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When They Make a Desert, They Call it Peace: The Timing of Judean and Roman Identity Formation in the First Century

HONORA HOWELL CHAPMAN

Introduction

Timing is everything, according to the old adage. Yet in the field of classical studies there is a real hesitation to see a correspondence between the Judean rebellion against Rome in 66 C.E. and the literature and monuments produced at Rome subsequently, except when a Roman author *explicitly* mentions the ruined city of Jerusalem or one of its refugees (such as the Judean priest and general turned historian, Josephus), or when discussing the Arch of Titus, which displays obvious artifacts from the temple in Jerusalem. More subtle echoes of the effects of this war are difficult to prove when doing analysis of the Roman texts, since classics scholars are less apt to apprehend veiled references to Judean affairs in any text, especially canonical works such as the writings of Tacitus. It is as if classicists today were channeling Tertullian, with a slight alteration: “What indeed has Rome [instead of ‘Athens’] to do with Jerusalem?”¹ A lot, it turns out, and timing is everything.

Tacitus’s most famous phrase about Roman imperialism, “When they make a desert, they call it peace,” offers an excellent opportunity to analyze how timing might, partially at least, explain its inspiration and meaning. This senatorial historian survived the murderous reign of Domitian towards the end of the first century to enjoy the relative calm and success of the empire under Nerva and Trajan at the very end of the first into the early part of the second century. The war in Judea lingered as a memory throughout the careers of all three of these emperors, with Domitian commemorating the triumph of his dead brother Titus, the conqueror of Jerusalem, on the famous Arch, while also allowing strip-searches of men to see if they were Judean and thus liable to pay the post-war tax. Nerva, however, advertised on coins that he was rescinding the power of false accusations made against people in order to force them to pay the

post-war tax into the *Fiscus Iudaicus*, while Trajan eventually had to deal with a rebellion involving Judeans in Cyrene in 116 C.E. that echoed the troubles of decades before. Tacitus surely experienced the events related to the Judeans first-hand at Rome, where he served as a senator from the time of Domitian's father, Vespasian, and wrote his five works. In one of these, his *Histories*, he displays his knowledge about the Judean people and their mores at the beginning of Book Five, but sadly the text is abruptly lost during his description of the siege of Jerusalem and the counterpart revolt of Civilis in Germany². Suffice it to say that Tacitus lived through these times and clearly recognized that the Judeans, whom we nowadays call the Jews, were part of the history of his own people, the Romans³.

It is in his earliest text that we find Tacitus's denunciation of Roman imperialism, a biography of his father-in-law, Gnaeus Iulius Agricola, published around 98 C.E.⁴ The scene comes when Agricola is leading a military expedition into modern day Scotland where he is about to encounter the local warriors at Mons Graupius. Tacitus allows the Caledonian chief Calgacus to rally the troops with a scathing indictment of Roman actions in Britain. The "cynical," as Martin Goodman calls him, Roman senator is putting these words into the enemy's mouth;⁵ there were no transcripts of any Caledonian speech, so we are left with a Roman senator creating a speech for an enemy character ranting in hyper-eloquent rhetoric against the Roman army. Calgacus states:

Whenever I consider the origin of this war and the necessities of our position, I have a sure confidence that this day, and this union of yours, will be the beginning of freedom to the whole of Britain... But there are no tribes beyond us, nothing indeed but waves and rocks, and the yet more terrible Romans, from whose oppression escape is vainly sought by obedience and submission. 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; when they make a desert, they call it peace.⁶

“*Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*” With such damning words the Roman historian Tacitus allows the enemy Caledonian chief Calgacus to sum up the devastating nature of Roman imperialism. Scholars of the text of the *Agricola*, Ogilvie and Richmond, have supplied a fine commentary on this most famous Tacitean aphorism, citing the writings of Quintus Curtius on Alexander the Great’s actions in Asia, and Pliny the Elder on what the Roman military did *not* do in Ethiopia, as providing parallel lines and possibly inspiration.⁷ A. D. Bosworth more recently has argued for the sustained influence of Curtius as a source for this line among many others in Tacitus.⁸ Curtius and Pliny, however, do not pair the idea of making a desert with the concept of calling it peace. Instead of looking at these Latin literary sources alone, I would like to examine the timing and historical context of this aphorism with respect to how the Romans monumentalized their wars, including the war in Judea.

When commenting on this passage in the *Agricola*, Ogilvie and Richmond point to Augustus’s Ara Pacis, or Altar of Peace, and Roman coinage depicting Pax “as lately as A.D. 80” as physical representations for this line in Tacitus, though they never explain why coinage of Pax was minted in this era.⁹ We can expand a bit more with respect to the Augustan monuments to peace and then carry this through to the Flavian era and the construction of the Temple of Peace, a remarkable monument to the Judean war built with an eye towards the Augustan regime and as a way of solidifying a new Flavian dynasty’s hold on power.

Diana Spencer has argued in her 2011 book, *Roman Landscape*, that Romans of the early empire formed their identities as citizens through the cultivation and manipulation of the land into landscape.¹⁰ We should take her argument one step further and examine how Romans understood their power to destroy such landscapes in other regions as part of their identity formation.

By monumentalizing Peace/Pax after the total destruction of an enemy and an enemy's land, Romans reshaped landscape both at the site of battle and back home in the capital as well, bringing the conquests home, so to speak.

The Judean historian Josephus's account of the revolt in Judea is a primary witness to the Roman propensity to turn a place into a desert in the name of "peace." For several years before and after the dedication of the Temple of Peace in 75 C.E., Josephus wrote his history of the war, articulating the effects of Roman military might in terms related to the landscape of Judea that we find in Calgacus's speech: the "desert" as an image of war's destructive nature, especially when waged by Romans. The desert, however, plays a different role in the Judean scriptural tradition and identity formation, one celebrating the desert as a place of prophecy and even salvation for the Judean people. Josephus melds his interpretation of this scriptural tradition with the ambivalent Roman vision of its imperial mission, as described later in Tacitus. This blend of cultural identities formed in landscape culminates in Josephus's text out in the desert at Masada just as it does physically at the Temple of Peace in Rome. The timing of this temple's dedication and the publication of Josephus's *Judean War* in the late 70's to early 80's have never been taken into account when discussing influences on Tacitus creating his most famous aphorism on imperialism.¹¹ The time has come for a deeper examination of the historical context.

Monumentalizing War and Peace¹²

When Titus Flavius Vespasianus gained control of Rome after defeating two internal enemies, his competitors in the Roman civil war of 69 and the Judeans in the east, the emperor faced a challenge quite similar to that of Octavian exactly one hundred years before: how to represent this double victory through monuments. In some respects, the ensuing *pax Flavia* was a response to, an emulation of, and perhaps even a competition with the historical precedent of the *pax Augusta* and its monuments.¹³

In a recent popularizing book, *The Archaeology of War*, the editors imply the similarity between Octavian and Vespasian when they cleverly embed a

feature box on monuments to the first-century Judean War, the Arch of Titus and the Colosseum, into a chapter on “The Spoils of Actium” set up by Octavian in Greece.¹⁴ In the main body of this chapter, the authors Murray and Petsas discuss a massive war memorial dedicated by Octavian in 29 B.C.E. at his new city Nikopolis, Victory City, on the site of his old command post near Cape Actium where his fleet defeated Antony and Cleopatra.¹⁵ After the archaeologists cut back the weeds from the monument that were still radioactive from the fallout of the Chernobyl disaster, they discovered twenty three slots of the original thirty three to thirty five that would have held the bronze rams of the defeated enemy ships, much like those on the Rostra in the Roman Forum, except far bigger.¹⁶ A huge inscription above this impressive display of rams ran 165 feet and announced that “IMPERATOR CAESAR ... CONSECRATED TO NEPTUNE AND MARS THE CAMP FROM WHICH HE SET FORTH TO ATTACK THE ENEMY NOW ORNAMENTED WITH NAVAL SPOILS.”

At home, Augustus continued this trend of honoring Mars by building a remarkable forum in downtown Rome, the focus of which was a temple to Mars Ultor. Containing cult statues of Mars, Venus, and the deified Julius Caesar, it was dedicated in 2 B.C.E. and fulfilled a vow Augustus had made forty years before to commemorate his vengeance against Caesar’s assassins. Richard Beacham reports that “The completion of this complex...was celebrated with magnificent games (repeated annually thereafter on May 12), including the *lusus Troiae* and slaughter of 260 lions in the circus, gladiatorial combats in the *Saepta*, and a great *naumachia*, staged in a huge basin constructed beside the Tiber (Suet. Aug. 43.1; Dio 55.10.7-8; Ovid *Ars Amat.* 1.171-72).”¹⁸ Augustus himself explained in his *Res Gestae* (*Achievements*) that of all the many buildings he either restored or built from scratch (RG 19-21), “I built the temple of Mars the Avenger and the Forum Augustum on private ground from the proceeds of [war] booty.”¹⁹

War, however, found its balance in peace under the Augustan regime, since the Senate had also decreed in 13 B.C.E. that a magnificent Altar of Augustan

Peace, Ara Pacis Augustae, which included a depiction of the god of war, Mars, be built on the Campus Martius to celebrate his return from pacifying Spain and Gaul, according to his *Res Gestae*.²⁰ Augustus boasts:

It was the will of our ancestors that the gateway of Janus Quirinus should be shut when victories had secured peace (*pax*) by land and sea throughout the whole empire of the Roman people; from the foundation of the city down to my birth, tradition records that it was shut only twice, but while I was the leading citizen the senate resolved that it should be shut on three occasions.²¹

Thus, an ancient ritual was revived as a way of linking the presently peaceful Augustan Rome back to the good old days of King Numa and the middle Republic.²²

H.J. Rose has observed about this Augustan personification of political peace as Pax:

Scarcely heard of before Augustus, she comes (as Pax Augusta) to represent one of the principal factors which make the imperial government both strong and popular, the maintenance of quiet at home and abroad (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.2.1: Augustus ‘seduced everyone with the sweetness of peace’). The most famous, but not the only, monuments of the cult were the Ara Pacis Augustae and the Flavian Templum Pacis, dedicated in AD 75.²³

In other words, as Brunt and Moore, the editors of the *Res Gestae*, explain: “*Pax* means ‘pacification’ as much as ‘no fighting’. But the citizens who enjoyed security at home could also take pride in the extension of Roman power to distant regions where Rome imposed peace.”²⁴ This sounds like the idyllic Vergilian vision of the Roman “arts” from the Aeneid Book 6.

Vespasian will also close the gate of Janus in 70 C.E. as a sign of *pax*.²⁵ In 75 C.E., on the fifth anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem, he dedicated a Temple of Peace, which combined the physical use of large outdoor space with a temple and porticoes found in the Forum of Augustus²⁶ as well as the concept of Peace behind the Altar of Augustan Peace.²⁷ Pliny the Elder, in fact, paired this Temple of Peace with the Forum of Augustus as two of the three most beautiful places in Rome ever seen.²⁸ Approaching the entrances to this Flavian Temple of Peace, a visitor would have encountered flanking palm trees, perhaps as a reminder of the land of Judea recently conquered, which was symbolized on Flavian coinage in this way as well. Inside the grounds of Vespasian's Temple of Peace, one would have enjoyed refreshing water channels and beds of roses, with statuary collected from many conquered regions scattered throughout the grounds for viewing pleasure—an oasis from the hubbub of the city, serving as an art museum, religious center, and academic resource. A temple of Pax with its altar out front was the forum's centerpiece, along with a library, and most remarkably, Josephus tells us that at this complex the emperor Vespasian deposited the precious golden objects surviving from the Jerusalem Temple to be on display for all visitors to admire.²⁹

Shortly after the death of the last Flavian emperor Domitian, however, the senator Tacitus is able to put a far harsher assessment of the first century's *pax Romana* into the mouth of the Briton Calgacus, "When they make a desert, they call it peace."³⁰ Is this renaming of a desert as Roman peace simply a literary echo from other Latin authors such as Curtius and Pliny the Elder, or has Tacitus also been affected by the sight of the Temple of Peace with its treasure of conquered nations, including Egypt and Judea, now on display in downtown Rome? And is it possible that the Roman historian had also been reading the works of Josephus, the Judean historian who described the recent war in nicely Atticized Greek for sophisticated readers to enjoy? We cannot know for certain, but an analysis of Josephus's account of the Roman army's devastation of his land certainly can shed light on how Tacitus's aphorism might have played in the minds of contemporary literati at Rome.

The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Desert in Josephus's *Bellum Judaicum*

As background to the Roman army's activities in Judea, one should be aware of how the Romans viewed the desert in general. Since farming was the basis of their civilization, Romans considered the desert, where most crops cannot grow, an uninhabitable place. For example, we can look at what Scipio Africanus says to his descendant in Cicero's "Dream of Scipio":

I see that you are still directing your gaze upon the habitation and abode of men. If it seems small to you, as it actually is, keep your gaze fixed upon these heavenly things, and scorn the earthly. For what fame can you gain from the speech of men, or what glory that is worth seeking? You see that the earth is inhabited in only a few portions, and those very small, while vast deserts lie between these inhabited patches, as we may call them; you see that the inhabitants are so widely separated that there can be no communication whatever among the different areas; and that some of the inhabitants live in parts of the earth that are oblique, transverse, and sometimes directly opposite your own; from such you can expect nothing surely that is glory.³¹

The vast deserts, *vastas solitudines*, are definitely not places for Romans to dwell, and they prevent the transmission of Roman glory to the farthest reaches of the earth. Not much good comes from the desert in the Roman way of thinking, which is the point of what Tacitus has Calgacus say: Romans make a place into a desert with their military, call it "peace," and neither the result nor the false label is honorable. Analysis of the ancient pollen record in eastern Scotland shows that this devastation is no exaggeration, as two scholars have argued: "Certainly a case can be made for the initiation, at least, of the palynologically deduced agricultural decline as a result of the Agricolan campaign." The "desert" is not a mere metaphor for the effects of a Roman invasion.³²

The desert plays quite a different role, however, in the Judean scriptural tradition and identity formation, which makes sense since the desert is part of Israel's physical landscape.³³ For Judeans, the desert was most notably where their ancestors wandered for forty years after the exodus from Egypt, and where Moses encountered God and received the law. The desert also provided a setting for prophetic activity revealing God's plan, as in Isaiah, chapter 40:

3 A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. 5 And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."³⁴

Informed by his study of this scriptural tradition, which he explores in so much depth later in his twenty-volume *Antiquities*,³⁵ Josephus uses the desert in his description of the actions and effects of both the Judean rebels and the Roman provincial government and army in Judea for a highly ironic effect in his Judean War.³⁶

In his account, the historian identifies a variety of troublemakers at the time of the procurator Felix before the war breaks out in Book 2, including those who use the desert as a rallying point:

For deceitful people and rogues, in a show of divine inspiration busying themselves with revolutionary matters and upheavals, were persuading the mob to be possessed, and leading them out into the desert so that God would there show them signs of freedom.³⁷

As Steve Mason and I point out in our commentary on *Judean War* Book 2, the verb used here for possession, δαίμονῶν, is a "strongly pejorative verb" that "he will use...again only at War 7.389: of the Masada rebels, who proceed

to their mass murder-suicide like *people possessed*.”³⁸ Just as the Masada *sicarii* choose to do at the end of the war, the rebels at the beginning are using the Judean desert, which is “E, NE, and SE of Jerusalem” and “a customary place for encountering God,” as a safe haven from the authorities.³⁹ Both groups are thwarted in their dreams of deliverance, with the first rebel group “destroyed” by the Roman procurator Felix’s army, while the latter killed themselves and their families on Masada in a horrible reverse-Passover at the *exact* time of the national festival.⁴⁰ Though the Romans succeeded in reshaping the terrain in order to besiege the giant rock of Masada overlooking the Dead Sea, they found themselves thwarted in their usual practices of slaughtering enemy fighters and enslaving civilians.

After two more pre-war procurators, Gessius Florus makes his predecessors look like amateurs, since “he neglected no form of plunder or torture.” The historian sums up Florus’s actions:

Because of that [man]’s greed, at any rate, it happened that all the cities were made into a desert, and many [people] rose up from their familiar ancestral places and fled to foreign provinces.⁴¹

As Mason notes, “the irony of turning subject territories (conquered precisely for their productivity and revenue) into deserts is a recurring theme in Josephus. Here it is particularly pointed because a Roman governor is (Josephus claims) directly responsible for the depredations.”⁴² Another Roman governor, Cestius Gallus, will come down out of Syria at the outset of the war and send one part of his army to the town of Joppa, which it plunders and burns after slaughtering 8,400 inhabitants, and order a large part of his cavalry to the Nabatenean toparchy to do likewise.⁴³ Later in his account, Josephus refers back to Joppa, “which had been laid waste,” being rebuilt by the Judeans, who then turned unsuccessfully to piracy.⁴⁴ The Romans under Vespasian’s command by this point then “make” all the territory around Joppa “a desert” to deter the pirates.⁴⁵

During the siege of Jerusalem in 70, Josephus claims that he spoke on behalf of the Roman commander Titus to the inhabitants of the city in an attempt to get them to surrender before they might succumb to famine. He explains that Titus wishes “to have neither a city empty of men nor the country a desert.”⁴⁶ Josephus ends up being the proverbial voice crying in the wilderness, however, since his pleas for them to take the “way of salvation,”⁴⁷ as he calls it, are generally ignored. Titus’s army had already begun reconstructing the terrain around the city when it moved from Mt. Scopus down to Herod’s monuments, filling in low spots and cutting down the high, making it all level, much like the command of the voice in Isaiah.⁴⁸ When the siege moves into high gear at the beginning of Book 6, Josephus as narrator ponders the effects of the war on the land around Jerusalem:

And now the Romans, although they were greatly distressed in getting together their materials, raised their banks in one and twenty days, after they had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that for ninety furlongs round about, as I have already related. And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing; for those places which were before adorned with trees and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down: nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change: for the war had laid all the signs of beauty quite waste: nor if any one that had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again; but though he were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it notwithstanding.⁴⁹

At the end of Book 6, Josephus will twice again use the verb ἐρημοῦν (“to make a desert, lay waste”) to describe the two destructions of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans and the king of Babylon before them. He precisely

calculates the timing from the city's founding to King David and to "its destruction by Titus."⁵⁰

The Roman army ends the siege on Caesar's orders after it has nothing else "to murder or plunder."⁵¹ Titus commands that his soldiers "raze both all the city and its temple" leaving only towers of the city wall as a testament to its former grandeur.⁵² The booty from the devastated wasteland of Jerusalem brought back to Rome will not only decorate the Temple of Peace, dedicated on the fifth anniversary of Jerusalem's fall, but also provide the capital for the construction of the Colosseum, which will be dedicated by the now emperor Titus on the tenth anniversary of the city's destruction in 80 C.E.⁵³ The timing for these monumental events at Rome was not coincidental but served as anniversary celebrations of Roman imperial greatness at the expense of rebellious Judea.

Conclusion

This is the Rome Tacitus and Josephus lived and wrote in. It is hard to imagine that Tacitus would not have been affected as a man in his twenties by these current events, with Judea made a desert and the emperor calling it peace. Tacitus would have seen Vespasian building a Temple to Peace, as if reliving the glory of Augustus and his Altar of Peace, and then outdoing the first emperor by building the greatest arena ever, the Colosseum. Did Tacitus read Josephus's *Judean War* in Greek, see the prominence of the desert theme play out, and find inspiration? I cannot prove this definitively, but perhaps we can now appreciate the famous words of Tacitus's Caledonian chieftain Calgacus about imperialism in a new light and accept that Roman and Judean identity formation, as exhibited in texts and monuments, were clearly intertwined in the late first century.

Josephus continued to live and write at Rome for decades after the war, and his outlook for the future, imbued with trust in God, appears hopeful. At the end of Book 10 of his *Judean Antiquities*, he writes of the prophet Daniel:

And our nation did indeed suffer these things under Antiochus Epiphanes just as Daniel saw and wrote they would happen many years beforehand. And in the same way Daniel also wrote about the empire of the Romans and that it would be made a desert by them.⁵⁴

According to Josephus, the devout Judean priest, God's providence then guided King Cyrus seventy years later to allow the Judeans to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their temple.⁵⁵ How could he not hope for the same cycle of destruction and renewal in the future? Though Jerusalem had been made a desert, Josephus surely remembered what Isaiah had foretold so long before: "the desert will bloom."⁵⁶

Epilogue

Five hundred years ago exactly from this past 2011 Advent season, a brave Dominican friar stood up in the church in Santo Domingo and preached a fiery sermon of social justice to the Spaniards gathered for mass. Bartolome de las Casas gives an account of the sermon:

They set aside the fourth week of Advent for the sermon, since the Gospel according to St. John that week is "The Pharisees asked St. John the Baptist who he was and he said: *Ego vox clamantis in deserto.*" ["I am a voice crying in the wilderness."]. . . . At the appointed time Fray Anton Montesino went to the pulpit and announced the theme of the sermon: *Ego vox clamantis in deserto.* After the introductory words on Advent, he compared the sterility of the desert to the conscience of the Spaniards who lived on Hispaniola in a state of blindness, a danger of damnation, sunk deep in the waters of insensitivity and drowning without being aware of it. Then he said: "I have come here in order to declare it unto you, I the voice of Christ in the desert of this island. Open your hearts and your senses, all of you, for this voice will speak new things harshly, and will be frightening." For a good while the voice spoke in such punitive terms that the congregation trembled as if facing Judgment Day. "This voice," he continued, "says that you are living in deadly sin for the atrocities

you tyrannically impose on these innocent people. Tell me, what right have you to enslave them? What authority did you use to make war against them who lived at peace on their territories, killing them cruelly with methods never before heard of? How can you oppress them and not care to feed or cure them, and work them to death to satisfy your greed?”⁵⁷

Another island, another empire, same basic message as Tacitus.⁵⁸ Times may change, but human nature corrupted by power remains relatively the same.

NOTES

- ¹ Tertullian, *The Prescription Against Heretics* 7. M. Goodman aptly named his book *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (Knopf, 2007). I would like to thank Trinity College Dublin’s Long Room Hub for providing the visiting fellowship during which the final revision of this article took place.
- ² Tacitus, *Histories* 5.1-13 covers the beginning of “the last days of a famous city” (5.2) and information on the origins of the Judeans.
- ³ S. Mason, “Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 38 (2007), 457-512; on 512, he argues that we should use “Judaeans” as both as adjective and noun, instead of “Jewish” and “Jew,” and concludes, “The *Ioudaioi* were understood not as a ‘licensed religion’ (*religio licita*) but as an *ethnos*.” Mason also remarks, “It becomes increasingly clear being a ‘Judaeans’ and being a follower of Jesus were incommensurable categories, rather like being a Russian or a Rotarian, a Brazilian or a Bridge player.”
- ⁴ For more on this text, see T. Whitmarsh, “‘This In-Between Book’: Language, Politics and Genre in the *Agricola*,” *The Limits of Ancient Biography: Genre and Technique*, eds. B. McGing and J. Mossman (Classical Press of Wales, 2007) 305-33; D. Sailor, “The *Agricola*,” in V. Pagán, *A Companion to Tacitus* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012) 23-44.
- ⁵ M. Goodman (2007) 319.
- ⁶ Tacitus, *Agricola* 30, transl. A. Church and W. Brodribb, 1876, with minor changes. The last line in Latin reads: “*Auferre trucidare rapere falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*” I prefer “when” as a translation of the conjunction “*ubi*,” instead of the more commonly used “where”; see Allen and Greenough, *New Latin Grammar*, #543, for temporal clauses.
- ⁷ R. Ogilvie and I. Richmond, *Cornelii Taciti De Vita Agricolae*, Oxford, 1967: 258; Curtius 9.2.24: “*Sero hostium legiones numerare coepistis, postquam solitudinem in Asia vincendo fecistis*,” “you have begun too late to count the legions of the enemy, after you have made a desert by conquering in Asia”; and Pliny, N.H. 6.182: “*nec tamen arma Romana ibi solitudinem fecerunt*,” “it was not, however, Roman arms that made a desert there.”
- ⁸ A. Bosworth, “Mountain and Molehill? *Cornelius Tacitus and Quintus Curtius*,” *Classical Quarterly*, N.S., 54, no.2 (2004) 551-67, here 558-9.
- ⁹ Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) 258.
- ¹⁰ D. Spencer, *Roman Landscape: Culture and Identity* (Cambridge, 2011).

- ¹¹ Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) 257, do mention Josephus when commenting on the word “*satiaverit*” in *Agricola* 30.4: “The commonplace that Roman imperialism wished to embrace East and West is frequent in such diatribes; cf. Joseph., *B.J.* 2.16.4; Sall. *Epist. Mithr.* 17.”
- ¹² For a sweeping analysis of Greco-Roman depictions of war, see T. Hölscher, “Images of War in Greece and Rome: Between Military Practice, Public Memory, and Cultural Symbolism,” *Journal of Roman Studies*. 93. (2003): 1-17.
- ¹³ M. Paladini, “A proposito di ‘pax Flavia’,” in M. Sordi, ed. *La Pace Nel Mondo Antico*, (Milan: Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1985), 228. Also, see Gian Guido Belloni’s essay in this volume, “Espressioni iconografiche di ‘Eirene’ e di ‘Pax’,” 127-145, a survey of “peace” from Greece to Rome. This competitive spirit comes out in Martial’s book of epigrams in honor of the Flavian Amphitheatre, where the poet all but declares Titus, the son of Vespasian, the victor in the battle of the best monuments at Rome, or at least in the battle of the best shows; see especially Martial, *Spect.* 34.
- ¹⁴ P. Young, et al., *The Archaeology of War* (New York: Hatherleigh Press, 2005); A. Benenson, “Monuments to War,” in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome*, eds. S. Dillon and K. Welch (Cambridge, 2006) does not deal much with the Flavian material.
- ¹⁵ Herod the Great helped finance the construction of Nikopolis; see Josephus, *B.J.* 1.425, *A.J.* 16.147: “He helped construct the majority of the public buildings.”
- ¹⁶ W. Murray and P. Petsas, “The Spoils of Actium,” in Young, *Archaeology of War*, (2005): 51-9, here 55.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 57. See also K. Zachos, “The tropaeum of the sea battle of Actium at Nikopolis: interim report” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 16, (2003): 64-92.
- ¹⁸ R. Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainments of Early Imperial Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 133.
- ¹⁹ Brunt and Moore, eds., *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), *R.G.* 21.1 on 28-9.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, *R.G.* 12.2 on 24-5.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, *R.G.* 13 on 25.
- ²² This link may also be evident with the possible depiction of Numa on the Ara Pacis itself: Paul Rehak, “Aeneas or Numa? Rethinking the Meaning of the Ara Pacis Augustae,” *The Art Bulletin* 83, no.2 (2001):190-208.
- ²³ “Pax,” *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd ed., 1129.
- ²⁴ Brunt and Moore (1967) 55.
- ²⁵ Nero also did this after Corbulo’s success, but the Jewish War broke out right then to ruin the good news of Nero’s coinage celebrating this.
- ²⁶ As J. Packer says in “PLURIMA ET AMPLISSIMA OPERA: Parsing Flavian Rome,” in *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*, eds. A. J. Boyle and William J. Dominik (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 167-198 (with excellent illustrations), here p. 170: “Pompey had celebrated his subjugation of the Near East with Rome’s first stone theatre. Caesar and Augustus had glorified their martial achievements with whole new fora. Vespasian could do no less.”
- ²⁷ Carlos Noreña has explained that the Flavians also celebrated this type of *pax* in 75 C.E. when they extended Rome’s *pomerium* and issued denarii with Pax depicted seated and holding an olive branch, in C. Noreña, “Medium and Message in Vespasian’s Templum Pacis,” in *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 48 (2003) 25-43, olive branch, 39.

- ²⁸ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*. 36.102: “*non inter magna basilicam Pauli columnis e Phrygibus mirabilem forumque divi Augusti et templum Pacis Vespasiani Imp. Aug., pulcherrima operum quae unquam vidit orbis?*”
- ²⁹ Josephus, *Judean War* 7.158-62; H. Chapman, “What Josephus Sees: The Temple of Peace and the Jerusalem Temple as Spectacle in Text and Art,” *Phoenix* 63, no.1-2 (2009) 107-130, with an additional page of illustrations.
- ³⁰ Tacitus, *Agricola* 30.5: “*ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*”
- ³¹ Cicero, *De Re Publica* 6.20, translated by C. W. Keyes (Harvard, 1977), 275.
- ³² G. Whittington and K. Edward, “*Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant*” The Romans in Scotland, a Palaeoenvironmental Contribution,” in *Britannia* 24 (1993) 13-25, here 21.
- ³³ For more on this, see D. Hillel, “Chapter 6: The Domain Desert.” in *The Natural History of the Bible: An Environmental Exploration of the Hebrew Scriptures* (Columbia University Press, 2005), 118-39.
- ³⁴ Isaiah 40:3-5, *New International Version*. For an excellent explanation of the Hebrew terminology for the desert, see <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04749a.htm>.
- ³⁵ On Isaiah and the prophets in Josephus, see *Antiquities* 10.32-5, especially 35: “[Hesaias himself] was acknowledged as a divine prophet and marvelous with respect to truth, for he was confident that he never said what was false. Writing down in books everything he had prophesied, he left these to be recognized as true from their fulfillment by people in the future. And not only this prophet, but also the others—twelve in number—did the same, and whatever bad thing that befalls us comes about according to their prophecy. “But we shall tell about each of these later on”; *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, trans. C. Begg and P. Spilsbury, ed. Steve Mason, vol. 5: *Judean Antiquities 8-10* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005) available online at <http://pace.mcmaster.ca/york/york/showText?text=anti>.
- ³⁶ On Josephus’ use of irony, see S. Mason, “Figured Speech and Irony in T. Flavius Josephus,” in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome*, eds. J. Edmondson, S. Mason, and J. Rives, eds., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 243-88.
- ³⁷ Josephus, *Judean War* 2.259. S. Mason with H. Chapman, *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, ed. Steve Mason, vol. 1b: *Judean War 2* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2008) 211, available online at <http://pace.mcmaster.ca/york/york/showText?text=wars&version=whiston>. On Masada, see H. Chapman, “Masada in the 1st and 21st Centuries,” in *Making History: Josephus and Historical Method*, ed. Z. Rodgers (Leiden, 2007) 82-102.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, 211, n. 1635.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, n. 1636, with biblical references.
- ⁴⁰ Josephus, *Judean War* 2.260 and 7. 389-401; H. Chapman, “Spectacle and Theater in Josephus’s *Bellum Judaicum*.” *Diss.*, (Stanford University, 1998).
- ⁴¹ Josephus, *Judean War* 2.279, transl. Mason with Chapman (2008), slightly altered; the Greek verb here is ἐρημοῦν (“to make a desert, lay waste”).
- ⁴² Mason with Chapman (2008) 228, n. 1790, pointing back to 2.213, where Rome would become a “desert” if Claudius upon his accession were to kill all the senators.
- ⁴³ Josephus, *Judean War* 2.507-9.
- ⁴⁴ Josephus, *Judean War* 3.414.
- ⁴⁵ Josephus, *Judean War* 3.431.
- ⁴⁶ Josephus, *Judean War* 5.373.
- ⁴⁷ Josephus, *Judean War* 5.415.

- ⁴⁸ Josephus, *Judean War* 5.106-8. See also *Judean War* 3.141-2 for the Romans leveling the road to Jotapata, as in Isaiah 40:4.
- ⁴⁹ Josephus, *Judean War* 6.5-8, transl. William Whiston, the most widely read version in English.
- ⁵⁰ Josephus, *Judean War* 6.435-442, 435 and 437 for the repetition of the verb.
- ⁵¹ Josephus, *Judean War* 7.1.
- ⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵³ See F. Millar, "Last Year in Jerusalem: Monuments of the Jewish War in Rome," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome*, eds. J. Edmondson, S. Mason, and J. Rives (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005) 101-28.
- ⁵⁴ Josephus, *Judean Antiquities* 10.276, transl. Begg and Spilsbury (2005).
- ⁵⁵ Josephus, *Judean Antiquities* 11.1-4.
- ⁵⁶ Isaiah 35:1. For a recent collection of essays on Isaiah, see *The Desert Will Bloom: Poetic Images in Isaiah*, eds A. Averson and H. Kim (Atlanta, 2009).
- ⁵⁷ Bartolome de Las Casas, *History of the Indies*, trans. and ed. Andree Collard (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) 183-4. I would like to dedicate this article in memory of Prof. Sabine MacCormack who first introduced me to this material.
- ⁵⁸ See K. Clarke, "An Island Nation: Re-Reading Tacitus' *Agricola*," *JRS* 91 (2001) 94-112.