



Reviews of the Enoch Seminar 2013.03.03

Jason von Ehrenkrook, *Sculpting Idolatry in Flavian Rome: (An)Iconic Rhetoric in the Writings of Flavius Josephus*. Early Judaism and Its Literature 33. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011. \$29.95. ISBN: 978-1589836228.

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The nineteenth-century novelist Gustave Flaubert, officially single his whole life, found himself irresistibly attracted to a statue in the Louvre. Of Antonio Canova's *Cupid [Amor] and Psyche*—she reclining half naked with her arms raised to the head of the God whose kiss has revived her—Flaubert confessed: “I kissed under the armpit the melting woman who stretches out her long marble arms to Amor. And *her foot!* her head! her profile!” One Freudian analyst came up with *agalmatophilia*, or statue-love, for Flaubert's condition; another, for a similar case, the colder *lithophilia* (L. Simmons, *Freud's Italian Journey*, 2006, 162). Stone in love. . . .

One does not hear much about these things in academic life, but this lively and provocative book, a revised dissertation from the University of Michigan, features a section on *agalmatophilia* among many other interesting topics. Ehrenkrook (hereafter E.) makes a clear but complex argument, which he helpfully recalls at strategic points. It would be just as well to quote one such passage as to attempt a summary (pp. 128–29). Notice the many dimensions here, three quarters of the way through:

I have argued above that sculpture in *B.J.* [Josephus' *War*] and, in particular, narratives about Jewish resistance to statues play an important role in defining Judean (sacred) territory and shaping Jewish identity as distinct from Greek space and identity. [In addition to discussing] the role of Josephus' 'sacred map' in the development of larger rhetorical themes in *B.J.* . . . , given the importance of Josephus' compositional context—Rome at the height of the reign of Titus—it is necessary to consider how this configuration . . . is both shaped by and contributes to a discourse on culture and power in Flavian Rome. By placing this iconology within its specific historical context, we can begin to see the extent to which Josephus' iconoclastic narratives . . . function to navigate the complicated cultural and political terrain in Rome following the turbulent rise of a new imperial family. More specifically, a decade after the devastating destruction of the temple, Josephus subtly probes . . . the limits of monarchy, defining and distinguishing

between tyrannical rule and legitimate expressions of power. In short, the territorial boundaries that emerge in *B.J.* become a kind of measuring stick for imperial (il)legitimacy.

The study falls basically in the historicist-idealist tradition, then, seeking to interpret Josephus' works as specific communicative media in their immediate setting: Rome under the Flavians. As the quotation suggests, the argument is fine-grained. Josephus' portraits of Jewish responses to images, though falling in narratives *about* Judaea, should convey specific messages to his Roman audiences. Namely, they should evoke Rome's ancient aniconic tradition, forge a link between Jews and Romans—against the Greek values (intertwined with cult statuary) recently indulged by Nero and Rome's long degeneration from a more virtuous piety—and erect a barrier against political tyranny. The new Flavian rulers are implicitly welcomed as Augustus-like protectors of Judaea's distinctive sacred spaces, even against home-grown Jewish (but Greek-style) tyrants. While Romanizing his narrative, in other words, Josephus also co-opts the Flavians as friends of the Jews' ancestral (aniconic) tradition, through a calculated mimicry (cf. H. Babha).

An important consequence of this argument for E. is that it should knock out a pillar of received scholarly wisdom: that Josephus evinces a general stringency in the interpretation of the second commandment during the late second-temple period. Stringency there may have been, E. allows, but Josephus' iconoclastic narratives are not transparent evidence for it. They are rhetorical creations "sculpted" for a Roman audience, which deliberately play up the Jews' devotion to an ancient aniconic piety. Other evidence of Jews' attitudes about images pre-70, albeit meager, is more ambiguous.

OVERVIEW OF ARGUMENT

Taking advantage of the space offered by a digital review, I shall begin with a description the book's structure and contents and then offer several lines of critical interaction.

An introduction and conclusion frame four chapters of detailed investigation. Back matter includes two brief appendices (Josephus' "statuary lexicon" and passages related to the second commandment), bibliography, and indices for ancient texts, modern authors, and subjects.

The introduction (pp. 1-18) first sets up the foil against which E. will develop his case: the reportedly ubiquitous view of scholars that pre-70 Judaism was more strictly aniconic than the second commandment (Exod 20.2-6) clearly required, and that a facile reading of Josephus (guiding the interpretation of sparse archaeology) shows this to be so. E. proposes a different approach, acknowledging trails blazed by J. Gutmann (1961) and J. Barclay (2006), who in different ways found daylight between the situation on the ground and Josephus' rhetoric.

The introduction also outlines the coming chapters, surveys Josephus' life and scholarly reception, and aligns E. with the recent (by no means uncontested) Roman-contextual reading of Josephus' works. Finally, it spells out the four contributions that E. hopes to make: to disqualify Josephus' works as direct evidence for strict aniconism before 70; to integrate ancient Jews into a Mediterranean-wide discourse on images, shattering any dichotomy between Hellenistic idol-

worshippers and Jewish iconoclasts; to better understand Josephus' works as compositions; and to clarify Josephus' role in Flavian cultural politics, as he "negotiated" space for Jews in a hostile postwar environment (pp. 17-18).

Chapter 1 ("Jewish Responses to Images in Cultural Context," pp. 19-59) begins the dismantling. Here E. contrasts an "exegetical stridency" concerning images with admittedly sparse but suggestive material evidence, in Judaea and elsewhere, of "a broad and complex range of Jewish responses to images." Although it is undeniable that some Jerusalemites "had an uneasy attitude toward sculptural representation," even this needs to be understood within the "wider Mediterranean milieu" (p. 20). The chapter includes an important reminder that other easterners (E. focuses here on Nabataeans) demurred from cultic statuary. We are thus looking at a Hellenistic melting-pot, in which many options were possible between completely embracing and rejecting cultic statuary, and each *ethnos* made its own way.

Examples of imagery tolerated by Judaeans include, E. suggests: Herod's eagle in the temple; Agrippa I's "portrait statues" of his daughters (located in Tiberias, p. 25); Herod's eagle-bearing coins, the iconic Tyrian shekel (which E. has Herod producing in Jerusalem, following Meshorer); and the statue-making implied in Jewish (or -ish) pre-70 inscriptions from Delos, Cyrene, Aphrodisias, and Egypt. E. examines two texts that are harshly anti-iconic (Epistle of Jeremiah and Wisdom of Solomon) yet also reveal that their authors were not isolated from the world of statuary but somehow part of the conversation. The most memorable example is Pseudo-Solomon's putative awareness of statue-love (*agalmatophilia*), on which he builds a serious claim that idolatry leads to *porneia* (pp. 55-58).

Having broken the eggs, E. begins cooking the omelet. Chapter 2 ("The Second Commandment in Josephus and Greco-Roman Jewish Literature," pp. 61-97) turns to interpretations of the second commandment—if it is the second. E. mainly restricts his biblical part of the chapter to the Hebrew of Exod. 20.2-6, pointing out the ambiguities already there (Whose images are prohibited and for what precise purposes?). In examining Josephus' handling of the commandment, he distinguishes between exegetical passages (*Ant.* 3.91-93 and *Ap.* 2.190-192) and narrative incidents (e.g., Herod's trophies and eagle, Pilate's standards, Gaius' statue). Whereas the former are concerned to explain why Jewish law forbids the representation of *the Jewish God* in human form, the latter indicate a prohibition of human and animal images *tout court*. The rest of this chapter considers the (surprisingly few) other Jewish texts that somehow engage the second commandment: Pseudo-Phocylides, *Jubilees*, *Temple Scroll*, Philo, Pseudo-Philo, and Mekilta de R. Ishmael. E. finds a surprising range of views here, from Pseudo-Phocylides' omission of the second commandment from its précis of the Decalogue, to the (third-century or later) Mekilta's comprehensive ban on imagery. The other texts prohibit cultic statuary, a position reinforced by the Mishnaic story of Gamaliel in the bath-house with Aphrodite's statue.

The remaining two chapters form the constructive heart of the study. They explore the image material in, respectively, Josephus' *War* (pp. 99-135) and *Antiquities* (pp. 137-72). In the former chapter E. argues that "Josephus in *B.J.* deploys sculpture as a mapping device, a boundary marker delineating sacred and profane space. The resulting sacred map ... functions to chart the proper boundaries of power and authority" (p. 134). Again, "the aniconic rhetoric ... [is] the

strategy of a cartographer whose ‘sacred map’ serves to navigate the complex cultural and political terrain of Flavian Rome” (p. 135). He seems to mean roughly that the characters of Herod, Pilate, and Gaius, with their attempted infringements of Judaeian sacred space (as he sees it), modeled a “desecrating tyranny” connected with Greek identity and values, and that Josephus allies Judaeians with virtuous Romans in opposing this. Implication: the Flavians are, like Augustus, bulwarks of virtuous Romanness and protectors of Jewish sacred space. Paradoxically, the Jewish “tyrants” in the war being described are Greekling desecrators, alien to Jewish and Roman traditions alike.

This *B.J.* chapter is complicated. Building on an opening assertion that “People are by nature cartographers” (p. 99), it considers theories of sacred space and “cognitive cartography,” to conclude with J. Z. Smith that sacred spaces have boundaries and are more about locating self than the sacred. E. argues that Josephus inverts the normal programme of delimiting the sacred by the presence of statues; in Judaea it is the absence of statues that signifies the sacred (p. 101). He proceeds to Josephus’ geographical description of Judaea (3.51–58) as allegedly a sacred space with Jerusalem as navel, then works through the image incidents—under Pilate, Herod, and Caligula—to propose Josephus’ distinctive concern (contrast *A.J.*) with sacred space in Jerusalem. The next section argues (via the Paul of Acts 17 and Pausanias) for the inseparable bond of statuary with *Greek* models of sacredness, a more complicated situation for Rome—delimited most importantly by its statueless *pomerium*, though also populated with sacred objects. Then E. looks at Jerusalem and Caesarea, focusing on the Caesarea incident before the outbreak of the war, where he claims that the real issue for Jews in Caesarea was not statues within the city (as *A.J.*) but the city’s “Greek” propensity for *statues* (p. 127). He stresses that Josephus turns what was “social unrest between rival Semitic groups into a veritable clash of civilizations,” Jews against Greeks (NB: whereas *A.J.* calls the other citizens *Syrians*, *B.J.* once calls them Syrians but then Greeks).

The final section of the chapter deals with “Greekness” in Flavian Rome. E. contrasts the Greeks’ criticism of Gaius Caligula for removing one of their sacred statues (preserved in Pausanias) with Judaeian outrage at his intended *imposition* of a statue in their statueless haven. E. cites chiefly Plutarch’s elder Cato for Roman anti-Greek sentiment, which “may very well testify” to worries about Greekness in Josephus’ Rome. With this association of Greeks, statues, and tyranny in hand, he highlights Josephus’ contrast between the Romans who wished to protect Judaea’s sacred spaces and the Judaeian *tyrants* (John of Gischala and others) who defiled them—and who appear in a “Greek” stereotype of effeminacy.

The *A.J.* chapter (5) completes the main argument by elucidating the thesis about common Judaeian and Roman traditions of aniconism. E. argues that Josephus’ use of *eikōn* does not sit outside of Graeco-Roman norms, but is part of a shared discourse. Rather than being anti-Roman, in particular, Jewish iconoclasm is the virtuous aniconism present at the foundations of both nations, which the Judaeians alone have managed to keep. The sections of this chapter work through: the founding golden age (especially in Rome) as a gauge of present health, and Roman authors’ perception of decline; Josephus’ efforts in his biblical paraphrase to make Judaea’s aniconic past consistent, by removing iconic episodes (golden calf, bronze serpent); and the contrast between Greek perceptions (e.g., in Herodotus) of aniconism as the way of the Other (*alterity*) and evidence that Romans, especially, recognized an aniconic piety in their own distant

past. For this E. depends chiefly on Varro as mediated by Augustine and Plutarch's portrayal of Numa. Finally, E. takes up the relationship between *eikōn* and *politeia*, the latter understood as a Leitmotif of the *A.J.* Josephus' emphasis here, according to E.—surveying the three accounts from *B.J.* and two new ones (a statue imposed on Jews in Dora and Herod's trophies)—is that Jewish rejection of images accords with a virtuous ancestral tradition (*patrios nomos*), and that is why attempts to trample the tradition create what no one wants: *stasis* (civil unrest).

In brief, E. respects the different interests and shapes of *War* and *Antiquities*. In *War* he finds the issue of images expressed in terms of a sacred map centred in a very un-Greek Jerusalem, whereas in *Antiquities* the localization issue is sidelined and the image episodes have to do with the creation of civil strife (*stasis*) as violations of the ancient Judaeian constitution (*politeia*)—which resembles the Roman *mos maiorum*.

A short conclusion (pp. 173–80) joins up the dots by focusing, after a quick summary, on the Roman context in which Josephus wrote. E. sees this as bleak for Jews, and suggests that their famed opposition to images would have contributed to their reputation for misanthropy and seditiousness (citing Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.4). But this time of transition—with the end of the philhellene Nero's reign, the destruction of his abundant imagery, and the emergence of the Flavians as old-school Roman males—also opened a path for Josephus. By stressing the aniconic heritage of the Judaeians, beyond the more complex reality on the pre-70 ground, he was confidently calling his Roman audiences back to their *mos maiorum*, so long corrupted. In the end, however, E. concedes that Josephus' "rhetorical enterprise" may not have been successful, given Juvenal's disparagement of Roman Jews a generation later (p. 180).

This lengthy summary was necessary to highlight even the most basic twists and turns of E.'s argument, which is no simple reading of a text. He leads the reader nimbly through a multi-faceted exercise, which tries to keep various wholes and parts in view simultaneously. E. might still think that I have omitted critical nuances, but I hope that this will suffice as a fair synopsis.

ASSESSMENT

In the assessment that follows, two things will soon be obvious: it is long and I am not convinced by the author's case. An unreflective person might infer that my review aims to tear the book down. Otherwise, I would not go on at such length. That would be a mistaken inference. Certainly the easier course would be to say, as the limited space in a print review might require, "I find the argument unconvincing," without explaining why. It is a sign of respect for author and readers that I take advantage of the space afforded by a digital review to work through E.'s argument. My aim is to show *why* I see other possibilities both for interpreting the evidence he uses and for explaining it in relation to the questions driving his inquiry. Too often in our field history is presented as a matter of conviction, belief, or conclusion, as though the authority of the historian were the main issue. In my view, the *inquiry* is the thing. E. invites us to think about issues that were important in ancient Judaism, and remain so for understanding cultural interaction today: notions of sacred space, group identity and boundaries, and figural representation.

Because I respect the inquiry, I am able to recommend this book while frequently disagreeing as to both interpretation and explanation of evidence. I hope to show, however, that disagreement has nothing to do with either prejudicial views or pique over a footnote. My assessment will focus on the overall argument and some of the supporting joints.

With warrants from E.'s final question about the *success* of Josephus' project, I assume that he is arguing for a conscious intention on Josephus' part, which a real, alert, and sympathetic audience in Rome audience should have been able to detect. That question about *Josephus'* success depends, however, on our evaluation of E.'s account of what Josephus was up to. Is it plausible that Josephus included the icon stories with the intentions that E. proposes, and that Roman audiences guided by his cues could have detected such messages? My assessment falls in three parts: the overall argument; its place in scholarship; and specific interpretations of evidence, upon which it rests.

Overall Argument

The argument as a whole raises unavoidable questions. To begin with, in none of the icon passages does Josephus talk about the larger issues and connections elucidated by E. These episodes have settings and functions in the stories to which they belong, which have nothing obvious to do with sacred mapping, old-Romanness, tyranny, or anti-Greek sentiment.

For example, *War's* golden eagle episode, near the end of Josephus' longest volume (1.648–55), is the penultimate stop on an emotional roller-coaster. With the extraordinarily capable and long-serving Judaeen king—crucially, the close friend of Augustus and Marcus Agrippa—near death, a pair of “sophists” inspire some daring youths (not the most reliable moral exempla in Josephus, Polybius, or other writers) to bring down the king's golden eagle from a temple gate (1.648, 655; 2.10). They have been itching to do it, and dare to act because the old foreign-backed tyrant, as they see him, is too weak to do anything about it. They are wrong about that, and pay with their lives. The Judaeen Spring that plagues Herod's son Archelaus as a result of the martyrs' execution leads to a massacre of his police force. In spite of his determination to preserve the peace, ahead of a confirmation hearing before Augustus, the threat of civil strife (*stasis*) is so urgent that he feels compelled to use force and kill thousands of protesters (2.5–13). Augustus entrusts him with an ethnarchy over the Judaeen heartland only, with the promise of a kingship if he proves his ability.

More generally, aside from the unreconciled and malcontented found anywhere, we have reason to think that Roman audiences would have cheered Rome's eagles (though they were common emblems among eastern monarchs too), considered them indispensable to military life, and cherished the memory of Augustus as the best ruler ever, which meant that his lifelong friends were axiomatically the best sort too. *War's* narrator does not challenge any of this, but presents Augustus as a stand-up fellow and Herod as an extraordinarily brave, loyal, and generous ruler. Could a Roman audience, then, have found reason in this eagle story to view Herod as a tyrant infringing on Judaeen sacred space, or felt a call to ponder the virtues of an anti-Greek, old-Roman, Jewish aniconism?

Many readings of the narrative are possible, granted, and Herod admittedly becomes a complicated figure towards the end of *War* 1 (though the explicit blame lies chiefly with

domestic intriguers; his close friendship with Augustus never fades). My point is that E. does not seem much concerned to interpret these episodes in light of Josephus' ongoing narrative cues, with a view to their possible impact in Rome. He provides no systematic introduction to the content or feel or themes of *War* 1, in which we might locate the eagle episode. E.'s procedure is much more to isolate and group the image stories together for a somewhat abstract, deductive treatment against the background of proposed Greek (Pausanian) and Roman backgrounds.

Consider the strife between Jews and "Greeks" in coastal Caesarea. E. argues that because the population are called Greeks in *War* (after being introduced as Syrians, 2.266), but Syrians in the *Antiquities* parallel, "*the narrative identifies statuary as the quintessence of Caesarea's 'Greekness'*" (p. 127, emphasis mine). This presentation should, it seems, resonate with a Roman audience's anti-Greek impulses. The problem is that Josephus has clearly made beautiful, statue-filled Caesarea, where Herod innovatively mastered nature itself, the seat of Roman government in the region. King Herod dedicated the city to Augustus (hence the city's name) and built a massive temple for the imperial cult, honouring Rome and Augustus. The temple contained colossal statues of Augustus, modeled on Olympian Zeus, and Rome/Hera. The city was adorned with other statues of the imperial family, some colossal, including those of Drusus and perhaps Tiberius (*War* 1.412–15). Those very *Roman*, imperial statues are the ones that offend Caesarea's Judaeon population. So how would it be possible for Josephus' Roman audience to understand this as a Judaeon-Greek standoff, in which they should feel an affinity for the Judaeans in their extraordinary push (nixed by Nero) to remake the city as their own—and image-free?

As for the Greekness of Caesarea, there is perhaps a simpler explanation than Josephus' putative sacred mapping and Greek-Judaeon dichotomy. Namely, Caesarea was a Greek-style *polis*. (It would be granted the status of a Roman colony after the war.) In his own account, Herod, a king himself in the Hellenistic model, created it with all the standard *polis* accouterments: agora, theatre, amphitheatre, harbor, and even Olympic-style games (1.415). It was thus comparable to all the other Greek-style *poleis* along Palestine's coast: from Gaza, Ascalon, and Azotus through Dora and Ptolemais to Tyre and Sidon—the sorts of cities that received Herod's largesse for their *polis* needs. Caesarea's Greekness becomes the heart of the issue, in the story, as a reaction of its citizens to the Judaeon effort to remake it with a Judaeon identity. In Josephus' account it is the residents who first claim Greekness, after his introduction of them as Syrians, not *because* they have statues (they use these as proof, *along with temples*, that Herod did not build a Jewish city, 2.266); they cite their Greek character because they do not wish to become Judaeon. They want to preserve the *polis* as a normal "Greek" kind.

Still, Josephus again calls Caesarea Syrian—Syria being his default label for the entire eastern seaboard of the Mediterranean—when he notes that the auxiliary force enlisted by Rome, who were relatives of Caesarea's citizens, were Syrian (2.268). The *Antiquities* parallel is more precise but not contradictory in saying that these soldiers were recruited from Caesarea and Sebaste (*Ant.* 20.176).

Or again, should the reader of *War*'s incident concerning Pilate's standards forget about what comes before it (chiefly the long passage on Essenes, as ideal Jewish men willing to die for the laws) and after? Should the following episode on Pilate's aqueduct, which the *B.J.* unmistakably

pairs with the standards incident by means of parallel structure and re-used vocabulary, have evoked different reflections on Roman and Greek values—about aqueducts or temple treasuries? E. notices Josephus' effort to join the two episodes, but instead of focusing on the elements featured by this pairing he concludes that the shared language illustrates "the politics of space. ... Caesarea ... represents the territory of the other, in this case Pilate, and Jerusalem the opposite. In other words, there is reflected in the juxtaposition of these two Pilate episodes a subtle mapping of space, a delineation of two realms that corresponds in part with the presence or absence of sculpture" (p. 111).

It is not clear to me what this adds to more prosaic standard assumptions: that a Roman audience would have understood from Josephus that Caesarea was the seat of the local imperial agent, while Jerusalem was the famously statue-less Judaeian mother-city. Could Josephus have intended a more "subtle mapping," and could his audiences have detected it? The cues provided by Josephus direct the audience to what is common between the stories, which does not include images: two great "disturbances," Judaeian courage in defence of the laws, Pilate's dependence upon these auxiliary soldiers (a crucial presence in the whole build-up to war), and potential Judaeian suffering for their efforts (much of it inadvertent, when Judaeians trample each other after the aqueduct). The second story is about aqueducts, and some of the linguistic parallels (concealed *standards* become concealed *weapons*; *laws* being trampled become *people* being trampled) suggest aesthetic rather than sacred-space-related concerns.

Another dimension of this is Pilate's portrayed character in *War* (rather different in *Antiquities*). He does not seem the venal type represented by Albinus and Florus later. Romans understood the sacred character of military standards and their inseparability from their host unit. Pilate orders the cohort to bring the standards into Jerusalem, concealed and by night (2.170), presumably to *avoid* antagonizing the populace. He capitulates quickly to the popular demand for their removal, in awe of the Jews' devotion to their "superstition" (*deisidaimonia*). In the following aqueduct incident, though the nature of his offence is likewise unclear, Pilate instructs his soldiers to use batons and not swords when confronting the demonstrators (2.176). Again, given that the standards brought from Caesarea bore the images of *Caesar*, as Josephus emphasizes—perhaps indicating that this was a *cohors Augusta*, but in any case a token of the army's loyalty to the emperor—how could a Roman audience have detected his intended message that they should side with Judaeian concerns about protecting sacred space?

Even the episode of Gaius' statues (plural in *War*) features that emperor's well-known depravity only in the opening and closing lines. The main story is about the virtuous Roman legate Petronius and his relations with the Jerusalem elite. The story is even punctuated by a digression on the magic glass of Ptolemais (2.184–203), which complicates any clear message about sacred space in Jerusalem. Petronius, who at first brings three legions to fulfill the emperor's order, is nevertheless no tyrant. His amazement at the Jews' devotion to their particular piety, strange though it is to him, sounds quite like Pilate's discovery (2.174, 198).

My point is not to advocate a particular reading of these passages *contra* E., but to suggest that his account does not really explore the many possibilities that a narrative form generates. In reading such a complex and multi-faceted dramatic history, in other words, it would be infinitely easier for an audience to pick up ongoing themes (different from theses) treated from various

angles, word-clusters, and devices, than to complete the sentence: “Josephus included this episode because he wanted to. . .” It is of course not an essay, and it is difficult to see how an audience could have extracted the sacred-map matrix that E. finds from any cues given by Josephus as he interweaves so many themes.

E. has given us an argument that is unquestionably erudite. To his great credit, he avoids dodges familiar to literary studies in classical and biblical contexts: recoiling from any suggestion of an author’s intention and resorting to vague claims about “what’s going on in the text,” untestable reader responses, or old-fashioned structuralism. Since E. makes a case for Josephus’ conscious and earnest effort to communicate quite specific impressions in Flavian Rome, that proposed effort at communication is the criterion against which we should assess his argument.

In *B.J.* the three main image episodes treated by E. (the eagle, the standards, and Gaius’ statues) fall in the work’s two introductory volumes, before the heart of the story: the actual war. In *A.J.*, the episodes in question fall well after the main trunk of biblical narrative (1-11). This reviewer has argued elsewhere that *War*’s first two volumes and *Antiquities*’ later books are indeed important, and contribute much to the works. I would not suggest that episodes falling in these zones cannot be significant. But still we would welcome guidance from E. as to why the audience of *War* should have singled out those few early episodes on images, or the audience of *Antiquities* a few later episodes, from the much larger accounts in which they are embedded, for the kinds of important reflections E. suggests. He does not clearly deal with this problem of proportion and expected impact.

In the case of *War*, the problem is especially serious because standards and images continue to appear in the work’s climactic sections, in ways perhaps not congenial to the thesis. First, not only do the legions bring their standards into Judaea under Vespasian and Titus (3.123; 5.48) but, as soon as the battle for Jerusalem is over, under Titus’ command they set them up in the holy temple precinct and offer Roman-style sacrifice *to them* (6.316, 403). Second, before leaving Jerusalem Titus assembles his troops near the temple and rewards them with gold and silver objects, including silver “standards,” before offering thousands of animal sacrifices and throwing a three-day feast (7.14–15). Third, Titus rejoins his father in Rome for the triumph for their Judaeian victory, an event filled with sacrifices and images of Roman gods (7.136), celebrating the domination of the Judaeans and *the removal of their sacred objects* to Rome’s Temple of Pax. The Flavians do not seem to be champions of Judaeian sacred space.

Moreover, the triumph soon issues in many new arches, statues, and monuments commemorating the Flavians’ subjection of the foreign-seeming Judaeian nation. After Augustus’ eastern victories a century earlier, the model emperor had filled the city with statues, sanctuaries, and altars with carved figural reliefs. Augustus does not seem to have connected Roman virtue with an aniconic past, and the Flavians (as E. observes without exploring the implications in his vein) apparently modeled their rule on his. Aniconism was not in view.

Place in Scholarship

Several supporting elements in E.’s argument have been established in other scholarship. Identifying them may help to isolate what is completely new.

As E. readily acknowledges, establishing that Josephus addressed a local Roman audience first of all, his crucial premise (pp. 13–14, 19), has been a focal concern of this reviewer’s work on Josephus. Less clear is that related concerns with political constitutions and tyranny have been part of that same project. On pp. 163–65, the author gives a quick tour through some of *Antiquities’* language related to *politeia* and *stasis*, to ground his argument that tyrants try to introduce images into Judaea and thereby create *stasis*. At the end of that section, a footnote (p. 165 n. 105) cites the reviewer’s *brief* treatment of constitutional themes in Roman context in a 1998 essay. The reference is correct, but E. seems to have missed my much fuller treatments of *politeia*, monarchy/tyranny, and civil strife in their Roman contexts, in 2000 (“Introduction to the *Judean Antiquities*” in *Judean Antiquities 1–4*, Brill) and 2003 (an essay in A. Boyle and W. Dominik, *Flavian Rome*, and the chapter in *Josephus and the New Testament* on Josephus’ works). Since those were the first efforts (known to me) to map out some of *Antiquities’* major themes from beginning to end, and as a work written in a Roman environment, they might have helped E.’s case in some ways.

More important, other scholars have noticed that Josephus’ comments on aniconism had strong Graeco-Roman connections and precedents, though not particularly Roman ones, and also suggested that he wrote deliberately to make those connections, not simply to transmit Judaeian realia. The clearest connections are, however, with Greek philosophy. This seems to present a significant problem for E.’s argument about the Roman and *anti-Greek* nature of Josephus’ appeal.

The great Josephus scholar Louis Feldman devoted half of his book *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* [Princeton 1993] to prejudice and hatred against Jews, but the other half to gentile attraction, admiration, and conversion. The second chapter of the latter half (Chapter 7) opens with a demonstration that the Jews’ insistence on the imageless God was a source of admiration among early Greek observers, because it fit with Greek philosophical and (derivative) Roman intellectual proclivities (pp. 201–07). Feldman notes common views that the paradigmatic philosopher Pythagoras took his own prohibition of divine images from the Near East, and from Jews in particular.

Feldman first mentions, however, the sixth-century Xenophanes, teacher of Parmenides. Although Xenophanes’ work is known only from fragments, it seems clear that he criticized Homer for presenting the Gods with human forms and passions. Xenophanes is critically important because of his influence on subsequent philosophy, especially Plato, Aristotle, and Stoicism. See for example the chapter devoted to him in W. Jaeger, *The Theology of Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford 1947), pp. 38–54. It was most obviously the *Greek philosophers* who continued to have trouble with anthropomorphism. The “God of the philosophers,” whether Plato’s absolute Good, Aristotle’s unmoved Mover, or the Stoics’ Nature, could not be captured in human form.

This is where E.’s case for old Roman and anti-Greek evocations becomes a particular problem. The Romans themselves were well aware of Greek influences on *their* aniconic tradition, especially from Pythagoras. I mentioned that E. cites two sources for Roman aniconism: Varro in Augustine and Numa in Plutarch. E. realizes that his case must rest on “explicit citations of Varro” (p. 159), given that the Christian mediator Augustine had his own reasons for

emphasizing the imageless God, citing Varro in support. So far, so good. But Varro himself appears to have been Pythagorean in his leanings. At least Pliny, who knew his work intimately and cited him often, observed that Varro's chosen mode of burial was fitting for a Pythagorean (*Nat.* 35.46 [160]).

E. mentions the third-century C.E. neo-Platonist Porphyry, for philosophers' conceptions of an imageless God (pp. 156–57), but he does not take this up in his argument about Rome's aniconic past. Porphyry's position was much older. Recall that Porphyry, though a neo-Platonist, was eclectic in the spirit of the time. A vegetarian in the Pythagorean tradition and wrote a *Life of Pythagoras*.

When E. cites Plutarch on Numa, he also mentions incidentally that Plutarch connects Numa's views with *the influence of Pythagoras* (pp. 160–61). Again, he does not follow through on the implications of this: that the alleged *Roman* aniconism is more consistently a position of Greek philosophy, which in contrast to Roman tradition has been maintained by philosophers to Josephus' day. Plutarch was a proud Greek statesman, priest, and Platonist philosopher, who thought that all humanity worshiped the same ultimate being. Though he wrote of famous Romans, and Greeks, he kept himself at arm's length from Roman rule (cf. S. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire*, 1996; C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* [1971] found him basically pro-Roman, but still at odds with the Flavian tyrant, Domitian). How, then, could Josephus' evocations of an imageless God have directed his Roman audience (without clearer guidance) to an old Roman tradition *against Greek* conceptions and values?

Diogenes Laertius (third century C.E.) raises the issue of divine images in the introductory paragraphs of his compendium on the chains and main representatives of (chiefly Greek) philosophical tradition (*Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 1.6). It was an important question for philosophy. According to Diogenes the Persian Magi, who reject the making of images, influenced the Greek philosophical tradition via Egypt and are thought to be ancestors of the Judaeans. This observation would fully support E.'s effort to find a seat for Jews at the large Mediterranean table of conversation about divine images, but it would seem to be awkward for his argument that Josephus' episodes featuring the imageless Judaeans God directed the reader to a particularly Roman past, rather than to common (Greek) philosophy.

It is in this kind of discussion that the prolific Cicero (106–43 B.C.) should be mentioned: a proud Roman senator, orator, and philosopher, but thoroughly trained in Greek philosophy and rhetoric. Like other Romans of his day, Cicero distinguished between the great Greek thinkers and statesmen of the past, whom he studied and admired, and the laughable specimens of his own day. Cf. A. Wardman, *Rome's Debt to Greece* (London 1976, pp. 110–34). One important work by Cicero related to our subject is *De natura deorum*: a dialogue among Platonist, Epicurean, and Stoic characters. At 2.28, the Stoic speaks about the nature of God in Xenophanic terms: Homer's portrayal of Gods with human forms and passions and movements is a perversion of the piety that is knowable from Nature; true worship consists only in purity, holiness, and sincerity of thought and speech. Although Cicero crafted this in Latin, he is consciously portraying the positions of the established *Greek* philosophical schools, which have also become influential among Roman intellectuals, but not about a non-Greek Roman antiquity.

I would suggest that Cicero's perceptions are to a surprising degree mappable on Josephus (see the "Introduction to *Antiquities*" above). It is true that Josephus often mentions "the Greeks" as a body to disparage them: this theme runs from *War*'s opening (1.13–16) to the closing lines of *Antiquities* (1.121; 20.262–65), through his autobiography (*Life* 40) and into the *Apion* (1.15–69). But these are mostly jibes at the pretensions of the dominant Greek culture in his day.

At the same time, he is of course writing in Greek, as a full heir to the great traditions of Greek rhetoric, historiography, geography, and moral philosophy. He claims to have gone to great lengths to acquire Greek learning (*Ant.* 20.263) and his large debts to Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, the tragedians, Dionysius, and Strabo are by now well known (the list could easily be expanded). He shows special respect for always-exceptional Sparta—ancient Sparta, that is—as the benchmark for a realized utopian polity, though the Jews have bettered it (*Apion* 2.225). Josephus clearly tries hard to be accepted as a learned (so, unavoidably Greek) author. *War* is a model of Atticizing: its opening maze of a period runs to 264 words, and is dense with *men ... de* constructions and neuter substantives from adjectives. Some of his earliest critics were learned and eloquent Greeks in the capital: native Greeks, who appear to have been preoccupied with retelling the old glories of Greece (*War* 1.13–16).

Given that he gave copies of his *War* only to men who "fully shared in the Greek wisdom" (*Apion* 1.51), and that he expected his *Greek-speaking audience* in Rome to catch his classical allusions, how could it be that those few episodes concerning images should lead the audience's thoughts to a distant Roman past and away from statue-ridden *Greek* culture?

To conclude this section: existing scholarship has for some time been alive to the possibility (advanced also by E.) that Josephus' narratives are not transparent reflections of reality, and that also on the image question he wrote to invite the respect of his audiences. In agreement with Feldman, this reviewer's commentary on *Life* 65 (Brill 2001) suggested reading Josephus' claim about images in light of the fact that: "Judeans were renowned throughout the ancient world for their reverence of an imageless God (Tacitus, *Ann.* 5.5; Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.96), which intersected neatly with the Greco-Roman philosophers' critique of anthropomorphism [refs. given]." The *War* 2 commentary (2008, n. 1061) connected Josephus' highlighting of statue-related episodes in that volume, given the ambiguity and varied interpretation of the second commandment itself, with the preceding account of Essenes as admirable, death-defying philosophers, all as part of a developing portrait of the Judaeian ethnic character. It is easy to agree with E., therefore, that Josephus wrote selectively and with rhetorical intent (not merely "what happened"). More difficult is to agree on the appeal to an *anti-Greek* sacred mapping as the intended framework for *B.J.*, or the attempt to link Judaeian culture with a virtuous aniconic Roman past in *A.J.*

Specific Arguments

Sacred mapping and cartography

Two points occurred to me as I read E.'s opening discussion of cartography and sacred space in Chapter 4. First, the notion that "people are by nature cartographers" bears pondering. A great deal of work on ancient "mapping" (by Kai Brodersen, Richard Talbert, Susan Mattern, and many others) has shown, I think, that the Romans did not and could not approach mapping as we do, because they lacked most of the tools we have for accurate measurement on a large scale. As

the Peutinger Table and many literary accounts indicate (e.g., Pliny the Elder), they thought more in terms of itineraries with stops along them, which they could measure with famed precision. But we need only remember that the Ordnance Survey of Britain began only in 1840, or look at maps of the Holy Land until that time with their extremely confused and distorted features, or remember that the U.S. Naval expedition down the Jordan River in 1848 was motivated precisely by the need to map its course, to realize that “cartography” in anything like our sense was out of the question for Romans. If we despair at the lack of geographical knowledge, when it is easily available to us, we must remember that it was not available to them. They had no mental pictures of Syria or Judaea, certainly none that came close to reality.

Second, then, we probably ought not to compare Josephus’ geographical descriptions with our maps and then project what a Roman audience could have understood. E.’s main case for a “sacred map” matrix in *B.J.*, as far as I can tell (I do not really understand “cognitive cartography”), rests on two main points. The second and easier one we could surely all agree on: Josephus visualizes the temple in concentric rings of holiness (pp. 103-07), with the Court of Nations on the outside and the most sacred *naos* at the innermost point. Certainly, but that conception seems implied already in the biblical description (with a Holy of Holies at the centre, inside rings of sacred protection) and was common enough: indeed, it suited a profoundly “Greek” idea of symmetry. But the concentricity of a *temenos* and sanctuary seems rather different from E.’s first support for the idea that Josephus wished to convey a sacred map of Judaea.

I found this part of the argument, which seems fundamental to E.’s case for reading the *War* in terms of sacred mapping, confusing for a number of reasons. As he notes, first, this is part of a lengthy geographical digression (3.35–58) prompted by the Flavians’ arrival in Ptolemais and the immediate capitulation of Galilee’s main city, Sepphoris, by means of that city’s suppliant delegation to Ptolemais. Before explaining the course of the following events—the regional mopping-up operations that contextualize Josephus’ defence of Iotapata (the focus of Book 3)—and since he has just said that Sepphoris was Galilee’s main and strongest city, making its immediate capitulation decisive (3.34), he stops to explain the geography. This kind of digression was normal in ancient history (see Y. Shahar, *Josephus Geographicus*). When he has nearly finished describing Galilee, a comparison with larger Peraea to highlight Galilee’s advantages over it seems to prompt Josephus to include an addendum on Peraea itself (3.46–47). Having gone that far, perhaps, he decided to include the rest as well: Samaria (3.48–50) and finally Judaea (3.51–58). The last two appear as an afterthought, whether they actually were or not, for the action resumes in the vicinity of Sepphoris (3.59), and the Flavians will not reach Judaea until the next volume.

Every literate person in antiquity knew or could guess that *Ioudaia* was the heartland of the *Ioudaioi*, so it is not surprising that Josephus gives the homeland a bit of space, describing its limits, ten regional centres, and relation to Jerusalem, though this is still barely half the space given to his main interest: Galilee.

E. acknowledges some of this, but still finds here what seems to be the principal basis for understanding Josephus’ aims in *War* as related to sacred mapping. He offers two reasons. First, he proposes that only in the case of Judaea does Josephus single out the centre (Jerusalem) as

well as the periphery—the other regions having only their borders indicated (p. 102). One problem with this is that Josephus’ digression takes off from his observation that Sepphoris controls Galilee all around it, which surely implies (what was actually the case) its middling location. In fact, near the end of the preceding volume Josephus said as much when, describing the campaign of Cestius Gallus, he observed that Sepphoris’ capitulation to Cestius caused the rebels to flee to Mt. Asamon: “the centremost mountain of Galilee, which lies opposite Sepphoris (2.511: εἰς τὸ μεσαιτάτον τῆς Γαλιλαίας ὄρος, ὃ κεῖται μὲν ἀντικρὺ τῆς Σεπφόρεως). Cf. 4.447, where he uses the same superlative adjective of two villages in the middle of Idumaea.

Second, however, E. fastens on that same superlative adjective in Josephus’ statement, just before he lists the eleven toparchies and boundaries of Judaea, that “Its *polis* of Jerusalem lies centermost” (3.52: μεσαιτάτη δ’ αὐτῆς πόλις τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα κεῖται). E. proposes that “by locating Jerusalem at the *exact center* of Judea, a spatial layout that only approximately reflects the *actual* geography” (p. 120, emphasis mine), Josephus must mean something symbolic. Given that he goes on to say that “for this reason, some have not unreasonably called it the navel [*omphalos*] of the *chōra*” (*War* 3.52), the ancient author must be establishing up a sacred map as interpretative grid for his work.

In dissent I would point out that Josephus does not place Jerusalem “at the precise center,” but claims only that it was “centremost” (μεσαιτάτη) of the *poleis*. Jerusalem clearly *was* the most central of the *poleis* that Josephus gives as toparchic centres. There need not be any more sacred-map symbolism here than in the descriptions of Sepphoris/Asamon and the Idumaeian villages in similar language. Anyway, even Josephus had no accurate map, and a Roman audience lacked even his knowledge from experience. Incidentally, Jerusalem was surprisingly close to the geographical centre of its post-exilic *chōra*, Judaea, given that the *poleis* of the coastal plain and their *chōrai* were outside of it (*War* 3.56: the ports of Joppa and Jamnia were special and separate)—though admittedly Josephus’ inclusion of Idumaea (3.55) expands Judaea southward.

This pillar of E.’s argument is difficult to support, then, (a) partly because the cues given by the context make the digression chiefly about Galilee, (b) partly because the reference to Jerusalem as *omphalos* is incidentally mentioned, late, with much other detail, and attributed to others, not highlighted as a central issue, and (c) especially because this digression comes long *after* all three of the image incidents featured by E. How could Josephus’ audience have had this passage in mind as an interpretative key concerning the sacred map—a *fortiori* the rings of sanctity around the temple in *War* 5, which are part of that book’s contextualization of Titus’ siege—when they heard or read the stories of *War* 1 and 2?

To come at this from another direction, it was a basic assumption of ancient ethnography, amply illustrated already in Herodotus, that each *ethnos* had its region, mother-city, political system, laws/customs, and ancestral traditions, including a distinctive modes of piety, priests, temples, altars, and sacrifices. But every *ethnos* was assumed to have these things, thus to recognize its own sacred spaces by some means. I confess not to understand where E. finds the added value in theorizing about sacred space and proposing it as distinctive of Josephus’ *War*. Certainly he believed that Jerusalem had its holy, consecrated, and sacred spaces, as everyone else believed about their *poleis*. Where would the extra payoff come from in saying that Jerusalem—apart from disdaining images as everyone knew—mapped sacred space?

B.J. / A.J. parallels

E.'s interpretation of statue-related episodes in *War* and *Antiquities* depends to a significant extent on contrasts he observes with parallel stories in the other work, where a parallel exists. He highlights details of wording found in one but not in the other as evidence of Josephus' narrative emphases. Although this procedure could conceivably (if rigorously applied) throw light on Josephus' changed outlook, if he changed his outlook), there are at least three problems with it.

First, Josephus' audiences for *War* did not have the *Antiquities* available, to compare them phrase by phrase in this way. It is unlikely that *Antiquities*' audiences had the seven book-rolls of *War* within reach, since Josephus has to remind them on occasion that the earlier history covered certain matters. If we could trace clear themes in either work by itself, it would be reasonable *for us* to compare the other to notice also smaller differences that contribute to the picture. Thus, for example, we may find clear themes in Josephus' biblical paraphrase (e.g., the philosophical and aristocratic character of the Judaeian constitution, Moses as brilliant, attractive, and a military commander) and then consider the ways he changed his biblical source, in spite of the fact that his audiences had no access to the Bible. This is an activity for us, to understand better how he achieved his presentation. But such cases cannot rest on a changed word here or there, because Josephus changes almost everything in some measure. The question must be about the text as it stands, and how it might be understood from the cues the author gives his audience.

Second, consequently, any such comparison needs to take in the whole picture. That offers the only criterion for linking small changes with something more significant. For example, if various Roman and Judaeian rulers are said in different passages of the same text to have *succession* problems, to persecute their *nobility* in order to steal their wealth, to be careless of laws, and indeed to be tyrants, or if Josephus describes various rulers as committed to *justice* and *piety*, we would have grounds for linking up these small changes of wording. We could reasonably expect an audience to detect such themes by constant reinforcement. As far as I can see, however, E. tends to select isolated words and phrases for comment without showing clearly how they fit with themes the audience could identify—among many possibilities. Where are the criteria they might use? Further, some of the particular changes he highlights are less than obvious in a comparison of the passages (below).

Third, alas, no one has yet been able to explain the thousands of differences between *War* and *Antiquities-Life* in any comprehensive way. Laqueur was (demonstrably) correct in finding the portrait of Herod and his father Antipater consistently darkened in the later work. But how should we explain that? Laqueur could not do it without an implausible stratification of Josephus' *Life*, which is demonstrably a unified work as it stands (not a great work, but a structurally and linguistically coherent one). This reviewer has proposed alternatively that Herod becomes a parade exhibit of some prominent themes running through *A.J.*: the folly of tyranny and departure from the aristocratic (priest-led) constitution established by Moses and preferred by Samuel, in preparation for Gaius and Tiberius. Even if that were a supportable reading, however, it would leave us with a vast residue of unexplained changes. Virtually everything from *War* 1–2 is told differently in *Ant.* 13–20 and *Life*. Roles are changed, sometimes reversed. The *dramatis personae* vary and assume different functions.

A tiny example from the standards incident is the shift from soldiers' *baring their swords* and Jews' inclining their necks in *War's* version (2.173) to *Antiquities'* portrait of the Jews *baring their necks* (18.59). There seems to be no reason for such constant rearrangement—except the joy of rearrangement. Most amazingly, Josephus' retells his own life story very differently (over against *War* 2), in ways that have found no large-scale explanation so far. The most satisfactory if disconcerting motive is that Josephus could not stand to retell a story the same way.

I labour this point because of its obvious implications for making arguments from isolated changes. Given the length of this review, I shall look at two of E.'s examples.

First, the two standards episodes (*War* 2.169–74; *Ant.* 18.55–59) are basic to his analysis. Though about the same length, they have no extended verbal agreements (contrast, say, the synoptic gospels). *Antiquities* rewrites the story in a number of ways, while keeping to the most basic events. It adds new motives and perspectives: Pilate's determination to dissolve Judaeans law, his break from previous governors' practice, a sensible shift on the Judaeans' part from lying motionless for five days to five days of importuning him, the change of legal voice to Josephus' own, and much else. In support of his argument about *War's* concern with sacred space, however, E. focuses on one small change: *War* specifies the impropriety of setting up images in the *polis* (2.170: ἐν τῇ πόλει), whereas *Antiquities*, in about the equivalent spot, I would add (laying the passages side by side), says that Pilate “brought the standards into the *polis*, though our law forbids the making of images” (εἰς τὴν πόλιν εἰκόνων ποίησιν, ἀπαγορεύοντος ἡμῖν τοῦ νόμου; *Ant.* 18.55). E. argues that, since the explicit wording of the prohibition in *A.J.* does not mention the city (he neglects to point out that the *polis* has just been given as the locus of this activity), whereas *War* mentions the *polis* in connection with the probation, we can see *War's* interest in “sacred space,” which has disappeared from *A.J.*

I do not think so. Given the overall rewriting in the later work, it would have been inelegant and pointless to repeat the *polis* referent there: “Pilate brought the standards into the *polis*, though our laws forbid the making of images in the *polis*.” The meaning seems clear enough in both cases, and on this issue the same: Jerusalem, mother-city of the Judaeans, does not abide images—as everyone knows. The important changes, I would suggest, are the other ones, concerning Pilate's motives and Josephus' narrative voice. Roman governors thought of their provinces chiefly in terms of their *poleis*, not in the more modern sense of a state's fixed territory: they were charged with cultivating productive relationships with the elites of those *poleis*. Everyone knew that Jerusalem was the chief *polis* of the Judaeans. E.'s own argument does not restrict the force of the laws Josephus mentions to the “municipal boundaries” or some such category. So it is difficult to see the significance of the difference here, with respect to the proposed theme of sacred mapping.

The other example concerns the episode of Herod's eagle, which is also quite differently reported in *War* and *Antiquities*. Important changes begin with the setting. Whereas *War* introduces this *popular uprising* (rarely if ever a good thing in Josephus) led by *sophists* (usually disparaging: *War* 1.2; 2.118, 433, 445; *Apion* 2.236), who had only a *reputation* (*dokein*) for careful interpretation of the laws and therefore were esteemed by the populace (who might thus be misled, as Queen Alexandra was misled by the similar *doxa* of the Pharisees at 1.110), in the very different atmosphere of *Antiquities* the narrator himself tells the audience that these teachers

were—not sophists (at first)—but “the most learned men” and “interpreters of the ancestral laws,” who *really did* teach those devoted to a life of virtue and were consequently beloved (*Ant.* 17.149). These changes all support that overall shift in *Antiquities*’ portrait of Herod: they are setting up yet another story of Herod’s violation of law and tradition, something that was not present in *B.J.* Here it involves images, to be sure, but there are many examples of Herod’s lawlessness (e.g., oppression and robbery of the people, murder of sons, violation of temple sanctity).

E. considers it self-evident that in *War* Josephus as narrator found Herod guilty of an offence with respect to the eagle on the temple. Thus Josephus gives “the precise reason his actions ostensibly violated Jewish law,” and in doing so he “stresses *the role of space* in assessing the legitimacy” of an image (my emphasis). But Josephus’ Greek construction seems more naturally to give *the perception of the sophists* concerning Herod’s offence, thus (*War* 1.649–50):

ὡς ἄρα καιρὸς ἐπιτηδειότατος εἶη τιμωρεῖν ἤδη τῷ θεῷ καὶ τὰ κατασκευασθέντα παρὰ τοὺς πατρίους νόμους ἔργα κατασπᾶν. ἀθέμιτον γὰρ εἶναι κατὰ τὸν ναὸν ἢ εἰκόνας ἢ προτομὰς ἢ ζώου τινὸς ἐπώνυμον ἔργον εἶναι.

[They said] that this would be an opportune moment now to avenge God, and pull down works that had been made *in contravention of the ancestral laws*; for [they continued] it was unlawful that there should be at the shrine any images or figures or a representation of some animal.

It may be that we should understand this also as Josephus’ verdict, but that is unclear. In the *Antiquities* parallel, Josephus’ voice is unmistakably clear, in the indicative mood with finite verbs, and this contributes to his thematic criticism of Herod (17.151).

In any case, *War* states the sophists’ position that it was unlawful for images to be at the shrine (κατὰ τὸν ναὸν) and adds Josephus’ explanation that “the King had constructed a golden eagle above the great gate” (κατεσκευάκει δ’ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑπὲρ τὴν μεγάλην πύλην ἀετὸν χρυσοῦν). Its location is necessary to the story. That actual location, rather than a theory of sacred mapping, seems a sufficient reason to mention it. E. finds special significance, however, in the phrase about the location, proposing that (a) that the space issue is missing in the *Antiquities* parallel, where (b) instead Herod’s actions are deemed *contrary to the ancestral law* “regardless of location” (p. 112). As with the differences he finds between the standards episodes, however, I would suggest that *this* difference is not clear, though other unmentioned ones are important.

As for *Antiquities*’ concern with violation of the laws, the quotation from *War* above shows that the ancestral law is central already there: “contravention of the ancestral laws.” Although the fuller version in *Antiquities* (17.150–51) indeed expands on the nature of Herod’s violation, now in Josephus’ voice (“contrary to the laws,” “against the law”; his terrible sufferings are now due to his lawlessness), it *also expands a little on the location* and nature of the eagle in the temple (17.151):

Now the king had had set up a donative gift over the great gate of the sanctuary, an extremely costly large golden eagle (κατεσκευάκει δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑπὲρ τοῦ μεγάλου πυλῶνος τοῦ ναοῦ ἀνάθημα καὶ λίαν πολυτελές ἀετὸν χρύσειον μέγαν).

The new information that the eagle was very large, costly, and a dedication to the temple only adds to the audience's ability to localize and imagine it *over the great gate*. Since the situation is more fully described in *A.J.*, it is again difficult to understand why *War's* version alone should suggest "sacred mapping" and this one not.

I turn finally to more minor supporting arguments. First, E. locates the incident involving images of King Agrippa I's daughters, being mishandled by the Caesarean-Sebastene soldiers on the roofs of brothels (in acts of crude celebration over the king's death) in Tiberias. The location is significant because he expresses doubt about whether such royal images were found in Judaea. But the text appears to say plainly that Caesareans and Sebastenes were to blame for this episode, in particular their auxiliary soldiers, whom Claudius threatened to send to the Black Sea (*Ant.* 19.354–65). The residence of Agrippa in question was presumably, then, in Caesarea.

I cannot avoid a discussion of one of the most intriguing sections of the study, on *agalmatophilia* (pp. 55–58). Though it is not indispensable to the book's argument, E. published it as an expanded version in a separate article (*Zutot* 7 [2011], 41–50), so it deserves scrutiny, though I shall limit my remarks to the version here in the book. Incidentally, E. describes the term as conventional terminology for statue-love. As I noted above it has become conventional in recent scholarship, but we should not imagine that the ancients knew about *agalmatophilia* as a standard practice.

E. proposes that the Wisdom of Solomon is concerned about "the capacity of a statue to arouse sexual yearnings, to cast its erotic charms on the viewer" (p. 55). "Indeed, it is precisely this perception of statuary that stands behind the Wisdom of Solomon's assertion that the invention of idols is the 'origin of *porneia*'" (Wis. 14.12). E. builds this original case on Wis. 15.5–6, where several terms of desire are used in relation to idols, a collection that "underscores the capacity of a statue to arouse *both* cultic *and* sexual attention" (p. 56, his emphasis). He then surveys a number of anecdotes from Greek and Latin literature that likewise "attest to the erotic power of statues" (p. 56). He concludes that Wisdom of Solomon's author attempts "to circumvent the beguiling charms of a statue by stressing the absurdity of the *πάθος* of lovers (*ἐρασταί*) who pursue a lifeless form" (p. 57)—terms used by Pseudo-Solomon—and that this shows how engaged the author was with image issues in Graeco-Roman society.

After re-reading this section and pondering it, I have to conclude that it confuses two rather different issues: the occasional ribaldry of Graeco-Roman literature, lampooning the pathetic human condition with humour and raised eyebrows, and what is going on in Wisdom of Solomon, which I think has nothing to do with sexy statues. Although E. acknowledges some contextual indicators in Wisdom, here also it seems to me that his focus on particular words leads to a misapprehension of context and meaning.

Let us consider Wisdom first. Beginning in Chapter 6 the author addresses the rulers and judges of the world (6.1, 9), admonishing them that God, the supreme ruler from whom their rules derive, will yield to no one (6.3–8). He urges them therefore to "set *your desire* on my words, and *long for* them" (*ἐπιθυμήσατε οὖν τῶν λόγων μου, ποθήσατε*, 6.11). Why? Because he teaches wisdom, and Wisdom (now personified) is worthy of love, desire, and constant attention.

Indeed, she is radiant, easily seen by those who love her; she anticipates those who desire and long for her (τοὺς ἐπιθυμοῦντας, 6.12–13). In other words, not to put too fine a point on it, one should become Wisdom’s lover (ἐραστής) on account of her beauty (τοῦ κάλλους αὐτῆς, 8.2). I do not think that the author means to suggest a graphic sexuality, or that he thinks of Wisdom as arousing sexual feelings, though he does speak of taking her for himself as bride (ἐζήτησα νύμφην ἀγαγέσθαι ἑμαυτῷ, 8.2).

Now in the following chapters, after abundant praise of God and Wisdom and reflections on Israel’s wayward past, the author comes to the problem of idols. What *is* the problem? Beginning around 12.23 the author begins to rail against those who have confused the order of things by making so-called Gods from specks of the cosmos created by the only God worthy of worship. But this long attack on the foolishness of the gentiles has a sympathetic side. Why did they lose sight of the great Craftsman, and worship parts of the created order? His answer is that first they were dazzled by *the beauty* of parts of nature itself (καλλονῆς κτισμάτων, 13.5). Thus far, one could sympathize, but then they began to make images (to commemorate loved ones, or absent rulers or whatever), and became attached to the beauty of those objects. The author repeats “beauty” words in this section, to rationalize the gentiles’ gradual dependence on idols (13.3, 5, 7; 14.9). But the consequences were catastrophic, for once you have confused Creator with created, you have given up the whole basis for order. One can only expect, then, that people will murder their children and have indiscriminate sex *with each other* and live in permanent debauchery (Wis.14.22–26):

Then it was not enough to go astray concerning the knowledge of God, but though living in great strife through ignorance, they call such great evils peace. For whether performing ritual murders of children or secret mysteries or frenzied revels connected with strange laws, they no longer keep either their lives or their marriages pure, but they either kill one another by treachery or grieve one another by adultery. And all things are an overwhelming confusion of blood and murder, theft and deceit, corruption, unfaithfulness, tumult, perjury, turmoil of those who are good, forgetfulness of favors, defilement of souls, sexual perversion, disorder in marriages, adultery and debauchery.

So when the author declares that “The beginning of *porneia* came with the invention of idols, and the discovery of them *the corruption/ruin of life*” (14.12), he cannot be saying that looking at idols made people want to have sex *with them*. The *porneia* in question is with other human beings, not *agalmatophilia*.

Granted, he uses the vivid language of love and longing for idols in 15.5–6. But the whole point of the text until now has been that those (vividly exaggerated or metaphorical) motives *should* have been directed toward divine Wisdom. This is put beyond doubt by 15.18–19, by which point the author has turned from possibly understandable worship of nature to the Egyptians, who worship idols fashioned after “the most rebarbative animals. . . . And even viewed as animals, they happen not to be the kind that one would desire” (15.19: οὐδ’ ὅσον ἐπιποθῆσαι ὡς ἐν ζῴων ὄψει καλὰ τυγχάνει). Surely he does not mean that if they were better-looking animals one might be aroused by them. There is, I think, no issue of sexual arousal here. He seems to mean that sensible people devote all their devotion and love and desire to beautiful Wisdom. The gentiles have been diverted instead by the beauty, first, of nature, and then by the charms their

own hand-made statues in the forms of Gods (not for sexual purposes). The Egyptians, however, cannot even be understood in these ways, given that they make statues of the most repulsive and anti-human animal forms.

Confirmation of this broad interpretation seems to come from other texts with affinities to Wisdom 12–15. E. himself notes that in *T. Reuben* 4 the relationship is the reverse of the one he finds in Wisdom: sexual sin leads to idolatry. This has solid biblical roots, of course, inasmuch as cohabitation with gentile women leads to compromises with their Gods. A more salient parallel not mentioned by E. is Rom 1.18–32 in the NT, which seems clearly to draw from this section of Wisdom. Paul’s argument captures the broad strokes: those who failed to recognize the Creator replaced him with images of humans, animals, and even (i.e., Egyptians) reptiles (Rom 1.26–31).

For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men. ... God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done. They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent ...

Again, the *porneia* generated by idolatry does not involve statues; it is one outcome of the generally abject disorder in *human-to-human* relationships unleashed by the catastrophic rejection of the Creator who has established all natural law and order. The author is not worried that idolatry might arouse a desire for statues; idolatry itself is a much more serious issue—as the Bible, this author, the *Testament of Reuben*, and Paul agree.

On the other side, it seems to me that the stories of statue-love assembled by E. have a different tone and purpose altogether. One of the secondary studies E. lists in a footnote emphasizes that these tales describe “a transgressive anomaly (and therefore something worth talking about)” (P. Stewart, *Statues in Roman Society*, 2003, p. 265). Indeed, these authors are not talking about the “capacity of a statue to arouse sexual yearnings” as much as they are laughing at the foibles of humans (well, men) who find themselves in this predicament. Men’s capacity to be aroused by virtually anything at all, inert or animal, has been a topic of ribald humour forever—and is the basis of the pornography industry. E.’s main sources here—Pliny the Elder, Lucian, and Pseudo-Lucian—were all looking for tales of the weird with which to delight their audiences (cf. Pliny, *Nat.* 1.7). For example, in Pliny’s volume on stone and its uses, he devotes a section to the ancient world’s most famous sculptors. It is in his section on world-famous Praxiteles that he mentions this man’s two statues of Venus, one decently draped (and purchased by Cos), one naked and purchased by Cnidus (*Nat.* 36.4.20–22). The naked one put its city on the map because so many people came to admire its beauty. “There is a story,” Pliny notes for a bit of spice, “that a man once fell in love with it and hiding by night embraced it, and that a stain betrays this lustful act.” Same with Praxiteles’ naked Cupid, over which a named-and-shamed fellow from Rhodes is recalled. But this is all in the eye-rolling humour department, in the context of praising Praxiteles for what he as a craftsman could achieve with stone. The love tales are a bit of frivolity, all the more so in the Syrian satirist Lucian (*Imag.* 4) and Ps-Lucian. This has nothing obvious to do with *a statue’s* capacity to excite (NB: these stories do not apply to the clothed versions).

Although Pseudo-Solomon may well have heard such humorous stories too, it is hard to find evidence that he was part of *this* conversation, or that he was the slightest bit worried that idolatry could lead to *statue-porneia*, as it were.

Finally, E.'s argument assumes a pervasively anti-Jewish environment in Rome, but how clear is the evidence for that? I do not criticize E. here, for I too have taken the official celebrations of Flavian victory, with their concomitant portrait of Judaeans as helpless, bereft, and objects of ridicule, as decisive for the whole atmosphere. Josephus plausibly complains about other writers rushing to flatter the Flavians and get in their digs at his people—the background against which he writes (*War* 1.1–8). And of course there is the famous story from Suetonius (*Dom.* 12) of Domitian's harshness in seeking out candidates for the tax payable to the *fiscus Iudaicus*, in the context of the emperor's dire financial straits. But this was another weird story worth telling, not normal.

On the other side, however, the main evidence for Jews welcoming sympathizers and converts happens to come from Rome in the Flavian to Trajanic periods. Josephus apparently had an extremely interested group of non-Jews around him (including Eaphroditus & co.). Even a book written to deny that ancient Jews had a missionary agenda allows that Rome in this period may have been exceptional (S. McKnight, *A Light among the Nations*, 1991, pp. 73–74, 113). It is hard to find evidence of any official anti-Jewish measures, again outside of the troubled last years of Domitian. Only those actually taken in the fighting seem to have been punished, the ruling class largely freed. The Flavians knew what they had done in transforming this provincial operation into an Augustus-like defeat of the Eastern Menace, and it seems doubtful that their necessary political manoeuvres had consequences for either Judaea or Judaeans anywhere else. Expatriate communities flourished, apparently also in Rome. Josephus prospered, even against Roman accusers of high rank (as the governor of Cyrene). Agrippa II and Berenice did very well indeed.

A number of smaller points raised by E. would also be worth discussion, but I have tried to keep the focus on significant issues for E.'s larger argument and for potential readers.

To conclude: I hope that this lengthy review has shown why I consider E.'s book worth reading, even though I am unconvinced by its main arguments. Ancient historians need imagination, to conjure up the possible scenarios that might explain our meager evidence. Too often we restrict our vision to what texts most obviously say, and ask merely whether they are reliable or not. Any number of potential backgrounds, parallels, and theoretical perspectives may help us to imagine possibilities. This book is a readable, engaging, and elegant effort to situate our most important source for Roman Judaea in a literary context, and with respect to the important question of divine imagery. It takes us on quite a ride. Scholars and graduate students in related areas will want to read it.

Of E.'s four stated ambitions, in my view the last two are not clearly achieved: he does not offer a systematic narrative-contextual treatment of the image episodes (though there are partial efforts) and his argument for the way in which Josephus negotiated space by evoking Roman aniconism seems beset by difficulties. On the other side, it seems to me that he does succeed in

complicating the use of Josephus for everyday realities in Judaea and in integrating ancient Jewish views into a broader Mediterranean discourse on images.