of life and thought offered the Jews a means for constructive engagement with the rest of the world. Hellenism held out an invitation to become citizens of the world. For others, Hellenism was to be shunned as a pagan evil that threatened to destroy the foundations of true religion and erode the pillars of Jewish life. The tensions between these two perspectives were felt not only between communities but also within communities, and sometimes even within individuals. It was in this context of ambiguity and tension that Jews in the Hellenistic period were having to answer the question, 'What is a Jew?' Inevitably the process of self-definition thus constructed led, in time, to the reduction of diversity as emerging definitions of Judaism excluded alternative definitions.[5] The definition of "Jewishness" became a battle for the soul of the people.

One of the primary resources in this battle was the Bible. As J. Blenkinsopp has argued:

> [Biblical] interpretation was not just one of several forms of literary and intellectual activity going on at the time. It was, on the contrary, decisive for the way the community was to understand itself, who was to belong to it, and how it was to go about its business.[6]

During the Second Temple period we find a vast array biblical scholarship of different kinds, all the way from detailed commentary on specific texts to wholesale rewriting of large tracts of the Bible. In each case, these scholars apparently hoped to make sense of the present in the light of the sacred account of the past. That "sacred account of the past", though, was not static or fixed. There was much scope for interpretation and reinterpretation as different individuals and communities scanned the ancient traditions for clues about their own place in the world.

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[4]See especially M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*. For a succint summary of the pertinent issues, see J.M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 88–92.

[5]Cf. E.P. Sanders, *Self-Definition*, vol. 2, ix.

[6]J. Blenkinsopp, "Interpretation", 25.

Clearly, then, even the interpretation of the Bible allowed significant latitude when it came to defining what it meant to be a Jew. This does not mean, however, that the process of Jewish self-definition was entirely without constraints, or that Jewish identities in different communities were so entirely disparate as to render a Jew from Rome unrecognizable to a Jew from Alexandria or Jerusalem. On the contrary, there was an identifiable commonality that united all the different expressions of Judaism at this time.[7] J. Neusner describes that commonality thus:

> That pre-Christian, prerabbinic religion of Israel, for all its variety, exhibited common traits: belief in one God, reverence for and obedience to the revelation contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, veneration of the Temple in Jerusalem (while it stood), and expectation of the coming Messiah[8] to restore all the Jews to Palestine and to bring to a close the anguish of history.[9]

Other scholars have described this common foundation in terms of basic "elements" or "distinctives" of Judaism. J.D.G. Dunn, for example, describes the "four pillars" of Second Temple Judaism.[10] These were: (1) the belief in monotheism (which is coupled to an antipathy towards the religions of other nations); (2) the conviction that Israel had been chosen by God, and that God had bound himself to Israel by a covenant; (3) the committment to the centrality of Torah in the life of God's chosen people. This tenet nurtured a sense of distinctiveness and privilege over against the other nations and led

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[7]E.P. Sanders gives an extended discussion of "common Judaism" in *Judaism*, 45–303. See also G.P. Carras, "Paul, Josephus, and Judaism," 1–23. Carras, who is indebted to Sanders, uses the term "common-denominator" Judaism. This is not to say that there was anything like a strict Jewish "orthodoxy" at this time. For a discussion of this term and its (in)appropriateness for discussion of first century Judaism, see N.J. McEleney, "Orthodoxy;" with responses by D.E. Aune, "Response;" and L.L. Grabbe, "Issues?" See also N.J. McEleney, "Replies to David E. Aune and Lester L. Grabbe." On the related discussion of the term "normative" Judaism, see J. Neusner, "'Judaism' after Moore;" S.J.D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishna*, 134–137; and J.M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 83–88.

[8]On Jewish hopes for the future, see further, E.P. Sanders, *Judaism*, 279–303.

[9]J. Neusner, *Judaism in the Beginning of Christianity*, 12.

[10]J.D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways*, 18–36. Similar discussions may be found in M. Casey, *From Jewish Prophet to Gentile God*, 11–22; and N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 215–243. See also A. Mendelson, *Philo's Jewish Identity*, 51–75; and S. Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 80 ff.

to what Dunn refers to as "focal points of distinctiveness" by which he means, "particular laws, especially ritual practices, which reinforced the sense of disctinctive identity and marked Israel off most clearly from other nations, test cases of covenant loyalty."[11] The most significant of these, he argues, were circumcision, Sabbath observance and the food laws.[12] (4) The fourth pillar was the centrality of the Temple in Israel's religious, political and economic life. Even after the destruction of the Temple, it continued to function as an important focal point for piety and hopes for the future.

J.M.G. Barclay emphasizes "ethnicity" as the bond that united Jews in the Diaspora. He writes: "The evidence indicates that it was ethnicity – precisely the *combination* of ancestry and custom – which was the core of Jewish identity in the Diaspora."[13] The evidence to which he refers is made up of five "strands": (1) the ethnic terminology used by Jews to describe themselves;[14] (2) the Gentile perception of the Jews as an ethnic group; (3) the "resocialization" of proselytes;[15] (4) the importance of marriage within the group; and (5) the education of children in the Jewish way of life.[16]

If we move beyond these basic "elements" or "strands" of Jewish identity we find a range of other issues that also served to unite, at least in principle, the different local expressions of Jewishness. Barclay refers to these as "supporting strands" which served to strengthen the "central thread" of Jewish identity.[17] They included the widespread importance among Jews of

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[11]J.D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways*, 28.

[12]J.M.G. Barclay lists the following as "pratical distinctions" which "marked off Diaspora Jews from their neighbours and thus gave definition to Jewish identity": the rejection of alien, pluralist and iconic cult; separatism at meals; male circumcision; and Sabbath observance (*Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 428–442).

[13]J.M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 404. Emphasis Barclay's.

[14]The Jews spoke of themselves as a "nation" (ἔθνος, φῦλον), a "race" (γένος), or a "people" (λαός).

[15]On the importance of entrance requirements placed on converts for Jewish identity, see also L. Schiffman, "At the Crossroads." On the requirements placed on converts to Judaism, generally, see B.J. Bamberger, *Proselytism*; W.G. Braude, *Jewish Proselytizing*; L.H. Schiffman, "Conversion of the Royal House of Adiabene;" "Proselytism;" *Who Was a Jew?*" S.J.D. Cohen, "Conversion to Judaism;" "Conversion Ceremony;" "Crossing the Boundary." See also J.J. Collins, "A Symbol of Otherness," 165–169. On the subject of Gentile attraction to Judaism, see especially S.J.D. Cohen, "Respect for Judaism."

[16]Barclay discusses each of these strands in some detail on pages 405–413.

[17]J.M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 413.

synagogue attendance,[18] and the payment of the Temple tax.[19] On the latter, E.P. Sanders has stated:

> If one where thinking of Jews outside Palestine, whether in the rest of the Roman Empire or in Mesopotamia, the Temple tax, along with observance of Sabbath and food laws, would be a major sign of Jewish identity. Paying it marked one as a Jew; not paying it would lead others to think that one had apostatized . . . . We may safely say that all Jews who wished to be counted as such paid the tax.[20]

Then, there were also certain privileges shared by Jews in certain areas and at certain times, such as the right to live according to their laws,[21] or exemption from military service.[22] In the aftermath of the Jewish war, the shared burden and humiliation of the *fiscus Judaicus* also contributed to the definition of Jewish identity.[23]

As Jews at the end of the first century CE came to terms with their circumstances, and attempted to carve out for themselves a way of being themselves in the world, all of the above factors would have contributed to their ultimate answer to the question, "What is a Jew?" And, therefore, they provide a context for the primary focus of the present study, namely, the image of the Jew presented by Flavius Josephus.

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[18]For discussion see, e.g., P. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, 12 ff; E.P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, 79.

[19]Cf. *Ant* 14.112–13; 16.162–8,171–3; Philo, *Embassy* 315–6; Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 28.66–9. On the Temple Tax generally, see further W. Horbury, "The Temple Tax."

[20]E.P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, 49.

[21]For a discussion of this point, see P. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, 19.

[22]Jewish communities often sought exemption from military service so as not to compromise their ability to observe all their customs. Although enlistment in the Roman army was generally voluntary, times of military crisis were inevitably accompanied by mandatory conscription. In was in times such as these that Jews needed some form of exemption (P. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, 12 ff).

[23]On the significance for Jewish identity of contributions to the *fiscus Judaicus*, see M. Goodman, "Nerva". For a discussion of Goodman's argument, see now also I. Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts*, 2–12.

2. *Josephus the Roman Jew*

In the present study we seek to understand one particular Jewish answer to the questions raised by Diaspora life; one particular "image of the Jew" offered both to Jews and to non-Jews[24] as an accounting of the nature of Jewish identity in the Roman world. Josephus' image of the Jew is a measure of his own particular social and political agenda, and as such sheds valuable light on his attempt to come to terms with the challenges facing Jews in the latter stages of the Flavian dynasty, especially those who, like him, hoped to find a way to be authentically Roman at the same time as being faithfully Jewish.[25] What is especially tantalising in the case of Josephus is the initial impression that we actually know a good deal about him. Unfortunately, however, this "knowledge" is notoriously suspect because of contradictions, special pleading and obvious literary *topoi*. It is to that subject that we must now turn.

2.1. *Curriculum Vitae*

Such knowledge as we have of Josephus is derived entirely from his own works dating from the late 70's to the mid–90's of the first century CE.[26] From these works, especially the *Life*, we may establish the following broad outline of his life: Josephus was born in 37 CE[27] and spent his early life in Jerusalem where, as the second son[28] of an aristocratic and priestly family (*Life* 7), he received a good education (*Life* 8). This basic education was supplemented in his adolescent years by more in-depth study of the various Jewish sects (*Life* 10) and an extended time of instruction under a desert ascetic called Bannus (*Life* 11). After this, he entered public life in Jerusalem and followed the precepts of the Pharisees (*Life* 12). At the age of twenty-six, he went on a diplomatic mission to Rome in aid of certain priests who were to be arraigned on unknown charges before Nero (*Life* 13–16). On his return from a successful trip he found the revolution against Rome already well under way (*Life* 17). During the early stages of the war he was involved as

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[24]The dual nature of the "audience" for whom Josephus wrote is discussed further below.

[25]On such individuals, see M. Goodman, "The Roman Identity of Roman Jews."

[26]*War* is usually dated between 75 and 79, though book 7 may have been written as late as the 90's; *Ant*: 93/94; *Life*: shortly after *Ant*; *Apion*: 97–100.

[27]"the year in which Gaius Caesar became Emperor," *Life* 5.

[28]This is inferred from the fact that Josephus' brother was given his father's name (*Life* 8).

a military leader in Galilee (*Life* 28–406; *War* 2.568–3.288; *Apion* 1.48). Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, though, he was captured by the Romans at Jotapata (*War* 3.316–391) and used thereafter as an interpreter and informant (*War* 5.325; 6.129; *Apion* 49). He was also used to try to persuade the rebels to give up the fight before it was too late (*War* 5.114,261,361 ff, 541ff; 6.94 ff,365). After the war he was highly honoured by the new Flavian emperors, not least because of his famous prediction during the last year of Nero that Vespasian would become emperor (*War* 3.399–402). Along with a tract of land in Judaea (*Apion* 422,425), he was granted Roman citizenship, and a house and pension in Rome (*Life* 423). During this period of Flavian patronage he turned his efforts towards the literary pursuits that produced the four works that make up his extant *corpus*. This was also a time of intense hostility from certain Jewish quarters which resented his conspicuous rise to prosperity (*Life* 424,428–429).

The difficulties which arise when we consider the details of Josephus' assertions about his life and career are well known. We will touch on them only briefly here.[29] We may arrange these problems under three headings. *(1) Early life and education.* Questions have been raised about Josephus' claim to both priestly and Hasmonaean descent.[30] His claim to have been a child prodigy would seem to be an obvious literary *topos*, and the times he gives for the period studying the various sects within Judaism do not seem to add up. It is also difficult to know exactly what he means when he says that in his nineteenth year he began to "govern [his] life by the rules of the Pharisees" (*Life* 12). Does this mean he became a "card carrying" Pharisee, or simply that in public life he followed their precepts out of practical necessity?[31]. The true nature of his diplomatic trip to Rome has also raised the suspicions of

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[29]For an excellent survey of all the relevant issuses, see S. Mason, *Josephus*, 35–52. See also T. Rajak, *Josephus*, 46–64,144–173,185–229; and S. Schwartz, *Judaean Politics*, 4–22.

[30]The issues are spelled out very well in S. Mason, *Josephus*, 37–38.

[31]S. Mason has argued for the latter ("Was Josephus a Pharisee?"), though this view has not been accepted by all; see, e.g., E.P. Sanders, *Judaism*, 832–833, n. 9. Sanders's basic objection is that the Pharisees, contrary to general opinion, did not yield the measure of political power in Jerusalem in the mid-50s that is required for Mason's position. The whole question of Josephus' attitude to the Pharisees in the *War* over against that in the *Antiquities* has been the cause of much speculation among scholars as well. Many suppose that Josephus' more positive attitude toward this group in later life betrays a desire to ingratiate himself with the incipient rabbinic movement in Palestine around the end of the first century.

some.[32] *(2) Involvement in the war.* The enormous difficulties with this part of his life stem from the fact that Josephus gives conflicting accounts of his activities in the *War* and in the *Life*.[33] The situation is further complicated by the fact that other accounts of the war apparently repudiated Josephus' version(s) and accused him of tyranny and brutality during this period.[34] Some of these charges Josephus seemed hard pressed to refute.[35] The events surrounding Josephus' capture by the Romans are notoriously problematic. For one thing, Josephus appears thoroughly unscrupulous and even cowardly while at the same time almost nauseatingly self-praising. At one moment he openly admits contemplating flight from the Romans (*War* 3.193), and at the next he is urging everybody else to sacrifice their lives (*War* 3.204). Once, we find him pleading with a group of refugees not to commit the impiety of suicide to escape capture by the Romans (*War* 3.361–382), and on another occasion he praises that very action (*War* 7.320–401; see also 3.331). The main difference between these two occasions is that in the former he himself would have had to commit suicide – something he clearly was not willing to do. To make matters worse, he allowed his compatriots to slaughter each other, only to save his own skin at the very last minute by surrendering to the Romans. As if this were not enough, Josephus claims that he was motivated in all of this by a prophetic inspiration, which came to him by virtue of his priestly status,[36] revealing that his captor Vespasian would eventually become

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[32]S.J.D. Cohen has argued (*Josephus in Galilee and in Rome*, 61 f,186, n. 13) that Josephus covered up the revolutionary implications of the charges brought against his associates.

[33]A full-scale treatment of this problem may be found in S.J.D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome*. See also the helpful summary in S. Mason, *Josephus*, 40–43.

[34]Josephus' main accuser was one Justus of Tiberias who had also been invovled in the war in Galilee. For a discussion of his version of events, so far as it is possible to reconstruct it from what Josephus says against it, see T. Rajak, "Josephus and Justus of Tiberias," and S. Mason, *Josephus*, 75–76.

[35]See, e.g., his acknowledgement that he made one of his captives cut off his own left hand (*War* 2.642–644; *Life* 169–173). Josephus presents himself as showing mercy in not having both the man's hands severed.

[36]Josephus writes: "Suddenly there came back into his mind those nightly dreams, in which God had foretold to him the impending fate of the Jews and the destinies of the Roman sovereigns. He was an interpreter of dreams and skilled in divining the meaning of ambiguous utterances of the Deity; a priest himself and of priestly descent, he was not ignorant of the prophecies in the sacred books" (*War* 3.351–352). On the well established priest-as-prophet tradition in Judaism at this time, see J. Blenkinsopp, "Prophecy and Priesthood in Josephus."

emperor. Astonishingly, this prediction, if that is what it really was, came true within a matter of two years[37] and Josephus' prestige and security were assured.[38] *(3) Life in Rome.* The nature and extent of the patronage Josephus received is difficult to establish. It would seem that although he had some kind of imperial support for the writing of the *War*, by the time he completed the rest of his works, in the nineties, he was supported by a patron by the name of Epaphroditus.[39] It is unlikely that this person had connections with the court, and we do not know what this implies about Josephus' status in Rome during this period. Also, Josephus' relationship with the Jewish community in Rome is not clear.[40] Josephus treats those of his own countrymen who opposed him as an insignificant minority, but was this really the case? Or, was Josephus in essence estranged from the Jewish community because of his perceived betrayal of the Jewish cause? This last possibility raises questions about the motivations of Josephus' literary works. Is it possible that rather than being the community-minded apologetic works he

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Blenkinsopp argues that however we evaluate Josephus' claim to prophetic inspiration derived from his priestly status, "it makes perfectly good sense in the context of traditional and contemporary understandings of both prophecy and priesthood" (256). The question of prophecy in Josephus has received a good deal of scholarly attention; cf. e.g. D.E. Aune, "The Use of προφήτης in Josephus;" M.N.A. Bockmeuhl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 82–92; M. Braun, "The Prophet Who Became a Historian;" F.F. Bruce, "Josephus and Daniel;" G. Delling, "Die biblische Prophetie bei Josephus;" L.H. Feldman, "Prophets and Prophecy in Josephus;" G.L. Johnson, "Josephus: Heir Apparent?" R. Mayer and C. Möller, "Josephus – Politiker und Prophet;" A. Paul, "Le concept de prophétie biblique;" W.C. van Unnik, "Die Prophetie bei Josephus," in idem, *Flavius Josephus als Historischer Schriftsteller*, 41–54; G. Vermes, "Josephus' Treatment of the Book of Daniel."

[37]Jotapata fell in July 67 and Vespasian was acclaimed emperor by the people of Rome in December 69.

[38]Josephus' prediction was apparently not the only "omen" regarding Vepasian's imminent rise to imperial power. That, at least, is the line given by Flavian propaganda. References to such predictions, including Josephus' are found in Tacitus, *Histories* 1.10;2.1; 5.13 and Suetonius, *Vespasian* 4. On the usefulness of such omens for the Flavian house, see the discussion of T. Rajak, *Josephus*, 185 ff. Rabbinic tradition attached a similar prediction of Vespasian's ascendency to Johanan ben Zakkai, the founder of the academy at Jamnia (Yavneh). For a discussion of the relevant sources, see J. Neusner, *A Life of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai*, 157 ff.

[39]See the discussion this period of Josephus' life in T. Rajak, *Josephus*, 223 ff. On Josephus' relationship with the various emperors, see briefly G.E. Sterling, *Historiography*, 238–240.

[40]See the discussion of M. Goodman, "Josephus as Roman Citizen."

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