Divine and Imperial power: A comparative analysis of Paul and Josephus

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Divine and Imperial Power:
A Comparative Analysis of Paul and Josephus

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On the *Feast of the Annunciation* (and the beginning of the 4th Age of Middle Earth), 2009

Declaration

No part of this thesis has been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

Abstract

The overall purpose of this study is to investigate Paul's construal of divine and imperial power in order to analyse to what extent he may be judged pro-Roman, anti-Roman or in some alternative relationship with Roman power. In order to provide development and sharper focus to this question Josephus and his work *The Jewish War* is examined alongside Paul and his letters to the Romans and the Philippians for the purpose of comparative analysis.

The study begins with an overview of recent investigations on the relationship between Paul and the Roman Empire, especially those works that perceive Paul to be critically engaged with imperial power. Since the thesis is concerned with the notion of 'power', an introduction to this field of enquiry is provided along with the analytical resources from postcolonial theory that are employed in exploring the question of how Paul and Josephus respectively engage with Roman power. The chapter concludes with three related research questions that provide an overall framework for the thesis. First, a narrow question of power and the constraints the Roman Empire may have imposed on Josephus and Paul: who is in power and what do they demand? Second, a deeper question of power related to perceptions and discourses of reality articulated by Josephus and Paul: who is in charge of the universe and who are we in relationship to this power? Third, a broad question of power, informed by postcolonial theory, related to power relations: how is the dominant discourse of Rome being represented, challenged, hybridised, or relativised by Josephus and Paul?

With these broad questions and analytical resources at hand, the thesis proceeds in the following manner. The comparative case of Josephus, as gathered from his work *The Jewish War*, begins with an examination of Josephus' roles as a historian and speaker and the conditions, constraints and challenges he dealt with as he offered his hybridised representation of the war (chapter 2). Next, attention is turned to broader concerns and how *The Jewish War* concurs with and challenges Roman values, virtues and claims for power as they are conveyed in the portrayal of the Flavian Triumph and the generalship of Titus and Eleazar (chapter 3). After this, the study shifts focus from Josephus to Paul and pauses to gather the questions and concerns attending to the final two chapters (chapter 4). With respect to Paul, Romans is analysed in order to determine whether or how this letter reflects concerns for imperial power and the role of Roman governing authorities (chapter 5). A second letter is brought into view with an analysis of Philippians where particular attention is given as to how Paul may or may not employ the Christ event and the alternative community it generates to relativise or subvert the claims of Caesar and imperial power (chapter 6). The final step draws together the threads of the overall analysis and compares the work of Josephus and Paul and how, with respect to their own angle of vision, they perceive the relationship between God, history, the Romans and their particular communities of interest (chapter 7).

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations of ancient literature follow the *OCD* (3rd ed.) and *The SBL Handbook of Style* (2004) wherever possible. In addition, the following abbreviations are used:

ABD	D.N. Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AE	*L'Année épigraphique* (Paris, 1888-)
ANE	Ancient Near East
Ant	Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*
Apion	Josephus, *Against Apion*
BAGD	W. Baur, W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and W. Danker, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature,*
BCE	Before the Common Era
BMC	*Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum,*
BMCRE	H. Mattingly and R.A.G. Carson, eds., *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, 9 vols., 1923-75.
CCCA	M.J. Vermaseren, *Corpus cultus Cybelae Attidisque: I. Asia Minor*
CE	Common Era
CIG	A. Boeckh, *Corpus inscriptionum Graecarum*
CIJ	J-B. Frey, *Corpus inscriptionum Iudaicarum*
CIL	T.E. Mommsen, et al., *Corpus insciptionum Latinarum*
EDNT	H. Balz and G. Schneider, eds., *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*
FgrHist	F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*
IG	Gaertringen, F. Hiller von, et al. *Inscriptiones graecae*
IGR	René Cagnat, J. Toutain, Pierre Jouguet Jovgvet, and Georges Lafaye, *Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes*
IGUR	L. Moretti, Inscriptiones graecae urbis romae
IPriene	F. Hiller von Gaertringen, *Die Inschriften von Priene*
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
Life	Josephus, *The Life*
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, H.S. Jones, and R. McKenzie, *A Greek English Lexicon*
NewDocs	G.H.R. Horsley and S.R. Llewelyn, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*
OGIS	Wilhelm Dittenberger, *Orientis graeci inscriptioines selectae. Supplementum sylloge inscriptionum graecarum,*
POxy	Egypt Exploration Fund, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*
SB	Friedrich Preisigke, Friedrich Bilabel, Emil Kiessling and Hans-Albert Rupprecht, *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*
SIG	W. Dittenberger. *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*
TDNT	G. Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLG	*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (online digital resource).
TNIV	Today's New International Version
War	Josephus, *Jewish War*

Unless otherwise noted, the translations of the ancient texts used in this thesis follow, where available, the renderings of the LCL. The translations of New Testament texts and Josephus are my own, unless otherwise stated.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Purpose of Study

Did Paul have an agenda to subvert the oppressive power of the Roman Empire? Did he intend his gospel of Christ to be a challenge to the ideology and authority of the Emperor? Were the Christian communities that he founded and/or nurtured around the Mediterranean intended to be alternative, revolutionary and, potentially, seditious societies? Until recently, these questions were not often asked by most New Testament scholars as they wrestled with the complexity and tensions – even contradictions – that shaped the theology and rhetoric of Paul's letters. The received interpretation of Paul has tended to view him, if anything, as pro-Roman in his political perspective and as one who made use of the stable imperial peace to promote his 'gospel' as gladly as he made use of efficient Roman roads to reach the limits of the empire. In short, the Roman Empire was part of the favourable and necessary conditions for nascent Christianity.

As questions regarding Paul's political stance have been brought into the discussion by modern interpreters, many have viewed him as the champion of the socio-political status quo.[1] For a number of scholars, this social conservatism is viewed as the logical implication of Paul's view of Christ's imminent parousia.[2] Other interpreters suggest that Paul's supposed acceptance of the political order is the result of a disappointingly 'limited application'[3] of his preached gospel or even a failure to 'extend the "ecclesial revolution" into society at large....[so that Paul's ethic does] not struggle with the issue of the empirically possible versus the religiously necessary, and it does not wrestle with strategies for political and social action. Rather, we get

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[1] For a summary of interpreters of Paul's 'social conservatism' see N. Elliott, *Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), 31-54.
[2] E.g., commenting on Paul's well known passage in 1 Cor 7 H. Conzelmann, *First Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians,* trans. J.W. Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 127, explains that Paul's command to remain in slavery in 1 Cor 7.17-24 is congruent with his view of living in the end time; E.P. Sanders, *Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 107, concludes 'in view of the shortness of time people should not change. This applied to being married or single, slave or free, circumcised or uncircumcised (7:17-24)....The net result was extremely conservative: do not change'; J.P. Sampley, *Walking between the Times: Paul's Moral Reasoning* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1991), 113, writes: 'grounding [his] quite conservative, even quietistic, social posture is Paul's expectation of the imminent Parousia.'
[3] C.J. Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 137.

the impression of something like a religious accommodation to the social sphere'.[4] More critical approaches towards his social conservatism have suggested that Paul appropriated imperial modes of discourse in his epistles that led to a legacy of domination by subsequent generations. R.S. Sugirtharajah concludes that:

> Paul, a genuine immigrant by current political standards, gives the impression in his writings that he has been fully co-opted into the imperial system. An example occurs in Romans 13, in which he reinscribes colonial values by asserting that God and history are on the side of the Roman Empire. The sensible thing for Christians, Paul writes, is to live peaceably with the colonial administration and to work within its framework, rather than to revolt. The almighty Roman power was hardly questioned in his epistles, except in teleological terms. Occasionally he censures the evils of the Empire, but offers no political strategy or practical solution for its liquidation.[5]

In contrast to these interpreters, others have argued that Paul should be understood as one with a transforming vision of the world – one that engaged Roman society with alternative communities that challenged, resisted and subverted imperial ideology and power. In contrast to the interpretative tradition that views Paul as essentially pro-Roman and favourably disposed to the conditions for preaching provided by the *Pax Romana*, these interpreters are more inclined to understand Paul to have been in a critical and antagonistic relationship with the Roman empire and fundamentally anti-Roman and anti-imperial in outlook – a fact that would account for his imprisonment(s), beatings and execution (for treason).

The purpose of this study is to investigate Paul's construal of divine and imperial power in order to analyse to what extent he may be judged as pro-Roman, anti-Roman or in an alternative relationship with Roman power. Up until now, the question of Paul's relationship to Roman power has been explored by outlining the key themes of imperial ideology – expressed in Greco-Roman literature, architecture, inscriptions, coins and, importantly, the imperial cult – and comparing this against Paul's theology. There are obvious benefits from such research (see 1.2. below); however, what has not often characterized these studies is any extended comparative

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[4] J.C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 327.

[5] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Asian Biblical Hermeneutics and Postcolonialism: Contesting the Interpretations* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1998), 20. This notion is also echoed in the critique by North American feminist theologians who regard Paul's 'politics of othering and vilification' of dissenting voices (e.g., rival missionaries/teachers, Corinthian women prophets) within his communities as 'revalorizing' and 'reinscribing' the imperial rhetoric of subordination; see E. Schüssler Fiorenza, 'Paul and the Politics of Interpretation', in *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation*, ed. R.A. Horsley (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000), 40-57 and C.B. Kittredge, 'Corinthian Women Prophets and Paul's Argumentation in 1 Corinthians', in *Paul and Politics*, 103-9.

study of Paul alongside other diaspora Jews who may also have been in critical engagement with Roman power. In this study, the work of Flavius Josephus will be studied in relationship to its interaction with Roman political power and, as such, will be employed as a point of comparison for evaluating Paul's social stance and theological engagement with the Roman Empire. Before this, however, an overview will be offered of the significant proponents of the 'Paul versus Empire' perspective[6] along with the main lines of evidence for such a reading of Paul's political perspective (in 1.2.). Next, a rationale for the suitability and usefulness of Josephus as a point of contrast will be articulated below (in 1.3.). Finally, an overview of the theoretical and analytical resources that will be employed in exploring questions of power will be deliniated (in 1.4.). The chapter will conclude with a summary of the key questions that will guide the thesis as I probe Paul's and Josephus' construal of divine and political power (in 1.5.).

1.2. Paul and Empire – Recent Investigations

The recent work on 'Paul and Empire' or 'Paul and Politics'[7] is part of a broader range of recent inquiry into the NT and the Roman Empire.[8] Precursors to

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[6] Although there is no official group name for those who support the position that Paul is anti-imperial and intends to subvert ideological claims for the power and position of the Emperor/Empire, for heuristic reasons I will variously describe these proponents as the Paul v. Rome perspective, the Paul v. Rome project, Paul v. Rome camp, etc. These designations are not intended to be pejorative, but descriptive and are used for convenience.

[7] See the following studies: D. Georgi, *Theocracy in Paul's Praxis and Theology*, trans. D. E. Green (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); Elliott, *Paul*; R.A. Horsley (ed.), *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997); R.A. Horsley (ed.), *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000); B. Blumenfeld, *The Political Paul: Justice, Democracy and Kingship in a Hellenistic Framework* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); P. Oakes, *Philippians: From People to Letter* (SNTSMS 110; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); M. Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue and State: Christians, Jews, and Civic Authorities in 1 Thessalonians, Romans, and Philippians* (Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series 34; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2001); N.T. Wright, 'A Fresh Perspective on Paul?', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 83 (2001), 21-39; R.A. Horsley (ed.), *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2004); R.A. Horsley (ed.), *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 97-171; B.J. Walsh and S.C. Keesmaat, *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004); J.D. Crossan, and J.L. Reed, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus' Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire With God's Kingdom* (London: SPCK, 2005); N.T. Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives* (London: SPCK, 2005), ch. 4; J.K. Hardin, 'Galatians and the Imperial Cult? A Critical Analysis of the First-Century Social Context of Paul's Letter' (PhD, Cambridge University, 2006).

[8] E.g., D.L. Jones, 'Christianity and the Roman Imperial Cult', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.23.2 (1980), 1023-54; K. Wengst, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); E. Faust, *Pax Christi et Pax Caesaris: Religionsgeschichtliche, traditionsgeschichtliche und sozialgeschichtliche Studien zum Epheserbrief*

this discussion include works from the beginning of the twentieth century by H.A.A. Kennedy,[9] E. Lohmeyer[10] and especially A. Deissmann.[11] Deissmann's *Licht Vom Osten* offered suggestions for the importance of the Roman imperial context for study of Paul's letters with particular attention focused on the significance of parallel titles between Christ and Caesar: κύριος, σωτήρ, θεός and υἱὸς θεοῦ. Several scholars[12] rightly point out that Deissmann did not assume that Paul deliberately borrowed from imperial language used in the context of emperor worship; rather, these titles merely happened to coincide with terminology that Paul employed from his favourite source: the Septuagint.[13] Nonetheless, Deissmann proposed that this independent usage might have contributed to later conflicts between Christianity and the Empire since 'there arises a polemical parallel between the cult of the emperor and the cult of Christ'.[14] Since this early work, it has been only in the last twenty-five years that biblical scholars have turned their attention to the political nature of Paul's theology; with this renewed interest, however, there is the added argument that Paul's terminology and rhetoric are not merely parallel, by coincidence, with imperial language but potentially subversive, by intent, towards imperial ideology.

One of the significant precursors challenging the notion of Paul's so-called social conservatism, especially as it has been read using Romans 13 as his 'canonical centre' on politics, is K. Wengst's work *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (1987; 1986 German edition). Although this work is not primarily focused on Paul, it

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(Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1993); R.A. Horsley and N. Asher Silberman, *The Message and the Kingdom: How Jesus and Paul Ignited a Revolution and Transformed the Ancient World* (New York: Grossett/Putnam, 1997); A. Brent, *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order: Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early Christianity before the Age of Cyprian* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 45; Leiden: Brill, 1999); M. Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott: Herrscherkult im römischen Reich* (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1999); W. Howard-Brook and A. Gwyther, *Unveiling Empire: Reading Revelation Then and Now* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999); W. Carter, *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2001); S.J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); R.A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); R.A. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Order* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002); J.J. Meggitt, 'Taking the Emperor's Clothes Seriously', in *The Quest for Wisdom: Essays in Honour of Philip Budd*, ed. C.E. Joynes (Cambridge: Orchard Academic, 2002), 143-69; C. Bryan, *Render to Caesar: Jesus, the Early Church, and the Roman Superpower* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Warren Carter, *The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005).

[9] H.A.A. Kennedy, 'Apostolic Preaching and Emperor Worship', *The Expositor* April (1909), 289-307.

[10] E. Lohmeyer, *Christuskult und Kaiserkult* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1919)

[11] A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World,* trans. L.R.M. Strachan (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1911).

[12] E.g., D.G. Horrell, 'Introduction', *JSNT* 27.3 (2005), 251-55, at 251; Oakes, *Philippians*, 129.

[13] See Deissmann, *Light*, 346.

[14] Deissmann, *Light*, 346.

is useful as a departure point for several reasons. First, by using the angle of vision provided by the early imperial claims of 'peace' as his point of entry, Wengst subjects the political power of Rome to careful historical scrutiny by allowing both the 'pacifiers' (i.e., the Romans and their adherents) and, importantly, the 'pacified' (i.e., their subjects) to speak. In suggesting that there are at least two voices to be heard in the narrative, his study, in part, anticipates J.C. Scott's notion of 'hidden transcripts'[15] present in the voices of the dominated alongside the public declarations of the dominant powers – an analytical tool that will become important in the Paul v. Rome perspective. Secondly, Wengst's work enlarged the discussion of Paul and politics beyond the boundary of Romans 13 by directing attention to numerous passages that suggest critical engagement with Rome. He argues that many of the passages alluding to suffering 'in blows, in imprisonments, in tumults'[16] should be read as clear evidence 'that Paul and his communities experienced the organs of the Roman empire in administration and jurisdiction, along with the legions the guarantees [*sic*] of the Pax Romana, as potential and often also actual persecutors'.[17] For Wengst, Paul's eschatological commitments expressed in 1 Thess 5.1-11 and 1 Cor 15.24-6 demonstrate his 'comprehensive generalization' of Roman power as belonging to the side of death. In fact, when Paul writes in 1 Cor 15.26 that the 'last enemy' to be annihilated is death 'the term "enemy"...combines the powers and authorities [of Rome] with death and makes them its accomplices. That means that for Paul the history shaped here by the Pax Romana stands under the sign of death and on its side; it is the history of death which Christ will break off'.[18]

Shortly after Wengst's book the work of another German scholar, D. Georgi, was published. Georgi's short but influential book, *Theocracy in Paul's Praxis and Theology* (1991; German edition 1987), understands Paul's theology to be shaped in the context of opposition with the Roman imperial order. Georgi's main thesis is straightforward: in his letters, Paul challenges not only the religious presuppositions of his day but also the political and social presuppositions of the Roman Empire. In fact, he argues that the theological assertions in Paul often function as a cloak to conceal a subversive political critique. He bases his argument on the 'democratizing

[15] See J.C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).
[16] E.g., 1 Thess 2.2; 2 Cor 6.5; 11.23-25; Rom 8.33-5.
[17] Wengst, *Pax*, 76.
[18] Wengst, *Pax*, 79.

tendencies' within Israel's wisdom tradition - in the form of Jewish apocalypticism, missionary theology and Gnosticism – that influenced Paul's thought. Georgi contends that Paul's Damascus Road experience is not so much a conversion for Paul from Judaism but a 'conversion of God', whereby God is transformed from a position of transcendent superiority and power to a relationship of solidarity and identification with sinful, rebellious and accursed humanity.[19] Within Paul's imperial context, this realized eschatology and solidarity with humanity is expressed through the death of Jesus in contrast to the realized eschatology of the Caesar-cult with its slogans of 'peace and safety' and 'salvation' by means of the divinized Lord and Saviour Caesar: 'the divinization of the Caesar is countered by the humanization of ... God'.[20]

The climax of his analysis concerns Paul's letter to the Romans. In Romans, Georgi views Paul as confronting a key branch of the Jewish wisdom movement: Jewish missionary theology - 'the most successful missionary movement prior to Christianity'.[21] Georgi argues that:

> Paul's dispute with "liberal" Judaism is concerned fundamentally with the contemporary strategy of social consensus. Jewish missionary theology was a highly developed expression of this strategy, which in its pagan manifestation in Rome culminated in the Caesar religion. Paul focused on Judaism...because he could use it to disguise his political program. Debate with Judaism was the code for a more far-ranging conflict that brought Paul into mortal danger. He later fell victim to this danger in the very city of Rome.[22]

For Georgi, 'every page of [Romans] contains indications that Paul has very concrete and critical objections to the dominant political theology of the Roman Empire under the principate'. Georgi suggests that 'by using such "loaded" terms as εὐαγγέλιον, πίστις, δικαιοσύνη, and εἰρήνη as central concepts in Romans, [Paul] evokes their associations to Roman political theology'.[23] Therefore, 'if the terms chosen by Paul for his Roman readers have associations with the slogans of Caesar religion, then *Paul's gospel must be understood as competing with the gospel of the Caesars* [emphasis mine]. Paul's gospel enters into critical dialogue with the good news that universal peace has been achieved by the miracle of Actium'.[24] The crucial passage,

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[19] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 20.
[20] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 30.
[21] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 80.
[22] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 81.
[23] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 83.
[24] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 87.

Romans 13.1-7, is 'an example of his critical imagination'.[25] Georgi explains this, oddly, as a 'fragment of Jewish tradition from the republican period',[26] which Paul uses anachronistically to protest against the increasing centralization of the imperial order. Romans 14 provides examples 'for the realization of the solidarity of God in the workaday world' and Romans 15.7ff 'depicts Jesus once more as the archetype of solidarity, overcoming all distinctions of class and system'.[27]

All in all, for Georgi, Romans represents an argument employed by Paul that, once its 'protective code is cracked'[28] by an imperial court in Rome, could lead to charges of treason (*laesae maiestatis*) for undermining the ideology that supported the imperial state. In contrast to the *passive* resistance of Christian martyrs who refused to sacrifice to the emperor, Paul's crime was 'an *active* [emphasis mine] one, an act of political aggression'.[29] Consequently, Georgi rejects the 'apologetic smokescreen' laid down by Luke and the Pastorals that projects Paul as non-political and purely religious for an 'authentic Paul' who was a rebel against the tyrannical imperial system and taught a righteousness which directly challenged the oppressive empire of Rome.

Georgi's effort to challenge the standard apolitical or socially conservative interpretation of Paul and discern an apostle with a political agenda is picked up and developed further by two scholars in particular: N. Elliott and R. Horsley. Both Elliott and Horsley are active members of the 'Paul and Politics Group' formed in 1997 at the Society of Biblical Literature meeting, a forum for exploring how Paul's letters both subverted Roman imperial claims and how Paul's liberative vision has been subverted into a rigid imperialism of its own that led to the subjugation of slaves, women, the poor and Jews. A number of the key essays from the proceedings between 1997-2000 were published in two books – *Paul and Politics* (2000) and *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (2004) – both edited by Horsley and both with important contributions from Elliott. Prior to publishing the findings of the 'Paul and Politics Group', however, two other works by Elliott and Horsley contributed to raising the profile of the interpretative understanding of Paul as a leader of an anti-imperial movement: Elliot's *Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of*

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[25] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 102.
[26] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 102.
[27] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 102-3.
[28] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 103.
[29] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 104.

the Apostle (1994)[30] and Horsley's (ed.) *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (1997).

Elliott's book, *Liberating Paul*, echoes the language of 'death' present in Wengst's work but in Elliott's case it is Paul's gospel – not the *Pax Romana* – that has been used 'in the service of Death' by those who have subverted his letters (including the purveyors of pseudo-Pauline letters like Col, Eph, 2 Thess and the Pastorals) as a warrant for oppression. In this sense the title of the book reflects a word play, namely, that Paul's letters themselves are in need of 'liberating' so that their vision of a world transformed may be recaptured. The heart of his thesis is that Paul's 'preferential option for the poor'[31] led him into direct opposition with the ideology of 'empire' and the state-sanctioned 'violence'[32] that structured the imperial order. Fundamental to Elliott's argument is that Paul chose to focus his gospel on the Messiah who suffered on a Roman cross as evidence of Jesus' solidarity with the poor, especially the Jews, suffering under imperial domination. For Elliott, 'it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the cross of Jesus Christ to Paul….As soon as we recognize the centrality of the cross of Christ for Paul, the common view that Paul was uninterested in political realities should leave us perplexed. The crucifixion of Jesus is, after all, one of the most unequivocally political events recorded in the New Testament'. For Elliott, Paul's emphasis on the manner of Jesus death by crucifixion (e.g., Phil 2.8) has 'unavoidably political…connotations'.[33]

Elliott asserts that Paul's emphasis on the political dimensions of Jesus' death, as a decision to identify with the victims in Roman society, is linked with Paul's apocalyptic vision. This vision sits comfortably within the apocalyptic framework of other late second temple Jews[34] who came to question the legitimation of the 'sacred

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[30] N. Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), was released only shortly before this thesis was submitted and could not be engaged with at length. Elliott's approach in this book draws substantially on the work of J.C. Scott and his notions of 'hidden and public transcripts'. Elliott utilized this approach in an earlier essay on Romans (see discussion below and n.56).

[31] Elliott, *Paul,* 87.

[32] Elliott, *Paul,* 101-5, 169-72, draws on R. Girard's theory of mimetic conflict and violence to understand the pre-conversion 'logic' of Paul (akin to Caiaphas, John 11.49-50) that approved of the necessary 'sacrifice' of Jesus to the violence of Rome in order to preserve the whole nation from the violence of Rome; see R. Girard, *Violence and the Sacred,* trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977) and *The Scapegoat,* trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

[33] Elliott, *Paul,* 110.

[34] E.g., the Zealots and the anonymous authors of 4 Maccabees, the Book of Biblical Antiquities, the Psalms of Solomon and the Pharisees. Elliott, *Paul,* 163-7, points out, however, that this apocalyptic framework could emphasize for some Jews, like Josephus and some elements of the Pharisaic camp,

violence' of successive empires against the Jews and, instead, offered resistance to oppressive empires. Just what form of 'resistance' against Rome might this take for Paul? In order to answer this, Elliott points to the concrete patterns of behaviour that Paul urged upon local Christian communities throughout the empire, a practice to engage in an 'ideological intifada'[35] against Rome.

According to Elliott, this 'ideological intifada' has a number of dimensions for 'the Christian ekklesia' scattered across the Mediterranean. He understands Paul to be urging Christians to become communities of 'discernment' who see through the Roman lies of 'peace and safety' and 'justice';[36] communities of 'resistance' in the face of costly opposition for repudiating imperial illusions;[37] and communities of 'solidarity with the crucified' who identified with the victims of imperial violence and exploitation'.[38] While Elliott ranges broadly through the authentic Pauline letters to support his thesis, it is in Romans that he discovers Paul's manifesto of resistance against the Roman Empire with its critique of Roman justice and challenge to the Roman Christians to confront the imperial ideology of power. Elliott holds that:

> Paul writes [Romans] in order to wrest from the empire the right to declare where justice is to be discerned. He calls the Christians of Rome to abandon the futility and senselessness of an unjust age (Rom. 1:18-32), an age "under the power of sin" and devoted to violence, an age that stands, Paul declares, under the indictment of the Torah....(3:13-17). Paul exhorts the baptized in Rome to throw off the coercive power of the age and to be so transformed in their thinking that they may offer themselves in holiness to God (12:1-2; 6:12-14). In fact the letter is built around this ideological intifada.[39]

The climax of Elliott's book is an explanation of Romans 13, a text that is the *stumbling stone* for any thesis that holds that Paul was politically subversive. He reads this passage against the backdrop of public unrest in Rome around 58 CE related to protests against the corruption of the agencies responsible for tax farming in Italy (cf. Tacitus, *Annals* 13.50). For Elliott, Paul is urging Christians in Rome not to contribute to the hostilities in this period of unrest primarily because any disturbance might be construed as Jewish involvement. 'A constant current of anti-Semitism [in

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endurance by way of submission to Roman hegemony rather than *resistance*. See also M. Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt against Rome A.D. 66-70* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 90-1.

[35] Elliott, *Paul*, 189; see also 195, 215, 230. Cf. *Arrogance*, 61.

[36] Elliott, *Paul*, 189-95.

[37] Elliott, *Paul*, 195-8.

[38] Elliott, *Paul*, 198-204.

[39] Elliott, *Paul*, 215.

Rome] would have led Paul to expect that any popular outcry against exploitive taxes might be deflected onto the most vulnerable population in the city: the Jewish refugees, who come directly into view in Rom. 14:1-15:13'.[40]

In Romans 13, Elliott suggests that Paul is simply being pragmatic and trying to counter any Roman gentile resentment of perceived Jewish privileges from the imperial largesse and any Roman Christian arrogance towards the Jews. Paul 'wants to deflect his audience from private resentments' and scapegoating violence against the 'poor' (i.e., the Jews in Rome) and 'impel them rather toward mutual compassion and striving for the common good' with their spiritual forefathers in the Jewish community.[41] While it is surprising that Elliott does not dismiss this text as an interpolation,[42] it is even more surprising that he reverses his earlier appeals to the 'historical Paul'. That is, whereas Elliott has previously pitted the historical Paul of the authentic Paulines against the canonical Paul of the deutero-Paulines, Elliott wants to limit the authority of this text for the present context by confining it to one brief historical situation in mid-first century Rome. In the end, he concludes that 'there is no "theology of the state" here, beyond the conventional prophetic-apocalyptic affirmation that God disposes the rise and fall of empires and gives the power of the sword into the hands of the ruler (13:1, 4)'.[43]

Horsley's contribution to the Paul v. Empire perspective draws on many of the same commitments as Elliott. Although Horsley articulates his own position with respect to this issue by contributing important essays in each one of his edited books, he draws together his position succinctly in his introduction to the earlier collection of essays entitled *Paul and Empire* (1997).[44] Horsley opens with a programmatic assumption: 'Christianity was a product of empire. In one of the greatest ironies of history, what became the established religion of empire started as an anti-imperial movement.'[45] He then proceeds to outline the four sections of the book and in doing so provides an excellent overview of the key themes in the Paul v. Empire perspective as a whole. The first two themes represent the historical context for Paul's anti-

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[40] Elliott, *Paul*, 223; cf. *Arrogance*, 154.
[41] Elliott, *Paul*, 223.
[42] Elliott, *Paul*, 29, 52, regards 1 Thess 2.14-16 and 1 Cor 14.34-35 as interpolations that undermine Paul's authentic, liberating vision. For those who do argue that Rom 13.1-7 is an interpolation see discussion below in 5.5.2. n93.
[43] Elliott, *Paul*, 224.
[44] Horsley, 'Introduction', in *Paul and Empire*, 1-8, 10-24.
[45] Horsley, 'Introduction', 1.

imperial stance. The first contextual consideration is what he describes as 'the Gospel of Imperial Salvation' represented in the first century Roman world and described by classical scholars (mostly), including: P.A. Brunt, D. Georgi, S.R.F. Price and P. Zanker. By demonstrating that 'honors and festivals for the emperor were not only widespread but pervaded public life, particularly in the cities of Greece and Asia Minor, the very area of Paul's mission',[46] Horsley hopes that drawing attention to this historical reality will lead to a reassessment of the place of the imperial cult in the world of Paul's mission. Linked with the first dimension is a second component which explores 'Patronage, Priesthoods, and Power' in the Roman world. By drawing on the research of P. Garnsey, R. Saller, J.K. Chow and R. Gordon, Horsley notes that Roman imperial patronage was one of the most important conditions in Paul's mission - a structure 'diametrically opposed to the pattern of horizontal reciprocal social-economic relations with which the Jesus movement(s) began.'[47]

In light of the first two historical realities that characterized the first century Roman Empire, Horsley concludes that they were met with elements in Paul's letters that illustrated his acts of resistance to the pressures of empire. The first element of resistance is encountered in 'Paul's Counter-Imperial Gospel'. Horsley contends that 'recent recognition that ... prominent Pauline terms such as "gospel," "the cross/crucified," "salvation," and perhaps even "faith" were borrowed from and stand over against Roman imperial ideology suggests a re-examination of what it is that Paul is against primarily.'[48] Within this assertion are two massive assumptions: 1) that Paul 'borrowed' terminology and 2) that these terms 'stand over against' Roman imperial ideology. For Horsley, this borrowing of highly charged ideological terms of reference constitutes a sly challenge to Roman order and a veiled announcement of doom and destruction, not on Judaism or the Law, but on the 'rulers of this age'. But if the message of a counter-imperial gospel points to what Paul opposed, the founding of alternative communities indicates what Paul advocates.[49] By organizing and nurturing communities known by the term 'ekklesia' – a term with primarily political valences according to Horsley[50] – and characterized by their counter-cultural horizontally framed constitution, Paul was establishing an alternative society to the

[46] Horsley, 'Introduction', 4.
[47] Horsley, 'Introduction', 5.
[48] Horsley, 'Introduction', 6.
[49] See Horsley's essay, '1 Corinthians: A Case Study of Paul's Assembly as an Alternative Society,' in *Paul and Empire*, 242-52.
[50] Horsley, 'Introduction', 8.

one on offer from the hierarchically driven Rome.

In addition to helping drive forward the Paul v. Empire reading, Elliott and Horsley also contribute to the project by deploying two methodological tools for analysing Paul's anti-imperial stance: the work of J.C. Scott and postcolonial criticism. Scott's study, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*,[51] offers an innovative and insightful socio-political analysis of power relationships that have been underplayed in biblical studies. Scott's work argues that wherever there is domination by the powerful there will inevitably be resistance by the weak. Scott's analysis of resistance refutes the simple alternatives of either open rebellion or compliance. Scott suggests that discontentment and resistance can take nuanced forms beyond open revolution. In particular, he has shown that the 'public transcripts' of the weak affirming the ideology of the powerful are often a mask for 'hidden transcripts', which reflect the offstage expressions of anger, revenge and self-assertion. This resistance is expressed in public either as false flattery or as a coded version of the hidden transcript cleverly disguised in double meanings and allusive rumour, gossip, folktales, jokes, songs, rituals and euphemisms.[52]

In Scott's work, interpreters like Horsley and Elliott find a point of connection between the material and political dimensions of the Roman Empire and the emotional and religious dimensions of early Christianity. His work on the public performance of the elite in order to awe and intimidate subordinates into a 'durable and expedient compliance', according to Horsley, illuminates 'how the Romans, along with the allied elites in control of Greek cities and provinces of the East, produced "performances of mastery and command"'.[53] Horsley appropriates Scott's logic that 'domination evokes resentment and resentment evokes resistance'[54] as a social reality that must be considered in reading Paul's letters. Informed by Scott's socio-political theory of resistance, Horsley concludes that 'Paul was spearheading an international movement of political resistance. The hidden transcript he helped develop envisioned a revolutionary transformation of the Roman imperial order. The movement's

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[51] J.C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). This work builds on and expands his previous book: *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).
[52] Cf. Scott, *Domination*, 18-19, 140-66.
[53] R.A. Horsley, 'Introduction', in *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul*, ed. R.A. Horsley (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 1-26, at 5.
[54] Horsley, 'Introduction', in *Hidden Transcripts*, 8, and quoting Scott, *Domination*, 115.

elaborate hidden transcript, however, remained "a substitute for an act of assertion directly in the face of power"'.[55] Elliott echoes Horsley's conclusion in his essay 'Strategies of Resistance and Hidden Transcripts in the Pauline Communities'.[56] Elliott argues that 'Scott's work on grassroots resistance and "transcripts" of defiance to hegemonic social pressures are of great value for our efforts to contextualize Paul's praxis and rhetoric'.[57] Not surprisingly, he reads Romans 13.1-7 as an example of a 'hidden transcript' of defiance – a new reading to this passage after his work *Liberating Paul*. While Horsley and Elliott are certainly not the only scholars applying Scott's theory to Paul's letters, they are at the forefront of this exercise.[58]

Horsley's openness to apply new approaches to discern Paul's anti-imperial stance is also evident in his application of postcolonial criticism.[59] While postcolonial theory is becoming an important tool in analysing ancient texts (outlined below in 1.4.3.), Horsley is one of a growing number of scholars exploring how themes from postcolonialism may shed light on Paul's letters.[60] In particular, Horsley, along with others,[61] has argued that postcolonial sensitivities towards the strategies of subordinate groups in unequal power relationships may illumine the subtle forms of resistance to imperial power in Paul's letters.[62]

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[55] Horsley, 'Introduction', in *Hidden Transcripts*, 23.
[56] N. Elliott, 'Strategies of Resistance and Hidden Transcripts in the Pauline Communities', in *Hidden Transcripts*, 97-122.
[57] Elliott, 'Strategies', 98; cf. *Arrogance*, 30-43.
[58] For other scholars working with Scott's theory and Paul's letters see Carter, *Empire*; M. Reasoner, 'Paul's God of Peace in Canonical and Political Perspective', (paper presented in the 'Pauline Epistles' section at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature).
[59] See R.A. Horsley, 'Feminist Scholarship and Postcolonial Criticism: Subverting Imperial Discourse and Reclaiming Submerged Histories', in *Walk in the Ways of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza*, eds. S. Matthews, C.B. Kittredge and M. Johnson-DeBaufre (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003), 297-317 and 'Subverting Disciplines: The Possibilities and Limitations of Postcolonial Theory for New Testament Studies', in *Toward a New Heaven and a New Earth*, ed. F.F. Segovia (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2003), 90-105.
[60] E.A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 156-85, thoughtfully brings together questions of history and postcolonial theory as they apply to texts in early Christianity. See also the recently published book: F.F. Segovia, and R.S. Sugirtharajah (eds.), *A Postcolonial Commentary on the New Testament* (London: T & T Clark, 2007).
[61] See the essays in Horsley's edited books by Abraham Smith, '"Unmasking the Powers": Toward a Postcolonial Analysis of 1 Thessalonians', in *Paul and Roman Imperial Order*, 47-66; S. Wan, 'Collection for the Saints as Anticolonial Act: Implications of Paul's Ethnic Reconstruction', in *Paul and Politics*, 191-215. Cf. also G. Zerbe, 'The Politics of Paul: His Supposed Social Conservatism and the Impact of Postcolonial Readings', *Conrad Grebel Review* 21.1 (2003), 82-103; N. Elliott, 'The Letter to the Romans', in *A Postcolonial Commentary*, 194-219; E. Agosto, 'Postcolonial Commentary on Philippians', in *A Postcolonial Commentary*, 281-93; J.W. Marshall, 'Hybridity and Reading Romans 13', *JSNT* 31.2 (2008), 157-78.
[62] It should also be noted that scholars are also applying postcolonial theory to discern how Paul reinscribes patterns of imperial domination over his own communities: see R.P. Seesengood, 'Hybridity

While Wengst, Georgi, Horsley and Elliott are leading figures in reading Paul's letters as examples of anti-imperial political discourse, there are other notable works that explore similar terrain. Two well-researched monographs by M. Tellbe and P. Oakes explore the possible tensions that existed between Pauline communities and the Roman state. Tellbe's work, *Paul between Synagogue and State*, explores the socio-political dilemma facing first-century gentile Christians in Thessalonica, Rome and Philippi as they withdrew from civic Graeco-Roman cults and began to form their identity apart from Judaism. Tellbe argues that these communities, many of them founded by Paul, faced the twin threat of hostility from Jews who did not want to be identified with this movement and opposition from Roman authorities who were suspicious of upstart movements and potentially subversive organizations. Tellbe does not suggest an easy answer to whether Paul was 'pro-Roman' or 'anti-Roman'; rather he argues that Paul's attitude to the state depends on whether one faces the issue from a political or a religious perspective. He concludes that 'Paul was obviously "pro-Roman" in evaluating many of the social and political benefits of the empire but certainly not when he assessed the religious pretensions of the state – even in the letter to the Romans'.[63] Oakes' study, *Philippians: From People to Letter*, narrows his focus to Philippi and Paul's letter to this church, but comes to many of the same conclusions as Tellbe.[64] Oakes argues that Paul supports his community in Philippi that is suffering economic hardship because of its failure to identify with Roman imperial claims. He makes the case that Paul offers a counter-claim to imperial pretensions and his thesis turns on three key arguments: 1) that the language that Paul employs in Phil 2.9-11 concerning Christ is 'cast in the imperial mould' and elicits a comparative response from the Philippian church between Christ and Caesar;[65] 2) that this exalted Christology sets Christ in superiority 'above the Emperor'[66] and subordinates Caesar to the 'Lord' of the Church; and 3) that Christ by implication is

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and the Rhetoric of Endurance: Reading Paul's Athletic Metaphors in a Context of Post-Colonial Self-Construction', *The Bible and Critical Theory* 1 (2005), accessible at http://publications.epress.monash.edu/doi/abs/10.2104/bc050016 (July 2006); J.A. Marchal, 'Imperial Intersections and Initial Inquiries: Toward a Feminist, Postcolonial Analysis of Philippians', *JFSR* 22.2 (2006), 5-32.

[63] Tellbe, *Paul*, 288; cf. 123-30, 200-6, 250-9.

[64] Oakes, however, does not agree with Tellbe that the primary issue relates to the religious problem created by the imperial cult for Christians; rather, he argues that the issue relates more broadly to the social phenomenon of the Roman ideology of imperial power; cf. *Philippians*, 137 and his more recent article, 'Re-mapping the Universe', *JSNT* 27.3 (2005), 301-22.

[65] Oakes, *Philippians*, 149-74

[66] Oakes, *Philippians*, 207

taken to 'eclipse',[67] 'relativise'[68] and 'replace'[69] the authority of the Emperor for Christians in Philippi.

Another significant contributor to the Paul v. Empire project is N.T. Wright. Although his involvement has not yet included a major monograph, he has articulated his position in a number of articles and essays.[70] By and large, Wright is in general agreement with the project set out by Horsley, Elliott and his former student, Oakes.[71] He argues that Paul's widespread usage of terms like εὐαγγέλιον, εἰρήνη and δικαιοσύνη challenge imperial messages of world-wide 'good news' that claim the divine Caesar has brought about justice and peace.[72] But Paul's main challenge was to the lordship of Caesar who demanded both taxes and worship. For Wright, in a world where Caesar is hailed as Lord and trusted as Savior 'Paul announced that Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, was Savior and Lord'.[73] Wright continues the repeated emphasis of others within the Paul v. Empire coalition by finding 'coded' messages within Paul's letters to substantiate his position. For example, he offers an analysis of Phil 3 as an instance of Paul's 'coded challenge to Empire'. In Paul's autobiographical critique of his allegiance to his Jewish heritage in light of the crucified and risen Jesus, Wright suggests Paul is offering a coded warning and summons to the Philippian followers of Jesus to imitate his example so that they, too, may critique their Roman allegiance in the same light.[74]

Although Wright places himself firmly within the Paul v. Empire camp (indeed he suggests that the integration of a political dimension with other themes in Pauline theology is a 'meta-issue'[75] behind Paul's letters), he does so with several well-placed qualifications. First, in light of the fact that some scholars (e.g., Horsley[76] and Elliott[77]) have suggested that Paul's primary opposition was Caesar's empire and not Judaism, he demurs and argues that a Pauline critique of imperial ideology need not mean that 'he did not challenge his fellow (but non-Christian)

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[67] Oakes, *Philippians*, 150
[68] Oakes, *Philippians*, 170
[69] Oakes, *Philippians*, 206
[70] See Wright, 'Fresh Perspective', 21-39; Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 160-83; and Wright, *Paul*, ch. 4.
[71] See Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 162 and *Paul*, 72.
[72] See Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 164-73.
[73] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 168.
[74] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 173-81. Cf. Georgi's description of Philippians as a 'Disguised Affront', *Theocracy*, 72-8.
[75] Wright, *Paul*, 77.
[76] See Horsley, 'General Introduction', in *Paul and Empire*, 6.
[77] See Elliott, 'Paul and the Politics of Empire', 20.

Jews'.[78] His second proviso relates to the positioning of the political and theological dimensions. Interestingly, Horsley makes a special plea for scholars to recognize the close, if not indistinguishable, relationship between politics and religion in the first century world. What Wright points out is that in highlighting this observation many of the advocates in the coalition make such a strong case for the political dimensions that theological concerns of Paul are marginalized. Put another way, instead of emphasizing what seems to be a both/and in Paul, the argument often appears to become mired in an either/or dualism. Wright is keen to point out that Paul's 'political sensibilities were driven by his theological ones, not vice versa'.[79]

A long-time sparring partner of Wright, J.D. Crossan, has also weighed into this discussion with the book *In Search of Paul: How Jesus' Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom* (2004), co-authored with J.L. Reed. In many ways, Crossan and Reed follow many of the conclusions of the scholars listed above. What is unique about their approach is their attention to Roman archaeology, not simply Roman texts, and how this provided a popular and visual representation of Rome's imperial theology, 'which Paul's Christian theology confronted nonviolently but opposed relentlessly'.[80] In short, they argue that without understanding this archaeological evidence as a means of conveying Roman imperial theology, one cannot understand Paul's theology. For them, the imperial theology initiated and popularized by Augustus was not accomplished by the texts of poets like Virgil, Horace and Ovid, but by images, from the smallest coin to the largest forum, from cups, statues, altars and temples; from ports, roads, bridges and aqueducts – the places where ordinary, and often illiterate, people congregated much of the time.[81]

Crossan and Reed recognize the contributions of previous scholars in emphasising the confrontation between Paul's Christian theology and Roman imperial theology. But they add 'we see [that clash] incarnating deeper and even more fundamental strains beneath the surface of human history. What is *newest* about this book is our insistence that Paul opposed Rome with Christ against Caesar, not

[78] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 163.
[79] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 164.
[80] Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, x.
[81] See Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, x, 136, 288. Cf. C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 411, on the visual impact of the Roman *imperium* displayed publicly in city squares, road markers and market places; and M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 186, on the visual significance of the altars of the *lares Augusti* placed on every corner of Rome and thereby solidifying the divine status of the Emperor.

because that empire was particularly unjust or oppressive, but because he questioned *the normalcy of civilization itself*, since civilization has always been imperial, that is, unjust and oppressive' [emphasis theirs].[82] They emphasise the 'structural and systematic difference between Lord or Savior, Divine One or Son of God, gospel or good news as applied first to Augustus and then to Jesus'.[83] Crossan and Reed argue that this structural difference between Rome's vision of civilization and Paul's vision of a new creation represents the grinding of two 'tectonic plates' in the first century. On the one hand, the Roman Empire was based 'on the common principle of *peace through victory* or, more fully, on a faith in the sequence of *piety, war, victory,* and *peace*'. Alternatively, they suggest that Paul 'was a Jewish visionary....[who] opposed the mantras of Roman normalcy with a vision of *peace through justice*, or, more fully, with a faith in the sequence of *covenant, nonviolence, justice,* and *peace*.'[84]

One final, substantial and very recent work requiring mention is R. Jewett's commentary on Romans in the Hermeneia series.[85] Jewett has been associated with the 'Paul and Politics Group' and contributed several essays to Horsley's edited books.[86] These essays are merely a taster for his massive, twenty-year-long project on Romans. In his commentary he argues that Paul's theology of power and honour in Romans is subversive of Roman imperial order and its patronage/honour system. According to Jewett 'it is clear that Paul criticizes and reverses the official system of honor achieved through piety on which the empire after Augustus rested. Paul offers a new approach to mercy, righteousness, and piety, one that avoided the propagandistic exploitation of the Roman imperial system'.[87] Jewett holds that at every turn in Romans Paul overturns the imperial system of honour – a complex system of force, propaganda and patronage that underpinned the ultimate power of the emperor – as a corrupt and exploitative structure.[88] Further, Jewett advocates that several aspects of the ideology of the ruler cult are challenged in Romans. First, Jewett notes that the universal condemnation of humanity in Romans 1-3 is the

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[82] Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, xi.
[83] Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, 270.
[84] Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, xi; see also summary on page 74.
[85] R. Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007),
[86] I.e., R. Jewett, 'The Corruption and Redemption of Creation: Reading Rom 8:18-23 within the Imperial Context', in *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*, 25-46 and 'Response: Exegetical Support from Romans and Other Letters', in *Paul and Politics*, 58-71.
[87] Jewett, *Romans*, 48.
[88] Jewett, *Romans*, 449-50.

antithesis to 'official propaganda about Rome's superior piety, justice, and honor'. Secondly, he asserts that the claims of the civic cult are countered by Paul's depiction of Christ. Jewett writes that 'the argument of Romans revolves around the question of which rule [i.e., that of Caesar or that of Christ] is truly righteous and which gospel has the power to make the world truly peaceful'.[89] Jewett's commentary is a balanced and thoroughly researched work that will be taken into serious account, especially in those sections of this thesis that deal with passages from Romans.

1.3. The Comparison of Josephus and Paul

The purpose of this study is to inquire about Paul's construal of divine and imperial power in order to analyse to what extent he may be judged as pro-Roman, anti-Roman or in some sort of alternative relationship with Roman power. In order to place Paul meaningfully within the world of 'political subversion', it would make sense to compare him with another Jewish writer culturally engaged with the Roman world. Price advises that 'in order to understand an allegedly "subversive" provincial figure, it is necessary to set him against the background of "subversion" in the Roman Empire'.[90] One of the primary aims of this study is to do just that, although instead of setting Paul against the entire background of 'subversion' it will set Paul against another Diaspora Jew, T. Flavius Josephus, whose 'subversive' aims with respect to Rome are heuristically suitable for this study. The purpose of placing Paul and Josephus side-by-side is to allow the research question on Paul to be more fully developed and sharply focused.

Until recently, the question of Paul's relationship to Roman power has been explored by outlining the key themes of imperial ideology – expressed in Greco-Roman literature, architecture, inscriptions, coins and, importantly, the imperial cult – and relating them to Paul's theology. This research has produced some excellent and interesting studies on the question (as noted above in 1.2.). What has not often characterized these studies is any comprehensive comparative study of Paul alongside other diaspora Jews who may also have been in critical engagement with Roman power. Although there are other candidates (e.g. Philo) who may have proved useful

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[89] Jewett, *Romans*, 49.
[90] Price, 'Response', 177.

to compare with Paul in relation to Roman power, Josephus is a helpful foil for several reasons.

First, Josephus is a diaspora Jew who personally engaged with Rome and wrote at length about this engagement and his nation's dealings with imperial power. Josephus' relationship with Roman political power has been the source of considerable interest by historians, but often the judgment of Josephus has been highly critical of his character and the reliability of his work. Unfortunately, this has often led to a one-diminensional evaluation of him as a Jewish traitor and Flavian sycophant.[91] More recently, however, Josephus has been assessed as a more complicated historian and theologian than previously thought, one whose associations with Rome are ambiguous and nuanced.[92] Of course, in drawing Josephus next to Paul one must not ignore the differences between the historical and literary contexts of these two diaspora Jews. Josephus began writing in the mid-seventies after the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple; he wrote under the considerable restrictions that came with living under the gaze of the emperors Vespasian and Titus; he wrote for a mixed Roman and Jewish elite audience. In contrast, Paul wrote most of his letters (including Romans) in the so-called 'good years' of the last Julio-Claudian emperor Nero; his writings were directed towards Christian 'insiders' and friends; the recipients of his letters tended to come from lower social strata. Nonetheless, there are considerable similarities between these near contemporaries and fellow diaspora Jews. Both of them were, at least for a time, inclined towards Pharisaic Judaism in Jerusalem. Each of them moved outside the confines of Judea to communicate their visions of the God of Israel at work in the world. They both conceived of their roles as priestly and prophetic spokesmen[93] for God to the Gentile world and employed the language, literary conventions and vocabulary of the Greco-Roman world to convey their messages. At a personal level, both of them experienced the confines of Roman incarceration – albeit under different circumstances. More importantly, both of them knew that the military might of Rome had been meted against objects at the centre of their respective theological worlds: Roman armies devastated Jerusalem and

[91] See the detailed list at n52 in 2.3.1. for those who hold this opinion.
[92] E.g. see essays by J.S. McLaren, 'Josephus on Titus: The Vanquished Writing about the Victor', in *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond*, eds. J. Sievers and G. Lembi (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 279-95; J.J. Price, 'The Provincial Historian in Rome', in *Josephus and Jewish History*, 101-18; and P. Spilsbury, 'Reading the Bible in Rome: Josephus and the Constraints of Empire', in *Josephus and Jewish History*, 209-27.
[93] For Paul, see Rom 15.16; for Josephus, see *War* 1.3; 3.352 and 2.3.2.

destroyed Josephus' temple; Roman soldiers tortured and crucified Paul's Christ. If nothing else, this last observation is enough to generate relevant comparative questions on their views on the relationship between God, Rome and power. Yet, for all this, there have been relatively few studies that have tried to place Paul and Josephus in conversation.[94]

Second, given the broad purpose of this study that seeks to investigate Paul's construal of divine and imperial power, comparing Paul with Josephus generates a number of parallel questions that add depth and focus to the over-arching research question. As they both thought and wrote in ways that explored the dimensions of God at work in the world and the role and place of Roman political power, several questions can be directed towards both Paul and Josephus: How did they navigate the terrain between imperial self-image and Jewish/Christian identity? In what ways do they reflect and/or respond to a Roman view of history? How do they perceive divine power at work in the cosmos? How, if at all, do they interpret Roman power in relation to God's power?

In order to attempt to answer these research questions a necessary decision must be made on the scope of the investigation in terms of the texts that will be the primary focus of study. For the purpose of analysis of the questions outlined above I have chosen three documents to concentrate upon: Josephus' first work, *The Jewish War*,[95] and Paul's letters to the Romans and the Philippians. Some justification has already been given above for selecting Josephus as a comparative foil for Paul, but a number of further reasons are in order for the selection of these three documents in particular. The rationale for selecting the *War* is based on several considerations. First, it is Josephus' earliest work and arguably the one that offers the most sustained reflection on the relationship between the Jews and the Roman Empire. The *War*, having been written in the mid-seventies when the memory of the conflict was still fresh (and, as will be argued below, vital for Flavian legitimacy) in the minds of Romans and Jews alike, is a storm centre for questions about Roman power. As a document devoted to recounting the reasons for the war and its impact on the Jewish

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94 One exception is the thesis by G.P. Carras', 'Josephus and Judaism: The Shared Judaism of Paul and Josephus' (D.Phil, Oxford University, 1989). See also a comparative essay by J.M.G. Barclay, 'Matching Theory and Practice: Josephus's Constitutional Ideal and Paul's Strategy in Corinth', in *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide*, ed. T. Engberg-Pedersen (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001), 139-64.

95 From here onward, normally, abbreviated as *War*. I will also abbreviate the other three works by Josephus respectively as: *Ant* (*Jewish Antiquities*); *Life* (*The Life*); and *Apion* (*Against Apion*).

people this seven-book history provides one of the clearest possible cases of a first century Jew engaging with the issues of Roman power. But, as will be argued in chapters two and three, the *War* does so in a manner that is multi-layered and politically astute. Second, as a work of ancient historiography it has an apologetic and political edge that lends itself to analysing Roman power from a Jewish perspective. Apologetically, Josephus expresses in the introduction that he is writing to even the record in the wake of other scurrilous and inaccurate accounts. In this respect he is also political in that he is not only pitting his work against opposing accounts of the Jewish War and their false depictions of his nation (*War* 1.1-3), but also writing to dispel notions that the Jewish people as a whole are inclined toward political insurrection (i.e., στάσις) and argue that they were led astray by a few 'tyrants' (cf. 1.10). The *War* also has a unique element with respect to its audience. Among Josephus' extant works, this is the only work that he describes as being given to, and thus potentially even read by, the Emperors Vespasian and Titus (*Life* 361-3 and *Apion* 1.50-1). Added to the fact that Josephus was residing in one of Vespasian's residences in Rome when he composed the *War*, this presents a number of interesting constraints upon Josephus and upon the way he structures and recounts the Jewish War and Rome's interaction with his people.

The selection of Paul's two letters also reflects several simple reasons to commend their inclusion in this study for extended analysis. First, there is a certain symmetry between Romans and Philippians with respect to Paul's interaction with the Roman Empire: one is a letter written *to Rome* and one is written *from Rome*[96] to a Roman colony. Second, and of more importance, both letters contain passages directly relevant for our study. Romans 13 represents arguably one of the most frequently discussed passages on Paul's so-called 'theology of the state'. Philippians contains the only explicit mention of Caesar (albeit 'Caesar's household', 4.22) and, according to those within the Paul v. Empire coalition, numerous points of contact with Roman ideology and the imperial cult. In this sense, Romans and Philippians are two of the most important documents in the debate about the relationship between Paul and Empire and take us to the heart of the research questions asked above. Further, they are important not simply because they contain one or two passages of

[96] I am aware of the significant debates of the provenance of Philippians and provide my reasons for agreeing with the traditional opinion of Rome in chapter 6. This is not, however, a major concern of this thesis and the analysis of Philippians is still warranted in the study with or without holding to a Roman provenance.

interest within them but because embedded in their very structure are Paul's perceptions about God's care and guidance of the cosmos, the place of his people in the world and, fundamentally, the role of the Christ event as the pivot on which time itself turns. Although some analysis of other relevant passages from the undisputed Paulines will be offered in chapter 4 of this study, space precludes detailed analysis of all Paul's letters.

For these reasons, I would argue that Josephus' *War* offers a useful point of comparison for evaluating Paul's social stance and theological engagement with the Roman Empire as expressed in the letters to the Romans and Philippians. Even though Josephus' text is a piece of ancient historiography and Paul's extant work is all epistolary, the difference in genre is not a significant hurdle for the purpose of this study. This study is not comparing form or source critical issues;[97] rather, it is concerned with comparing issues of socio-cultural engagement, power and theological perspective. Although the *War* is ancient historiography, it contains careful theological reflection about the work of God in the fortunes of the Roman and Jewish people. Romans and Philippians are *ad hoc* correspondence but clearly offer a window – however contested the meaning of this view may be – into Paul's theological framework and perception of reality.

1.4. Theoretical/Analytical Resources

This thesis is concerned with 'power' and its outworking in the socio-political spheres of the first century Greco-Roman world. Specifically, this study is interested in how Paul and Josephus perceive, interpret and respond to divine and imperial power. As such, this requires careful thinking about 'power' and its particulur dynamics. Recent work in sociological and cultural analyses has produced a number of useful resources for analysing power relations. In accounting for the extent of the modern literature on power, sociologists frequently point to several significant philosophers and theorists who gave impetus to the subject: Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Max Weber.[98] Although not all would

[97] For an excellent study examining issues on how Josephus' work compares with the New Testament, see S. Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003) where he compares Luke-Acts with the works of Josephus.

[98] For an excellent overview, see S. Lukes, 'Power and Authority', in *A History of Sociological Analysis*, eds T. Bottomore and R. Nisbet (London: Heinemann, 1979), 633-676. For an overview of

agree with the assumptions of these early theorists, their work provided the basis for the extensive sociological and political analysis of power since the 1950s.

1.4.1. Power – 'An Essentially Contested Concept'

Not surprisingly, with the proliferation of discussions about power there has been divergence of opinion on the question of definition, conceptualization, and analysis of power. 'Power', according to S. Lukes, is 'an essentially contested concept'.[99] This is hardly surprising given the lack of precision that the word 'power' carries in everyday conversation. S. Sykes skilfully points out this semantic range in his opening chapter to *Power and Christian Theology*.[100] What Sykes demonstrates is that use of the term 'power' can be employed in a variety of situations, including assorted rhetorical situations. This should alert us to the fact that in addition to being an essentially *contested* concept, it is also an essentially *contextual* concept.

How then should we approach this contested and contextual concept in the scholarly domain of sociological/cultural analysis? In his book *Power*, J. Scott offers a useful navigation through this disputed territory.[101] Scott identifies two 'streams' of power research: 1) a 'mainstream tradition [that is] principally concerned with the episodically exercised power that one agent has over another', and 2) the 'second stream ... focuse[d] on the dispositional capacity to do something'.[102]

The mainstream view of power, according to Scott, takes the sovereign power of a state as its primary paradigm. The work of Weber is considered as the classic statement of how a sovereign actor – be it a state or any other sovereign organization like a business or church – imposes its will on other actors in a social relationship. 'According to this point of view, actors seek to make others do what they would otherwise not do, and they resist the attempts of others to make them act in ways contrary to their own preferences.'[103] The mainstream tradition generates at least two questions concerning power. First it asks a broad question: Who is in power and what

much the same ground, but from a theological perspective, see S. Sykes, *Power and Christian Theology* (London: Continuum, 2006), 92-103.

[99] S. Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 30.

[100] Sykes, *Power*, 1-2, notes that in common usage the term 'power' carries both negative (e.g., when we refer to others as 'power-hungry' or when power is used synonomously with 'domination' or 'violence') and positive (e.g., when we we speak of a person's 'intellectual power' or 'power of concentration') connonotations.

[101] J. Scott, *Power* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 6-12.

[102] Scott, *Power*, 6.

[103] Scott, *Power*, 6

do they demand? Second, in relation to theology, it poses a deep question regarding power: Who is in charge of the universe and, related to this, who are we in relationship to this power?

The 'second stream' of power, according to Scott, shares a similar impulse with the first stream but has a different focus. Scott notes:

> The second stream begins from the same core idea of power, but it takes this in a different direction. Its focus is not on specific organizations of power, but on strategies and techniques of power. It sees power as diffused throughout a society, rather than being confined to sovereign organizations.[104]

The stress in this 'second stream' is not exclusively placed on the repressive aspects of power (i.e., 'zero sum' constructions) but on the facilitative or 'productive' aspects of power, in which all can gain from the use of power (i.e., 'variable sum' constructions).

Two of the most influential figures in this second stream are A. Gramsci[105] and M. Foucault.[106] Gramsci's key contribution lay in providing the concept of 'hegemony', which highlights a mechanism of power whereby dominant agents produce *consent* over subalterns without the use of overt repression. Gramsci asks: How is it that ordinary people come to be persuaded of a specific view of things? It was in trying to understand this question that Gramsci formulated his concept of 'hegemony'. Hegemony is power achieved through a combination of coercion and consent. Consent is procured through *discursive* means that occur when people communicate with one another. The emphasis is on *persuasion* rather than solely on coercion or force. Foucault also explores discursive and persuasive elements in his extensive writing on power. In contrast to mainstream views of power, Foucault argues against the partial picture provided by 'the classic, juridical theory, [where] power is taken to be a right, which one is able to possess like a commodity, and which one can in consequence transfer or alienate, either wholly or partially, through a legal act or through some act that establishes a right, such as takes place through cession or

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[104] Scott, *Power*, 9.

[105] Cf., A. Gramsci, *Selections From the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971).

[106] Foucault's work on the concept of 'power' is substantial, but a representative selection would include: *The History of Sexuality*, trans. R. Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990); Gordon, Colin (ed), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977 By Michel Foucault* (London: Harverster Wheatsheaf, 1980); 'The Subject and Power', in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, eds H.L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); *Discipline and Punish* (London: Allen Lane, 1977).

contract'.[107] Against the purely Hobbesian and Weberian sovereign conception, Foucault makes two assertions about power:

> In the first place...that power is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised, and that it only exists in action....[and] that power is not primarily the maintenance and reproduction of economic relations, but is above all a relation of force.[108]

Foucault believed that he had identified a non-sovereign type of power, which is a power that is not the result of a particular individual's will to dominate a society. Rather, power exists without people knowing it within social relations that surround and permeate the public, political sphere of sovereign power. For Foucault, power does not emanate from some central or hierarchical structure but flows through society in a sort of capillary action: 'Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere'.[109] This is the 'power of normalization' that is formed by 'discursive formations' operating through the mechanisms of socialization. Foucault injects into the equation a relationship between 'power' and 'knowledge' whereby power produces a particular discourse of truth and, reciprocally, this discourse of truth reproduces power:

> What I mean is this: in a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse.[110]

The questions generated from this second stream focus less on the 'who' questions (i.e., Who is in power?) emphasised in the mainstream tradition in order to attend to 'how' questions: How are power relations maintained? How is power shaped and supported by knowledge and discourses of truth?

Scott offers a helpful account 'that synthesises the two streams, using each to enrich the other'.[111] He suggests that one can bring the two streams together in a way that is more than merely an 'eclectic bolting together of disparate ideas'. The way forward is to draw together two complementary modes of power offered by the two streams: 'Mainstream research has highlighted what can be called corrective causal

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[107] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 88.
[108] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 89.
[109] Foucault, *History*, 93.
[110] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 93.
[111] Scott, *Power*, 12-30. See also Lukes' conceptual map in *Power*, 74-85.

influences, while second-stream research has emphasised persuasive causal influence.'[112] Corrective influence and persuasive influence are both forms of social power, but they draw on different resources in forming their dominating structures. The resources at hand for corrective influence are direct force and manipulation[113] in its elementary forms, and coercion and inducement in more complex structures. Persuasive influence, on the other hand, employs processes of legitimation and signification[114] in its elementary forms and expertise and command in its more developed structures. What is helpful in Scott's scheme is that it provides a framework for discerning *how* power relations are constructed and by bringing together the two streams of power research it provides useful conceptual tools for describing power relations that combine various resources at different levels. Obviously, no conceptual 'map' can account for every power dynamic, but Scott's framework at least provides a starting point from which to analyse power relations without being restricted by any one sociological or cultural perspective. Importantly, it provides us with several questions about power that help to develop and sharpen the general research question of this study concerning Paul's construal of divine and imperial power and the set of parallel questions asked of both Paul and Josephus concerning history, God, Rome and power.

1.4.2. Power and the Roman Empire

A general exploration of the meaning and dynamics of power, however interesting, is not the primary focus of this study. With this in mind, the comment of social theorist Lukes is germane as he recommends that instead of simply attempting to define power we should focus instead on the question: 'What interests us when we are interested in power?'[115] The interest of this thesis is how Paul and Josephus construe divine and imperial power. At one level this relates to those theological resources that Paul and Josephus brought to bear on this issue. In moving forward in

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[112] Scott, *Power*, 12.
[113] 'Manipulation occurs where a principal alters the bases on which a subaltern calculates among action alternatives, ensuring that the subaltern's rational choices lead him or her to act in ways that the principal desires', Scott, *Power*, 14.
[114] 'Where persuasion operates through cognitive symbols – ideas and representations that lead people to define situations in certain ways – it takes the form of signification. Where it operates through the building of value commitments to particular ideas or conditions, it takes the form of legitimation', Scott, *Power*, 15.
[115] S. Lukes (ed), *Power* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 4.

this investigation of divine and imperial power, P. Oakes' offer of clarification on terminology in a recent essay is helpful. Oakes writes:

> By 'Rome' I mean, primarily, Roman ideology, that is, Roman discourse which sustains certain power relations. The power relations in question are those of Roman society. They have both external and internal dimensions. Externally, they constitute Rome's dominant position over against any competing powers. Internally, they constitute a hierarchy that runs from the emperor down to the most marginal inhabitants of the Empire. Alongside ideology, I am including practices that maintain the power relations in question.[116]

Oakes' useful definition provides a practical and efficient summary when we consider the potential conflicts in the discourse or practice between Paul and Rome or Josephus and Rome. First, it alerts us to the question of how to explore the effects of Rome on its subjects. For example, in the case of Josephus, it opens the issue of how his history accounts for Rome's position of power over God's chosen people (a primary concern in chap 2) and how he portrays, asserts and challenges Roman discourse and hegemonic claims (a primary concern in chap 3). Second, Oakes' summary picks up, among other things, the Foucauldian interest in the construction and maintenance of power relations discussed above. Interest in the relationship between power, Rome and our subjects Paul and Josephus may also benefit from a related resource that offers useful analytical tools for addressing cultural relationships between dominant geo-political powers and subordinated peoples, namely, the resources available in postcolonial theory.

1.4.3. Resources from Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory and the sociological analysis of power are attuned to many of the same concerns. Both are interested in questions of empire, power relations, the creation and maintenance of hegemonic discourse, and the production of knowledge as a means of imposing power. A number of these connections are visible in B. Gilbert-Moore's description of postcolonialism as 'a more or less distinct set of reading practices ... preoccupied principally with analysis of cultural forms which mediate, challenge or reflect upon the relations of domination and subordination - economic, cultural and political - between (and often within) nations, races or cultures, which characteristically have their roots in the history of modern European

[116] Oakes, 'Re-mapping', 302-3.

colonialism and imperialism'.[117] Of particular significance for this present study is Gilbert-Moore's following comment where he notes that 'even such a broad definition may be unnecessarily restrictive. One of the best papers at the "Empire, Nation, Language" conference in London in 1993 addressed the cultural histories of classical Greek colonies within broadly postcolonial perspectives'.[118] This concern to push the theoretical resources of postcolonialism beyond the boundaries of modern history is echoed in the recent conclusions of F. Segovia as part of a larger project on the relationship between postcolonialism and biblical criticism. Segovia highlights the 'egregious lacunae in Postcolonial Studies' with respect to the world of antiquity and religion whereby postcolonial analysis could be 'gainfully extended to the world of antiquity in general and to the Roman formation in particular. Moreover, I see no reason why postcolonial analysis should not include the religious dimension'.[119] Already a number of scholars have picked up the challenge to apply postcolonial theory to questions of antiquity and religion. J.M.G. Barclay points out some of the recent studies of postcolonial theory applied to the Greco-Roman world while demonstrating successfully in his work how postcolonial reading strategies can be deployed to elucidate Josephus' work, *Against Apion*.[120] In this sense, employing postcolonial criticism offers a new angle from which to view questions of ancient power relations and, importantly, what happens 'to the cultural products of the dominant culture (their language, literature and value systems) once they are taken up by the subjects of imperial or colonial power'.[121] As Barclay has noted, 'the distinctive feature of postcolonial criticism is to analyse these cultural relations not

[117] B. Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics* (London: Verso, 1997), 12. B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, and H. Tiffin, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (London: Routledge, 1998), 186-192, at 187, explore a number of the issues raised by S. Slemon and A. Ahmad and others concerning the historical limits around the term 'postcolonialism'. Nonetheless, they conclude that postcolonialism 'is now used in wide and diverse ways to include the study and analysis of European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European colonialisms, the discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject construction in colonial discourse and the resistance of those subjects, and, most importantly perhaps, the differing responses to such incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies'.

[118] Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory*, 12.

[119] F. Segovia, 'Mapping the Postcolonial Optic', in *The Bible and Postcolonialism*, eds Fernando F. Segovia and Stephen D. Moore (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 75.

[120] J.M.G. Barclay, *Flavius Josephus: Against Apion* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), lxx n190. Cf. the discussion of postcolonial theory and Josephus in J.M.G. Barclay, 'The Empire Writes Back: Josephan Rhetoric in Flavian Rome', in *Flavius Josephus & Flavian Rome*, eds J. Edmondson, S. Mason and J. Rives (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 316-321; J.M.G. Barclay, 'Judean Historiography in Rome: Josephus and History in *Contra Apionem* Book 1', in *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond*, eds J. Sievers and G. Lembi (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 34-36.

[121] J.M.G. Barclay, 'Josephus in Postcolonial Perspective' (unpublished paper presented at *Society of Biblical Literature Conference*, November 2006).

simply as the meeting or merging of different cultural systems (e.g., the Hellenizing of the Jewish tradition), but as a negotiation of *power*, sometimes brutal and simple, sometimes subtle and ambiguous. The approach is overtly political, placing a premium on the self-representation of the subordinate and the potential means of challenging, changing or deforming hegemonic discourse'.[122]

Postcolonial theory, therefore, provides both fresh conceptual vocabulary and well-suited analytical tools with which to examine the themes of empire and power. If colonialism can be defined as the conquest and control of other people's land and goods (something undeniably true with respect to the Roman Empire), then in our study 'postcolonialism' will be used to understand and describe the process of domination and the resistance to domination.[123] Potentially, both Paul and Josephus, to varying degrees, may be described as 'postcolonial' authors without necessarily being anachronistic. As Barclay has suggested, even though the term 'postcolonial' is normally applied to modern circumstances, the general nature of postcolonial categories provides an apparatus that 'can be employed in analysis of the unequal power relations of antiquity; while the *forms* of power (economic and political) may be very different from the modern world, their *effects* in the realm of cultural interaction bear many similarities'.[124] That is, both Josephus and Paul lived and wrote as provincials in the context of Roman subjugation but were dedicated to supporting, defending, and, if need be, exonerating the people of God in the face of Roman opposition.

Although this thesis intends to employ a number of the resources from postcolonialism, it is not a 'postcolonial' study per se. Rather, the resources from postcolonialism will be exercised *heuristically*. That is, they will be used in the formation of questions to help uncover aspects of power relations that might otherwise go unnoticed and they may provide an additional lens with which to observe our ancient authors. But as resources they are not substitutes for the literary

[122] Barclay, 'Postcolonial'.
[123] Cf. A. Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 1998), 19, on understanding the descriptive potential of 'postcolonialism' with regard to the *process* of imperial power relations: 'Postcolonialism...is a word that is useful only if we use it with caution and qualifications. In this it can be compared to that concept of "patriarchy" in feminist thought, which is applicable to the extent that it indicates male domination over women. But the ideology and practices of male domination are historically, geographically and culturally variable.....Patriarchy then becomes a useful shorthand for conveying a structure of inequity, which is, in practice, highly variable because it always works alongside other social structures....Postcolonialism is (or should be) a descriptive not an evaluative term'.
[124] Barclay, *Apion*, lxx.

evidence itself but tools for analysing power. Further, I intend to employ the resources of postcolonial theory in terms of the relationship that Paul and Josephus have with Rome, not their relationship with other ambient cultural influences around them more generally. I recognise the complexity in making this decision, but it is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine how Paul and Josephus engage with the many cultural influences (e.g., Hellenization) that surround them. Amongst the various tools for analysing power that postcolonialism offers, several appear especially helpful in examining Paul and Josephus' construal of divine and political power, especially: subversion, representation, and hybridity.

1.4.3.1. Subversion

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin note that:

> A characteristic of dominated literatures is an inevitable tendency towards subversion, and a study of the subversive strategies employed by post-colonial writers would reveal both the configurations of domination and the imaginative and creative responses to this condition. Directly and indirectly, in Salman Rushdie's phrase, the "Empire writes back" to the imperial "centre", not only through nationalist assertion...but even more radically by questioning the bases of [the coloniser's] *metaphysics*, challenging the *worldview* that can polarize centre and periphery in the first place.[125]

We have already observed that the issue of 'subversion' is a fundamental question for this study, especially, how politically 'subversive' the Apostle Paul may or may not be with respect to the Roman Empire. For Josephus, a colonised writer living under the direct patronage of the Flavian emperors, it is important to notice the unlikelihood of his being overtly subversive per se – i.e., Josephus cannot *directly* challenge Roman hegemony and, thus, his opportunities for subversion would have been restricted. He must write his history under the constraints that this hegemony has created. Nonetheless, a fundamental question is how, if at all, Paul's letters and Josephus' *Jewish War* challenge Roman metaphysics and worldview? Or, how do Paul and

[125] B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, and H. Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 1989), 33.

Josephus 'construct reality'[126] and, more importantly, to what end?

1.4.3.2. Representation

E.W. Said's *Orientalism*[127] is broadly regarded as the charter document of postcolonial theory. One of the most significant themes in the book is that knowledge is not innocent but is profoundly connected with the operations of power. This Foucauldian insight informs Said's foundational work *Orientalism*, which points out the extent to which 'knowledge' about 'the Orient' as it was produced and circulated in Europe from the eighteenth century forward, was an ideological accompaniment of colonial 'power'. This is a book not about non-Western cultures, but about the Western *representation* of these cultures. In his own words, Said describes the contribution of his work in the afterward to the 1995 edition of the book:

> Human history is made by human beings. Since the struggle for control over territory is part of that history, so too is the struggle over historical and social meaning. The task for the critical scholar is not to separate one struggle from another, but to connect them, despite the contrast between the overpowering materiality of the former and the apparent other-worldly refinements of the latter. My way of doing this has been to show that the development and maintenance of every culture requires the existence of another different and competing *alter ego*. The construction of identity - for identity, whether of Orient or Occident, France or Britain, while obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, *is* finally a construction - involves establishing opposites and "others" whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from "us".... In short, the construction of identity is bound up with the disposition of power and powerlessness in each society.[128]

In highlighting the problematic of 'representation' Said's work draws our attention to the contact point between two cultures of unequal power relations and how the principal power represents the subaltern 'Other' through its descriptive control of a particular historical discourse. In this discourse, the subaltern is typically stereotyped and homogenized to fit the worldview of the principal. In a sense, the principal not only controls the content of what is being said about the Other (whether

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126 This useful expression, even though it moves outside the nomenclature of postcolonial theory, is drawn from the work of P.L. Berger, and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967).

127 E.W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin, 1995 [1978]). G.C. Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London: Routledge, 1993), 56, describes *Orientalism* as 'the source book in our discipline' while H.K. Bhabha, 'Postcolonial Criticism', in *Redrawing the Boundaries: The Transformation of English and Literary Studies*, eds S. Greenblatt and G. Gunn (New York: MLA, 1992), 465, acknowledges that *Orientalism* 'inaugurated the postcolonial field'.

128 Said, *Orientalism*, 331-32.

it be correct or not) but also controls the lens by which the Other is viewed and does so because, it is argued, the Other is inferior even to adequately represent themselves.

The representation serves not only to control the discourse of truth, it also establishes and reinforces the power of the principal. As Barclay points out:

> Crucial here is the connection between knowledge and power (drawn from Foucault): where Western patterns of discourse delimit and define the field of knowledge, where the Western vantage point provides the sole legitimate perspective, and where Western canons of truth, rationality, and morality fix the norms and analytical concepts, this pattern of representation constitutes a form of power....Under these conditions of cultural hegemony, it is in practice impossible for subordinate peoples and cultures to represent themselves on their own terms.[129]

In raising the notions of control of historical discourse, representation, and the relation between knowledge and power, Said encourages us to ask how Paul and Josephus, both subjugated Diaspora Jews, voice their own views of history and power at work in the world. For example, we may ask how Josephus responds to the manner in which the Jewish nation is represented by his contemporary Roman historians writing about the Jewish War or by imperial propaganda that used the Jewish War to help legitimise the Flavian dynasty. For Paul, the optic of representation may help inquire how the apostle responds to Roman portrayals of reality and/or the imperial cult's assertion of divinity for Caesar. In part, these question relate to the strategies a subaltern employs in responding to unequal power relations or, in the words of J.C. Scott, how subalterns 'speak truth to power'.[130] But in order to do so, another important category from postcolonial theory aids in this discussion: the category of hybridity.

1.4.3.3. Hybridity

While postcolonial critics are interested in the way imperial powers represent, construct and define the barbarian 'other', they are particularly interested in how colonial subjects respond to this intrusive presence and the impact it has on their culture and institutions. While some subjects capitulate to this intrusion and others resist it vigorously, all of them, according to theorists like H.K. Bhabha, are 'hybridized' to a greater or lesser extent in their relationship with their colonizer(s).

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[129] Barclay, *Apion*, lxix.

[130] J.C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 1.

Hybridization explores the slippage – the unstable 'third space' – that occurs between the self-represented identity of the colonised subject and the constructed identity of the indigenous subject by the colonial power. Simultaneous compliance and resistance, mimicry and mockery characterize the hybridized identity. From close contact with colonial power, colonised subjects will mimic the cultural values and practices of the coloniser while at the same time, when mirroring these adopted elements, they reflect their own cultural assertions in ways that can slip into subtle forms of mockery. For Bhabha, colonial discourse is shaped above all by *ambivalence* in the relationship between coloniser and colonised; resistance to a colonial power is never directly oppositional:

> The colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference.... The place of difference and otherness, or the space of the adversarial...is never entirely on the outside or implacably oppositional.... Resistance is not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention, nor is it the simple negation or exclusion of the 'content' of another culture, as a difference once perceived. It is the effect of ambivalence produced within the rules of recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the signs of cultural difference and reimplicate them within the deferential relations of colonial power – hierarchy, normalization, marginalization, and so forth.[131]

Moore adds that, '[colonial discourse] is riddled with contradictions and incoherences, traversed by anxieties and insecurities, and hollowed out by originary lack and internal heterogeneity.' Furthermore, Moore adds that for Bhabha the locus of colonial power, far from being explicitly on the side of the colonizer, exists in a shifting, unstable, potentially subversive, 'in-between' space between colonizer and colonized, 'which is characterized by *mimicry*, on the one hand, in which the colonized follows the colonizer's authoritative command to imitation, but in a manner that constantly threatens to teeter over into mockery; and by *hybridity*, on the other hand, another insidious product of the colonial encounter that further threatens to fracture the colonizer's identity and authority'.[132]

The analytical tool of hybridity may help avoid some of the dichotomies that have too often characterized descriptions of both Paul's and Josephus' relationship to Roman power. At times, Paul and Josephus have been labelled *either* (at best) as

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[131] H.K. Bhabha, 'Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817', *CI* 12, no. 1 (1985), 144-65, at 150, 152-3.

[132] S.D. Moore, 'Questions of Biblical Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree Outside Dehli; Or, the Postcolonial and the Postmodern', in *Postcolonial Biblical Criticism*, eds. S.D. Moore and F.F. Segovia (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 79-96, at 88.

political conservatives and (at worst) Roman sycophants, *or* as political 'subversives' employing a subtle range of irony, silence and hidden transcripts to resist Roman domination. While I am very much in favour of recognizing ironic devices and strategic silence in the works of Paul and Josephus, these binary classifications force one into choosing sides too early and often as the result of prior ideological agendas. By utilizing postcolonial concepts of hybridity, mimicry and doubleness one may be better able to see ambivalence and complexity in Paul and Josephus as, to varying degrees, they *both* affirm Roman political power, worldviews and values *and* mirror these back to Rome in a thoroughly Jewish reading that leads to destabilizing and unexpected results. For example, the optic of hybridity should draw our attention to what role Josephus and Paul give to Roman authorities in their documents and how Roman categories, values and assertions are picked up and reworked by our writers. But even before doing this, we must identify whether Paul and Josephus express themselves as 'hybridized' subjects at all and how this is expressed in their work and thought world. The point is not simply to use postcolonial theory as a blunt tool to analyse Paul and Josephus. We must be open to the fact that what is fruitful for analysing one may not necessarily yield results for the other.

1.5. Research Questions and Thesis Outline

Once more, *the overall purpose of this study is to investigate Paul's construal of divine and imperial power in order to analyse to what extent he may be judged as pro-Roman, anti-Roman or in some sort of alternative relationship with Roman power*. In order to provide development and sharper focus to this question Josephus and his work *The Jewish War* will be drawn alongside Paul and his letters to the Romans and the Philippians. The value of this comparison is that it provides perspective and context to Paul's understanding of power, God and Rome and offers an additional layer of parallel questions that may be asked of both writers, including: How do they navigate the terrain between imperial self-image and Jewish/Christian identity? How to they perceive and respond to Roman views of history and reality? How do they interpret Roman power in relation to God's power? Since these questions relate to the issue of 'power' and power relationships, the study is attuned to the work of sociologists and postcolonial theorists and their interest in questions of empire, power relations, the creation and maintenance of hegemonic discourse, and the production of knowledge as a means of imposing power. In light of these added concerns we are reminded of Lukes' recommendation that instead of attempting to find a precise definition of power, we should focus on the question: 'What interests us when we are interested in power?' In this sense this study will by guided by a final layer of research questions in order to provide an overall framework for the analysis of Paul and Josephus. First, a narrow question regarding power asked by mainstream social theorists: Who is in power and what do they demand? Second, a deep question regarding power, also from the mainstream, which asks: Who is in charge of the universe and, related to this, who are we in relationship to this power? And, finally, a broad question regarding power that is drawn from second stream and postcolonial theorists, which asks: How do power relations work between Paul and the Roman Empire and Josephus and the Roman Empire? Or, to put this last point in other words, how is the dominant discourse of Roman power being represented, challenged, 'hybridised', or relativised by Paul and Josephus?

With these broad questions and theological resources at hand, the thesis will proceed in the following manner. The comparative case of Josephus, as gathered from his work *The Jewish War*, will focus first on the narrower issues of Josephus' roles as a historian and speaker and the conditions, constraints and challenges he dealt with as he offered his hybridised representation of the war (chapter 2). Next, attention will be turned to broader concerns and how the *War* concurs with and challenges Roman values, virtues and claims for power as they are conveyed in the portrayal of the Flavian Triumph and the generalship of Titus and Eleazar (chapter 3). After this, the study will shift its focus from Josephus to Paul and will pause to regather the questions and concerns that attend the final two chapters (chapter 4). With respect to Paul, Romans will be analysed in order to determine how this letter reflects concerns for imperial power and the role of Roman governing authorities (chapter 5). The second letter in focus will be the letter to the Philippians with particular attention given to how Paul may or may not employ the Christ event and the alternative community it generates to relativise or subvert the claims of Caesar and imperial power (chapter 6). The final step will be to draw together the threads of analysis and compare the work of Josephus and Paul and how, with respect to their own angle of vision, they perceive the relationship between God, history, the Romans and their particular communities of interest (chapter 7).

Chapter 2: Josephus as Historian and Speaker

2.1. Introduction

As the provincial historian Josephus wrote his narrative on the Jewish War in the mid-seventies in the quarters of Emperor Vespasian's former home, he was conscious of Roman claims for power – especially their claims in relation to the Jewish nation. Josephus' history is shaped by the power dynamics relating not only to his own participation in the war but also by the circumstances and constraints that existed while he wrote about the war. As has been outlined in the previous chapter, our analysis of this historical account is informed by two central concepts from postcolonial theory: the problematic of *representation* and colonial mimicry or *hybridity*. As it has been suggested by Barclay, postcolonial theory 'is particularly well attuned to the phenomenon of power and how subordinate groups can (or cannot) represent themselves'.[1] As a theory it is concerned with the power-relations between dominant nations and their subalterns who must live under their military, political, economic and intellectual power. But rather than merely chastising those who live under the yoke of imperial masters for their inability to cast off their subjugation, postcolonial theorists attempt to understand the complex ways 'with which superior nations or classes control not only the economic and material lives of their subordinates, but also the terms in which they are described and defined, even the terms in which they think and speak'.[2] As such, postcolonial theory is particularly interested in the production of knowledge: who has the power to impose their knowledge and for what purposes? Or, furthermore, who is allowed to write history? How are subjugated nations categorized and represented? Under what conditions, constraints and terms must a subordinate nation represent themselves? In what ways does the self-representation of the subordinate concur with, challenge or change the hegemonic discourse? These are the fundamental questions behind this chapter that seeks to analyse Josephus' approach to writing the *War* and his role as a historian and spokesperson for the Jewish nation. The first task, however, will be to examine the Flavian representation of the Jewish War itself after illustrating several key Roman historiographical assumptions.

[1] Barclay, 'Empire', 316.
[2] Barclay, 'Empire', 317.

2.2. Flavian Representation of the Jewish War

Why study history? Who decides what is important in history? In the preface to several well-known histories, we glimpse some Roman historians' basic answers to these questions. Polybius, a 'Romanised' historian, begins by acknowledging what he learned from his predecessors:

> The soundest education and training for a life of active politics is the study of History, and that the surest and indeed the only method of learning how to bear bravely the vicissitudes of fortune, is to recall the calamities of others. Evidently therefore no one, and least of all myself, would think it his duty at this day to repeat what has been so well and so often said. For the very element of unexpectedness in the events that I have chosen as my theme will be sufficient to challenge and incite young and old alike to peruse these pages. For who is so worthless or indolent as not to wish to know by what means and under what system of polity the Romans in less than fifty-three years have succeeded in subjecting nearly the whole inhabited world to their sole government – a thing unique in history? Or who again is there so passionately devoted to other spectacles or studies as to regard anything as of greater moment than the acquisition of this knowledge?[3]

The purpose of studying history, according to Polybius, is educational – especially in training for a 'life of active politics'. It dispels ignorance and offers examples that one should imitate or avoid.[4] But there is a deeper lesson in this 'education' that instructs the reader about the reality of the world during Polybius' day, namely, the reality that the Romans are masters of the land and the sea and that they have reduced the whole inhabited world to obedience and they left behind them an empire not to be paralleled in the past or rivalled in the future (*Hist.* 1.2.7). History is important, but *Roman* history in particular is important because Rome rules the world. The choice of one's topic and one's stance towards that topic carry significant ideological freight. For example, in the work of the Augustan historian, Livy, whose interests were far more directed toward *moral* instruction than practical lessons, his topic of choice is, not surprisingly, the 'deeds of the foremost people of the world'[5] – the Romans. Livy goes on to note somewhat tongue-in-cheek that

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[3] Polybius, *Hist.* 1.1.2-6. Unless stated otherwise, all classical citations are from the Loeb Classical Library; all citations from Josephus are my own translations.

[4] See also the Livy's *praef.*, 10: 'What chiefly makes the study of history wholesome and profitable is this, that you behold the lessons of every kind of experience set forth as on a conspicuous monument: from these you may choose for yourself and for your own state what to imitate, from these mark for avoidance what is shameful in the conception and shameful in the result.' J. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 29, distinguishes between Polybius' emphasis on the *practical* lessons of history and Livy's focus on the *moral* benefits of history.

[5] Livy, *praef.*, 3.

> It is the privilege of antiquity to mingle divine things with human, and so to add dignity to the beginnings of cities; and if any people ought to be allowed to consecrate their origins and refer them to a divine source, so great is the military glory of the Roman people that when they profess that their Father and the Father of their Founder was none other than Mars, the nations of the earth may well submit to this also with as good a grace as they submit to Rome's dominion.[6]

This passage from Livy illustrates a Roman historian's answer to the question of who has the power to write his or her own history and from what point of view they may do so. His answer is that since Rome rules the earth, Rome has the power to claim divine origins for their empire and their subjects would do well to submit to this assertion 'with as good a grace as they submit to Rome's dominion'. It is not enough simply to state that Rome has worldwide hegemony; the point is that they are in the position to assert their canons of knowledge and impose their systems upon their subjects as part of a discourse of domination. Historiography, then, is being used as part of the techniques and tactics of domination.[7] In telling the story of Rome, Polybius and Livy grant Rome precedence in defining who is important, or to put it another way, who is deemed worthy to 'construct' the world.[8] In this constitution of power relations, the ability to record and publish history is used as a tool of world construction. Understood within postcolonial theory, Roman power shapes the discourse of their historical representation.

2.2.1. Flavian Imperial Legitimacy

Flavian claims for imperial legitimacy were intimately tied with the Jewish War of 66-70 CE. In quelling the rebellion in Judea, the Flavian dynasty represented itself as returning stability, order, and peace to the Roman Empire. First in triumphal procession, and later through coinage,[9] architecture[10] and historical record,[11] the

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[6] Livy, *praef.*, 7.

[7] Cf. Foucault, *Power*, 102, who argues that the study of power must not be limited to an examination of juridical sovereignty and state institutions, but also analyse 'the *techniques* and *tactics* of domination'.

[8] The conscious use of 'construction' and its variants is borrowed from Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction.*

[9] I.e., the series of *IVDAEA CAPTA* coins. Further, divinely ordained victory was heralded with the themes of *Fortuna Redux, Aeternitas,* and *Providentia* on Rome's coins after the accession of the Flavians. For *Fortuna Redux* on Flavian coins see H. Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum 2: Vespasian to Domitian* (London: Trustees, 1930), 114 no. 529, 127 no 589, 130 no. 603; for *Aeternitas* see *BMC* 111, 194; for *Providentia* see *BMC* plate 23 no. 12, 142-3, nos 642, 649. Cf. I. Carradice, 'Towards a New Introduction to the Flavian Coinage', in *Modus Operandi: Essays in*

celebration of the Jewish defeat was a key symbol validating Flavian claims to imperial power. While this Flavian claim for legitimacy built on the back of the Jewish War is broadly recognized by scholars, J.A. Overman adds an important observation: success in the Jewish War was not, at first, the important propaganda element it later became in legitimizing Flavian imperial power but rather developed in two discernable stages.[12] In the first stage, the Jewish revolt is simply one issue among many as Vespasian worked to establish his base of power in the East. Building his case on passages in Tacitus and Suetonius, Overman argues that Vespasian was 'in step with a fairly well established Roman political pattern of building one's reputation and financial and military support out East before returning to Rome to assume and accept power'.[13] Vespasian required support in the East, especially in Syria and Egypt, and initially his presence in Judea to quell the revolt was a first step towards his successful bid for power.[14] 'While the civil strife in Judea was a problem to be faced, and success there would be important for any aspiring world ruler, the Judean struggles took place within a larger context of laying the foundation for Flavian success and subsequent Flavian rule'.[15]

Once Vespasian was assured of support in the East he was, as Suetonius wrote, 'well prepared for civil war'.[16] Overman points out: 'that the youthful and inexperienced Titus was charged with taking care of the Revolt while Vespasian took leave for other places supports the claim that the real issue and concern in 68-9 CE

Honour of Geoffrey Rickman, eds. M. Austin, J. Harries and C. Smith (London: University of London, 1998), 93-117.

[10] E.g., the Arch(es) of Titus, the Colosseum, the temple of Peace. See L. Feldman, 'Financing the Colosseum', *BAR* 27.4 (2001), 20-31, 60-61; F. Millar, 'Last Year in Jerusalem: Monuments of the Jewish War in Rome', in *Flavius Josephus*, 101-28.

[11] Josephus mentions the inadequacy of other historians work on the Jewish war, cf. *War* 1.1-2. F. Parente, 'The Impotence of Titus, or Flavius Josephus's *Bellum Judaicum*, as an Example of "Pathetic" Historiography', in *Josephus and Jewish History*, 47-48, identifies at least two other historians, one Roman and one Jewish, who may be behind some of these other histories of the Jewish War. He suggests that the *official* Roman chronicler of the Jewish war was the former procurator of Judea (*War* 6.238), Marcus Antonius Julianus, mentioned by Minucius Felix in *Octavius* 33.2-4; on the Jewish side, the history written by Josephus' compatriot, Justus of Tiberias, represents an account that conflicted with that of Josephus and one that he took exception to (*Vita* 358). See also the discussion in M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism - 3 Volumes* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974), 1:455-57. On a near contemporary's view of the war, see Tacitus (c. 55 – 117 CE), *Hist.*, 5.

[12] J.A. Overman, 'The First Revolt and Flavian Politics', in *The First Jewish Revolt: Archaeology, history, and ideology*, eds. A.M. Berlin and J.A. Overman (London: Routledge, 2002), 213-220.

[13] Overman, 'Revolt', 214.

[14] Tacitus, *Agr.* 7.

[15] Overman, 'Revolt', 214.

[16] *Vesp.* 7.

was preparing for possible civil war and laying a serious claim to the throne'.[17] The impression left by this is that the Judean conflict was simply a distraction for Vespasian amidst his larger imperial concerns. However, when Vespasian's accession was complete and the Flavian line securely established, then the role and representation of the Jewish *Revolt* metamorphosed into the Jewish *War* that brought peace to the worldwide empire.

What accounts for the Flavian change of view on the Jewish War? Initially Vespasian is portrayed as the one who brought *Pax* to the empire when, according to Tacitus, 'the whole world' was engulfed in civil war and Judea was merely one trouble spot among others in Gaul, the Spanish provinces, both upper and lower Germany, the Balkans, Egypt, and Syria.[18] Over time, however, a second stage can be discerned when the role of the Jewish revolt changed from being one conflict among many to becoming an overemphasized war by the Flavian political machinery. Several factors drove the Jewish revolt to the forefront of Flavian propaganda. On the one hand, the Emperor Vespasian required a more substantial claim for accession beyond simply filling the power vacuum created by one of the most tumultuous years of the Empire. On the other hand, his ready-made successor, Titus, also required justification for his office. This was made especially acute since one of the key factors Vespasian used to promote his bid for power was the dynastic stability he offered with two sons in waiting.[19] The circumstance of the Jewish revolt served to answer both of these questions rather conveniently. As M. Goodman observes, 'the Flavian dynasty needed a great victory to give it the prestige which, as a scion of a quite insignificant family, the new emperor Vespasian urgently needed'.[20] The defeat of the Jews allowed Vespasian to claim that he restored worldwide peace by means of a 'foreign' victory (untrue though this was) and deflect the matter of civil unrest that marred the

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[17] Overman, 'Revolt', 214; cf. Dio who, oddly, in one place (64.13-14) does not even acknowledge that it was Titus who was left in Judea and simply states that after Vespasian 'entrusted the war with the Jews to others, he proceeded to Egypt'.

[18] *Hist.* 4.3.

[19] This is in contrast to the single, and noticeably licentious Vitellius, who reflected more the excesses and eccentricities of Nero (cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.62; 2.71; *War* 4.596-97). That Vespasian was determined to see his sons rule after him is expressed in the comment by Suetonius: 'Everyone agrees that he always had such faith in the astrological predictions made concerning himself and his sons that even after frequent conspiracies against him he still maintained to the senate that, if his sons did not succeed him, no one would' (*Vesp.* 25).

[20] M. Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt against Rome A.D. 66-70* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 236; cf. M.T. Griffin, 'The Flavians', in *The Cambridge Ancient History, 2nd Edn., Vol XI: The High Empire AD 70-192*, eds. A.K. Bowman, P. Garnsey and D. Rathbone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-83.

Empire. Even more importantly for Titus, the suppression of the Jews provided him with a military record of service. As R. Syme reminds us, 'sacking Jerusalem was Titus' sole claim to glory'[21] and Overman adds: 'that defeat had to be interpreted as an event that had empire-wide implications, not a local disturbance or a parochial *seditio'*.[22]

2.2.2. Defeat of the Jews and Flavian Propaganda

The 'great victory' over the Jews offered a clear focal point with which to emphasise both restored Roman peace and Flavian pedigree – and to do so by representing both the Jewish people and their god as inferior to the Romans and their god(s). With this in place the propaganda machinery went to work. First, the triumphal procession[23] in June 71 CE celebrated jointly by Vespasian and Titus, declared Roman might and the superiority of their gods (*War* 7.116- 57). In an unusual innovation to the triumph, sacred vessels of a defeated nation were included as a central element of the procession:[24] After the procession the gold menorah and offering table from the temple were placed in the great monument of the new dynasty, the temple of *Pax* (*War* 7.158-62; Dio 66.15.1). Further these sacred objects were included in one of the two inner reliefs in the Arch of Titus. With the temple destroyed and its cult symbolically captive in Rome Vespasian took another action to advertise the end of the Jewish cult by imposing the *fiscus Iudaicus.* Vespasian ordered that the annual half-shekel temple contribution by all adult Jewish males between ages 20 and 50 be transferred to a yearly two-drachma tax sent to the Capitolium and, as if to add further insult, the tax was extended in age and gender. While this move was no doubt motivated by financial necessity, the symbolism of the tax transfer from support of the Jewish god to support of the chief Roman god could hardly be missed: Roman gods were superior to the Jewish god.

A second aspect of the Flavian propaganda machine at work was the production of *IVDAEA CAPTA* coins. The coins enjoyed an Empire-wide distribution

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[21] R. Syme, 'The *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus', *CQ* 23 (1929), 135-36, at 35.
[22] Overman, 'Revolt', 216.
[23] Millar, 'Jerusalem', 101, points out that Josephus' account of the triumph 'is the fullest description which survives of any triumph held in the Imperial period.'
[24] Cf. M. Goodman, 'Josephus as Roman Citizen', in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essay in Memory of Morton Smith*, eds. F. Parente and J. Sievers (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 329-38, at 338.

and unusually long run (i.e., at least 10-12 years). The images on the coins proclaimed divine approval for the Flavians, Roman power, subjugation of the Jews and Flavian virtues.[25] The coins, however, expressed another innovation in Imperial power projection. As Overman notes, 'while the utilization of coins in the political and cultural wars of Rome was not anything new, most provincial or regional defeats leading up to the Flavians had not been celebrated in coins'.[26] For example, the suppression of Boudicca in 60 CE did not evoke *Brittania Capta* coins.[27]

A third, and longest standing, aspect of the Flavian propaganda program that exploited the defeat of the Jews to best advantage is exhibited in the extensive Flavian building campaign after the War. Interestingly, the opportunity to create a lasting Flavian imprint on Rome was made possible by the fact that Vitellius had left Rome in ruins and in desperate need of a makeover. First, the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus was reconstructed and, not insignificantly, was financed by the *fiscus Iudaicus (War* 7.218). Next, the Flavians built a temple to *Pax* (75 CE), the goddess of Peace, containing the sacred vessels from the Jewish temple, 'with the clear intimation that the Roman world had been saved from war only by the suppression of the Jews'.[28] The erection of the Arch to Titus soon followed in the Circus Maximus (c. 80/81 CE) as a dramatic symbol of Roman and Flavian subjugation of Judea. The surviving inscription from this arch celebrates the suppression of the Jewish people and the destruction of Jerusalem:

> The Roman Senate and people [dedicate this] to the Emperor Titus Caesar Vespasian Augustus, son of the deified Vespasian, pontifex maximus, holding the tribuncian power for the tenth year, acclaimed imperator seventeen times, consul eight times, father of his country, their princeps, because with the guidance and plans of his father, and under his auspices, he subdued the Jewish people and destroyed the city of

[25] The coins had the image of a Roman soldier on them with Judea, often symbolized as a woman, kneeling and sometimes blindfolded before the Roman god Nike/Victoria or as a Jewish man with his hands bound as a captive (cf. *BMCRE* II, 115-18 and *passim*). For the Roman virtues and divine approval expressed on Flavian coins, see note 9 above.

[26] Overman, 'Revolt', 215.

[27] Cf. Goodman, *Judaea*, 235.

[28] Goodman, *Ruling*, 236; cf. *War* 7.158-62. Goodman notes further that although this claim was untrue it was psychologically effective 'since Vespasian's seizure of power had indeed ended extremely bloody warfare but, since that warfare was of the civil variety and Vespasian's role in it had been as self-seekingly ambitious as that of the other contenders for the imperial throne, it was not possible to boast publicly about his achievement in bringing it to an end. This technique of tacit celebration of the cessation of civil war by openly marking a foreign victory had been used by Augustus in the erection of the Ara Pacis, and Vespasian's temple to the same divinity was probably built in direct imitation of the first emperor'. On the Ara Pacis, cf. *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 12.

> Jerusalem, which all generals, kings, and peoples before him had either attacked without success or left entirely unassailed.[29]

The claim is extraordinarily untrue. Although the claim demonstrates Roman ignorance of biblical history about previous sacks of Jerusalem,[30] it also flies in the face of Josephus' account in the *War* relating the capture of the city by both Pompey in 63 BCE (1.141-54) and Sosius[31] in 37 BCE (1.345-57), not to mention the Babylonian destruction (6.250, 267-70). This matter will be explored at greater length in the following chapter (see 3.1.2.2.). Nonetheless, it does illustrate the importance that the representation of the Jews as a 'subdued' people played in Flavian triumphalism and self-assertion, a fact that is pictorially represented in the famous relief of the triumphal procession on the second surviving Arch of Titus standing along the Velia on the way to one of most impressive structures in Rome, the Colosseum.

Of all the buildings constructed by the Flavians, the most impressive monument commemorating Roman power, Flavian prestige and Jewish subjugation is the Colosseum or, as it was originally known, the *Amphitheatrum Flavium*. Recently, F. Millar and L. Feldman have written convincing articles arguing that the Amphitheatre was funded 'from the spoils' (*ex manubi[i]s*) of the Jewish war.[32] They base their conclusion on the reconstructive work of G. Alföldy on a Flavian Amphitheatre inscription.[33] Alföldy reconstructs a text based on the holes for the nails holding the letters of a Flavian inscription underneath an existing inscription. According to Alföldy, the original text should read:

> I[mp(erator)] T(itus) Caes(ar) Vespasi[anus Aug(ustus)] amphitheatru[m novum?] [ex] manubi(i)s (vacat) [fieri iussit?]

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[29] *CIL* VI, no 944.

[30] By all accounts this is not surprising given the general ignorance, if not incomprehension, about the Jews by Romans. E.g., Tacitus *Hist.* 5; cf. E.S. Gruen, 'Roman Perspectives on the Jews in the Age of the Great Revolt', in *First Jewish Revolt*, 27-42, on the almost complete lack of serious investigation of Jews by Roman intellectuals both before and after the war in 70 CE and their superficial understanding that led to misinformed opinions and caricatures about the Jews.

[31] Millar, 'Jerusalem', 122, remarks that 'Sosius had celebrated a triumph *ex Judaea* in 34 BCE and had built the temple near the Theatre of Marcellus sometimes referred to as that of "Apollo Sosianus". So the claim [on the inscription] was a simple and demonstrable falsehood'.

[32] See articles by F. Millar, 'The Inscriptions of Rome: Recovery, Recording, and Interpretation', *JRA* 11 (1998), 434 and L. Feldman, 'Financing the Colosseum', *BAR* 27.4 (2001), 20-31, 60-61 and Millar, 'Last Year ', 117-19.

[33] G. Alföldy, 'Eine Bauinschrift aus dem Colosseum', *ZPE* 109 (1995), 195-226.

> [The] E[mperor] T[itus] Caesar Vespasi[an Augustus] ordered [the new] amphitheatre [to be made from] the (proceeds from the sale of the) booty.[34]

The opening of this new amphitheatre with its attendant shows were the occasion for Martial's verse *On the Spectacles (De spectaculis)*:

> Where the starry colossus sees the constellations at close range and lofty scaffolding rises in the middle of the road, once gleamed the odious halls of a cruel monarch, and in all Rome there stood a single house. Where rises before our eyes the august pile of the Amphitheater, was once Nero's lake. Where we admire the warm baths, a speedy gift, a haughty tract of land had robbed the poor of their dwellings. Where the Claudian colonnade unfolds its wide-spread shade, was the outmost part of the palace's end. Rome has been restored to herself, and under your rule, Caesar, the pleasances that belonged to a master now belong to the people (*Spect.* 2).

Although Martial's words highlight the populist connection (in contrast to Nero's exclusivity) that the amphitheatre expressed between Vespasian and his people rather than memorializing the Jewish war, when his words are coupled with the reconstructed inscription it is clear that this magnificent structure is the single greatest monument in Imperial Rome to the war. Given that the triumphal route in Rome would have passed through both triumphal arches and that the eastern view from the second existing arch looks directly down the slope of the Velia to the Colosseum, the monuments combine to offer a vivid picture of power. As Millar notes, 'now that we know that the *Amphitheatrum* was financed, in the first instance by Vespasian, from the spoils of a war which must be the Jewish War, the connection between the two monuments becomes infinitely more powerful'.[35]

2.2.3. Flavian Representation – Concluding Comments

Clearly, the Jewish War and the destruction of the Jerusalem temple served a vital role in Flavian self-assertion. Furthermore, this war, so significant for the Flavians, did little to illuminate Roman understanding about their defeated enemy. E.

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[34] *CIL* 6.40454a = *AE* 1995, 111b. Several factors point to *manubiae* from the Jewish war being the funding source. First, Suetonius (*Vesp.* 16) indicates that Vespasian found the treasury and privy pursue in a desperate state and declared at the beginning of his reign forty billion sesterces, the largest sum of money ever mentioned in antiquity (i.e., billions of dollars in modern equivalent) were needed to refinance the state. Secondly, the only war fought by the Flavians where the booty acquired was sufficient to deal with this debt and finance their building projects was the Jewish War. We know that the Romans acquired tremendous treasures from Jerusalem, especially the temple (cf. *War* 6.282, 317, 387-91; 7.132-34, 148), and some 97,000 Jewish prisoners (*War* 6.418).

[35] Millar, 'Jerusalem', 125.

Gruen convincingly demonstrates that 'inspection of [Roman] texts on both sides of the chronological divide elicits a most surprising result. The Revolt itself does not appear to signal a watershed in the discourse on the Jews'.[36] Nonetheless, in utilizing the Jewish War for their own propaganda purposes the Flavians did their best to ensure that the Jewish people, their soldiers and their deity[37] were represented as inferior, if not depraved in comparison to the superiority of Roman arms, military virtue and divine favour. The Jewish defeat served to solidify typical Roman perceptions that they were a nation that had conquered the world,[38] that the greatest of all cities was Rome[39] and that they had been chosen by the gods to achieve these purposes,[40] indeed, it was by the favour of the gods that the empire was sustained and enlarged.[41] To be sure, there is no *written* evidence to suggest that Roman attitudes towards the Jews were fundamentally changed after the war as Gruen has carefully

[36] Gruen, 'Roman', 28; on the remarkable success of Jews in the Diaspora and pagan attitudes towards Jews see E.S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (London: Harvard University Press, 2002). Nonetheless, the Jewish faith was often ridiculed (cf. Cicero who brands Jewish practices as *barbara superstitio*, *Pro Flacco* 67; see also Seneca, *apud* Augustine, *City of God* 6.11; Plutarch, *On Stoic Self-contradictions* 38; *On Superstition* 69C; Quintilian, *Inst.* 3.7.21; Tacitus, *Hist.* 2.4, 5.8.2-3, 5.13.1; *Annals* 2.85) and their religious practices frequently lampooned (cf. attitudes on Sabbath observance in Juvenal 14.105-6, Persius 5.179-82 and Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4.3; on Jewish diet, see Petronius, *Satyricon* 37, Juvenal 6.159-60, Plutarch, *Banquet Debates* 4.5.2; on circumcision, see Petronius 68.4-8, Juvenal 14.103-4, Martial 7.30.5, 11.94).

[37] The inferiority of the Jewish god and the superiority of the Roman gods projected by the Flavians coincide with Roman perceptions that extend back at least to the first century BCE and through the second century CE. For example, Cicero, (*Flac.* 69) condemns the Jews' 'barbarous superstition' and alludes to Pompey's recent conquest of Jerusalem (63 BCE) by jibing 'how dear [the Jewish nation] was to the immortal gods has been shown by the fact that it has been conquered, farmed out to the tax-collectors and enslaved'; the Roman Caecilius in Minucius Felix's *Octavius* 10 argues that Christians should not confine their worship to one God as did the Jews, since their God 'has so little force or power that he is enslaved with his own special nation to the Roman deities'; Celsus also ridicules the notion of Jewish divine favour and sees their defeat and captivity to Rome as evidence for this conclusion (Origen, *Cels.* 5.41).

[38] A *populus victor gentium*, Pliny the Younger *Pan.* 51.3; cf. Zvi Yavetz, 'Latin authors on Jews and Dacians', *Historia* 47, no. 1 (1998), 77-107.

[39] A *princeps urbium,* Horace, *Carm.* 43.13; *domicilium imperii et gloriae*, Cicero, *Rep.* 2.4.10; *Pro Sulla* 33.

[40] E.g., Pliny the Elder, '[Italy] is at once the nursling and the mother of all other lands, chosen by the providence of the gods to make heaven itself more glorious, to unite scattered empires, to make manners gentle, to draw together in converse by community of language the jarring and uncouth tongues of so many nations, to give mankind civilisation, and in a word to become throughout the world the single fatherland of all the races' (*Nat.* 3.39); the bounty of nature in the Empire is 'all owing to the boundless grandeur of the Roman Peace.... May this gift of the gods last, I pray, for ever (27.3); '[the Romans are] the nation that has conquered the earth, that has subdued the whole world, that distributes tribes and kingdoms, that dispatches its dictates to foreign peoples, that is heaven's representative, so to speak, among mankind' (36.118).

[41] E.g., Valarius Maximus, 1.1.8: 'the gods [are] ... ever watchful to augment and protect an imperial power by which even minor items of religious significance are seen to be weighed with ... scrupulous care; Cicero, *Har. Resp.* 19: 'Who, once convinced that divinity does exist, can fail at the same time to be convinced that it is by its power that this great empire has been created, extended, and sustained?' [numine hoc tantum imperium esse natum et auctum et retentum?].

demonstrated. The Romans viewed the Jews, after the war, as they were prior to it: they were a deeply misunderstood and maligned people.[42] In their audacity to wage war against their 'noble' patron Rome, their height of ingratitude brought down the crushing might of the Roman Empire. True, the Roman perception may not have changed towards the Jews, but it was entrenched by *physical* representation in coinage, marble and Jewish blood. At least one Jew living in Rome took measured, but motivated steps to address this representation, the Jewish general, priest and, now, historian: Flavius Josephus.

2.3. Josephus as Historian

If the success of the Jewish war is represented as bringing stability, order, and peace to the Roman Empire, then the converse could be said for the fortunes of Diaspora Jews. Any Jew present in Rome could not but have looked on in horror and grief at the triumph, so poignantly described by Josephus.[43] Diaspora Jews, not least those Jews living at the heart of the Empire in Rome itself, had long lived with the precariousness resulting from the vicissitudes of Roman imperial rule. The Jewish community in Rome had experienced the misfortunes as a vulnerable, visible, and often misunderstood minority, occasionally resulting in expulsion from the capital city. The reasons for expulsion varied from food shortages and tax revolts to civic disturbances and religious misunderstandings. Although in the immediate period after the war the Jewish community in Rome did not experience any recriminations, it is nonetheless plausible that the combination of the triumph, the proclamation of *IVDAEA CAPTA* on coins and arches, and the imposition of the harrowing *fiscus Iudaicus* brought increased instability and dissonance, and potential hostility to the Jewish community.[44] The centre of their symbolic universe, the temple in Jerusalem, was no more.

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[42] Cf. Gruen, *Diaspora*, 57.

[43] Cf. *War* 7.139-157, and the captives adorned with beautiful garments to conceal any 'disgust from their tortured bodies' (7.138), the vivid spectacle of the moving stages depicting the war in all its gore (7.139-147) and the climactic scourging and execution of the Jewish general, Simon son of Gioras (7.154).

[44] Cf. S. Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003), 60-64; P. Spilsbury, 'Flavius Josephus on the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire', *JTS* 54 (2003), 1-3; E.S. Gruen, 'Roman', 27-42. On the tensions experienced by Roman Jews under Domitian see J.M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan, 323 BCE - 117 CE* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 310-13; Goodman, 'Roman Citizen', 331-2; E.M. Smallwood,

Before we examine Josephus as a historian and his role as a spokesperson for the Jews, it may be helpful to summarize how utilizing the tools of postcolonial analysis will direct our perspective by drawing on Barclay's approach in *Against Apion*.[45] First, we should appreciate that Josephus wrote his history of the Jewish War under the considerable constraints of empire. As Josephus wrote the *War* sometime in the mid-70s, the tragedy of the destruction of the temple was still a vivid memory. These constraints included not only the raw reality of the subjugation of the Jewish revolt and the fact that Josephus' current place of residence[46] daily reminded him at whose pleasure he served, but he was also constrained by his intent, as a provincial Jew, to communicate effectively to *Roman* elite.[47] It would have been counter-productive if not suicidal to confront directly Roman policy towards the Jews. 'As a political subject in Rome, and as an apologist, Josephus cannot afford to allow his discourse to clash openly with Roman sensibilities'.[48] Not surprisingly, his narrative openly projects deference towards Roman military power and values. Josephus is keen to underline the superiority and ruthless effectiveness of the Roman armies and their generals,[49] while at the same time maintaining that they are humane and clement masters.[50] Secondly, as Josephus writes to the Roman imperial elite as a Jewish, colonized historian it is important to be alert not only to the ways in which he affirms Roman values, but also to the ways in which he alters Roman assertions for his own interests in directions that create complex, destabilizing and unexpected results. That is to say, we must be attentive to doubleness and hybridizations in the discourse. Finally, as Barclay continues, 'we might also find in Josephus, suitably

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'Domitian's Attitude toward the Jews and Judaism', *CP* 51 (1956), 1-13; E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 371-85.

[45] See Barclay, 'Empire', 320-21 and *Against Apion*, LXVI-LXXI; cf. P. Spilsbury, 'Reading the Bible in Rome: Josephus and the Constraints of Empire', in *Josephus and Jewish*, 209-27, at 210.

[46] For his services after the war, Josephus was granted Roman citizenship, a pension, extensive states in Judea exempt from taxes, and a residence in Vespasian's former palace (*Life* 422-29).

[47] On Josephus' *intended* audience for *War*, see S. Mason, 'Of Audience and Meaning: Reading Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*', in *Josephus and Jewish History*, 71-100 and Price, 'Provincial', 101-18. Questions of audience will be addressed more fully in the following chapter (see chap 3.4.).

[48] Barclay, 'Empire', 320.

[49] Josephus clearly admires Roman military discipline and prowess (e.g., *War* 2.577; 3.70-109). Cf. F.W. Walbank, *Polybius, Rome and the Hellenistic World: Essays and Reflections*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 271, remarks that 'it seems overwhelmingly likely' that Josephus' account of the Imperial army in *War* 3.70-109 was inspired by the description of the republican army by Polybius, 4.19-42.

[50] E.g., in *War* 6.340-41, 350 Titus' address to the rebels highlights Roman 'humanity' (φιλανθρωπία) and clemency (πραότης). Also, Titus is repeatedly portrayed as interested in alleviating the populace under siege in Jerusalem (e.g., 5. 360-61, 519, 556; 6.214-197.111) and maintaining the sanctity of the temple (e.g., 5.402; 6.99-102, 241, 256).

concealed or partial in expression... hints of a cultural defiance which refuses to let Judaism merely mirror back to the Romans' their own cultural mores'.[51] Reading the *War* with these angles of view may serve to open up the interesting and complex ways with which Josephus related to Roman power amidst the political and social constraints that shaped his discourse.

2.3.1. The Prologue to *The Jewish War*

It has been recognized by numerous scholars that Josephus' political history is apologetic, tendentious and cast in a distinctly pro-Roman light.[52] The obvious place to begin testing these conclusions is the opening pages of the history. Like that of any good historian, the proem to Josephus' history is thematically and rhetorically significant.[53] He begins (*War* 1.1-12) by establishing his reasons for writing, introducing the main themes and arguing for his own suitability as a historian of the account. In a somewhat surprising move, he turns to criticize certain erudite Greeks (1.13-16), possibly an oblique way of demonstrating that he was in vigorous dialogue with other historians in the capital.[54] Next (1.17-18), he sets the historical scope of his narrative by establishing the limits of his account. Finally (1.19-30), he provides a

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[51] Barclay, 'Empire', 321.

[52] As such many of these writers conclude Josephus is merely a disingenuous propagandist for the Flavians and wrote to deflect blame for the war's tragic consequences from the Romans. The low regard for Josephus as a historian has a long-running history of its own in modern scholarship, cf. R.A. Laqueur, *Der jüdische Historiker Flavius Josephus* (Giessen: Münchow'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1920), 229, 256; W. Weber, *Josephus und Vespasian: Untersuchungen zu dem jüdischen Krieg des Flavius Josephus* (Berlin: W. Kohlhammer, 1921), 23, 44, 54; G.A. Williamson, *The World of Josephus* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964), 276ff.; W.R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus: an inquiry into Jewish nationalism in the Greco-Roman period* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1973), 15-16 and 19-20; S.J.D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Developments as a Historian* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 86, 97, 232ff.; M. Stern, 'Josephus and the Roman Empire as Reflected in *The Jewish War*', in *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity*, eds. L.H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 73; M. Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D*, trans. David Smith (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), 15; S. Schwartz, *Josephus and Judean Politics* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 15; B. Levick, *Vespasian* (London: Routledge, 1999), 3; M.T. Griffin, 'The Flavians', in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Vol XI: The High Empire AD 70-192*, eds. A.K. Bowman, P. Garnsey and D. Rathbone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-83, at 4. While he may not share most of these scholars' conclusion that Josephus' history is entirely unreliable, according to H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus: The Man and the Historian* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1967), 47, 'the glamour of imperial Rome and adulation of his patrons have overcoloured the picture [of the *Jewish War*], detracted from the historian's impartiality and on occasion raised serious doubts as to his veracity. The campaign is viewed through Roman spectacles'.

[53] The proem is a key component in establishing the historian's claim to authority and credibility; cf., Marincola, *Authority*, 3-12.

[54] Mason, 'Audience', 88, adds that Josephus takes 'advantage of traditional Roman stereotypes of the Greeks, as money-grubbing windbags (1.16), to drive home his attack'.

prospectus of the entire narrative – especially highlighting 'the efforts of the Romans to spare a foreign people' and Titus' repeated attempts 'to save the city and temple' (1.27-28) – in a manner that 'conspicuously reaches out to a Roman audience'.[55] For purposes of our analysis we will examine how the prologue to the *War* serves to introduce the character, aims and conditions of Josephus' historiography.

As he opens the narrative to the *War*, Josephus expresses not only the necessity of this history and his personal suitability for the task at hand, but highlights it in such a way as to emphasize the importance of the work in recording 'the greatest combined war not only of our time, but also as far as we have heard of wars which have broken out between cities against cities or nations against nations' (*War* 1.1).[56] The necessity of the history that Josephus sets out to write is based on his low opinion of the works of other historians who have poorly recounted the story of the war through their ill-informed positions or malicious intentions. The task, at first glance, is simple: set the record straight. The 'truth' is at stake and, left unattended, he thinks it 'monstrous, therefore, to allow the *truth* of affairs of such importance to go astray,' especially since his narrative had already received an audience with the Parthians and Babylonians[57] while the Greeks and Romans remain 'ignorant of these things, having only flattering or fictitious narratives to rely upon' (1.6).

In contrast to (unnamed) historians,[58] Josephus views himself as exceedingly qualified to offer an accurate and reliable account of the war. Unlike the inadequate accounts of other historians who write out of ignorance or bias, Josephus views his unique position as one who witnessed the events from both sides of the conflict to qualify him to write accurately and impartially. As a work of Greco-Roman history, it reflects the form and content of recognized ancient historians like Thucydides and Polybius,[59] and shares the convictions and conventions of a number of his closer

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[55] Cf. Mason, 'Audience', 95-7, argues that Josephus has shaped the prospectus in terms of its key characters and themes in such a way as to appeal to Roman concerns, and deliberately omits overtly Jewish concerns that will factor significantly in the narrative itself.

[56] Marincola, *Authority*, 9, notes that referring to one's topic as the 'greatest' in history, is a familiar *topos* for ancient historians (e.g., Thucydides 1.1.1).

[57] Josephus' reference to a previously written Aramaic work, that is no longer extant. Cf., S. Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003), 65, on the relationship of this Aramaic work to the extant Greek.

[58] As Parente, 'Impotence', 47-8, suggests, Josephus may have in mind the Roman historian Marcus Antonius Julianus and the history written by Josephus' compatriot, Justus of Tiberias.

[59] E.g., Josephus reflects the language, style and form of ancient historiography along with the expected proemial *topoi*, set speeches, dramatic and historic elements; cf. Mader, *Historiography*, 5-10, *passim*; P. Bilde, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, His Works, and their Importance* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 202. On Thucydidean elements in the *War* see T. Rajak,

contemporaries.[60] Josephus' aim is to provide a history that is thorough, truthful, and without flattery.[61] In fact, Josephus is especially critical of those who exaggerate claims of Roman power (*War* 1.9). In the craft of history writing, Josephus is striking a pose for a power-claim: only he can tell the history right. It is important to recognise the significance of this claim. Josephus, in a manner that appears unique among peoples conquered by the Romans,[62] asserts that as a general and priest of a defeated nation (1.1-2) he can more adequately than others represent the Jewish War to the Roman people.

That a defeated, provincial 'foreigner' (ἀλλόφυλος; cf. 1.16) from Jerusalem can tell the story of the Jews may account for one characteristic of his history that Josephus flags up himself as distinctively *unlike* the famed work of historians of the Greco-Roman world. These attempted to write with the cool detachment befitting a historian, while, in contrast, Josephus' work aches with the personal pain of a Jewish lament, echoing the language of the psalms of lament and the exilic prophets. Josephus bends historiographical convention towards Jewish lament and sustains this emphasis throughout the narrative. In this lament, Josephus is vulnerable to censure, recognizing that his emotional involvement is 'contrary to the law of history', but nonetheless he is unapologetic:

> Now be assured I have no intention of rivalling those who praise the deeds of the Romans by exaggerating the deeds of my own people. But I will recount the actions of both parties with accuracy. I will suit the words of the circumstances to my own feelings, and give my own sympathies (πάθος) an opportunity to lament (ἐπολοφύρεσθαι) the calamities of my native place. That it was ruined by civil strife (στάσις), and that the Jewish tyrants drew the unwilling hands of the Romans and fire upon the holy temple, Titus Caesar, who destroyed it, is himself a witness.... But if someone should slander us when we speak our accusations against the tyrants or bandits or for our lamentations (ἐπιστενάζω) over my country's failures, let him

Josephus: The Historian and His Society (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, 1983), 9, 93, 233-6; Goodman, *Ruling*, 19-20; L. Feldman, 'Josephus' Portrayal of the Hasmonaeans compared with 1 Maccabees', in *Josephus and the History*, 41-68, at 50. On Polybian elements (e.g., temple desecration) and themes in the War see S.J.D. Cohen, 'Josephus, Jeremiah, and Polybius', *HT* 21 (1982), 377-80; A.M. Eckstein, 'Josephus and Polybius', *CA* 9 (1990), 175-208; and Walbank, *Rome*, 258-76. On Josephus' use of Roman political invective (*War* 4.559-563) see Mader, *Historiography*, 9 and note 28.

[60] On some of the characteristics of Flavian historiography as the emphasis shifted from writing about the Republic to writing for the Emperor, see C.S. Kraus, 'From *Exempla* to *Exemplar*? Writing History Around the Emperor in Imperial Rome', in *Flavius Josephus*, 181-200.

[61] Cf. Tacitus' preface to *The Annals*, in which he scorns writers who have recounted the times of Augustus 'by swelling sycophancy' whereas in his own transmission of the story he intends to relate it 'without anger and partiality' (1.1.2-3).

[62] I.e., in contrast with Josephus, we do not have Gauls, Britons, Germans, etc., telling their own history.

> offer a kind judgement for an emotion (πάθος) which is *contrary to the law of history* (παρὰ τὸν τῆς ἱστορίας νόμον). For what is more, of all the cities under Roman rule it was our lot to advance to the highest good fortune and to fall to the lowest extreme of calamity. Indeed, in my opinion, the misfortunes of all nations since the world began fall short of those of the Jews; and, since the blame lay with no foreigner, it was impossible to restrain our grief (ὀδυρμός). If, however, any critic is too hard-hearted for pity (οἶκτος), on the one hand let them judge against the facts in the history, while on the other judge against the lamentations (ὀλόφυρμος) of the writer (*War* 1.9-12).[63]

Lament has a long and important pedigree within Jewish tradition as the category used when a king, priest or prophet calls on God to make right an injustice. Josephus employs this characteristic to tell the tragedy of the Jewish War, but in such a way that does not wipe out the uniqueness and future of the Jewish people.

As much as this passage cited above is replete with the language of lamentation, the incidence of pathos language continues throughout the *War* in proportions that are beyond other texts of Greek prose from this era.[64] Whatever Josephus' own perceived faults may be as a historian, the *War* stands out as a unique form of Greek tragic historiography. As P. Bilde notes, it 'is a work of tragic historiographical interpretation' – an attempt to describe the indescribable disaster of the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple.[65] Another point worth noting is Josephus' claim for Jewish exceptionalism (i.e., 'the misfortunes of all nations since the world began fall short of those of the Jews', 1.12). Even in the disaster that has befallen the Jews he highlights the unique place they take in world history. The question remains whether a Greco-Roman audience, familiar with the appropriate convention of critical distance necessary for a recognized historian, would have overlooked Josephus' personal lament.[66] While this might be unlikely for a Gentile

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[63] Eckstein, 'Josephus', 183, notes how this passage shares a number of similar elements with Polybius, 38.3-4: a defence of having to reveal the faults of one's countrymen; an apology for over-emotional language; and an admission that their nation had brought destruction upon themselves.

[64] The language of lament that occurs throughout the *War* in comparison with other Greek prose literature available in the Perseus Digital Library yields the following results: ὀλοφυρμός ('lamentation') occurs 18 times in Greek prose, 11 times in the works of Josephus, 8 times in *War*; ὀδυρμός ('a complaining', 'lamentation') occurs 26 times in Greek prose, 7 times in the works of Josephus, 5 times in *War*; οἶκτος ('pity') 88 times in Greek prose, 47 times in the works of Josephus, 22 times in *War*; and πάθος (that which is 'endured' or 'experienced', often of suffering) occurs 850 times in Greek prose, 208 times in the works of Josephus, 96 times in *War*. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/morphindex?lang=greek (6 June 2006).

[65] Bilde, *Josephus*, 72. H. Lindner, *Die Geschichtsauffassung des Flavius Josephus im Bellum Judaicum* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 132-141.

[66] Price, 'Provincial', 109-112, suggests that the violation of acceptable standards of historiography by this 'provincial' historian of limited standing likely contributed to his work being ignored by Roman readers. At the same time, as is argued below, Josephus' understanding of the direct role of God in the

reader, for a Jewish reader the narrative unfolds as an entirely appropriate piece of biblical history.[67]

One more comment in the prologue that betrays some hint of Josephus' intent to rework Roman frames of reference to his own purposes relates to the conditions of the Jewish conflict. Again we notice that Josephus, like Polybius[68] and Livy before him, uses his history not merely to recount events, but to shape reality. While Josephus, no less than Polybius and Livy, is quick to affirm the good fortune and supremacy of Rome, her generals and her armies (cf. 1.8), his recounting of this story also serves to relativise an exclusive claim for Roman hegemony. While 'proper' history has Rome as the ultimate focus, even at this early stage in the narrative Josephus begins to draw Rome under a Jewish canopy of reality. In this reality, Rome is not the only city of importance; rather, Jerusalem is projected as another city of world renown,[69] albeit one which has drunk the bitter wine of divine judgment. And, like recent circumstances that have beset Rome, Josephus attempts to demonstrate that the upheaval in Jerusalem is the result of internecine conflict: 'As the Romans had their own internal disorders, at the same time the revolutionary movement of the Jews, when they were in a flourishing position for riches at hand, arose in rebellion in this state of disorder' (*War* 1.4). Very early in the *War*, Josephus attempts to dispel any notion of widespread Jewish rebelliousness (στάσις) by deflecting the blame for the Jewish uprising onto the shoulders of a 'few' insurrectionists who dragged the nation into conflict with Rome.[70] In this regard, the history reflects an apologetic edge beyond merely recounting the events of the war, but it also indicates that he resists the temptation to define his conditions merely on Roman terms but from a perspective that includes Jerusalem.

Thus far we have suggested that Josephus' prologue reflects his careful attempts to negotiate his own perspective on the Jewish War without entirely

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unfolding of historical events is characteristically Jewish (cf. the lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah) and, as such, would appeal to a Jewish audience.

[67] Spilsbury, 'Rise', 9; see also Price, 'Provincial', 114.

[68] Mader, *Josephus*, 41-43, suggests, convincingly to my mind, that Polybius was one of the models, along with Thucydides, for historiography for Josephus. See also Cohen, 'Josephus', 377-380.

[69] Later in the history Josephus will further highlight that Jerusalem and her temple are a place of 'cosmic' significance (*War* 4.324) and that it is the Jewish nation that is 'beloved' (5.382) by God while the Romans are merely one nation in a series of nations that act as God's instruments to purify his people. See discussions below on providence/fortune (2.3.3) and Josephus as speaker (2.4.).

[70] The tendency to portray the rebellious war party as an *unrepresentative* minority group against the majority of Jews runs throughout the narrative, beginning in the prologue itself (*War* 1.10: 'throughout the war [Titus] was moved with sympathy for the people terrorized by the rebels [τῶν στασιαστῶν]'; e.g. 2.345-346, 399; 3.448, 454-455; 5.53).

offending Roman sensibilities or Flavian claims. He does so by mirroring back elements of accepted Greco-Roman historiography in terms of stylistic conventions and concurrence with Roman ideology about their military and political superiority. But there are hints that already he is more than just mirroring back to the Romans their own discourse. He claims, as a 'foreigner' and a Jew to be able to tell the story of the war better than any other historian. He bends the rules of Greco-Roman historiographical convention towards Jewish lament in order to highlight the significance of the Jewish people, their city and their temple. He is critical of alternative histories that exaggerate Roman power and he begins to carve out a space whereby the concerns of Jerusalem and the Jewish people share similar ground with Rome. Although this does not necessarily constitute a direct challenge to Rome, it does hint at a cultural defiance that establishes a basis for Jewish pride.

2.3.2. Josephus' Calling and the Surrender at Jotapata

As an important transition stage in the prologue between Josephus' description of the main themes of the narrative and a prospectus of the entire work, he notes that he will begin his history of the Jewish War at 'the point where [Greek] writers...and our prophets conclude' (1.18). Initially, this appears as an odd juxtaposition for in this phrase Josephus equates the roles of historians and prophets as similar in function. The question is why Josephus is doing so especially since the association between historiography and prophet is without equivalent in Greek or Roman culture.[71] Part of the answer may be uncovered later in the narrative when Josephus describes his own calling during the siege of Jotapata.

As has already been noticed, Josephus understands himself to be eminently suited to be a historian of the Jewish War and capable of representing the story of the war better than his contemporaries. This portrayal also seems to fit with the self-styled regard he has for himself as an ideal leader. Early in the narrative Josephus comments on the combined qualities that made John Hyrcanus a 'truly blessed individual' and leader:

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[71] Barclay, *Apion*, 28n152, commenting on *Apion* 1.37 writes '[Josephus'] association of Judean historiography with prophets (cf. *War* 1.18; 6.109) is without parallel in Greek or Roman culture, where prophets (or Sibyls) might predict the future, under divine inspiration, but had no role in the genre of historiography'. Thus, Thucydides, 1.22.4, concludes that the sober requirements of legitimate history requires that the work be 'devoid of myth' (τό μή μυθῶδες) even though it may 'detract somewhat from its interest'.

> He was the only man to have three of the most excellent privileges: the leadership of the nation, the high priesthood, and prophecy. For so closely was he in touch with the Deity, that he was never ignorant of the future; thus he foresaw and predicted.... (1.68-69)

With the concluding repetition of notions of foreknowledge, the emphasis on the three qualities of ideal leadership seems to fall on the final trait: prophecy.[72] And later, when Josephus himself appears in the narrative he draws the reader's attention to these same three qualities in himself. He portrays himself as the pre-eminent Jewish general,[73] a priest by birth[74] and a prophet resembling Daniel[75] and, especially, Jeremiah.[76] It is noteworthy that at no time does Josephus refer to himself directly as a προφήτης, since 'for him, as for the rabbis of the Tannaitic period onwards, genuine prophecy is limited to a normative age in the past'.[77] Nonetheless, even though he is explicit about identifying himself as a 'historian' his use of several terms (i.e., διάκονος in 3.354, 4.626 and ἄγγελος in 3.400) to indicate that he is one who understands and makes known God's will suggests that he *functions* as a prophet. His prophetic gifting not only helps save his own skin as he 'prophesies' the future accession of Vespasian as Caesar, it affords him his unique understanding of the Jewish situation. Despite these confident assertions about himself and his role(s), Josephus also seems attuned to the criticisms of being a Flavian quisling and a Jewish traitor. As the pace of the narrative slows down to recount the circumstances that led to his surrender to the Romans during the siege of Jotapata, the reader is offered hints

[72] Cf. J. Blenkinsopp, 'Prophecy and Priesthood in Josephus', *JJS* 25 (1974), 239-62; Cohen, 'Josephus, Jeremiah, and Polybius', 369-77; and R. Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: the Evidence from Josephus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 35-79. See also the discussion of prophecy in Mason, *Josephus*, 20-21, 46-51.
[73] *War* 2.568; cf. Cohen, *Josephus*, 91-7, on Josephus and the ideal general.
[74] *War* 1.3; 3.352. Marincola, *Authority*, 109-11, 145, notes that Josephus may have been using his claim as a priest to establish himself as a reliable witness since priests (e.g., Manetho, *FGrHist* 609 T 7a & FF 1, 10; Chaeremon of Alexandria, *FGrHist* 618 F2 & T6; Berossus of Babylon, *FGrHist* 680 T1 & F1b(1)) had privileged access to sacred writings, royal records and archives preserved in temples (cf. *Apion* 1.50-54). Additionally, Josephus may also have been asserting his nobility and asserting his social status in the Roman tradition (cf. *Life* 1-6).
[75] Cf. S. Mason, 'Josephus, Daniel, and the Flavian House', in *Josephus and the History*, 161-91, and *Josephus*, 93-94. See also Spilsbury, 'Rise', 7-8, 10-12, on Daniel motifs in Josephus and Gray, *Prophetic*, 74-77.
[76] Cohen, 'Josephus', 366n2, notes that scholarly comparison between Josephus and Jeremiah goes back until at least 1818-19 with the work of S. Löwisohn, 'Der Prophet Jeremias, Josephus Flavius, und Rabbi Isaak Abarbanel,' *Sulamith: eine Zeitschrift zur Beförderung der Kultur und Humanität unter den Israeliten,* 5th year, II (no date), 168-181. See also H. Lindner, *Die Geschichtsauffassung des Flavius Josephus im Bellum Judaicum* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 32-33 and 73; D. Daube, 'Typology in Josephus', *JJS* 31 (1980), 18-36 at 26-7 and 33; Gray, *Prophetic*, 72-4.
[77] Blenkinsopp, 'Prophecy', 240.

why Josephus eventually did surrender, but not before an extended description of Josephus' brave actions is provided. With Vespasian and his army advancing and Josephus still in Tiberius, Josephus recounts:

> He [Josephus] saw where the circumstances of the Jews would finally end, and he knew their only salvation lay in a change of course. But as for himself, although he expected to be pardoned by the Romans, nevertheless he would much rather prefer to die many times over rather than utterly betray his homeland and wantonly disregard the supreme command entrusted to him in order to seek his fortune among those to whom he was sent to fight (3.136-137).

In this passage, not only does Josephus make an effort to defend his honour, but he begins to highlight his abilities of foresight and discernment, as any prophet would have, along with suggesting the appropriate direction for the Jews: a change of their present course of action. Shortly after this passage the narrative describes Josephus trapped in Jotapata. Vespasian receives news that the general Josephus is ensnared, and the reader is informed that this is more than blind luck; this is the work of 'God's providence'[78]:

> A deserter brought to Vespasian the good news about the general's movement, and Vespasian hastened to press the attack on the city [Jotapata] since with taking that he would seize all Judea, if he could only take Josephus into captivity. Vespasian snatched at the news as a great fortune (εὐτύχημα) and God's providence (προνοίᾳ θεοῦ) that the man who seemed to be the wisest of his enemies had entered into a self-appointed prison (3.143-144).

Finally, as the moment of Josephus' capture draws to a climax, the narrative alerts us to a sudden development:

> There came back to [Josephus] the recollection of those nightly dreams, in which God had foretold to him the coming circumstances of the Jews and of the Roman rulers. He was an interpreter of dreams and capable of interpreting the ambiguous words of the Deity; a priest himself and of priestly lineage, he was not ignorant of the prophecies in the sacred books. At that hour he was inspired to read their meaning, and, recalling the dreadful images of his recent dreams, he offered up a silent prayer to God. "Since it pleases You," so it ran, "who did create the Jewish nation, to chastise[79] thy work, since fortune (τύχη) has wholly passed to the Romans, and since you have chosen my spirit to announce the things that are to come, I willingly surrender to the Romans and consent to live; but I take You to witness that I go, not as a traitor, but as Your servant (διάκονος)" (3.351-354).

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[78] We will note below how Josephus sets τυχή [in this case εὐτύχη] alongside of God's προνοία as linked, if not synonymous, terms.

[79] κολάσαι = 'to chastise' appears to be the likely reading. This reading is supported by the superior mss of PAML and best explains how the following two variants came about, i.e., by transposition of the omega and kappa and omission of the omega; ὀκλάσαι = 'to sink into the dust', VRC Niese and Michel-Bauernfeind; κλάσαι = 'to break', Reinach and Thackeray; Cf. 5.377.

In this passage, all three roles of leader, priest and prophet are brought together in an effort to prove Josephus is not a traitor, but a shrewd, obedient initiator. Although the narrative does not offer us specific texts of the 'prophecies in the sacred books,' it is clear that the reason why Josephus is willing to offer himself alive to the Romans is so that he might assume the role of a servant (διάκονος) of God,[80] a servant cast in the mould of a prophet like Jeremiah,[81] one who must 'announce the things that are to come.' And, like Jeremiah, Josephus 'predicts' that he would receive an equally cool response from his fellow citizens to his message of 'things to come.' The rationale for his actions provided in the narrative is that Josephus is a reluctant, but obedient, servant of God who responds to God's providential leading at this crucial moment in the history of the Jews. Although the particular words for the providence of God are not present in this passage in favour of the more widely known Greek term 'fortune' (τύχη),[82] the sense of God's direct intervention is evident through God's offer of foreknowledge to Josephus by way of 'nightly dreams'[83] on how 'fortune' passed over to the Romans. As if to punctuate the almost interchangeable relationship between fortune and providence, when the time ultimately comes for the final surrender of Josephus after nearly all his other compatriots had drawn lots to kill one another, the narrative notes, almost in passing, that 'he, (should one say by fortune or by the providence of God? [εἴτε ὑπὸ τύχης χρὴ λέγειν εἴτε ὑπὸ θεοῦ προνοίας]), was left alone with one other person' (3.391). After Josephus fails to convince the whole group to surrender, it seems in the end he is able to persuade one hapless survivor to join him in submitting to the Romans.

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[80] The concept of prophecy and Josephus as God's servant is also brought together later in the narrative. This time, however, the words are put in the mouth of Vespasian when he liberates Josephus from his bonds: '"It is disgraceful," he said, "that one who *foretold* my elevation to power and was a minister of the voice of God (διάκονον τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ φωνῆς) should still rank as a captive and endure a prisoner's fortune (δεσμώτου τύχην)"' (*War* 4.626). Amazingly, Josephus has Vespasian, the emperor of Rome no less, recognizing the authority of a Jewish inspired prophet!

[81] That Josephus likens himself to the prophet Jeremiah may be surmised since Josephus directly draws the link between himself and Jeremiah later in a speech before the Jews on the walls during the siege of Jerusalem (cf. *War* 5.392-393 and the analysis of this speech in section 4 below). In a subsequent speech before the walls, Josephus does not invoke the name of Jeremiah, but he links the abuse he receives from the recalcitrant Jews on the walls with the 'records of the ancient prophets and that oracle [unnamed] which threatens this poor city' (*War* 6.109).

[82] E.g., Demetrius of Phalerum (early third century BCE), *Treatise on Fortune*; Plutarch, *Fort. Rom.*

[83] As an interpreter of dreams, we are reminded of the writer's namesake, Joseph the favourite son of Jacob, Not surprisingly, Joseph receives particular attention and glossing in the *Ant.* (cf. 2.9-200), another person who, coincidentally, began his royal career in chains, but as an accurate interpreter of dreams was elevated by the ruler.

Ultimately, the purpose of Josephus' portrayal of himself in a prophetic role goes beyond the bounds of providing a personal apologetic against the charge of treason. Within the narrative, the historian-come-prophet in the cave in Jotapata is pivotal for the nation as a whole. At first, it appears that Josephus' capture is only of military significance for the nation: 'Vespasian hastened to press the attack on the city [Jotapata] since with taking that he would seize *all Judea*, if he could only take Josephus into captivity' (3.143). But we soon learn that his capture relates to more than just military issues; it is revealed that he has a larger purpose as God's servant to 'announce the things that are to come' (3.354). In particular, before he is sent as a prize to Emperor Nero he is granted a private audience with Vespasian and announces:

> I have come to you as a messenger (ἄγγελος) of greater purposes; for had I not been sent by God I knew the law of the Jews, that it is fitting for generals to die. To Nero do you send me? For what reason? Are Nero's successors - until they come and see you - still alive? You will be Caesar, Vespasian, you will be emperor, you and this son of yours (3.400-1).

Clearly, Josephus' role as historian has expanded to include his role as a Jewish prophet – one who will not only be a spokesperson *for* the Jewish people, but whose role encompasses being God's messenger *to* Rome and her emperors. Between the prayer in 3.351 and the declaration made to Vespasian in 3.400-1 we learn four vital matters related to the whole narrative: 1) God, the creator of the Jews, has decided to punish his people (3.354); 2) τύχη has passed over to the Romans (3.354); 3) Vespasian will be Caesar and Emperor (3.401); and 4) Josephus is God's servant/messenger to announce these realities. The Jotapata experience functions not only as the turning point in Josephus' life, it plays an important role in the *War* as a whole. As Cohen rightly points out:

> Its presence explains the absence[84] ... of other Flavian *omina imperii* known from Suetonius, Tacitus, and Dio. Josephus wanted it known that Vespasian's sole divine legitimation was through Josephus the Jewish prophet, just as he wanted it known that Vespasian was first acclaimed emperor in Judaea, the land of Josephus the Jewish prophet.[85]

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[84] Aside from passing references in *War* 1.23; 3.404; 4.623.

[85] Cohen, 'Josephus', 374.

What this indicates is that while Josephus may recognize the power of Rome and the Flavian emperors, he also carefully construes their power from a Jewish perspective of reality and in Jewish terms.

From this perspective we may better understand the connection that Josephus makes between historians and prophets in the prologue (cf. 1.18): he is both a qualified historian, on Greco-Roman terms, and a prophet, on Jewish terms. Furthermore we can understand the claim that Josephus makes in a later writing that prophets, from his uniquely Jewish perspective, are also historians, since they are sent and inspired by God (cf. *Apion* 1.37). Or, in the judgment of Blenkinsopp, 'the prophet, for [Josephus], is the historian *par excellence* since he obtains information about the past in the best and surest way, by divine inspiration'[86]

In the *War*, then, Josephus offers what he views as a truthful and thorough history of the conflict between the Romans and the Jews. Further, he offers himself as the most suitable historian for this account because of his unique double vantage point during the war and the qualities he possesses as a leader, priest and, most importantly, as a prophet. In his capacity as a Greek historian and a Jewish prophet, Josephus explains the Jewish War by adopting and adapting a Greco-Roman *and* a Jewish response. What is also clear is his conviction that this conflict, if not all of history itself, was being guided by fortune or, more precisely, by the providence of God.

2.3.3. God's Providential Guidance of History

There is debate among modern historians on the extent to which ancient Greco-Roman historians included religious themes in their work and attributed the direct guidance of history to the gods. A. Momigliano argues that from Herodotus onward

> The historian was unlikely to emphasise direct intervention of the gods in history.... What meaning Polybius attributed to fortune and Tacitus to fate is a favourite subject for academic disputes, but no one has yet made a reasonable case for Polybius or Tacitus as religious interpreters of history. Interventions of gods, miracles and

[86] Blenkinsopp, 'Prophecy', 241.

> portents, together with other curiosities, were often confined by the historians to digressions and excurses.[87]

In contrast, J. Marincola contends that 'the appearance of fortune and the divine is so common [in the histories of Xenephon, Caesar, Plutarch and Josephus] that we should perhaps acknowledge a motif of divine aid, a motif that will naturally be of use in a war narrative by emphasising the justness of one's cause and at times the unjustness of one's opponents'.[88] F. Walbank lends support to Marincola by remarking how the rational and factual historian 'Polybius attributes quite a basic rôle in the destruction of Macedonia ... in 168 BC to *Tyche*, Fortune, who in this way brings about the rise of Rome to world hegemony in just fifty-three years'.[89] Elsewhere, Walbank notes that *Tyche* 'occupied a special place in the religion, art, and rhetoric of the Hellenistic age' and that Polybius employed this ambiguous[90] term frequently, but 'in the context of Roman imperial growth...*Tyche* figures as a divine power....as a conscious and purposeful power directing world events towards a closely defined end.'[91] By the time of the Flavians it was a familiar part of Roman ideology that Rome ruled by the divine favour of the gods – a point made clear by the frequent appearance of *Fortuna,* the Latin equivalent of the Greek goddess *Tyche*, on Flavian coins. The concept of *Tyche* occurs frequently in ancient Greek prose and it is one that our historian Josephus avails for himself,[92] along with the more technical Stoic term πρόνοια,[93] to articulate for a Greco-Roman public, in ways not unlike Polybius,[94] how divine

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[87] A. Momigliano, 'Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians', in *Quinto contributo all storia studi classici e del mondo antico*, (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1975), 73-92, at 74-75.

[88] Marincola, *Authority*, 207, cf. 206-11.

[89] Walbank, *Rome*, 272; cf. also F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius, Vol I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 16-26; F.W. Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 60-65.

[90] I.e., *Tyche* can refer to 1) a personal protective spirit, 2) an irrational and incalculable factor that often upsets human plans, or 3) a higher divine power that controls human events; cf. Lindner, *Die Geschichtsauffassung*, 46.

[91] Walbank, *Rome*, 248; for *Tyche* in Hellenistic art see J.J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 2-4.

[92] Based on a TLG search of Greek literature from the 8th century BCE – 1st century CE, τύχη is used 2971 times with 144 of the occurrences in the works of Josephus; only Aristotle, Menander, Diodorus Siculus and Dionysius Halicarnassenis employ the term more often. Almost half of Josephus' uses (71) occur in *War*. A related term is εἱμαρμένη, the participial form of μείρομαι, a term that is used much less frequently in Greek texts, only 77 occurrences in total, with 22 of those occurring in the works of Josephus and 14 times in *War*.

[93] On πρόνοια/proventia in Stoic philosophy see Cicero, *Nat. d.*, 2.57-58, 73f.

[94] Eckstein, 'Josephus', 200-3, argues that Josephus has taken his understanding of *Tyche* completely from Polybius as a way of conveniently presenting his ideas to a Greek public. Price, 'Provincial', 116 and n37, disagrees with Eckstein on the 'exact historical mechanism' in which τύχη and God are related in Polybius and Josephus. Walbank, 'Roman Domination', 273, does not outright dismiss

favour rests on Rome and how 'god' providentially directs history. How far Josephus mirrors Greek historians like Polybius is not vitally important. Our concern is to understand how he employs concepts like providence and fortune – terms familiar to a Greco-Roman audience –and, from a postcolonial perspective, to what extent he adapts and modifies them in a hybridized Greek-Jewish manner.

Providence, as a motif, is significant in the writings of Josephus. The term πρόνοια, occurs 159 times in Josephus' works, 24 times in the *Jewish War*.[95] The incidence of this term in Josephus is proportionately quite large since it only extant 1105 times in ancient Greek texts prior to the first century CE.[96] The other terms closely connected to the concept of providence are fortune (τύχη) and fate (εἱμαρμένη and χρεών), both of which are variously employed by Josephus. While the usage of words like τύχη carry the broad range of meaning that they do in other writers like Polybius,[97] in the *War*, fortune and fate, either in juxtaposition with God or standing on their own, can connote personal or divine agency.[98] In some instances, as a number of the passages above indicate, πρόνοια, τύχη and εἱμαρμένη are used almost synonymously. For example, in *War* 3.391 Josephus offers both τύχη and πρόνοια as equivalent options when describing his circumstances in the Jotapata cave. Further, in his excursus on the three Jewish philosophies, his brief description on the Pharisees includes a comment that they 'attribute all things to Fate (εἱμαρμένη) and to God, and to act rightly or not rests, indeed, for the most part with humans, but Fate (εἱμαρμένη) does assist with each person' (*War* 2.162-63).[99]

The theme of divine providence punctuates the narrative of the *War* at key junctures. The earliest reference to any direct role of 'god' in the dealings with the world occurs with reference to the youthful Herod the Great. Herod's father warns him against pursuing revenge on the high priest Hyrcanus, his 'benefactor', since it

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Eckstein's claims on Polybian borrowing, but does note the substantial difference in 'tone' between the two works.

[95] Of these 24 occurrences in *War*, twelve of them occur with reference to 'the providence of God' (προνοία θεοῦ) or 'divine providence' (δαιμόνιος πρόνοια), cf. K.H. Rengstorf, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus, 4 Vols* (Leiden: Brill, 1973); the remaining occurrences refer to some kind of 'care' or 'making provision' for someone/something.

[96] Based on a TLG search of πρόνοια usage between 8th century BCE and the 1st century CE. Polybius is closest to Josephus in using the term, employing it 67 times in his writings. After this Demosthenes uses it 36 times with the remainder of the usages being scattered sparingly across a range of authors.

[97] Cf. Lindner, *Geschichtsauffassung*, 46-7.

[98] E.g., *War* 1.233; 2.162; 6.250, 267, 314; cf. *Ant.* 16.188, 397; 17.122.

[99] Thackeray in his footnote in the Loeb edition, 385 note d., mentions that 'Josephus… substitutes "Fate" for "Providence" for his Gentile readers.'

could only lead to war and God's wrath (1.214-5). A century after the warning was given to the young Herod, the country is on the verge of war again, but now the stakes are much higher. This time it is a grandson of Herod the Great, Agrippa II, who presents a lengthy speech warning against a rebellious war with the mighty Roman Empire. Agrippa concludes his speech by pointing out that the insurrectionists are without human allies and, more importantly, without divine assistance:

> The only recourse, then, left to you is an alliance with God (τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ συμμαχίαν). But even this is ranged on the side of the Romans, for, apart from God's aid, so large an empire could never have been built up....How can you call on the Deity to aid you, after deliberately putting aside the service which you owe Him? Those who enter into a war have either won over the support of God or man; but when, in all probability, your going to war may sever both avenues of help, then the ones going to war choose certain ruin. (*War* 2.390-95)

As circumstances leading up to 66 CE deteriorated, Josephus carefully distributes causes for the war between rebel arrogance,[100] corrupt Roman officials,[101] and an early, but crucial tactical error made by the Roman military.[102] In the end, however, Josephus posits that it is divine agency at work behind human causality that ultimately leads to the defeat of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem. With Roman troops under the leadership of governor Cestius of Syria poised at the gates of Jerusalem in the early days of the war, Josephus writes:

> A terrible panic now seized the rebels, many of whom were already escaping from the city since it was on the verge of being captured. The nation [i.e., the moderates] took courage because of these things, insofar as the insurgents gave ground, and they were about to open the gates and welcome Cestius as a benefactor as [his] troops drew nearer. If only he had persisted for a little longer in the siege, then the city would shortly have been taken. But God, I suppose, already had turned away from the insurgents and the sanctuary, [thus] he [God] prevented the end of the war from having its conclusion (*War* 2.538-39).

It is clear that Josephus did not view God as an impotent or uninterested bystander in the unfolding events of the Jewish war, but as the primary power behind the conflict, climaxing in the destruction of Jerusalem itself. The Roman leader, Titus, and a

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[100] I.e., the suspension of sacrifices in the temple on behalf of Rome at the instigation of Eleazar, son of Ananias the high priest (*War* 2.409-410; these sacrifices, offered twice daily [2.197], were instituted by Augustus and consisted of two lambs and a bull [cf. Philo, *Legat.* 157]).

[101] I.e., Florus, see following note as well.

[102] The governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, finally took the field against the Jews. Unfortunately for the long-term consequences of Jerusalem, during the early days of the rebellion he chose not to capture the city when he had the opportunity to do so (*War* 2.530-31).

Jewish leader, Eleazar, demonstrate this from the narrative description itself and in speeches:

> [The Jewish rebels] fell upon their faces bemoaning their own foolishness, as those who have been hamstrung have no means of flight. Exactly here one may observe closely the power of God (τήν τε τοῦ θεοῦ δύναμιν) over those who are unholy and the fortune (τὴν Ῥωμαίων τύχην) of the Romans (*War* 6.398-99).

> "God indeed," he exclaimed, "has been with us in the war. And God has brought down the Jews from these strongholds, since what power has men or machines against these towers?" (Titus' words after taking the towers of Jerusalem, *War* 6.411)

> Do not attach the blame to yourselves, nor the credit to the Romans, that this war against them has brought destruction to us all; for it was not by their might (οὐ γὰρ ἐκείνων ἰσχύι) that they have accomplished these things, but the intervention of some more powerful cause (κρείττων αἰτία) has supplied them with an appearance of victory (Eleazar's speech to vanquished Jewish fighters at Masada, *War* 7.360)

Josephus, thus, interprets the circumstances leading up to the war and key events within the war as directed by *God's* power and *God's* providence.[103] Even though the historical narrative clearly makes these points, Josephus provides further evidence to demonstrate the activity of the divine will in human affairs. This evidence, however, is by the more direct means of divine prophecy and oracles.

Although the prophetic is hinted at early with reference to the predictions of the Essenes,[104] Judas (*War* 1.78-80) and Simon (2.113), divine revelation plays a key role in Josephus' initial 'conversion' to the side of the Romans (3.351ff.) and his vindication after Vespasian is acclaimed Emperor (4.622-629). The latter passage is of particular interest since it draws together a number of key elements. After noting the widespread and enthusiastic support for Vespasian's accession, Josephus writes:

> After everything was moving forward according to the mind of fortune (κατὰ νοῦν τῆς τύχης) and circumstances had converged together in the best way, Vespasian came to think that without divine providence (δαιμονίου προνοίας) he would not have seized power, but that some just fate (εἱμαρμένη) had placed the sovereignty of the world upon him. For as he remembered the other omens (σημεῖα) which had everywhere foreshadowed his imperial honours, he recalled the words of Josephus,

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[103] Cf. also the following where God shapes the 'destiny' of the Empire (*War* 3.6); Vespasian is portrayed as viewing the civil strife in Jerusalem as 'Divine Providence' (*War* 4. 366) and that 'God is a better general than he' (*War* 4. 370); 'God commits' the empire into the hands of Vespasian and Titus (*War* 5. 1, 39); Titus, addressing his own troops, declares to them that they are 'enjoying the co-operation of God....God is angry with them and extend[s] His aid to us' and they have a 'divine Ally' (*War* 6. 39-41); and both the gates of Jerusalem (*War* 6. 110) and Masada (*War* 7. 318) are delivered into Roman hands by 'Divine providence'.

[104] For the Essenes as prophets see *War* 2.159.

> who had ventured, even in Nero's lifetime, to address him as emperor....[Vespasian] spoke in detail about his brave deeds which he worked during the siege of Jotapata; after that he related those predictions, which at the time he suspected were shaped by his fear, but after time and events proved to be of divine origin (θείας). "It is disgraceful," he said, "that one who foretold my elevation to power and was a minister of the voice of God (διάκονον τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ φωνῆς) should still rank as a captive and endure a prisoner's fortune (τύχη). And calling for Josephus, he ordered him to be liberated....Thus Josephus won his enfranchisement as the honour of his foretellings, and he was also thought of as one trustworthy (*War* 4.622-29).

In one sweep this passage draws together the themes of fortune, providence and politics as well as the key role of the prophet and the *omina imperii*[105]. The latter are not only important in Josephus' reconstruction but are also commonplace in the histories of other Roman historians.

The role of prophetic utterances, divine oracles and portents, is elaborated in the climactic moment in the burning of the temple (6.284-315). To begin with, mention is made of numerous false prophets – charlatans and pretended messengers of God (οἱ ... ἀπατεῶνες καὶ καταψευδόμενοι τοῦ θεοῦ) – who deceived the people and led them to disbelieve 'the public proclamations of God' (6.288). What is 'plain' for Josephus may appear opaque to modern readers; nonetheless, Josephus offers a catena of portents, including: a sword shaped star, a year-long comet appearance, a shining light around the altar, a monstrous birth of a lamb from a cow in the temple precincts, the spontaneous opening of the eastern gate of the inner court, celestial armies surrounding the cities throughout the country, and a voice in the temple announcing 'we are departing hence' (6.289-300). But most important of all, during the four years prior to the war and 'when the city was enjoying very much peace and prosperity,' a peasant, 'Jesus, a certain son of Ananias...standing in the temple suddenly began to cry out, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds; a voice against Jerusalem and the sanctuary, a voice against the bridegroom and the bride, a voice against all the people"' (6.300-301). Jesus continued his mournful prophetic lament for over seven years, well into the siege of Jerusalem itself.

As any well-taught Jew would have done, Josephus is committed to explaining how God has acted in history with regard to his chosen people. In all likelihood, he modelled his work on the well-regarded histories of Thucydides and Polybius not only to follow acceptable historiographical conventions but also to convey historical

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[105] On the role of the *omina imperii* see below at 3.2.2.

credibility. He relates the story of Israel reaching a dark, climactic moment in its history. He is motivated to explain the inexplicable: how Jerusalem and its temple, the centre of the Jewish cosmos, has come to its fateful destruction.

As a historian, Josephus writes as one knowledgeable of the form and conventions of Hellenistic historiography and, as such, appeared hopeful that a Greco-Roman audience would receive his work within this tradition. He drew liberally on the common stock on Greco-Roman terminology like πρόνοια, τύχη and εἱμαρμένη to communicate the divine favour that rested on the Roman Empire and the Flavian house. What is striking is the distinctly Jewish feature of his history.[106] As a *Jewish* historian, he writes history that disregards a 'proper' historian's critical distance by employing the well-known Jewish theme of lament in order to comprehend a tragedy of this magnitude. Further, he understands history as guided not simply by the agency of *Tyche* as would a writer like Polybius, but by the personal providence of God, a providence that is indicated by auguries and announced by prophets, including the prophet-historian Josephus himself. All of this points to a history that strikes as many biblical historical notes[107] as it does Greco-Roman ones. As Price observes, 'both a Roman and a Jewish reader would understand the idea that political and economic success – especially such phenomenal success as the Roman Empire – was the result of divine favour; this, as well as the rise and fall of great empires, was a familiar concept in each tradition (e.g., Polybius 29.21)'.[108] That is, Josephus' description of providence, fortune and fate have a double valence that can be read as equally understandable on the basis of Roman as Jewish understandings of history. Might this sharing of Roman and Jewish understandings of history also reflect, as postcolonial theorists alert us to, a statement of cultural self-assertion as much as it mirrors a submission to imperial values and domination? Josephus does not invert Roman claims that fortune and fate have led them to worldwide domination, nor does he criticize the means by which divine providence has guided

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[106] See Rajak, *Josephus*, 79, who writes: 'What is striking and even bold in Josephus is the very fact that he had introduced a distinctive Jewish interpretation into a political history which is fully Greek in form, juxtaposing the two approaches.' Rajak is clearly right in pointing out *that* Josephus does this, but even more important is *how* Josephus does this. That is, he does so by building this Jewish interpretation into the narrative as a whole through his Jewish understanding of God, history, providence and, most boldly so, in the speeches of Agrippa II (*War* 2.345-401) and Josephus (5.362-419).

[107] E.g., Dan. 2.20-22.

[108] Price, 'Provincial', 116. See also the similar conclusions by R. Shutt, 'The Concept of God in the Works of Flavius Josephus', *JJS* 31 (1980), 171-87, at 185-87.

them to victory over the Jews. His strategy is subtle and potentially more threatening by drawing Roman claims under the umbrella of a worldview framed by a Jewish understanding of history. His reading of history is not unambiguously mimetic; he mirrors selective and important elements of Roman historiography but in a way that slightly skews the picture. He creates a 'hybridity' that does not simply add to Roman understandings of history but subtly destabilizes the Roman history to which he is contributing. Does this suggestion exist in the narrative? To answer this question we will now turn to the notorious speech in the mouth of Josephus himself before the walls of besieged Jerusalem to round off this chapter's discussion.

2.4. Josephus as Speaker (*War* 5.362-419)

The speeches[109] in the *War* are rhetorically and politically charged 'set pieces' in the narrative that allow Josephus to comment personally on the events he records. These characteristics are nothing new to Greco-Roman historiography.[110] As rhetorical creations historiographical speeches offer important strands of evidence to an author's purposes and tendencies. Rajak notes a remarkable feature with regard to the speeches in the *War*: 'Josephus stands out among surviving ancient historians in that he ascribes as many as three orations (of which two are major ones) to himself.'[111] The question in response to this observation is simple: Why? A suspicious reader might conclude that this is another expression of Josephus' self-aggrandizement. While this is not impossible, another reason may better explain the inclusion of these speeches. If one allows that Josephus regards himself as a prophet, then the primary function of a prophet is oracular: a prophet must speak *for* God. Furthermore, a prophet must also speak *about* God; whatever else, Josephus' speeches

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[109] The major speeches in the *War* are those attributed to Agrippa I (2.345-401), Ananus (4.162-92), Jesus (4.239-69), Josephus (3.362-82; 5.362-419; 6.99-112), Titus (6.33-53; 6.328-350), and Eleazar (7.323-388).

[110] Speeches played a vital role in conventional Greco-Roman theory which regarded history as a matter of πράξεις καί λόγοι – action and speeches (cf. Thucydides, 1.22.1-2; Ephorus, *FGrHist* 70 F 9; Plato, *Tim* 19c; Polybius, 36.1.6-7; Quintilian, *Instit.* 10.1.101). On speeches in ancient historiography and their rhetorical function, see F.W. Walbank, *Speeches in Greek Historians - the Third J.L. Myres Memorial Lecture* (Oxford: 1966), 1-19; M Grant, *The Ancient Historians* (London: Michael Grant Publications Ltd, 1970), 88-101. On the speeches in Josephus, see Rajak, *Josephus*, 80-81 and P. Villalba i Varneda, *The Historical Method of Flavius Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 89ff.

[111] Rajak, *Josephus*, 80.

are loaded with theological freight. In fact, the incidence of 'God language' increases over ten-fold in the *War* when Josephus himself speaks.[112]

For the purpose of analysing the role of Josephus as speaker in the *War* we will turn our attention to Josephus' notorious second speech before the walls of besieged Jerusalem. While a skilled writer like Josephus could shape and nuance his speeches for a variety of purposes and aims, this analysis will focus on how the oration demonstrates Josephus' perspective on the relationship between God and the Romans, how it construes Roman power, and what explanation it offers for the legitimation of Roman hegemony over the Jews. This analysis is looking for ways to understand how the relations of power between the Romans and Jews were shaped and how theological language is used in this context. Further, as postcolonial theorists have taught us to recognize, we will be looking for any interplay between subjugation and self-assertion or cultural constraint and cultural defiance in the speech.[113]

2.4.1. Josephus and Jeremiah

Josephus' second speech, cast in both indirect (5.362-74) and direct (5.374-419) speech, is one of the longest[114] and the most theologically loaded in the *War*. Although it parallels the emphases and themes of Agrippa's speech,[115] it does so not as one speaking from the outside, at a distance as it were, looking at the military power and superiority of the Romans. Rather, this speech addresses circumstances from a Jewish insider's perspective that sees God at work intimately in the history of his people. Significantly for the purpose of this study, it offers the most explicit insight into Josephus' understanding of divine and political power in the entire

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[112] Θεός in the singular occurs 185 times in the *War*, cf. Rengstorf, *Concordance*. On average, θεός in its various cases occurs at a rate of 1.43 occurences/1000 words. In three instances there is a 'θεός spike' where the rate leaps to over 10 occurences/1000 words; those 3 instances are the 3 speeches of Josephus, where θεός occurs a total of 34 times.

[113] At present, only one other scholar, Spilsbury, 'Reading', 211-15, has approached the *War* from a postcolonial perspective, but only as an introduction to his longer analysis of the *Antiquities*. Although brief, and restricted to those parts of Josephus' speech that relate to the 'lessons' from biblical history, Spilsbury's comments offer an excellent entrée to applying postcolonialism to the *War*.

[114] Agrippa's speech (2.345-401) is slightly longer; but in total, the words directly attributed to Josephus are the greatest.

[115] *War* 2.345-401. Cf. Lindner, *Geschichtsauffassung*, 25, concludes that 'die Agripparede ist letzlich keine Einheit in sich, sondern ein Auftakt, ein Hinweis auf einen Gesamtzusammenhang, der erst Schritt für Schritt, vor allem durch die große Josephusrede im 5. Buch, in seiner Geschlossenheit erkennbar wird'; see also 22, 24-25, 28.

narrative. But before moving to this analysis, a few further comments on Josephus' understanding of his role as a prophetic 'servant' are necessary, since at the heart of this second speech he makes an explicit link between the prophet Jeremiah and himself (3.391-393).

It is not surprising that when facing the assaults from the Jews on the wall by the Antonian fortress Josephus recalls the ministry of Jeremiah. He complains that king Zedekiah and his subjects were more moderate in response to Jeremiah's prophetic warnings than the present rebel leaders and their supporters:

> For when Jeremiah cried out loud that they were hated by God on account of their trespasses against him and told them that they would be conquered unless they handed over the city, neither the king nor the people put him to death. But you...hurl evil words and missiles against me, the one who calls you to salvation. You do so as ones being provoked when you are reminded of your sins and cannot bear the mention of the words which describe the deeds you commit each day (5.392-93).

There are a remarkable number of similarities between Josephus and Jeremiah.[116] They were both priests, residents of Jerusalem[117] and landowners. They were both initially reluctant to adopt their respective prophetic calls.[118] Their prophetic messages of judgment on the Jewish people for sins against God and defilement of the temple[119] were similar – and similarly received.[120] They both view a foreign nation as an agent of God to punish the sins of the Jewish people; they advocated surrender to their enemies and faced accusations of treason by fellow citizens.[121] Despite the fact that both of them are among the few 'fortunate' survivors in the destruction of Jerusalem, their writings and words are not smugly satisfied with being proven 'right.' Rather, they are flavoured with the theme of lament.[122] The most important point for our purposes, however, is to highlight that by directly referring to the prophet Jeremiah, Josephus establishes a similar role for himself in relationship to the Jews

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[116] See also discussion in Cohen, 'Josephus', 367-8, 371.

[117] Cf. Jer 1.1, although Jeremiah hailed from Anathoth 2-3 miles north of Jerusalem, he resided in the capital city as an adult.

[118] Jeremiah complains of his youth, Jer 1.6; while Josephus expresses his preference for death at the hands of the Romans, *War* 3.354, 382. Interestingly, Titus is noted as commenting on Josephus' 'youthfulness' after his capture (*War* 3.396) despite the fact that Josephus was thirty years old.

[119] Compare Jer 7 with *War* 5.401-02, 564; 6.98. The significance of Jeremiah 7 for Josephus is noted by Lindner, *Geschichtsauffassung*, 33n.2.

[120] The enemies of both Jeremiah and Josephus sought their death (cf. Jer 26.12ff [not 27.12ff as noted in the Loeb translation in 5.392 n. d]).

[121] Cf. Jer 20.1-2; 19.10; 26.11.

[122] Jeremiah is known as the 'weeping' prophet (Jer 9.1ff) and Josephus regularly 'bewails' the misfortunes of his people (*War* 1.9) and tears often accompany his appeal (e.g., 5.420). This speech ends with an appeal to 'take my blood as the price of your own salvation' (5.419).

and the Romans that existed between Jeremiah, the Jews and the Babylonians. With this in mind, we now turn to the content of the second speech itself.

2.4.2. The Might of the Romans

Early in the speech, after briefly contrasting Roman reverence with rebel contempt for the temple, Josephus asserts that the 'might of the Romans was irresistible' (5.364). It is foolish to seek to dispense with the 'yoke' of Roman control after being so long in submission under those to whom 'the universe was subject' (5.366). As did Agrippa in his speech (2.357), Josephus reminds his audience that their Jewish forefathers, superior in every way to them, had yielded to the Romans a century before (5.368) – so how could they hold out, with their stoutest walls already breeched and with famine raging war against them as well? Josephus even reminds them of a 'law' among men 'to yield to the stronger and the mastery is for those pre-eminent in arms' (5.367). By making mention of this 'law' Josephus reflects his understanding of power, an understanding that would coalesce with a Roman view on power. Even the offer of clemency by Titus – who like other Romans is 'by nature lenient in victory' (5.372) – at this late stage in the conflict betokens power: it is only the powerful that can offer mercy to the weak. As Spilsbury notes, 'such a description obviously panders to Rome's own ways of describing itself, and as such is hardly a reflection of the Judean experience of Roman aggression'.[123] On the face of it, this appears to be outright collusion with Roman expectations and absorption within Flavian propagandist aims. It is hard to imagine how Josephus could do otherwise given the constraints he was under – both in the implied situation as an advocate for Titus before the walls of Jerusalem and in his context of the writing and publication of the *War* in Rome under Flavian patronage. From a Jewish perspective, Josephus goes even further towards indicting himself as a traitor to the Jewish cause and pawn of the Romans by expressing that they were not only at war with the Romans, they were at war with God.

In reminding the Jewish rebels that their forefathers had yielded to the Romans, Josephus adds the statement, with a Jewish interpretation of history, that they never would have done so 'had they not known that God was on the Roman side'

[123] Spilsbury, 'Reading', 213.

(5.368). Later in the speech, he again draws on the example of the first conquest of the Jews by the Romans and asks:

> But who enlisted the Romans against our people? Was it not the impiety (ἀσέβεια) of the inhabitants? Where did our slavery arise? Was it not from party strife (στάσις) among our forefathers, when the madness of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, and their mutual strife, brought Pompey against the city, and God subjected to the Romans those who were unworthy of freedom? (5.395-96)

Furthermore, it is not just any 'god' who has sided with the Romans; it is the God who once was allied with them and whose presence once inhabited the temple in Jerusalem. Exasperated, Josephus cries out:

> Miserable wretches, unmindful of your own allies, would you make war against the Romans with arms and might of hand? What other foe have we conquered this way? And when did God, the creator of the Jews, fail to avenge, if they were wronged? Will you not turn and see the place from where you fight so eagerly and reflect how mighty an Ally you have defiled.... Nevertheless, listen, so that you may know that you are warring not only against the Romans, but also against God (5.376-78)....I am convinced that the Deity has fled from the holy places and taken His stand alongside those with whom you are now at war. Now even a good man will flee from an impure house and hate those in it, and can you persuade yourselves that God still remains with his household in their iniquity? (5.412-13)

But what is most revealing about Josephus' understanding of history and the relationship between God and the Romans is presented succinctly very early in the speech where he states:

> For it is evident from all sides that fortune (τύχη) has gone over to them [the Romans], and (καί) God who went the round of the nations *now* (νῦν) rests sovereign power upon Italy (5.367).

Again, the *prima facie* tenor of Josephus' comments about God and the Romans alerts us to conclusions about political success and values that were entrenched in Roman thinking: Roman hegemony is the result of divine favour; Roman 'piety' – in contrast to Jewish impiety (ἀσέβεια) – is rewarded by the gods; and *Tyche* is on the side of the Romans.

2.4.3. Jewish Self-Assertion

While Josephus clearly bears the imprint of Rome and colludes with Flavian propaganda, the way he construes his reading of history alerts us to statements reflecting not only submission to Roman domination but also recognizable cultural self-assertion. In the first place, as Price has correctly highlighted, the 'exact historical mechanism assumed [in 5.367] is ambiguous. That is, the relationship between τύχη and God can be understood in one of two ways, depending on whether the καί is read as a standard conjunction or as a reinforcement of the previous point in parataxis'.[124] While both readings are grammatically possible, Price suggests that:

> An average Roman reader would understand τύχη to be the overriding agent, and God the immediate instrument of what τύχη determined: God's obvious favour of the Romans is a sign of the determination of τύχη, who could act randomly and capriciously or purposefully, but whose ways were ultimately inscrutable and unpredictable; above all, even if τύχη intervened on the immediate level to reward virtue or punish crime, the goddess had no teleological purpose, no grand plan, but rather reacted to events and did not plan them.[125]

This reading follows closely a Polybian reading of τύχη in which there is no discernable method to the inscrutable and uncertain influence of Fortune (e.g., Polybius 29.21). On the other hand, the passage can just as well lend itself to a Jewish interpretation in which the Jewish reader, with the knowledge of biblical prophets like Daniel[126] and a sense of history reflected by Agrippa II in his speech (*War* 2.355-387), 'would understand Josephus to mean that God had purposefully favored different nations in turn with world power – this being the "fortune" which the Romans now enjoy from every quarter. Instead of God being fortune's instrument, fortune is God's'.[127] Additionally, with the subtle insertion of the adverb νῦν there is a further hint of Jewish self-assertion. What the Jews need, for 'now', is patient endurance until Roman rule and divine favour run their course and are returned again to them. Latent in Jewish prophecy and lament (e.g., Jeremiah) is the promise that after a period of subjugation, suffering and purgation will be followed by liberty, prosperity and sovereignty. It seems that Price has correctly identified a feature that we have come to expect in Josephus, one where his rhetoric reflects a polyvalence of meaning and hybridization that can be understood differently depending on the reader's ideological and cultural commitments. In short, the subtle

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[124] Price, 'Provincial', 116.
[125] Price, 'Provincial', 117.
[126] E.g., Daniel 2.20-21b: 'Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others.'
[127] Price, 'Provincial', 117.

argumentation and syntax could lead a Roman reader to an entirely different conclusion from that of a Jewish reader.

Secondly, the doubleness and ambiguity that mark the passage in 5.367 is maintained in the lessons from biblical history that follows in the second part of Josephus' speech. The beginning of direct speech (*War* 5.376ff) marks a shift in the discourse. Josephus moves from 'advice' to historical evidence to remind his audience – both on the wall and reading the narrative – that by taking up arms and defiling the temple they have outraged their greatest 'Ally,' God. This 'educational' history within a history parallels the lesson offered by Herod Agrippa II in his speech in book two. But whereas Agrippa recounted the successes of the Romans over various nations by noting Roman military prowess, Josephus recounts his people's victories by highlighting Jewish passivity. The Jews were able to be passive because they had a mighty Ally, God, who fought for them. An array of examples are listed, beginning with Abraham, moving through successes against the Egyptians, Philistines, Assyrians, and ending with the return from Babylonian captivity; in each case God is the primary agent in bringing about victory. His tendentious conclusion is that:

> There is no instance of our forefathers having prospered by arms or failed utterly apart from them when they entrusted themselves to God: if they sat still they conquered, as it pleased their Judge, if they fought they always fell (5.390).

In this biblical history lesson Josephus is highly selective in his choice of examples and carefully avoids any reference to fighting leaders or judges from the Hebrew past. Nonetheless, his point is that without the most important 'Ally' on their side, their cause is lost and unless his audience on the wall puts down their arms like their pious forefathers did they will soon be defeated. No doubt Josephus' highly selective reading of biblical history would have been controversial for his Jewish contemporaries. Josephus' review of biblical history, however, 'retains key elements of cultural pride as well'.[128] For example, the description of Abraham's passivity and dependence on prayer (5.380-81) highlights the aid of 'the invincible Ally' (τὸν ἀνίκητον . . . βοηθόν) for 'those Hebrews beloved by God' (τοὺς θεοφιλεῖς Ἑβραίους). Spilsbury rightly observes that 'the argument for passivity rather than exemplifying Josephus' capitulation to the Romans becomes the vehicle for an affirmation of God's military alliance with the Jews and for their special place in his

128 Spilsbury, 'Reading', 214.

affections'.[129] This incident, in an odd revision, also highlights the 'obeisance' (προσκύνησις) with which the Egyptian king regarded the 'spot' (i.e., the temple) that the Jewish rebels now stain with blood in a fashion similar to the comment made about Roman 'reverence' (ἐντρέπεσθαι) for the holy places (5.363) at the beginning of the speech. The temple and passivity theme continue their central role in the following story of the return of the Israelites who, after prayer and without resort to arms, are delivered from subjugation to foreign kings and become 'the future guardians' of God's shrine (5.383). Josephus keeps intact his image of the peaceable Israelites by passing over the conquest of Canaan and retelling 'God's leadership' (5.386) in restoring the ark to the temple after it had been stolen by the 'Syrians' (Josephus' name for the 'Philistines'). He notes that 'the whole nation of those raiders' (5.384) came to regret their deed of impiety. Next, the foreign invader Sennacherib is routed by 'God's angel' (ἄγγελος. . .τοῦ θεοῦ) while Jewish 'arms [are] raised in prayer' (5.388). Finally, after the bondage in Babylon where 'our people never reared their heads [lit. 'manes'] for liberty', the Judean exiles are sent home, by Cyrus 'in gratitude to God', to re-establish 'the temple-worship of their Ally' (5.389). Spilsbury points out that Josephus' review of his national history is more than merely a capitulation to imperial aggression but also contains key elements of 'cultural pride'. 'The very fact that Josephus couches his argument in terms of a review of his national history reflects his continued attachment to the dignity and venerability of that history'.[130] While Josephus' emphasis on the antiquity of the Jewish people and their scrupulously cared-for history[131] would have appealed to Roman appreciation of ancient traditions and ancestral ways, Spilsbury argues for a doubleness in the narrative that would appeal to both Roman and Jewish readers:

> Josephus uses this confluence of values to communicate more effectively with his Roman audience, while at the same time trying to say something of a political and social nature to his Jewish readers in Rome. For both types of reader Josephus has a message about the essential peaceableness of the Jews, the continuing importance of appropriately expressed piety, and the centrality of the temple not only in Jewish history but for the rebuilding of Judaism in the future as well. Beyond all of this, there are clear hints of a more confident cultural defiance as well. God is the ally of the Hebrews. When they entrust their cause to him they will overcome their enemies. Those who destroy the temple are nothing more than a "nation of raiders" who will

[129] Spilsbury, 'Reading', 214.
[130] Spilsbury, 'Reading', 215.
[131] Cf. *Ant.* 1.13; *Apion* 1.1.

eventually come to rue their hubris. Truly wise foreign rulers recognize the one true God and the Jewish people as the guardians of his sanctuary.[132]

A third aspect of cultural self-assertion in Josephus' speech may be discerned in the final movement of the oration. Like a good Deuteronomist, after running through examples of 'blessings' from Israel's 'pacifist' history, the speech turns to examples of 'curses' from Israel's 'militaristic' past (5.391ff). It is at this point that Josephus flags up his relationship to the prophet Jeremiah, the prophet who condemned Judah for its disobedience and called on them to surrender to the Babylonians. This time, he lists examples of Jewish defeats against Babylon, Antiochus Epiphanes, and, most recently, at the hands of the Romans to make his point. As noted above, he concludes that it was 'impiety,' 'party strife' and 'mutual dissensions' (5.396) that brought about initial servitude to the Romans, the very traits with which he paints the present rebels. As one might expect by now, Josephus contrasts Roman 'reverence' for the holy precincts with the impiety and 'secret sins' of the rebels in order to shame the rebels. Only this time, added to the discussion of impiety/piety is the issue of justice/injustice, with God as the moral Judge in history:

> It is madness to expect God to appear the same way to the just as to the unjust. For he knows how to avenge himself whenever it is necessary, for instance, when he broke the Assyrians the first night they encamped nearby. So then, had he judged that our people were worthy of freedom, or the Romans of punishment, he would have immediately darted to the rescue, just as he did with Assyrians, when Pompey began to meddle with the nation, when after him Sossius came up, when Vespasian ravaged Galilee, and now, lastly, when Titus was approaching the city (5.407-08).

The critique of Jewish aggression is clear, for they act not only in ignorance of God's action in history but display wilful disobedience and impiety that can only result in God's judgment. And yet, a 'road of salvation' (σωτηρίας ὁδός, 5.415) still exists for them. Hope is not completely lost for the Jewish nation. Implicit in this is the eschatological dimension that, in acknowledging God's direction of human history, a special role is reserved for the future of his own people, the Jews, despite their present dire condition. While God has favoured different kingdoms in the past, and has supported Jewish success and sovereignty as the fruit of righteous behaviour, so God will bring around success for the Jews once more. The first steps involve surrendering and, as Herod Agrippa also pleaded, paying the Roman 'customary

[132] Spilsbury, 'Reading', 215.

tribute' (5.405). But to this military and economic solution a theological requirement is also added: 'the Deity is easily reconciled to those who confess and repent (ἐξομολογουμένοις καὶ μετανοοῦσιν)' (5.415). Not surprisingly the language of lament we have come to expect in the War supports this appeal. He pleads with the 'iron-hearted' rebels to have a sense of 'shame' (αἰδῶ) for the countless treasures of their country, capital and temple (5.416). He invokes them to have 'pity' (οἰκτείρατε) for their children, wives and parents (5.418). And in a final flourish he offers the lives of his own mother, wife and 'not ignoble' family – and even his own blood – as the price for the rebels 'salvation' (σωτηρίας) and their learning 'self-control' (σωφρονεῖν, 5.419). Yet in all this and in a way characteristic of the entire speech, it is primarily God, and not the Romans, who must be reckoned with. To be sure, God has 'sided' with the Romans, for now, but this God is not necessarily a 'Roman god.' The Romans are God's instruments to bring about a change of direction – μετάνοια – from the Jews in relationship to their God. Further, the Romans are liable to divine 'punishment' as well as favour: their power serves and depends on a greater power.

2.5. Conclusion

Overall, Josephus' speech serves to illuminate the complexity, irony and polyvalence that exist in the *War* as a whole. This is not to suggest that the rhetoric in his speech or the broader narrative did not collude with and support Roman values and Flavian agendas. Josephus must very carefully negotiate his perspective on the Jewish war. In many ways the speech follows the tone of the *War* as it mirrors back to Roman readers much of what they would expect both in style and content of a proper history in the following ways: sensitivity to Roman historiographic conventions; drawing on familiar language like πρόνοια, τυχή, εἱμαρμένη and χρεών to acknowledge divine favour towards Rome; and acquiescing to Roman military and political power. Given both the implied narrative context and the actual circumstances of writing, Josephus could not have directly criticized Roman values, sympathies or hegemony. Even though Josephus was under no obligation by his patron Vespasian to publish,[133] he did so (voluminously!) and whether he was

[133] As Goodman, 'Citizen', 338, wryly remarks: 'Unlike modern academics, Josephus, with his estate in Judaea kindly granted by Vespasian (*Life* § 425), was under no compulsion to publish'.

successful or not in capturing the interests of a Roman audience, this is what he clearly aimed to do.

But in writing back to the empire as a Jewish, colonized historian, the image he presents of the Jewish people and the war with them at the same time affirms and alters Roman assertions creating complex, destabilising and unexpected results. In this Josephus appears to skew, alter and hollow out Roman values by a recurring 'double vision' with respect to key aspects of Roman ideology. He bends historiographical convention towards a Jewish lament in the prologue and sustains this throughout the narrative – even ending his speech with an impassioned appeal for repentance. Josephus' use of 'pathos' language is not necessarily unique in Greco-Roman literature. But lament has a long and important pedigree in Jewish tradition and it is the category used when a king, priest or prophet calls out to God to make right an injustice. In the *War* lament expresses the tragedy besetting the Jewish people, but in such a way as to highlight the uniqueness and future of the Jews. Insofar as speeches were used in ancient historiography to project and progress the views of the author, the speech we have examined in this chapter does not convey undiluted praise for the Roman project in the same way that in his introduction to the *War* Josephus refrains from exaggerated accounts of Roman power. Josephus did not write an encomium for Rome.[134] Rather, the points of praise in the speech are focused on the Jews, their city, their temple and their history. It is the Jews, the object of God's love (5.376, θεοφιλεῖς), who hold a special relationship with God their Creator (5.377, ὁ κτίσας) and Ally (5.377, σύμμαχος, 5.380, βοηθός). While Roman power is acknowledged, it is clear in the speech that it is *derived* and *limited* by the Jewish God who providentially establishes kingdoms and has given the 'rod of empire' to Rome, for 'now'. Even the use of commonly accepted language to express this providential move of fortune – i.e., πρόνοια, τυχή, εἱμαρμένη and χρεών – is expressed in such a way as to carry double valences that can be understood differently depending on one's Roman or Jewish angle of view. Not inconsequentially, the declaration of Vespasian as Emperor occurs in the mouth of a Jewish prophet *and* on Judean soil – an unexpected and ironic twist on the 'well-hidden secret' of the principate revealed by Tacitus that 'it was possible, it seemed, for an emperor to be

[134] Cf. Price, 'Provincial', 115, notes that this contrasts with the 'real admiration expressed by various provincial authors, from Polybius' astonishment at the Romans' unique and stupendous accomplishment to the encomium of Rome by Aelius Aristides, representing a theme for sophists in Josephus' time and afterwards'.

chosen outside Rome' (*Hist.* 1.4). While this explicitly Judean location for the declaration of Vespasian to the *imperium* 'bends' the official record of the likes of Tacitus and Suetonius, it does so in a way that is not necessarily disrespectful, but with an angle of view that distorts and reframes the Roman line.

In oblique challenge to Flavian assertion exhibited in triumph, coin and architecture, Josephus concedes that the Jews may be defeated, but they are not thoroughly insignificant and, importantly, nor is their God. Further, he contends that a defeated provincial can best represent his significant and ancient people – and not simply because his surrender placed him in a fortuitous position to tell both sides of a war (e.g., Thucydides). He can represent this story because as a priest and prophet of the Jews he is a *spokesperson* for his people and their God, thus acting as more than just a narrator affirming Roman power. Is this 'ironic' on the part of Josephus? That is, is the *War* a deliberate attempt to subvert Roman ideology? Is Josephus' doubleness a conscious strategy on his part? This is certainly a possibility but almost impossible to judge without being able to get inside the mind of Josephus. But by considering that Josephus reflects a postcolonial 'hybridity' or 'doubleness' in his narrative rather than an outright subversion of Rome suggests that one-dimensional readings of Josephus as either a Flavian mouthpiece or a covert Jewish rebel will not do. These descriptions do not account for the complexities of the situation or the sustained and substantial efforts that Josephus undertook to understand, explain and interpret Roman rule and Jewish defeat. The doubleness is embedded in the structure of the narrative and it allows for different voices to be spoken and heard. Further, it implies that although Roman ideology has left its imprint on Josephus' history, when this imprint comes into contact with his Jewish values and identity it produces a work that is multi-layered and suggestively nuanced.

Chapter 3: Triumph, Temple and Two Generals

3.1. Introduction

S.R.F. Price rightly faults those who hold a 'Christianizing theory of religion' which assumes that religion's only role is to help its adherents through personal crises and grant them salvation in an afterlife.[1] This perspective obscures the broader reality in the Greco-Roman world in which *both* religion and politics are ways of systematically constructing power. In other words, religion, along with politics helps define and shape the manifold power relationships (both real and perceived) that pervade and constitute society.[2] Amongst a range of religious expressions (e.g., the quickly expanding imperial cult) that formed and structured the 'web of power'[3] in the first century Roman world one of the fundamental contributors in this religio-political network was what J.R. Fears denotes as the 'theology of victory at Rome'.[4] Victoria Augusta formed an essential feature of Roman statecraft. According to Fears,

> Victoria Augusta was neither mere allegorical figure nor mere metaphor for the brutal realities of political life. It rather evoked a complex series of relationships, an entire repertoire of essential themes which together created that political myth of supernatural legitimization which is as essential to the stability and continuity of a government as are the military, political, and socio-economic bases of power.[5]

In Josephus' world in which the *War* was written it was the triumphant emperors Vespasian and Titus who were hailed as divinely favoured by the goddess Victoria and whose deeds in Judaea were an epiphany of victory. Surviving the web of power in Rome required deft negotiation and careful word-craft on the part of Josephus. In the previous chapter I argued that our provincial historian and speaker Josephus had carefully marked out a path in his narrative that reflects elements of

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[1] Price, *Rituals*, 247.
[2] Price, *Rituals*, 241-42.
[3] Cf. Price, *Rituals*, 247; Wengst, *Pax*, 38, 51-54; D.R. Edwards, 'Surviving the Web of Roman Power: Religion and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles, Josephus, and Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe*', in *Images of Empire*, ed. L. Alexander (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 179-201.
[4] J.R. Fears, 'The Theology of Victory at Rome: Approaches and Problems', in *ANRW, 2.17.2*, ed. W. Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1981), 736-826. Fears builds on the seminal work of J. Gagé synthesized in 'La Théologie de la victoire impériale', *Revue Historique* 171 (1933), 1-43 and G. Charles Picard, *Les trophées romains: Contribution à l'histoire de la religion et de l'art triomphal de Rome* (Paris: Bibliothèque des Ecoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 1957). See also S. Weinstock, 'Victoria', *RE* VIII A, 2 (1958), 2501-42; T. Hölscher, *Victoria Romana: Archäologische Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Wesensart der römischen Siegesgöttin von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 3. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Mainz: Ph. v. Zabern, 1967); and S.P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 162-71.
[5] Fears, 'Victory', 739.

deference and defiance with regard to Roman power. By drawing on insights from postcolonial theory I attempted to demonstrate that, faced with the considerable constraints as a subaltern member of the Jewish people and under direct Imperial patronage, Josephus mirrored and mimicked Roman values in the *War* but did so in such a way that reflected elements of cultural self-assertion and destabilising hybridity. The present chapter will continue to draw on the insights of postcolonial resources for analysis but whereas the previous chapter maintained a narrow focus on the personal role of Josephus this chapter attempts to cast the net more broadly. This chapter will examine his treatment of the Roman 'theology of victory' by drawing particular attention to the Flavian triumph and the Jewish temple and Josephus' portrait of the Roman general Titus and the Jewish general Eleazar. Finally, several comments will be offered on the question of Josephus' audience(s) for the *War* before summarizing the key conclusions on how aspects of Josephus' depiction of the Roman victory and its participating generals mirror, alter and, potentially, destabilise Roman values and ideology.

3.2. Flavian Triumph and the Jewish Temple

Imperial rule of the 'civilized world' was assumed and asserted by Rome. By the time of the Flavian principate, Romans were aware that they had conquered the world, a *populus victor gentium* (Pliny, *Paneg.* 51.3), that Rome was the greatest of all cities, *princeps urbium* (Horace, *Carm.* 4.3.13), a light of the world and citadel for all nations, *domicilium imperii et gloriae* (Cicero, *De re pub.* 2.4.10; *In Cat.* 3.1, 4.11; *Pro Sulla* 33) – and that they were chosen by the gods to achieve these aims (Pliny *HN* 3.39; 27.3; 36.118). Roman rule, including Roman rule of the Jewish people, was an indication of the favour of the gods. Cicero, commenting on the initial Jewish subjection to Rome in *Pro Flacco* 69, jibed that Pompey's conquest and sacking of Jerusalem indicated how 'dear' (*carus*) this city was to the immortal gods. Tacitus, *Histories* 5.13, also adds that the 'gods' abandoned the Jerusalem temple.[6] None of these claims would have been lost on the Flavians as they asserted their right to rule in 70-71 CE. We will now turn to examine some of the Roman claims for political power in the context of the Roman 'theology of victory', the *omina imperii* legitimizing Flavian rule, the Flavian triumph and, finally, the portrayal of the Jewish

[6] The notion that the Roman gods were superior to the Jewish God persisted well into the third century (cf. Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 10, 13; Origen *Contra Celsum* 5.41).

temple in the *War*. At appropriate junctures we will also employ the theoretical questions of postcolonialism and reflect on how Josephus' narrative strategy mirrors, alters or, possibly, defies Roman claims.

3.2.1. Roman Theology of Victory: Fortune and Virtue

The Romans consciously[7] inherited their theology of victory from the Greek tradition where the notion that the gods intervene to bestow victory is marked early on in Greek cult.[8] In 296 BCE the Romans dedicated their first temple to Victoria in Rome after the great victory at Sentinum and the Capitoline temple was adorned with a statue of Victory-bearing Jupiter, inspired by Greek prototypes.[9] By 293, for the first time in celebration for victory over the Samnites, those who were awarded with crowns for valour wore them in the games and the victors received palms – all in accordance with Greek tradition. Fears concludes that this combination of events 'point to a conscious innovation in Roman cult life with the specific aim of accommodating the contemporary Greek conception of victory and its concomitant political imagery'.[10] At this juncture in Roman history we see for the first time the combination of the personifications of Victory, its worship as an independent deity and the propagandistic use of *Dea Victoria* as a distinct expression of divine approval of Roman political expansion. 'In this significance, Victoria and theology of victory were direct importations from the Greek world, admitted into Roman cult and state propaganda in order to justify Roman expansion'.[11] At crucial junctures in various Republican wars the Romans acknowledged victories as the manifestation of the god Victoria.[12] By the imperial period, the religio-political role of Victoria was

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[7] Cf. Fears, 'Victory', 773-2; Weinstock, 'Victoria', 2486-7, 2505-6.

[8] See Fears, 'Victory', 753-73. Cf. Pindar, *Pyth.* 8.76-7, who reminds Aristomenes that god alone can grant victory; in the Iliad the role of divine patrons intervening on both national (e.g., 1.9, 55; 4.389, 514-6, 541-2 5.30, 589-95) and personal levels (e.g., Odysseus, 10.245, 11.419, 23.771-83; Diomedes 5.122-32, 792-909; Hector and Achilles, 5.312, 594, 604, 22.2133) is already well formed.

[9] I.e., the god appeared in a four-horse chariot, driven by Victoria, and hurled a thunderbolt against the city's foes (Livy, 10.23.12); see Fears, 'Victory', 774 and H. Mattingly, 'The First Age of Roman Coinage', *JRS* 35 (1945), 65-77, at 74.

[10] Fears, 'Victory', 774.

[11] Fears, 'Victory', 774. The important role of Victoria in the propaganda of Roman expansion can be traced in the coin types from the opening of the Punic Wars to the Battle of Pydna see Fears, 'Victory', 775-78 and M.H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage, Volume I* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 1-105.

[12] E.g., L. Postumiuns' vow of a temple to Victoria during a crucial moment during the Samnite War in 294 BCE (Livy 10.33.8-9); Cato's temple to Victoria Virgo marking a specific epiphany of Victoria in his Spanish campaign (Livy 35.9.6); and Octavian's first major victory at Mutina in 43 BCE with a

widespread, even associated as an aspect of Jupiter, the divine representative of the Roman state. Victoria, according to Ovid, was the constant companion of Augustus and, if she chose, could also bestow her presence upon his generals (in this case Tiberius at war in Pannonia):

> *Sic adsueta tuis semper Victoria castris,*
> *Nunc quoque se praestet notaque signa petat,*
> *Ausoniumque ducem solitis circumvolet alis,*
> *Ponate et in nitida laurea serta coma,*
> *Per quem bella geris...*[13]

In addition to inheriting from the Greeks the notion that victory is bestowed at the behest of the gods, the Romans also inherited the concept that divine favour of the gods is inter-related with the moral virtue of its recipients. For the Greeks, moral virtue - ἀρετή - is a concomitant feature of divine favour. The gods aid a just cause and τυχή rewards the intelligent, brave and virtuous.[14] The word ἀρετή broadly signifies 'excellence' of any kind (i.e., of the gods, persons, animals, property, etc.), but it was often associated with political power[15] and, more specifically, with 'military prowess' especially as it related to generalship. Together τυχή and ἀρετή formed the key aspects of triumphant generals, elements that are picked up by Roman writers in their Latin equivalents of *fortuna* and *virtus*.[16] It is important to note that in Roman culture a male (*mas*) was not necessarily a man (*vir*), it was *virtus* that made a *vir*.[17]

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temple to Victoria Augusta (Feriale Cumanum CIL X 8375; II XIII, 2, 441-2). Cf. Fears, 'Victory', 742.

[13] Ovid, *Trist.* 2.168-73 [may Victory, always accustomed to your camp, be present now seeking the familiar standards, wings hovering as ever over the Italian leader, setting the laurel on the shining hair of him, in whose person you give battle...]

[14] Cf. Polybius, 10.2.6-7; Xenophon, *Cyr.* 7.1.10-7, 7.5.70, 8.5.23; Isocrates, *Evag.*, (IX) 21, 25, 701. Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 1145 A, notes that by an excess of ἀρετή mortals could become gods. Fears, 'Victory', 768-9, highlights that the visual imagery of both Nike's epiphany of god-given εὐτυχία on the reverse and Alexander's ἀρετή on the obverse of his decadrachms portrays the way in which Alexander's possession, execution and benefit of political power raised him to the ranks of the divine. For Cicero, *Nat. d.* 3.88, along with Spes, Salus and Ops, Victoria is derived from the gods while Mens, Virtus and Fides reside (at least potentially) in humans.

[15] E.g., Plato, *Meno* 71 E, 73 A; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 1144A. Cf. Fears, 'Victory', 759-60; A. Adkins, *Moral Values and Political Behaviour in Ancient Greece* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1972), 126-39; and K. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), 326.

[16] See Polybius' discussion of the general Scipio (10.1-12); on Alexander see Plutarch, *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute*; on Pompey see Cicero, *Leg. man.* 27-48. While there was an ongoing debate in ancient sources on which element was more essential for success, it is worth noting that these two elements were closely linked together in the Roman world.

[17] C.A. Barton, *Roman Honor: The Fire in the Bones* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2001), 38. For a thorough discussion on Roman *virtus* see chapter three in Barton, *Roman*. See also P.G. Walsh, *Livy: His Historical Aims and Methods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 75, who notes that 'of the personal qualities to which Livy attributes Rome's rise to world dominance none

For a Roman *virtus* was, in the words of G. Dumézil, 'la qualité d'homme au maximum'.[18] In the contest culture of Rome *virtus* was a quality that was tested, demonstrated and proved – especially in acts of courage.[19] Cicero writes that 'man's particular virtue (*virtus*) is fortitude, of which there are two main functions, namely scorn of death and scorn of pain. These then we must exercise if we wish to prove possessors of virtue (*virtus*), or rather, ... if we wish to be men (*viri*)' (*Tusc.* 2.18.43). C. Barton aptly expresses the conclusion that for the Romans 'being a man was a mannerism'.[20]

Given the widespread importance of this Roman 'theology of victory' with its twin supporting pillars expressed in divine favour (τυχή/*fortuna*) and human virtue (ἀρετή/*virtus*), it is not surprising that this Roman imprint is reflected in the *War*. As the previous chapter highlighted at some length, Josephus' narrative works within the framework that the Romans were victorious over the Jews because 'fortune had passed over to Romans' – and this at the direction of 'God' (*War* 5.367). But it was argued that even in mirroring to the Romans this 'theology of victory' Josephus does not negate his own Jewish monotheistic framework. That is, Rome rules because *God* (i.e., the 'Deity' who once inhabited the Jewish temple and now takes his stand with the Romans, 5.412), not the *gods*, favoured them; this is a distinction that is scrupulously maintained throughout the *War* and an aspect that will be examined in more detail below in relationship to Titus' speeches.

Josephus' interpretation of the Jewish War is that Rome is victorious because of divine favour. That is, Rome's success is a *derived* success *because of* God and *by means of* divine providence (e.g., 4.366-70; 6.399, 411; 7.360). If Josephus is careful to affirm divine favour for the victorious Romans we should also ask to what extent Roman virtues – that is, the second 'pillar' of a Roman theology of victory – play in the *War*? Leaving aside until later the special virtue associated with Titus, we find

is more vital than *virtus Romana*'. Cf. Livy, 1.9.4 [Romulus]; 5.27.8 [Camillus]; 2.12.9 [Scaevola]; 9.31.13; 36.41.12.

[18] *Horace et les Curiaces* (Paris: 1942), quoted in Barton, *Roman*, 36.

[19] E.g. numerous examples in Livy: Lucretia challenges Brutus and Colatinus to avenge her violation with the words 'if you are men [*si vos viri estis*]' (Livy 1.58.8); 'the kingdom is yours Servius,' asserts Tanaquil, 'if you are a man' [*si vir es*] (Livy 1.41.3); the humiliated survivors of the battle of Cannae plead for an opportunity to regain their lost honour by asking that they be given some perilous task in order to 'prove our spirit and exercise our courage' [*virtutem exercere*] (Livy 25.6.22). Seneca in a discussion on the relationship between the struggles men face and the role of Providence argues that 'between good men [*bonos viros*] and the gods there exists friendship brought about by virtue [*virtute*]' and that God 'does not make a spoiled pet of a good man; he tests him, hardens him, and fits him for his own service' (*De providentia* 1.5-6).

[20] Barton, *Roman*, 41.

that the *War* places a considerable emphasis on Roman virtue. As Eckstein notes, however, Josephus does not stress 'some vague Roman moral worthiness or uprightness'[21] that characterized the explanations by Livy[22] and Plutarch[23] for the rise of the Roman Empire in the early Imperial period.[24] By far and away, the virtues emphasized in the *War* are the 'manly' virtues associated with Roman military training,[25] experience and expertise,[26] determination in battle,[27] military organization and discipline[28] and, above all, courage.[29] In his comments prefacing his digression on the Roman army, Josephus affirms what could have just as easily be commented by Polybius: 'If one looks at the whole organization of their army, it will be perceived that such a great empire is held in their possession by virtue (ἀρετή), not as the gift of fortune (τυχή)' (*War* 3.71). On the face of it, the Jews are no match for the powerful Roman legions.[30] A number of scholars,[31] persuaded that Josephus is overwhelmingly enamoured with his imperial patrons and their army, would hardly be surprised to find the words that Josephus puts in the mouth of Titus in his first speech: 'the *Jews* are led on by recklessness, temerity and despair, emotions (πάθη) which are good when facing success but are damped by the slightest reverse; but *we* are led by valour (ἀρετή), obedience (εὐπείθεια), and fortitude (γενναῖος), which, though doubtless seen to perfection when favoured by fortune (εὐτυχήμα), in adversity holds on to the last' (3.479). With 'fortune' securely on their side and with their superior

[21] Eckstein, 'Josephus', 199. Eckstein notes that there are very few comments in the *War* on Roman virtues like justice (*War* 5.257), piety (5.326, 6.122-23) and, apart from specific references to Titus (6.333, 340-41), clemency (5.372).

[22] On Livy, see Walsh, *Livy*, 66-81; and L.R. Lind, 'Concept, Action, and Character: The Reasons for Rome's Greatness', *TAPA* 103 (1972), 248-9.

[23] On Plutarch, see the *Cat. Maj.* 1.3-7 (fortitude and discipline), 3.1-4 (justice), 4.1-4 (moderation), 16.6 (the greatness of the Roman people), passim; *Fort. Rom.* 318F; cf. C.P. Jones, *Plutarch on Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 99-100.

[24] For a detailed bibliography on the cult of virtues and their role in Roman imperial ideology see J.R. Fears, 'The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology', in *ANRW 2.17.2*, ed. W. Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1981), 827-948, especially 841n7.

[25] On Roman military training: *War* 3.70-74; 5.310; 6.38.

[26] On Roman military experience and expertise – especially in contrast to Jewish passion and rashness: *War* 2.502, 517-18; 3.6, 15, 153, 475; 4.45; 5.268, 285; 6.72, 159; 7.7.

[27] On Roman determination in battle: *War* 2.378; 6.228-31.

[28] On Roman planning and discipline (often referred to as εὐταξία and κόσμος): *War* 3.78, 84, 85, 90, 467, 477, 479; 5.47-50, 122, 303; 6.22; 7.7.

[29] On Roman courage (usually referred to as ἀρετή): *War* 2.381; 3.71, 478-9; 4.33, 46; 5.314, 483; 6.20, 36, 39, 42, 63; 7.7, 126. On the courage of individual Roman 'heroes: Sabinus, 6.54-67; Julianus, 6.81-91.

[30] A conclusion shared by Polybius, *Hist.* 6.

[31] See Shaw, B.D., 'Josephus: Roman Power and Responses to it', *Athenaeum* 83 (1995), 372-77. Cf. also Laqueur, Thackerary, Cohen, etc.

virtus it would appear that victory over the Jews is simply a matter of course in the *War* for the Romans. Or is it?

From the prologue in the *War* Josephus offers his readers a glimpse into the fact that his narrative will not be an encomium to the Roman army or its generals. He states that he does not wish to over-exaggerate the victory of the Romans, as other so-called historians were wont to do (1.7-8). Without question, he does mirror Roman values with respect to victory, fortune and virtue and he has nothing but scorn for the 'impiety' of the Jewish rebels, especially their leaders. But at the same time he also extols the bravery of the Jewish fighters and the cunning of their leaders, not least of all his own role as a resourceful general. In this sense he portrays the Jewish soldiers as mirroring Roman *virtus*. Setting aside the description of his exploits in the war,[32] the narrative is not parsimonious in its praise of Jewish military prowess. Alongside individual Roman soldiers noted for their bravery Josephus also highlights the courage displayed by Jewish heroes both in the initial stages of the war in Galilee (3.229-33) and in the siege of Jerusalem (5.74; 6.92, 145-8, 169-76). On more than one occasion the Jews not only match the Romans strategically (e.g., 5.109-19, 469-72), they best Roman valour and even instil fear in Roman troops that can only be forestalled by the upbraiding of Titus (e.g., 5.121-7, 291-5, 314-6). The dejection of the legionnaires is almost palpable when they realize 'that the Jews had a courage of soul (τὸ παράστημα τῆς ψυχῆς) that could rise above faction, famine, war and ... a number of disasters' (6.13). It appears as almost a surprise when the Romans realize 'the character of the men' (τὸ ἦθος τῶν ἀνδρῶν) they are facing (6.190). To be sure, Roman writers appreciated a 'worthy foe'[33] and 'Mars loves a fair field' (*Aequum Mars amat* [Petronius, *Satyricon* 34]), but given that Roman writers were more prone to ridicule Jewish curiosities than vaunt Jewish courage[34] Josephus' repeated assertions of Jewish fortitude and resultant Roman fear can be construed as destabilizing the *virtus Romana* of the vaunted legionnaires.[35] It is potentially

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[32] E.g., Josephus' preparedness in Galilee defences (3.61-3)

[33] E.g., the Roman admiration for Hannibal (Pliny, *Nat.* 34.15.32; Livy 30.35.5), the German general Arminius (Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.88.3-4), and other worthy foes (Plutarch *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata*; Suetonius, *Julius* 75.4; Pliny, *Nat.* 7.44.144).

[34] In *Hist.* 5.13.3. Tacitus does, however, in passing note that the besieged Jews, both men and women, displayed a foolhardy courage and who were more afraid of living than dying when faced with the prospect of abandoning their homes.

[35] Along similar lines of argument see J.S. McLaren, 'A Reluctant Provincial: Josephus and the Roman Empire in *Jewish War*', in *The Gospel of Matthew in Its Roman Imperial Context*, eds. J. Riches, and D.C. Sim (London: T & T Clark International, 2005), 34-48, at 43-4.

destabilizing in that it was part of the Roman theology of victory that her soldiers were the sole possessors of superior virtue and courage; in the *War* Jewish soldiers are construed as also possessing courage, besting Roman soldiers in battle and even instilling fear in the legionaries. According to Josephus' narrative, in the Jewish fighter 'fortune' has indeed 'sought out the bravest men'[36] as a worthy, and occasionally superior, foil for Roman valour.

3.2.2. Flavian Legitimacy and *Omina Imperii*

While the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was an incomprehensible thought for a Jew prior to 66 CE, the accession of the Flavian dynasty may nearly have been as inconceivable for a Roman when Nero dispatched the aging general Vespasian to Judea that same year. However, as book three opens, Josephus prepares his audience for just such a scenario as he describes the character and record of Vespasian. After noting that Nero regarded Vespasian's record as a general as a 'happy augury' he inserts, again almost unnoticed, that in sending Vespasian to Judea, Nero was 'moved, may be, also by God, who was already shaping the destinies of empire' (*War* 3.6). As already mentioned in the previous chapter (cf. 2.2.1.; see also *War* 4.622), this favour comes to full fruit when Vespasian is acclaimed emperor by his troops in place of Vitellius.[37] After book five opens with a description of the factions within the rebel camp in Jerusalem and relates that Titus has taken over from his father Vespasian as general in the war, again, Josephus inserts the aside that God had recently committed the empire to their hands (*War* 5.2). With these indirect comments Josephus appears to be supplementing and supporting Flavian claims for the divine legitimacy of their principate. The fact remained, however, that Vespasian was not a nobleman by birth and had no formal links with the Julio-Claudian house. Military victory was a key sign of divine favour for the Romans but like other would-be rulers in the Greco-Roman world 'a catalogue of favourable omens was an

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[36] See Seneca, *De providentia*. 3.4, where he notes that *fortuna* 'seeks out the bravest man [*vir*] to match with her; some she passes by in disdain. Those that are most stubborn and unbending she assails, men against whom she may exert all her strength. Mucius she tries by fire, Fabricius by poverty, Rutilius by exile, Regulus by torture, Socrates by poison, Cato by death'; see also *De providentia* 3.4, 9; Cicero, *Off.* 1.19.64.

[37] Josephus notes that the senate and Roman people, who prefer the qualities of temperance and virtue, also confirm the acclamation. More importantly, the Roman senate appreciate the stability of dynastic succession offered by the Flavian line in preference to the lewd, tyrannical, and childless prince Vitellius (*War* 4.596).

indispensable condition of legitimacy'.[38] The *omina imperii* were an essential feature of a theology of victory as visible signs and promise of divine assistance.[39]

'The augur's office is one of high dignity; surely the soothsayer's art also is divinely inspired' (*Nat. d.* 2.4), so speaks the Stoic philosopher Balbus in Cicero's work on *The Nature of the Gods* over a century prior to the Jewish War. It would have come as no surprise to elite Greco-Roman readers of the *War* when discussion of signs, oracles, and prophetic utterance coupled with notions of 'divine providence' and 'the power of God' appear in the narrative. There is a strong tradition amongst Roman historians writing shortly after Josephus that prophets and omens foretold Vespasian's rise to Imperial power,[40] including two passages that mention Josephus' prophecy itself.[41] When Josephus predicts Vespasian's accession as Emperor, this coalesces with the prophetic 'record' of Roman sources. The prophetic voice heralds the rise of empires, in this case the Roman Empire and the Flavian line:

> 'You are Caesar and all-powerful, Vespasian, you and your son here. But for now, firmly bind me and keep me for yourself, for you, Caesar, are not only master of me, but also of land and sea and the whole human race; but as for me I beg to be punished with even a stricter imprisonment, if I am speaking anything frivolously, even of *God*.' When he had said this, Vespasian, in that moment, did not believe him, but supposed that Josephus said these things like some cunning villain trying to preserve his safety. But slowly he came to believe him, for *God* was already stirring in him thoughts for the empire and was foreshadowing the symbols of kingly power through other signs (σημεῖον) (*War* 3.401-4).

As already noted in the previous chapter, when this prophecy is fulfilled and Josephus is vindicated and released from chains in the following book (4.622-9), the narrative draws together the themes of providence, prophecy/oracles, and the political power of the Flavians. Remarkably, this passage highlights that a Jew (i.e., Josephus) and his 'god' legitimate the Flavian dynasty.

Another noteworthy passage in the *War* occurs in book six between the description of the cessation of the daily Jewish sacrifices (6.94) and the instigation of sacrifices by the victorious Romans to their standards in the temple courts (6.316). Between these points in the narrative, Josephus steps back to offer a litany of 'public

[38] Mason, 'Daniel', 189.
[39] E.g., on Timoleon the saviour of Sicily see Plutarch, *Tim.* 8, 26; Diodorus 16.66, 79; Polybius 12.24. On the omens associated with the kingship of Seleucus Nicator see Appian Syr. 56; Diodorus 19.90. On omens in the Sullan propaganda see Plutarch, *Sull.* 6.7-9, 11; 17.3; 19.8-10; 27.12. On the *omina imperii* of Octavian see Suetonius *Aug.* 91-97.
[40] Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.10, 2.1, 2.78.
[41] Suetonius, *Vesp.* 5 and Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 61.1.

warnings of God' (τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ κηρύγματα) in 6.288-315 that were foolishly ignored by the 'wretched people' of Jerusalem. Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.13) offers a surprisingly similar account to the one described by Josephus.[42] While both Josephus and Tacitus criticize the Jews for their failure to heed the portents, what is most devastating for the nation is a failure to interpret properly the oracle concerning Vespasian. Josephus refers to an unreferenced oracle in the Jews' 'sacred writings' that 'one from their country would become ruler of the world' (*War* 6.312). The Jewish rebels, according to Josephus, 'more than all else' were incited to war by this ambiguous oracle. Josephus, however, offers his reading of the oracle: 'in reality [it] signified the sovereignty of Vespasian, who was proclaimed Emperor *in Judaea*' (6.313).[43] Although the Jews are cited as misreading this most critical of signs, Josephus does not seem to miss the fact that, in part, the oracle is still accurate. At first glance it appears that Josephus has abandoned his sense of Jewish nationalism with regards to Messianic prophecy; but this may also reflect an interpretative stance that has redrawn Jewish prophecy to include Vespasian and even offers a historical inaccuracy in stating that Vespasian was proclaimed Emperor *in Judaea* (ἐπί Ἰουδαίας).[44] In effect, this conclusion suggests another instance of what Bhabha would refer to as 'doubleness' in the narrative. In this instance Josephus alters the Roman discourse by claiming the Emperor for the Jews, first, and for Rome, second, but in a way that would not directly offend the sensibilities of a Roman reader. Further, along the lines of the passages in 3.401-4 and 4.622-9, Josephus claims that the God of the Jews is the key power broker in his discourse and, remarkably, Flavian imperial history is the fulfilment of *Jewish* prophecy – and as such Vespasian is proclaimed Emperor *first* on Judean soil, by a Jew, and in Jewish terms.

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[42] In the Loeb translation, Thackeray, in a note to *War* 6.313, suggests that 'Tacitus is not likely to have read Josephus: both are apparently dependent on a common source.' To the contrary, Mason, 'Daniel', 188-9, argues that Tacitus had some knowledge of Josephus' work.

[43] Cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.13; see also Suetonius, *Vesp.* 4.

[44] Tacitus, *Hist.* 2.79 and Suetonius, *Vesp.* 6, state that Vespasian was first proclaimed emperor in Alexandria.

3.2.3. Flavian Triumph

Josephus may have claimed the new Emperor for the Jews, but in the triumph[45] of 71 CE Vespasian claimed the principate for the Flavian *gens*. Whatever the rumour that Emperors were being made outside of Rome, the reality was that Emperors must be acknowledged in Rome. Further, nothing acknowledged Emperorship more than a triumph since from the middle of Augustus' reign the role of *triumphator* was the sole prerogative of the Emperor or the imperial family. Initially, a Roman triumph celebrated the *Victoria Populi Romani* as a mark of divine favour expressed towards the *virtus et felicitas*[46] of the Roman people corporately; only later in the period of the civil wars did republican ideals wane and attention become increasingly focused on the triumphant general.[47] The triumph was the climactic expression of the general/emperor's *auctoritas* and the political power it bestowed on the victorious general, the honour it brought his family and the prestige it bestowed on the troops. In the case of the Flavians, however, the triumph not only heralded the

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[45] On the Flavian Triumph see B. Eberhardt, 'Wer dient wem? Die Darstellung des Flavischen Triumphzuges auf dem Titusbogen und bei Josephus', in *Josephus and Jewish History*, 257-77; H.H. Chapman, 'Spectacle in Josephus' *Jewish War*', in *Flavius Josephus*, 289-313; M. Beard, 'The Triumph of Flavius Josephus', in *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*, eds. A.J. Boyle and W.J. Dominik (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 543-58; P. Spilsbury, 'Josephus on the Burning of the Temple, the Flavian Triumph, and the Providence of God', in *Society of Biblical Literature 2002 Seminar Papers*, (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 306-27; E. Künzl, *Der römische Triumph: Siegesfeiern im antiken Rom* (München: Beck, 1988), 9-29. On the Roman Triumph more broadly see; M. Beard, 'The triumph of the absurd: Roman street theatre', in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, eds. C. Edwards and G. Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 21-43; R. Brilliant, '"Let the Trumpets Roar!" The Roman Triumph', in *The Art of Ancient Spectacle: Studies in the History of Art*, eds. B. Bergmann and C. Kondoleon (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 221-29; H.S. Versnel, *Triumphus: An Inquiry into the Origin, Development and Meaning of the Roman Triumph* (Leiden: Brill, 1970); L. Bonfante Warren, 'Roman Triumphs and Etruscan Kings: The Changing Face of the Triumph', *JRS* 60 (1970), 49-66; R. Payne, *The Roman Triumph* (London: Robert Hale, 1962); G. Charles Picard, *Les trophées romains: Contribution à l'histoire de la religion et de l'art triomphal de Rome* (Paris: Bibliothèque des Ecoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 1957).

[46] Versnel, *Triumphus*, 363-72, points out that *felicitas* did not only mean 'good fortune' and 'fertility, productivity' but also 'bearing good fortune' and 'bringing fertility'. In this sense the ceremony elevated the victorious general who by his *vir fortissimus* captured, focused and channelled good fortune to the whole people. On the intimate connection in the Republic between the victorious general and the corporate honour and prosperity of the people see Cicero *Arch.* 22; E.S. Gruen, *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 110, 117-8, 121-3.

[47] Fears, 'Victory', 773-83, stresses that in the Greek world since Alexander, victory was a monarchical concept focused on the success of the king. While the Romans began to absorb Greek ideas on victory beginning in the early third century BCE, it was only after the rise of the great warlords of the civil wars when the Romans broke down Republican corporate ideals and centred attention on the *triumphator*; cf. Warren, 'Triumphs', 65. This innovation seems traceable to the triumph of Scipio Africanus in 201 BCE whose triumph is described as 'far more splendid than that of any of his predecessors, (Appian, *Pun.* 8.65-66); by the time of Aemilius Paullus' triumph in 167 BCE (Plutarch, *Aem.* 34) the new tradition was well established.

arrival of a new emperor, but a new dynasty, thus echoing Roman ideology that emperors and victories are inseparable.

3.2.3.1. Purpose of a Triumph

Mary Beard comments insightfully that '*triumphi ekphrasis* regularly offered Greco-Roman writers an opportunity to explore, and to re-improvise, the shifting interplay of politics and theatricality, showmanship and imperialism, that the triumph signified'.[48] It was celebration and spectacle in its highest form and it 'provided all Romans with the opportunity to affirm their cohesiveness and their superiority over "others" through the agency of the triumphator'.[49]

A Roman victory must clearly be attributed to the gods, and the spoils of war are consequently dedicated to their gods Mars, Janus Quirinus and Jupiter during three phases of the procession.[50] Although the gods must be clearly acknowledged, the focus was squarely on the *triumphator* – or, in the case of the Flavians, *triumphatores* – who, for the day, assumed the guise of Jupiter. The *triumphator* entered the city by the special entrance, the Triumphal Gate, riding in a chariot drawn by four horses. Accompanied by the leading men of state, his victorious troops, prisoners and the spoils of war, the general made his way to the heart of the city following a prescribed route to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, where he laid his laurel in the lap of the cult statue. His triumphal garb, spray of laurel in his right hand (the dress and insignia of Jupiter borrowed for the day from the Capitoline temple) and red face paint that mirrored the cult statue of Capitoline Jupiter appears to express the *triumphator*'s representation as Jupiter on earth for the day.[51] 'The divinization of the victorious general was, simultaneously, the epiphany of Jupiter'.[52]

The triumph not only affirmed the *triumphator* as an object of wonder it also served to model Roman imperialism. Victory, literally, meant the world was brought to Rome for all to see and the spoils were given a prominent place in the parade. Initially, triumphs were simple affairs but over time, and with the increasing power

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48 Beard, 'Triumph', 550.
49 Brilliant, 'Triumph', 222.
50 Warren, 'Triumphs', 53, writes: '*Spoila* were first consecrated to Mars in the Campus Martius *extra pomoerium*, outside the city boundaries. Next came the dedication of *spoila* as the *dux* passed through [the *porta triumphalis*] and entered the city itself: these were the *spoila* consecrated to Janus Quirinus.... The final phase of the ceremony consisted of offering the *spoila opima* (*prima*) to Jupiter Feretrius at his sanctuary on the Capitoline Hill'.
51 Pliny, *Nat.* 33.111-12; cf. Fears, 'Theology' 781 and Versnel, *Triumphus*, 35-7, 42-8, 66-93.
52 Barton, *Roman*, 55n108.

(and ego!) of the generals, the ceremonies became more lavish as the world's wealth poured into Rome. The Triumph of Scipio (cf. Appian, *Pun.* 66) was a humble affair in comparison with those that would follow. Plutarch described Aemilius Paullus' celebratory victory over King Perseus of Macedon in 167 BCE as requiring three days to complete (*Aem.* 32). Even more lavish were the triumphs of Pompey in 61 BCE and Caesar in 46 BCE.[53] After commenting on the profusion of gold, gemstones and pearls on display during Pompey's triumph, Pliny notes, in a somewhat uncomplimentary tone, that 'it was austerity that was defeated and extravagance that more truly celebrated its triumph' (*Nat.* 37.6.15).

The reverse side of this parade, in contrast to projecting the exalted status of the Empire expressed through her triumphant general and spectacular riches, was also on exhibit: the subjugation of Roman enemies. The spoils of war included the living spectacle of defeated enemies, humbled generals and cowering kings. In defeat and capture a soldier was hopelessly dishonoured: 'for all their bluster, beaten troops were inevitably inferior in morale' (Tacitus, *Hist.* 3.1).[54] Every day was a testimony to the captured slave's defeat. As R.H. Barrow expressed it: 'To enslave an enemy rather than to slay him was a device to reap his labour, but it was also a way of enjoying a perpetual triumph over him'.[55] Acknowledgement of the divine favour of the gods, divinization of the *triumphator*, and exaltation of the Empire by displaying her spoils of victory and subjugated enemies were all key elements of the Roman triumph. With this précis in hand, we will now turn to examining Josephus' representation of the Flavian triumph in the *War*.

3.2.3.2. Josephus' Representation of the Triumph (*War* 7.123-62)

Besides being one of the longest of its kind, Josephus' account in book seven of the *War* is the only extant written[56] record of the Flavian triumph in 71 CE. Book seven as a whole has often perplexed scholars and been the subject of considerable debate with regard to its date and composition. Nonetheless, its two nodal points –

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[53] Cf. Plutarch, *Pomp.*45; Appian *Hist. rom.* 12.17.116-7; Appian *Bell. civ.* 2.15.101-2.
[54] See also Horace, *Carm.* 3.5.26-29: 'Wool died with purple never regains the hue it once has lost, ... nor true *virtus*, once lost, cares to be restored to the diminished spirit'.
[55] R.H. Barrow, *Slavery in the Roman Empire* (London: Methuen, 1928), 2. Cf. K.R. Bradley, *Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire: a Study in Social Control* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).
[56] I.e., the written record can be corroborated with the physical records in arches, reliefs and buildings; cf. Eberhardt, 'Wer', 257-68, and Millar, 'Jerusalem', 101-28.

the description of the triumph (7.123-62) and the siege of Masada (7.252-406) – offer readers an important contribution in rounding off Josephus' history as they add to our understanding of his subtle negotiations with Roman power. For now, our attention will turn to analysing the triumph and its relationship to Josephus' portrayal of the temple in Jerusalem before returning to Masada later in the chapter.

The account of the triumph is straightforward with three major sections and an appendix, of sorts. After announcing that the modest *triumphatores* declined the offer of separate triumphs decreed by the Senate (7.121), the reader is offered a first section by way of a description of the pre-triumph preparations and the opening sacrifices at the Triumphal Gate (7.123-31). The next major section is the lengthy report of the triumph itself (7.132-52), beginning with a demure admission that the historian cannot adequately describe the richness and diversity of the spectacles (θέαμα) on offer in this exhibition of the Roman Empire's majesty (7.132-33). Having somehow found words fit to purpose, Josephus adumbrates the spoils – where silver, gold and ivory 'flow[ed] like a river' with gems in such profusion as to 'correct our erroneous supposition that any of them was rare' – and the mob of captives adorned in beautiful (κάλλος) garments to cover any unsightliness (κάκωσις) of disfigured bodies (7.134-38). The real theatre designed to excite the crowds followed when the large and somewhat unstable stages rolled by providing a visual montage of each episode of the war (7.139-47). Josephus almost matches with rhetorical flourish the lavishness of structures that were meant to bring the war home before the crowds eyes 'as if they were present themselves' (ὡς παροῦσι; 7.146). From Josephus' perspective, however, the real climactic moment 'above all else' (πάντων) was exhibited in the spoils taken from the temple at Jerusalem. Josephus lingers on his description of the golden table, lampstand and copy of the Jewish law (7.148-50). After previous scenes that have run by in quick succession this lingering over the temple symbols seems to give the narrative a brief 'slow motion' effect. The story resumes its quickstep by mentioning the image of the goddess Nike and the Flavian triumvirate (7.151-2). The concluding section (7.153-57) recounts the arrival of the procession at the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and the 'ancient custom' (παλαιὸν πάτριον) of waiting for the announcement of the execution of the enemy general, Simon ben Gioras, before the final sacrifices and victory banquets (7.153-56). A summary sentence draws everything to a close with a three-fold announcement: 1) the achievement of victory over enemies; 2) the end to civil dissension; 3) and the beginning of hopes for 'felicity' (7.157).

In a somewhat unexpected move, Josephus breaks the chronology of the history and provides an 'appendix' (7.158-62) to the triumph by fast-forwarding four years to the erection of Vespasian's temple of Peace in 75 CE. The 'peace' this temple commemorates most likely relates to the end of the civil dissensions and the victory over 'enemies' – i.e., those enemies of the Jewish War. Josephus draws particular attention to the contents of this building. He notes that it is embellished with artwork and objects that reflect the geographical breadth of the empire (περὶ πᾶσαν ...τὴν οἰκουμένην; 7.160). While these works of art and sculpture remain anonymous, Josephus names the items from the Jewish temple that played such a prominent part in the triumph – the golden vessels of the table and lampstand – as finding their new home here; but 'their Law and purple curtains from the sanctuary [Vespasian] ordered to be put away to be preserved (φυλάττω) in the palace' (7.162). The description of the Flavian triumph ends symbolically with the world living under the 'peace' and hegemony of this new dynasty, including the Jewish people.

Josephus' description of the triumph affirms everything that one might expect of a person in his circumstances. He draws the reader's attention to all the values associated with the Roman 'theology of victory': the virtue (ἀρετή) of the Roman soldiers (7.126), a projection of the might and wealth of the Empire and the requisite description of the enemy's subjugation and humiliation. In the latter he draws an especially poignant picture as he describes the moving stages that depict the 'slaughtered enemy', cities 'deluged with blood', 'supplicants' hands unable to be raised in resistance', and on each of the stages 'the general of a conquered city arranged in the position where he had been taken' (7.142-7).[57] Josephus indulges in the mimetic spectacle that is the triumph with all its gore and gaudiness. Beyond this, however, he is also careful to maintain the propaganda for this debutant dynasty. As has been

[57] Although she does not discuss this episode in the *War*, M. Gleason's essay 'Mutilated messengers: body language in Josephus', in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, ed. S. Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 50-85, examines the semiotics of body language as expressions of political power in the work of Josephus. In a conclusion that has much relevance to Josephus' dramatization of the Jewish captives in the Flavian triumph, Gleason, 74, argues 'that where the body so readily figures the polity in the collective imaginary, dramatizing one's ability to control individual bodies (both one's own and those of others) was a vital part of making a claim to political power.'

noted by others,[58] Josephus adds the regular refrain that everything in the triumph is taking place according to well-established lines of Roman tradition[59] – while the upstart Flavians may have no lineal connection with Julio-Claudian roots, they clearly want to portray themselves as those who have not fallen far from the Imperial tree.

Yet for all of Josephus' acquiescence to Roman values and Flavian propagandist claims, he is decidedly neutral in his description of the religious significance attached to Roman gods and the role of the Emperors. As B. Eberhardt points out, the Roman cult sites that are mentioned in the triumph account – i.e., the temple of Isis (7.123) and temple of Jupiter (7.53) – function only as cartographical reference points designated at the beginning and end of the procession according to 'customary' practice, but any religious significance attached to these locations is absent.[60] Further, when reference is made to the Roman gods, they are presented either as fixed points where customary sacrifices are offered as part of triumphal rituals (7.131) or as expensive objects of craftsmanship (7.136), including the goddess *Nike* (7.151), but without theological value attached to them. In terms of the role of the *triumphatores* in the parade Josephus is also remarkably understated in his comments. Of course, they are mentioned as reciting customary prayers (7.128 155), donning the traditional victory garments (7.130) and offering prescribed sacrifices (7.130, 155). But any independent meaning attached to their religious actions or their coming into contact with the divine – in this case Jupiter – is not mentioned by Josephus; the Roman victory is hollowed of what should be some of its basic emphases. Far from being projected as 'Jupiter for the day' Vespasian and Titus are dislocated of their divine status and maintain a decidedly human, though pious, posture. Again, Eberhardt's comments regarding the two Caesars and their relationship with Roman gods are insightful at this point:

> Eine Beziehung zu bestimmten römischen Göttern wird nicht ausgesagt, im Gegenteil: sie wird bewusst vermieden. Auch wenn auf den ersten Blick vom Text er völlig klar zu sein scheint, dass die Opfer und Gebete der Flavier an Jupiter Capitolinus gerichtet waren, und es sich sicher historisch auch so verhielt, so ist an

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[58] E.g., Michel and Bauernfeind, *Flqvius Josephus*, 241 A.66 (Exkurs XX); Beard, 'Triumph', 554; Eberhardt, 'Wer', 275.

[59] E.g., references to Roman tradition: Vespasian and Titus wearing traditional (πάτριος) triumphal garments (7.124); expressing 'customary (νομίζω) prayers' (7.128, 155); the eating of the 'customary (νομίζω) breakfast' of the soldiers (7.129); going through the gate where triumphal processions always (ἀεί) pass (7.130); and 'the ancient custom (παλαιὸν πάτριον)' of waiting for the execution of the enemy general (7.153-4).

[60] Eberhardt, 'Wer', 270, 273.

> dieser Stelle doch das „beredte Schweigen" des Josephus zu vermerken. Durch die Nichterwähnung des Jupiter ermöglicht er seinem Lesepublikum, die Religionsausübung der Flavier nicht lokalspezifisch als Jupiterkult, sondern als universale Frömmigkeit zu interpretieren.[61]

Josephus' „beredte Schweigen" on these matters is even more profound when one asks: What *is* given special prominence at the climactic moment of triumph and its subsequent 'appendix'? Somewhat surprisingly, it is not Roman victory, Roman virtues or even the triumphant Roman generals. Rather it is the Jewish temple and, specifically, it is the articles from the temple that are highlighted and dwelt upon. Why? In order to answer this we must back up slightly and reflect on what Josephus has previously related about the temple and its lamentable demise.

3.2.4. The Jewish Temple

In Josephus' description of the Flavian triumph scene what often disturbs modern scholars is his lack of emotion and cool depictions of the symbolic expressions of his country's ruin.[62] Chapman rightly asks: 'Where are the lamentations now over his country's fate?'[63] Very likely Josephus is sobered by the fact that as a *spectator* of the event, he could just as easily been part of the *spectacle* as a Jewish general assuming his position as a captured foe on the tableau float from the Jotapata siege. But another option is that he has already played up the significance of the Jewish temple elsewhere and lamented its ruin and implications for his own people. After all, to rain on this Roman parade would not only be bad form, it may well invite odium since a triumph is, by definition, an occasion for celebration and an opportunity to affirm Roman civic bonds and superiority over 'others'. Instead, Josephus mirrors expected elements and values in his description of the Flavian triumph but he also strategically positions the temple at the most important points of his account and in the process dislocates and hollows the Roman triumph of vital elements and emphases at one and the same time.[64] Before we analyse how Josephus does this, a brief summary of his descriptions of the temple and its ruin will be offered.

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[61] Eberhardt, 'Wer', 273.
[62] Rajak, *Josephus*, 218-9.
[63] Chapman, 'Spectacle', 310.
[64] Cf. Moore, 'Questions', 87.

3.2.4.1. Cosmic Significance

In all likelihood, very few of Josephus' Roman readers would be familiar with the city of Jerusalem and, at the heart of the city, its temple. When the scene of the *War* shifts exclusively to the siege of Jerusalem in book five, the narrative pauses for a lengthy description of the city and her magnificent temple (*War* 5.136-247). The description moves concentrically inward beginning with a detailing of the city walls and towers (5.136-160). Particular emphasis is placed on Herod the Great's three towers (5.161-175) dedicated to his friend Hippicus, his brother Phasael, and wife Mariamme. As the text dwells on these towers whose 'magnitude, beauty and strength [are] without equal in the world' (5.161), Josephus clearly means to convey the strength and impregnability of the city. All of this prepares the Roman reader for Titus' words as he enters the city upon its defeat in September 70 CE. As he surveys the magnitude of the towers and marvels at the greatness of their breadth and height, he exclaims, 'Indeed, we have made war with God [on our side]. It was God who has brought down the Jews from these strongholds; for what power have men or machine against these towers?' (6.411). The account progresses through a sketch of Herod's palace before moving to the temple itself, beginning with the porticoes and outer court, the women's court, the gilded gates and the sanctuary itself. As he elaborates on the materials used in the sanctuary, Josephus provides an editorial aside that this mixture of materials was not 'without its considered meaning: it was an image of the whole universe (ὅλος)' (5.212). As one moves further into the sanctuary to the Holy Place Josephus mentions the three most wonderful works of art, 'famous to all people':[65] the lampstand, table, and altar of incense (5.216). Josephus has briefly mentioned these objects before (cf. 1.152) in connection with Pompey's entry into the temple. This time, however, he lingers on them and describes their allegorical significance in detail. The seven lamps represent the planets; the twelve loaves depict the circle of the Zodiac and the year; while on the altar of incense the thirteen spices from every place on the earth signify that 'all things are of God and for God (τοῦ θεοῦ πάντα καὶ τῷ θεῷ)' (5.218). Josephus intends to impress his audience and sweep

[65] Not least because they were prominent fixtures of Vespasian and Titus' triumphal procession and housed in the temple of Peace in Rome.

them into a positive appraisal of the temple and God's universal embrace implied by them.[66]

In his elaborate description of Jerusalem and hermeneutical comments on the contents of the temple, Josephus offers more than simply a general's briefing on the distant siege-site of a third rate people. The account performs the function of highlighting the world-renowned significance of Jerusalem, her temple, and, ultimately, of her people. It was a place that attracted pilgrims 'from the ends of the earth to gather around this famous place' and whose 'altar was venerated by all people, both Greeks and barbarians' (5.17). Earlier in book four when Josephus offers his encomium to the priests Ananus and Jesus, he notes that in the temple they had led 'ceremonies of cosmic worship' (τῆς κοσμικῆς θρησκείας) and visitors to the city had come 'from every quarter of the earth' in obeisance (4.324). Although Josephus is careful when and how he provides his editorial comments, the sum of these texts expresses his conviction that Jerusalem is an esteemed city and that its Temple stands as a model for the universe, and so is of cosmic significance.

3.2.4.2. Jewish Impiety & Divine Purgation

The magnificence and significance of Jerusalem and her temple undoubtedly account for the lament theme and high incidence of pathos language in the *War*.[67] It has already been mentioned that Josephus, in the tradition reminiscent of Jeremiah, laments the plight of Jerusalem and her people, but he is not the only one who does so. The prophetic lament is picked up by the peasant, Jesus son of Ananias, who began his ominous cries against the city four years before the war (*War* 6.301-309) and continued them throughout the three years and five months of the war itself. Added to the lament for the city, the people, and the Temple expressed by Josephus and Jesus, the narrative also includes the unlikely voices of the Romans and Titus himself. Titus notices the ignoble mounds of unburied Jewish dead in the valleys and ravines as the siege progresses; he 'groans and raises his hands, calling God as his witness, that this was not his work' (5.519; cf. 6.214-16). Further, even the Roman

[66] Cf. Chapman, 'Spectacle', 297.

[67] The lament theme and pathos language runs throughout the *War*, but especially in books 5 and 6; cf. 1.9, 12; 4.361-62; 5.19-20, 28, 422, 429, 442-445; 6.1-8; 6.119-120, 407-408.

soldiers, hardly known for their empathetic temperament, 'had pity' (ἐλεέω, 5.572) upon hearing the tales of horror occurring within the besieged city.[68]

Josephus goes to considerable lengths to demonstrate the lamentable fate of Jerusalem, its people and its temple, even drawing into the orbit of grief the opponents of the Jewish fighters. Why? Josephus appears to want his readers to understand that this tragedy need not have happened, that the destruction of Jerusalem was not simply the result of Roman imperial aggression. Rather the reasons for the destruction go beyond the human purposes of Rome; this purgation of the Jews is centred in the overarching purposes of God. From start to finish, Josephus makes clear that the war against the Jews was deserved. In short, the country 'owed its ruin to civil strife, and that it was the Jewish tyrants who drew down upon the holy temple the unwilling hands of the Romans' (1.10; cf. 7.113 above). In a revealing editorial note on the heels of this declaration, Josephus adds:

> But I suppose God brought the destruction because of the defilement of the city and, wishing the sanctuary to be purged (ἐκκαθαρθῆναι) by fire, he cut off their defenders and those most dearly loved (4.323).

This purgative theme is repeated numerous times throughout the narrative as Josephus remarks on how God is purging the sanctuary by the agency of the Romans (5.19, 367-368, 378, 408-412, 442-445; 6.251). In fact, as Mason notes, 'if the Romans had not acted according to script, Josephus claims, God would have caused the very earth to swallow up the Jewish rebels (5.566).'[69] To add to the centrality of this notion for the whole history, what begins as an editorial aside of Josephus in book four is given full brush in the closing words of the final speech attributed to Josephus himself. Josephus cites an uncertain reference[70] from a prophetic oracle in support of his appeal:

> For they foretold that [the city] would be taken when someone would begin to slaughter his own countrymen. Are not the city and the whole temple full with the

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[68] See also Titus' comments and his 'pity' for Jerusalem (7.112-13). A. Ziolkowski, '*Urbs direpta*, or how the Romans sacked cities', in *War and Society in the Roman World*, eds. J. Rich and G. Shipley (London: Routledge, 1993), 69-91, argues, in contrast to Polybius' description of disciplined Roman troops, that legionnaires were given free reign to vent themselves in wanton slaughter, rape and plunder of a sacked city. Pity, it seems, was far from the normal posture of imperial armies. See also Mattern, *Rome*, 162-210 and V. D'Huys, 'How to Describe Violence in Historical Narrative: Reflections of the Ancient Greek Historians and their Ancient Critics', *AS* 19 (1987), 209-50.

[69] Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, 86.

[70] Thackeray, 6.109 note b, suggests that the Sibylline Oracles 4.115ff may be the passage alluded to by Josephus.

> corpses of your countrymen? Therefore God, God himself along with (μετά) the Romans, is bringing fire to purge (κάθαρσιν) [the temple] and ravage this city full of such great defilements (6.109-10).

It is important to emphasize the two important points that Josephus is making: first, God is in control of the whole scene, the Romans are working in concert *with* God as agents of God's chastisement; secondly, the purpose of the judgement is to purge, *not* eradicate, the temple and the people of God. In spite of their pollutions and disregard for their leaders, God has not abandoned his people and, for that matter, the law. Although Josephus does not state it openly in the narrative, the direction that this purgative action should lead to its repentance and restoration – the twin outcomes expressed in Deuteronomy 30 and often in the prophetic literature of Israel. And when this occurs, like those exiles in Babylon who knew where the temple articles were held by their overlords, Josephus makes clear that the temple items are being carefully 'preserved/retained' by the Romans in no less an auspicious dwelling than Vespasian's palace (cf. *War* 7.162).

3.2.4.3. The Jewish Temple on Parade

Given Josephus' high regard for the temple and his eschatological hopes for it even after it has been 'purged' by fire, it is not surprising that he allots it special mention at two key junctures in the triumph account. The first reference to the temple occurs at the high point of the account (7.148-52)[71] where Josephus writes that 'above all else' (πάντων) the spoils from the temple at Jerusalem stood out in particular in the Flavian triumph (7.148). The temple items are given prominent descriptive space (90 words) at this significant moment; especially if one compares this with the brief mention of the goddess Nike (16 words) and the Flavian triumvirate (21 words). But more significant than word count is the fact that Josephus not only mentions the temple items but goes on to lift out the lampstand and describe the symbolic meaning of its seven-armed branches – an allusion to the Jewish Sabbath, the 'honoured' seventh day, that both Jewish readers and informed pagan readers would likely understand. On the other hand, the goddess Nike and her *triumphatores* are mentioned, as were the statues in 7.136, without any theological or religious meaning whatsoever. Obviously, an informed Roman reader would already know the religious significance given to Nike, but it does nonetheless seem odd that in a Roman

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[71] Cf. Künzl, *Triumph*, 26-7 and Eberhardt, 'Wer', 271.

triumphal narrative the emphasis should fall on the religious significance of the defeated and not the victor.

It appears that Josephus is not merely being sentimental about the Jewish temple when the same items highlighted in the triumph account warrant a second mention in the triumph 'appendix' where Josephus notes that the Torah is 'retained' or 'preserved' (φυλάττω) in the palace (7.162). This appendix (7.158-62) brings forward into the narrative Vespasian's Temple of Peace that was erected in 75 CE. This temple is a microcosm of the whole world, the product of a 'superhuman idea' (πάσης ἀνθρωπίνης κρεῖττον ἐπινοίας, 7.158), a lasting memorial to the Flavian triumph and the new dynasty. But again, in a moment of Flavian imperial assertion the account is crowded with the mention of vessels from the temple of the Jews being placed in the Temple of Peace, 'but their Law and the purple curtains from the sanctuary [Vespasian] commanded be put away in the palace to be retained' (7.162). The final word of the account is the Greek infinitive φυλάττειν a word that merits attention, as noted by Eberhardt,[72] by the fact that its Hebrew equivalent שמר (retain/keep/observe) is a fixed term when related to Jewish law. 'To retain' or 'to keep' the law (cf. Deut 6.3) is linked with hearing and doing the law: 'Hear, O Israel, and keep (שמר) so that you may do [the law]'. For Josephus, keeping/retaining the law is a theme that is important, especially in the *Antiquities*[73] and *Against Apion.*[74] In a passage earlier in *War* 2.202 he recounts the situation when Gaius ordered that his statue be erected in the temple at Jerusalem and draws on the motif of 'keeping the law'. He writes that the Roman general Petronius, after a thorough reflection on Jewish resolve, urged Gaius that 'unless he wished to destroy both the country and the people in it, he must permit them to keep (φυλάσσω) their law (νόμος)'. Now, with a sense of irony, Josephus mentions that after destroying the temple and defeating the Jewish people Vespasian is the one who is 'keeping the law' and, additionally, the sanctuary curtains.[75] Might this 'preservation' be a nod towards acknowledging that the temple items, like those 'preserved' in the Babylonian captivity by Babylonian triumphant kings only to be retrieved later, are catalogued for future use? Or might it

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[72] Eberhardt, 'Wer', 274.
[73] Cf. 1.15; 3.223; 4.159, 183, 191, 193, 210, 243, 306, 309, 318; 7.130, 338, 374, 384; 8.21, 195, 208, 290, 395; 9.157; 10.63; 11.152, 191; 12.276; 13.54; 14.65; 18.59, 84, 290.
[74] Cf. 1.60, 210, 212; 2.156, 184, 194, 237, 278.
[75] Eberhardt, 'Wer dient wem?', 277, comments that mention of the law and the sanctuary curtains draws together respectively both the pharisaic and priestly dimensions of the items themselves.

simply be another acknowledgement of Roman power and divine favour? The ambivalence of Josephus' account lends itself to answer both questions affirmatively.[76] Since this additional 'appendix' does not necessarily add to the portrayal of Roman hegemony already displayed in the triumph account proper, it appears almost as a cipher to stress the point that just as God has providentially used the Flavians as his instrument to *punish* and *purge* the Jewish people and temple they will now continue to serve as God's instruments to *preserve* and *protect* the Jewish law and symbol of their sanctuary (i.e., the temple curtains). In the end, Josephus' description of the triumph serves not only to highlight the greatness of Rome, it also serves to highlight, albeit obliquely, the greatness of the temple even after it has been destroyed – a thought that Eberhardt rightly captures in her question about the account as a whole: 'Wer dient wem?'

3.2.5. Conclusions

In Josephus' depiction of the Flavian triumph a number of features of postcolonial discourse are at work, including those of ambiguity, mimicry and hybridity. The ambiguity occurs because Josephus both mimics expected Roman values and assertions while also reshaping and, to some extent, dislocates – even hollows out – these values and assertions in his hybrid account of events.

On the one hand, he mimics Roman values by drawing attention to the divine favour resting on Rome and the concomitant Roman virtue accompanying their fortune, especially as it relates to military prowess. Further, the worldwide hegemony of Rome is recognized and the narrative supports Flavian legitimacy and, as the triumph account suggests, even though the Flavians may not be of Julio-Claudian stock they are depicted by Josephus as pious leaders following the 'customary' traditions of Rome.

On the other hand, the mimicked elevation of Roman military virtue teeters on the edge of mockery in the face of Jewish soldiers whose bravery not only equals that of their Roman counter-parts but also bests them at times. The recitation of the *omina imperii* also carries an unstable doubleness within the narrative where the prophecies announcing the Flavian Imperium are redrawn and altered along Jewish lines so that

[76] Cf. J. Rives, 'Flavian Policy and the Destruction of the Jerusalem Temple', in *Flavius Josephus*, 145-66.

Vespasian is acclaimed as Emperor by the Jews first, on Jewish soil and in fulfilment of Jewish prophecy. Finally, where power in the form of military and religious superiority should be projected most openly and 'victoriously' in the spectacle of a Roman triumph we find, yet again, that Roman ideology shares centre stage with Jewish self-assertions. To be sure, Josephus is careful not to spoil the Flavian coronation nor usurp Roman ideology that emperors and conquest go hand-in-hand. Yet in the hands of a Jewish historian the high point, primary focus and final word do not glorify Roman gods nor the victorious Roman *triumphator* in the guise of 'Jupiter for a day'; rather, what is given rhetorical and religious pride of place is the Jewish temple, via its sacred vessels, and the 'keeping' or preservation of the Jewish law. All of the expected Roman elements are on stage in Josephus' hybrid discourse on the Flavian triumph, but the tune that is played is subtly altered and modulated into a Jewish key. Again, from a Jewish perspective, the Roman Empire and her leaders are pictured as serving, somewhat unexpectedly, the purposes of Josephus' God, the God of the Jews.

3.3. A Tale of Two Generals

By and large, little scholarly attention has been given to the role of Roman generals in battle in terms of their personal abilities in leadership. It is often asserted that the success of the Roman army had very little to do with the capability of their commanders, beyond their employment of broad-scale tactics.[77] A.K. Goldsworthy argues that the harsh treatment scholars have levelled against the ability of Roman commanders is based on the anachronistic assumption that grand tactics were the general's most important skill.[78] Instead, Goldsworthy demonstrates that there was much that a Roman general could do before, during and after a battle to ensure the success of his army. Further, amidst the upbringing and social ethos of the Roman elite there was a clear image of what made a 'good commander', above all else he should possess *virtus* – in terms of both moral and physical courage – a quality that

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[77] See the work of B.H. Liddell-Hart, *A Greater than Napoleon - Scipio Africanus* (Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons, 1930), esp. 248-80; H. Delbrück, *History of the Art of War within the Framework of Political History*, trans. W.J. Renfroe Jr. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975), 380-7 (on Scipio), 565-71 (on Caesar); J. Leach, *Pompey the Great* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), 210; and L. Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army: From Republic to Empire* (London: Routledge, 1998), 101-2.
[78] A.K. Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC - AD 200* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 116-70. See also B. Campbell, 'Teach Yourself How to be a General', *JRS* 77 (1987), 13-29.

must accompany the expected technical skills of a general and the divine Fortune or Tyche that accompanied one's rise to power.[79] In addition to the obvious military objectives, the stakes were high for Roman commanders as their military successes were tied closely to their political fortunes.

The purpose of this section is to compare Josephus' representation of two prominent generals in the *War* in terms of what they are portrayed as saying and, importantly, what they do in their capacity as military commanders. Recently, J. McLaren has provided an excellent analysis of Josephus' depiction of Titus as a general in the *War*.[80] The first part of this section will examine the portrait of Titus provided by Josephus by analysing his speeches and generalship. The latter will draw on McLaren's work but also extend his treatment on Roman attitudes regarding a good commander by applying the criteria to Josephus' picture of Eleazar ben Yaïr, the Jewish leader during the siege of Masada. The aim is to show how a colonised Jewish historian applies Roman values and standards of a 'good commander' to both Roman and Jewish leaders. Of course, the Roman general in question is not just any general, but Josephus' own imperial patron. Is the picture that Josephus draws sycophantic mimicry to enhance the image of Titus and, once more, shame the Jewish rebels? Or, does his hybrid account potentially destabilise Roman perceptions by challenging the public image of Titus and asserting the *virtus* of his Jewish compatriots distilled in the image of Eleazar?

3.3.1. Titus

Titus is the dominant Roman character in the *War* rivalling even his father Vespasian for pride of place. Even though he does not come into the narrative until book three, he is mentioned in the prologue no less than three times (1.10, 25, 27-8) and his role is extensive from book five onwards. Outside of the *War* Titus is named as providing an imprimatur for Josephus' history thus indicating, at some level, substantiation and approval for the project (*Life* 361-63; *Apion* 1.50-1). Scholars are quick to point out that the prominence evinced in the account and the apparent positive portrayal of Titus is either an indication, at worst, of Josephus' collusion[81]

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[79] Cf. Onasander, *Strategikos*, Prooemium 5-6 and books 1-2; Plutarch, *Mor.* 316C-326C; Cicero *Leg. man.* 10.28.
[80] J.S. McLaren, 'Titus', 279-95.
[81] E.g., Laqueur, *Josephus*, 229, 255-6; Hengel, *Zealots*, 15; Mader, *Josephus*, 155-6.

with Flavian propaganda to enhance the public image of Titus or, at best, an expression of gratitude[82] to repay and honour the protection provided by Vespasian and Titus. Either way, Josephus is presented as an active participant in promoting a positive image of Titus and countering his reputation for cruelty (*saevitia*, Suetonius, *Tit.* 7.1).

Evidence for the positive depiction of Titus in the *War* is typically based on several factors.[83] One element is the repeated motif of the imperial virtue of clemency associated with Titus.[84] From the prologue (1.10, 27), narrative (e.g., 3.396; 4.627; 5.319, 329-35, 348, 519; 6.94-5, 115, 127-8, 236-43, 324, 383) and especially in his speeches, Titus is pictured as displaying 'philanthropy' towards the Jewish people and pity for their temple. A second element is Titus' military leadership, especially his courage. Time and again Titus comes to the rescue of his troops through feats of bravery and personal involvement in the fighting (e.g., 3.484, 504; 5.82, 288, 295, 340, 347-8, 6.70, 6.245). The highlight of his courage in battle is his single-handed rescue of the Tenth Legion – on two occasions no less (5.97)! These two elements – Titus' imperial clemency and military capability – will now be examined in more detail by turning to his speeches and an evaluation of his generalship.

3.3.1.1. Speeches

On four occasions in the *War* direct speech is attributed to Titus. Two of the speeches, one short and one longer, are addressed to Roman troops, while the other two, again one short and one longer, are addressed to Jewish rebels. The shorter address to the Roman troops (*War* 3.472-84) is set while the war is in its early stages in Galilee at the town of Tarichaeae on the Sea of Galilee. Titus' words offer an interesting perspective on the power dynamics that are shaped as he compares his Roman troops with their Jewish adversaries. First, the Romans are affirmed for their superior *identity*. Twice within the first few lines of the speech Titus calls on his troops to remind them 'of the name of your race, that you might bear in mind who you are and whom we have to fight….reflect once more on who [we are] and against

[82] E.g., Zvi Yavetz, 'Reflections on Titus and Josephus', *GRBS* 16 (1975), 411-32, at 423-4; Rajak, *Josephus*, 203-17.
[83] Cf. McLaren, 'Titus', 281.
[84] Cf. Yavetz, 'Reflections', 424-6. See also the detailed discussion of irony in relationship to Titus' clemency in S. Mason, 'Figured Speech and Irony in T. Flavius Josephus', in *Flavius Josephus*, 243-88, at 262-7.

whom [we are] going into battle' (3.472, 475). Twice he acknowledges that they dominate the whole inhabited world (3.473, 480) in an effort to bolster further this identity of superiority. Second, the speech contends that the Romans are superior to the Jewish rebels in terms of *virtue*: 'the Jews are led on by recklessness, temerity and despair, emotions (πάθη) which are good when facing success but are damped by the slightest reverse; but *we* are led by valour (ἀρετή), obedience (εὐπείθεια), and fortitude (γενναῖος), which, though doubtless seen to perfection when favoured by fortune (εὐτυχήμα), in adversity holds on to the last' (3.479). Third, the speech draws to a close by affirming that they have a divine 'Ally,' and this reality undergirds their position of power and provides the basis of their courage: 'Do you then not fail me, have confidence that *God is on my side and supports my ardour*' (3.484). Thus, Titus bases his confidence on their identity as Romans, their superior virtue and the divine 'Ally' who supports their cause.

Although the second speech of Titus (6.33-53), on this occasion addressing his troops during the final moments of the siege of Jerusalem, is longer – due in part to a stoic-like encomium on the warrior death (6.46-53) – it echoes the dynamics of the first speech. But what receives special attention in the speech is a theological element; four references are made in succession that God favours them:

> We possess the co-operation of God (συνεργουμένους ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ). For our misfortunes are the result of the Jews' desperate madness, while their sufferings grow by your virtues (ὑμετέραις ἀρεταῖς) and the co-operation of God (τοῦ θεοῦ συνεργίαις).[85] For what can rebellion and famine and siege and the fall of the wall without the use of engines mean except that God is angry with them and extending his aid (βοήθεια) to us? Therefore, to allow us not only to be diminished by those who are inferior but also to betray a divine Ally (τὴν θείαν συμμαχίαν) would be beneath our dignity (6.38-41).

What these comments point to is a sense of the Roman right to rule the world, a position that is supported by the twin pillars of the theology of victory: superior virtue (ἀρετή)[86] and divine favour. What is striking about the theological legitimacy of this position is that Titus, the *princeps* of Rome, states his affirmation of divine support consistently in monotheistic terms. This monotheistic position, understandable to a Stoic as much as a Jew, is consistently employed in direct and indirect references made by Roman rulers throughout the whole of the *War*. No doubt, any Roman

[85] Thackeray, oddly, translates τοῦ θεοῦ as 'the Deity'.
[86] E.g., 3.479; 4.43; 6.36. Another nod towards the virtue of the Roman troops is that they are respectful, unlike the Jewish rebels, of the temple precincts (6.123).

hearing this would assume that the 'god' Titus refers to is Jupiter or Victoria. But the consistent usage of θεός in the singular offers *both* a Roman *and* a Jewish valence to divine agency at work for the Romans. Even further, this language makes Titus appear to speak like a 'Judaized Roman'. For example, in 5.519 after describing Titus making his rounds and witnessing the carnage around Jerusalem Josephus notes that 'he groaned and, raising his hands, he called God to witness that this was not his work'. In every instance when Titus (as well as Vespasian) speaks of 'God' in direct speech throughout the *War*, he does so in monotheistic terms.[87] Titus' 'call to courage' demonstrates a clear sense of the Roman right to rule the world, a position that is supported by their superior virtue and legitimated by divine approval.

Titus' shortest direct speech (6.124-128) is set at the height of the war, with the temple mount surrounded. It follows a speech made by Josephus himself. Josephus is at pains to portray the Romans as virtuous, merciful, and pious. Besides mentioning that the Romans greeted his own speech with 'pity' (6.112), he notes that several chief priests,[88] a number of sons of chief priests,[89] and many others from the Jewish aristocracy[90] are received by Caesar with 'courtesy' and promises of restoration of their property after the war (6.115; cf. 6.119, 123).

It is in this context of the moral high ground, that Titus addresses his first brief speech to the Jewish leader John of Gischala and those with him. Titus upbraids the rebels for bringing the war to the temple and thus defiling the holy precinct with the blood of foreigners and natives. He presents the Romans as those who uphold Jewish laws regarding the sanctity of the temple[91] and guarantees that if they change their place of defence 'not a Roman shall approach or insult your holy places' (6.128). Titus offers his own pledge as one who will 'preserve the temple for you, even against your will' (6.128). At the heart of Titus' speech is an appeal to 'the gods of my fathers to witness and any deity that once watched over this place – for now I do not suppose that it is regarded by any – I call my army, the Jews within my lines, and you yourselves to witness that it is not I who force you to pollute these precincts' (6.126-

[87] The only one exception to this is in 6.126-27, when Titus appeals to the 'gods of my fathers' that he will preserve the inviolability of the temple precincts in Jerusalem. One explanation for this usage may be that he has twinned the Roman ancestral gods with the deity who *was* in the temple before abandoning it because of its pollutions.
[88] I.e., Joseph and Jesus, *War* 6.114.
[89] I.e., sons of Ishmael and Matthias, *War* 6.114.
[90] Cf. *War* 6.113, 114 where Josephus refers to τῶν εὐγενῶν.
[91] Josephus has earlier described John's sacrilegious plundering of the temple, see *War* 5.562-66.

27). The Jewish rebels are presented as responding dismissively to Titus' speech and given their portrayal throughout the narrative this is not surprising. The brigands and their tyrant attribute '[Titus'] exhortations rather to cowardice than goodwill, and treated them with contempt' (6.129).

Of course, the irony of the so-called virtue, piety, and mercy of the Romans and her leader in this discourse would hardly be lost on many of Josephus' readers whether they are Roman or Jewish. Already the audience has been alerted to Roman violations committed in the temple precincts by Pompey (1.150-54), Pilate (2.169-74), Gaius (2.184-87) and Florus (2.293-96). Furthermore, set against this 'clement' Titus of book six is the more savage Titus at the end of book five. Book five ends with a description of the mounting dead around Jerusalem, the famine gripping the city under siege, and mass Jewish crucifixions at the direct order of Titus (5.446-451). What the notion of 'clemency' does suggest is that Titus possesses absolute power over life and death. Whether one is convinced by the rhetoric, the heart of the speech, once more, makes a clear reference to the fact that the 'deity that once watched' this temple has, like the chief priests and aristocrats of Jerusalem who were able to do so, deserted it for the side of the Romans. Oddly, in Titus' call to witness, he appeals to 'the gods of my fathers' – the only time in the entire narrative that any Roman refers to 'god' in the plural. Nonetheless, the speech continues with the asymmetrical portrayal of divine power linked with the fortunes of Rome behind the smoke screen of Roman 'virtue' and Jewish rebel impiety.

The invective against the rebels and claims of Titus are repeated and elaborated in his final speech (6.328-50) with the city in flames and only a few rebels under the leadership of Simon and John holding out for pardon. In this speech, the notion of Roman clemency – articulated as 'philanthropy' (6.333, 340, 341) – is cited as a pretext for the Jewish rebellion. Rome is portrayed as a loving 'master' who has granted numerous concessions to the Jews, only to be incorrigibly despised (6.334-5). Titus charges the rebels with taking advantage of the disorder after Nero's death to bring war on the Romans. When Rome responds, it is portrayed as merely the action of a merciful and loving master bringing correction to an ungrateful servant. Vespasian's ravaging of Galilee was supposedly meant to afford 'you time for repentance.... [and] his kindness (φιλανθρωπία) was taken for weakness, and upon our clemency you nursed your audacity' (6.340). When Titus arrives at Jerusalem, he asserts that he kept 'faith,' invited them to 'peace,' and 'on approaching the temple, again in deliberate forgetfulness of the laws of war, I besought you to spare your own shrines and to preserve the temple for yourselves' (6.345-46). Finally, in response to the rebels' initial request for pardon, Titus replies with his own question and an assertion:

> Is not your people dead, your temple gone, your city at my mercy, and are not your very lives in my hands? .... Throw down your arms, surrender your persons, and I grant you your lives, like a merciful master of a household punishing the incorrigible and preserving the rest for myself (6.349-50).

What this final speech once more expresses are the notions of Roman virtue, expressed as 'faithfulness' and 'peacefulness.' Added to this is the motif of clemency, couched as 'philanthropy' and set against the grand patronage of Caesar as the 'merciful master of a household.' This speech expresses the archetypal model of power that operated in the Roman Empire: that of patron and client. This is no war between 'equals'; it is a rebellion between master and servant(s). Josephus, in a display exhibiting a deep Roman imprint, is keen to assert imperial virtue, especially the virtue of *clementia*, at work in the general Titus. But at the same time, he also frames Titus' military success in terms of the divine favour of God, and a god who is spoken of almost exclusively in monotheistic terms. While this 'monotheism' could obviously carry a Stoic valence, for a provincial historian like Josephus it could also carry a Jewish sense as well. Furthermore, the divine dependency that Titus expresses verbally in his speeches adds another layer of nuance to Josephus' overall thesis that Jerusalem fell *not* because of Roman power but because the Jewish God desired to purge his own house by means of the Romans. This assertion continues the challenge against the Flavian presentation depicted in triumph, coins, monuments and historical record that the war was won simply because of the virtue of the Roman generals (now emperors), their superior army and the favour of Roman deities.

3.3.1.2. The Generalship of Titus: An Evaluation

As noted earlier, McLaren has provided an excellent argument challenging the prevailing one-dimensional scholarly portrait that understands Josephus' view of Titus the general as 'paid advertisement and/or...expression of thanks'.[92] McLaren's thesis

[92] McLaren, 'Titus', 282.

is based on two important, but often neglected, pieces of evidence. The first is the presentation of Titus as a general based against the backdrop of existing Roman perceptions of good commanders.[93] The second is the place of the public image of the Titus boasting of unparalleled success over the Jews set against Josephus' record in the *War*.[94] What follows is a summary of McLaren's findings that will be used as a template when later considering Josephus' portrait of Eleazar, the Jewish commander at Masada.

3.3.1.2.1. Roman Perceptions on a Good Commander

In the first century Roman world there were familiar *exempla* of Roman commanders in late Republican and early Imperial period texts that make mention of figures like Scipio, Pompey, Caesar, Corbulo and Agricola. Further, military manuals written by Onasander (mid-first century CE) and Frontinus (late-first century CE) were part of a well-founded genre in Roman elite circles.[95] These texts offered broad principles, especially related to a general's character (Onasander), and exemplary practices of former commanders (Frontinus[96]) that informed a Roman perspective. Obviously, the relationship between texts and real practice is a complex one. As A.J. Smith notes, 'the general did not read Onasander in the battle, any more than a Greek would ride to hunt with Xenophon's *Cynegetica* in his hand, but reading such works was a way of reflecting in advance, and in memory, on action'.[97] It is impossible to know whether Josephus was conversant in specific texts like those of Onasander or Frontinus. However, as McLaren notes, Josephus behaved very much in the mould of the commander outlined by Onasander in book three in the *War* and this at least suggests that Josephus was familiar with some Roman attitudes regarding a good commander.[98]

McLaren identifies from the work of Onasander three broad criteria that illustrate 'best practice' by a general. The first criterion relates to safeguarding the

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[93] See McLaren, 'Titus', 282-7.
[94] See McLaren, 'Josephus on Titus', 287-91.
[95] Cf. Campbell, 'Teach', 20-22.
[96] It is noteworthy that while Frontinus cites very few imperial period figures in his work he does include Vespasian and Domitian amongst his *exempla* but never mentions Titus (*Strategmata* 1.18; 1.3.10; 2.3.23; 2.11.7; 2.11.17; 4.6.4).
[97] C.J. Smith, 'Onasander on How to Be a General', in *Modus Operandi: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Rickman*, eds. M. Austin, J. Harries and C. Smith (London: University of London, 1998), 151-66, at 166.
[98] McLaren, 'Titus', 283n8.

army at all times. A good general must ensure his troops with protection en route through enemy territory (*Strategicus* 6-7), provide them with safe and fortified camps (8, 10), judiciously use spies (10.3) and employ stratagems to trick the enemy (21.9; 22.2).[99] A commander must also take due care in safeguarding over-zealous soldiers in pursuit of the enemy (11.1). While in siege a commander must take care to protect his troops from counter-assaults (40-1) and provide proper equipment for battle (42.3).[100] The second criterion is maintaining proper discipline of troops. Precise obedience to orders was vital so that control be maintained in battle (10.9; 25), wanton pillaging and murder be avoided (35; 42.8) and surrendering troops be treated humanely in order to prevent the enemy being turned into desperate fighters and making victory difficult to obtain (38.1).[101] The third criterion is the personal conduct of the general. A general must be quick thinking (32), confident (13), open to advice (3) and ensure his troops are neither too fearful nor lack proper caution (14.1). Above all, a general should be close enough to the battle to lead effectively but under no circumstances become directly involved in the actual fighting (33.6).[102] It was not the role of the general to fight, the general was to command and lead.

In light of this context on Roman attitudes towards military command, McLaren provides a helpful corrective to any one-dimensional view that envisages Josephus as simply offering a positive portrait of Titus the general. Overall, the recalibrated impression offers a mixed review of Titus' ability. In the first area related to organizational skills and the employment of stratagems Titus does make some constructive decisions. Organizationally, he consults his staff, oversees the construction of some camps and builds siege walls to protect his soldiers (*War* 5.276, 446, 491-6; 6.149, 220). Strategically, he employs tactics that attempt to deflate the morale of the Jewish fighters (e.g., 5.289, 348-56). There are, however, a number of failings on his part. The positioning of his camps is far from safe so that both soldiers and equipment are regularly attacked (5.67-84, 275-87, 291-95, 479-85). Several

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[99] Frontinus placed particular emphasis on the canny abilities of a general to outwit his enemy (*Strategemata* 1.1-12; 2.1-3, 4-5, 7-8, 11-12).
[100] Tacitus praises Agricola for his excellent organizational skills (*Agr.* 20, 22) and at the battle of Bourges Julius Caesar makes particular note of the importance of protecting his siege works and properly positioning his troops (*Bell. gall.* 7.22-28).
[101] Tacitus commends Corbulo and Agricola for their ability to maintain firm discipline of their troops (*Ann.* 11.18-20; 13.35-39; 15.26; *Agr.* 20)
[102] Goldsworthy, *Roman*, 149-63, discusses the proper positioning of a general in relationship to the front line. Fighting in the front lines with troops was clearly the exception to common practice as in the case of Marius (Plutarch, *Marius* 20), or under desperate circumstances like those faced by Caesar at the Sambre in 57 BCE and Cotta at Atuatuca in 54 BCE (*Bell. gall.* 2.25; 5.33).

times Titus does come personally to rescue his troops and repel the Jewish fighters, but as McLaren points out 'such interventions should not have been required in the first place, nor should it have been Titus who intervened in the fighting'.[103] With regard to stratagems, it is Titus who is more often portrayed as a gullible leader who is often put on his back foot by the clever ruse of his enemies (4.92-116; 6.177-81) and his so-called clemency belies a simplicity in battle that is frequently exploited (5.319, 329, 333-4).

In the sphere of discipline, again, Titus is both effective and ineffective. Titus does reprimand his troops for insubordination and failure to heed his warnings (5.121-28, 316, 553-6; 6.155). Yet despite these efforts he is often unable to control his soldiers. Jewish soldiers regularly outwit unprepared and undisciplined Roman soldiers (5.109-14, 318-29) and there are regular reversals at key junctures in the battle due to soldiers who make decisions without orders (6.182-3, 256) or in disregard to orders (6.258, 260-2, 266).

It is in the area of Titus' personal conduct in the War where the portrait is most damning. Only once does Titus heed the advice of his officers and stay 'directing the combat of the soldiers rather than going down and bearing the brunt of the fighting' (6.133). More frequently Titus does the exact opposite. Repeatedly, Titus would 'act the part of a common soldier' ignoring that he was 'master of both the war and the whole world' (5.88). Titus is regularly depicted leading the attack or saving the day (e.g., 5.97, 486; 6.70). While modern readers may look on this as illustrating positive 'hands-on' leadership style and bravery, in fact this 'runs counter to the notion of the general being near to the fighting to oversee what happens but not actually directly engaged in battle on a regular basis'.[104]

What we are left with after considering Titus' actions and abilities against Roman perceptions of what constitutes a 'good general' is less than complimentary. Even though Titus does live up to his claims of courage – a sign of Roman *virtus* to be sure – this does not necessarily dismiss the fact that his generalship was poor. Put another way, Josephus affirms that Titus possesses physical courage in his willingness to expose himself to front lines and encourage his men; however, Titus lacks a sense of moral courage in his ability to make and maintain decisions affecting his army. By drawing out useful *Roman* criteria with which to evaluate the quality of a general,

[103] McLaren, 'Titus', 286.
[104] McLaren, 'Titus', 287.

McLaren has demonstrated that Josephus' portrayal of Titus is far from a flat, positive and one-dimensional picture. Instead, the depiction has nuance to it that appears to challenge Roman values on their own terms and it provides a useful measure with which to judge the later portrait of Eleazar in book seven. But before turning to Eleazar one further corrective on Josephus' supposed positive depiction of Titus will be summarized with regards to Titus' public image.

3.3.1.2.2. The Public Image of Titus

In the previous chapter we examined some of the measures the Flavian propaganda machine pursued in order to legitimise their debutant dynasty. Although Vespasian lacked an imperial pedigree he did have a well-established military career as a successful general. In fact, set against the criteria of a good Roman commander, Vespasian would score quite well on all counts. On the other hand, his son Titus bore the added pressure of only minimal military experience to his credit. In this regard, the victory in Judea was exploited for all the political capital it could generate. Of particular importance was the construction of a positive public image for Titus, an especially vital task given his dismal reputation before he became sole Emperor of Rome (cf. Suetonius, *Tit.* 6-7).

One of the most important public expressions aimed at rehabilitating Titus' image and highlighting his persona as a successful military commander was the triumphal arch that used to stand in the Circus Maximus constructed in 80/81 CE. While the arch no longer exists, the dedication survives and reads with the crucial lines italicized:

> The Roman Senate and people [dedicate this] to the Emperor Titus Caesar Vespasian Augustus, son of the deified Vespasian, pontifex maximus, holding the tribuncian power for the tenth year, acclaimed imperator seventeen times, consul eight times, father of his country, their princeps, because with the guidance and plans of his father, and under his auspices, *he subdued the Jewish people and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, which all generals, kings, and peoples before him had either attacked without success or left entirely unassailed.*[105]

As McLaren indicates, 'this dedication on a public monument points to the way people were meant to view Titus. He was not to be seen as one among equals, let alone as a commander who simply restored Roman rule but as the commander who had succeeded where all others had previously failed by being the first to subdue the

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[105] *CIL* VI, no 944.

Jewish people'.[106] The claim depicted on the arch was bold and one that simply ignored events of the recent Roman past, i.e. Pompey in 63 BCE and Sosius in 37 BCE; what is clear is that there was an effort to broadcast – both publicly and broadly – Titus' military command and prowess.

Interestingly, Josephus' account does not mirror the Flavian propaganda on Titus and in fact contradicts it.[107] The most significant contradiction to the public reporting of Titus' military career relates to the claim made on the triumphal arch. The *War* describes numerous occasions when Jerusalem was conquered by the likes of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Pompey, Sosius/Herod and Varus (1.32, 138-52, 265-70, 342-56; 2.66-79). Titus was not the first to capture Jerusalem or defeat the Jews. As if to punctuate this further, Josephus provides a double reference to Jerusalem's defeat by the Babylonians at the conclusion of his description to Titus' siege of the city (6.250, 268) and ends the book by mentioning the city had been 'captured on five previous occasions' (6.435). Far from hiding the defeats faced by his home city, Josephus draws attention to its past defeats. In light of this, I agree with McLaren's conclusion that:

> It almost appears to be a perverse strained over emphasis by Josephus of past defeats suffered by the Jews. There is no effort to cover up the past. It is, therefore, not simply a case of Josephus supplementing the Roman efforts to promote a positive image of Titus. Contradictions existed between what Josephus described and what circulated among Roman circles about Titus.[108]

It is apparent that Josephus' account of Titus not only contradicts the public image of the general/emperor; it offers a challenge to the Roman story with regard to Titus and does so on Roman terms. While it is difficult to imagine the history of a marginal Jewish provincial historian having significant impact on Roman public opinion, for those who read the *War* this portrait of Titus would seriously skew the image refracted by way of monument, coin and Roman texts. When one adds to this the previous chapter's conclusion that it was faction, famine and the providential agency of God guiding the fortune of Rome that led to the defeat of the Jews, the view that Josephus' history is merely a piece of Flavian propaganda or panegyric rings hollow. Such a reading opens up the question as to how Josephus projects the image of the

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[106] McLaren, 'Titus', 288.
[107] E.g., McLaren, 'Titus', 290, points out the contradictions between Suetonius' claims (*Tit.* 4) for Titus' victories in the Jewish War at Tarichaeae and Gamala that are contradicted by Josephus' account (On Tarichaeae see *War* 3.445, 485, 503, 522; for Gamala see 4.31).
[108] McLaren, 'Titus', 291.

only Jewish rebel given a prominent voice in the *War*, the Jewish commander Eleazar ben Yaïr.

3.3.2. Eleazar

Along with the Flavian triumph at the beginning of book seven of the *War*, the siege of Masada – with Eleazar's speech at its heart – is the second nodal point of the book. That Josephus intended the Masada account as important appears evident from the weight granted to it. The episode recorded in 7.252-406 constitutes one-third of book seven and includes one of the major speeches in the work. Understandably, Josephus' description of the siege of Masada and its dramatic conclusion in 73 CE[109] has attracted significant scholarly attention.[110] The genesis of modern interest can be attributed to Y. Yadin's book about his archaeological excavation at Masada.[111] Yadin's interpretation of the archaeological evidence and its relationship to Josephus' narrative sparked immediate debate among Jewish scholars.[112] Since then, scholars have pursued questions related to Josephus' Masada account regarding literary relationships (both Jewish[113] and classical[114]), form-critical characteristics,[115] historical reliability[116] and the political context.[117]

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[109] W. Eck, 'Die Eroberung von Masada und eine neue Inschrift des L. Flavius Silva Nonius Bassus', *ZNW* 60 (1969), 282-89, has suggested that this should be redated to the spring of 74 CE but this conclusion has been effectively questioned by C.P. Jones' review in the *AJP* 95 (1974), 89-90 and by G.W. Bowersock's review in the *JRS* 65 (1975), 180-85.
[110] For a summary of scholarship from the early to mid-twentieth century see L. Feldman, 'Masada: A Critique of Recent Scholarship', in *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty, Part Three*, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 218-48.
[111] Y. Yadin, *Masada: Herod's Fortress and the Zealots' Last Stand* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson: London, 1966).
[112] Cf. S. Zeitlin, 'Masada and the Sicarii', *JQR* 57 (1967), 251-70 and T. Weiss-Rosmarin, 'Josephus' "Eleazar Speech" and Historical Credibility', in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Volume 1*, (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1977), 417-27.
[113] O. Michel and O. Bauernfeind, 'Die beiden Eleazarreden in Jos. bell. 7, 323-6; 7, 341-88', *ZNW* 58 (1967), 267-72 argue that Eleazar words contain Jewish traditional material under a Hellenistic veneer and Lindner, *Die Geschichtsauffassung*, 60, explains the speech by means of Septuagintal usage.
[114] As early as W. Morel, 'Eine Rede bei Josephus', *RMP* 75 (1926), 106-15, evidence has been marshalled to demonstrate the extent to which classical material imbues Eleazar's speech. This has been developed further by D.J. Ladouceur, 'Masada: A Consideration of the Literary Evidence', *GRBS* 21 (1980), 245-60, and M. Luz, 'Eleazar's Second Speech on Masada and its Literary Precedents', *RMP* 126 (1983), 25-43.
[115] Cf. R.R. Newell, 'The Forms and Historical Value of Josephus' Suicide Accounts', in *Josephus, the Bible and History*, eds. L.H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 278-95.
[116] S.J.D. Cohen, 'Masada: Literary Tradition, Archaeological Remains, and the Credibility of Josephus', *JJS* 33 (1982), 385-405, concludes that the historicity of the Masada account, especially the suicides, is dubious. Newell, 'Forms', 288-91, offers a more nuanced analysis of the suicide account and using criteria for evaluating authenticity – i.e., use of named individuals, the quality of sources and

Common to many of these investigations is the view that Josephus intended to portray the deaths of the Jewish soldiers and their families as heroic. Although a few scholars would demur on this point,[118] the narrative portrayal of Eleazar is interesting for the manner in which it serves both as a vehicle of scorn for the Jewish rebel leader and his followers and also asserts Jewish virtue and national pride. As such, this account offers another window to the subtle nuances and multivalent themes characteristic of postcolonial discourse that pervade the *War*. In turning to the speech of Eleazar the analysis will be especially attuned to further hints of ambiguities and doubleness in his words.

3.3.2.1. Speech (War 7.323-36; 341-88)

The two-part speech of Eleazar in 7.323-36 and 7.341-88 – reminiscent of Josephus' two-part address in book five[119] – is integral to the Masada account. The account opens with a description of the Sicarii's long battle with Rome (7.252-8) that leads into a digression about the impiety of other Jewish rebels who followed the example of lawlessness and cruelty against their kinsmen set by the Sicarii (7.259-74). The narrative next turns to the careful, but swift, siege preparations of the Tenth Legion under the leadership of Flavius Silva (7.275-79). The narrative dwells at some length on the description of Masada and its well-equipped fortifications built by Herod the Great (7.280-303). Finally, the events of the actual siege are described (7.304-19) culminating with the Romans breaching a second wooden wall of the fortress by means of fire and waiting until dawn for the flames to subside before pushing ahead with their final assault. For a moment, it appeared as if the wind might blow the flames against the Roman siege engines. Yet, once more, divine providence (δαιμονίου προνοίας,7.318) intervenes to redirect the wind, another proof that the Romans were blessed by the 'aid of God' (τῇ παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ συμμαχίᾳ, 7.319). In the face of flames, a brutal fate that waited at Roman hands and the judgment of God

function within the *War* – judges that the Masada suicides are historically probable even if the actual content of the speeches is not reliable.

[117] D.J. Ladouceur, 'Josephus and Masada', in *Josephus, Judaism and Christianity*, 95-113, argues that Josephus wrote the Masada account as a caricature of Stoic-Cynic opposition to the Flavians in the 70s.

[118] Pace Ladouceur, 'Masada', 101-5.

[119] Cf. Lindner, *Die Geschichtsauffassung*, 33, who also notes this parallel with Josephus' speech.

bent against them, Eleazar turns to his compatriots to convince them to take their own lives in his famous speech.

The inclusion of the speech by Eleazar ben Yaïr is interesting for a number of reasons. First, it is interesting for having been included at all. After being vilified throughout the previous six books in the narrative, the rebels are finally given their own voice.[120] For, secondly, unlike what one may have expected, the tone of Eleazar's words are not the words of a cowed criminal, penitent for impious acts against Rome, God and the temple. The first part of the speech opens with a vigorous affirmation of fealty not to Rome, but to God:

> For a long time it has been our determined effort, good men, neither to serve the Romans nor anyone else except God, for God is the only true and righteous Lord of humankind; the time is now present and urges us onward to prove true our purpose by deeds (*War* 7.323).

Eleazar beckons his compatriots to burn their possessions and the fortress, take their own lives and those of their families, but preserve their abundant provisions as a silent testimony so that the Romans would know 'that we were not overcome by lack of provision, but that from the beginning we determined to seize death before slavery' (7.336).

Finally, in light of what has been written throughout the *War* the speech is interesting for its many ambiguities. On the one hand, the speech affirms what has been consistently maintained throughout: the rebels' destruction is the work of divine providence. Importantly, this demonstrates that Eleazar's speech is, on *some* crucial points like divine providence, very similar to that of his political opponent Agrippa II. As was noted above, the sudden turn of the wind driving the flames away from their enemies and on to their wooden wall is not the work of blind chance, but the work of God. This reversal, as elsewhere, is interpreted as the work of the Jewish God's

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[120] Rajak, *Josephus*, 81, notes that 'in letting [Eleazar] speak, Josephus probably follows a *topos* among ancient writers, Tacitus being a noteworthy exponent, of putting stirring and even anti-Roman words into the mouths of defeated enemies'; cf. R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 528-29. While Rajak argues that Eleazar's words are 'anti-Roman', they certainly exhibit a wide range of familiar Stoic-Cynic values (cf. note 126) and affirm a fundamental Roman virtue in the 'noble death' motif. In contrast, the Britain Calgacus' anti-Roman vitriol is hardly comparable to Eleazar's words: 'Robbers of the world, having by their universal plunder exhausted the land, they rifle the deep. If the enemy be rich, they are rapacious; if he be poor, they lust for dominion; neither the east nor the west has been able to satisfy them. Alone among men they covet with equal eagerness poverty and riches. To robbery, slaughter, plunder, they give the lying name of empire; they make a solitude and call it peace' (Tacitus, *Agr.* 30-32). While Calgacus directs censure solely against the Romans, Eleazar acknowledges that the rebels' defeat is the just retribution of God for their crimes of impiety.

power against them (7.332). As Eleazer adds: 'For not *even* the invincible natural qualities of this fortress have been able to save us; for it can be plainly seen that despite the abundance of food and the great number of arms and preparation above and beyond this, we have had the hope of salvation taken away from us *by God*' (7.331). As if to drive this message home, Eleazer asserts: 'Do not attach the blame to yourselves, nor the credit to the Romans, that this war against them has brought destruction to us all; for it was *not* by their might (οὐ γὰρ ἐκείνων ἰσχύι) that they have accomplished these things, but the intervention of some more powerful cause (κρείττων αἰτία) has supplied them with the appearance of victory' (7.360).

The speech also affirms, albeit in a tone much more subdued than the rest of the narrative, that the rebel defeat at the hands of the Romans and by the power of God was deserved; this is a just retribution (7.327-30). The punishment and wrath of God is fitting because of 'the many wrongs which we madly dared to inflict upon our countrymen' (7.332). This, adds Eleazar, follows a history that has a lengthy tradition, 'for a long time, it seems, God has placed a vote against all of the Jewish race in common, that we are to be deprived of this life if we do not intend to offer fitting service to him according to what is proper' (7.359). Thus far, all is according to script. As elsewhere, Eleazar's speech affirms that actions befalling the Jews are according to the power of God in just recompense for their crimes. This follows in tune with the retribution theme played throughout book seven and is in accordance with the classical expectations of an audience who are accustomed to the *topoi* of 'tragic' history with its notions of retributive justice and the vicissitudes of fortune (τύχης μεταβολαί).[121]

Eleazar's speech is also fascinating in that a Jewish leader who opens his mouth with words echoing the beginning convictions of the *Decalogue* – 'it has been our determined effort...neither to serve the Romans nor anyone else except God, for God is the only true and righteous Lord of humankind' (7.323) – is transformed into a philosopher figure both in terms of the shape and content of his speech. Of all the characters in the *War* it is somewhat ironic that it is in Eleazar that Josephus chooses to reflect a deeply imposed Greco-Roman imprint. Numerous scholars[122] have catalogued at length the literary parallels of this speech with Platonic and Stoic

[121] Cf. thematic links of divine retribution in 7.32-4, 271 and 451-53. Ladouceur, 'Masada', 104, points out that the notion of *lex talionis* is a 'commonplace of Greek historiography from the classical period onwards'.

[122] See the works mentioned in 3.3.2.1. n114.

philosophy and for our purposes only a few samples are necessary to illustrate the imprint. In addition to references to Euripides and Posidonius, Eleazar alludes frequently to Platonic themes, particularly from *Phaedo*, for example: the imprisonment of the soul in the body, *War* 7.344-5//*Phd.* 81 e, 82 e, 91 e; the separation of the body and soul, *War* 7.344, 347, 348//*Phd.* 80 d, 114 b; on the soul's pure abode, *War* 7.344, 346//*Phd.* 80 d, 81 a, 84 b, 114 c; the soul weighed down by the body, *War* 7.346//*Phd.* 81 c; the Godlike force of the soul, *War* 346-7//*Phd.* 78 d-80 a. After his exhaustive survey of the second part of Eleazar's speech, Luz concludes: 'the dramatic and rhetorical parallels between the *deuterosis* and the suicide and consolation pieces of later times are too many to be coincidental, especially when we remember that these themes belonged to the *consolatio pervulgata* (Cic., *Fam.* V. 16.2) and *pertritum* (Sen., *Ep.* LXIII.12) in Roman times'.[123]

The speech, however, also raises some challenges to Roman ideology. Leaving aside the issues of suicide and the views on the relationship of the soul and the body,[124] Eleazar's speech challenges the notion of Roman military superiority and Roman 'virtue,' especially the virtue of clemency. As can be ascertained from quotations above, while conceding that God is at work against them, the rebel leader does not in any way acknowledge that they were bested by Roman military prowess. While Agrippa portrays the Romans as 'masters' of the world[125] and able to subdue powerful enemies from Parthia to Britain, Eleazar contends that on their own soil the Jews are a match for the Romans – a match that is, had God not been against them (7.369-70). Furthermore, the moral high ground which has characterized Titus and his pious soldiers throughout the narrative is critiqued by an honest appraisal of Roman 'justice' as the survivors from the fall of Jerusalem are mentioned:

> Some of them have been killed on the rack and tortured by fire and whip; while others half-eaten by wild animals only to be preserved to nourish a second life for them, after providing laughter and sport for their enemies. But those who must be regarded as the most pitiful are those who are still alive, those who have prayed countless times for death but do not receive it (*War* 7.373-74).

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[123] Luz, 'Eleazar's', 35.

[124] Along with this speech, the speech of Josephus at Jotapata on the crime of suicide, *War* 3.362ff, and its classical links have been explored at length by Morel, Ladouceur and Cohen.

[125] The 'master-servant' motif is also picked up in Titus' final speech in 6.349-50 establishing the grand patronage of Caesar, as the 'merciful master of a household.'

This, along with the fate of Jewish prisoners described earlier in book seven (cf. 7.37-8; 39-40) serves to undercut any notion of clemency at the hands of Titus.

Further, although in the *War* the Romans have often been praised for their nobility and fortitude, both parts of Eleazar's speech begin by addressing the Jewish defenders as 'brave men' (ἄνδρες ἀγαθοί, 7.323, 341) and the speech ends with the rebels portrayed as those who shun 'unmanliness' (ἄνανδρος, 7.378) and are noted for their 'manliness' (ἀνδρείᾳ, 7.382) and their boldness/audacity (τόλμη, 7.388) as they look forward to die honourably (καλῶς ἀποθανεῖν, 7.380) – a death that, at least by some Roman standards of the time, could be construed as dignified.[126] Ladouceur argues that Eleazar's appeal to his men that their act will be one of 'virtue and courage' (ἀρετή and εὐτολμία, 7.342) is undercut elsewhere in the history where ἀρετή is reserved primarily for descriptions of Roman military actions;[127] the Jews, in contrast, are motivated by baser qualities of 'audacity' or 'rashness' indicated by the word τόλμημα.[128] Still, one cannot help but note a doubleness at work in the discourse, especially in light of the emphasis on the virtue of contempt for death in the speech.

While Josephus may have been reluctant to attribute ἀρετή directly to Eleazar and the Sicarii, either for personal reasons of distaste or because this was a virtue so closely related to the exclusively *Roman* theology of victory, what is clear in the speech is that their suicide is regarded as 'noble' within the speech, in the narrative comments and in the words of Roman soldiers. In avoiding the direct and 'heroic' virtue of ἀρετή, he does ascribe the admirable Roman virtue of 'contempt for death' to the Jewish defenders, an element overlooked in Ladouceur's critique. In Roman culture, contempt for death was noble, honourable and virtuous.[129] For the Romans, voluntary death was, to use the words of M. Bakhtin, 'a pregnant and birth-giving death'[130] or as Barton writes, 'in the Roman contest culture...to will death was not to

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[126] MacMullen, *Enemies*, 4-5, notes that 'to a Greek mind, killing oneself was an act of cowardice, of desertion, as Socrates had said. Stoicism introduced a different view to be developed further in the century after Cato's death.'
[127] The notable exceptions to this are *War* 3.347 and 380 where ἀρετή is applied to military action when Josephus is personally involved.
[128] Ladouceur, 'Masada', 105 and note 35, argues that τόλμημα is never used with positive connotations in the *War* and that Thackeray's translation at 7.393 as 'daring deed' is misleading (cf. *War* 3.479).
[129] E.g., Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.3.30; Cicero, *Har. resp* 5.9; *Tusc.* 2.18.43; *Mil.* 30.82.
[130] M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World,* trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge, Mass.: 1968 [1929]), 394-5, cited in Barton, *Roman*, 43.

deny life but to carve its contour'.[131] In the Roman mind the competitive 'wasting' of soldiers – the willingness to expend everything – was, 'paradoxically, the final insurance of the continued existence of both the state and the spirit'.[132] Seneca puts it succinctly, 'Who scorns his own life is lord of yours' (*Ep.* 4.8).[133] This contempt of death was even extended to the willingness to expel one's 'natural' affections for family. 'We are appalled to hear Lucan's Vulteius, addressing his troops on the eve of their mass and mutual suicide, declare that their honor would be greater if their children and old folks were there to die with them (*Bellum civile* 4.503-504). But, like Seneca's and Euripides's Medea, like the Jepthah of Judges, or the mother of Second and Fourth Maccabees, men and women of honor made very unnatural parents'.[134]

In a culture whose heroes were the defeated Trojans, not the victorious Greeks, a people who understood how an enemy's will could be broken by the 'discarding' of soldiers at a time of greatest need,[135] a nation who admired the unbowed spirit – Roman readers could hardly be unimpressed by the contempt for death displayed by the defenders of Masada. That the theme of a 'noble death' is fundamental to the rhetorical thrust of the speech is evident by direct mention of it twice in part one (*War* 7.325, 326), once in the narrative bridge (7.337), and in the final few words of Eleazar in part two (7.388). This death is an opportunity sent by God as expression of judgement for their crimes (7.333, 358, 387) but one that is hoped by Eleazar to be 'admired' (θαῦμα, 7.388) by Roman soldiers – and, as the last line of the Masada account expresses, indeed it was: 'encountering the multitude of the slain, they could take no pleasure in the deed as over enemies, they admired the

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131 Barton, *Roman*, 43.

132 Barton, *Roman*, 44. E.g., Scipio's response when asked what he depended on as he prepared to cross over from Sicily to Africa to fight the Carthaginians, he pointed to three hundred men being drilled on a tower near the sea and replied 'there is not one of those men who would not, at my command, climb to the top and throw himself down headfirst' (Plutarch, *Reg. imp. apophth*, Scipio Maior 4).

133 Barton, *Roman*, 44n58, notes that 'the Romans delighted in the story of the person whose spirit could not be defeated because he or she held nothing in reserve, from Lucretia to Seneca's convict who strangled himself with the outhouse sponge (*Epistulae* 70.20-21). A Roman could redeem even lost honor by self-destruction' (cf. Cicero, *Fin.* 5.2.64; Seneca, *Phaed.* 261; Valerius Maximus 5.8.4). See also C.A. Barton, 'Savage Miracles: The Redemption of Lost Honor in Roman Society and the Sacrament of the Gladiator and the Martyr', *Representations* 45 (1994), 41-71.

134 Barton, *Roman*, 46.

135 E.g., Cicero asserts Hannibal's will was broken when he heard that the Romans were discarding the survivors of Cannae when Rome most needed them to defend herself (*Off.* 3.32.114; cf. Polybius, 6.58.13).

nobility of their resolve and the fearlessness in so many carrying out their deeds in contempt of death' (7.406).

3.3.2.2. Eleazar's Generalship: An Evaluation

Eleazar does not have a lengthy role of military leadership in the *War* and descriptions of his actions are relatively few in comparison to Titus. Nonetheless, there is a heuristic value in applying the 'best practice' of a Roman commander identified by McLaren to Eleazar.

The first criterion of a good commander is amply illustrated in the Masada account. According to Josephus, Eleazar led his troops to the safest, most well-provisioned fortress in Judea, if not the Eastern Empire. Josephus goes to great length to describe the natural protection afforded by the rocky plateau the fortress was situated on (7.280-4); a position that was made even stronger by the battlements, walls and towers constructed by the master architect Herod the Great (7.285-94). Josephus is at pains to have his reader agree with him that this stronghold had 'been fortified against the assaults of enemies both by nature and human hands' (7.294). Further, besides arable land on the top of the plateau (7.288-9) and the large reservoirs of water available to the defenders in an otherwise dry and uninhabitable surrounding (7.291), Masada was amply stored for years in corn, oil, wine, pulses, dates and masses of arms capable of fitting out 10,000 men (7.299). Although archaeological findings appear to challenge the claims of Josephus,[136] the Romans were said to have found even the fruit stores still fresh (7.297) and Eleazar spares destroying their provisions so that 'they will testify, when we are dead, that it was not want which subdued us' (7.336). Put simply, a Jewish commander in post-70 CE could not provide a safer, more well prepared fortress for a limited number of defenders to hold off a fully equipped Roman legion for months.

However one may wish to construe the rhetoric of Eleazar's speech, when one examines the obedient reaction of his troops to his exhortation in the second part of his speech, he is depicted as being able to get his fearful troops to do something that is against 'natural' inclinations and in keeping with their status as 'brave men' (ἄνδρες ἀγαθοί, cf. 7.323, 341). Like Titus before him, he uses his words to incite fearful troops to 'manful' actions and quick obedience such that Josephus records that each

[136] Cf. Cohen, 'Masada', 398.

man was eager to outdo his neighbour in performing their difficult actions as a proof 'of manliness and sound judgement' (τῆς ἀνδρείας καὶ τῆς εὐβουλίας νομίζοντες, 7.389). This ability to maintain discipline and obedience over his troops is linked closely with his personal conduct in the siege. Even though Eleazar lacked the defensive capability by way of ballistae to repel the Roman siege works, when it came to withstanding the battering ram against Masada's outer wall, the Sicarii responded with appropriate tactics in constructing an inner, pliable wall to break the force of the concussions. When the Romans set the wooden wall afire, the narrative comments are not that Eleazar and his defenders are filled with fear; rather the account notes that 'neither did Eleazar himself contemplate flight, nor did he intend to permit any other to do so' (7.320). At no time in the Masada account is Eleazar described as being fearful, rash or indecisive – and, importantly, at no time in the siege is Eleazar depicted as fighting personally. Rather, his role in leadership was to lead his defenders into a course of action that was difficult and required determined purpose. In short, although Eleazar has a limited profile in the *War* as a whole, when he does appear he is depicted, on terms understandable to a Roman audience, as a good commander.

3.3.3. Conclusions

The Masada account and the part played by Eleazar as speaker and commander illustrate a number of characteristics of postcolonial discourse that reflect both deference to Roman assertions as well as difference from, if not defiance to, Roman values. First, the adoption of Roman modes of thinking is most clearly reflected in the Greco-Roman philosophical motifs in Eleazar's speech. While it is certainly possible that Eleazar is pictured mimicking Stoic-Cynic values to position Jewish rebels and their ilk on the side of Flavian opponents present in Rome of the seventies, there is also ambivalence in depicting the worst of Jewish 'criminals' – the Sicarii – dressed in what was still considered the best of Roman philosophical traditions.

Second, the Masada account adopts the retributive justice theme and, as such, follows in line with classical tragic historiography. For Josephus, the Romans are God's agents of power and the Sicarii – whose central principle was 'no master but God' – failed to grasp God's purpose and received the appropriate punishment for their crimes. Yet despite being the acknowledged agents of God, the rebel leader boldly declares that neither the punishment, nor even the semblance of victory, is due to Roman superiority. For Eleazar, the punishment and victory is God's, not Rome's.

Third, while the narrative comment before Eleazar's speech does illustrate the discipline, tactical dominance and genius of the Roman army there is something destabilising to the claims of Roman military prowess. The fact is that a few hundred cornered Jews led by their Sicarii leader are able to maintain tactical advantage in their well-provisioned fortress for months against a battle-hardened Roman legion. In the crucial moment of testing this rabble, in almost Roman-like discipline, respond with unswerving obedience – and against natural affection – to the orders of their commander.[137]

Finally, there is no reason to grant heroic status to the Jewish defenders and thus contradict the assertion that moral virtue (i.e., ἀρετή) is the purview of Roman soldiers alone. While mirroring this essential Roman point of view, Eleazar's speech does, however, bend another related Roman virtue in the direction of the Jews: contempt for death. In the face of defeat, humiliation and the perpetual triumph exhibited by slavery, the Jews rob and hollow out the Romans' final victory in the *War* by 'nobly' taking their own lives. In each of these elements the doubleness characteristic of postcolonial discourse is evident and demonstrates the multi-layered quality of yet another crucial episode in the *War*.

3.4. Audience Questions

Throughout our study of Josephus, various comments have been made with regard to potential and/or likely audiences of the *War*. Although nothing in this analysis of Josephus hinges *per se* on questions of audience, it may be helpful to offer a few suggestions about audience in light of this postcolonial reading of the *War* and the subsequent implications that arise from it with regard to its multiple layers and subtle nuances. Another reason for addressing the question of audience is the recent consideration given to this issue – after an almost complete lack of attention to this

[137] In line with the prologue, Josephus is carving out the best of both worlds. That is, he suggests that one can hardly represent the Romans as a great nation while at the same time deprecating the actions of Jews (*War* 1.7-8). In this way Josephus preserves the supremacy of the Roman Empire without sacrificing the dignity of the Jewish people.

question by Josephan scholars[138] – by Steve Mason[139] and Jonathan Price.[140] In many respects the conclusions offered by Mason and Price are complimentary but place their respective emphases in different locations. On the one hand, Mason argues that Josephus directs the *War* towards a sophisticated *Roman* audience. He provides excellent support for his conclusion based on the general conditions for composing and disseminating literature in the first century, along with explicit indicators in the *War* that rely on uniquely Roman assumptions about the audience's knowledge and values.[141] Price, in contrast, grants that Josephus may address multiple audiences (i.e., Greek-educated elite in Rome along with Greek-speaking intelligentsia and Greek-speaking Jewish inhabitants in the Eastern provinces), but in the end argues for a *Jewish* based audience for the *War*. Price bases his conclusion on the historical and social circumstances of Josephus as an isolated provincial historian in Rome and his self-professed Jewish identity that shaped his historical outlook, not only for the *War* but also his entire literary project.

The tension between the positions of Mason and Price may be resolved if one distinguishes between the multiple worlds to which the text may direct itself. This approach is suggested by Barclay in his commentary on *Apion* and may also prove fruitful in considering the *War*.[142] Given the sensitivity that ancient readers had in differentiating between those addressed *in* the rhetorical setting of the text and those addressed *by* the real-life setting of the author, Barclay proposes that we should distinguish between at least three layers of audience that may or may not overlap: 1) the *declared audience* – those to whom the text is explicitly directed by named reference; 2) the *implied* audience – the ideal readers 'constructed' by the text in the assumptions made about the reader's knowledge and values; and 3) the *intended audience* – those readers Josephus hoped would read his narrative either in the short term or over time. The first two audiences are deduced from data within the text while the third audience is inferred, albeit cautiously, from the historical and social

[138] When scholars do address audience questions often the solution is that Josephus wrote for a wide readership; Romans, Greeks and Jews. E.g., Bilde, *Josephus*, 77-8, and G.E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 298-308.
[139] Mason, 'Audience', 71-100.
[140] Price, 'Provincial', 101-18.
[141] Mason, 'Audience', 99.
[142] Barclay, *Apion*, xlv-li.

context of the author outside the text. With this approach in hand, a few comments are in order about the respective audiences of the *War*.

3.4.1. Declared Audience

The declared audience of the *War* is announced in its prologue. Josephus writes that his history is directed 'to the subjects of the Roman Empire' (1.3), in particular, 'to the Greeks and those Romans who were not participants in the war' (1.6). This straightforward admission is complicated by another passage inside the *War*.[143] After a digression on the Roman army early in book three, Josephus writes that his purpose was not 'to extol the Romans as much as to encourage those whom they have subdued and avert those who may attempt to revolt' (3.108). He follows this by adding that those who 'love the good' (τῶν φιλοκαλούντων, 3.109) may also benefit from his digression. Who were those readers who may be tempted to revolt and those 'lovers of the good'? The answer to this question is found in the implied and intended audience layers of the *War*.

3.4.2. Implied Audience

In considering the implied audience for the *War* Mason draws considerable attention to elements in the prologue and the narrative that indicate a knowledgeable Greek-speaking Roman readership.[144] The opening sentence suggests, especially as one carefully considers the Greek as opposed to English translations,[145] that Josephus is engaged to some extent with a current and ongoing debate amongst other writers in the capital. Later in the prologue, according to Mason, the 'prospectus' (1.17-30) to

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[143] Outside of the *War*, in two separate passages in *Life* 361-6 and *Apion* 1.50-1, Josephus acknowledges that he had *given* copies of the *War* to Romans (most notably the imperators, Vespasian and Titus) and *sold* copies to many Romans and Jews (most notably Agrippa II) – including some who had participated in the conflict.

[144] See Mason, 'Audience', 88-91, 95-6.

[145] Mason, 'Audience', 88, points out that the fluidity and present force of Josephus' circumstances in Rome vis-à-vis other historians' accounts of the Jewish war is obscured by translating a number of present tense participles and verbs into the perfect tense in Thackeray's English translation. E.g., he notes that συλλέγοντες in 1.1 should be 'are collecting' not 'have collected', ἀναγράφουσιν in 1.2 should be 'are writing them up' not 'edited', and καταψεύδονται in 1.2 should be 'are misrepresenting' not 'misrepresenting'.

the narrative 'conspicuously reaches out to a Roman audience'[146] while the narrative assumes a substantial knowledge of Roman history but only a basic understanding of Judean realia.[147] These elements of presupposed knowledge in terms of what must be explained/left unexplained and aspects that are emphasized/ignored point to an implied Greek-speaking Roman audience.

3.4.3. Intended Audience

It is entirely plausible that Josephus aimed his work at an elite Roman audience and as such they constitute his implied audience constructed in the text. But if one considers the limited social possibilities available to Josephus in Flavian Rome and the profoundly Jewish characteristics of the *War* then it is also possible to deduce an intended Greek-speaking Jewish audience. In addition to the essay by Price, H. Cotton and W. Eck[148] have argued persuasively that Josephus' connections with the Flavian court and elite Roman circles were more limited than previously assumed. The benefits he received from Vespasian (i.e., citizenship, lodging, pension, land in Judea, *Life* 422-6) do not necessarily imply a position of privilege.[149] Outside of emphasizing his relationship with the imperators, Vespasian and Titus, Josephus rarely indicates those he knew in Rome and no extant first or second century external source, aside from a passing reference in Suetonius (*Vesp.* 5.6), even mentions Josephus or his work. Josephus does, however, mention that he sold copies of the *War* to a number of Judean figures, including members of the Herodian family (*Life* 362; *Apion* 1.51). Add to this the unlikelihood that a provincial historian with an Aramaic accent would offer public recitations of his history for an exacting Roman *literati* it appears more likely that Josephus would have moved in social circles amongst the few privileged fellow Jews in Rome with whom he shared a similar social and intellectual affinity. Whether it is this group that Josephus has in mind

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[146] Mason, 'Audience', 95-6, points out that Josephus carefully crafts the prospectus by culling important Judean figures (e.g., John of Gischala, Simon bar Giora and Eleazar ben Yair) and events in the revolt (e.g., the Hasmonean history and Herodian succession) while highlighting Roman figures (e.g., Vespasian, Titus, Pompey, Sossius, Augustus, Varus, Cestius and Nero) and events (items concerning Nero, the Roman civil war, Vespasian's succession and Titus' clemency) in order to 'hook' an interested and appreciative Roman audience.

[147] Mason, 'Audience', 91-2, provides examples of how even the most famous figures in Judean history like the Hasmoneans and Herod the Great must be explained as must basic aspects of Jewish culture like the Sabbath (1.146), the law (cf. 1.270, 650; 4.317) and feasts (e.g., Passover, 2.10-11; Pentecost, 2.42).

[148] H. Cotton and W. Eck, 'Josephus' Roman Audience: Josephus and the Roman Elites', in *Flavius Josephus*, 37-52.

[149] Cf. Cotton and Eck, 'Audience', 38-40; Price, 'Provincial', 105-9.

when he wrote about those 'subdued' by Rome and tempted to revolt in *War* 3.108 is debatable. The key point, however, is that the doubleness and ambiguities that I have attempted to demonstrate which exist within the text can suggest different and sometimes competing perspectives that would appeal to an intended audience of more sympathetic Greek-speaking Jewish readers.

It is hoped that the merits of this approach may help to reconcile the respective strengths of both conclusions proffered by Mason and Price. Mason's argument, with its emphasis on the presupposed knowledge of a Roman readership, relates primarily to the *War*'s implied audience; Price's argument, with its emphasis on the historical and social circumstances of Josephus along with the sympathy that his historical outlook would have engendered, relates primarily to the *War*'s intended audience. But beyond merely resolving two different emphases, this approach to the question of audience lends strength to the postcolonial reading of the *War*. That is, the postcolonial reading suggests that the narrative is replete with the doubleness, ambiguity and multiple layers of a hybrid account. As a writer whose own position is paradoxically shaped by the 'in-between-ness' created by the complex encounter between his native Jewish identity and the dominant values of Rome, it should not be surprising that his work speaks to multiple audiences and with different purposes. In this light, in addressing an implied Roman audience, the purpose of the *War* serves to acknowledge the dominant power of Rome and assuage any post-war antipathy towards Josephus and his compatriots; in addressing an intended Jewish audience, the work serves to redress any imbalance in the record of his nation's participation in the war (cf. 1.1-3, 6-9) while at the same time asserting Jewish valour, vigour and virtue in contrast to the subservient portrayal of the Jews in Flavian Rome.

3.5. Conclusion and Transition

Throughout the last two chapters a number of aspects to the *War* suggest that Josephus' work represents a far more complex and layered history than is assumed by those who regarded him as a one-dimensional traitor or Flavian sycophant. Instead, as a Jewish, colonized historian the image he presents of the Jewish people and their conflict with the Romans illustrates how Josephus has crafted a work that at the same time affirms and alters Roman assertions and values to create multifaceted, destabilising and unexpected results. Before turning our attention to Paul and his reflection on Roman power it will be helpful to summarise our findings.

On the one hand, postcolonial resources alert us to discover characteristics that illustrate how values and assertions of the dominant Roman power are picked up and 'mimicked' by the colonised Jewish writer Josephus in his discourse. To begin with we may recognise how the *War* reflects an awareness of Greco-Roman historians and the conventions of their historiography. The structure of the narrative, the role of set speeches and the inclusion of familiar motifs illustrate Josephus' consciousness to these. Besides appealing to an implied Roman audience, one that includes the emperor himself, the narrative highlights recognisable qualities of the new imperial dynasty with attention to the themes of clemency, adherence to tradition and Roman military virtue. The superiority of the Romans and their theology of victory based on divine favour are affirmed, as is the legitimacy of the new Flavian dynasty and their right to rule. Josephus regularly marshals well-known philosophical themes like fate and divine providence to verify Roman domination of the world and the appropriateness of the Flavians as its triumphant emperors.

On the other hand, Josephus has also weaved in elements to the *War* that offer potentially destabilizing elements to the prevalent discourse on Roman power. Although Josephus employs conventional elements of Greco-Roman historiography that appeal to a Roman audience, he also unapologetically plays the notes of prophetic lament that would be recognisable to a Jewish ear. Josephus is sympathetic to a Roman view of history as one shaped by divine Tyche, but he also incorporates elements which affirm this history as fulfilment of Jewish prophecy, by a Jewish prophet on Jewish soil and in the language of Jewish monotheism. He does acknowledge that God is indeed on the 'side' of the Romans but as such, the purpose of this 'siding' is fit into the role of God's instrument of punishment, purgation and preservation of his people the Jews. Thus, while divine power may work through Roman rule, Rome is not the focus of God's ultimate affection. Rather, it is the Jewish people who, albeit for 'now' are under the domination of Rome, remain a people 'beloved of God' (οἱ θεοφιλοί, *War* 5.381). The uniqueness of this beloved Jewish people is such that even the Roman triumph serves to highlight Jewish concerns for their temple and law, concerns that indicate these items may yet find their way back to Jerusalem at a future date. If Jewish self-assertion can be made at the moment of the triumph it should be no surprise that even the claims and character of Rome's ultimate general/emperor are questioned, if not tarnished, when examined in the light of Roman criteria of excellence for their generals. While the image of Titus fairs poorly in this light, the narrative as a whole draws to a close with the portrait of a Jewish general, Eleazar, who displays the characteristics admired in Roman leadership. Further, while the narrative routinely reminds us that the Roman soldiers may have virtue, the final note that is struck in book seven is one where Jewish soldiers, on Roman terms, are also depicted as brave, resourceful and even 'noble'.

The image that imperial Rome wanted to portray to the subjects of the Empire was one of power and triumph through victory, conquest and humiliation of the enemy. They were victorious because the gods favoured their virtuous generals and disciplined armies. Yet even though the superiority of the Romans is displayed most profoundly in their military strength, one is inclined to concur with Mattern's conclusion that 'the most essential element in this system is the state of mind of the enemy: Rome's empire depends on its ability to assert and enforce an image of itself as awesome and terrifying'.[150] Even if Eleazar is an ambiguous figure in terms of embodying the sentiments of the Flavian opposition, the reality is that a supposedly defeated and cowered people – it was *Iudaea Capta* after all – is portrayed in their *ultima verba* of the *War* as defiant, unbowed and even admired by Roman soldiers for mirroring a most Roman of virtue: contempt of death.

Josephus is politically motivated to articulate a defence of the virtue of the Jewish people, the nobility of their traditions and temple, and the power and influence of their God – a God who judges and purges them but who also continues to speak to them through priests and prophets, like Josephus, and holds them in special favour amongst all peoples, even the Romans, as his beloved. The Romans are indeed powerful, but their power is derived from and limited by the Jewish God. It is in this sense that the *Jewish War* lends itself to both a traditional reading of the war (from the Roman point of view) and an ironic perspective on the war. This 'doubleness' allows for a both/and rather than simple binary either/or readings of the Jewish war (e.g., either the Roman god is superior or the Jewish god is; either the Roman Empire is dominant over all peoples or it is not). As a 'postcolonial' text, the War is a complex and hybridized formation by relating the story in such a way that would

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[150] Mattern, *Rome*, 171-2.

concur with Roman views on 'god', 'providence/fortune', 'power' - but yet do so in a way that, read from a Jewish perspective, still has the Jewish God in control of all events and the Jewish people at the centre of his purposes (albeit purgative ones for now) and affection. It is difficult to judge whether this was a conscious strategy on the part of Josephus, but it is embedded in the structure of the narrative and, as such, allows for an intended Jewish 'voice' to be heard in a document with a declared Roman audience.

As this study shifts from its focus on Josephus the historian to Paul the apostle several significant questions emerge from the analysis of Josephus for examining Paul and his relationship with Roman power. First, it is clear that given Josephus' historical and literary context it is remarkable how he navigates his way through the sensitive terrain in which imperial self-image and Jewish pride are at stake. Josephus wrote not only for a Roman elite audience, one that might even include the emperor, but he did so at a time when the Jewish War was being used as a propaganda tool in order to legitimate Flavian imperial claims. The circumstances dictated that Josephus be very careful in how and what he wrote. The question this raises is whether Paul had to be careful with respect to Roman authorities in the content and manner in which he wrote. Is there any reason for Paul to be guarded in his language and/or assertions about Roman power? The Paul v. Empire coalition regularly asserts that Paul employs 'coded' language to conceal his anti-imperial message. What circumstances require this for Paul?

Second, Josephus uses a Roman view of history as he writes the *Jewish War*. Although Josephus carves out space in his narrative to assert Jewish values and perspectives he also admits traditional Roman perceptions that the history that matters most is the arrival and spread of the Roman Empire and that divine providence had rewarded their superior virtue and allowed them to achieve their supreme status. Josephus goes as far as to claim that God was on the side of the Romans (Cf. Josephus' speech at 5.367-8; 395-96; 412-13). The question then is whether Paul uses or reflects a Roman view of history in his letters to the Romans and the Philippians? What is Paul's vision of reality that shapes his understanding of history/the world?

Third, Josephus portrays the Romans as God's instruments both to *punish* and *purge* the Jewish people and temple and to *preserve* and *protect* the Jewish law and symbols of their sanctuary. Josephus attempts to interpret Roman power in relation to God's power in the empire as he has experienced it. Where does Paul perceive God's power to be at work, how does he place the Christ event within this framework, and what implications does or does not this have in relation to Roman power?

What I hope these observations and questions demonstrate is that Josephus' *Jewish War* serves as a useful foil of comparison for Paul. Josephus illustrates how another significant Jewish writer in the first century negotiates the careful task of admitting his status as a subject of Rome in a potentially subversive manner. As such, I think that Josephus helps raise and sharpen questions in analysing Paul's relationship with Roman imperial power.

Chapter 4: Paul, Powers and the Roman Empire - Critical Questions

4.1. Introduction

A segue from the work of T. Flavius Josephus to the letters of the apostle Paul may not necessarily be direct, but it is not implausible. They share much in common as diaspora Jews. Although it is unlikely their paths crossed, their lives overlapped in the mid-first century. Both of them were, at least for a time, inclined towards Pharisaic Judaism in Jerusalem. Each of them moved outside the confines of Judea to communicate their visions of the God of Israel at work in the world primarily to Greco-Roman, non-Jewish audiences. As such, they conceived of their roles as priestly spokesmen[1] for God to the Gentile world but employed the language, literary conventions and vocabulary of the Greco-Roman world to convey their messages. But much of each author's uniqueness and theological perspective would be lost if our approach merely tried to create a simple binary comparison of their respective relationship with Roman power. For all their similarities they also have profound differences. Josephus navigated in the circles of Roman and Jewish elite and directed the *War* towards an implied Roman audience and intended Jewish audience; Paul was more inclined to interact with working freemen, the poor and disenfranchised and, as such, the audience to whom he directed most of his correspondence was made up of these lower social strata. A more fruitful approach is to allow these two important diaspora Jews to speak independently and then trace any lines of congruence and difference in their approach to Roman power afterward. But even so, our enquiries about Paul and Josephus can be guided by asking similar questions. Alongside the specific questions that arise from the Paul v. Empire project, the same broad questions that were applied to Josephus will be applied to Paul. First, with a narrow view to power, we may ask of Paul who he understands to be in power and what they demand. Second, with a deeper view of power, the question arises as to who is in charge of the universe and, related to this, how Paul depicts himself and his communities in relationship to this power. Third, with a broad view to power, the focus is on how power relations work. That is, does Paul attend to the discourse of Roman power and, if so, how does he represent, challenge, 'hybridise', or relativise this discourse in his

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[1] For Paul, see Rom 15.16; for Josephus, see *War* 1.3; 3.352 and above at 2.3.2.

letters? And finally, with respect to his own angle of vision, how does Paul understand the relationship between God, history, the Romans and the people of God?

Thus far we have argued that the provincial and 'colonised' Jewish general Josephus is neither a traitorous, Flavian sycophant – as he has often been portrayed – nor is he an unrecognized, heroic Jewish patriot. In short, Josephus was a complex person and historian. In one respect, he did write consciously for a Roman audience and bears evidence of a Roman imprint by the way he mimicked Roman values and presuppositions, especially the Roman preconception that their status as the pre-eminent world power was based on their superior virtue and divine providence. At the same time, he also subtly challenged the Roman representation of the Jews, implicitly critiqued fundamental assertions of Flavian ideology (including those concerning General/Emperor Titus) and boldly maintained a cultural self-assertion for the Jewish people – including their unique status as the beloved people of God. In all this, Josephus is vitally interested in the politics of the Roman Empire and how Roman power prevails and influences the present, and future, condition of the Jewish people.

As we set aside the analysis of the work of a politicized diaspora Jew like Josephus, we turn to the question of Paul's own relationship with the Roman Empire in his letters. In chapter one I outlined how the Paul v. Empire perspective is keen to argue against a depoliticized Pauline Gospel or a privatized, quietist Paul. I am generally in agreement with this overall assertion. I am, however, uncertain whether the Paul v. Empire project has framed their argument adequately in deciding that a politically engaged Paul implies that he must be anti-imperial. Further, I am unsure whether their approach opens up the most fruitful access to Paul's theology on this matter. In order to address these issues I will offer a number of questions that will provide angles of entry with which to analyse Paul's relationship to imperial power.

4.2. Key Arguments & Questions of the Paul v. Empire Project

Before turning our attention to the analysis of passages from Romans and Philippians, a short overview of the arguments supporting the Paul v. Empire position will be offered for two reasons. First, this overview will serve as a reminder of the main lines of argument supporting their assertion that Paul opposed, challenged and subverted Roman political power. Second, asking a number of related questions at each stage will help guide the analysis of Paul's letters themselves in the following two chapters.

4.2.1. Context – A Ubiquitous Ideology Supporting Roman Power

One aspect that is highlighted in recent scholarly work on the first century Roman world is that the imperial cult[2] and the ideology[3] it supported created an all-pervasive socio-political context that dominated social space, especially in those cities and regions of the eastern empire where Paul worked. The net impact of this ideology produced an image of the emperor who was not only supreme – ruling an empire that was favoured by the gods above all others and endued with ultimate power – but who was also divine and received the worship due to a deity.[4] Essentially, a key argument of the Paul v. Empire coalition is that Paul could not have failed to address and challenge these pretensions of empire. It is argued that in a Roman society dominated by a rigid patron-client structure Paul's democratised appeals for Christian ἐκκλησία, defined by equality that crosses lines of gender, race and class must serve as a pointed challenge to the official city ἐκκλησίαι and the hierarchy that ordered Roman society, including its patron of patrons: Caesar.[5]

It is very likely that Paul was aware of the imperial cult and not naïve to the ideology of power that supported the Roman Empire, the most ruthless super-power of its day. But if imperial ideology so completely dominated social space, why is Paul decidedly *silent* in reference to Roman emperors or governors, Roman gods,

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[2] Price, *Rituals,* has thoroughly demonstrated the widespread and pervasive influence on public life of the imperial cult in Asia Minor; even the sheer number of imperial altars/temples built in the imperial period in Asia Minor compared to non-imperial theatres/temples is instructive (see maps on xxi-xxvi; 249-74). Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions,* trans. Brian McNeil (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 324, correlates the locations of imperial cults on Price's maps with locations mentioned in the NT. See also S.J. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (Leiden: Brill, 1993); B.W. Winter, 'The Imperial Cult', in *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting,* eds. D. Gill and C. Gempf (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 93-103.

[3] Zanker, *Power,* is frequently appealed to in support of the visual power of imperial ideology. He articulates a convincing assessment of the visual power of imperial ideology that pervaded public space by way of coinage, statues, temples, inscriptions, triumphs, public games and feasts. See also Crossan and Reed, *Paul,* who emphasize many similar aspects as Zanker, but from an archaeological perspective.

[4] J.R. Fears, 'Ruler Worship', in *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean: Greece and Rome (Vol. II),* eds. M. Grant and R. Kitzinger (1988: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 1009-25, at 1014-18; Klauck, *Religious Context,* see ch. 4: 'Divinised Human Beings: The Cult of Rulers and Emperors'. Crossan and Reed, *Paul,* 160, express this succinctly: 'Imperial divinity was, quite simply, the ideology that held the Roman Empire together'.

[5] For example, see Horsley, '1 Corinthians', 242-52.

Roman punishment/imprisonment, or Roman crucifixion?[6] Why does Paul not offer a *direct* critique of the Roman Empire? There is certainly precedent in Jewish tradition and history for the critique of foreign powers.[7] Even writers like Philo[8] and Josephus[9] who sit historically on both sides of Paul could offer *public*, albeit cautious, critique of the Roman Empire. Why must Paul find it necessary to be even more careful and cautious in his *private* correspondence to 'insiders' within the Christian community? Further, if, as is argued, the demands of the imperial cult were such that they were a pivotal cause of tension between the followers of Christ and the larger society in a place like Philippi, why does he make only broad general references to the source of this persecution?

It is also very likely that Paul was conscious that the communities he founded and/or supported throughout the Mediterranean could be construed as a threat, being new and hence suspicious societies that did not appear to work within the social structure of the empire. Their identity drew on the heritage of Israel, not Rome, and their rationale for existence was the good news of Jesus Christ, whom they acknowledged as 'Lord'. In one sense this is deeply subversive, but is it directly so? Furthermore, does living from different impulses and preconceptions constitute the same thing as working for the overthrow of the present social structure? Does the use of shared political language necessarily imply an antithetical relationship with the Roman Empire?

4.2.2. Content – Shared Vocabulary as Subversive Code and Hidden Transcript

In the light of a historical context that is overwhelmingly shaped by the ideology of empire, a number of scholars argue that the content of Paul's letters belies a message that is anti-imperial. In particular, a number of key words are held up as evidence that Paul mirrors imperial vocabulary as subversive counter 'code' intended to undermine the cult and ideology of Caesar. For example, in proclaiming a 'gospel'

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[6] I.e., 1 Thess. 2.14-15 claims that the *Jews* killed Jesus; 1 Cor 2.8 claims that the *'rulers of this age*...crucified the Lord of glory'. Paul groups the unnamed 'rulers of this age' on the side of the whole human order in its fallenness. These rulers, who are human (see G.D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987], 104n24, who argues decisively on this point based on the linguistic evidence, the context and Pauline theology), and likely Roman, are grouped simply with the rest of those in the age that is passing away.

[7] E.g., Isaiah 40-55, Daniel, or 4 Maccabees.

[8] See *Legatio ad Gaium*.

[9] See chapters 2 & 3.

of peace brought by Christ Paul thus opposes the gospel of Caesar and the *Pax Romana*.[10] The declaration of Jesus as the exalted 'Lord' and 'Saviour' (e.g., Phil 2.11; 3.20) above all earthly powers is viewed as subverting the authority of the Emperor[11] who ascribed these divine titles to himself.[12] The 'peace' and 'justice' that Paul proclaimed was inaugurated by God through Jesus Christ is viewed as a clear blow against Augustus, (and his successors) who, as the 'son of a god' (*divi filius*)[13] prided himself for instituting universal peace, security and justice across the empire. In all of this it is argued that Paul deliberately employs double meanings implicit in these words to communicate by way of the 'hidden transcripts'[14] of political subversion.

The force of this line of argumentation would be strengthened if it could be demonstrated that Paul *derives* his terms directly from his Roman context and if they stand in *antithesis* to imperial ideology. This is not to suggest that we should not look for 'parallels' or 'analogies' between Paul's language and contemporary Greco-Roman political language. But it is important to be wary of identifying parallels where none exist or to fail to take into account the broader context in which allegedly similar terms occur.[15] It is true that Paul uses terms like εὐαγγέλιον, κύριος, σωτήρ, εἰρήνη and ἐκκλησία that carry political connotations, and they may have been heard by his hearers/readers as analogous to the language used in imperial propaganda.[16] There is, however, reason to suggest that this argument based on terminology is overstated. The word εὐαγγέλιον was in broader use before, during and after Paul's

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[10] Wengst, *Pax*, 72-89; Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 160-83; idem, *Paul*, chap. 4. In discussions on Paul's use of the term 'gospel' as a critique of the 'good news' inaugurated by Rome's divine emperor, appeal is commonly made to the so-called 'Priene inscription' and its claim that 'the birthday of our god [i.e., Caesar Augustus] signalled the beginning of good news for the world because of him [τῶι κόσμωι τῶν δι' αὐτὸν εὐαγγελίων]' (cf. *OGIS* 458). For a complete discussion of the inscription in its various locations (i.e., Priene, Apamea, Maeonia, Eumenia, Dorylaeum) throughout Asia Minor see U. Laffi, 'Le iscrizioni relative all'introduzione nel 9 a.C. del nuovo calendario della Provincia d'Asia', *Studi Classici e Orientali* 16 (1968), 5-98.

[11] G.D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 31, 197; Tellbe, *Paul*, chap. 5; Oakes, *Philippians*.

[12] This point coheres with Luke's portrayal of the protest against Paul's preaching in Thessalonica (Acts 17.7).

[13] Augustus was doubly divine, both by his divine conception from Apollo and Atia (Suetonius *Aug.* 94.4) and by paternal adoption from the divine Julius Caesar.

[14] Although not every member of the Paul v. Caesar coalition deploys the theory and/or language of Scott in his work *Domination*, the notion of 'code' is often invoked (see 1.2.).

[15] See S. Sandmel, 'Parallelomania', *JBL* 81 (1962), 1-13; cf. T.L. Donaldson, 'Parallels: Use, Misuse and Limitations', *EQ* 55 (1983), 193-210.

[16] Paul's use of 'political' language and argumentation need not be construed merely as being deployed against a Roman target. E.g. see L.L. Welborn, *Politics and Rhetoric in the Corinthian Epistles* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997), for a detailed study of how Paul could employ 'political language' without it being directed against imperial ideology.

lifetime for matters other than simply the 'good news' of Caesar.[17] While G. Stanton has outlined the difficulty in determining the origin of Paul's usage of εὐαγγέλιον[18] it seems more likely that Paul was influenced by Isaiah[19] and Jesus[20] than by imperial propaganda. Even if Paul and his readers/hearers were aware that he was offering a different 'gospel' from that of Caesar it would not necessarily follow that Paul construed the two as being in direct opposition to one another.

Much like the word εὐαγγέλιον both κύριος and σωτήρ were not the exclusive domain of Caesar.[21] Paul admits that in his day there were 'many lords' (1 Cor 8.5) and, in this context, Jesus would have been viewed as simply another lord – even though for Paul he maintained that 'for us there is one God, the father...and one Lord, Jesus Christ' (8.6). For both κύριος and σωτήρ the valences in the first century were so broad that neither title would unavoidably point to a political reading.

The term 'peace', especially in its usage in the phrase 'peace and safety' in 1 Thess 5.3, is a potentially fruitful example of Paul's counter-imperial efforts. As J.R. Harrison notes, this phrase is 'imperial shorthand for the Latin *pax et securitas* of the *Pax Romana'* which sums up the 'protection against external threat offered by Roman power'.[22] This was a slogan that evoked a central point in imperial ideology about the new 'golden age' brought in by Augustus and both terms occurred frequently on

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[17] E.g., Cicero, *Att.* 2.3.1; 13.40.1; Lucian, *Asin.* 26; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 3.93. Cf. LSJ 705 and *NewDocs* 3.13-14. The range of usage can be illustrated in Josephus' employment of the term; he can use εὐαγγέλιον to refer to the 'good news' that reached Florus (*War* 2.420) or use it to refer to the 'good news' that Vespasian had seized power (4.618).
[18] See G.N. Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9-62, at 22-25. Cf. A.J. Spallek, 'The Origin and Meaning of Εὐαγγέλιον in the Pauline Corpus', *CTQ* 57.3 (1993), 177-90.
[19] Indicated by the quotation of Isa 52.7 in Rom 10.15 explaining his perspective of the gospel commission.
[20] It is plausible that Paul was aware of the recollection that Jesus understood his mission in terms of Isa 61.1: 'to bring good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) to the poor' (Lk 4.18). Cf. J.D.G. Dunn, *Christianity in the Making Volume 1: Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 448-9, 516-7, 662; M. Hengel, and A.M. Schwemer, *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch: The Unknown Years,* trans. J. Bowden (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 91-2.
[21] Κύριος was widely used in the east of gods, e.g., as epithet for Isis, Chronos, Zeus, Sarapis and of deified rulers like Ptolemy, Cleopatra and Roman emperors. Cf. *LSJ* 1013 (κύριος B); *BDAG* 376-7 (κύριος 2bb); *EDNT* 2.328-31. Σωτήρ was also variously used as a title for divinities, e.g., as an epithet for Asclepius, Sarapis, Isis, Heracles, Zeus, for deserving persons and deified rulers. Cf. *LSJ* 1751; *BDAG* 985; *EDNT* 3.325-7; see also A.D. Nock, '*Soter* and *Euergetes*', in *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, ed. Z. Stewart (London: Clarendon Press, 1972), 720-35.
[22] J.R. Harrison, 'Paul and the Imperial Gospel at Thessaloniki', *JSNT* 25.1 (2002), 71-96, at 86. See also K.P. Donfried, 'The Cults of Thessalonica and the Thessalonian Correspondence', *NTS* 31.3 (1985), 336-56; Wengst, *Pax Romana*, 19-21, 77-9; H. Koester, 'Paul's Eschatology', in *Thessalonian Correspondence*, ed. R.F. Collins (Uitgeverij Peeters: Leuven University Press, 1990), 441-58, at 449-50; and C. vom Brocke, *Thessaloniki: Stadt des Kassander und Gemeinde des Paulus* WUNT 2.125 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 179n64.

imperial coinage.[23] It is, however, difficult to equate this phrase with an overt challenge to Rome. In the context of 1 Thess 5, Paul is not using it to attack the Roman Empire but to highlight the unexpectedness of the day of the Lord. This may undermine imperial eschatology, but it does not do so directly. Furthermore, any reference to Rome is obscured by the voices behind this slogan that are either designated as those unnamed people in 'darkness' who are saying this or as an undifferentiated company known as 'the rest' (5.6). For Paul, it is clearly not important that he indicate that these are *Roman* voices.

Finally, Paul's use of the term ἐκκλησία has led some to conclude that he was establishing alternative and counter societies to the civic communities of the Roman Empire. In all likelihood Paul did want to establish alternative communities, but to suggest that they were a deliberate counter to political assemblies overlooks the fact that political connotations were not exclusively associated to this term which could still carry the overtone of 'assembly'[24] and, more importantly, the influence of the LXX as a term to translate the familiar references to the ἐκκλησίαν κυρίου (e.g., Deut 23.2, 3, 4, 9; 1 Chr 28.8; Mic 2.5) and 'ἐκκλησία Ισραηλ' (e.g., Deut 31.30; Josh 8.35; 1 Kgs 8.14; 1 Chr 13.2; 1 Macc 4.58; Sir 50.13) would likely be significant to Paul.

In addition to these terminological concerns a further issue relates to the employment of the categories of 'code' and 'hidden transcripts' to support the argument of Paul's use of political terms to subvert empire. According to J.C. Scott, subversive code and hidden transcript are the weapons of resistance used by communities who must mask their public transcript by means of cunning, allusion and false flattery in the presence of their powerful overlords. But offstage and outside the public gaze they are able openly to express their anger, frustration and subversion.[25] Based on these criteria by Scott, several relevant questions come to mind. Are the situations of Paul's audience addressed by his letters to the Romans and Philippians parallel to Scott's description of dominated communities? If Romans and Philippians are *public* documents then it is understandable that Paul might well choose to guard his message in ways that would require his audience to read between or behind the lines. But if they were meant as in-house, *private* documents, why would he need to

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[23] H.L. Hendrix, 'Archaeology and Eschatology at Thessalonica', in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*, ed. B.A. et al. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 107-18, at 113-114 nn.16, 18.
[24] Cf. *LSJ*, 509.
[25] See Scott, *Domination*, 18-19, 140-66.

write in coded or hidden language? Why could he not directly express his 'gospel' and call upon his co-religionists to ignore or subvert those who declare Caesar's supremacy, since Christ, not Caesar, was the true Lord and Saviour of the world? The fundamental issue that requires addressing is why Paul finds it necessary to write in code and whether the code-theorists are able to provide any practical or concrete justification for their secrecy theories.

4.2.3. Paul and Apocalyptic Theology

A third strand in the argument supporting Paul's anti-imperial agenda is his 'apocalyptic vision', a vision in company with the apocalyptic works like the books of Daniel, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*.[26] These apocalyptic writers exhibit a critique of pagan empires that exert control over the people of God and offer an imaginative vision for their readers in their efforts to endure and even rebel against their foreign overlords. Accordingly, Paul, it is argued, draws on themes similar to these Jewish canonical and non-canonical texts to discern how the followers of Christ may exist, resist and maintain hope in the midst of Roman political domination before God intervenes to set matters right or, more specifically, to unveil saving 'justice'. The argument essentially equates Paul's apocalyptic theology with a politically subversive theology. In order to substantiate this claim it will be vital to discern to what extent Paul's apocalyptic vision is subversive and what effect this vision has on any anti-imperial agenda. It seems clear that Paul regards the declaration of Christ as Lord as an event with cosmic and historical implications; the question, however, is how this shapes his understanding of divine power and its relationship with Roman power. Furthermore, one might also ask if the temporal visions of Rome and of Paul compete. That is, does Paul frame his gospel antithetically with the Roman Empire when it comes to answering the question: What time is it?[27] This question also drives at how Paul understands the relationship between God, history, the people of God and the Roman Empire. In a period when a golden age for Rome has been proclaimed by Augustus and his successors we might ask if Paul's understanding of the revelation of Christ and his 'new creation' competes directly or indirectly with Roman ideology.

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[26] See Elliott, *Paul*, chap. 5; Wright, *Paul*, 67-9.

[27] A key question asked in relationship to Galatians by J. Louis Martyn, 'Apocalyptic Antinomies', in *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 121-2, but equally applicable to all of Paul's letters.

4.2.4. Paul & Postcolonial Theory

Before directing our attention to Paul, one final theoretical question should be asked, and at least partially addressed, with respect to Paul and postcolonial theory. A number of analytic categories from postcolonial theory were employed, with fruitful results, in our investigation of Josephus in the previous chapters. Postcolonial theory, especially with its interest in tracking how colonised subjects experience imperial domination, fits well in examining Josephus. Postcolonialism, briefly, is interested in questions of power, identity and the impact of close interaction between colonial power and colonised subject(s). According to postcolonialism, colonial powers employ control over their subjects not only militarily but also in terms of the way they represent, construct and define the barbarian 'other'. Postcolonial critics are particularly interested in how colonial subjects respond to this intrusive presence and the impact it has on their culture and institutions. While some subjects capitulate to this intrusion and others resist it vigorously, all of them, according to theorists like H. Bhabha, are 'hybridized' to a greater or lesser extent in their relationship with their colonizer(s). Hybridization explores the slippage – the unstable 'third space' – that occurs between the self-represented identity of the colonised subject and the constructed identity of the indigenous subject by the colonial power. Simultaneous compliance and resistance, mimicry and mockery characterize the hybridized identity. From close contact with colonial power, colonised subjects will mimic the cultural values and practices of the coloniser while at the same time, when mirroring these adopted elements, they reflect their own cultural assertions in ways that can slip into subtle forms of mockery.

Josephus' *War* offers substantial evidence for the kind of hybridization described by postcolonialism. For Josephus the imprint of Roman ideology is reflected in a number of ways. On the one hand, he mimics Roman literary tradition, he knows how the Empire works from inside knowledge of circumstances (e.g., Claudius' situation), he grasps how power relations work within the empire and he explicitly correlates Roman power with divine power in his work. On the other hand, he infuses his literary style with distinctly Jewish elements (e.g., prophetic lamentation) and subtly creates spaces for Jewish self-assertion and cultural values so that his representation of his own people, at times, teeters on the verge of mockery of the Romans. In short, Josephus is a good example of a hybridized subject. He bears the clear imprint of his Roman imperial master(s), but does so in a way that does not erase or obscure his indigenous identity.

While a few scholars have attempted to bring the resources of postcolonial theory to the study of Paul,[28] a simple but fundamental question is whether it fits as a useful resource for analysing Paul's letters. Paul is potentially a useful candidate for postcolonial analysis since he is clearly a subject in the Roman Empire (possibly a Roman citizen) and thus must be accessible for postcolonial analysis. That Paul writes and speaks in Greek, reads the Bible in Greek, uses idioms and metaphors from his social environment, are all signs that he is culturally affected by what goes on around him, though he is far less affected than many other Diaspora authors we know.[29] But how much is specifically Roman? In particular, we must ask where the imprint of the colonial power is reflected in Paul and how, as a hybridized subject, he mirrors Roman elements, values and preconceptions in his person and thought. That is, where are there Roman narratives/tropes in his letters? What were his experiences with Rome? Did he express any direct interaction with the imperial cult? Does Paul reuse any fundamental Roman motifs? At this point it is helpful to note how *unlike* Paul appears to Josephus; there is very little in Paul that appears to be shaped specifically by the Roman Empire, as opposed to Hellenistic culture generally. It was noted above already that a remarkable *silence* exists in Paul's letters in relation to Roman matters. We may add that in addition to this silence when Paul deploys his most explicit use of 'power' language in 1 Cor 1.18-2.16 and chapter15 (esp. vv. 24, 43, 56) it is not directed against Roman imperial power, but to demonstrate how the power of the cross (1 Cor 1-2) stands over and against the wisdom of this age and how the power of Christ's resurrection (1 Cor 15) stands over and against that of death and sin. Roman rulers, if they are alluded to at all in these passages – as they are in 2.6, 8 – are not marked out as important for being *Roman* but merely as a component part of the undifferentiated human structures of this age. The use of power language in Paul is directed primarily at over-arching powers that cut across personal, social and political boundaries so that sometimes Rome is presented as working for the

[28] See 1.2. footnotes 60-62.
[29] On this question and the 'anomalous' characteristics of Paul as a diaspora Jew, see chap 13 in J.M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan, 323 BCE - 117 CE* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996).

'good' while at other times it is co-opted by the powers of 'this age' that is passing away.[30]

Although postcolonial theory is potentially very useful for reading ancient texts, there are several factors that suggest that in Paul's case the theory may not be as fruitfully applied as it was in the case of Josephus. Those who have attempted to apply postcolonial theory to Paul have often done so because they think Paul was promoting subtle forms of resistance to Roman imperial power.[31] Although political subversion is a theme in postcolonial theory, it is a mistake to think that Paul's resistance to Rome automatically qualifies him for postcolonial analysis. As we have seen from the work of Scott, analysis of forms of resistance need not require explicit reference to postcolonial resources.

Fundamentally, where postcolonial theory is concerned with examining the unstable 'third space' between indigenous conceptions of identity and the conceptions formed by the colonial power, it appears difficult, on the surface at least, to locate much of a Roman imprint on Paul. Put bluntly, where does Roman power get mentioned explicitly in his letters? Does Paul clearly bear the imprint of Roman ideology and mimic this in his letters? If so, one would expect clear references to how his community/communities relate to the larger political realities within their local provincial settings and in relationship to local Roman government. As was mentioned above (see 4.2.1.), these references are rare in Paul's letters – even Romans 13.1-7 lacks an explicitly 'Roman' referent. To cast the net broader, one could ask how Paul sets the Roman Empire within his framework of history. Unlike Josephus, Paul does not clearly indicate how God has brought the 'rod of empire' into the hands of the Romans (cf. *War* 5.367). While Paul may have resisted Roman domination by various means, it is not clear that he did so as a 'hybridized' subject.

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[30] This will be analysed further in chapter five in the discussion of Rom 13.1-7 where Roman governing authorities are also, again, simply described as 'servants of God' who play a limited role during this age.

[31] E.g., Sze-Kar Wan, 'Collection for the Saints as Anticolonial Act: Implications of Paul's Ethnic Reconstruction', in *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2000), 191-215; G. Zerbe, 'The Politics of Paul: His Supposed Social Conservatism and the Impact of Postcolonial Readings', *CGR* 21.1 (2003), 82-103; A. Smith, '"Unmasking the Powers": Toward a Postcolonial Analysis of 1 Thessalonians', in *Paul and Roman Imperial Order*, ed. R.A. Horsley (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2004), 47-66. Interestingly, the double-edged nature of postcolonialism is reflected in the manner in which some scholars employ its resources to construe Paul as a colonising power who re-inscribes Roman imperial ideology for his own purposes to dominate his communities (see J.A. Marchal, 'Imperial Intersections and Initial Inquiries: Toward a Feminist, Postcolonial Analysis of Philippians', *JFSR* 22.2 (2006), 5-32).

4.2.5. Final Questions and a Caution

One of the most important resources used by the 'Paul versus Empire' project is S.R.F. Price's work, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (1984). Horsley excerpts a chapter from this book for one of the lead essays in the first book of the trilogy he edited on the subject of 'Paul and Politics' entitled *Paul and Empire* (1997). It is interesting that Price is given the last word in the final essay of the final book of the trilogy.[32] In his closing 'Response', Price issues a number of significant cautions to the project as a whole. He does so by first noting that the publication of F. Millar's *The Emperor in the Roman World*[33] marked a turning point in the study of Roman Empire: 'For the first time, we could see that the Empire was not simply a structure imposed by Rome, but resulted from a series of ongoing choices and negotiations between subjects and ruler'.[34] For ancient historians, according to Price, this means that the picture of Rome and her Empire has become more complex, particularly with respect to the relationship between Rome and her provinces. Price adds further that 'we cannot assume that it is right to move smoothly from analyses of Augustan Rome to analyses of provincial culture. Put bluntly, there is no necessary connection between the imagery of the Ara Pacis (a monumental altar in Rome in honor of Augustus) or the poetry of Horace and the thought world of the Greek East'.[35] Applied to the New Testament, this suggests that one must mind the significant gap between the ideology inspired by way of Augustus and his successors and the missionary work and theological world of Paul. In this sense, what must be carefully considered are the local conditions in places where Paul worked in order to prevent the sort of over-generalizations that appear in the Paul v. Empire coalition.

In many ways it appears that to find the emperor, the imperial cult and imperial ideology in or, more accurately, 'encoded' behind Paul's terminology and argument is to let Paul's context and the perceptions of Paul's readers set the framework for Paul's theology. At best this is a difficult line of argument to establish. The deeper question may be whether, in light of Paul's view of history and his understanding of the agency of God in the Christ event, the Roman Empire and its emperor merited special political or theological attention for him at all. Related to

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32 S.R.F. Price, 'Response', in *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*, ed Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2004), 175-83.

33 F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World, 31 B.C. - A.D. 337* (London: Duckworth, 1977).

34 Price, 'Response', 176.

35 Price, 'Response', 177.

this, for Paul, one might also ask who are the real enemies with which Christ contends? In what way may these enemies take political expression? What are the 'kingdoms' that Paul contests? Are imperial claims to divinity worthy of competition or subversion for Paul? If Paul's theology is political, what level(s) of power is he interested in? Does his theology critically infiltrate the political sphere in the same way that it penetrates every other sphere of life?

Chapter 5: Romans

5.1. Introduction

When the Flavians looked for means to assert their legitimacy for the *imperium* and project their power on the massive stage that was the Roman Empire they did not need to look far for a model. The exemplar was at hand in the person of Augustus. Flavian self-glorification through grand-scale (re)building projects in Rome, their reassertion of classical 'Roman' virtues (e.g., piety, justice, mercy, etc.), the cultivation of propagandist writers and poets, and proclamations of a new age of peace were all unmistakably modelled on Augustus' project nearly a century earlier.[1] It was Augustus who created an indelible picture of what self-glorification and imperial ideology looked like for successive emperors to follow.

Augustus, like the Flavians after him, seized the opportunity of rebuilding Rome and restructuring its administration[2] to highlight imperial ideology and the greatness and beneficence of the emperor.[3] Beginning with Augustus, the emperor became associated with the heart of a political imagery and mythology that included, but went far beyond, the imperial cult. Officially, Augustus – like Julius Caesar before him and Claudius, Vespasian and Titus after him – was not declared *divus* until after his death when the senate decreed his apotheosis and included him in the official Roman pantheon.[4] Practically, even though Augustus tactfully avoided direct

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[1] See the previous discussion of Flavian self-representation in 2.2.
[2] On Augustus' restructured Roman administrative system see Suetonius, *Aug.* 30.1; Cassius Dio, 55.8.7; 55.26.4-5; Pliny, *Nat.* 3.66-67. Cf. J.E. Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 114-16 and O.F. Robinson, *Ancient Rome: City Planning and Administration* (London: Routledge, 1992), 8-13.
[3] Zanker, *Power*, 101, outlines the breadth of the Augustan program and its dominant visual impact that thematically focused on the renewal of religion, ancient custom, virtue, and the honour of the Roman people. Besides Zanker's detailed discussion in *Power*, chap. 4, see also A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Rome's Cultural Revolution', *JRS* 79 (1989), 157-64.
[4] Suetonius, *Iul.* 88, writes that after the death of Julius Caesar he 'was numbered among the gods, not only by a formal decree, but also in the conviction of the common people'; cf. *Claud.* 45. Cassius Dio, 51.17.8, explains the difference between veneration of emperors only after their death in Rome in contrast to the practice in the provinces: 'still, even there [i.e., Rome] various divine honours are bestowed after their death upon such emperors as have ruled uprightly, and, in fact, shrines are built to them' (see also 56.46.1-3).

veneration as a god in the city of Rome during his lifetime,[5] he was ascribed everything but this.[6]

Despite attempts to regulate the imperial cult discreetly in Rome itself so that Augustus and the Julio-Claudian emperors after him appeared observant of ancient Roman traditions (Gaius Caligula and the late Nero are the exceptions), the imperial cult pervaded public and private space and was supported by a robust imperial ideology manifested in various ways throughout the city.[7] Poets flattered the emperor as 'son of a divine being',[8] imperial altars were dedicated for the worship of the emperor throughout Rome[9] and official coins portrayed him as *divi filius*.[10] The landscape of Greek and Roman cults shifted around Augustus in the capital city on both theological and physical levels.[11] Theologically, key aspects of Greek and Roman cults were restructured around the emperor. For example, Jupiter[12] was now portrayed as the preserver of the saviour Augustus; Apollo[13] was given a distinct role in the birth of the golden age restored by Augustus; and in the cult of Mars Ultor in the Forum of Augustus, the worship of the divine *Iulii* was joined with the new cult of the emperor's *genius*.[14] Physically, the building projects and temples that paid homage to Augustus transformed the capital. On a more fundamental level, even the streets bore witness to the change. Prior to Augustus the crossroads of the 265 city

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[5] Philo remarked that Augustus 'never wished anyone to address him as a god [μηδέποτε θεὸν ἑαυτόν ἐθελῆσαι προσειπεῖν] but was annoyed if anyone used the word' (*Ad Gaium* 154; cf. Suetonius, *Aug.* 53.1; *Tib.* 27); this evinces Augustus' modesty but indicates the direction of public tendencies towards veneration.

[6] See H-J. Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*, trans. B. McNeil (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 299.

[7] For a chronological recounting of Augustus' promotion of his cult from as early as 41 BCE, see L. Cerfaux and J. Tondriau, *Le Culte des Souverains dans la Civilisation Gréco-Romaine* (Paris: Desclée, 1957), 313-22.

[8] E.g., Virgil, *Aen.* 6.791-94: 'This is he whom you have so often heard promised to you, Augustus Caesar, son of a divine being [*divi genus*], who shall again set up the Golden Age'; see also Horace, *Carm.* 3.5.1-4; Velleius Paterculus, 2.89.2-3.

[9] See L.R. Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, Philological Monographs Number I (Middletown, Connecticut: American Philological Association, 1931), 181-204, 224-46; M.P. Charlesworth, 'Some Observations on Ruler Cult: Especially in Rome', *HTR* 28 (1935), 5-44. 27-32; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 65-90; M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1.183-86, 206-10.

[10] For numismatic evidence see L.J. Kreitzer, *Striking New Images: Studies on Roman Imperial Coinage and the New Testament World* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 69-98; Zanker, *Power*, 53-7.

[11] See Tellbe, *Paul*, 146.

[12] See J. R. Fears, 'The Cult of Jupiter and Roman Imperial Ideology', in *ANRW, vol. 2.17.1: Principat*, ed. W. Haase (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1981), 3-141, at 56-66.

[13] On the place of Apollo in Augustus' program see Zanker, *Images*, 48-53.

[14] According to Ovid, *Fast.* 5.545-54, 'Mars dwelled in his son's [i.e., Augustus'] city'; cf. Tellbe, *Paul*, 146 and Zanker, *Power*, 79-82.

districts displayed thousands of shrines to the *Lares*, the ancient household gods (Ovid, *Fast.* 5.145) – in 7 CE Augustus changed these cults to the cults of the *Lares Augusti* and the *Genius Augusti* (*Fast.* 5.145), raising the profile of Augustus even further throughout the city and also providing the plebs a focus with which to participate in imperial propaganda and express loyalty to the emperor.[15]

The imprint of the Augustan project and imperial ideology lasted not only through the reigns of the Julio-Claudian emperors, but, as we have earlier noted, into the Flavian dynasty as well. As we discovered with our analysis of Josephus, he was clearly impressed with Flavian claims of power – claims that were consciously modelled on the Augustan project – even as he did his best to assert his own cultural values, heritage and deity. Josephus acknowledged the greatness of the city of Rome, but was careful also to assert the cosmic significance of Jerusalem. He recognized the importance of Roman virtue and military might, without denying the courage and skill displayed by Jewish fighters and leaders. He was sure to acknowledge that God was on the side of the Romans and that God had passed the mantle of power to Italy, yet he confidently described this 'God' as the *Jewish* God who supported and sustained the Roman Empire – 'for now'. Josephus carefully but clearly sought to borrow Roman terminology and ideas in writing *The Jewish War* as much as he also subtly constructed a uniquely provincial – and potentially rival – representation of Roman ideology for a Roman *and* imperial audience. The question for Paul is whether he deliberately employed Roman terminology to counter imperial claims and whether imperial ideology influenced or shaped his perception of reality and his understanding of the story of the world. That is, do the imperial cult and its supporting ideology play a significant factor influencing the purpose(s) of Paul's letters?

When Paul's letter to the Roman Christians arrived sometime between 55-58 CE,[16] imperial ideology and (at least) implicit claims for the divinity of the emperor

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[15] On the pervasiveness of the imperial cult in public and private space see Alföldy, 'Subject' 255.

[16] The date of Paul's composition of Romans depends on the dating of his three-month journey in Greece and his stay in Corinth, from where he likely wrote the letter (Rom 16.1-2, 23; cf. Acts 20.2-4). The consensus among scholars is that Paul wrote the letter between 55-58 CE. E.g., Barrett, *Romans*, 5, and Morris, *Romans*, 6-7, date Romans in 55 CE; Dunn, *Romans*, 1.xliii, and Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.16 place Romans in either 55-56 or 56-57 CE; Moo, *Romans*, 3, and Jewett, *Romans*, 18-23, in 57 CE; Sandlay and Headlam, *Romans*, xiii, in 57-58 CE. For those who dismiss the evidence from Acts in reconstructing Paul's chronology, a much wider frame is allowed. E.g., G. Lüdemann, *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology*, trans. F.S. Jones (London: SCM, 1984), 263, dates Romans in 51/52 or 54/55 CE.

pervaded public and private life in Nero's capital city. Paul certainly must have had hints of this from observing public space and practice in Asia and Greece.[17] What is in question, however, is to what extent this shaped the purpose(s) of his epistle. That is, to what extent did imperial ideology impinge on Paul's thinking and his concern for himself or fellow Christians? Until recently the purpose of Romans has been highly debated, but there is a broad consensus that the purpose is linked to concrete circumstances in Rome and/or Paul's own ministry.[18] In this vein, Romans has been read as a dialogue between Jewish and Gentile Christians, especially in the interest of unity related to the internal problems articulated in 14.1-15.13, and with respect to Paul's mission to Spain of which the church in Rome was meant to form the platform for his outreach.

With the rise of the Paul v. Empire project a further purpose is offered for Paul's epistle to the Romans. As outlined in the introductory chapter (see 1.2.), this project makes a number of assertions about Romans, including that it is: a concrete critique of Roman ideology – an act of 'political aggression' which, once its protective 'code' is cracked, could have formed the foundation for a trial of treason (Georgi); an 'ideological intifada' against Rome and a challenge to Roman Christians to confront the imperial ideology of Empire (Elliot); an employment of borrowed terms that stand over against Roman ideology (Horsley); a challenge to the lordship of Caesar who demanded both taxes and worship (Wright); and an overture against the corrupt and exploitive system of Roman honour (Jewett). In sum, this perspective contends that Paul was a highly politicized writer whose target was set against the presuppositions and projections of imperial power.

Even though the apostle Paul acknowledges that at the time of writing his epistle to the Romans he had never visited the capital city of the Empire, it is unlikely that he was naïve to the pretensions of imperial power that would have existed there. But, again, the key question of this chapter is not whether Paul was aware of this, but what concrete evidence there is that imperial power shaped, influenced or impinged

[17] Further, any experience Paul would have had even in Judaea would have exposed him to the glorification and worship of the Emperor as divine that was instituted under Herod the Great, especially in those areas where the Jewish population was not large (e.g., Caesarea); see Hengel, *Zealots*, 101-3 and J.S. McLaren, 'Jews and the Imperial Cult: From Augustus to Domitian', *JSNT* 27.3 (2005), 257-78.

[18] K.P. Donfried, 'False Presuppositions in the Study of Romans', in *The Romans Debate: Revised and Expanded Edition*, ed. K.P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 102-27, at 103. The most recent example of one who understands the purpose focused more on Paul's circumstances and his mission to Spain, see Jewett, *Romans*, 80-91 and passim.

upon his perceptions of reality and of history. In chapters two and three a number of key questions were directed toward Josephus' work *The Jewish War*. In particular our focus was on three broad lines of enquiry: 1) how Josephus' literary and historical circumstances constrained his writing, 2) how he read Jewish history under the dominating power of Rome, and 3) how he understood the relationship between divine and imperial power. As we turn to Paul, these questions will be applied to him as well. First, Josephus' immediate circumstances dictated that he be very careful in how and what he wrote. The question this raises is whether Paul had to be careful with respect to Roman authorities in the content and manner in which he wrote. Is there any reason for Paul to be guarded in his language and/or assertions about Roman power? The Paul v. Empire coalition regularly asserts that Paul employs 'coded' language to conceal his anti-imperial message. What circumstances require this for Paul? Secondly, Josephus uses a Roman view of history as he writes the *War*. Does Paul use or reflect a Roman view of history in his letters to the Romans and the Philippians? What is Paul's vision of reality that shapes his understanding of history and the world? Thirdly, Josephus attempts to interpret Roman power in relation to God's power in the empire as he has experienced it. Where does Paul perceive God's power to be at work, how does he place the Christ event within this framework, and what implications does this have in relation to Roman power?

In order to answer these questions, this chapter will proceed by analysing several key themes and texts in Romans. Paul states early in the letter that the Christ event expressed in the gospel is 'the power of God' (1.16). The first step will be briefly to explore how Paul presents this gospel 'power' at work in the world (5.2.). Next, Romans 5-8, with special attention to 5.12-21 and 8.18-39, will be analysed with respect to the manner in which Paul argues that the Christ-event is critically engaged with the power(s) in the world (5.3. and 5.4.). Finally, Romans 12-13 will be explored, with a focus on the *locus classicus* 13.1-7, as a means to assess Paul's view of the socio-political praxis of the renewed people of God (5.5.).

5.2. The Christ Event, the Gospel and the Power of God

The Christ event declared in the gospel is of fundamental concern for Paul in Romans. No less than three of the nine occurrences of the noun εὐαγγέλιον in the epistle occur in the introductory seventeen verses.[19] If the *content* of this εὐαγγέλιον is described in Romans 1.3-4,[20] then its *effect*[21] is proclaimed in the summary statement (1.16-17) of the letter's thesis[22] where Paul asserts that the εὐαγγέλιον is 'the power of God for salvation to all who have faith (δύναμις...θεοῦ ἐστιν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι)'. Before moving on to examine the question of who or what Paul envisions this 'power of God' to be deployed against, a few observations about the Christ event are in order.

References to God's power recur frequently in Jewish literature, fundamentally as the source of 'salvation' from the Egyptians in the Exodus (Exod 15.6, 13; 32.11; Deut 9.26, 29; 26.8; 2 Kgs 17.36; Ps 77.14,15; Bar 2.11).[23] In contrast to the prevailing attitude among her neighbours in the ANE who understood the power of God as the neutral force(s) of nature, the Israelite understanding of 'power of God' entailed the agency of a *personal* God who acted in *history*.[24] For Paul, the gospel is the 'power of God' effecting salvation for all those who believe and the language in Rom 1.16 echoes that of 1 Cor 1.18 where ὁ λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ 'is the power of God (δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστιν)' to those who are being saved. Furthermore, Christ is the *personal* expression (cf. 1 Cor 1.24) of God's power for salvation enacted at a pivotal juncture in *history* on the cross. Paul writes in Rom 3.25-6 that it is precisely 'in the present critical time (ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ)' that Christ is 'put forth as a ἱλαστήριον'[25] by God to demonstrate his righteousness and make righteous the one who has faith in Jesus. Paul envisages the Christ event as an event that marks a climactic moment[26] in salvation history with implications for the past (i.e., those sins committed in 'former times'; 3.25) and the present age (cf. 5.6; 8.18; 11.5; 13.11).

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[19] The noun εὐαγγέλιον, always in the singular, occurs 48 times in the capital Paulines and nine times in Romans either as 'gospel of God' (1.1; 15.16) or 'gospel of his son' (1.9) or 'gospel of Christ' (15.19) or 'my gospel' (2.16; 16.25) or just 'gospel' (1.16; 10.16; 11.28). There are also three uses of the cognate verb, εὐαγγελίζω, in Romans (1.15; 10.15; 15.20).

[20] I.e., 'regarding [God's] Son...Jesus Christ our Lord'.

[21] P.J. Gräbe, *The Power of God in Paul's Letters*, WUNT 2.123 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 177.

[22] Opinions range on how 1.16-17 works as the letter's 'thesis'. See the discussions in the literature cited in G.D. Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans*, JSNTSupp 39 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1990), 40-6; Moo, *Romans*, 64-5; and Jewett, *Romans*, 135-6.

[23] See W. Grundmann, 'δύναμαι κτλ.' *TDNT* 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 290-99.

[24] Grundmann, 'δύναμαι κτλ.', 292.

[25] The word ἱλαστήριον has been extensively investigated and the theological options vigorously debated. See discussions in the literature in James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8; Romans 9-16. 2 vols.*, WBC 38A & 38B (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 1.170-1 and Jewett, *Romans*, 284-90.

[26] According to Dunn, *Romans*, 1.175, the Christ event denotes a 'time pregnant with significance'.

The scope of God's power at work in the gospel is expressed in Rom 1.16b where it is 'for salvation to all who believe, both to the Jew first and to the Greek (εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι,᾽Ιουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἕλληνι)'. Paul envisages a power that relativises all earthly barriers whether they be ethnic or, as he states two verses earlier, boundaries based along cultural (i.e., both civilised 'Greeks' and uncivilised 'barbarians') or intellectual (i.e., both 'wise' and 'foolish') lines: 'as a messenger of the gospel [Paul] can uninhibitedly stride across the conventions and prejudices of the divided cosmos'.[27] Although many commentators are inclined to view the salvation Paul speaks of solely in terms of eschatological deliverance from divine wrath in the final judgment,[28] Käsemann is correct in recognising that in 1.16b 'σωτηρία has become a present reality through Christ in the midst of the world and not just an anticipation "in principle"'.[29] In its immediate context σωτηρία is dominated by the present tense verb ἐστίν and, as Jewett points out, this correlates with 8.24 where salvation is described with the past tense verb.[30]

Paul declares that the εὐαγγέλιον is 'the power of God for salvation' and as we have briefly noted above it is a power that is personally delivered in Christ, globally directed to all of humanity and put forth in time as the pivotal moment in history. But what, or who, is it positioned against? Is it, as those in the Paul v. Empire project suppose, directed against the εὐαγγέλιον celebrated in the reign and person of the Emperor, the σώτηρ[31] of the universe? Unarguably Paul knew of these assertions of imperial ideology, but there is no direct suggestion in Romans, either in 1.16 or in the rest of the letter, that Paul understands his gospel as antithetical to that of Rome. On the other hand, there is a clear indication that Paul does have in view an

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[27] E. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans,* trans. G. W. Bromiley (London: SCM Press, 1980), 20.
[28] As noted by Jewett, *Romans*, 138n40, e.g., D. Zeller, *Der Brief an die Römer. Übersetzt und erklärt*, RNT (Regensburg: Pustet, 1985), 42; J.A. Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* TPINTC (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989), 69; Dunn, 1.39; J.A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* AB (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 119; T.R. Schreiner, *Romans*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 61; Werner Foerster, 'σῴζω κτλ,' *TDNT* 7 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 993; K.H. Schelkle, 'σωτηρία,' EDNT 3 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 327.
[29] Käsemann, *Romans*, 22; so also Jewett, *Romans*, 138.
[30] Jewett, *Romans*, 138.
[31] The so-called 'Priene Calendar' Inscription in honour of Caesar Augustus' birthday (*OGIS* 458 = 2.48-60) is regularly cited as the primary evidence for this line of argument. The relevant portion reads that Providence granted 'a σώτηρ, both for us and for our descendants, that he might end war and arrange all things, and since he, Caesar, by his appearance (excelled even our anticipations), surpassing all previous benefactors, and not even leaving to posterity any hope of surpassing what he has done, and since the birthday of the god Augustus was the beginning of the εὐαγγέλιον for the world that came by reason of him which Asia resolved in Smyrna'. Cf. references to Augustus proclaimed as the 'saviour of the universe' (σωτήρ τῆς οἰκουμένης; *IG* 12.5.557) and Nero celebrated as 'the saviour and benefactor of the universe' (τῷ σωτῆρι καὶ εὐεργέτηρι τῆς οἰκουμένης; *OGIS* 2.668.5).

imperium that the gospel as God's power does oppose. This appears as a power that is broader in scope and deeper in consequence than that represented by Rome. It may be that Paul's view Christ's death and resurrection as a transforming reality would render ethnic distinctions obsolete – including national expressions of political power. But who, or what, are the powers that Paul understands as being primarily contested by Christ? Whose 'rule' is of significant consequence for Paul? For him, the powers that exert domination over humanity and cut across empire are explicitly named, and confronted, in Romans 5.12-21.

5.3. The Primary Contest Between the 'Powers' (Romans 5.12-21)

Most commentators view Romans 5 as marking a pivotal shift of emphasis and subject matter in the letter.[32] Chapter 5 falls into two discernible sections: 5.1-11[33] and 5.12-21.[34] The former passage, 5.1-11, is one of three nodal passages (along with 1.16-17 and 3.21-26) in the first stages of the epistle that offer a summary of the fundamental themes of the letter. The opening transitional phrase of 5.12 – διὰ τοῦτο – suggests grammatically that what is to follow is directly related to the previous verse. While this is possible, the concerns of 5.12-21 as a whole stretch further back than just the previous verse. The repeated πολλῷ μᾶλλον in vv. 15 and 17 echoes those earlier in vv. 9 and 10. Thematically, the δικ- (vv. 1, 7, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21) and χαρ- (vv. 2, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21) word groups along with the important notion of how believers share in Christ's 'life' (vv.10, 17, 18, 21) feature prominently in both 5.1-11 and 5.12-21. Even more broadly, Dunn concludes that 'the whole course of the argument so far is contained within 5:12-21, with the rule of sin corresponding to 1:18-3:20 and the rule of grace corresponding to 3:21-5:11'.[35] Rom 5.12-21 is a significant passage in the letter and one that is full of theological and

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[32] Precisely where this shift begins, ends, and to what portion of the letter it belongs is debated. For a summary of the various positions see M.C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5*, JSNTSupp 22 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 147-9.

[33] In 5.1-2 Paul opens with a summary statement (*transitio*) of the argument thus far. See M.R. Cosby, 'Paul's Persuasive Language in Romans 5', in *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy*, ed. D.F. Watson (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 209-26, at 213; M.L. Reid, *Augustinian and Pauline Rhetoric in Romans Five: A Study of Early Christian Rhetoric* MBPS 30 (Lewiston: Mellen, 1996), 94; Jewett, *Romans,* 346.

[34] Verse 12 opens with a transitional clause, διὰ τοῦτο, and closes with a concluding Christological formula διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

[35] Dunn, *Romans*, 1.243; see also K. Grayston, '"Not Ashamed of the Gospel". Romans 1,16a and the Structure of the Epistle', in *Studia Evangelica, Vol. II*, ed. F.L. Cross (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 569-73, at 572.

exegetical complexity. While not entirely ignoring these concerns, our interest in this passage (and to some extent in Rom 6) is the window it provides on Paul's understanding of history, the condition of the world and the fundamental power struggles that concern him. If one is to discern *imperium* in Romans, the place where this language and thought process is clustered is in Rom 5-6.

In Rom 5.12-21 Paul compares and contrasts the respective roles and impacts of Adam and Christ. The purpose is to demonstrate the superiority of grace in Christ bringing life and righteousness that overwhelms the calamitous effects of the rebellion of Adam which inaugurated the reign of sin and death. Paul traces several lines of continuity between Adam and Christ and, to some degree, offers a historical overview, albeit in broad strokes. Verses 12-14 outline the introduction of death into the world in sequence through Adam (described allusively as δι᾽ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου in v.12 and explicitly as Adam in v.14) to Moses (v.14) until Christ, 'the coming one' (τοῦ μέλλοντος, v.14). This is too limited a historical overview to suggest that Paul is presenting a full blown salvation-history at this point in Romans, but the references to Adam, Moses and Christ point to the moments in history that Paul views as significant.[36] But when Paul deploys the large cosmological categories and radical contrasts between 'sin' and 'righteousness', 'death' and 'life', etc., it may be more accurate to describe 5.12-21 as 'cosmological-apocalyptic' in character.[37] These contrasts indicate the two opposing spheres of existence that mark the primary contest in the world. In this contest the world is the field of battle. As E. Adams points out, the world, i.e., the κόσμος, in verses 12 and 13 is neither inherently sinful nor an acting 'power' in the drama.[38] The κόσμος is the stage where, as de Boer notes, 'sin and death on the one side and grace on the other are personified and conceptualized as cosmological rulers in conflict'.[39]

The cosmological-apocalyptic character of Paul's argument is shaped by the sharp antitheses, contrasts and cluster of power-language utilized in 5.12-21 and

[36] O. Cullmann, *Salvation in History* (London: SCM Press, 1967), 130.
[37] See de Boer, *Defeat*, 163-65, who highlights the cosmological-apocalyptic framework and content of the passage; cf. Käsemann, *Romans*, 142, and his description of 'the apocalyptic antithesis of primal time and end-time' and E. Adams, *Constructing the World: A Study in Paul's Cosmological Language* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 172.
[38] Adams, *Constructing*, 173-4, notes that 1) God's original creation of the world was without sin, rather sin 'entered' (εἰσῆλθεν) the world and death entered through sin (where Paul may be picking up language from Wis 2.24: 'through the devil's envy death entered the world' [θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον]); and 2) the world is not an alien and hostile power as it is in 1 Cor 1.20, 21; 3.19, 22 but rather 'occupied territory'.
[39] de Boer, *Defeat*, 160.

carrying over into chapter 6. A syntactical pattern emerges repeatedly in 5.12-21, where the effects of Adam's disobedience are contrasted with the 'super-effects' of Jesus Christ's obedience:

v.12:	*just as* (ὥσπερ) through one man sin entered the world[40]
v.15a:[41]	*not as* (οὐχ ὡς) the trespass
	so also (οὕτως καὶ) the gracious gift
v.15b:	*for if* (εἰ γὰρ) through the one trespass the many died
	how much more (πολλῷ μᾶλλον) will grace...abound to the many
v.16:	*not as* (οὐχ ὡς) through the one sinner
	(so also) the gift
v.17:	*for if* (εἰ γὰρ) through the one trespass death **reigned** (ἐβασίλευσεν)
	how much more (πολλῷ μᾶλλον) **will** those receiving the abundant grace...**reign** (βασιλεύσουσιν) in life
v.18:	*as* (ὡς) through the one trespass...into judgment
	so also (οὕτως καὶ) through the one righteous act...into rightness of life
v.19:	*just as* (ὥσπερ) through the disobedience of one the many...
	so also (οὕτως καὶ) through the obedience of the many...
v.21:	*just as* (ὥσπερ) sin **reigned** (ἐβασίλευσεν) in death...
	so also (οὕτως καὶ) **may** grace **reign** (βασιλεύσῃ)...in eternal life

These antitheses indicate who are the fundamental opposing realities and where the power struggles lie for Paul. Paul names the powers that oppose Christ as 'sin' and 'death'. These abstract realities are personified[42] as the key players in the contest. Earlier in Rom 3.9 Paul had already implied that sin was a cosmological subjugating power holding both 'Jews and Gentiles' under its control. In 5.12 'sin' and

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[40] As most commentators point out, the opening contrast in v.12 is an anacolouthon in which the opening ὥσπερ in v. 12a has no comparative οὕτως καί in the apodosis in 12b; rather, the construction is completed at v.21. See G. Bornkamm, 'Anakoluthe', in *Das Ende des Gesetzes: Paulusstudien* (*Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie*, Bd. 16; München: C. Kaiser, 1966), 79-92, at 81-2; R. Bultmann, 'Adam and Christ According to Romans 5', in *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation*, eds. W. Klassen and G.F. Snyder (London: SCM Press, 1962), 143-65, at 152; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 411; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:272-3; Dunn, *Romans*, 1.271; Jewett, *Romans*, 373. *Pace* C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* BNTC (London: Black, 1957), 109; J.T. Kirby, 'The Syntax of Romans 5.12: A Rhetorical Approach', *NTS* 33 (1987), 283-86; and R. Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (London: Blackwell, 1966), 79-80.

[41] A plausible argument can be made that vv. 15a and 16a should be viewed as rhetorical questions requiring an affirmative answer, that is: Is not the gift just like the trespass? Yes....(v.15a) Is not the gift just like the one sinning? Yes....(v.16a); see C.C. Caragounis, 'Romans 5.15-16 in the Context of 5.12-21: Contrast or Comparison?', *NTS* 31 (1985), 142-48, at 142-5; S.E. Porter, 'The Argument of Romans 5: Can a Rhetorical Question Make a Difference?', *JBL* 110 (1991), 655-77, at 673-74; Jewett, *Romans*, 371n13. Even if this is so, the radical contrast is still maintained in the comparison by the following πολλῷ μᾶλλον rejoinder in 15b and 17b.

[42] de Boer, *Death*, 155 and n.33, remarks that Paul's cosmological personifications of sin and death are not unique to Paul (cf. *1 Enoch* 92.5; 91.17; Sir 27.10) and his notions of sin as enslavement are primarily Jewish or apocalyptic rather than Hellenistic; contra E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 553.

'death' are given explicit personified expression where sin 'entered' (εἰσῆλθεν) the world through 'one man' (i.e., Adam) and death came to all people. But even more, death and sin are recognised as exercising their *imperium* over humanity. The royal language of rule is not expressed as belonging to the emperor or to any other political power; rather, a cluster of βασιλεύω[43] language unique to the Pauline corpus occurs in 5.14-21 and 6.12. This language is used with reference to the 'reign' of death (5.14, 17) and the 'reign' of sin (5.21; 6.12) and the counter-claims concerning the future 'reign' of those who receive grace and righteousness 'through Jesus Christ' (5.17) and the 'reign' of grace 'through Jesus Christ our Lord' (5.21).[44] The context for the power struggle is placed squarely in the world (5.12, 13) and the contested subjects are 'the many' (5.15, 19).

In Rom 5.12-21 Paul envisions two spheres of reality, one ruled by sin and death, the other by grace through the Lord Christ. But whatever the commonalities may be in the contrast between these opposing realities, Paul does not believe they are equal in strength or effect. The reign of grace and the Lordship of Christ 'abound(s)' over the reign and work of sin and death. In verse 15 Paul writes that while through the one trespass 'the many died (οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον)', yet 'how much more (πολλῷ μᾶλλον)' the grace of God 'abounded to the many (εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπερίσσευσεν)'. In verse 17 he adds that while 'death reigned through the one trespass', those who receive 'the abundant grace...will reign in life'. Even though the recipients' of grace are expressed as having a future reign, Paul follows this by instructing them not to let sin reign (6.12) in the present because their loyalties have been exchanged from the 'mastery (κυριεύω)' of death (6.9) and the 'mastery (κυριεύω)' of sin (6.14). They are no longer 'slaves to impurity' but 'slaves to righteousness' (6.19) under God who graciously gives 'life eternal in Christ Jesus our Lord' (6.23).

In the rhetorical strategy articulated in 5.12-21 and chapter 6 sharp antitheses are employed to express the distinctness between Christ's reign and the reign of sin and death. If we ask what Paul's perception of *imperium* may be, this passage and its

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[43] βασιλεύω – to be king, rule, reign (*LSJ*) occurs only nine times in Paul, six of them in Romans 5-6 and the remaining three in 1 Cor 4.8 (2x) and 1 Cor 15.25. The two occurrences in 1 Cor 4.8 are expressed as rhetorical jibes against the over-realised eschatology of certain Corinthian Christians.

[44] de Boer, *Death*, 155, writes 'Paul's use of the terminology of dominion or 'reigning' (βασιλεύειν) in connection with sin (5.21; 6.12), death (5.14, 17), and grace (5.21) reflects the use of that same terminology (משל) in the Dead Sea Scrolls (cf. e.g. 1QS 3.17-25; 1QM 13.10; 14.9; 17.5-7; 18.1, 11) for spiritual powers or angels, both evil and good'.

heavy use of βασιλεύω language points to the answer. Paul describes the power of grace in Christ that reconfigures the world and sweeps away old divisions and antinomies based on ethnic, social and political lines. While Paul had formerly understood the basic divisions in ethnic terms between Jews and Gentiles, he now envisions the world divided between those whose loyalties are aligned to the reign of death or the reign of grace. Where historians like Josephus make much of Hellenistic and Roman eras, the significance of the Seleucid kingdom and the Roman Empire, or the personal matters of the Herodian and Flavian dynasties, Paul gives no priority to these historical concerns. For Paul, what is of primary interest is the divide between the age associated with death and sin and the age associated with grace and righteousness. Within this confrontation individuals, whoever they may be in the undifferentiated 'many', align themselves either with the reign of sin and death or the abounding reign of grace and life through the Lord Christ. Paul is clear as to his allegiance and the life-giving benefits of the reign of grace. No doubt there were many aspects of the Roman Empire that Paul considered as related to death and sin, but as Romans 1.18-32 indicates, there are many sinful aspects in all people whether they be Jewish or Gentile. The confrontation between death and life, sin and grace does not pass neatly between the Roman Empire and the rest, because sin and death affect the whole of humanity and the whole of history. Still, as the passage examined next indicates, he is not naïve to the sting of trial and suffering that play out in his own circumstances or those of his recipients. The powers of sin and death are defeated but not vanquished in a world that still requires followers of Christ to hope amidst distress and live patiently in conflict.

5.4. Suffering and the Overlap of the Ages

In focusing on the contest between the powers of sin/death and grace/life, Paul does not ignore the social consequences of following the gospel for his readers. With both the age of death and the age of life in simultaneous effect, the people of God will be caught up in the conflict and persecution that arises between the times. In fact, Paul *expects* persecution for himself and fellow-Christians as his initial twin exhortations on suffering and the hope of future glory in 5.2-4 ('let us boast in our *hope of God's glory*'/'let us also boast in our *sufferings*') resume in his assertion in 8.17 ('we are...co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we are his co-sharers in *suffering* in order that we may also share in his *glory*'). Paul elucidates the relationship between future hope and present suffering explicitly in 8.18-30. He begins and ends this section with a reference to future hope (v.18, 'the glory about to be revealed in us'; v. 30 'those...he also glorified'). But the notes struck in between deal with life in the present for Christians as a time of 'suffering' (v. 18), 'groaning' (v. 23), 'waiting' (vv. 23, 25),'endurance' (v. 25) and 'weakness' (v. 26).[45] He follows this with 8.31-39, which celebrates the ultimate victory of believers over any danger, trial or enemy. Within this passage Paul lists possible sources of threat for believers by way of seven dangers (vv. 35-36) and ten forces (vv. 38-39) – none of which, he asserts, can wrest them from the grip of God's love demonstrated in Christ.

For those scholars who understand Paul's gospel in Romans as confronting the Roman Empire, chapter 8 reflects this struggle. Georgi claims that Paul's description in 8.18-25 of the created world as 'groaning' in solidarity with fallen humanity and awaiting eschatological freedom is an idea that 'distinguishes Pauline theology sharply from the political theology of Rome' where 'nature plays an important role, but it is discussed in idyllic terms'.[46] Jewett elaborates this argument in his recent commentary. He suggests that commentators, while recognizing the traditional Jewish motif of suffering employed by Paul in 8.18-25, overlook the contextual implications for Roman believers. In particular, Jewett argues that Paul's formulation of human suffering and creation's 'mourning' and corruption challenges the 'illusion'[47] of a prosperous 'golden age' and untroubled peace promoted by imperial ideology from Augustus[48] to Nero[49]. In commenting on 8.31-39 and its emphasis on the love of God, Wright concludes:

> Once again, the themes of the letter pose a standing challenge to the imperial system of which Paul, himself a Roman citizen, was a critic from within. If it is indeed true, as some have suggested, that already at this period some in Rome thought of the "secret name" of the city as AMOR, "love" ("Roma" spelled backward), it is a further indication of something we would have to stress anyway: that a community founded

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[45] G.D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 570. Käsemann, *Romans*, 231, describes vv. 19-27 as a 'counterthrust' to vv. 18 and 28-30.

[46] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 100. Georgi refers to the idyllic conditions of Roman rule expressed in the eclogues from Virgil to Piso, the *Carmen saeculare* and the odes and epodes of Horace.

[47] Jewett, *Romans*, 508-21, see esp. 509, 510, 514, 516, 517.

[48] See Beard et al., *Religions*, 1.203, who comment on the ideology of Augustus' Saecular Games in 17 BCE.

[49] See the new 'golden age' under Nero celebrated by Calpurnius Siculus, *Ecl.* 1.33-99; see also Aratus *Phaen.* 100-36; Ovid, *Metam.* 1.89-112.

on, and sustained by, the sovereign love of the creator God is a political threat, not least to anything like a totalitarian system'.[50]

In asserting that Rom 8 contributes to Paul's overall critique of the Roman imperial ideology, each of the scholars mentioned above relies primarily on *external* historical and literary sources to substantiate their position. This, in itself, is not a serious mistake. The problem, however, arises when the historical context is used to force Paul's words to say something they are not saying. The question is whether one should or must argue that everything in the letter to the Romans is specific to Rome in 55-58 CE. This is not to suggest that Paul's theology in Romans 8 (or elsewhere in the letter) is totally 'abstract' either. It is, however, a false dichotomy to make everything either historically specific or theologically abstract. Whatever else, the suffering, dangers and 'powers' referred to in 8.18-39 are *real* circumstances for Paul. The questions that remain for discussion about 8.18-39 are: What is Paul's perspective on suffering and who/what causes the suffering? And, in a preliminary manner, how does the positive assessment of political authorities in 13.3-4 relate to the realism of 8.35-39?

When we ask about Paul's perspective on suffering one of the first observations to make is how *unlike* it is in relation to Josephus' view.[51] Josephus portrayed the suffering of the inhabitants of Jerusalem during the siege as a punishment for their disobedience and theologically this meant that God had abandoned them, albeit temporarily, to side with the Romans. In contrast, Paul portrays suffering for Christians as evidence of their solidarity with Christ (Rom 8.17-18). Further, their suffering is linked with the general suffering of the world as a whole since Adam[52] and he reflects Jewish apocalyptic theology with its speculation about the impact of Adam's transgression on nature.[53] But as Adams observes, Paul deviates from the dualistic world-view of Jewish apocalypticism. As such, Paul does not interpret suffering as placing believers in a cosmic battle against the forces of evil. Neither does he show concern for retribution on the perpetrators of the suffering.

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[50] Wright, *Romans*, 618. See also N.T. Wright, 'Paul and Caesar: A New Reading of Romans', in *A Royal Priesthood: The Use of the Bible Ethically and Politically*, ed. C. Bartholemew (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002), 173-93.
[51] See K. Haacker, *The Theology of Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 76, who briefly compares Paul's assurance of God's love in Rom 8.28-30, and the despair of Eleazar in Josephus' account of the defence of Masada in *War* 7.327.
[52] There is general agreement that Paul alludes to Gen 3.17-19 in Rom 8.19-22; e.g., Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.413; Dunn, *Romans*, 1.469; Moo, *Romans*, 515; Jewett, *Romans*, 511-12
[53] See Adams, *Constructing*, 175n94; cf. *Jub.* 3.29; *Apoc. Mos.* 10-11; *Gen. Rab.* 11.2-4; 12.6.

'Rather, Paul links believers' specific afflictions with the general suffering that characterizes creation as a whole and emphasizes believers' solidarity with the world and its suffering. He legitimates their experience of suffering and persecution in a way that is unlikely to encourage or reinforce a social dualism between insiders and outsiders'.[54]

In associating objective, concrete suffering with Christ and in solidarity with creation, Paul writes in decidedly general terms about what or who causes this suffering.[55] If there is a political danger from the Roman Empire that might threaten Christians, Paul is silent about it in favour of outlining the broad threats from human beings summarized in 8.35-36 and general forces arrayed against believers in verses 38-39. Elliott attempts to demarcate the afflictions listed in 8.35 – tribulation (θλῖψις), distress (στενοχωρία), persecution (διωγμός), famine (λιμός), nakedness (γυμνότης), peril (κίνδυνος), sword (μάχαιρα) – as more than strands of Jewish apocalyptic tradition. He asserts that they 'are a pointed summary of Israel's experience *under Roman rule* [emphasis mine]'.[56] To limit these experiences to 'Israel' seems unlikely since the series of afflictions begins with ἡμᾶς suggesting that these adversities are shared both by Paul[57] and his audience. Further, while it is possible that Paul is identifying the seven threats in 8.35-36 with Rome, it is unlikely that all of them must be located so specifically. That is, Roman oppression might be behind 'tribulation and distress'[58] or 'persecution', but since a Roman source is not named and these terms can be used with a more general connotation elsewhere in Paul (cf. Rom 2.9; 2 Cor 6.4; 12.10), there is no reason to suppose he has only Roman oppression in view. Further, it seems implausible that Rome is solely responsible for 'famine', 'nakedness' or 'peril' – the latter is especially odd to associate with Rome since Paul elsewhere associates κίνδυνος with dangers associated with travel.[59] The seventh item in the list, μάχαιρα, seems the most promising link to the Roman authorities since the only other time the word occurs in the undisputed Paulines is in

[54] Adams, *Constructing*, 183.
[55] Moo, *Romans*, 543, notes that the 'who' in the opening question of v. 35 embraces any conceivable opposition, personal or impersonal.
[56] N. Elliott, 'Romans 13:1-7 In the Context of Imperial Propaganda', in *Paul and Empire*, 184-204, at 194. Jewett, *Romans*, 543 and n.113 points out the similarity between Paul's catalogue of adversity and other tribulation lists in Greco-Roman and Jewish sources.
[57] This is especially likely since Paul has experienced all but one of the items in this list (cf. 2 Cor 6.4; 11.26-7; 12.10).
[58] These terms are often associated together, though not always in the same order, in the LXX; cf. Deut 28.53, 55, 57; Isa 8.22; 30.6.
[59] I.e., 2 Cor 11.26.

association with ruling authorities in Rom 13.4. Still, there is nothing that limits this word to punishment from the state either by definition or in its particular context in Rom 8.36.[60]

A similar breadth of scope occurs when Paul lists ten general forces that are unable to separate believers from God's love in 8.38-39. Again, to note that these forces are 'general' does not mean that they are simply 'abstract' for Paul. That these forces are legitimate and significant powers arrayed against believers is indicated by Paul's opening threat: 'death'. In 5.12-21 we noted that 'death' is a fundamental antithetical power confronted by Christ with significant implications for believers. The one threat that is a possible candidate for a political power is the fourth item: ἀρχαί.[61] But even here, the reference is left unnamed, undifferentiated and plural. In the end, the point seems clear that what matters for Paul is that no power – let alone any political power, Roman or otherwise – is able to separate believers from the love of Christ in God. That is, what is significant for Paul is the 'power' of God's love, not the threats to this power.

As we turn to offer a preliminary comment on how the positive assessment of political authorities in 13.3-4 might relate to the realism of 8.35-39, the work of Adams offers a useful insight with which to begin. Adams argues that by ending the list of threats in 8.39 with the phrase οὔτε τις κτίσις ἑτέρα – literally meaning 'any other creature'[62] but best translated as the NRSV and TNIV by 'anything else in all creation'[63] – Paul does not intend to include creation within the field of activity of evil powers.[64] Rather the addition of this phrase is more likely 'aimed at tempering the previous negative terms, by implicitly classifying them as κτίσεις, rather than at

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[60] μάχαιρα may refer to a relatively short sword or other sharp instrument, sword, dagger (see BAGD, 622; W. Michaelis, 'μάχαιρα', *TDNT* 4.526; E. Plümacher, 'μάχαιρα', *EDNT* 2.397); in the absolute it can refer to the punishment of the state (e.g., Rev 13.10; Acts 12.2; Heb 11.34, 37) but it can also be a metonym for violent death (e.g., Gen 31.26; *Sib. Or.* 8.120; Matt. 10.34; cf. Dunn, *Romans* 1.505).
[61] ἀρχή is used frequently in the LXX to refer to human political authorities and the plural usage is reflected in the NT (e.g., Lk 12.11; 20.20; Titus 3.1); cf. LSJ 252 II.4 lists 'the authorities, the magistrates' as a possible translation. While some scholars argue that ἀρχαί in Rom 8.38 are political authorities – e.g., C.K. Barrett, *1 Corinthians* (London: Black, 1968), 357; Jewett, *Romans*, 552 – the combination with ἄγγελοι along with Paul's usage in 1 Cor 15.24 leads most to assume that it refers to spiritual powers. See LSJ 252 II.6; BAGD 138; Michel, *Römer*, 284; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.442; Moo, *Romans*, 545.
[62] See BAGD 455, 'creature' or 'created thing'.
[63] Adams, *Constructing*, 185, suggests the NRSV catches the significance of the words. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.444, suggests that the phrase οὔτε τις κτίσις ἑτέρα is added 'in order to make the list completely comprehensive'.
[64] Contra Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament, Vol. 1*, trans. K. Grobel (London: SCM Press, 1952), 230.

impugning κτίσις by the association....The rhetorical effect of closing the catalogue with τις κτίσις ἑτέρα is to qualify the preceding items in such a way that these potential threats are now brought within the compass of God's creation and the sphere of his control'.[65] This conclusion makes good sense of the entire focus of 8.31-39 that emphasizes the overwhelming power of God's love for believers and the comfort it brings. By closing with the phrase τις κτίσις ἑτέρα Paul is making the point that any potential threat to believers is in a certain sense to be understood within the creative and providential sovereignty of God at work through the gospel.[66] This performative work of the gospel, where God is at work making and sustaining new creation through his Son (i.e., God 'gave him up for us all' and 'will graciously give us all things', 8.32; cf. 3.25-26) against all anti-believer powers, is the context in which 'true power is born not of control or force, but of solidarity of divine love'.[67]

As in 8.31-39, Paul emphasizes the sovereignty of God in 13.1-7, this time specifically over political authorities. In chapters 12-13 Paul continues with the tone of non-sectarian interaction and response to external relationships that characterizes 8.18-39. Paul builds on the theme of non-retaliation in 12.17-21 by promoting positive engagement with non-believers in 13.3-4. Both of these responses to outsiders, non-retaliation and 'doing good', are placed under the rubric of love ('love your neighbour', 13.8-10). As we will explore futher below, Paul re-apprises the theme of love that plays such a significant role in chapter 8. But where in chapter 8 the stress lies on the comfort that is afforded to believers on account of the invincibility of God's love in Christ, in chapters 12-13 the admonitions for believers to express their commitment to Christ are bracketed by the command to love others, including the 'other' that lies outside the Christian community (12.9; 13.8-10).

What this brief analysis of suffering in Romans 8 indicates is that concern with Roman imperial ideology holds little significance for Paul's theology of suffering. Paul does not cloak his gospel in coded terms as a means for avoiding suffering or persecution for Christ at the hands of Rome, or any other political power. For him, 'present sufferings' with Christ are a given. Paul's list of the powers that might threaten Roman believers runs the gamut of the threats, spheres and dimensions that infect all of the cosmos with 'decay'. At most, the significance of the Roman

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[65] Adams, *Constructing*, 185.

[66] I write 'in a certain sense' because Paul views the 'creation' as God's possession but also as an 'occupied territory' under the influence of sin and death.

[67] A.R. Brown, *The Cross and Human Transformation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 164.

Empire occurs as part of a general group of powers that array themselves, in futility, against believers. If Paul did mean to challenge 'golden age' imperial ideology he does so only in the most indirect way and within a long-standing Jewish tradition of reading Gen 3.17-18. For Paul the primary focus, as elsewhere in his letters (e.g., 2 Cor 4.7-11; Gal 6.17; Phil 3.10), is to identify his life and the life of fellow believers with the sufferings of Christ, sufferings that arise from a variety of potential sources. But this suffering is shaped by the promise of a future hope and the trust that God's sovereignty abides over 'anything else in all creation' (τις κτίσις ἑτέρα).

5.5. Romans 12-13: New Creation/Community at Work in the World

As we come to this final, and important, analysis in Romans the fundamental questions of this study are brought to the fore: What does this passage inform us about how Paul understands the world? What does it say about the relationship between God, his people and the Roman Empire? In particular, how does Paul's understanding of Christian existence shape associations both inside and outside the Roman Christian communities, especially in relationship to civic authorities, in the only text in the Pauline corpus, i.e. 13.1-7, which speaks directly about political power?

With respect to these questions, those in the Paul v. Empire coalition offer a variety of approaches to account for Paul's inclusion of Rom 13.1-7. Georgi contends that Paul's treatment of the Roman political and legal authorities is an example of his 'critical imagination'.[68] Georgi suggests that in response to the increasing political centralization coalesced in Caesar's authority and power Paul counters with Rom 13.1-7 by borrowing 'a fragment of Jewish tradition from the republican period. By citing this anachronistic tradition...Paul gives the passage a critical slant: he urges decentralization and undermines the ideology that supports the majesty of the state'.[69]

Wright, on the other hand, concludes that even though Paul offers repeated, albeit allusive, critique of the imperial ideology throughout the letter, Rom 13 carries a hidden 'nevertheless' at its core lest Paul's readers, in a state of 'over-realized' eschatology, foment revolt against their political masters. He writes, 'Jesus is Lord; nevertheless, his followers must obey their earthly masters. This is not because the

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[68] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 102.
[69] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 102

rulers have somehow, in theory, already submitted to his lordship, but despite the fact that they have not done so'.[70] Jewett also concludes that in this passage Paul abandons his revolutionary approach to honour visible in the preceding chapters and reverts to cultural and imperial stereotypes. Jewett contends that Paul's motivation for this allowance was 'missional'. For the sake of the proclamation of Christ crucified to gentiles in Rome and, later, Spain, Jewett suggests that 'Paul was willing to accept the system that demanded honor for the emperor and his officials whether they deserved it or not....This pericope is an excruciating example of Paul's willingness to be in the world but not of the world, to reside between the ages, to be all things to all people, all for the sake of the gospel'.[71]

Similar to Wright and Jewett, Elliott argues that Rom 13.1-7 is also a concession on Paul's part after carrying out an 'ideological intifada' against the Roman Empire in the previous twelve chapters. Elliott, however, grounds Paul's reason to do so on another basis than a rear-guard action against misguided Roman Christians or for the sake of Christian mission. For Elliott, 13.1-7 functions within a rhetorical strategy, beginning in chapters 8-11 and carrying across 12-15, intended 'to advocate for the safety of the Jewish community in Rome'.[72] Elliott suggests a *Sitz im Leben* for Romans in which the Jewish community was in danger of hostility from the local Roman population, especially in the context of popular unrest occasioned by tax abuses. In this situation Paul might have expected the Jews of Rome to bear the brunt of violence in the event of tax riots in Rome and he wants to encourage gentile-Christian solicitude toward the Jews. He does so by relating the characteristics of suffering 'in Christ' in 8.17-18 with the afflictions of Israel's experience under Roman rule described in 8.35 (i.e., tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword). Coupled with this, Elliott reads the 'weak' of 14.1-15.6 (akin to the 'stumbling' in 9.30-33) as non-Christian Jews and the 'strong' as gentile Christians. In his approach, Elliott understands 'the broad rhetorical movement across chapters 12-15, like that across chapters 8-11, [as] meant to quell gentile-Christian arrogance and to evoke sympathy and solidarity with Israel. That context suggests that Rom. 13:1-7

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[70] Wright, *Romans*, 722.
[71] Jewett, *Romans*, 803.
[72] Elliott, 'Romans 13:1-7', 191. See also Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 221-6.

was intended to head off the sort of public unrest that could have further jeopardized the already vulnerable situation of the beleaguered Jewish population of Rome'.[73]

A final approach taken by one of the Paul v. Empire coalition reads Rom 13.1-7 as ironic discourse. Although Elliott also asserts that Paul is following in the footsteps of diaspora Jews like Philo who employed flattery and coded insinuation when dealing with Roman political rulers,[74] it is T.L. Carter who argues that 13.1-7 is ironic discourse.[75] Carter proposes that the readers of Romans shared with Paul a common experience of oppression at the hands of Roman authorities. The consequent implausibility of Paul's language would have alerted his readers to the presence of irony. They would have been able to set aside the surface meaning of the text and recognize that Paul was using a well-known rhetorical technique of censuring with counterfeit praise.

Without offering a blow-by-blow response to these approaches, I will offer a reading of Rom 13.1-7, within the context of chapters 12.1-15.13, that seeks to answer the broad questions asked at the beginning of this section as a way of responding to the Paul v. Empire project. In no way does this reading attempt to answer all of the questions that could be asked of this notoriously difficult passage.[76] Instead, the intent is to offer a coherent reading of a text that accounts for Paul's portrayal of the relationship between God, followers of Christ and Roman civic power.

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[73] Elliott, 'Romans 13:1-7', 196.

[74] Elliott relies on the work of E.R. Goodenough, *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 55-62. Goodenough, 62, interprets Philo's tractate *De Somniis* 2.91-92 comparing rulers and beasts in the marketplace as an attack on Roman governors 'in code'; cf. *idem. The Politics of Philo Judaus. Practice and Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), chap. 2506. This interpretation has been called into question by R. Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics, Roman Rule and Hellenistic Judaism', *ANRW* II.21.1 (1980), 417-553, at 491-506, who argues that Philo's critique springs from anti-Gentile not anti-Roman feeling.

[75] T.L. Carter, 'The Irony of Romans 13', *NovT* 46.3 (2004), 209-28.

[76] The exegesis and hermeneutics of Rom 13.1-7 have generated more discussion than almost any other passage in the history of NT interpretation. For a preliminary survey of the history see V. Riekkinen, *Römer 13 - Aufzeichnung und Weiterführung der exegetischen Diskussion* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1980). For a description of four of the main interpretative approaches see E. Käsemann, 'Principles of Interpretation of Romans 13', in *New Testament Questions Today*, ed. E. Käsemann (London: SCM Press, 1969), 196-216, at 200-7.

5.5.1. Romans 12-13 in Context

The immediate context of Rom 13.1-7 is the paraenetic section of Rom 12-13. This section is sometimes described as 'general paraenesis'[77] based on the assumptions that these chapters have very little to do with the theological argument of chapters 1-11 and lack any immediate relation with the circumstances of the letter. There are, however, several reasons for concluding that these chapters build on the argument and the theology of the preceding eleven chapters as well as preparing the way for the climactic argument of the letter in 14.1-15.6.[78]

5.5.1.1. Continuity with the Argument of the Letter

The first evidence supporting the position that Rom 12-13 builds on the previous material is that it is in continuity with the argument of the letter thus far and takes the next logical step forward. From the introduction of the letter (1.1-17; cf. v. 5, 16) Paul is concerned primarily with the power of the gospel and its effect in establishing a people for God that is inclusive of both Jew and Gentile. The recounting of human solidarity in sin follows the introduction (1.18-3.31) and concludes with the affirmation that *all* have sinned (3.23) and are in need of the righteousness of God provided in Christ, received by faith. The story of Abraham follows (ch. 4) and presents him as the father of faith for both Jew and Gentile alike (v. 17: 'I have made you the father of many nations'). At the transitional juncture in Romans 5 Paul draws the argument to an initial conclusion before describing the crucial role of Christ in overturning the power of sin and death. Christ is the basis of a new humanity (5.11-8.39) that incorporates both Jew and Gentile on the basis of faith, apart from the law. But identifying new identity markers for the people of God based on faith in Christ (apart from the law) and a circumcision of the heart by the Spirit raises a number of questions (2-4; esp. 3.1, 29) about Israel 'according to the flesh'. These questions are addressed in Rom 9-11 with the reaffirmation that the promise to Abraham can only be fulfilled when both Jew and Gentile are incorporated into one 'olive tree' based on faith.

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[77] E.g., Käsemann, *Romans*, 323-4; Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 288-9; Schlier, *Der Römerbrief*, 349-50.

[78] I regard 15.6 as the end of the paraenetic material and 15.7-13 as likely the summary of the entire epistle.

If Torah is no longer a fundamental defining marker for the newly constituted people of God, then, as Dunn notes, 'the whole argument...would have profound ethical and social consequences. For under the old definition of the people of God the ethical guidelines were clearly drawn...Where group identity was not [*sic*] longer determined by the law and the works of the law, the question of how the group may define itself in social intercourse was one which could not be ignored'.[79] Therefore, it is not surprising that Paul follows 1-11 with the paraenesis of 12.1-15.6. Chapters 12-13 outline the first step of Paul's instructions for this 'body' of believers in two directions: 1) their relationship to those within the body (12.3-16)[80] and 2) their relationship with those outside the community (12.17-21), including state authorities (13.1-7). The motivation for both these directions is based on trust in God's sovereignty,[81] on love as 'fulfil[ing] the law' (13.8; cf. 12.9, 21) and on the eschatological perspective 'know the time' (13.11). Love, as the fundamental command and primary identity marker in this section, anticipates the following material on a matter that threatens the unity of the people of God in Rome. The second step in 14.1-15.6 deals with the pressing matter of how 'the strong' and 'the weak' can live together in unity as the people of God with their differences on matters pertaining to food and special days, i.e. issues that were significant in dividing Jew and Gentile under the old covenant. Within this framework, the content of chapters 12-13 appears to carry on in continuity with the argument of the letter. There are also thematic and terminological links that serve to demonstrate the literary cohesion of 12-13 with the letter.

5.5.1.2. Thematic-Linguistic Continuity

A number of recent studies[82] have demonstrated the thematic and linguistic links between the programmatic statement in Rom 12.1-2 and the previous eleven chapters. This suggests that the conjunction οὖν signals more than merely a transition

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[79] J.D.G. Dunn, 'Romans 13.1-7 - A Charter for Political Quietism?', *ExAud* 2 (1986), 55-68, at 61.
[80] Presumably τοὺς διώκοντας of 12.14 are not within the community; Paul's insertion of the imperative 'bless those who persecute (τοὺς διώκοντας) you' may simply follow as a connection to the final participial phrase τὴν φιλοξενίαν διώκοντες.
[81] I.e., Rom 12 ends with the injunction not to repay evil for evil because it is God's place to avenge. Again, along with Rom 5 and 8, Paul is sensitive to the pressure of persecution and the role that trust in God plays in dealing with it.
[82] E.g., M. Thompson, *Clothed with Christ: The Example and Teaching of Jesus in Romans 12.1-15.13*, JSNTSup 59 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 78-86; Adams, *Constructing*, 199-201.

in the argument. Rather, 12.1-2 forms a summary and another nodal point in the letter.[83] Some of the more interesting links are with those from chapter 1.18-32 and chapter 6-8 emphasizing the effects and impact of new creation and the overturn of the reign of death. M. Thompson points out that the connection between 12.1-2 and 1.18-32 is unmistakable in three key themes: first, in contrast to the failure to glorify God and the idolatrous worship offered to the creation (ἐλάτρευσαν τῇ κτίσει, 1.25) now, appropriate worship is offered to the Creator (τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν, 12.1); second, while the 'mind' (νοῦς) of humanity once was subjected to futility, failing to acknowledge the will of God (οὐκ ἐδοκίμασαν τὸν θεόν, 1.28) believers are called to renew their 'mind' so that they will be able to discern God's will (τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοὸς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ; 12.2); and third, while once God gave humanity over in the desires of their hearts to uncleanness for the degrading of their bodies (εἰς ἀκαθαρσίαν τοῦ ἀτιμάζεσθαι τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν; 1.24) followers of Christ are now to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God (τὰ σώματα...ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ; 12.1).[84] As Thompson notes, 'the action [Paul] calls for in 12.1-2 thus represents a reversal of the downward spiral depicted in Romans 1'.[85] Finally, the term ἀγαθός is a term that recurs throughout chapters 1-11 (2.7, 10; 3.8; 5.7; 7.12, 13, 18, 19; 8.28; 9.11; 10.15) and is reintroduced again in 12.2 and functions as a linking term in the transition between paragraphs[86] in the entire paraenetic portion of the letter (12.2, 9, 21; 13.3 [2x], 4; 14.16; 15.2).[87]

The significance of these connections lies not only in demonstrating the continuity that exists in the letter, but in establishing that the paraenesis of 12-13, which is introduced by 12.1-2, has specific ties to the argument of the letter and prepares the ground for the important exhortation in 14.1-15.6. First, the attention to sacrificial bodies and transformed and renewed minds that are tuned to the 'good' will of God in 12.2 prepares one for the admonitions to love, unity and service in 12.3-21. These behaviours have two directions: toward community *insiders* (the ἀλλήλων of

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[83] Earlier nodal points in the letter are in 5.1-5; 8.1-2; 9.1-5.
[84] Thompson, *Clothed*, 81-2. See also Furnish, *Theology*, 103-5; Evans, 'Worship', 30-2; Dunn, *Romans*, 2.707-8.
[85] Thompson, *Clothed*, 82.
[86] Tellbe, *Paul*, 172, points out that this is especially important in the paragraphs in 12.9-13.10 which lack transitional particles and conjunctions but are knitted together by the thematic contrasts between ἀγαθός/κακός [πονηρία].
[87] 'Αγαθός occurs only 30 times in the authentic Paulines; 21 of these occur in Romans – and 9 of these in 12.1-15.13.

12.10, 16) and toward *outsiders* (those who are objects of 'blessing' in 12.14, 'peace' in 12.18, and 'the good' in 12.21). The characteristics of love (at least in the sense of 'doing the good'), unity and service are identified as the primary obligations 'owed' (13.7) to external governing powers in 13.1-7 and 'owed' (13.8) internally to members of the community, members who are clearly facing tensions in 14.1-15.6.

Second, while 12.1-2 indicates a negative assessment of the 'pattern of this world', this in no way permits a parochial, sectarian withdrawal from the world.[88] As Adams acknowledges, 'it should be noted that the positive counterpart to conformity to "this age" is "transformation" and "renewal" (μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοός). This suggests that the underlying apocalyptic picture is that of cosmic transformation rather than that of cosmic destruction....This is thoroughly consistent with 8:19-22 where Paul declares that creation is to be redeemed and transformed, not destroyed'.[89] While there are clear indicators of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' throughout 12.3-13.10, in the eschatological language that frames the apocalyptic picture in 12.1-2 and 13.11-14 there is no mention of insider/outsider terminology. Rather, the language is used to stimulate good behaviour along distinctly Hellenistic values. When Paul urges his readers to walk εὐσχημόνως (13.13) this qualifying adverb 'signifies what would generally be regarded as decent, proper, presentable in responsible society'.[90] Again, while this positive engagement with the 'world' in no way blinds Paul to the stark realities of fallen humanity and the dangers it poses to Roman Christians, it does establish a basis for understanding his comments about the ἐξουσίαι in 13.1-7.

Finally, the general paraenetic material of 12-13 supports and prepares the ground for the specific exhortation in 14.1-15.6. After beginning with the appeals 'to

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88 This coheres with the conclusion of P.A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003). Harland's work highlights the fundamental problems with a sectarian-focused approach to the social history of early Christianity. Harland, 182-200, challenges scholars who argue that the social world represented by Christian communities described in 1 Peter, John's Apocalypse, the Pastoral Epistles, Colossians, Ephesians, and Ignatius' epistles was one of separation, conflict and non-participation in civic life. Harland suggests that this has resulted in an overemphasis 'on the ways in which such assemblies were in tension with surrounding society to the neglect of evidence concerning how they continued to live *within* [emphasis his] the polis and empire' (12). While Harland's study is focused primarily on material later than Paul's letters (although not exclusively; see 182-4, 235-6, etc.), it does add further complexity to the notion that Paul and any trajectories influenced by him would be either pro-Empire or anti-Empire.

89 Adams, *Constructing*, 202.

90 Dunn, *Romans*, 2.788-9. Cf. BAGD, εὐσχημόνως, 414; H. Greeven, *TDNT*, εὐσχήμων, 2.770-72. See also D.G. Horrell, *Solidarity and Difference: A Contemporary Reading of Paul's Ethics* (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 257-61.

offer your bodies (τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν) as a living sacrifice...to God' (12.1) and 'be transformed by the renewing of your mind (τοῦ νοός)' (12.2) Paul continues by focusing his attention on the request for unity in the 'one body' (ἓν σῶμα, 12.4, 5) based on an appropriate mind-set (ὑπερφρονέω, φρονέω, σωφρονέω, 12.3). This call for unity and single mindedness is repeated near the end of the section with the entreaty in 15.5-6: 'May God ...give to you the same mind (τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν)...so that together in one voice (ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐν ἑνὶ στόματι) you may glorify God'. Between these appeals, as mentioned above, is an ongoing dialectic in which the attitudes and actions that are to be reflected within the Christian community are connected to relations with those in society around them. After urging intramural honour (12.10), Paul exhorts them to extend it to those outside the community who have every right to expect it (13.7).[91] In encouraging the community to live at peace 'with everyone' (μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων, 12.18) he also concludes that they must pursue the things of peace and building up of 'one another' (εἰς ἀλλήλους, 14.19). While acknowledging that rebelling against authorities established by God brings 'judgment (κρίμα) on themselves' (13.2), Paul also warns fellow believers against 'passing judgment (κρίνω) against one another' since they all will stand before God's judgment seat (14.10-13). If Paul urges believers to do 'the good (τὸ ἀγαθόν)' for society (13.3), it is not surprising that he expects that they will also please those within the people God 'for their good' (εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν, 15.2) – after all, Paul is convinced that the Roman Christians are full of 'goodness' (ἀγαθωσύνη, 15.14). And the impulse for these appropriate attitudes and behaviour is sincere love, expressed as love for one's 'neighbour' – whether they be within or without the Christian community (12.9-10; 13.8-10; 14.10; 15.2). With this understanding of the context in hand we may now turn our attention to 13.1-7 itself.

[91] L.E. Keck, *Romans* ANTC (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 319. On the issue of honour in Roman society see H. Moxnes, 'Honor, Shame, and the Outside World in Paul's Letter to the Romans', in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, eds. J. Neusner, P. Borgen, E.S. Frerichs and R.A. Horsley (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 207-18.

5.5.2. Romans 13.1-7: Argument and Critical Observations

Some scholars argue that the inner logic of Rom 13.1-7 is self-contained and has no direct connection to its literary context;[92] this argument has led some to suggest that 13.1-7 is an interpolation.[93] On the other hand, it is argued by others that while there is no linkage grammatically with its context, 13.1-7 is connected thematically and terminologically to chapters 12-13. In particular, the terms ἀγαθός/κακός in 12.21 are raised in 13.3-4 and the cognates ὀφειλή/ὀφείλω occur in 13.7 and 13.8.[94] T. Engberg-Pedersen offers convincing support for reading 13.1-7 in a way that firmly ties it to both its immediate historical and literary contexts. First, Engberg-Pedersen notes the historical similarity between Seneca's advice to Nero in *De Clementia* 1.1-4 and Romans 13.1-7.[95] While admitting that Seneca's perspective on power is 'from above' and Paul's is 'from below', he argues convincingly for the similarity between their respective understanding of God, political powers and good behaviour. Second, after pointing out the historical connection with Seneca, Engberg-Pedersen concludes that:

> Apparently there was an idea in Rome in the 50s CE of the ruler or earthly rulers acting on behalf of the gods or God in support of behaviour that is good. This idea writers could take for granted and presuppose in what else they had to say. Indeed, they could appeal to it as something that would not be questioned—and could then move on from there to make whatever other points they were bent on making. Seen

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[92] E.g., Michel, *Der Brief*, 312, who argues that it is 'eine selbstädige Einlage'; cf. E. Käsemann, 'Principles of Interpretation of Romans 13', in *New Testament Questions of Today*, ed. E. Käsemann (London: SCM Press, 1969), 196-216, at 199; J.I.H. McDonald, 'Romans 13.1-7: A Test Case for New Testament Interpretation', *NTS* 35 (1989), 540-49, at 542.

[93] Jewett, *Romans*, 783n17, refers to seven scholars who hold this position, to which one more can be added to the list in A.F.C. Webster, 'St. Paul's Political Advice to the Haughty Gentile Christians in Rome: An Exegesis of Romans 13:1-7', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 25 (1981), 259-82. Among these scholars, the argument presented by J. Kallas, 'Romans XIII 1-7: An Interpolation', *NTS* 11 (1965), 365-74, is one of the most significant. The arguments for the interpolation theory are refuted well by F.F. Bruce, 'Paul and "The Powers That Be"', *BJRL* 66 (1983), 78-96, and Jewett, *Romans*, 783-4. In the end, the most striking point against interpolation is the fact that none of the Greek MSS for Romans lacks 13.1-7.

[94] See S.E. Porter, 'Romans 13:1-7 as Pauline Political Rhetoric', *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 3 (1990), 115-39, at 118-9; Tellbe, *Paul*, 172n126. T.C. de Kruijf, 'The Literary Unity of Rom 12,16-13,8a: A Network of Inclusions', *Bijdragen* 48 (1987), 319-26, identifies a number of verbal (e.g., 'one another' in 12.16 and 13.8a; 'repay/pay' in 12.17 and 13.7; 'wrath' in 12.19 and 13.5; 'good' in 12.19 and 13.3; 'fear' in 13.3 and 13.4) and thematic links, or what he refers to as a 'chiastic network of inclusions' in 12.16-13.8a.

[95] T. Engberg-Pedersen, 'Paul's Stoicizing Politics in Romans 12-13: The Role of 13.1-10 in the Argument', *JSNT* 29.2 (2006), 163-72, at 167. Engberg-Pedersen identifies three similarities between Seneca's portrayal of Nero's power and Paul's depiction of governing powers: 1) the emperor has been chosen on earth to be the representative of the gods; 2) the emperor is the sovereign judge (*arbiter*) of life and death, good things and bad things, for all his subjects; and 3) the emperor has recourse to many thousands of swords (*gladii*) with which to maintain peace.

> in this light there is absolutely nothing strange about the transition from Rom. 12.21 to Rom. 13.1ff. Believers should 'conquer the bad (τὸ κακόν) by means of the good (τὸ ἀγαθόν)' (12.21): *in* so doing, they should be subjected to the powers of this world since these, on their side, represent God and in themselves support behaviour that is good (13.1ff). We should conclude that the movement from 12.14-21 to 13.1ff. is so smooth that it is most unfortunate that Rom. 12–13 has traditionally been divided up into two separate chapters. Romans 13.1-7 is a wholly integrated part of the comprehensive and finely differentiated politics that Paul is articulating for the benefit of his Roman addressees in the two chapters taken as a whole.[96]

What Engberg-Pedersen helpfully demonstrates is that Paul's line of thought in Romans 12-13 is by no means idiosyncratic.

Many of the details of Rom 13.1-7 are disputed, but the argument itself is straightforward. Paul begins with a general appeal (v.1a), supported by three paired arguments/warnings (vv. 1b-4b), a restatement of the general appeal (v.5-6), and a specific application (v.7).[97] This is illustrated in the following outline:

v.1a *General Appeal*: Every person must submit (opening imperative: ὑποτασσέσθω) to the governing authorities
- v.1b *Argument 1*: For (γάρ) every authority is from God
- v.2 *Warning 1*: Therefore (ὥστε) those who oppose authority, oppose God and will incur judgement
- v.3a *Argument 2*: For (γάρ) rulers are a terror to those who do evil, not to those who do good
- v. 3b *Warning 2*: But (δέ) those who do evil will have reason to fear; those who do good will receive praise
- v.4a *Argument 3*: For (γάρ) God's servant in authority supports the good
- v.4b *Warning 3*: But (δέ) the evil one will face the fear of the ruler's sword

v. 5 *Transition by Restated Appeal*: Therefore (διό) it is necessary to submit (ὑποτάσσεσθαι) on account of God's wrath and personal conscience
- v. 6 *Practical Application*: For this is why you pay taxes to God's servants

v.7 *Specific Appeal*: Pay (final imperative: ἀπόδοτε) whatever you owe, be it taxes (direct or indirect), or fear, or honour

From this outline a number of points stand out. Two imperatives bracket the passage, namely a general exhortation to submit to authorities in verse 1 and a specific command to pay all one's dues in verse 7. Within this framework the passage falls thematically into two sections. The first section, verses 1-4, is structured by the interplay between three parties: 1) the governing authorities (ἐξουσίαι ὑπερεχούσαι); 2) those designated as 'everyone' who submit (πᾶσα ψυχὴ...ὑποτασσέσσθω); and 3) those who oppose (ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος/οἱ

[96] Engberg-Pedersen, 'Politics', 168.
[97] What follows is indebted to the analyses of R.H. Stein, 'The Argument of Romans 13:1-7', *NovT* 31.4 (1989), 325-43, and Tellbe, *Paul*, 174-5.

ἀνθεστηκότες) the governing authority.[98] The appeal for everyone to be subject to the ruling authorities is based on two reasons. The first is a theological reason: God appoints the authority and opposition against them equates to opposition against God (13.1b-2). The second reason is more practical and shifts to the language of diatribe[99] as the pronouns change to second person singular: the authority will punish 'you' if you do evil (13.3-4). The language of ἀγαθός/κακός is key in the entire paraenetic portion of the letter and roots this passage into that material (as noted above). Verse 5 functions as a transitional hinge between the general argument of the passage and the particular issue raised in verses 6-7. It draws the argument to a head with the inferential conjunction διό in verse 5 and a restatement of the appeal to submit, within the framework of a 'not only (οὐ μόνον) on account of wrath, but also (ἀλλὰ καί) on account of conscience' as the rationale for the practice of paying taxes in verse 6.[100] The opening phrase διὰ τοῦτο γάρ in verse 6 draws the practical application of the appeal, arguments and warnings of verses 1-4 to a climax with the conclusion: 'you therefore pay taxes'.[101] Verse 6 reiterates the first and third arguments (i.e., the authorities are *God's* servants and devote themselves to promoting good and restraining evil). The entire passage is drawn to a close in verse 7 with the second imperative, ἀπόδοτε, and the specific appeal to 'pay all that is due', whether it is direct or indirect taxes,[102] fear, or honour.[103]

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[98] J.I.H. McDonald, 'Romans 13.1-7: A Test Case for New Testament Interpretation', *NTS* 35 (1989), 540-49, at 542.

[99] Paul's shift to second person singular, the utilization of an imaginary interlocutor and his use of a question indicate diatribe style; cf. Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*, 396. See also S.K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 84.

[100] The οὐ μόνον...ἀλλὰ καὶ construction occurs regularly in the letter in order to press home Paul's rhetorical point (cf. 1.32; 4.12, 16; 5.3, 11; 8.23; 9.10, 24; 16.4). In this instance, Paul offsets the negative appeal to wrath with the positive appeal to conscience indicating that 'a Christian's political conduct should not be motivated by fear alone', Käsemann, *Romans*, 358; cf. Dunn, *Romans*, 2.765. For detailed discussions on Paul's understanding of 'conscience' see C.A. Pierce, *Conscience in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1955) and M.E. Thrall, 'The Pauline Use of SUNEIDESIS', *NTS* 14 (1967), 118-25.

[101] The indicative reading of τελεῖτε is preferred over the imperatival reading in light of the γάρ in v. 6 that would be inexplicable if it were an imperative; cf. C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 2 Volumes* ICC (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 2.668. See also Dunn, *Romans*, 2.766; Porter, 'Romans 13:1-7', 134. Moo, *Romans*, 804, adds that 'Paul almost always uses this word [γάρ] to introduce the ground or explanation of a previous statement'.

[102] Gk. φόρος = Lat. *tributum*, the direct taxation from tribute; Gk. τέλος = Lat. *portoria*, the indirect taxes from custom duties; cf. *OCD* 1228, 1551. On the question of Roman Christians and their need to pay tribute, see T.M. Coleman, 'Binding Obligations in Romans 13:7: A Semantic Field and Social Context', *TynBul* 48 (1997), 307-27 and J.N. Bailey, 'Paul's Political Paraenesis in Romans 13:1-7', *ResQ* 46.1 (2004), 11-28.

[103] Coleman, 'Binding Obligations', 315-25, argues convincingly that φόβος and τιμή are best understood as obligations of respect (φόβος) towards the *office* of political leadership (e.g., the

In light of this a number of important observations for our study can be made. The first observation is elementary, but significant: nowhere in the entire passage is Rome, the emperor, or any individual Roman office ever mentioned – they are simply part of the undifferentiated ἐξουσίαι. On this glaring silence L.E. Keck writes:

> One should not overlook what [Rom 13.1-7] does *not* say....Though the letter was sent to believers in Rome, neither the city nor its role as the center of imperial power is even alluded to; nor is the emperor (Nero, then still popular) mentioned....The Roman Empire, whether as a whole or in any of its particulars, is not evaluated, neither denounced nor celebrated....Paul gives no hint of the "God *or* Caesar" issue....when one views what is said in these verses together with what is not said, one is struck by its pragmatic, minimalist character.[104]

Thus far, it has been assumed that the generic, undifferentiated reference to the ἐξουσίαι refers to its common political meaning of 'governing authorities'.[105] Although some scholars[106] have suggested these ἐξουσίαι refer to angelic beings, the present consensus is that they should be regarded as human political authorities. Several key arguments favour this interpretation. While ἐξουσία has a wide semantic range – e.g., freedom of choice, power, ruling power, bearer of ruling authority (human or angelic)[107] – and the term can be used by Paul to refer to angelic beings, when it does carry this meaning in Paul and elsewhere in the NT it is paired with ἀρχή/δύναμις/κυριότης.[108] Furthermore, within its immediate context Paul employs a variety of terms drawn from Greco-Roman political language in Rom 13.1-

emperor, his officials, civil magistrates) and honour (τιμή) towards these individuals for their *actions*. For further discussion on the social obligations towards the emperor and civic officials see R. Saller, 'Poverty, Honor and Obligations in Imperial Rome', *Criterion* 37 (1998), 12-20 and J.E. Lendon, *Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 30-175.

[104] L.E. Keck, *Romans* ANTC (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 319-20.

[105] As it is used, for example, in Luke 12.11; Plutarch, *Phil.* 17.7; Josephus, *War* 2.350.

[106] The earliest proponents of this position appear to be K.L. Schmidt, 'Das Gegenüber von Kirche und Staat in der Gemeinde des Neuen Testaments', *TBl* 16 (1937), 1-16; idem, 'Zum theologischen Briefwechsel zwischen Karl Barth und Gerhard Kittel', *TBl* 13 (1934), 328-34 and Günther Dehn, 'Engel und Obrigkeit: Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis von Römer 13,1-7', in *Theologische Aufsätze, Karl Barth, zum 50. Geburtstag*, ed. E. Wolf (Munich: Kaiser, 1936), 100-09. The most significant advocate of this position is O. Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1957), 50-70, 95-114; see also K. Barth, *Church and State*, trans. G.R. Howe (London: SCM Press, 1939), 29-30 and W. Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 45-7. C. Morrison, *The Powers That Be: Earthly Rulers and Demonic Powers in Romans 13.1-7* (London: SCM Press, 1960), 25-39, attempts a middle position that understands the ἐξουσίαι to include both human and angelic agencies; cf. G.B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 22-6. Initially, Cranfield followed Morrison's position, but changed his view when he wrote his commentary; cf. *Romans*, 659.

[107] See BAGD, 352-3; W. Foerster, 'ἔξεστιν κτλ.', *TDNT* 2 (1964), 562-66.

[108] 1 Cor 15.24; cf. Eph 1.21; 3.10; 6.12; Col. 1.16; 2.10, 15; 1 Pet 3.22.

7 alongside his references to ἐξουσία/ι.[109] Finally, it seems unlikely that Paul would expect Roman Christians to submit to angelic powers or pay them taxes. In the end, these governing authorities most certainly include *Imperial* authorities, including the Emperor, but Paul chooses to describe them as part of the undifferentiated finite, political powers that derive their existence from God.

This leads to a second observation: it is God who sustains and authorises the political authorities. While the emperor and his political subordinates go casually unnamed in the passage, God is mentioned six times. Political authorities may be feared and honoured, but this is qualified by the fact they are, according to Paul, *servants* of God. This 'god' is not Jupiter, Mars or Apollo but the same God and father of the Lord Jesus who takes a primary role in the entire letter.[110] In this sense the Roman Christians are not unimportant subjects in relationship to the empire, rather all political authorities are appointed and exist under the God whom Roman believers call 'Abba' and the God who calls them his adopted sons, his children (Rom 8.14-17). Three inter-relationships – πᾶσα ψυχή, ἐξουσίαι and ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος – may give shape to the passage, but these relationships are subject to God's ordering. In the end submission to the governing authorities is an expression of respect for them and an ultimate submission to the God who stands behind those authorities.

Thirdly, the point of the instruction is to shape conduct not provide a theology of the state. As such, Paul does not speculate about situations when rulers are unjust or what those under their authority should do in such cases.[111] Rather, he reflects a common understanding of the limited but useful role of the state operating under authority appointed by God, as reflected in Jewish tradition.[112] Overall the tone of rhetoric is subdued even though Paul employs diatribe in verses 3-4 and brackets the passage with imperatives. The subdued tone suggests that it does not appear that the

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[109] E.g., διαταγή (v. 2), διάκονος (v.4), λειτουργός (v.6). See A. Strobel, 'Zum Verständnis von Röm 13', *ZNW* 47 (1956), 67-93; idem, 'Furcht, wem Furcht gebührt: Zum profangriechischen Hindergrund von Rm. 13.7', *ZNW* 55 (1964), 58-62.

[110] It is well known that the incidence of θεός language is higher in Romans than in any other of the authentic Paulines, except for 1 Thessalonians. See R.C. Beaton, 'God-Language in Romans: An Analysis of Explicit and Implicit [THEOS] Statements in a Proposed Historical Context' (MCS Thesis, Regent College, 1994).

[111] Porter, 'Pauline Political Rhetoric', 138-9, argues that it is implied that obedience should only be required of Christians by 'just' authorities. He bases this on his conclusion that the modifying participle ὑπερεχούσαις (Rom 13.1) for governing authorities denotes only those who are 'qualitatively superior' with regard to justice (122-4). Porter's argument is not satisfying since it is difficult to conceive a situation where Paul would encourage Christians to withhold tribute and/or indirect taxes from 'unjust' or 'qualitatively *inferior*' political authorities.

[112] See the following discussion in 5.5.3.1 below. See also Horrell, *Solidarity*, 255-6.

Roman Christians are refusing to submit or pay taxes.[113] That is, in terms of their conduct they are exhorted to keep doing what they are already doing as expressed in verse 6. Paul assumes that the Roman Christians will pay what they owe and that their interaction with those to whom they 'owe' will be positive.

Another active and positive stance in the passage may also be reflected in verses 3-4. Two recent studies by B. Winter[114] and P. Towner[115] examine the possibility that in these verses Paul encourages Roman Christians 'to seek the welfare of the city' of Rome by becoming public benefactors. Their point is that Romans 13.1-7 reflects part of a broader program of Christian engagement in the world. Whereas others point out Paul's usage of typical Greco-Roman terminology from the political (vv. 1,3), legal (v.4) and taxation revenue systems (vv.6-7), they point to the language of civic benefaction (vv.3-4). Winter lays the groundwork of the position by a detailed examination of epigraphic and literary evidence and concludes that the language of τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐργόν, τὸ ἀγαθόν, and ἔπαινος in 13.3-4 mirrors the language for public praising of public benefactors. Winter argues that whereas some might want to argue for Christians keeping a low profile in the city, the correlation between the praising of public benefactors and the language of 13.3-4 is an example of Paul highlighting Christian benefaction. He asserts that Paul's encouragement to active, public participation by Christians in the political life of the city is supported by 'hard epigraphic and literary evidence and their clear relationship to the political context of Rom 13.1-7'.[116]

Towner follows Winter's argument for the most part but diverges from Winter in arguing that Paul's instructions in verses 3-4 are not merely directed toward wealthy Roman Christians who were to serve the city as benefactors and demonstrate the Christian community's commitment to society. Towner suggests that Paul's shift from third person inclusive address to the second person singular in 13.3-4 is not due

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[113] Although the assertion 'you pay (τελεῖτε, read in the indicative mood) tribute' in v.6 may suggest that some believers in Rome are not doing so, the casual tone and the infrequency of the remark does not suggest Paul is overly concerned about this issue. See criteria for mirror-reading in J.M.G. Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case', *JSNT* 31 (1987), 73-93, at 84-5.
[114] B.W. Winter, 'The Public Honouring of Christian Benefactors: Romans 13.3-4 and 1 Peter 2.14-15', *JSNT* 34 (1988), 87-103; idem, *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens* First Century Christians in the Graeco-Roman World (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 26-40.
[115] P.H. Towner, 'Romans 13:1-7 and Paul's Missiological Perspective: A Call to Political Quietism or Transformation?', in *Romans and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, eds. S.K. Soderlund and N.T. Wright (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 149-69.
[116] Winter, 'Benefactors', 95.

to Paul shifting his remarks from all Roman Christians to a few wealthy individuals but rather to the switch to diatribe style. 'In this case, even where the second person singular is used, all believers continue to be addressed. And if this is so, not only must Paul reshape the convention [of public benefaction] in order to apply it to the entire Christian community, but its application would also suggest a surprising reversal of values'.[117] In this sense, Paul co-opts the benefaction convention as the obligation of all. He concludes that this kind of purpose goes beyond the so-called political quietism often advocated in this passage. Towner writes:

> The church's (presumed) position of weakness and what we know of the benefaction convention suggests that Paul intends to deliver at least a mild shock in this call to action. A convention normally associated with the powerful "haves" is co-opted for the "have-nots." For this, the conventional meaning of "doing the good thing" requires redefinition, and the use of the concept throughout Romans provides the direction, with 12:2, 9 and 15:2 leading the way...."the good" is to be understood as service on behalf of others, which in this context of a discussion about public responsibility finds practical expression in the paying of taxes and respect for those in authority....But as we allow theological, literary, and cultural backgrounds to converge, the implications of the teaching for the church and society become even more radical. The remapping of domains charted in Romans...determines that these mundane acts of responsibility are consecrated as service....The church – powerless, poor, marginalized, and without any official political status in the empire – is directed to participate in the public life of society through humble service, taking the role...spiritually and in defiance of appearances, of the honorable benefactor.[118]

If Towner's suggestion of Paul's co-option of Roman benefaction convention is correct, then we have an instance of what post-colonial theory refers to as 'hybridity'.[119] In this case Paul is encouraging his subaltern have-not co-religionists in Rome to adapt the mores of the Roman colonial power and to do so in a way that mimics their notion of doing the 'good' but in a manner that reapplies the convention. Instead of benefaction being the purview of the few powerful 'haves', Paul redefines benefaction as the role of all Christians in Rome, including the 'have-nots'.[120] Further, this positive interaction is in keeping with the overall argument of chapters 12-13 where Paul advocates a positive, public engagement with insiders and outsiders. The

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[117] Towner, 'Romans', 166.
[118] Towner, 'Romans', 167-8.
[119] Marshall, 'Hybridity', 172, also identifies hybridity at work in Rom 13.1-7 but he does so by reading all of Rom 13 as 'interstitial agency' whereby Paul is urging his audience toward 'acquiescence and subordination' to Rome as 'an acceptable price for their stability to support his radical mission'.
[120] P. Lampe, *Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries: From Paul to Valentinus*, trans. M. Steinhauser (London: Continuum, 2003), 42, 48-66, concludes that the majority of first century Christians lived in Trastevere and the Appian Way outside of the Porta Capena. Those from the lowest social standing inhabited both quarters, i.e., 'have-not' areas of the city of Rome.

primary point of this engagement is missional: Roman Christians assume the role of 'patrons' in service to those around them. These chapters represent a constructive engagement by Christians, not a sectarian or withdrawn stance, with regards to the social structures in Rome. What would be the primary contact of Christians in Rome with 'authorities'? It is taxation that would bring them into direct contact with the government of the day for Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome as much as it does for Christians living in Judea or Galilee. The issue of taxation was highlighted by Josephus (see discussion below in 5.5.3.1), where not paying taxes is one of the few marks that would draw the attention of authorities, not whether one declares another god or failed messiah as 'Lord'. Paul does not appear to promote the sectarianism and exclusivity of a conversionist sect,[121] i.e. a deviant religious movement characterized by tensions with society.[122] Based on our observations of Romans 12-13, it is difficult to argue that Paul promotes disengagement with the world and its political structures, at least as far as those structures impinge on non-elite Christians living in Rome. Paul does, however, promote disengagement from sin, the flesh, and the 'body of death' (Rom 5-6). Paul's description of social engagements reflects a complex scenario of rejection (e.g., of sin and its practices, Rom 1.18-32), adaptation (Christian benefaction), maintenance (fear/honour governing authorities and pay taxes) and acceptance (submit to governing authorities) of certain aspects of Greco-Roman values. Paul appears to expect the Christians in Rome to be culturally engaged but also culturally wise.[123]

5.5.3. Social-Political Circumstances behind Rom 13.1-7

Although there are good reasons to accept Romans 13.1-7 as a significant component of the logic and argument of Romans 12-13, this still leaves the question as to why Paul raises the specific injunctions of submission to governing authorities and tax payment. While some interpreters are content with viewing these exhortations, particularly the question of taxation, as an illustration,[124] a variety of scenarios have been offered in an attempt to provide a specific socio-political

[121] E.g., the position advocated by Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 35-9, 77-80 and MacDonald, *The Pauline Churches*, 163-66.
[122] See the typologies of Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 22-23.
[123] Cf. Harland, *Associations*, 199.
[124] See the examples provided by Dunn, *Romans*, 2.766.

background for the passage. In what follows, I will not attempt to provide a new reconstruction. Rather, I suggest that Paul's stance toward the 'governing authorities' is in continuity with traditional Hellenistic and Jewish (including Josephus') perspectives about engagement with foreign rulers, but that this posture is secondary to his broader and deeper vision for believers' interaction with the world, including the political world.

5.5.3.1. Greco-Roman and Jewish Understanding of the State

Several studies have ably demonstrated that Romans 13.1-7 is steeped in Hellenistic political terminology[125] and mirrors traditional Greek and Roman political perspectives on the dual role of government to 'praise' those who do good and punish those who do evil.[126] As mentioned above, Engberg-Pedersen has recently drawn out the similarities that exist between Rom 13.1-7 and Seneca's picture of the emperor in the treatise *De Clementia* 1.1-4.[127] He identifies three similarities between Paul and Seneca and their understanding of the state: First, for Paul, the governing authorities are appointed (τάσσω) by God (Rom 13.1); for Seneca, Nero has been chosen (*electus*) as the gods' vicar on earth (*Clem* 1.2). Secondly, for Paul, the governing authorities praise the good and punish the evil-doers (Rom 13.3); for Seneca, Nero is the sovereign arbiter over life and death, good things and bad things (*Clem* 1.2). Thirdly, for Paul, the 'servant of God' does not bear the sword in vain (Rom 13.4); for Seneca, the many thousand swords (*gladii*) that restrain peace, but at present remain sheathed,[128] do so on Nero's command (*Clem* 1.3). Engberg-Pedersen notes that Seneca's portrait is qualified by the caveat that it is an idealized picture of what the 'state of the world *should* be' rather than what actually is.[129] He also notes a qualification on the state in Romans 13.8, a point that will be picked up below. For

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[125] See especially Strobel, 'Röm 13'; idem, 'Furcht'; Delling, *TDNT* 8.36, 523-4; Blumenfeld, *Paul*, 391-5.

[126] Unnik, 'Lob' 336-40, draws out these parallels between the language in Rom 13.3-4 and a broad range of ancient writers (i.e., Lysias, Xenophon, Demosthenes, Diodorus Siculus, Philo, Josephus, Dio).

[127] Engberg-Pedersen, 'Politics', 167-9.

[128] Elliott, 'Romans 13:1-7', 203, attempts to draw a sharp distinction between the imperial propaganda that vaunts the theme of the 'idle sword' under Nero (cf. Einsiedeln Eclogue 25-31) in contrast to Paul's 'testy declaration that the authority "does not bear the sword in vain"....The imperial sword is *not* idle: it continues to threaten destruction and bloodshed'. Whether or not Paul was aware of this distinction seems to be inconsequential since in both Seneca and Paul the point is that the mere mention of the presence of the sword elicits a warning to those who would contravene state authority.

[129] Engberg-Pedersen, 'Politics', 169.

now, it is sufficient to note that Paul's view of the state is consonant with certain streams within Greco-Roman political tradition.

The same broad point can be made about the manner in which Paul's attitudes reflect similar principles towards the state to those found in Jewish tradition. First, there is a broad consensus that political rulers are given their power by God (cf. Prov 8.15-16; Jer 27.5-7 (34.5-7 [LXX]); Isa 45.1-3; Dan 2.21, 36-8; 4.17; Sir 10.4; *Let. Aris.* 224; Wis 6.3). Secondly, acknowledgement of foreign rule must go beyond begrudging obeisance but reflect honour and constructive advancement of their welfare. In Jeremiah's words this is expressed as seeking peace for their land and praying for their prosperity (Jer 29.7 (36.7 [LXX]); cf. Ezra 6.10; Baruch 1.10-13; 1 Macc 7.33; *Let. Aris.* 45; *Aboth* 3.2; *Tos. Sukka* 4). When Philo described the Jewish nation's piety towards Rome he was following this long-standing tradition:

> In all matters in which piety is enjoined and permitted by the laws my nation [i.e., the Jewish nation] stood not a whit behind any other either in Asia or in Europe, in its prayers, its erection of votive offerings, its number of sacrifices, not only of those offered at general national feasts but in the perpetual and daily rites through which is declared their piety, not so much with mouth and tongue as in intentions formed in the secrecy of the soul by those who do not tell you that they love their Caesar but love him in very truth (*Legat.*, 280; cf. 140, 152, 157, 317, 356-7).

In light of this evidence, Paul's comments on the 'governing authorities' both reflect similarities and exhibit several notable differences from perspectives within Jewish tradition. Paul's observation that 'there is no authority except that which God has established' (Rom 13.1) is not out of step with his tradition or near contemporaries like Josephus who declared 'no one comes to rule/authority apart from God' (οὐ γὰρ δίχα θεοῦ περιγενέσθαι τινὶ τὸ ἄρχειν, *War* 2.140; cf. *Ant.* 12.406; 15.374; *Apion* 2.76-77) – whether it be individual rulers (e.g., Vespasian, see *War* 4.622-9) or empires (cf. 5.367). While Paul is decidedly minimalist in his description of how and why God establishes political authorities when set against the likes of Josephus (and Philo), he still falls within a common pattern of opinion. For both of them, as for many of their fellow Jews, God is the primary agency in the universe and it is by God's power that kingdoms are established.

If Paul's opinion on God's providential oversight of political authority is in continuity with Josephus and other strands of Jewish tradition, then it is not surprising that he reflects another aspect of this tradition when he encourages Roman Christians to give honour to governing authorities. In comparison to other Jewish writers, there is nothing exceptional in Paul's exhortation ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς...τῷ τὸν φόβον τὸν φόβον, τῷ τὴν τιμὴν τὴν τιμήν (Rom 13.7). It is notable that while Paul has no 'sacrifices for the welfare of Rome' to appeal to as do Josephus (*War* 2.197; cf. *Apion* 2.75-8) and Philo (see above), he does not even mention offering prayers for the emperor or civic rulers.[130] It is interesting, however, that when it comes to relating to foreign overlords, both Josephus and Paul bring together the notions of taxation and reverence/honour. Josephus' recurrent discussion of tribute and the injunction for the Jewish nation 'to pay taxes' suggest that this was a central issue. For example, in *War* 2.403-4 Josephus has Agrippa addressing a Jerusalem crowd on the edge of revolt because of the excesses of Florus. Agrippa warns them that a failure to pay tribute (φόρος) to Caesar is considered an act of war against the Romans. His advice is direct: τελέσετε τὴν εἰσφοράν (2.404).[131] Unfortunately, this advice was not heeded and shortly afterwards Josephus recounts that Agrippa is expelled from Jerusalem. Closely linked with the failure to pay taxes is a final incendiary act on the part of the Jewish rebels: the cessation of twice daily sacrifices (2.409)[132] which were customarily offered περὶ μὲν Καίσαρος καὶ τοῦ δήμου τῶν Ῥωμαίων (2.197). Josephus concludes that the failure to honour the Romans in this way 'laid the foundation of the war against the Romans' (2.409) in 66 CE. Josephus adds that the Jewish rulers argued vigorously against this 'strange innovation into their religion' by the rebels that opened the charge of 'impiety' (ἀσέβεια) against them (2.414). In Josephus' account there is a relationship between paying tribute and respecting the Emperor and the Roman people through daily sacrifices on their behalf.

Beyond illustrating that the nexus of divine ordering of political authorities, taxes and honour is reflected in both Josephus and Paul and that Paul shares a similar

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[130] This is different from later exhortations like 1 Tim 2.1-2.

[131] See also Josephus' speech, *War* 5.405, before the walls of Jerusalem and his plea that all that the Romans demand is 'the customary tribute (δασμός), which our fathers paid to [the Romans]' in exchange for not sacking the city, not despoiling the temple and granting to the Jews 'freedom of your families, the enjoyment of your possessions and the protection of your sacred laws' (5.406). On the other hand, in Titus' speech, the emperor upbraids the rebels for their misuse of Roman 'philanthropy' that included the permission for the Jews 'to exact tribute for God' (6.335).

[132] The tradition of offering sacrifices by the Jewish people for foreign political masters begins at least as far back as the Persian period (cf. Ezra 6.9-10; *Ant.* 11.119). There is some discrepancy on whether these sacrifices were borne at the expense of the Emperor (so Philo, *Legat.* 157, 291, 317) or the Jewish nation (so Josephus in *Apion* 2.77). In the context of *War* 2.409, Josephus reveals the sacrifices were paid for by Rome since Eleazar's point was to forbid sacrifices '*from a foreigner*'. See discussion in Barclay, *Apion*, 210n268.

political conceptual framework with Hellenistic and Jewish traditions,[133] this shared perspective blunts any argument that Paul is employing 'ironic speech' (e.g., Carter) or 'sly civility' (i.e., postcolonial readings). Paul is minimalist in his comments about governing authorities, and his exhortation to pay taxes and give honour is terse; but set against the pattern of Jewish tradition these statements are not unique and, hence, likely not an example of irony. There is nothing in the tone or content of Rom 13.1-7 to suggest Paul is using ironic discourse. There are no obvious factual or text-dependent markers to indicate to Paul's audience that he is not being straight with his speech.[134] Further, since he is writing an 'in house' letter to Christians in Rome, there is not any need for Paul to employ subtle 'audience-dependent' irony. In contrast, in the *War* Josephus must employ both text-dependent and audience-dependent irony when writing under the watchful eye of the Flavians. For example, he regularly affirms that Jerusalem was conquered on a number of occasions before Titus' victory.[135] This *is* ironic given that Titus' arch – presumably in agreement with the Flavian propaganda program to project him as a victorious general – openly declared that 'he subdued the Jewish people and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, which all generals, kings, and peoples before him had either attacked without success or left entirely unassailed'.[136]

If it is unlikely that Paul is employing ironic speech it is also doubtful whether he is advocating political subversion – the kind of subversion that may be associated with postcolonial subjects. It was suggested above that Paul's employment of the Roman notions of patronage is an example of 'hybridity' at work. That is, Paul is mimicking the mores of the colonial power and adapting them so that Christians in Rome, including the 'have-nots' (i.e., the powerless Roman Christians), are called upon to do 'the good'. But in Paul's hybrid usage the intention is not to subvert but support the outside society, whether that society responds in kind or not. Again, in saying this, it does not mean that Paul is naïve about actual miscarriages of justice or

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[133] These points are overlooked in Marshall, 'Hybridity', 170-2, but they are considerations that are important in determining Paul's 'intersititial agency'.

[134] I am indebted to Mason's distinctions on the definition, means and ends of figured speech in Greco-Roman literature of the first century in his essay, 'Figured Speech', 245-54. Mason makes an important distinction between text-dependent irony and audience-dependent irony. Contra Carter, 'Irony', Romans 13.1-7 does not fit the criteria for either type of ironic speech. I.e., there is nothing in the text itself that is indicating ironic speech nor is there any knowledge available to the audience to suggest that Paul is employing irony.

[135] I.e., Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Pompey, Sosius/Herod and Varus (cf. *War* 1.32, 138-52, 265-70, 342-56; 2.66-79).

[136] *CIL* VI, no 944

'present sufferings' at the hand of human persecutors or 'enemies', including Roman ones, as his assertions elsewhere in Romans indicate (i.e., 5.3-5; 8.18, 35; 12.14-21). Rather, it means that Paul acknowledges the limited but useful role of God-appointed government and yet relativises it against the more important 'good' behaviour of the Roman Christians. Paul identifies the specific duties expected of Christians in relation to these authorities in terms of taxation and honour, but, as we will argue below, this obligation is secondary to the primary and most significant obligation of love.

5.5.3.2. Living in Rome: Positive Engagement that is ὡς μή

Numerous attempts have been made to explain the specific socio-political background to Romans 13. Besides the scenarios described by Wengst, Elliott, Wright and Jewett, some scholars have argued that Paul's warnings were driven by his knowledge of anti-Roman sentiment in the Christian community in Rome fuelled by Jewish revolutionary tendencies.[137] Others argue that Paul is attempting to avert charismatic enthusiasm that is perverting Christian eschatology and leading to the rejection of the state.[138] Still others turn to the political tension in the late 50's in Rome over the matter of Nero's proposed tax reforms.[139] In the face of this unrest, Paul directs Romans Christians to the path of political quietism by paying their taxes and avoiding drawing any hostile attention on them.[140] Each of these positions, particularly the latter, offers interesting hypotheses towards understanding Romans 13.1-7. For the most part, each of these scenarios has Paul taking the Roman Empire seriously – and rightfully so – and advocating a Christian stance toward the state that

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[137] E.g., M. Borg, 'A New Context for Romans 13', *NTS* 19 (1972), 205-18; E. Bammel, 'Romans 13', in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day*, eds. E. Bammel and C.F.D. Moule (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 365-83; R. Barraclough, 'Romans 13:1-7: Application in Context', *Colloquiam* 17.2 (1985), 16-21. These claims are historically unlikely since, as M. Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), 412, notes 'the travails of Judaea up to 66 do not suggest a society on the brink of rebellion for sixty years. The only specific Jewish action described by any ancient writer as clearly hostile to Roman rule in general, and not just opposed to some specific act or acts of the current Roman administration, was the abortive uprising led by "the Egyptian" in the time of Felix, and on that occasion, according to Josephus, "all the people" joined the Roman governor in its suppression'.

[138] E.g., Käsemann, 'Romans 13', 209-13; idem, *Romans*, 351, 359. Käsemann's argument falters insofar as it demands a highly speculative transfer of the situation in Corinth to Rome. This position bears some similarity to that held by Ridderbos, *Paul*, 323 and Bornkamm, *Paul*, 213.

[139] Cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* 13.50-51; Suetonius, *Nero* 10.1.

[140] J. Friedrich, W. Pöhlmann, and P. Stuhlmacher, 'Zur historischen Situation und Intention von Röm 13,1-7', *ZTK* 73 (1976), 131-66; Dunn, *Romans*, 1.liv; cf. idem, 'Romans 13:1-7', 60; Coleman, 'Obligations', 309-15; Tellbe, *Paul*, 177-82.

is compliant, unobtrusive and quietistic. Unfortunately, the proposed backgrounds are speculative and the suggestion that Paul is advocating a quietist posture for Roman Christians does not fully account for the tone or direction of the text.[141] First, there is no suggestion in the tone of Rom 13.6-7 by way of emphasis that Paul understands the Roman Christians to be doing anything other than paying their taxes. In doing so, the Roman Christians are merely engaging in one of the few, direct avenues of contact individuals living in areas like Trastevere and along the Appian Way would have had with civic authorities. Second, while agreeing with the argument that Paul proposes compliance, not subversion, toward governing authorities, I contend that his position goes beyond quietism. I am inclined to follow a position that understands the direction of Rom 12-13, on the one hand, to be encouraging an active, positive and public engagement with Roman society, and, on the other hand, to be viewing the state as a useful but limited component of creation set against the broader canvas of God's dealing with the world. The former aspects have been drawn out above; the latter assertion relies on an observation related to Rom 13.8-14.

In 13.8, Paul writes 'Owe no one anything, other than to love one another; for the one who loves the other fulfils the law'. The 'debt' of love picks up the theme of obligation in 13.7. Initially, Paul's logic in 13.8 follows naturally from that in the previous verse by repeating the injunction: render to everyone whatever is their due so that no one has a claim on you (v.7)....do not owe anyone anything. But he then adds a qualification in the next phrase that jars with this logic: do not owe anyone anything except[142] to love one another. Engberg-Pedersen suggests that this qualifier 'pulls the carpet completely away from a univocal reading of 13.1-7.'[143] Paul affirms the accepted view of the divinely appointed ruler as the background to 13.7 as a valid

[141] Tellbe, *Paul*, 177-82, summarizes the strength of the 'quietist' thesis proposed by Friedrich et al. The thesis is that Paul placed emphasis on paying taxes in Rom 13.1-7 because he was aware of social unrest in Rome in the late 50's due to taxation issues (see Tacitus, *Ann.* 13.50.1; Suetonius *Ner.* 10.1) and the precarious position of Jews (and Christians identified with the Jews) in Rome at that time since Claudius' expulsion edict in 49 CE. A key point in their argument is that Jews, with their special privilege of the Temple tax, were particularly vulnerable to charges of tax evasion. This reconstruction, while interesting, is not entirely satisfying. First, it requires that Paul possesses intimate knowledge about *publicani* tax complaints in Rome at a specific time in 58 CE. This seems possible, but unlikely. More importantly, the thesis also presupposes a vulnerable social situation for Jews living in Rome in the 50's. This assumption has recently been challenged by Gruen, *Diaspora*, 15-41.

[142] See Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.674 on the preference of the inclusive reading of εἰ μὴ ('except to') rather than the antithetical reading.

[143] Engberg-Pedersen, 'Politics', 170; cf. Marshall, 'Hybridity', 171.

obligation *within that framework*. But 'there is *more* to politics than that. What more? Answer: life *within* the group (13.8-10, taking up 12.1-13) and life in the light of the coming salvation (13.11-14), both of which have an entirely different quality to them than that other life'.[144]

Engberg-Pedersen's suggestion, that Paul qualifies the importance of the state and expands his field of view, picks up on a point that several other scholars have made. The observation is that Paul's exhortation for believers to love 'one another' and 'the other' indicates an attitude similar to Paul's famous notion of ὡς μή ('as not') from 1 Cor 7.29-31.[145] Obviously, the parallel with 1 Cor 7 does not lie with the use of ὡς μή language but the manner in which Paul establishes his contrast. In this sense, Paul contrasts the duties that can be fulfilled in one field – pay your taxes, and then forget about it – and then carry on with the duties that remain (the outstanding debt of love). 'In other words, do it 'as if not'. Or: do it, but without paying any special attention to it. That is *not* what *matters*. *By contrast*, fulfil your obligation to love'.[146] When Paul places political powers on the map with God and the church, obligations towards the state are kept but, having been kept, he moves on to the broader and more important obligation of fulfilling the debt of love toward 'one another' within the people of God (important for chaps 14-15) and toward 'the other' with whom a Christian may find themselves in relationship. As Engberg-Pedersen expresses it, Paul's focus is 'bi-focal' – that is, his vision attends to political matters on one level, and to matters that go beyond politics on another.

I would, however, aver from Engberg-Pedersen in his assertion that the debt of love that Paul writes about is intended only internally within the group of the Christian community; it seems that his appeal to love of neighbour encompasses all whom one would come into contact with. While the reference to loving 'one another (ἀλλήλους)' in 13.8a at least points to fellow followers of Christ,[147] there is good

[144] Engberg-Pedersen, 'Politics', 170.
[145] In addition to the recent argument by Engberg-Pedersen, 'Politics', 169-71, this has also been suggested by Riekkinen, *Römer 13*, 215-16; J. Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul*, trans. D. Hollander (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 53-4; and W.E. Pilgrim, *Uneasy Neighbors: Church and State in the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 32.
[146] Engberg-Pedersen, 'Politics', 171.
[147] Similar 'one another' sayings occur throughout Romans (1.12; 12.5, 10, 16; 14.13, 19; 15.5, 7, 14; 16.16) and refer to fellow Christians. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.674-5, argues that even this is not limited only to fellow-Christians: 'it is much more likely that, having just said Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε, Paul meant τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν in an all-embracing sense'.

reason to understand the reference to 'the other'[148] in 13.8b as pointing to 'others' – Christian or not – with whom one comes into contact. Further, the comment on κακὸν οὐκ ἐργάζεται in 13.10 points back to 12.17, 21 and the mention of 'neighbour' (πλησίον, 13.10) suggests a broad context that includes any people Roman Christians may come into daily contact with in the course of life.[149] Paul is encouraging active,[150] not passive, engagement with the world by co-opting the system of benefaction so that 'doing good' is the obligation of the entire community, and then emphasising the broader and more important obligation of loving 'one another' and 'the other'. Therefore, Paul stakes out a position about civic powers that is rooted in Jewish diaspora tradition and incorporates Hellenistic conventional language. But his ethic for the community goes beyond these general conventions. His injunction of 'doing the good thing' as benefactors in service to others – which finds practical expression in paying taxes – encourages the politically powerless, marginalised and, mostly, poor Church in Rome to engage in service done in 'love for neighbour'. Paul is aware, of course, that this service may also take place potentially in the midst of difficult, sacrificial service (5.3-5; 8. 31-9; 12.17, 21). The realm of politics is accepted as a part of God's good, created order, but his Christian ethical field of vision includes more than politics as Christians live ὡς μή since what genuinely matters lies beyond politics.

The motivation for this positive, loving engagement is provided in 13.11-14: καὶ τοῦτο εἰδότες τὸν καιρόν (13.11). This reflects Paul's appeals to the Corinthian Christians (ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος ἐστίν....παράγει γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου; 1 Cor 7.29, 31) where the motivation for Christian behaviour is eschatologically based on the nearness of the parousia. Along with this reference to the parousia is a cluster of apocalyptic contrasts: night/day, darkness/light, waking/sleeping. But, as was mentioned earlier, the dualities that Paul expresses do not stress the contrast between insiders and outsiders.[151] Instead, the dualities are intended to flag up the contrast between decent behaviour and the desires of the flesh

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[148] Moo, *Romans*, 814.n20, makes two significant remarks about τὸν ἕτερον: 1) that the article specifies a particular 'other' person in contact with a Christian (cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.676; Dunn, *Romans*, 2.776-7) and 2) ἕτερος suggests distinction or difference (cf. Barrett, *Romans*, 250).
[149] Dunn, *Romans*, 2.777; Thompson, *Clothed*, 139; Adams, *Constructing*, 208.
[150] See McDonald, 'Romans', 544 and Porter, 'Romans 13' 139.
[151] See Adams, *Constructing*, 202-3. Adams points out that this is unlike the usage of similar dualistic language in 1 Thess 5.1-11 where the contrasts are employed to distinguish between those within the Christian community and the 'others' (5.6) who are outside and belong to the 'darkness'.

(13.13). The intent, then, is not aimed at emphasising a social dualism between the Christians and non-Christian society but to shape behaviour that will 'win the *approval* of outsiders'.[152] Further, it supports Paul's earlier theological emphasis on redemption and restoration of creation and provides the *modus operandi* for those who live in the present, groaning world and await, in hope, the glory that will be revealed in them (cf. 8.18-25). But, like Paul's call in 1 Cor 7 for a ὡς μή attitude toward existence in this world, this suggests that the state structures of this world are not part of the permanent and ultimate structures of eschatological existence. Rather, Christians are invited to participate and invest in love because love is of permanent, eschatological value (cf. 1 Cor 13.13).

Paul's vision for Christian ethics in Rom 12-13 is broad and is not exclusively aimed at historical circumstances in the Rome of 57/58 CE. As important as these circumstances may be for Roman Christians, his instructions are general, though not abstract, in nature. The reason why Paul holds such a broad and encompassing vision is two-fold. First, his exhortations are shaped and motivated by apocalyptic realities (cf. 12.1-2 and 13.11-14). Second, as important as any interaction with state powers may be for Paul this is of secondary importance to the more significant clash of powers described in 5.12-21 and 8.31-39. These latter powers are broader than Roman political power and they are real historical powers for Paul.

5.6. Conclusion

While no analysis of Romans can be conclusive, a strong case can be made for a reading of Romans 13.1-7 that fits within the argument of the letter and understands this passage as offering a realistic and positive engagement with the state and its agents. This reading holds that Paul realistically assesses the civic ἐξουσίαι as capable of contributing to God's good order of the world and that the Christian relationship with them should be positive. There is nothing within the logic that does not fit a plausible historical reconstruction of realistic political participation for first century Roman Christians. Broadly, their primary contact with civic authorities through taxation should lead them to continue to pay what is asked of them, any honour that is demanded of them should be offered willingly – and all of this should be extended from their vantage point as 'have-nots' who are doing 'the good' for

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[152] Adams, *Constructing*, 203.

society. In short, if it is possible, as far as it depends on them, Romans Christians are commended to live at peace with everyone (12.18) and, more importantly, they must love their neighbour and 'the other' in their midst.

This reading of Romans intends to clarify the questions we raised at the beginning of the chapter. First, what judgment does this reading bear with respect to the suggestion of a hidden 'code' of critique in Romans held by the Paul v. Empire coalition? Without re-addressing the issue of Paul's 'political' terminology (e.g., 'gospel', 'lord', 'peace'; see 4.2.2), it exposes several shortcomings in this position. The fundamental problem with the argument for a 'coded critique' existing in Rom 1-12 is that it self-destructs against a reading of Rom 13.1-7 that can account for its place within the logic of the letter as a whole and within 12.1-15.6 in particular. The evidence that Paul's view toward the civic authorities falls within a general pattern of Jewish opinion toward foreign rulers since the time of the Babylonian exile further substantiates this. But in suggesting that Paul's comments about the state fit within the logic of the letter and within Jewish tradition does not imply that Paul is naïve with regard to the negative force pagan rulers can play amongst the many dangers Christians may encounter. Paul's positive stance toward society certainly reckons with the fact that Christians live in a world where they share the sufferings of Christ (8.17). Romans 8 does *not* suggest that he intends to shield believers from the reality of dangerous forces arrayed against them (8.38-9). The argument for code also fails in providing a reasonable explanation why Paul would write so allusively about the Roman Empire when writing to Christian 'insiders' at a time when Nero, or his officials, had little interest in the Christian community. The code-approach demands that Paul writes to insiders more cryptically about the Roman Empire and its ideology than the likes of Josephus who wrote for a pagan, Roman audience, post 70 CE – an audience that could include Vespasian and Titus amongst its potential readers.

If Paul is not interested in writing a coded critique of the Roman Empire, this leads to our second primary question: What does Romans indicate about Paul's vision of reality and his understanding of the place of God's people in the history of the world? What my reading of Romans suggests is that Paul is primarily concerned with the constitution of the people of God and their existence within the world as God's people renewed in mind and conduct. There is some indication that Paul has a salvation-history vision of reality but my reading of Rom 5.12-21 suggests that this is secondary to a 'cosmological-apocalyptic' view. From this perspective Paul understands the 'present critical time' (ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ, 3.26; cf. 8.18, 13.11) to be shaped by the Christ event that cracks history in two; it is the fissure that divides time between the age of Flesh, Sin and Death and the age of Christ and the renewed Spirit. This vantage point allows Paul to conceive of the fundamental antitheses and lines of conflict not in terms of threats from the Roman Empire or in competition with the 'golden age' of Caesar, but in confrontation with the power of Sin and Death – powers that continue to exert their influence in the present overlap of the ages. As God's people incorporated into the new humanity where grace reigns through the Lord Christ, they are no longer to allow Death to have mastery over them or permit Sin to reign in their mortal bodies (6.9, 11). As God's renewed people, their behaviour toward both Christians and external society is to be motivated by a love that understands 'the present time' as one when 'salvation is nearer now than when [they] first believed' (13.11). This does not mean that Christians are not under threat by spiritual powers that would try to enslave them again or from the experience of suffering at the hands of human agents. It does mean that no power, spiritual or human, will separate them from God's love or exclude them from eschatological vindication as God's reconstituted people in a renewed world.

If in Paul's vision of reality the significant power conflicts exist between Christ and Death, Sin, etc., it should not be surprising that when he does come to write about the Roman Christians' responsibility to civic authorities his comments are pragmatic and minimalist in character. Paul does not provide a theology of the state in Romans 13.1-7, but he does indicate where civic authorities are situated in his understanding of the world: they are agents ordered by God to be his servants for justice in the world. Paul does not develop a response to how one should act when they are not just, but he is hardly naïve to the capriciousness of Roman rule and their projections of power. He simply does not view them as significant on his map of reality beyond the limited role that they operate in the world. Again, this is an essentially traditional Jewish diaspora view of political states. God establishes them with a useful but limited role in creation. There is no anxiety about Rome. In fact, neither Rome nor the Emperor is even mentioned in the passage. To be sure, Paul is concerned that believers pay their taxes, but there is nothing in the rhetoric to suggest that they are not already doing so. In so far as the newly constituted people of God relate to the external society around them, they are encouraged to be engaged with them in a peaceful, orderly, and loving way.

Finally, where does Paul perceive God's power to be at work, how does he place the Christ event within this framework, and what implications does this have in relation to Roman power? Paul's primary focus is the power of God that is at work in the gospel. Indeed, Paul conceives of his gospel calling as making him a 'debtor' (ὀφειλέτης, 1.14) to humanity in the widest possible terms. This motivation, however, is instilled in Paul not in spite of the gospel but because of the gospel. That is because his focus is the gospel and what God is doing to defeat the ultimate powers that threaten humanity – the power of Sin and Death. Paul's priorities are not the priorities of the Paul v. Empire coalition. His priorities do not include ranging the power of the gospel of Christ against the gospel of Caesar. The power of the Roman Empire does indeed loom large in the background of Paul's day and it would be foolish to deny Paul's knowledge of imperial assertions. But the breadth and depth of the important enemies of the gospel of God and the 'reign' they cling to relativises any claim Rome or her Caesars may make. Paul's subversiveness of empire – if there is one at all – is in not granting it a prominent or significant role in the cosmic conflicts he envisages. For Paul the fundamental reality of consequence is that reality which has been shaped by the Christ event. In this sense, if it is a critique at all against the Roman Empire it is an oblique or diagonal critique.[153] That is, it is neither directly concerned with nor disinterested in the Roman Empire. Paul is certainly not ignorant of the projections and presuppositions of imperial power, but his argument only intersects with 'governing authorities' insofar as they may bear on a larger and (to him) more important argument. The significance of Rome for Paul extends only as far that God has ordained it to rule and play its role like any other part of created, human institutions. Rome may be co-opted, like any individual or human institution, by the over-arching powers of Sin and Death. But in the end, it is not merely evil expressed in the Roman Empire that Paul conceives of the power of the gospel as opposing or subverting; it is evil at work everywhere.

In offering these answers, I suggest that there are more likely explanations to the questions about Paul's understanding of the relationship between divine power and imperial power than the alternatives offered by the Paul v. Empire coalition – especially with regard to Rom 13.1-7. Georgi's view that Paul employed 13.1-7 as a

[153] I am indebted for this notion of 'oblique' critique or 'diagonalization' to A. Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism,* trans. Ray Brassier (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 14, 42.

fragment of Jewish tradition from the republican period in order to offer a 'decentralising critique of the centralising power' of the Emperor is contrived. Wright's approach that introduces 13.1-7 as a rearguard action against enthusiastic Roman Christians who may seek revolution after interpreting the 'coded' subversion of chapters 1-12 is unnecessary. There is no indication from either the content or context to suggest the 'nevertheless' position that Wright advocates for 13.1-7. Wright's conclusion is only necessary because of his coded reading of chapters 1-12. Unfortunately, 13.1-7 is more of a problem than Wright assumes. A simple 'nevertheless' with regard to this passage creates more tension than Wright admits if Paul has been directly undercutting the Roman Empire and then abruptly exhorts them to pay honour to governing authorities. With respect to Elliot's thesis, there is no need for 13.1-7 to be viewed as an abrupt change of course in Paul's 'ideological intifada' against Rome. And there is no need to read aspects of the letter or 13.1-7 as a coded message, ironic or otherwise, to be used as a weapon for the weak (e.g., Carter). Paul does not consider the Roman Christians as weak with respect to the Roman Empire or in need of any weapon to defend themselves against 'the powers' except that provided by the power of God's love. All of these alternatives require readings that rely on silences in the text, coded messages behind the text, or an imperial context around the text. In all this there is the assumption that Paul *must* be anti-imperial. There is no need to establish whether he was. Instead, beginning with the idea that Paul was anti-imperial, this project places its focus on micro-details and terminology in Paul that *can* be interpreted as anti-imperial if one were to assume that he was. In this approach, there is no need to find explicit references to empire in order to assess Paul's views. More fatal to the position is the interpretive acrobatics that are required by the Paul v. Empire perspective to accommodate the pragmatic, minimalist and positive statements about the governing authorities and Christians' engagement with society in 13.1-7.

What the reading offered in this chapter concludes is that Romans, in general, and 13.1-7, in particular, may be read coherently without resorting to interpretative strategies that 1) require encoded message(s) or implied meaning(s) behind the text, or 2) demand placing Christ and the gospel in an antithetical posture *against* imperial Caesar and imperial ideology. In the end, it may be in Paul's oblique stance to the Roman Empire that the theological significance of Rom 13.1-7 may be seen. Based on the confidence of God's loving, providential care for his people against any possible threat or force (8.35-9), when it comes to the governing authorities in the world the Roman Christians are not obligated to choose between hatred toward Rome (e.g., Rev 13) or idolization of its power. Rather, a response that is conditioned by a ὡς μή attitude where the more important 'debt' (ὀφείλω, 13.8) to love is a sign that the mind of the Roman Christians has indeed been made new (Rom 12.1-2).[154]

[154] Cf. Keck, *Romans*, 325.

Chapter 6: Philippians

6.1. Introduction

Significant scholarly interest in the relationship between Paul's letter to the Philippians and the Roman Empire emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century, especially in the work of A. Deissmann and E. Lohmeyer.[1] In describing the spread of the cult of Christ in the Mediterranean world of the first century, Deissmann observed that 'there arises a polemical parallelism between the cult of the emperor and the cult of Christ, which makes itself felt where ancient words derived by Christianity from the treasury of the Septuagint and the Gospels happen to coincide with solemn concepts of the Imperial cult which sounded the same or similar'.[2] As he explored the connection between titles for Christ and Caesar he noted that 'we cannot escape the conjecture that the Christians of the East who heard St. Paul preach in the style of Phil. ii. 9, 11 and 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6 must have found the solemn confession that Jesus Christ is "the Lord" a silent protest against other "lords," and against "the lord", as people were beginning to call the Roman Caesar'.[3] While Lohmeyer was not inclined to see the connection between Christ and Caesar in Phil 2.9-11, he did recognise a conscious contrast between the two in 3.20-1.[4]

Attention to this relationship in Philippians continued to some degree during the subsequent decades after the work of Deissmann and Lohmeyer,[5] but in the last twenty years a number of scholars – most notably D. Georgi, N.T. Wright, P. Oakes, M. Tellbe and C.S. de Vos[6] – have further probed the matter of the comparison between Christ and Caesar. Although there is some disagreement on specific issues,[7]

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[1] Deissmann, *Light*; Lohmeyer, *Christuskult*.
[2] Deissmann, *Light*, 346.
[3] Deissmann, *Light*, 359.
[4] Lohmeyer, *Christuskult*, 28.
[5] For a helpful survey of this period see Oakes, *Philippians*, 129-38.
[6] One might also add the recent commentaries by G.D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) and M. Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, BNTC (London: A & C Black, 1997).
[7] E.g., Oakes, *Philippians*, 137, disagrees with a number of those who view Paul's anti-imperialism as stemming from a problem relating specifically to the imperial cult. Rather, he points to the broader, social problem Paul has with imperial ideology. Tellbe, however, does recognise the broader ideological concerns of Paul beyond the imperial cult in his monograph; cf. *Paul*, 250-9. There is also disagreement on the question of the ethnic composition of the Church in Philippi; Tellbe (*Paul*, 223-4) and de Vos (*Church*, 251-4) assume a larger number of Roman citizens in the community than does Oakes (cf. *Philippians*, 58-70)

these scholars agree that Philippians provides us with numerous points of contact with Rome and Paul's anti-imperial stance. From his unique perspective as a prisoner of Rome in the early sixties[8] he is supposed to have written to an embattled church in Philippi that is also suffering at the hands of Roman civic authorities.

Arguably the primary themes in Philippians are suffering (cf. 1.7, 28-30; 2.8, 30; 3.10, 18; 4.14) and unity (cf. 1.27; 2.1-5, 14-16; 4.1-3).[9] Tellbe, Oakes and de Vos argue that these two factors should be tied together in such a way as to recognise that opposition from Roman civic authorities is the source of the suffering and the cause of fractures within the emerging Christian community.[10] Accordingly, Paul's response is to write Philippians where, especially in 2.6-11 and 3.20-1, he encourages the beleaguered church in Philippi by reminding them of their privileged position as followers of the Lord Jesus in comparing Christ with Caesar. This can be illustrated by the following conclusions by Tellbe, Oakes and de Vos:

> Jesus Christ ... is firmly juxtaposed with the emperor, and even placed above him in a way that constituted an assertion whose boldness could not have been missed by citizens of a colony where imperial ideology was everywhere....By spurring the Philippians on to perseverance, unity and "joy in the Lord" in the face of their hardships, Paul reinforces and affirms their identity and honor as followers of Christ. From a social perspective, such a rhetorical strategy would also reinforce their autonomous status in Philippi.[11]
>
> A hearer in a Roman context would hear 2.9-11 as in some sense involving a grant of authority to Jesus that eclipsed the authority of Emperor....In Christ, God's project of putting the right authority in place over the Cosmos had come to fruition. The social and political authorities, under whom the Philippian Christians faced the social pressures that threatened perseverance and unity, had

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[8] There is no clear consensus on the related issues of date or provenance for Philippians with scholars divided on opinion between Ephesus (c. 55 CE), Caesarea (57-9 CE) and Rome (c. 60-2 CE). While I incline toward the latter since a Roman provenance best accounts for references to the Praetorian guard (1.13) and Caesar's household (4.22), this does not pose any particular significance for my analysis. For helpful summaries on provenance see G.F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, WBC 43 (Waco: Word, 1983), xxxvi-xliv; Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 25-32; and B.B. Thurston, *Philippians and Philemon*, Sacra Pagina Series 10 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 28-30.

[9] See especially two recent monographs that focus, respectively, on these two themes: L.G. Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians*, JSNTS 78 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) and D. Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians in the Light of Disunity in the Church*, NovTSup 79 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995). On the centrality of the theme of suffering in the letter see also N. Walter, 'Die Philipper und das Leiden: Aus den Anfängen einer heidenchristlichen Gemeinde', in *Die Kirche des Anfangs: Für Heinz Schürmann*, eds. R. Schnackenburg et al. (Freiburg: Herder, 1978), 417-34. Lohmeyer, *Philiper*, 5, views suffering, in terms of martyrdom, as the central theme of the letter.

[10] Tellbe, *Paul*, 224-31. Tellbe does add a third theme, i.e. 'a community without joy' to suffering and unity but this is derivative from the former issues; Oakes, *Philippians*, 77-102; de Vos, *Church*, 275-81. See also Fee, *Philippians*, 29-34.

[11] Tellbe, *Paul*, 258-9, 275.

> been relativised by Christ. Christ, not the Emperor, was now the figure of authority....Christ has replaced the Emperor as the world's decisive power.[12]

> In 3:20 there is an unambiguous contrast drawn between Christ and the Emperor....Paul's expression ἡμῶν...τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς....refers to...a reality that is a direct competitor to, and contrast with, the Roman Empire.[13]

Although they do not draw out the link between the themes of suffering and unity, Georgi and Wright emphasise Paul's reliance on a hidden 'code' in Philippians as a means of critiquing Roman political power. Georgi asserts that Philippians represents 'a disguised affront' in order to launch 'a critical infiltration of the reigning political and social principles'.[14] Georgi bases his assertion on Paul's circumstances in prison: 'Because he is in the hands of the Romans and therefore in immediate political danger, he has to be careful and change his tone'.[15] In a similar vein, Wright concludes that Phil 3 is a 'coded message of subversive intrigue' that will warn the Philippian Christians 'against the Caesar-cult and the entire panoply of pagan empire'.[16]

None of these conclusions may be dismissed lightly, especially those by Tellbe, Oakes and de Vos since they are based on detailed historical observations and careful exegesis. Most scholars would agree with their historical observations that the imperial cult and imperial ideology were important for Paul's contemporaries and that there is language in Philippians that could have been heard by his recipients as corresponding with imperial propaganda. Tellbe's argument that Paul intends to reinforce and affirm the Philippian Christians in their identity and honour as followers of Christ as an alternative community from those around them is compelling.[17] I also find Oakes' description of Paul *'redrawing the map of the universe* [emphasis mine]....both in space and time'[18] to be a helpful analogy and accurate depiction of the letter. Nonetheless, there are several aspects of their conclusions that seem open to question. Does Paul construe Rome, and its civic authorities in Philippi, as his primary protagonist(s) or 'opponents' in shaping an alternative community or in drawing his 'map' of the universe? In dealing with the exalted status and 'power' language that Paul ascribes to Christ in Philippians must one read into this a direct

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[12] Oakes, *Philippians*, 150, 170, 206.
[13] de Vos, *Church*, 274, 283.
[14] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 74.
[15] Georgi, *Theocracy*, 72.
[16] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 174.
[17] See Tellbe, *Paul*, 267-75.
[18] Oakes, 'Re-mapping', 321.

'comparison' with Caesar and 'contrast' to the power and power-claims of the Emperor?[19] What are the primary antitheses in the letter and how, if at all, are Caesar and the Roman Empire reflected in them?

In order to probe these questions, this chapter will first summarise the evidence that is offered as the basis for Paul's apparent critique of Rome followed by an assessment of these anti-imperial messages contained in Philippians. The analysis will focus primarily on three areas: 1) the issue of opponents in Philippi and the extent to which the *Roman* context in Philippi must be read into the text; 2) the notion of 'code' in the letter; and 3) the question of comparison with Caesar in Phil 3.20-1 and 2.9-11 and the shared vocabulary of empire. In the course of this analysis I will articulate where and how I understand Paul's emphases to lie and how his 'political' theology works in the letter.

6.2. Evidence for Paul's Anti-Imperial Critique in Philippians

The lines of evidence used to demonstrate that Philippians contains an anti-imperial critique are provided by way of evidence *external* to the letter (e.g., from archaeological, inscriptional and numismatic material) illustrating the dominance of Roman imperial ideology in Philippi and *internal* evidence that counters this ideology.

6.2.1. External Evidence

Although the Macedonian city of Philippi became part of the Roman Empire in 168 BCE it was not until 42 BCE that the character of the city became distinctly Roman. In 42 BCE Philippi was the scene for the pivotal battle between the legions of Brutus and Cassius and those of Antony and Octavian.[20] After Antony and Octavian's victory, Philippi was granted status as a Roman colony and given the name, *Colonia Victrix Philippensium.* Initially, land around Philippi was allocated (i.e., 'centuriated'[21]) to a number of Antony's retired legionaries after the battle. Twelve years later, after Octavian defeated Antony at Actium, the city was refounded by

[19] E.g., despite the repeated assertions of these scholars, the only explicit reference to 'Caesar' in Philippians is 'Caesar's household' in 4.22.
[20] Appian, *B. Civ.* 4.105-38; Plutarch, *Brut.* 36-7, 53; *Caes.* 69; Josephus *Ant.* 14.301, 310-11.
[21] Oakes, *Philippians*, 25; cf. P. Collart, *Philippes, ville de Macédonie depuis ses origines jusqu' à la fin de l'époque romaine* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1937), 226.

Octavian and given the *ius Italicum*,[22] the highest privilege available to a colony whereby their land was treated as if it was in Italy. Octavian settled it with a cohort of Praetorians[23] and a number of veterans of Antony[24] who were displaced from their property in Italy. The move was politically astute on Octavian's part; he placated Antony's supporters, relieved population pressures in Italy and guaranteed loyalty to the Empire from the colonists in Philippi who lived along the Egnatian Way – a strategic land route connecting Italy with Greece and Asia Minor.

The actual number of Roman veterans living in Philippi by the middle of the first century CE was likely quite small, but the influence that they had in shaping a distinctly 'Roman' character of the city was significant.[25] The Latin and military nature permeated the city at every turn.[26] The official language was Latin[27] and most of the inscriptions[28] and coinage from this period are in Latin.[29] More importantly, the religious situation, despite the ongoing variety of Thracian, Greek and Asian cults in the city,[30] was significantly influenced by the imperial cult and sustained by traditional, loyal veteran soldiers.[31] Further, these Roman veterans, despite their small number, would have carried all the power and wealth in the city and shaped a 'clear disposition…to flatter Rome with different titles, celebrations, processions,

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[22] *OCD*, 790; A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 316-22. This privilege was bestowed on only three other *coloniae* in Macedonia, i.e. Cassandreum, Dium and Dyrrachium. See J. McRay, *Archaeology and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 283-4; L.M. White, 'Visualizing the "Real" World of Acts 16: Toward Construction of a Social Index', in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks*, eds. L.M. White and O.L. Yarbrough (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 234-61, at 242.
[23] L. Bormann, *Philippi: Stadt und Christengemeinde zur Zeit des Paulus*, NovTSup 78 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 22.
[24] Cassius Dio, 51.4.
[25] P. Pilhofer, *Philippi, Band I: Die erste christiliche Gemeinde Europas*, WUNT 87 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1995), 92, writes: „Gewiß waren die Römer zahlenmäßig nicht in der Mehrheit, wie es das römische Gepräge der Stadt vermuten lassen könnte, aber das Lebensgefühl war durch und durch römisch"; cf. Collart, *Philippes*, 315.
[26] Tellbe, *Paul,* 212-19, provides a thorough summary of the Roman character of first century Philippi.
[27] See P. Collart, 'Inscriptions de Philippes', *BCH* 56 (1932), 193-231, at 231; idem, *Philippes*, 301n.5.
[28] See discussion on inscriptions in Oakes, *Philippians*, 35-40. Interestingly, despite the cult's apparent significance in Philippi, the Roman imperial cult has only a minor place in the overall collection of inscriptions that point to the religious life of the average person in the city. See P. Pilhofer, *Philippi, Band II: Katalog der Inschriften von Philippi* WUNT 119 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 2000), 883-5. Pilhofer's Kultisches index lists numerous examples of cultic inscriptions in Philippi and this places in perspective the meagre fourteen imperial cult inscriptions listed by Bormann, *Philippi*, 42-4. Cf. Koukouli-Chrysantaki, 'Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis', in *Philippi at the Time of Paul and after His Death*, eds. C. Bakirtzis and H. Koester (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), 5-36, at 15-6.
[29] Tellbe, *Paul*, 213.
[30] Pilhofer, *Philippi*, 92-113.
[31] Bornmann, *Philippi*, 32-67.

games, oaths, sacrifices, and petitions in honor of the emperors.'[32] When Paul visited the city for the first time in the late forties, he would have discovered a unique city compared to those he would visit throughout Macedonia, Greece and Asia Minor. Pilhofer notes:

> Für den aus dem Osten kommenden Paulus war diese Stadt daher insofern etwas völlig Neues und Außergewöhnliches; auch wer seine Reise Richtung Westen auf der Via Egnatia fortsetzte, traf nichts Vergleichbares. Man mußte schon mindestens bis Italien vorstoßen, um wieder eine so durch und durch lateinisch geprägte Stadt wie Philippi zu finden.[33]

Given this situation and the significant role that the civic cults played in the city, Tellbe concludes that 'the civic cults would have engaged all the citizens – even non-Roman free citizens – in one way or the other, and it must have been important for other cults and associations in the city not to promote ideologies or activities that could be understood as a provocation to Roman imperial propaganda'.[34]

These archaeological, inscriptional and Roman literary records are important threads of evidence in building the case that Christians in Philippi were opposed because of their failure to adhere to Roman imperial ideology and cult practices. The unique *Roman* character of the city also coheres with another piece of external evidence: Luke's report of the clash between the apostles Paul and Silas and Roman authorities in Acts 16.11-40. Luke records that the apostles were brought before the civil magistrates[35] on political charges[36] for threatening the *pax Romana* ('throwing our city in confusion', 16.20b), being Jewish propagandists[37] ('proclaiming customs which are unlawful for us Romans to accept or observe', 16.21), turning citizens from local and civic gods and, finally, challenging the cult of the emperor.[38]

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[32] Tellbe, *Paul*, 217.
[33] Pilhofer, *Philippi*, 120-1.
[34] Tellbe, *Paul*, 217.
[35] I.e. Roman magistrates, the *duumviri*.
[36] C.S. de Vos, 'Finding a Charge that Fits: The Accusation against Paul and Silas at Philippi (Acts 16:19-21)', *JSNT* 74 (1999), 51-63, questions whether the charges were actually *political* and counters with an argument that they were charges for practising magic.
[37] Tellbe, *Paul*, 235, suggests this accusation reflected an archaic 'principle of incompatibility' that forbade Roman citizens from practising foreign cults.
[38] Tellbe, *Paul*, 236-7, notes that the proclamation of 'the way of salvation' and the exorcism of the girl with 'pythonic spirit (πνεῦμα πύθωνα, 16.16)...in the name of Jesus Christ' was the trigger to the accusations at Philippi. The reference to the 'pythonic spirit' suggests she was inspired by Apollo (like the oracle of Delphi). Since Apollo was Augustus' special god and Apollo was one of the gods attested at Philippi, in this exorcism the apostles 'directly challenged the cult of Apollo [and] also undermined important core values of the imperial ideology'; cf. Zanker, *Power*, 49-53.

Given both these strands of evidence for the Roman nature of the city of Philippi and the political clash recorded in Acts, the next question is whether this data relates to Paul's letter itself. In particular, what does it suggest about the situation of the Philippian Christians and Paul's message to them? According to those who read Philippians as a challenge to imperial ideology, it is considerable.

6.2.2. Internal Evidence

A number of scholars have recognised the Roman character of Philippi and the tensions this might have created for Christians living there in the first century.[39] This decidedly *Roman* nature of the city seems to explain a number of issues in the letter given the references to τὸ πραιτώριον (1.13) and ἡ καίσαρος οἰκία (4.22), a number of military terms and metaphors[40] in the letter that may allude to popular imperial games held throughout the empire and in Philippi, the use of the Latinised Φιλιππήσιοι (4.15)[41] and Stoic terminology (4.8).[42] An important link to be made between external evidence and Paul's letter relates to how the record in Acts 16 is used as a converging piece of support to explain the suffering and opposition described in Phil 1.28-30.[43] Since Paul and Silas were accused of 'advocating customs unlawful for us *Romans* to accept or practise' and briefly imprisoned in Philippi this is said to cohere with Paul's appeal in Phil 1.30 for the Philippian believers to suffer on behalf of Christ 'since you are going through *the same struggle*

[39] E.g., F.W. Beare, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Black, 1959), 7-9; J. Gnilka, *Der Philipperbrief. 2nd ed.*, HTKNT 10.3 (Freiburg: Herder, 1976 [1968]), 1-5, 99-100; R.P. Martin, *Philippians*, NCBC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 4-6; L. Portefaix, *Sisters Rejoice: Paul's Letter to the Philippians and Luke-Acts as Received by First Century Philippian Women*, ConBNT 20 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988), 59-74; P. Perkins, 'Theology for the Heavenly Politeuma', in *Pauline Theology Volume I: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon*, ed. J.M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 89-104; B. Witherington, *Friendship and Finances at Philippi: The Letter of Paul to the Philippians* (Valley Forge: Trinity International, 1994), 99-100; Bormann, *Philippi*, 217-24; Fee, *Philippians*, 30-2, 157, 196-7; Pilhofer, *Philippi*, 114-39, 193-99, 212-8; Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 2-8, 100-1, 147, 233-5.

[40] E.g., συναθλέω (1.27), ἀγών (1.30) and συστρατιώτης (2.25). T.C. Geoffrion, *The Rhetorical Purpose and the Political and Military Character of Philippians: A Call to Stand Firm* (Lewiston: Mellen Biblical Press, 1993), 54, observes that many of the terms used in Phil 1.27-30 are found in historical accounts of military conflicts; E.M. Krentz, 'Military Language and Metaphors in Philippians', in *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity. Essays in Honour of John C. Hurd*, ed. B.H. McLean (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 105-27.

[41] Over a century ago W.M. Ramsay, 'The Philippians and Their Magistrates', *JTS* 1 (1900), 114-16, at 116, described this transcription of the Latin *Philippenses* as a '*monstrum* in Greek'.

[42] T. Engberg-Pedersen, 'Stoicism in Philippians', in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 256-90. Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 173, notes that the Stoic language could be labelled 'the language of Philippi'.

[43] Tellbe, *Paul*, 233; de Vos, *Church*, 262; Oakes, *Philippians*, 99.

you saw I had, and now hear that I still have'.[44] Thus *mutatis mutandis* the source of the suffering for the Philippian Christians is linked to the same opposition Paul received from the wider civic community as recorded in Acts 16. Whether it is the Christians' failure to participate in the local cults, especially the imperial cult,[45] an unwillingness to express loyalty to the emperor by oaths,[46] the social tension that would exist in mixed domestic (e.g., mixed relationships: Christian wife to pagan husband, Christian slave to pagan owner, Christian children to pagan parents) or business situations,[47] the issue narrows to Christians conflicting, and paying for this conflict, with *Roman* political, social and religious obligations expected of them in Philippi.

Given the Roman *source* for the opposition the next move is to recognise the anti-imperial *messages* that the Philippian Christians supposedly 'heard' in Paul's letter to them. Although some scholars merely point to words like κύριος and σωτήρ that Paul uses in Philippians as 'polemical parallels' with the titles used in imperial ideology, a number of scholars advance more nuanced arguments. One of the first arguments identifies the unique usage of the verb πολιτεύομαι (1.27) and the noun πολίτευμα (3.20)[48] and the political connotations these words carry with regard to the concept of 'living as a citizen' and 'citizenship'. Since Paul uses these terms to frame the main body of the argument in the letter and they occur in a context dealing with 'opposition' it is argued that they relate to the historical context of a city proud of its Roman citizenship. In using these political terms it is asserted that Paul's admonitions to Philippian Christians stand as a counter reminder that the community of believers belong to an alternative 'state' in heaven with different values and commitments from that of Rome.[49]

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[44] Cf. 1 Thess 2.2: 'But we had previously suffered and been insulted, as you know, in Philippi'.

[45] Tellbe, *Paul*, 250-9; de Vos, *Church*, 264. Tellbe's and de Vos' reconstruction of the social situation in Philippi emphasises the dominant Roman character of city and the fierce loyalty to Rome by its civic authorities. This loyalty and the Christians aversion to participation in the imperial cult would have led to clashes with civic authorities and/or through legal processes.

[46] Bormann, *Philippi*, 48-50; de Vos, *Church*, 265.

[47] Oakes, *Philippians*, 89-96. Oakes' approach is based on a reconstructed social model of the city and church and he argues that the main problems for the earliest gentile Christians probably came from relatives and other ordinary people rather than civic authorities. As Christians abandoned Greco-Roman cults, according to Oakes, this probably led to the breakdown of economically important relationships and sporadic violence against the most vulnerable members of the church in Philippi: urban, Greek service workers.

[48] Both terms are *hapax legomena* in Paul.

[49] See Tellbe, *Paul*, 239-43; de Vos, *Church*, 281-86.

Closely aligned with the political resonances that πολιτεύομαι/πολίτευμα carry is the comparison that Paul allegedly makes between the κύριος and σωτήρ Christ and the κύριος and σωτήρ Caesar. Paul's claim that Christ the κύριος will receive universal submission (2.11) through humility and obedience (2.6-8) leads Tellbe to conclude that the Philippian Christians must have heard a 'radical contrast' with Lord Nero and the habit Roman emperors had for '"grasping" honors of divinity and for "snatching" power'.[50] Oakes interprets 3.20-1, in a context concerned with 'citizenship' and including the title σωτήρ linked with universal power, as providing a clear comparison with the emperor.[51] More substantially, Oakes offers eight factors concerning 2.9-11 in order to demonstrate 'that the Philippians would have heard a comparison drawn...between Christ and the Emperor.'[52] In addition to pointing out these comparative elements, Oakes draws out a two-fold function that the picture of Christ in 2.6-11 effects for its hearers. First, verses 6-8 provide an imitable servant-like model in Christ that serves to reinforce Paul's call for unity (2.1-4) in the face of suffering (1.27-30). Secondly, verses 9-11 provide a picture of the exalted Christ that offers a number of effects for its hearers so that Christ 'relativises society's imperatives', 'replace[s] the Emperor as the world's decisive power', provides 'confidence' for believers in Christ rather than in Roman society and grants the Christian community in Philippi with a 'de-marginalised' social identity.[53]

Paul's apparent portrayal of Christ in comparison and competition with Caesar and imperial ideology also leads to other conclusions about several important matters in Phil 3. Tellbe and de Vos both conclude that Paul is warning the predominantly gentile Christian community in Phil 3.2-11 against the temptation to follow Judaising 'agitators' and their call to adhere to Judaism as a means of obtaining social identity and protection against Roman authorities. From this perspective, the issue in 3.2-11 is not with circumcision or the law but with 'confidence in human status'; Paul intends to deflect the fledgling gentile Christians from the temptation to be seen as 'proper'

[50] Tellbe, *Paul*, 257.
[51] Oakes, *Philippians*, 138-47
[52] Oakes, *Philippians*, 147-174. The eight factors in 2.9-11 are: 1) links with 3.20-1; 2) Christ given universal authority; 3) authority granted for a reason; 4) universal submission and the central Imperial saving task for the world; 5) the use of Isaiah 45; 6) the naming in v. 9; 7) the title κύριος; and 8) a leader who defines his people's ethics by example.
[53] Oakes, *Philippians*, 204-7.

Jews[54] as a legitimate way of exempting themselves from participation in the traditional cults, especially the imperial cult.[55] In an alternative solution to the issue of the 'agitators' and the target of Paul's polemic in 3.2-11, Wright reads Paul's appeal not to put 'confidence in the flesh' as a 'coded challenge to Empire'.[56] He proposes that in 3.2-11 'Paul...has Judaism and paganism, particularly, in the latter case, the Caesar-cult, simultaneously in mind, and is here using a warning against the former as a code for warnings against the latter....His concern is to warn them against the whole panoply of pagan empire'.[57] By drawing in the language about 'citizenship' in 3.20 and in light of the pride the citizens of Philippi had in their colonial status, Wright concludes that the central point of the chapter is to argue: 'as I, Paul, have rethought my Jewish allegiance in the light of the crucified and risen Jesus, so you should rethink your Roman allegiance in the same light'.[58]

One final issue that is resolved for several of those who argue that Philippians is an imperial critique relates to the question of the 'enemies' depicted in 3.18-19. According to Tellbe and de Vos, these are not the same opponents as the religious agitators in 3.2. Rather, these adversaries are those who are advocating that Christians rejoin the voluntary associations, *collegia* or θίασοι and return to their traditional cult practices, especially their relationship with the imperial cult, as a means of avoiding conflict in Philippi.[59] That these associations are in view is suggested by Paul's descriptions of their practices – ὁ θεὸς ἡ κοιλία καὶ ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ αὐτῶν (3.19). These descriptors are metaphorical extensions of accusations of gluttony and sexual debauchery that were familiar accusations against voluntary and cultic associations.[60] Paul's response is to remind the Philippian believers that our πολίτευμα is in heaven (3.20), in contrast to any πολίτευμα of a club, voluntary association[61] or, ultimately, the imperial cult.

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[54] In an earlier article, Tellbe associated this with Philippian Christians hoping to identify with Judaism and thus obtain their *religio licita* status (cf. 'The Sociological Factors behind Philippians 3.1-11 and the Conflict at Philippi', *JSNT* 55 (1994), 97-121); in his later monograph he has amended this position.
[55] Cf. Tellbe, *Philippians*, 261-7; de Vos, *Church*, 267-9.
[56] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 173-81.
[57] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 174-5.
[58] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 178.
[59] Tellbe, *Paul*, 268-74; de Vos, *Church*, 271-75.
[60] E.g., the accusations of Philo against the associations and clubs in *Ebr.* 22-5, 29, 95; *Spec. leg.* 1.323, 2.44; *In Flacc.* 4, 136. Cf. W. Cotter, 'Our *Politeuma* is in Heaven: The Meaning of Philippians 3.17-21', in *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity. Essays in Honour of John C. Hurd*, ed. B.H. McLean (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 92-103, at 98-103.
[61] Tellbe, *Paul*, 271, notes that πολίτευμα could also designate a club or voluntary association.

In summary, the scholars cited above detect several interlocking pieces of evidence from within Philippians to argue that Paul is offering an anti-imperial critique in the letter. First, they identify the source of opposition in Philippians (1.28 and 3.18-19) as either civic authorities or the general populace who object to Christian withdrawal from participation in the Greco-Roman cults of the city, particularly the imperial cult. Second, they interpret Paul's response to be a comparison between Christ and Caesar (2.9-11) and between the 'citizenship of heaven' and the citizenship of Rome. For those in the Paul v. Rome coalition, these factors, along with unique Roman terms and metaphors in the letter, cohere with the evidence we have about Philippi's first century Roman character and Luke's portrayal of the apostles' conflict in Philippi in the early days of the Christian community's existence there. Our task now is to assess this evidence and determine whether the arguments in favour of an anti-imperial critique and a Christ-Caesar comparison offer the best framework for interpreting Philippians.

6.3. Analysis of Philippian Anti-Imperial messages

Luke's account depicts Paul encountering Roman opposition. More than once in Acts Luke portrays Christians facing questioning by Roman authorities only to see them exonerated.[62] According to a number of scholars in the Paul v. Rome coalition, this evidence along with the Roman character of Philippians shapes the comparison and competition Paul envisages between Christ and heavenly citizenship and Caesar and Roman citizenship. Undoubtedly, Paul encounters Roman opposition in Acts and he recognises that both himself and the Philippian church are experiencing suffering and 'opposition'. The key question, however, is whether Paul views the Roman Empire as the primary opposition and the significant foil *in Philippians*. Further, what are the antitheses in Philippians and is it clear that Paul's polemical target in the letter is Caesar and imperial ideology? These are the primary questions behind the following analysis of Philippians and its so-called anti-imperial critique.

6.3.1. Opponents at Philippi

[62] In addition to the account in Philippi in chap 16, see also 13.6-12 before Sergius Paulus the proconsul on Cyprus; 17.5-9 in Thessalonica; 18.12-17 before Gallio the proconsul in Corinth; 24.1-27 before procurator Felix; 25.1-12 before procurator Festus.

There is widespread agreement among scholars that the Philippians were facing 'opponents' of some kind. But despite intense investigation there is no consensus on the question of *who* these opponents might be.[63] The diversity of theories and the difficulties associated in finding and describing opponents in Paul's letters should engender caution among interpreters as recent studies have suggested.[64] No full-scale presentation of the Philippian opposition is intended here. Instead, along with briefly summarising the data related to 'opponents' in Philippians, the focus will be on analysing whether the arguments in favour of a Pauline anti-imperial critique are supported by his comments on opponents in the letter.

6.3.1.1. Phil 1.15-17

The first mention of an adversarial situation in the letter relates to Paul's circumstances, not the Philippians. In 1.15-17 Paul writes that in the city where he is imprisoned 'some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry' supposing they can 'raise up trouble (θλῖψις) for me while I am in chains'. Several observations can be made from this passage. First, this opposition can be excluded from being in Philippi. Second, the issue is one of conflict within the Christian community (i.e. between Paul and these unnamed ἀδελφοί), not between Paul and outsiders. Third, although Paul mentions 'the whole praetorium' in 1.13, he seems uninterested that his incarceration is a *Roman* imprisonment. Of more importance for Paul is the gospel and that internment has not hindered its 'advance' (1.12) either on Paul's part inside the prison or from the Christian community outside prison – and both of these are counts for 'joy' (1.18). That Paul dwells on the mixed motives of some of those preaching Christ in that city appears to be paradigmatic with an eye to the Philippians' circumstances. Although Paul is content that some preach Christ out of ἐριθεία[65] (1.17) in the city of

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[63] Useful summaries and bibliography are available in O'Brien, *Philippians*, 26-35; Bloomquist, *Suffering*, 198-201; R. Jewett, 'Conflicting Movements in the Early Church as Reflected in Philippians', *NovT* 12 (1970), 362-90; J.J. Gunther, *St. Paul's Opponents and Their Background: A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian Teachings*, NovTSup 35 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), 2; and J.L. Sumney, 'Studying Paul's Opponents: Advances and Challenges', in *Paul and His Opponents*, ed. S.E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 7-58, at 25-9. Gunther, *Opponents*, 2, lists no less then eighteen different assessments of the opponents in Phil 3 alone!
[64] See Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading', 73-93.
[65] F. Büchsel, ἐριθεία, *TDNT* II, 660–61, notes that the word is derived from ἐριθεύω, 'to work as a day-labourer' but came ' to denote the attitude of self-seekers, harlots, etc., who demean themselves for gain. Aristocratic contempt for daily wage earners seems to have brought about the devaluation of meaning'.

his imprisonment, he warns against it taking root within the Philippian community (2.3). As with his indifferent attitude toward his chains, a potential death sentence or the source of his imprisonment, Paul's field of vision is dominated by the gospel and its advancement.

6.3.1.2. Phil 1.27-30

This priority on the gospel is maintained when Paul turns from his circumstances (τὰ κατ᾽ ἐμέ, 1.12) to those of the Philippians (τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, 1.27) in 1.27-30. In the only instance in the letter where the language of opposition occurs, Paul urges the Philippians to conduct themselves in a manner 'worthy of the gospel of Christ…and not be frightened in any way by those who oppose (ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων) you'. Paul adds that this opposition has led to suffering on behalf of Christ (1.29). Paul employs a variety of images, especially those of a military nature, in order to emphasise the corporate unity that should characterise the community. For those who read Paul as engaging in subversion of the empire, this occurrence of language of opposition in 1.27-30 is the first indicator that the opponents in Philippi are external, political and, likely, Roman. This proposal is based on two primary factors: first, Paul's use of the 'politically' charged verb πολιτεύομαι in 1.27 and, secondly, the reference in 1.30 to the Philippians experiencing 'the same struggle' (i.e. with Roman civic authorities) that Paul experienced in Philippi (cf. Acts 16) and continues to experience.

Even though most scholars would agree that in the clearest and most direct statement in 1.28 the opposition derives from a source external to the Philippian community, there are a few voices that demur even here. R. Ascough offers a defensible suggestion that the ἀντικειμένοι are Christian opponents similar to those who are making problems for Paul (1.14-15). He notes that the Philippians have observed Paul in conflict and now hear that he is still engaged in this type of conflict. However, 'the conflict is not his imprisonment, but the competitive groups which "preach Christ from envy and rivalry" (1:15) which the Philippians have just heard about in the reading of the letter'.[66] Accordingly, members of these groups look out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ' (2.21). From this perspective, the opposition does not have to be 'the same' source as the one opposing Paul in the city

[66] R.S. Ascough, *Paul's Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians*, WUNT 161 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 2003), 144-5.

of his imprisonment. Rather, Paul is highlighting similar phenomena between his situation and theirs and the damaging effect of inter-group rivalry.

Although most scholars would disagree with Ascough's suggestion that the opponents are 'insiders' since their 'opposition' is linked with suffering of a kind that is 'on behalf of Christ', Ascough's interpretation does illustrate the vagueness of Paul's language even in this most direct statement in Philippians concerning 'opponents'. Further, Ascough's approach raises doubt as to whether believers in Philippi are being persecuted exclusively because of their non-participation in the imperial cult. It also leads to a re-examination of the evidence supporting the proposal that the opposition derives from Roman political authorities. In this interpretation the apparent 'link' with imperial opposition is tied to Paul's employment of the verb πολιτεύομαι in the opening imperatival phrase of this section (1.27). An early voice that is regularly cited in support of this interpretation is that of R.R. Brewer.[67] According to Brewer, 'πολιτεύεσθε is used when conduct relative to some law of life – political, moral, social, or religious – is signified'.[68] It is then proposed that the political overtones of this word must be regarded as dominant for a Christian congregation living in a city like Philippi where their Roman citizenship, expressed in their devotion to the emperor and his cult, is taken seriously. More recently, however, E.C. Miller[69] has demonstrated that Brewer's conclusion about πολιτεύεσθε overemphasises the Greek usage of the word and overlooks the Jewish usage of the word with its stress on corporate conduct. Miller argues that where the verb occurs in the LXX (primarily in the Maccabean[70] literature) and first century Jewish writers (i.e. Philo[71] and Josephus[72]) it carries associations with *corporate* adherence to the law of God rather

[67] R.R. Brewer, 'The Meaning of *Politeuesthe* in Philippians 1, 27', *JBL* 73.2 (1954), 76-83.
[68] Brewer, 'Meaning', 80
[69] E.C. Miller, 'Πολιτεύεσθε in Philippians 1.27: Some Philological and Thematic Observations', *JSNT* 15 (1982), 86-96.
[70] E.g., in 2 Macc 6.1 an Athenian senator is sent to the Jews to compel them to turn away from the laws and customs of their fathers and not to live by them (τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ νόμοις μὴ πολιτεύεσθαι). Cf. 2 Macc 11.25; 3 Macc 3.4; 4 Macc 2.8, 23; 4.23; 5.16.
[71] Cf. *Mut.* 240; *Decal.* 14. Even though the usage of πολιτεύομαι in *Conf.* 78 where he remarks that though the patriarchs inhabit the earth, 'to them the heavenly region, where their citizenship lies (ἐν ᾧ πολιτεύονται) is their native land' conveys Greek thought associated with the idea of the πόλις, Miller, 'Πολιτεύεσθε', 88, notes 'the people whom Philo mentions in this context are traditionally representative of the quintessence of Judaism, they embody that fidelity to God which is the pride and measure of a faithful Jew'.
[72] Πολιτεύομαι occurs thirty times in Josephus.

than strictly political connections with 'citizenship'.[73] In raising the point that πολιτεύομαι relates primarily to corporate conduct Miller blunts a solely political reading of the verb; i.e. the corporate life in view is not necessarily 'citizenship' in a narrow sense. Whereas the Torah usually regulates corporate conduct in Jewish literature, in Philippians 1.27 corporate conduct is modified by the adverbial phrase 'worthy of the gospel of Christ'. Thus πολιτεύομαι need not immediately link to some counter-imperial message as is suggested – usually because this politically loaded term is used instead of Paul's more typical word for conduct περιπατέω – since Paul's primary emphasis is on *corporate* conduct shaped by the gospel. Even though πολιτεύομαι is a *hapax legomenon* in the Pauline epistles, it is not a rare word in Greco-Roman or Jewish literature and, more importantly, its corporate meaning fits appropriately with Paul's appeal to the group that they stand together 'in one Spirit, fighting together in one mind for the faith of the gospel'. To construe the meaning of the word to emphasise a counter 'citizenship' in opposition to *Roman* citizenship is by no means obvious in the text and may even obscure Paul's priority on unity and the gospel of Christ.

While one element in the anti-imperial reading is open to question by recognising the corporate sense of πολιτεύομαι beyond narrow political overtones, this leaves a second key element to the argument: linking the source of Paul's suffering with that of the Philippians. Since Paul writes to the Philippians that 'you are experiencing the *same* struggle you saw I had and now hear I have' a number of scholars suggest this implies the same source, i.e. Roman civic authorities.[74] There is, however, an ambiguity in the text at this point that raises some questions. In particular, does Paul intend to draw the similarity between the same *source* of the suffering or the same *reason* for the suffering? There is no indication that, like Paul, any members of the Philippian community are in prison or facing the possibility of death. Rather, the 'sameness' may just as well relate to their shared 'agon' for the faith with its attendant aspects, including sharing in suffering.[75] Paul emphasises in 1.12-26 that he is in chains on account of Christ and this imprisonment serves to advance

[73] For a discussion of πολιτεύομαι and its corporate connotations see also H. Strathmann, 'πόλις κτλ.', *TDNT*, VI 516-35; Peterlin, *Philippians*, 55-6. J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd, 1903), also notes the corporate nature of πολιτεύεσθε by writing that this term 'seems always to refer to public duties devolving on a man as a *member of a body*' [emphasis his].
[74] E.g., Fee, *Philippians*, 172; Tellbe, *Paul*, 233; de Vos, *Church*, 262-3; Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 103.
[75] See Pfitzner, *Paul*, 118.

the gospel. A similar emphasis marks 1.27-30 where the Philippians are to conduct themselves worthily of the gospel and suffer 'on behalf of' Christ. The purpose of the struggle is not the conquest and defeat of an unmentioned enemy, but the spread and growth of the gospel. A similar situation is described in 1 Thess 2.14 where Paul writes that the Thessalonians are 'suffering the same things' from their countrymen as the Jewish Christians in Judea. At issue in Phil 1.30 (as in 1 Thess 2.14) is not the same source or precise circumstances of opposition, but the same theological reason for the suffering, i.e. they are suffering for the sake of Christ and the gospel.[76] The emphasis is not on the opposition or the source of the suffering – these are left unnamed and incidental to the primary purpose of the gospel – but on unity for the sake of the gospel in Philippi (cf. Phil 2.12-14).

6.3.1.3. Phil 3.2-3

With an abrupt outburst of invective, Paul issues a three-fold alliterative warning to the Philippians as a means of providing them 'safety' (ἀσφαλές,[77] 3.1) in 3.2:

> βλέπετε τοὺς κύνας
> βλέπετε τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας
> βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν

Despite the determined efforts to identify who Paul is referring to in this description,[78] given his response offered in 3.3 – *we* are the circumcision...putting no confidence in

[76] Gnilka, *Philipperbrief*, 101-2 notes that 'Wenn Paulus die Leiden der Gemeinde auf dieselbe Ebene hebt wie sein eigenes Leiden, berechtigt das nicht zu weitreichenden Schlüssen. Keinesfalls ist die Lage der Philipper ebenso hart wie die seine, befinden sich ihre Episkopen und Diakone im Gefängnis wie er....Die Gleichsetzung beruht nicht auf einer Gleichheit der Fakten, sie ist theologisch begründet. Leiden und Bedrängnisse der Gläubigen, mögen sie hart oder leicht sein, sind Leiden und Bedrängnisse um Christi willen'. Cf. O'Brien, *Philippians*, 162.

[77] This is the only occurrence of this word in Paul's letters.

[78] A.F.J. Klijn, 'Paul's Opponents in Philippians III', *NovT* 7.4 (1965), 278-84, advocates for Jews or Jewish missionaries; cf. T.E. Pollard, 'The Integrity of Philippians', *NTS* 13 (1966-7), 57-66; G.F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, WBC 43 (Waco: Word, 1983), xliv-xlvii, 125. A number of factors speak against the likelihood Paul is writing about Jews or Jewish missionaries. First, there is no evidence that there were Jewish missionaries operating during this period; see M. Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994). Second, it seems unlikely that Gentile Christians could be in danger of becoming Jewish proselytes; Paul's language can only refer to those who are preaching another 'gospel', but a gospel that speaks of Christ nonetheless. K. Grayston, 'The Opponents in Philippians 3', *ExpTim* 97 (1986), 170-72, suggests that the mention of 'dogs' refers to Gentiles but this fails to take into account 3.3-6. W. Schmithals, 'Die Irrlehrer des Philipperbriefes', *ZTK* 54 (1957), 297-341, and H. Koester, 'The Purpose of the Polemic of a Pauline Fragment', *NTS* 8 (1961), 317-32, both maintain that Phil 3.2-11 and 3.17-

the flesh – and Paul's comparison of his former life 'in the flesh' and his present existence of knowing Christ, it seems most likely that he is warning against those who would wish to bring Gentile Christians under Jewish symbols of identity, especially circumcision. The exact identity of these 'opponents' may be vague, but it seems clear that whoever they are these people are not present in Philippi. Paul's words may be harsh, but they are for preventative warning since no mention of these opponents appears elsewhere in the letter.

The question remains, however, as to whether Paul's mention of them relates to his anti-imperial critique. De Vos argues that Paul mentions them because the Philippians were faced with an impending clash with the Roman authorities and this may have tempted them to pass themselves off as 'Jewish' in order to avoid persecution.[79] The appeal of this charade would be to take advantage of the protection offered by Judaism as a *religio licita*, along the lines of a 'Jewish Magna Carta'.[80] There are, however, a number of problems with this proposal. First, *religio licita* both as a term and, more importantly, a concept connected with the Jews is dubious.[81] F. Millar points out that the notion that 'each cult in the Empire was either a *religio licita* or a *religio illicita*' is not supported by any ancient source.[82] Second, even if some form of special status was granted to Jews in the Roman world of the

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21 refer to the same opponents who are either Jewish libertinistic gnostics (Schmithals) or Jewish Christian perfectionists (Koester). Cotter, 'Our *Politeuma*', 92-94, points out the deficiencies of these prominent, 'single-front' hypotheses, especially their failure to 'reconcile the Torah observant opponents of Phil. 3.2-11 with those whose god is the "belly" [3.19]; cf. Sandnes, *Belly*, 155-6. Importantly, these hypotheses over-interpret Paul's words and provide no substantiation why certain terms in the passage (especially the reference to the 'Spirit' and 'knowledge') must be the words of the so-called 'opponents' and not Paul's; cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 299n60.

[79] de Vos, *Church*, 269. Cf. Perkins, 'Theology', 92-4.

[80] See Fee, *Philippians*, 120. Cf. E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 128, who describes the actions of Roman authorities after Julius Caesar as 'comprehensive permanent legislation giving positive rights to legalize the practice of Judaism in all its aspects'.

[81] P. Fredriksen, 'Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the Study of Christian Origins Whose Time Has Come to Go', in *Israel's God and Rebecca's Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity. Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado and Alan F. Segal*, eds. D.B. Capes, A.D. Deconick and H.K. Bond (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007), 25-38, at 33, points out that *religio licita* was not a Roman legal term at all but in fact derives from Tertullian. A number of scholars have pointed out that any legal privileges that the Jews possessed were the result of *ad hoc* requests or complaints; cf. T. Rajak, 'Was There a Roman Charter for the Jews?', *JRS* 74 (1984), 107-23; Paul R. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 8-12. P.A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 222, significantly qualifies 'the notion that Jews needed special legal protection because the relationship between synagogues and their polis of residence was by nature conflictual in an ongoing and consistent manner'.

[82] F. Millar, 'The Imperial Cult and the Persecutions', in *Rome, the Greek World, and the East. Vol 2: Government, Society and Culture in the Roman Empire*, eds. H.A. Cotton and G.M. Rogers (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 298-312, at 298.

kind alluded to by Josephus,[83] it is doubtful that there were enough Jews in Philippi who could even make this claim.[84] Finally, it is likely civic authorities would recognise the speciousness of this claim or that Jews in Philippi (if there were any) would allow Gentile Christians to make it. Although the earliest Jewish Christians would have valued any protection their identity as Jews may have afforded them, it is doubtful whether a number of gentile Christians claiming Jewish identity before Philippian civic magistrates would improve their situation. Given the general disdain for Jews in the Greco-Roman world and the suspicion attached to abandoning ancient gods this scenario seems implausible.[85]

6.3.1.4. Phil 3.18-19

A final instance of negative labelling in 3.18-19 occurs in the context of the example of Paul and the plea that the Philippians should imitate him (v.17). This imitation carries with it a future focus that has been in view in the letter from as early as 1.6 where Paul expresses his assurance that 'he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion (ἐπιτελέω) on the day of Christ Jesus'. The Philippians are thus urged to 'stand firm' in their commitment as an expression of Paul's prayer in 1.9-11, a plea reiterated throughout the letter (cf. 2.12-13, 16; 3.15). This forward focus is emphasised in the fact that even Paul cannot rely on his good beginning but must look ahead to the 'prize of the heavenly/upward calling' and God's continual work in him to bring him to completion (cf. 3.12-15: οὐχ...ἤδη **τετελείωμαι**, διώκω δὲ....κατὰ σκοπὸν διώκω εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως....Ὅσοι οὖν **τέλειοι**, τοῦτο φρονῶμεν). It is Paul's example, echoing the example of Christ in 2.6-11, that is the basis of the deliberative aim of the letter that the Philippians remain

[83] Josephus ascribes the favourable decisions toward Jews from the Roman senate, emperors, city decrees and rescripts to provincial governors; cf. *Ant.* 14.301-23; 16.160-78, 185-267. For a critical assessment of this material see H.R. Moehring, 'The *Acta pro Judaeis* in the *Antiquities* of Flavius Josephus: A Study in Hellenistic and Modern Apologetic Historiography', in *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults. Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty*, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 124-58; J.M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan, 323 BCE - 117 CE* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 262-3; and Tellbe, *Paul*, 42, 59.

[84] Outside of the evidence from Acts 16 there is no inscriptional or archaeological evidence attesting to a Jewish presence in first century Philippi. The earliest known evidence for a synagogue comes from a grave stele inscription dated to the third century CE; see Koukouli-Chrysantaki, 'Colonia', 28-35.

[85] Ascough, *Macedonian*, 148n180. See also the disdain that Roman writers had for those who converted to Judaism in Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.96-106; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.1.

steadfast in their commitment and be prepared to suffer as, accordingly, both Paul and Christ have done.

In 3.18-19 Paul contrasts those who walk differently from his example. Whereas Paul desires to share in Christ's suffering, be conformed to his death and attain to a future resurrection of the dead, there are those, whom he has previously mentioned to the Philippians and now remembers with tears, that walk 'as enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly and glory is their shame, whose minds are set on earthly things'. As was mentioned above, considerable effort has been made to identify whom these persons are who walk and think this way. This effort has resulted in a diverse array of options. The opponents of 3.18-19 have been identified as 1) Judaising or Jewish missionaries[86] of 3.2; 2) triumphalist Christian libertines[87] who regard themselves above present suffering; or 3) the pagan opposition in 1.28, in this case specifically associated with voluntary associations in Philippi.[88] The variety of plausible options demonstrates the difficulty in making a firm decision on the identification of 'the many' characterised in 3.18-19. While there is much that is unclear in this passage, what is clear is that Paul's places the emphasis on *behavioural* conduct and not *theological* teaching.[89] It is also likely that whatever our difficulties are in determining what Paul is referring to with unusual phrases like ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἡ κοιλία (3.18),[90] his negative labelling in 3.18-19 speaks of a lifestyle with which the Philippians are familiar. On the whole the implied

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[86] E.g., H. Koester, 'The Purpose of the Polemic of a Pauline Fragment', *NTS* 8 (1961), 317-32; Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 162-7; Lincoln, *Paradise*, 95.

[87] E.g., Schmithals, 'Die Irrlehrer', 297-341. Fee, *Philippians*, 374-5, suggests they are Christian itinerants who may not be libertines but whose 'view of the faith is such that it allows them a great deal of undisciplined self-indulgence'. Since these people appear only once in the letter at this point, Fee concludes that they primarily serve as a rhetorical foil 'to Paul's own "walk" and to his heavenly pursuit'.

[88] Both Tellbe and de Vos build on the work of Cotter, 'Our *Politeuma*', 98-101. Cotter notes the resonance between Paul's descriptions in 3.18-19 and the denunciation of indulgent behaviour amongst voluntary associations recorded by Philo (*Ebr.* 22-5, 29, 95; *Legat.* 311-12; *Flacc.* 4, 136). See also Ascough, *Macedonian*, 145-9, who notes a possible link between Paul's discussion of intra-Christian rivalry in Philippians and intra-group rivalry between Bacchic groups (see *IG* II^2 1368), Dionysian groups (see *IG* X/2 260) and supporters of the god Souregethes. Ascough suggests that Paul may be using these descriptors to reaffirm the Philippians' calling to a greater honour and to warn them that despite being similar to the associations as a community they must not adopt the behaviour typical of voluntary associations.

[89] This is confirmed by Paul's use of the term περιπατεῖν in 3.18 and the fact that nothing is mentioned about teaching.

[90] I.e., the only other metaphorical usage of κοιλία in the Pauline corpus is Rom 16.18; the reference in 1 Cor 6.13 refers to the 'belly' in terms of digestion and Gal 1.15 refers to the 'belly' in terms of the womb.

opponents in 3.18-19 are likely 'Christian'[91] in some sense, but not associated with the 'insider' community Paul is addressing and likely not related to those in 3.2-3. Still, it is difficult to ascertain the exact identity of these 'opponents' or the historical circumstances of the situation based on the limited data in Phil 3.

A promising way forward in understanding Paul's language of opposition in Phil 3 is provided by O. Sandnes' recent study on the belly-*topos* in Paul's letters.[92] Sandnes' thorough study of the belly-*topos* in the Greco-Roman and Hellenistic-Jewish material demonstrates that the concept of 'belly-worship or enslavement to the stomach is firmly rooted in moral philosophical discussions on mastering the desires'.[93] According to Sandnes, in conjunction with the indictments 'being enemies of the cross of Christ', 'glorying in their shame' and 'having the mind set on earthly things', the dictum 'have the belly as god' is part of a lifestyle that is incompatible with being followers of Christ. Sandnes concludes that to have 'the belly as god' is a figurative extension of the stock figure of a glutton and refers to the self-loving Epicurean lifestyle in which all difficulties are avoided. For our purposes, Sandnes' study helps clarify two issues: 1) the reason for the occurrence of 'political' terminology (especially πολίτευμα in 3.20) and 2) the role of negative labelling.[94]

First, Sandnes argues that the political terminology in 3.17-21 appears as a widely attested traditional motif associated with the 'belly-*topos*' in this passage. He supports his position by drawing on a wide range of examples from both Greco-Roman[95] and Jewish-Hellenistic[96] sources to demonstrate that ancient writers drew no distinction between worshipping the belly and worshipping themselves.[97] This judgment accords with Paul's rhetoric in Phil 3.19 that those who stuff the belly, without regard for God or anyone else, essentially worship themselves. Sandnes points out that this focus on the self is given a political edge in the likes of Cicero,[98]

[91] Although Paul speaks that the conduct of these people indicated they are devoted to another god, i.e. their 'belly', his mention of 'weeping' for them and describing them as 'enemies of the cross' implies some claim to Christ and thus possibly 'insiders' within the Christian community; cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 369-70, 374.
[92] K.O. Sandnes, *Belly and Body in the Pauline Epistles*, SNTSMS 120 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[93] Sandnes, *Belly*, 133.
[94] Sandnes, *Belly*, 149-53.
[95] Sandnes, *Belly*, 24-92.
[96] Sandnes, *Belly*, 97-131.
[97] E.g., Xenephon *Mem.* 1.5.1-6, where Socrates notes that public servants must be stronger than their bellies.
[98] E.g., Cicero, *Fin.* 2.58-63, considers the doctrine of Epicurus, with its emphases on the pleasures of the belly (i.e. excessive eating, drinking and sex; cf. *Nat. d.* 1.113), to be harmful to civic duty.

Epictetus[99] and Demosthenes[100] who argue that those whose lives exhibit servitude to their bellies are not reliable citizens since they seek to serve their own selfish ends and not that of the state. In light of this common figurative extension of the belly-*topos* linked with the question of living as a proper citizen it is not surprising that political terminology occurs in 3.20 with mention of a heavenly πολίτευμα as a contrast to the 'belly-worshipers' of 3.19. Paul's agenda and his use of the belly-*topos* may be intended to demonstrate that 'believers who seek only their own end, and who are unprepared to undertake a self-abnegating life according to the pattern set by Christ, have neglected their heavenly citizenship. What is true for the earthly city, goes for the heavenly *politeuma* as well; belly-devotion is a neglect of the duties of a citizen and is incompatible with true citizenship'.[101] This interpretation of 3.18-20 corresponds well with the concerns of the letter elsewhere, especially with the picture of Christ and his example for others (2.1-8) and the emphasis on friendship in the letter expressed as the opposite of self-love but in caring for the interests of others (e.g., the examples of Timothy, 2.20-21; Epaphroditus, 2.29-30; and Paul's own example in 3.7-11 which is parallel to the ideal friendship expressed in Christ in 2.6-11).[102]

Second, Sandnes proposes a reading of Phil 3 that may assist in breaking the deadlock on the question of 'opposition'.[103] Rather than focusing on the elusive quest to identify opponents, he suggests that we are better served by focusing on the rhetoric of Paul's argument. He proposes that the examples raised in Phil 3.2-3 and 18-19 function as rhetorically appropriate foils to the example of Paul rather than suggesting the presence of actual opponents.[104] Thus, the choice of Judaizers and self-loving libertines (who resemble the practices of voluntary associations) are both legitimate, potential threats to the Philippians that Paul intends to safeguard them

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[99] E.g., *Diss.* 2.20, 26, where Epictetus remarks that the soldiers of Thermopylae would not have readily embraced death if they had been followers of Epicurus.

[100] E.g., *De Corona* 285-305 where Demosthenes indicts Aeschines as an enemy of Athens and ill disposed to the common good of its citizens by speaking of him (and his associates) as one who measures the happiness of his stomach without sharing in the common suffering of his compatriots.

[101] Sandnes, *Belly*, 151.

[102] Cf. L.M. White, 'A Paradigm of Friendship'; S.K. Stowers, 'Friends and Enemies'; J.T. Fitzgerald *Friendship*, 83-160; Fee, *Philippians*, 2-4; Sandnes, *A New Family*, 86-91, 152

[103] Sandnes, *Belly*, 155-59.

[104] See also D.A. de Silva, 'No Confidence in the Flesh: The Meaning and Function of Philippians 3:2-21', *TrinJ* 15 (1994), 27-54, at 52, and Peterlin, *Philippians*, 90-100.

against.[105] In the case of 3.17-21 the language of contrast need not be strictly tied to an argument that must identify actual 'opponents' whether they be external civic authorities, itinerant (Christian) Jewish missionaries or internal Christian foes. Along these lines Bockmuehl writes:

> Paul's interest in these enemies of the cross is general and rhetorical rather than specific and sustained. They are evidently of no acute importance to Paul, and their sole appearance in this letter serves merely to give sharper definition to the Christ-centred orientation which Paul wants to commend to his readers. It is this concern which governs his argument both before and after the parenthesis of verses 18-19.[106]

The focus, in this configuration, falls not so much on the opponents but on the Philippians and Paul's theological concerns. The emphasis shifts from the historical details of the Judaizers of Phil 3.2-4 or the belly-worshipers deemed to be 'enemies' of 18-19 – opponents who may or may not be present in Philippi – to Paul's general contrast between 'those whose minds are set on earthly things' and those whose commonwealth is in heaven. The former are those who fail to participate in the present sufferings on behalf of Christ and who will then miss sharing in the future glory with the resurrected Christ.

6.3.1.5. Conclusions

Given Paul's general but enticing comments about 'opposition' in his letter to the Philippians it is not surprising that they have generated considerable interest but little scholarly consensus as to the source and nature of this opposition. There are, however, several conclusions with respect to the issue of Paul and Empire that can be made based on the limited evidence that is available. First, Paul is not interested in naming or identifying 'those who oppose' (ἀντικειμένοι, 1.28) the Philippian believers. While it is likely that the opponents mentioned here are external – and the comments in 3.2-3 and 3.18-19 are *warnings* with no clear indication that they refer to

[105] Sandnes follows the conclusions of Peterlin, *Philippians*, 90-2, 98-9, who proposes that these examples represent potential threats and 'underlying tendencies' that have taken root in Philippi without the active influence of 'opponents'. Cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 9, who infers that Phil 3.2-3 'is a *warning* against them, pure and simple; those who consider them *present in Philippi* either assume that or read it into the text' and with respect to 3.18-19 concludes 'who these people are over whom Paul weeps cannot be known for certain, but again, even less so in this case, there is not a hint that they are actually present in Philippi as opponents of Paul and his gospel there.' [emphases his]
[106] Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 232.

actual opponents in their midst - Paul's statements about them are ambiguous.[107] Further, the evidence to support a scenario of conflict with *Roman* opposition is not obvious: the verb πολιτεύομαι (1.28) carries overtones of corporate conduct rather than strictly political valences, and the mention of the 'same struggle' (1.30) can refer to the same *reason* for the struggle (i.e. on behalf of Christ) rather than the same *source* of opposition.[108] Given Paul's vagueness about 'those who oppose you' (1.28) and given that we do not have evidence to go further than observing that they are external, it may be significant that we cannot go further. That is, since we can assume that the Philippians know whom Paul is referring to, he does not feel it is important to add much more specification to their identity. In the end, Paul's priorities are not primarily concerned with the opponents, but with the community and, ultimately, the gospel of Christ.

Second, if the only conclusion that one can make regarding the source of the opposition in 1.28 is that it is external and general (in terms of Paul's actual description) rather than specifically derived from or identified with *Roman civic authorities*, it seems dubious to make the additional step in joining the issues of 3.2-3 and 3.18-19 with matters related to Philippian Christians and their lack of participation in the imperial cult. The attraction for Gentile Christians to come under the umbrella of Judaism and its status as a *religio licita* as a means of avoiding suffering is a non-starter. Further, the theory that in 3.18-19 Paul is aiming at the Philippian *collegia* which loyally support the imperial cult is possible, but, again, far

[107] Even Oakes, *Philippians*, 89-99, who supports an anti-imperial reading of Phil 2.6-11 and 3.20, agrees that the identity of the ἀντικειμένοι is likely not from Roman political authorities or legal processes, but as a result of opposition from relatives or other ordinary people in Philippi as a result of strained social relations, sporadic violence and possibly economic sanctions. Contrast de Vos, *Church*, 264-5 (cf. 156-7), who suggests that the conflict in Philippi may have arisen from Christians who refused to take loyalty oaths to Caesar similar to those which may have been required in Thessalonica; cf. a similar conclusion by Harrison, 'Paul', 80. As will be argued in more detailed below in discussion of Phil 2.6-11, de Vos and Harrison may over-estimate Paul's dependence on the imperial cult and oaths to Caesar in motivating his use of language like κύριος and σωτήρ.

[108] On the question of reasons for persecution in the early church see the work of G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, 'Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?', *PP* 26 (1963), 6-38, at 24; T.D. Barnes, 'Legislation Against the Christians', *JRS* 58 (1968), 32-50, and Price, *Rituals*, 15, 220-2, show that there is a lack of evidence for Roman-initiated, official persecution in the empire in the first two centuries. Cf. Millar, Persecutions', 298-312; Harland, *Associations*, 187-9, 244-51; K. Hopkins, *A World Full of Gods: Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Roman Empire* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 111-23; R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Penguin, 1986), 38, 95, 98, 419-34. The cumulative research shows that the imperial cult was not a key issue behind Christian and societal tensions nor a pivotal cause in the persecution of Christians. When persecution did occur it was often the result of Christian assertiveness or their general disregard for ancestral customs, customs that could include the imperial cult but only as a part of much broader range of concerns.

from conclusive. A strong case can be made that the political terminology in 3.20 (i.e. πολίτευμα) may just as likely be a traditional motif associated with the belly-*topos* Paul is employing as part of his rhetoric. This possibility sidelines the question of *collegia* in Philippi altogether.

It is right to conclude that opposition and its attendant suffering for the Christian community is a dominant theme in Philippians but it is nowhere directly connected with Roman magistrates or representatives of Roman power. Paul's framework allows him to view persecution beyond the category of earthly political powers and their threats of social isolation, violence or domination. For him, the source of the persecution (e.g., political, social, economic) does not seem to be important. Granted, it may have been important for the writer of Acts to demonstrate that political charges against Christians were baseless and the church as a social entity was not a threat to Roman imperial power. But these are neither Paul's interests nor his categories. In Philippians, Paul is deeply concerned with conformity to the sufferings of Christ, unity amongst the followers of Christ as a means of living out the gospel in obedience to their heavenly identity, and the promise of resurrection as eschatological vindication. As we noted in Rom 8, the dangers that Paul envisions threatening followers of Christ are broad, encompassing death and life, angelic and archic powers. The fact that it may be a Roman persecution that is threatening the Christian community in Philippi is not what interests Paul, and calls into question efforts to find a fitting historical context for every detail in the text. The danger is to assume that our categories are the same as Paul's categories when it comes to opposition and suffering.

6.3.2. Critique by Implication?

In a recent article evaluating N.T. Wright and R. Horsley and their 'fresh perspective' on Paul's so-called anti-imperial theology, D. Burk issues a series of cautions in following this new reading of Paul's letters.[109] Amongst several admonitions, Burk draws on the work of E.D. Hirsch in recognising an important hermeneutical distinction that is often overlooked by 'fresh perspective' proponents:

[109] D. Burk, 'Is Paul's Gospel Counterimperial? Evaluating the Prospects of the "Fresh Perspective" for Evangelical Theology', *JETS* 51 (2008), 309-37.

the distinction between meaning and implication. [110] As Burk notes, 'for Hirsch, verbal meaning is what an author has consciously willed to convey through the linguistic signs he uses and which can be conveyed (shared) by those linguistic signs. An implication, however, differs in that it is not a part of the author's conscious intention, even though it is established by a type that derives from the author's willed meaning'.[111] Burk highlights Wright as one who fails to make this distinction by coalescing Paul's meaning and the implications of his meaning. Wright identifies how Paul's message was 'heard' by his audience with what the apostle meant.[112]

Although Burk does not examine Wright's approach to Philippians, the same methodological critique could be levelled against Wright's argument on Phil 3. Wright argues that Phil 3.2-11 'function[s] as a coded challenge to Caesar's empire, telling Paul's story of renouncing his past and embracing the Messiah in order to encourage the Philippians along an analogous path'.[113] Wright posits that Paul's example in 3.2-11 is a challenge to an alternative loyalty in a manner that parallels 2.5-11. If 2.5-11 should be heard as affirming Jesus, not Caesar, as Lord so too should 3.2-11 be heard as issuing warnings against Judaism 'as a code for warning against the Caesar-cult'.[114] This may be a possible *implication* of 3.2-11, but it is almost impossible to discern whether this is the expressed *meaning* of Paul's argument for several reasons. First, Wright's reliance on 'code' to decipher Paul's intent in Phil 3.2-11 not only fails to distinguish between meaning and implication, but the introduction of the concept of a hidden message at 'secondary level' is exegetically unwarranted. There is nothing in the text of chapter 3 itself that indicates Paul's words are meant to carry a secondary meaning. Paul does not mention Rome nor does he make explicit reference to Caesar in this context. Since Paul nowhere speaks openly against Rome in his other letters it is impossible to assume the non-

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[110] Burk, 'Gospel', 319-22.

[111] Burk, 'Gospel', 320; cf. E.D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 31, 61-7.

[112] This reliance on what the Philippians 'heard' between the lines of the text is repeated regularly by Oakes who appeals to what the Philippians 'likely', 'probably', 'undoubtedly' or even 'unavoidably' heard in Paul's letter; cf. Oakes, *Philippians*, 150, 174, 201, 207-8.

[113] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 181. Wright's thesis is similar to the one proposed by Pilhofer, *Philippi*, 123-7, who argues that the 'foil' (die Folie; cf. 123) for Paul's designations of himself in 3.5 is meant as a confrontational counter-part to self-designation of a Roman citizen. Again, while this may be an implication from the text, there is nothing in the text that indicates this is Paul's meaning. Further, Pilhofer's thesis linking Paul's terms with their Roman counterparts (i.e., toga [virilis] ⇔ περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος; civis Romanus ⇔ ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ; tribu Voltinia ⇔ φυλῆς Βενιαμίν; Cai filius ⇔ Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων) only succeeds by ignoring the remainder of Paul's self-description in 3.5b-6.

[114] Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 174.

reference to Rome in Phil 3 must be hidden in code. Second, it is historically implausible that Paul is keeping matters hidden in order to keep circumstances 'safe' for the Philippians (cf. 3.1), for Christians in Rome or even for Paul himself. If he writes in 'code' in order to somehow shield the Philippians from state censure this would require positing a level of surveillance unheard of even in the third century during periods of state-organised persecution. If Paul wishes to keep those in Rome 'safe' by writing obliquely in chapter 3, then it is odd that he would write an open greeting from those in 'Caesar's household' in 4.22. Finally, it is difficult to imagine that Paul somehow wanted to avoid further danger for himself, as Georgi suggests, after he has so openly admitted that he is willing to die in 1.21-26 in prison for Christ if necessary (although he expects σωτηρία, 1.19; cf. 2.24).[115]

Wright's appeal to a coded message of subversion in Phil 3 is akin to the 'hidden transcripts' that others in the Paul v. Empire coalition find in Romans 13 (see the previous chapter). As in our analysis of the 'hidden transcript' approach, Wright's method fails to offer a legitimate reason why Paul was obliged to write in code in *private* correspondence to close friends where he could have openly expressed his ideological opposition to Caesar if he so intended. As with the appeal to 'hidden transcripts', which are meant to be discerned in *public* documents where obliqueness and allusion are necessary, the argument for a hidden code in Phil 3 is methodologically flawed and exegetically unsustainable.

6.3.3. Competition and Comparison with the Emperor?

Phil 2.9-11 and 3.20-1, with the titles κύριος and σωτήρ in prominent position, are regularly cited as passages that indicate Paul is intending Christ to be understood as either in direct comparison or in competition with Caesar. There is little doubt that legitimate parallels exist between the titles ascribed to Christ and Caesar. It is the assessment of the value and context of those parallels that is in question. That is, does the context demand a Christ-Caesar comparison? Is there something in the historical situation that requires an anti-imperial reading? Since Phil 3.20-1 is generally viewed as the 'clearer case'[116] supporting an anti-imperial reading, our analysis will begin there before returning to 2.9-11.

[115] Pace Georgi, *Theocracy*, 72.
[116] Oakes, *Philippians*, 138.

6.3.3.1. Philippians 3.20-1

Oakes[117], following Lohmeyer,[118] posits that Paul's use of the word πολίτευμα sets 3.20 as 'immediately political'. In response to this assertion, one might reasonably ask why the usage of πολίτευμα in v. 20 demands a political reading. As a word it can have many different meanings,[119] but the most likely meaning is the common Hellenistic sense of the word as 'commonwealth'. Like the usage of the verbal cognate πολιτεύομαι in 1.27 and its emphasis on living with proper reference to others within a community, in 3.20, with the comparison between οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦτες in 3.19, Paul seems to be highlighting a dynamic power from heaven that is to regulate its adherents on earth.[120] In this case the antithesis Paul envisions is between those whose πολίτευμα is in heaven and those who think in earthly terms (οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες, 3.19). Unfortunately (for historians), Paul does not define his earthly-minded antagonists. While Paul can compare heavenly and earthly cities (e.g., Gal.4.25-6), there is nothing to suggest that the πολίτευμα in 3.20 is contrasted with an earthly one in Philippi or Rome. The contrast is broader than between Heaven and Rome or Heaven and Philippi, and on the side of the heavenly πολίτευμα the members include more than just the Philippian believers since the commonwealth envisioned is the possession of every believer, including Paul – i.e., '*our* πολίτευμα' (cf. '*we* are the circumcision', 3.3).[121] Although I find Sandnes' suggestion helpful that Paul's use of the term πολίτευμα may be generated as part of a traditional motif associated with the belly-*topos*, even if one agrees with those who suggest that Paul is countering the Philippian voluntary associations – known for their devout loyalty to Rome – the breadth of Paul's

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[117] Oakes, *Philippians*, 138.

[118] Lohmeyer, *Christuskult*, 27.

[119] The semantic range includes: 1) the active form of government, the 'constitution' by which a state is governed; 2) the 'state' or a political community within a state; 3) 'citizenship' and its privileged political powers; 4) a 'colony' of foreigners. The definition 'citizenship' is poorly attested in the NT period and will likely not fit here; cf. P.C. Böttger, 'Die eschatologische Existenz der Christen: Erwägungen zu Philipper 3.20', *ZNW* 60 (1969), 244-63, at 252, and Lincoln, *Paradise*, 99. 'Colony' should also be ruled out as a translation in Phil 3.20 since Paul's emphasis is that the Philippians' πολίτευμα is in heaven and not on earth; see also objections raised by Koester, 'Purpose', 330n1, and Strathmann, 'πόλις κτλ', *TDNT* 6.535. The suggestion by Lohmeyer, *Der Brief*, 157, and Beare, *Philippians*, 136, that 'homeland' be understood for πολίτευμα is without lexical support; cf. Lincoln, *Paradise*, 99.

[120] Lincoln, *Paradise*, 99; cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 378n17.

[121] Cf. Cotter, 'Our *Politeuma*', 104.

comparison (i.e. between heaven and τὰ ἐπίγεια) militates against a narrow Heaven versus Rome contrast. Despite being a *hapax* in Paul's letters, other first century Jews, including Philo[122] and Josephus,[123] could employ πολίτευμα and the ethics they associated with it to demonstrate the distinctiveness of their people or communities from *all* other governments or constitutions, not just Alexandria, Rome or wherever.

Since it is questionable whether the metaphor πολίτευμα carries explicit civic-political valences and it is unlikely that Paul is drawing a specific contrast to any one city in 3.20, does the combination of the title σωτήρ and the salvation that he brings denote an unequivocal comparison with the Emperor? Again, since the text lacks an unambiguous reference to Caesar, this reading must be read into the text. Oakes acknowledges that on its own the title σωτήρ does not necessarily point to a comparison with the Emperor since many deities in antiquity were referred to as 'saviour'.[124] Further, Paul, and possibly the Philippian believers, would be informed by the many references to God as saviour in the LXX.[125] Nonetheless, Oakes and de Vos insist that the 'salvation' that Caesar inaugurated is being contrasted at this point. But, again, this seems far from certain. First, the historical situation in Philippi offers other examples, in addition to Caesar, of 'saviours' who might compete for loyalties with Christ. In this regard, Ascough describes inscriptions to the cult of the Thracian Horseman that were important in first century Philippi. Among the many epithets to this deity a prominent one is the title 'saviour' and the hope that this hero would bring to those in the afterlife.[126] This could suggest that Paul's mention of a 'saviour' from heaven was countering the social practices and beliefs of followers of this cult and their hopes for a better life since the context in which Paul uses the title in 3.20 is future hope.

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[122] *Spec.* 2.46; *Opif.* 143; *Agr.* 82; *Ios.* 69; *Conf.* 109.
[123] *Ant.* 1.5, 13; 11.157; *Apion* 2.145, 164, 165, 184, 250, 257.
[124] Oakes, *Philippians*, 139; cf. W. Foerster, 'σώζω κτλ' and 'σωτήρ' in *TDNT* VII, ed. G. Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 992-3, 1003-21. A.D. Nock, '*Soter* and *Euergetes*', in *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, ed. Z. Stewart (London: Clarendon Press, 1972), 720-35, at 727-8, offers an interesting comment on the usage of the term in the first century Roman world with reference to a certain C. Iulius Xenon of Thyatira who was acclaimed for his services to Asia to be '*soter* and *euergetes* and *ktistes* (founder) and *pater* of his fatherland'. He notes that '*soter*, while most often used of Emperors, was at times formally applied to local dignitaries and to Imperial functionaries, in a manner which indicates that it was not felt to be excessive or invidious'.
[125] See Michael, *Philippians*, 182-3; Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 171; O'Brien, *Philippians*, 462-3; Fee, *Philippians*, 381.
[126] Ascough, *Macedonian*, 158-9. Cf. *CCET* I no. 10

Beyond this historical note and the possible interplay it would have with Phil 3.20-1 is a second and more important consideration. The salvation of Caesar pointed to significant changes in the empire in terms of political stability, economic prosperity, peace and social harmony. Why would the Philippians automatically think 'Caesar' when they hear that the σωτῆρ from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, will transform their 'lowly bodies'? This kind of transformation and the power required to do so is what interests Paul, both at this point and elsewhere in the letter, not any so-called 'power' that Caesar can wield in his empire. This wholly different 'salvation' even appears to lead away from a political reading. Just a few verses earlier we read that hope in the *power* of the resurrection (τὴν **δύναμιν** τῆς ἀναστάσεως), unity with Christ in suffering and in *conformity* with his death (**συμμορφιζόμενος** τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ; 3.10-11) is what propels Paul forward. Similarly, transformation in *conformity* with Christ's body of glory (**σύμμορφον** τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ) by the working of his *power* (κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ **δύνασθαι** αὐτόν, 3.21) that enables Christ to bring all things in submission to him is what is to shape the Philippians' identity as they follow the example set by Paul.

As was mentioned above, I find Oakes' description of what Paul is envisioning in Philippians in terms of 're-mapping' their understanding of space and time to be very helpful. It seems clear that Paul is mapping out the territory where their πολίτευμα exists at present, i.e. spatially in heaven in contrast to earth, and using it to shape behaviour on earth. As Paul waits in prison with a considerable level of confidence for his own σωτηρία (1.19), he enjoins the Philippians to await their own σωτήρ (3.20), the Lord Jesus Christ. In both sets of circumstances there is tension between the reality of the present time and future hopes: for himself, despite his present imprisonment and threat of death, Paul is confident he will be delivered (1.19; cf. 2.24); for the Philippians, Paul declares that 'our πολίτευμα *is* in heaven' – although they all must still '*await* a saviour' and experience suffering on earth. Further, Paul is clear that he has not already attained what he reaches for in the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (3.12-14); similarly, the Philippians' transformation is decidedly in the future and their heavenly σωτήρ is still awaited.[127] While I am in agreement with Oakes' description of Paul's 're-mapping' programme, I am not convinced that either the lexical or the contextual evidence supports a reading

127 This future focus is part of the recurrent eschatological orientation of every major section in the letter (1.9-10, 19-20; 2.16; 3.11, 12-14, 20-21; 4.5).

that requires that a comparison between Christ and Caesar be understood in 3.20-1. Paul's cartography may indeed relativise and subvert the claims of Caesar, but it does so as a part of the contrast with all those who 'think in earthly terms' (οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες, 3.19), not simply those who look to Rome.

6.3.3.2. Philippians 2.9-11

In turning our attention to Phil 2.9-11, the second stanza of the well-known 'Christ hymn' of 2.6-11, we move to a portion of Paul's letters that has received an inordinate amount of attention. This interest is completely justifiable. As Foerster notes, the light that is shed by this passage is 'inexhaustible'.[128] Unfortunately, the attention that is usually given to the enigmatic search for the Christological origins of the so-called pre-Pauline 'hymn' also creates problems of its own. As Tellbe notes, this endless search tends to isolate the passage from its immediate literary and wider socio-historical contexts and drives an unnecessary wedge 'between kerygma and ethics'.[129] Although I may demur with a number of the conclusions held by my primary interlocutors with regard to the imperial implications of 2.6-11, they should be commended, again, for their work on several counts. First, they demonstrate not only the literary relationship that 2.5-11 has with 3.20-1 but also how 2.5-11 'fits' the literary argument of 1.27-2.18.[130] Second, in their comparative analysis, they avoid attempting to draw hypothetical parallels between Christ and specific rulers or individuals.[131]

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[128] Foerster, 'κύριος', 1088.

[129] Tellbe, *Paul*, 254. The latter situation is best illustrated by the investigations of E. Käsemann, 'A Critical Analysis of Philippians 2:5-11', *JTC* 5 (1968), 45-88, and R.P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians 2:5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship*, SNTSMS 4 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 68-74,84-8, 287-92. Käsemann and Martin argue that Paul employs the 'Christ hymn' not for paradigmatic purposes in order to guide the Philippians' ethics but to remind them of their eschatological and soteriological existence 'in Christ'. More recently, strong cases have been made that demonstrate the connection between kerygma and paraenesis in this passage; cf. L.W. Hurtado, 'Jesus as Lordly Example in Philippians 2:5-11', in *From Jesus to Paul: Studies in Honour of Francis Wright Beare*, eds. P. Richardson and J.C. Hurd (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Press, 1984), 113-26, at 120-5, and M.D. Hooker, 'Philippians 2.6-11', in *Adam to Christ*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 88-100.

[130] See Tellbe, *Paul*, 232, 254n193; Oakes, *Philippians*, 188-207. This primary significant step is what Hurtado, 'Jesus', 119, appealed for among scholars and, in particular, criticised in Käsemann's work on Phil 2.6-11.

[131] As do a number of scholars, including: A.A.T. Ehrhardt, 'Jesus Christ and Alexander the Great', *JTS* 46 (1945), 45-51; W.L. Knox, 'The "Divine Hero" Christology in the New Testament', *HTR* 41 (1948), 229-49, who draws a comparison between Jesus and Heracles; and K Bornhäuser, 'Zum Verständnis von Philipper 2.5-11', *NKZ* 44 (1933), 428-34, 453-62, and D. Seeley, 'The Background of the

There are several questions, however, that arise with regard to their argument for viewing a competition/comparison between Christ and Caesar in 2.9-11. First, one might ask where 'earthly rulers' are in view in the passage? It is not irrelevant to observe that no explicit mention is made of the Emperor in 2.6-11. Any comparison must be inferred. Even Tellbe admits that 'rather than looking for conjectural analogies between any particular ruler and Jesus – although these may exist – *the text should rather be viewed as positing a general contrast between Christ's exaltation and the pursuit of power among earthly rulers* [emphasis his]'.[132] The simple point to be made is that there is no comparison in the passage between Christ and 'rulers' at all.

Second, one might ask whether the cumulative argument raised by Oakes is satisfying. In an effort to substantiate his case, Oakes offers eight different factors demonstrating 'that the Philippians would have heard a comparison being drawn' between Christ and Caesar. Importantly, these factors are dependent on what must have been 'heard' by the audience rather than what is stated in the text. Even if one does allow a hearing for these factors, issues can be raised against them on a number of fronts. For example, Oakes' first factor is the link 2.9-11 has with 3.20-1. He suggests that if the 'clear' political overtones are heard in 3.20-1, then they must be heard in 2.9-11. But, as I have argued above, the political valences in 3.20-1 are far from certain.

Oakes' second factor is that Christ's universal authority is comparable to the Emperor's claim to world authority. But even here, while stating that 'first-century hearers would undoubtedly think in terms of the Roman Emperor' when hearing that all knees will bow to Christ and every tongue acknowledge him as Lord, Oakes goes on to write that Christ is depicted 'with a far wider scope of authority than the Roman Emperor'.[133] But might this not be the point of Paul's declaration? The territories which Christ and Caesar inhabit are not only *quantitatively* different (Caesar: the Lord of the earth; Christ: the Lord of heaven, earth and the underworld), but also *qualitatively* different. Oakes notes the radical reconstruction of power and the re-mapping that this passage entails for the Philippians. However, it seems unlikely that Jesus is being offered as an alternative 'emperor'. Whereas the power that concerns emperors (and many modern theorists such as Foucault, Gramsci, etc.) is power as

Philippians Hymn (2:6-11)', *Journal of Higher Criticism* 1 (1994), 49-72, at 61-71, who attempt to draw a parallel between Christ and Caligula.

[132] Tellbe, *Paul*, 256.

[133] Oakes, *Philippians*, 150.

'domination', Paul offers a vision that is not interested in this kind of power. In the Christ hymn power does not equal domination; the power of Christ is expressed through weakness, humility and self-giving. But arguing that Paul compares or contrasts Christ with Caesar is to let imperial politics, and its definition of power, set the agenda for the passage. Both the context of the Christ hymn with its concerns for communal unity and the content of the Christ hymn with its definition of the Lord's character offer a qualitatively different and radically reworked notion of power in 2.6-11. In comparison to Josephus, who is absorbed with trying to understand how God is providentially in control of the universe and yet lets the Romans defeat his chosen people, Paul does not bring his broad scope of Christ's power into play with narrow political contrasts with Rome. In fact, while there are a number of areas of actual and potential clash points in the letter, none of them are 'political'. The many antitheses that concern Paul in the letter are between earth (τὰ ἐπίγεια, 3.19) and heaven (ἐν οὐρανοῖς, 3.20); between resurrection (3.21) and perdition (3.19); between those who are earthly-minded (3.19) and those who are Christ-minded (2.5); between those who are motivated by envy and rivalry (1.15) and those acting in humility and unity (2.2-4, 21); and between those who are 'enemies of the cross' (3.19) and those who are followers of the cross (2.6-8; 3.10). Nowhere are the claims of Caesar – who is casually mentioned in 4.22 – said to be in opposition with Christ. Nowhere does Paul explicitly connect the 'magistrates' or any other Roman civic authorities with the suffering the Philippians are encountering. In the end, one searches in vain to find where Christ explicitly competes with Caesar in the letter. The space which Christ inhabits is larger and the points of conflict of a different order from the power politics of empire.

Another factor that Oakes raises as evidence to demonstrate where Christ's 'imperial' credentials are comparable with those of Caesar is an analogous affinity between their legitimation of power and their self-sacrificial examples to their followers.[134] In this regard Oakes attempts to draw a comparison between Roman moral qualities of the optimal ruler – the one who is self-effacing and devoted to his people – as the only person who may rule legitimately and the logic (though not the content) of Phil 2.6-8. In Phil 2.6-8 Christ is depicted as refusing to seek his own interest, and therefore God, like the Senate of Rome, logically recognises that Christ

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[134] E.g., in Oakes' taxonomy the following points: 'Authority granted for a reason', 154-60 and 'A leader who defines his people's ethics by example', 172-4.

is the appropriate one to receive supreme authority in 2.9. In part, this comparison does seem valid. However, it does appear strained to construe Christ's obedience to the point of death on a cross[135] as comparable to the service and example that Caesar offers to the empire.

An additional example that both Oakes and Tellbe appeal to in order to indicate the comparison between Christ and Caesar is the title 'Lord'. It is true that there does appear to be a special emphasis in Philippians on Jesus Christ as the divine κύριος[136] but does this emphasis imply Paul is foregrounding the political connotation of this title, a title that, along with σωτήρ, was also used for Caesar in the first century? Is Paul intending his audience to hear 'and not Lord Nero' whenever they hear 'Jesus Christ is Lord'? This may indeed be the case if κύριος was a title that was exclusive to Caesar and not simply a primary way of speaking of the gods in various cults, especially in Egypt and the East.[137] It is hard to imagine that the declaration κύριε Σάραπι or κύριε Διόνυσε would be considered politically subversive in Philippi. Only if this title had been exclusive to Caesar and his cult would declaring Christ as Lord have been viewed as disloyal.[138] Further, for Paul and his complex Jewish theological commitment to one Lord and one God it would be unremarkable for him to highlight the fact that regarding Caesar as a deified emperor was inappropriate for followers of Christ. The emperors and their cult appear to be only examples of the general categories within paganism that Paul elsewhere subsumes under his designation of 'many lords and many gods' (cf. 1 Cor 8.5-6). It is, however, remarkable that Paul places Christ in the position of 'Lord' given his quotation from Isa 45.23 in Phil 2.10, which in its Isaianic context refers to God as the sovereign ruler with the nations showing obeisance to him alone. It is less significant to observe that if Paul has this exalted view of Christ he would then regard

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[135] Cf. Hurtado, 'Jesus', 124, rightly observes on the syntax that 'the obedience of Phil. 2:8 is not the obeying *of* death, as if death were one of the cosmic powers here, but obedience to the *extent* of death (*mechri thanatou,* not *thanatōi*!)' [emphasis his].
[136] Noted by Tellbe, *Paul*, 258. But it should be noted that it is not abnormally high; in fact, the incidence of 'Lord' is more frequent in 1 Cor where it occurs 66 times (or 8.10/1000 words) compared to 15 occurrences (or 7.71/1000 words) in Phil.
[137] Cf. Foerster, 'κύριος' *TDNT* 3.1046-58; LSJ 1013 (*kyrios* B); BDAG 577.
[138] This does, however, become a *test* of loyalty for Christians, but not until the second century. See *Mart. Pol.* 8.2; Pliny *Ep.* 10.96. It is important to note, however, that neither in the account of Polycarp's martyrdom nor in Pliny's correspondence with Trajan is the issue of political disloyalty and failure to participate in the imperial cult given as a *reason* for bringing Christians to trial. The reason is located more generally in the Christians' failure to honour the gods or participate in civic religious life (i.e., 'atheism'), not failure to participate in imperial cults specifically. Cf. Harland, *Associations*, 244-51.

any human being, even Caesar, as comparable to this one who is described as equal with God (ἴσα θεῷ, Phil 2.6), the one who one verse earlier in Isaiah 45 declares: ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ θεός καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος (Isa 45.22).

Besides my overall hesitation for acknowledging a comparison between Christ and Caesar in Phil 2.9-11, a second area of concern relates to the literary context of 2.6-11 as a whole. As mentioned above, one of the advantages of recent work done on the question of Paul and Empire is that Oakes and Tellbe have demonstrated how 2.6-11 fits within the argument of the letter itself.[139] Unfortunately, their efforts to fit the passage into the political context of first century Philippi may militate against the gains made to recognise its place in the literary context and overall argument of the letter. In particular, the issue that Phil 2.6-11 is called upon to address is that of unity *within* the Christian community in Philippi, not primarily to demonstrate Christ's superiority over Caesar. In this regard a similar issue where Paul also discerned the need to deploy the text from Isa 45.23 is in Rom 14.11. In both Rom 14 and Phil 2, Paul is concerned with addressing issues related to disunity in the Christian community. Although the text from Isa 45 may indeed relativise imperial ideology, Paul uses it as a text to remind 'insiders' about their own common position as fellow subjects of the Lord Christ. If they are equal on this level, this reality is of consequence in the way in which they relate to one another – especially since the 'Lord' offered himself in humility and obedience on behalf of others. In other words, Paul is not narrowly employing Isa 45 to 'clash' with imperial ideology. Rather, Paul is asserting that behaviour, especially within the community whose πολίτευμα is in heaven, must be shaped by the Lordship of the crucified Christ and demonstrated in a life of humility and obedience.

Oakes and Tellbe are correct in pointing out the literary links between 2.6-11 and the letter as a whole. Without sidestepping into the question of the integrity of the letter, it seems apparent that Paul is using 2.6-11 in a manner that relates to the occasion and issues in Philippi. In an effort to explain the literary significance of 2.9-11 in the letter, especially the 'riddle'[140] of how this inimitable description of Christ's exaltation relates to the Philippians after the imitable actions of Christ in 2.6-8 (i.e., self-lowering and obedient acceptance of suffering), Oakes, and to a lesser extent

[139] D.E. Garland, 'The Composition and Unity of Philippians: Some Neglected Literary Factors', *NovT* 27 (1985), 141-73, at 157-9, carefully details the links between 2.5-11 and 3.20-1. See also N. Flanagan, 'A Note on Philippians 3:20-21', *CBQ* 18 (1956), 8-9.
[140] Cf. Oakes, *Philippians*, 201.

Tellbe and de Vos, turns to a comparison between Christ and Caesar. There are terms and concepts in Phil 2.6-11 that could illustrate, according to Tellbe, a 'contrast in power' between Christ and self-elevating rulers.[141] But the literary and rhetorical function of 2.9-11 in the letter is not expressly directed against those outside the community, however helpful this may have been, but toward those within the community. Hurtado articulates this well by noting, 'the fact that Jesus is now *kyrios* (2.9-11) means that his action of self-humbling and obedience has not just exemplary but also fully authoritative significance. What Paul calls for is obedience (2:12), as Christ was obedient (2:8), and the authority of his call to obedience (as the *hōste* of 2:12 indicates) rests on the fact that the one to whom his readers are summoned to conform is now the *kyrios*'.[142] The exalted authoritative status of Christ does 'relativise' the human authority and power of Caesar, but this does not appear to be the target of Paul's rhetoric. Why? Because Caesar and his empire is not Paul's orientating reference point in his vision of reality, rather it is Christ and the πολίτευμα that follows him. It is this focus, not that of empire, that forges the link between the language of Lordship in 2.9-11 and the language of transformation in 3.20-1. The pattern of obedience, humility and cruciform suffering followed by exaltation by God in 2.6-11 forms the template for Paul's own life (3.7-11) and the programme he calls on the Philippians to conform to in 3.17-21. Within this 'universe' Caesar and his empire may form a constituent part, but they do not have primary significance in this space. Because the believers' Lord rules the universe the Philippians have a key role as those who 'shine like stars, having the role of life in the world'[143] (ἐν κόσμῳ λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες, 2.15-6) and as Christ's πολίτευμα. Further, Caesar and his empire have no fundamental bearing on time because temporal reality, for Paul and the Philippians, is now orientated around the future 'day of Christ Jesus' and the arrival of the heavenly σωτήρ.

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[141] Tellbe, *Paul*, 256. For example, the term ἴσα θεῷ bears resemblance to an expression used in the imperial cult where the emperors appeared in the 'forms of gods' and were called ἰσόθεος. See S.R.F. Price, 'God and Emperors: The Greek Language of the Roman Imperial Cult', *JHS* 104 (1984), 79-95, at 88; cf. *Pap. Heid.* 1716.5; 2 Macc 9.12; Appian, *B. Civ.* 2.148. But it is difficult to assess whether the imperial *cult* is in view in Phil 2.6-11. Even Oakes, 'Re-mapping', 319, points out the passage reflects more the actions of a ruling authority than the apotheosis of a ruler.

[142] Hurtado, 'Jesus', 125.

[143] A translation by Oakes in 'Re-mapping', 320. Cf. J.P. Ware, *The Mission of the Church in Paul's Letter to the Philippians in the Context of Ancient Judaism* NovTSup 120 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 256-70, and his discussion of ἐπέχω in Phil 2.16. Ware argues that this phrase expresses Paul's only explicit command to believers to engage in active verbal mission.

The observations about the re-mapping of space and time, which are helpfully indicated by Oakes, alert us also to the postive and primary contributions that Philippians offers with regard to Paul's view of power. I would add, however, that they point to a broader aspect. The nature of Christ's power is not only wider in *scope* from that of imperial power it is qualitatively different in *kind.* The power of Christ, unlike the projections of imperial power exemplified in triumph and domination, is characterised by weakness and service because it is shaped by the paradoxical power of the cross. In Paul's re-mapped view of reality, his framework and the qualitative difference that his notion of Christ's power possess do not need to account for any agency or importance the emperor may have nor to parody or eclipse his power by Christ. The Christ event marks the true power at work in the world, i.e. the power of the resurrection of the crucified Lord. For Paul, this power not only guarantees both his and Philippians' own resurrection, it grants them a unique perspective on suffering since participation in Christ's suffering in the present entails conformity to his resurrection body in the future. With this perspective on reality any power that a mortal emperor can have is not simply relativised but pushed off the map.

6.4. Conclusion

This chapter began with several questions intended to help probe the argument that Paul's letter to the Philippians is marked by anti-imperial messages. The questions of this analysis included the following: Does Paul construe the emperor, or Roman civic authorities in Philippi, as his primary protagonist(s) in the letter and the source behind the suffering of the believing community? What is Paul's view of reality in terms of the fundamental power at work in the world? Is it evident within the framework of the letter or its many antitheses that the power-claims of Christ contrast or compete with Caesar? What follows is a summary of my conclusions with regard to these questions that speaks against the overall argument put forward by the Paul v. Empire project.

First, a fundamental issue was recognised regarding the evidence supporting the Christ v. Caesar model in Philippians. The attempt to uncover anti-imperial message(s) relies on what must be implicitly 'heard' by the Philippian audience rather than what is explicitly written in the letter. There are no unambiguous references within the letter where the interpreter must supply the refrain 'and not Lord Caesar' after reading 'Lord Christ' in order to grasp the argument. While Paul emphasises the supremacy of the Lord Jesus, the priority of the gospel and the cruciform identity of the followers of Christ, one searches in vain to find Caesar or his civic magistrates in Philippi on the opposite side of a comparison in the text. The many antitheses in the letter have been outlined above,[144] but there is no explicit antithesis with Caesar or his empire. Instead, the repeated assertion is made about what imperial echoes *must* 'likely' or 'undoubtedly' be heard by the Philippian readers without explicit mention in the text of 'Lord Caesar', his cult or civic authorities. At its best, this approach depends on historical conjecture; at worst, this approach resorts to arguments based on 'code'. Despite efforts to find the Christ v. Caesar comparison, I am inclined to conclude that this contrast is not a primary concern to Paul, and despite attempts to incorporate interesting observations from the historical background of first century Philippi these insights remain hidden in the background.

Second, what is uncovered when asking how Paul conceives his own historical context or that of the recipients of his letter? That is, how does Paul perceive reality and that of his friends in Philippi? Despite being imprisoned, his primary concern and emphasis remains the gospel and the health of the followers of Christ in Philippi. He indicates *no* interest in the fact that his is a *Roman* imprisonment. Further, he is not concerned about any 'power' that Rome may have over him. While he is confident that he will be released, the ultimate threat of death – the very worst that Roman powers could threaten him with – holds no fear for him since he knows a greater 'power' that cancels out the threat of death: 'the power of his resurrection' (3.10), 'the power that enables him to subject all things to himself' (3.21). This confidence is based on a view of history that is entirely different from that of the Roman world and its 'golden age'. His perception of history is dominated by the Christ event marked by the cross and resurrection of Jesus (2.6-11) and the nearness of the day of Christ (1.6, 10; 2.16; 3.20; 4.5).

What Paul *is* interested in, in terms of his perception of reality, is the condition and shape of the community in Philippi, especially that they be unified and of 'one mind'[145] for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. For Paul, if the community is living its Christ-shaped witness in Philippi it should be no surprise that they will experience Christ-like suffering just as their founder Paul experiences suffering. Apparently, the

[144] See section 6.3.3.2. Philippians 2.9-11 above.
[145] Cf. L.M. White, 'Morality', 210, who outlines the importance of 'one mind' in social relationships.

source of this suffering is not important to Paul, but the *reason* – that is on behalf of Christ – is important. In terms of the question of 'opponents' in Philippi, Paul is vague in his comments about them not because he is unaware of the dangers they present nor because there is a need to write under the cover of 'code'. The *source* of the suffering does not appear to be important within Paul's categories or framework, and he does not choose to provide explicit or clear details about them. Besides the one explicit mention of 'those who oppose you' in 1.28, the remainder of the language of opposition in the letter is vague and ambiguous and there is no way of knowing whether the opposition is real, potential or simply the product of Paul's rhetorical strategy. Paul writes only generally about the source of opposition without any direct reference to Rome, civic magistrates or the imperial cult; this appears to coincide with a number of classical historians who have concluded that lack of participation in the imperial cult or charges of political disloyalty were not significant *reasons* for persecution in the early church.[146] Paul's general comments about those who 'oppose' the followers of Christ in Philippi reflect the conclusion that Christians, even in this loyal *Roman* colony, were marginalised and harassed because of their alternative perception of reality that led them to ignore the ancient gods and traditions of the city, including, but not exclusively, the Roman imperial cult.

Third, the lexical and literary evidence raised in support of a Pauline critique of Empire is ambiguous. There are a number of words in the letter that illustrate Paul's awareness of Roman realia (e.g., the Praetorium, 1.13; Caesar's household, 4.22) and Latinisms (e.g., Φιλιππήσιοι, 4.15), but simple use of these words does not point to an explicit, substantive engagement with Rome in the argument. Further, so-called anti-imperial 'key words' in the letter (e.g. κύριος, σωτήρ, πολιτεύομαι, πολίτευμα) can carry political valences but their actual deployment in the argument of the letter can lead the interpreter just as well away from political readings as toward them. Moreover, with respect to the literary context, one of the key passages in the letter – Phil 2.6-11 – appears at times to be pressed out of its literary context in order to support the Christ-Caesar comparison. Instead of searching for contrasting elements with Caesar or opponents outside the Philippian community, it seems more fruitful to identify how Paul positively deploys Isa 45 language in Phil 2.9-11, as he

[146] E.g., de Ste. Croix, Millar and Price. See note 108 above.

does in Rom 14, to encourage concord and mutual growth within the Philippian community.

Finally, although an anti-imperial bias in Philippians may be difficult to discern, we can be more certain about the behaviour Paul is attempting to engender, and its basis, in the community in Philippi. The basis of the Philippians' behaviour is to be shaped by a worldview or 'map' of reality that is in conformity with the Christ event. As Christ emptied himself, took on the form of a slave, humbled himself and accepted suffering, even to the extent of death on the cross, so should the Philippians be prepared to live, think and be conformed to this paradigm – and the models of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus support this. But for those 'in Christ' who embrace this model they should anticipate vindication in the future when their bodies of humiliation will be conformed to Christ's glorious body (3.21). And this is true, for Paul, because *all* Christians have their commonwealth, their corporate constitution, in heaven and should reflect this existence in their behaviour. Those believers who are unwilling to embrace Christ-shaped existence – i.e. social relations characterised by humility, service and openness to suffering – are in radical disobedience to Christ and his apostle (cf. 2.8, 11) and constitute themselves 'enemies of the cross' (3.18).

Although Paul conceives of an alternative πολίτευμα for followers of Christ, he does not envision disengagement with the world. For himself, Paul still prioritises the advancement of the gospel as its proclamation penetrates even the Praetorium. For others in Rome who are believers in 'Caesar's household', there is no indication that Paul wishes them to leave off their service to Lord Nero. For the Philippians, he construes their obedience, unity and purity of life as the basis for their shining 'like stars, having the role of life in the world' (2.15-16). Paul's vision for community is indeed alternative to those who think in earthly terms, but it is also engaged with society as they advance the gospel in Philippi in a manner that reflects the new 'power' exhibited in the Lord of the universe who serves in weakness and humility. For Paul it is this big picture, this 'map' that is significant, and if it 'relativises' or 'subverts' imperial ideology it does so only because it relativises and subverts any mindset or earthly πολίτευμα, real or community created.

Despite disagreeing with a number of excellent scholars' conclusions regarding the role of the Roman Empire in Paul's letters, I am in fundamental agreement with them on a number of counts as well. First, there is no question that Roman ideology was deeply influential in a colony like Philippi. I agree that itinerant workers like Paul would be confronted by this ideology, especially in a place like Philippi. However, I find it questionable whether Paul was concerned with this ideology or perceived this context, and how it might impact his churches, as providing the fundamental framework for his view of reality. I argue that there is no explicit evidence that he did so in Philippians. Oakes is certainly correct that he has 're-mapped' the world and intends the Philippians to embrace his new cartography, but to set the limits and frame of the map by the shape of the Roman Empire appears to limit Paul's view. The argument that Paul is comparing Christ to Caesar would make Christ Lord of the 'earth' whereas Paul's map encompasses a scope that not only includes all things in 'heaven, earth and under the earth' but also re-maps the very notion of power itself.

Furthermore, I agree that Paul intended to shape an alternative identity for the Christians in Philippi from that of the world. Paul was motivated to form an alternative society which saw its identity in terms of the heritage of Israel ('we are the true circumcision', 3.3), orientated by the gospel ('live lives worthy of the gospel', 1.27), owing primary allegiance to Jesus as Lord ('confess that Jesus Christ is Lord', 2.11) and mutually committed to one another ('standing firm in one Spirit, striving together with one mind', 1.27). However, Paul does not explicitly contrast this society with the Roman Empire, in general, or the imperial cult, in particular, but with all those who set their minds on earthly matters. Of course, this included Rome, but not narrowly so. In this sense, Paul's communities were deeply subversive – not just to Rome, but to any power in heaven or on earth or under the earth.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Throughout this study, a number of conclusions have been made at various junctures and now I will draw together those strands. In order to provide shape to the summary, what follows are the broad conclusions to each of the three areas of question (i.e., those raised in 1.5. and 3.5.) that have guided the study as a whole. First, the narrow question of power and the constraints this power imposes for Josephus and Paul: who is in power and what do they demand? Second, the deeper question of power related to perceptions and discourses of reality articulated by Josephus and Paul: who is in charge of the universe and who are we in relationship to this power? Third, the broad question of power, informed by postcolonial theory, related to power relations: how is the dominant discourse of Roman power being represented, challenged, 'hybridised', or relativised by Paul and Josephus? After these questions have been addressed a final comment will be offered on what the primary and positive interests of Paul appear to be on the question of power as well as several potential questions for further study.

7.1. Imperial Constraints and the Extent of Roman Power

In navigating the sensitive terrain where imperial self-image and Jewish pride were at stake, Josephus was governed by the constraints of empire in three discreet areas. First, there was the situation of his personal context. After the Jewish War Josephus depicts himself as being made a client of the ruling Flavian family. Although he was probably not as close to the Flavian inner circle as some have assumed, he did receive accommodation in Vespasian's former private residence in Rome along with Roman citizenship, tracts of land in captured Judea and a stipend (*Life* 423). A second context that created constraints for Josephus was the declared and implied Roman audiences of the *War*. Elements in the narrative of *War*, especially remarks in the prologue (1.3,6) and the 'prospectus' (1.17-30), suggest that he expected his history to be read by members of the Roman elite. Given both the actual circumstances of writing and his literary context, Josephus could not have directly criticized Roman values, sympathies or hegemony. Thirdly, the circumstances of post-war Jewish existence within the empire were far from conducive for a Jewish historian. The demands that Rome made on the Jewish population were significant and humiliating, especially Vespasian's imposition of the *fiscus Iudaicus* following the Jewish War. This was significant because the Flavians confiscated the annual temple tax and broadened the payment to include every Jew – male and female, adult and child, slave and free – in the Empire. But added to the financial burden this would incur was the deeper humiliation that the tax carried. The half-shekel tax that once was sent to the temple in Jerusalem as a mark of devotion to their one, true God was now redirected to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome. Further, the humiliating legacy of the Jewish defeat was represented by the flood of Jews in slave markets, in the long run of *Iudea Capta* coins and the longer standing monuments, arches and buildings in Rome commemorating Roman victory over the Jews. The Jewish War was a key plank in Flavian propaganda and their imperial legitimacy and its constant reminder generated the constraints of empire that every Jew experienced to varying degrees. Even Josephus, though exempt from paying taxes and receiving a modest pension from the Flavians, lived with the reality that he wrote under the watchful eye of Rome.

All of these observations indicate that Josephus' circumstances *demanded* that he write circumspectly about Roman power and carefully frame his own nationalist assertions. Yet, for all the constraints that required Josephus to articulate his positions with caution, he still managed to make bold assertions, and he did so without resorting to code or requiring 'hidden transcripts'. That is, he openly named and critiqued Roman emperors (Gaius and Nero) and governing officials (Pilate, Albinus, Florus); he portrayed Roman armies as disciplined (3.78, 84, 90; see 3.2.1. n28) and courageous (2.381; 3.71; 4.33; 5.314; 6.36; 7.7; see 3.2.1. n29) as well as disorganised (5.109-19, 469-72) and fearful (5.121-7, 291-5, 314-6); and his depiction of the generalship of Titus is ambiguous (see 3.3.1.). It is true that Josephus criticised a minority of his fellow countrymen for a rebellion that incurred divine judgment. Still, he affirmed a view of providential history that struck decidedly Jewish tones; he represented Jewish soldiers and their leaders as brave, resourceful and noble (e.g., 3.229-33; 5.74; 6.92, 145-8; 7.323, 341-27, 406); he asserted fundamental Jewish values and claims that carved out space for his nation and their unique relationship with God. Despite all his limiting circumstances Josephus did not write an encomium to Rome.

From our study of Paul it is not clear whether he had comparable constraints that required him to be guarded in what he wrote, either for his own sake or for those he addressed. While there are some indications that Paul does admit to limited imperial constraints like paying taxes and granting honour to 'governing authorities' (though no prayer) in Rom 13, he depicts this as merely one part of a broader, positive interaction with society within the scope of the 'debt of love' (Rom 13.8-10) for one's neighbour and to any 'other' with whom a believer may come into contact. Neither his own circumstances nor those of the recipients of his letter to the Romans demonstrate that he needed to write in code (cf. Georgi, Wright), with ironic discourse (Carter) or to protect a vulnerable Jewish community (Elliott). With respect to the conditions of Paul's later imprisonment (presumably in Rome) when Philippians was written, there is no indication that they dampened Paul's resolve to write openly and boldly. He exhibits no concern for his own protection (in fact he thinks he will be released) nor does he try to shroud the identity of those followers of Christ who live in Rome when he names them openly as members of 'Caesar's household' (Phil 4.22). As for the recipients of his letter in Philippi, there is no clear indication of the identity of those who 'oppose' them; if they represent imperial authorities Paul does not seem concerned to classify them as *Roman*. I have suggested that this does not stem from a reluctance to name enemies; rather, this silence on the source of the opposition is simply not Paul's priority. Instead, his priorities are focused on the community and their conformity to the gospel and to Christ. With these priorities, he expects the community to experience suffering on behalf of Christ as part of their identification with Jesus and articulates this clearly in both Philippians (1.28; 2.6-8; 3.10-11) and Romans (8.17-39; 12.17-21). The means by which this identification is formed is the renewal of 'mind' to that of Christ (Rom 12.2, 3, 16; 15.5; Phil 2.5; 3.15; 4.2).

Paul wrote both Romans and Philippians as private correspondence to 'insiders' of the Jesus movement, at a time when Christians were not easily distinguished from the Jewish community and during the so-called 'good years' of Nero's reign. In the end, it is difficult to discern either from Paul's letters or from his historical circumstances plausible reasons why he would have been required or wished to write in code or veiled messages. Further, it is difficult to imagine that such a poor attempt would be made to do so especially if the titles like κύριος and σωτήρ were as politically charged as some within the Paul v. Empire perspective seem to suggest. It is equally difficult to imagine that the state had access to mechanisms of surveillance needed to track private letters to communities in Philippi or Rome.

As I have lined up the circumstances and constraints of Josephus and Paul alongside their literary productions I find no plausible reason to suggest that Paul needed to write in veiled code or hidden transcript. To find messages of subversion between, under or behind the lines of Paul's texts requires scenarios that are beyond historical or literary plausibility. If Paul had so desired to directly oppose or critique Roman imperial power there is little that would have impeded him; devising circumstances that demand him to write in hidden code are, in my judgment, historically inadequate and hermeneutically misguided. Whereas Josephus must write carefully as he carves out space for Jewish values in Flavian Rome, the constraints of empire and the demands that imperial power made do not appear to limit Paul's mission (as he perceives it) in how or what he writes.

7.2. Providential history, Re-mapping the World and Paul's Perception of reality

Romans understood themselves to be the dominant power in the world because the gods favoured them and rewarded their superior virtue. On a number of counts I have argued that Josephus affirms this Roman view of history and mirrors Roman perceptions that divine providence has rewarded Roman superior virtue with worldwide hegemony (5.367; see also 4.622-9; 5.412-3; 6.398-9, 411; 7.360). But not all that Josephus wrote in the *War* is straightforward. Josephus' history, unlike those produced by Polybius and Livy, does not exaggerate Roman claims of power and invincibility and, while he does not denigrate Roman gods, he claims that Roman rule is derived and maintained by the one God – the God who declares the Jewish people as objects of his love (5.376). While his use of the language of fate, providence and 'god' is in step with Greco-Roman perceptions and use of these terms, he frequently mirrors back these ideas in ways that also share a distinctly Jewish grasp of reality. He depicts Roman soldiers as respecting and mourning the temple in Jerusalem (cf. 5.519, 572; 6.345-6; 7.112-3), the words about 'god' that come from the mouth of the Roman generals Vespasian and Titus have a distinctly monotheistic emphasis, and he even draws Flavian legitimacy under a Jewish 'canopy' of reality by predicting Vespasian's emperorship by a Jewish prophet and, later, being proclaimed emperor while on Jewish soil (3.400-1; 4.622-9). In his depiction of the Roman triumph (7.123-62), while he incorporates all the required elements for describing their victory his narrative also serves to highlight the Jewish temple and law. There are even some glimmers of eschatological hope in this darkest of narratives (from a Jewish vantage point) when Josephus emphasises that with the temple items and law preserved/kept under the Emperor's roof they will be guarded for some future use. Of course, none of these claims are overtly anti-Roman, but they do reflect back to Romans their own values in ways that are refracted in Jewish light.

There are some indications that Paul shares Josephus' views of reality in terms of God's providential guidance of history and the role of secular governing authorities. He does not, however, hold to Josephus' framework of history. As was pointed out in chapter five and the analysis of Rom 13, Paul is not idiosyncratic in his approach to governing authorities and the respect and deference that is their due. The pagan governing authorities are, for Paul and many within the Jewish tradition, part of God's good care for society and play a useful, albeit limited, role in this age. His views in this regard are in step with Josephus and his conception of divine providence, even though he does not use Josephus' terminology (i.e., τυχή, πρόνοια). But with regard to the experiences that mark reality for Paul, he does not follow Josephus' framework that depicts political power as making the rounds through successive kingdoms with the latest stop resting on the Roman Empire (*War* 5.367). For Paul, it is God's work in the Christ event and his imminent return (Rom 13.11-14; Phil 1.6, 10; 2.16; 3.20-1; 4.5) that frames history. Between these two poles it is the reign of sin and death that concerns him, not the reign of Caesar and imperial ideology. The emperor and his government may find itself in step with God in their limited mandate within creation (Rom 13.1-7) but they may just as easily be arrayed alongside the 'powers' that threaten believers (Rom 8). That the ἐξουσίαι express themselves as either 'servants of God' or 'rulers of this age' does not significantly concern Paul. He is aware that believers must still consciously choose not to live with their minds κατὰ σάρκα nor mirroring those οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες (cf Rom 8.5-8; Phil 3.19); this is the way that leads to death and reflects the patterns of this age. Instead, he is keen to remind them to renew their minds in conformity with Christ so they might reflect their obligation to live κατὰ πνεῦμα in step with the new creation and mirror those, like Paul, who follow the patterns of their heavenly πολίτευμα.

Paul's understanding of the world is not divided along ethnic, gender or social lines – as it most certainly is for Josephus (it is *Jewish* pride and identity he seeks to defend) – but along the line that separates those whose mindset and identity are shaped by the heavenly πολίτευμα and οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες. This implies a re-mapping of the universe, as Oakes rightly suggests, for Paul and his co-religionists but in this new cartography the Roman Empire's place is unmarked, *not* at the centre as a grand enemy. But however much those who define their primary allegiance to Christ and those who look first to Rome are separated by how they live in the world, this does not lead Paul to advocate parochialism or sectarian withdrawal from society. For him, the world is to be transformed (cf. Rom 8.19-22; 12.1-2), not eradicated, and followers of Christ represent the dawn of this new age. The positive counterpart to 'conformity to this age' is transformation and conformity to Christ. This means the focus is on what will lead to the progress of the gospel, not its covertness, in the world. Followers of Christ are admonished to 'shine like stars, having the role of life in the world' (Phil 2.15) not hide behind the cover of code or hidden transcript. This will most likely entail suffering, a reality Paul anticipates both in Rom and Phil, but Paul also anticipates vindication and resurrection as the final word.

7.3. Power Discourses and the Colonial Self

Postcolonial theory alerts readers to the discourses of power that occur within imperial structures. The analytical tools associated with this theoretical model have been useful in discerning the manner in which Josephus responds and interacts with Roman power. In Josephus' world, Rome is the dominant player and it is their discourse and representation of the Jewish War that he engages with on a regular basis. As I have tried to illustrate and argue, Josephus responds in ways that demonstrate the Roman imprint is alive and active in his narrative but which at critical junctures is bent, hybridised and mirrored back to his Roman audience in ways that are potentially destabilising and assertive of Jewish ethnic pride.

What is markedly different in Paul is the difficulty in applying the resources of postcolonialism to him. In order to employ these resources one would need to identify ways in which the Roman imprint is at work in Paul by way of perception(s) of reality, values or epistemology. There is very little in Paul that appears specifically shaped by the Roman Empire, as opposed to Hellenistic culture generally. His name, Paulus, is Roman. Perhaps he is a Roman citizen – although he makes no mention of his citizenship, and, remarkably, it is not among his list of his credentials in Phil 3.5-7 (nor in 2 Cor 11.22-29) – but one can hardly say, as one clearly can for Josephus, that the specific conditions of the Roman Empire are evident in his work. Paul is remarkably silent when it comes to Roman power. While the destruction of Josephus' temple by Rome destabilises his world and requires substantial accommodation and adjustment to Roman power, the crucifixion of Paul's Lord requires a major re-evaluation for Paul, but not with respect to Roman power. The Christ event alters Paul's world but it alerts him to the enemies at work in sin and death that characterise this age whereas the Roman Empire is at best consigned to a role among the 'rulers of this age' whose power is temporary and on the way out. For Paul, Christ's power and Rome's power entail different orders and priorities. It is not that Paul is ignorant of Roman ideology or its power projections in architecture, coin, sculpture, etc.; rather these claims seem unimportant for him. As such, it is difficult to discern whether or how Paul conceives of himself as a colonial self who must speak to Empire. This may explain why he thinks it unnecessary to draw an antithesis between Christ and Caesar – this is simply not a comparison he explicitly makes or is required to make in his understanding of the significant power relations in the universe.

This reordering of priorities is most clearly depicted in the manner in which Josephus and Paul respond to suffering and tragedy. For Josephus, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple is an event of tragic consequence; it is an event for which he openly breaks historical conventions to express his immeasurable grief (*War* 1.9-12; see 2.3.1. n64). In this way Josephus is deeply marked by this decidedly *Roman* source of suffering. His way of interpreting this event is to draw on a tradition in Judaism that understands the cause of suffering to be disobedience. Josephus interprets the destruction of Jerusalem as something that was only allowed, not because the Romans were powerful enough to do it, but because God was using the Romans as his agents to purge his people (4.323; 6.109-10; cf. 3.2.4.2). Josephus must account for and accommodate this Roman event in his view of reality and he responds to Roman representations of this event with his own Jewish, hybridised historical account.

Paul presumably also knows that his Lord Christ was crucified by Roman hands and under Roman judgement. But unlike Josephus he does not grant any place to Rome as the agents of this event and does not reflect on what would be the Roman account of this incident. Instead he completely ignores any Roman part in the crucifixion and at best loosely groups them as 'rulers of this age' who are ignorant of God's 'wisdom' (1 Cor 2.6-8). For Paul, there is no history to hybridise because there is no Roman representation of it to which he feels it necessary to respond. For him, Rome is simply not a primary player in the Christ event. It follows then that when it comes to suffering Paul does not dwell on its source, especially in Rom 8.17-30 but also in Phil 1.28-30, beyond the most general terms. For him, the reason for suffering (i.e., identity with Christ), not its source, is of concern. But unlike Josephus, the cause is not human disobedience but, as G.D. Fee expresses it, divine gift: 'the God who has graciously given believers salvation ("not only to believe in him"), has with that salvation also graciously given them "to suffer on his behalf"'[1] (Phil 1.29).

In chapter one when summarising the analytical tools from postcolonial theory that may be useful in examining Paul and Josephus, I noted that postcolonial theorists frequently observe a tendency toward subversion by colonised subjects. In the literature of colonised subjects, the empire will often write back and challenge the imperial centre by questioning the bases of the coloniser's *metaphysics* and challenging their *worldview*. Although Josephus' circumstances required that any attempt to question or challenge Flavian domination and discourse be done with extreme care, I have argued that some aspects of his narrative did so. In assessing whether Paul was politically subversive those in the Paul v. Empire coalition argue that he subverts imperial ideology, especially in his comparison and contrast between Christ and Caesar. I am inclined to agree that Paul's theology and his vision of reality (shaped by the Christ event) would ultimately subvert the empire. But I have suggested that this does so by implication and, ironically, by *not* directly comparing or contrasting Christ with Caesar. For Paul, his categories do not appear to permit this. He identifies himself as a servant of Christ – the Lord of all things in heaven, on earth and under the earth – and to equate, compare or view Christ in competition with a human leader like Caesar or his idolatrous cult is, in my judgment, a category mistake. Paul is concerned with Rome only in an oblique way insofar as the empire makes demands for tribute or honour; Rome is not, however, one of the dominant powers in his universe and to regard Caesar as comparable to Christ would be to do so

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[1] Fee, *Philippians*, 171.

'from a worldly point of view' (cf. 2 Cor 5.16). Paul's reading of reality in this regard is not only fundamentally different from his contemporaries, including Josephus, but also from many modern interpreters. In shaping his worldview under the power of the cruciform Christ he offers a view of reality that is radically different and, in the end, fundamentally subversive of imperial propaganda because he does not directly challenge it but subsumes it and relativises it within a larger framework of reality.

Paul is a potentially useful candidate for postcolonial analysis since he is clearly a subject in the Roman Empire (possibly a Roman citizen) and thus must be accessible for postcolonial analysis in some ways. But the imprint that is most fruitfully explored from the perspective of postcolonial theory is that of Hellenism rather than that of Rome. Postcolonial theory is useful and interesting when there is evidence for a cultural-political engagement that takes places at nodal points of the subjects' ideology (political, cultural, theological) and at the level of specifics and particulars. This is clearly so for Josephus in what he thinks about history, his nation, and God. In this regard we can trace interesting instances of mimicry, destabilisation and hybridity in Josephus. In Paul, Hellenistic and Jewish traditions, rather than specifically Roman ones, influence what he says about the state both in his clearest articulation of this matter in Rom 13 and what he writes to followers of Christ living in a highly *Romanised* colony like Philippi. One might expect that for Josephus, with his nation ravaged by Rome, engagement with Roman power would be everywhere, and so it is; one might expect that for Paul, with his Christ crucified by Rome, engagement with Roman power would be very evident - but it is not. At its core, in his central mapping of the world, Rome is surprisingly absent; and this means that postcolonial analysis is not helpful in analysing him, except to say that he appears remarkably resistant to the imprint of Roman culture, perspectives and ideology, having a very strong Jewish one.

7.4. The Positive and Primary Interests of Paul

Despite my essential disagreement with the Paul v. Empire project as a whole, I have learned a great deal from their scholarship. This fundamental disagreement and yet appreciation may best be summarised in my response to the conclusions of

Crossan and Reed in their book: *In Search of Paul: How Jesus' Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom.* I am in disagreement that Paul makes, or is required to make, a theological opponent out of the Roman Empire. I find no reason why Paul must narrow his target to Rome or Caesar as a counterpoint to his theological or communal concerns. In this I would demur from Crossan and Reed's suggestion that Paul asserts a 'hierarchy of the negative' in Rom 13.1-7 – that 'there is a time and a way to obey, a time and a way to disobey the state'.[2] I do, however, welcome their suggestion – albeit late and undeveloped in their book – that Paul exhibits a more fundamental 'primacy of the positive'. Crossan and Reed propose a deeper context for Paul whereby he is '*not so much trapped in a negation of global imperialism as engaged in establishing its positive alternative here below upon this earth*'[3] [emphasis theirs]. This stress on the more fundamental primacy of the positive is a vital qualification, but one that is, to my mind, unnecessary since I do not agree with their assertion of Paul's negative thrust. I cannot discern a clear, direct negation of Roman imperialism at all in Paul's letters, even in Romans or Philippians – the two documents most often appealed to exhibiting this opposition. Still, I find Crossan and Reed's closing illustration from Mohandas Gandhi's attitude towards the imperialism of the British Empire to be helpful. They note that, for Gandhi, opposition to the British Raj was not of primary concern. 'Why worry one's head,' said Gandhi, over a demise 'that is inevitable?...That is why I can take the keenest interest in discussing vitamins and leafy vegetables and unpolished rice'.[4] Paul's primary interests may not be those of Gandhi's, nonetheless the point is that Paul was *positively* concerned with the gospel declared in the Christ event and in nurturing alternative communities who mirror their Lord and Saviour's identity and, for the most part, he simply ignored imperial Rome as one of the powers whose demise was inevitable along with all that is reflective of the 'present evil age' (Gal 1.4).

7.5. Questions for Further Study

The Pauline legacy is ambiguous and has proved itself capable of being interpreted in more than one way. One the one hand, some early Paulinists developed

[2] Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, 394.
[3] Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, 409.
[4] Quoted by Crossan and Reed, *Paul*, 410.

a largely positive and quietist attitude to the state as in the Pastorals that reflect a policy of peacefulness and prayer for governing powers (1 Tim 2.1-2; Titus 3.1-2). On the other hand, some early Paulinists found more cause to see themselves in opposition to the Roman Empire. For example, in the apocryphal *Acts of Paul*, where the apostle's martyrdom is recounted,[5] it seems the Pauline legacy is developed less from the reading of his letters as from the legend(s) surrounding his death, and, perhaps, in a context where the imperial cult became a litmus test for Christian identity. In this connection, the interesting question to explore would be to what extent the figure of Paul, and the letters of Paul, became important in the confrontation between the empire and Christianity, or whether it was actually other texts and/or traditions that were more central. In particular, the position to investigate is whether – or to what extent – the Pauline letters themselves were read in the kind of 'anti-imperial' sense that some scholars now advocate, especially in the second and third centuries when the church was in open conflict with agents of the Roman state.

In bringing attention to the ambiguity of the Pauline legacy on matters relating to engagement with political powers, we must not overlook other diaspora Jews like Josephus. The legacy of Josephus, like that of Paul, is also ambiguous, but for different reasons. What I have tried to demonstrate in this study is that Josephus, in his own right, is a far more complex and interesting figure than has often been assumed by both classical and biblical historians. Like Paul, Josephus negotiates diaspora existence in a manner that is theologically creative and politically nuanced and this, on its own, would require exploration beyond the confines of the *War*.[6] Further, as it has proved useful to set Josephus in comparitative analysis with Paul, it may also be profitable to set Josephus in dialogue with other Christian accounts like the narrative of Luke-Acts where the question of thrones (Lk 1.50-55), enemies (1.69-79), kingdoms of the world (4.6-7), nations (Acts 4.24-30) and the emperor (17.6-7) are directly engaged. But, for now, these lines of enquiry are beyond the scope of this study and must be set aside for future investigation.

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[5] See 'The Acts of Paul', in J.K. Elliott (ed.), *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 385-8. This final section of the work emphasizes the conflict between the 'soldiers of Christ the king' and the imperial cult.

[6] E.g., *Ant.* 10 (on Daniel); *Apion* (on Rome).

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