REVIEW

J. Sievers and G. Lembi (eds.), *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond. (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, vol. 104)*. Brill, Leiden–Boston 2005, pp. xiii + 454
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Josephus Flavius and his work have long been of interest to many scholars. This is most convincingly confirmed by the number of new publications appearing every year as well as the long list of international seminars in recent years devoted to the life, writing, and period of the Jewish historian. Among the most recent was that organized by Professor Joseph Sievers titled „Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome”. Held in Rome in September 2003, it gathered a large group of researchers from several countries. The papers presented on that occasion have just seen print. For their quick publication, both the editors and publishers deserve genuine appreciation. While the publication’s title differs from that of the original seminar, the new title better reflects the main issues on which participants focused in their discussions.

The papers delivered at the seminar were divided into five thematic groups, the differences between them indicating that most speakers concentrated on historical problems concerning various aspects of the period in which Josephus flourished. Less attention was devoted to other matters such as analysis and criticism of his writings.

To help readers gain insight into the contents of the volume and to encourage those whose research interests approximate the subject discussed at the seminar to read the volume, it is worth quoting the titles of articles in respective parts. Part I: „Historiography” contains six articles: D. Mendels, „The Formation of an Historical Canon of the Greco-Roman Period: From the Beginnings to Josephus” (pp. 3–19); L. Troiani, „La genèse historique des *Antiquités juives*” (pp. 21–28); J.M.G. Barclay, „Judaean Historiography in Rome: Josephus and History in *Contra Apionem* Book 1” (pp. 29–43); F. Parente, „The Impotence of Titus, or Josephus’ *Bellum Judaicum* as an Example of ‘Pathetic’ Historiography” (pp. 45–69); S. Mason, „Of Audience and Meaning: Reading Josephus’ *Bellum Judaicum* in Context of a Flavian Audience” (pp. 71–100); J.J. Price, „The Provincial Historian in Rome” (pp. 101–118). Part II: „Literary Questions” contains four studies: H. Howell Chapman, „‘By the Waters of Babylon’: Josephus and Greek Poetry” (pp. 121–146); D. Dormeyer, „The Hellenistic Biographical History of King Saul: Josephus, *A.J.* 6.45–378 and 1 Samuel 9:1 – 31:13” (pp. 147–157); T. Landau, „Power and Pity: The Image of Herod in Josephus’ *Bellum Judaicum*” (pp. 159–181); J.W. van Henten, „Commonplaces in Herod’s Commander Speech in Josephus’ *A.J.* 15.127–146” (pp. 183–

Herod's Commander Speech in Josephus' *A.J.* 15.127–146" (pp. 183–206). Part III: „Josephus and Judaism" consists of three contributions: P. Spilsbury, „Reading the Bible in Rome: Joseph and the Constraints of Empire" (pp. 209–227); T. Jonquière, „Josephus' Use of Prayers: between Narrative and Theology" (pp. 229–243); N. Förster, „Some Observations on Josephus' Description of the Essenian Morning Prayer" (pp. 245–253). Part IV: „Histories and History," like Part I, includes six papers: B. Eberhardt, „Wer dient wem? Die Darstellung des Flavischen Triumphzuges auf dem Titusbogen und bei Josephus (*B.J.* 7.123–162)" (pp. 257–277); J.S. McLaren, „The Vanquished Writing about the Victor" (pp. 279–295); G. Haaland, „Josephus and the Philosophers of Rome: Does *Contra Apionem* mirror Domitian's Crushing of the 'Stoic Opposition'" (pp. 297–316); G. Schimanowski, „Alexandrien als Drehscheibe zwischen Jerusalem und Rom: die Bedeutung der Stadt im Werk des Josephus" (pp. 317–330); G. Jossa, „Jews, Romans and Christians: From the *Bellum Judaicum* to the *Antiquitates*" (pp. 331–342); B.S. Jackson, „The Divorces of the Herodian Princesses: Jewish Law, Roman Law or Palace Law?" (pp. 343–368). Part V: „Translation and Transmission" has three articles: G. Lembi, „The Latin Translation of Josephus' *Antiquitates*" (pp. 371–381); A.J. Forte, „Translating Book I of Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*: Some Critical Observations" (pp. 383–403); F. Siegert, „Josephus und das Alphabet der Römer: Überlegungen zur Schreibung griechischer Eigennamen in lateinischer Schrift" (pp. 405–423).

While a detailed discussion of each contribution would take too much of our space, at least a selection deserves a mention. Admittedly, the choice is subjective, primarily reflecting the present reviewers' research focus. From this point of view, of particular interest are articles in Parts One and Four. Part Three, treating on the religious content of Flavius' works, is also useful to historians, who will find there many important insights helpful in a proper reading of the Jewish historian's narration.

In the first part, especially interesting is the article by D. Mendels on the making of a canon of historical texts in the antiquity. Although the author takes Josephus as his starting point, he proceeds to draw a wider circle. He is concerned with the phenomenon that generations of historians have been trying to understand: the survival and functioning of some historical texts. D. Mendels' remarks assuredly deserve a close reading. Other valuable contributions include those by L. Troiani, J.M.G. Barcklay, F. Parente, S. Mason, and J.J. Price. Some of them attempt to identify Josephus' readership and offer many original interpretations and hypotheses which often step beyond strict involvement with the ancient historian. Although their respective findings converge in many points, their conclusions vary somewhat. Such differences concern not only generalizing conclusions, but also interpretations of facts and, consequently, conclusions. One example of this are different opinions on the identification of Epaphroditus, the patron of Josephus Flavius. G. Haaland (p. 316), like many other scholars, identifies him with his namesake, Nero's freedman. In contrast, G. Jossa (p. 342 and note 17) believes that the patron was another Epaphroditus known in the Flavian period, teacher and owner of a large private library who died in an advanced age during the reign of Nerva. G. Jossa's suggestion seems far more convincing than that prevailing so far because of the obvious proximity between both figures' interests. Its acceptance, however, means that G. Haaland's conclusions on the dating of *Contra Apionem* lose much of their strength.

I entertain no doubt that the book in question deserves a recommendation not only to students of Josephus Flavius' work, but also to all those researching Roman history in the Flavian period and interested in Romanization or Hellenization as cultural aspects. Such scholars will no doubt find many inspiring observations and interpretations.

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