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**Josephus in Byzantine Chronicles: An Overview
Part One**

The Sources

Byzantine world chronicles, written in Greek mainly from the sixth through the twelfth centuries, served as a major source of knowledge of the past and influenced the writing of history in the Greek Orthodox East and the Latin West.¹ Written mainly by churchmen, monks or imperial officials, chronicles begin with Creation and conclude with their authors' own times and convey an Orthodox Christian and pro-Imperial world view.² Chroniclers frequently copy from earlier Christian works and from each other. Despite these similarities and the numerous repetitions, the respective writers display individual preferences, predilections, styles, choice of sources and foci. Over the past several decades, scholars have reassessed the chronicles' significance and emphasize their importance as indicators of the state of Byzantine culture at the times of their respective composition.³ This reevaluation has resulted in the publication of new critical editions and annotated translations.⁴

¹ C. Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (London, 1988), 189-200; E. Jeffreys, "The Attitudes of Byzantine Chroniclers to Ancient History," *Byzantion* 49 (1979), 199-238; B. Croke & R. Scott, "Byzantine Chronicle Writing," in: *Studies in John Malalas*, eds. E. Jeffreys, B. Croke & R. Scott (Sydney, 1990), 27-55.

² The Incarnation, the founding of the Roman Empire and its conversion to Christianity, serve as turning points in world history. R. Fishman-Duker, "The Second Temple Period in Byzantine Chronicles," *Byzantion* 47 (1977), 126-156; Mango, op.cit., 198-200; E. Jeffreys, op.cit., 223-228.

³ For the traditional, disparaging view of the genre, see: H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I (Munich, 1979), 249-441, especially 257 ff. For a refutation of Hunger and a rehabilitation of the chronicles: J. Ljubarskij, "New Trends in the Study of Byzantine Historiography," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993), 131-138; idem., "Quellenforschung and/or Literary Criticism: Narrative Structures in Byzantine Historical Writing," *Symbolae Osloenses*, 73 (1998), 5-22; Mary Whitby, "The Biblical Past in John Malalas and the Paschal Chronicle," in: *From Rome to Constantinople: Studies in Honor of Averil Cameron*, eds. H. Amirav & B. ter Haar Romeney (Leiden, 2007), 279-203.

⁴ The new editions according to the date of the chronicle and referred to in this study are: Ioannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed., I. Thurn, CFHB (Berlin, 2000); *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, tr. & ed. E. Jeffreys,

With the exception of the early ninth century chronicle of Theophanes, which begins with the Emperor Diocletian, ancient history comprises a significant part of each work. All include material on the history of the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 CE. The writers coopted Biblical history as *historia sacra*, which they viewed as a prelude to the Incarnation. In addition, Jews were one of the peoples of the ancient world, along with Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans, facts of whose histories appear in the chronicles.⁵

A version of the works of Josephus served as a source for the ancient period. As Steven Bowman has pointed out, the importance of Josephus derived from the extensive citations in writings of the Church Father Eusebius,⁶ for whom Josephus was an authoritative witness to Jesus (the “*Testimonium Flavianum*”), John the Baptist and James (*JA.*, xviii: 63-64; xviii: 116-119; xx: 200) and a participant in the revolt against Rome, whose background and history he faithfully recorded in *The Jewish War*. For the Church Fathers, the revolt, which ended with the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem,

M. Jeffreys & R. Scoot (Melbourne, 1986); Georgius Syncellus, ed. A. Mosshammer, Teubner (Leipzig, 1984); *The Chronography of George Syncellos*, tr. & ed. W. Adler & P. Tuffin (Oxford, 1997). I have not listed several recent editions and/or translations of chronicles or sections of chronicles which do not pertain to this study. Older critical editions in this paper include: *Chronicon Pascale*, 1-2, ed. L. Dindorf, CHSB (Bonn, 1833); Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon Syntomon*, 1-2, ed. C. de Boor, Teubner (Leipzig, 1868-75); Georgius Cedrenus, *Synopsis Historion*, 1-2, ed. I. Bekker, CHSB (Bonn, 1838-39); Ioannes Zonaras, *Epitome Historion*, 1-3, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1836); Michael Glycas, *Biblos Chronike*, CHSB (Bonn, 1836). I use the Greek transliterated spelling for the names of Byzantine chroniclers, as it is preferred usage at present. In this paper, I use the state-of-the-art English translations of Malalas and Syncellos, and my own translations of the other chronicles with a reference to the original Greek.

⁵ R. Fishman-Duker, “Images of Jews in Byzantine Chronicles,” in: *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, eds. R. Bonfil, O. Irshai, G.G. Stroumsa, R. Talgam (Leiden, 2012), 777-798), especially, 781-785; Mary Whitby, “The Biblical Past in John Malalas and the Paschal Chronicle,” ; E. Jeffreys, “Old Testament ‘History’ and the Byzantine Chronicle,” in: *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, eds. P. Magdalino & R. Nelson (Washington, D.C., 2010), 153-174.

⁶ S. Bowman, “Josephus in Byzantium,” in: *Josephus, Judaism and Christianity*, eds. L.H. Feldman & G. Hata (Detroit, 1987), 362-385, especially, 363-364; on Byzantine chronicles, 364-5, 371-372; on the enduring influence of Eusebius’ chronicle: W. Adler, “Eusebius’ Chronicle and Its Legacy,” in: *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism*, eds. H.W. Attridge & G. Hata (Detroit, 1992), 467-491.

served as proof of the divine punishment of the Jews for rejecting and crucifying Jesus.⁷

Chroniclers, however, not only use Josephus for events of Christian interest, but also refer to material from or attributed to Josephus for the third century BCE into the first century CE (*Antiquities*) and from the mid-second century BCE to the seventies CE, *War*). Furthermore, chroniclers supplemented material from a version of *Antiquities* to their sections relating events in the Hebrew Bible.⁸ Forty years ago Heinz Schreckenberg published a comprehensive list of references and a discussion of Josephus in ancient and medieval sources, including Byzantine chronicles.⁹ In light of the recent attention to and editions of several chronicles, it is time to review the place of Josephus in Byzantine history writing and by implication, the state of culture in Byzantium.

The chronicles in this presentation include: John Malalas *Chronographia* (565); the anonymous *Chronicon Paschale* (628/29); George Synkellos, *Ecloga Chronographica* (written in 810; it ends with the Emperor Diocletian); George the Monk, *Chronicon Syntomon* (866/67); and John Zonaras, *Epitome Historion* (1118). [Submitted here is Part One: Malalas, the *Chronicon Paschale* and Synkellos. At the presentation in Yarnton, I

⁷ M. Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations Between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire, 135-425*, tr. H. McKeating (Oxford, 1986), 66-70. An early expression of this view exists in the mid-second century C.E. in Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*: Fishman-Duker, "Second Temple in Byzantine Chronicles.," 134, note no.15.

⁸ The material from Josephus may have been taken from summaries of *Antiquities*, such as in the *Epitome* of Zonaras, or more directly, e.g., Synkellos, and from a text which included interpolations from the *Book of Jubilees* and used along with *Antiquities* itself. See: Adler-Tuffin, *Synkellos.*, Introduction, liv and passim. On Malalas: K. Berthelot, "La Chronique de Malalas et les Traditions juives," in: *Recherches sur la Chronique de Jean Malalas I*, ed. J. Beaucamp, et. al. (Paris, 2004), 37-49, especially, 42-46.

⁹ H. Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius Josephus Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter* (Leiden, 1972). For references to Byzantine chronicles: Malalas, 104; *Chronicon Paschale*, 106; Synkellos, 110-112; Georgios Monachos, 118-120; Kedrenos, 134-137; Zonaras, 141-144; Glykas, 152-154; Bowman, op.cit.,

shall also discuss the chronicles of George the Monk and John Zonaras. And, for the fuller publication, I shall include the works of George Kedrenos, *Synopsis Historion* (1057) and Michael Glykas, *Biblos Historike* (1118).] The dates noted above indicate the final year in the chronicle. I shall address the following issues in the texts: the mention of Josephus; the material taken directly or indirectly from Josephus; the use of Josephus for Christian purposes; and, finally, the wider implications of the increase in the use of Josephus in Byzantine chronicles from the ninth century on.

The Chronicle of John Malalas and the Anonymous *Chronicon Paschale*

Both the work considered the earliest Byzantine chronicle, the *Chronographia* of John Malalas, completed before 565, and the anonymous *Chronicon Paschale* (628/629) contain few references to Josephus. Malalas calls Josephus, “*sophotatos*”, “most learned.”¹⁰ To be sure, Josephus is in good company, as Malalas refers similarly to most of his ancient sources, among them, Theophilus, Palaiphatos, Herodotus, Eusebius, Euripides, and many more.¹¹ In a paraphrase of the *Testimonium Flavianum*, Josephus is called “the Hebrew philosopher”, literally a “philosopher of the Hebrews” (“*ho hebraion philosophos*”) and under Vespasian, with the destruction of Jerusalem and the numbers of dead and captives, as a “Hebrew who was present at the war” “*Hebraios hyparchon parein en to polemo*”.¹² Josephus occasionally appears together with other authors, such as Eusebius,

¹⁰ On the importance of Malalas: E. Jeffreys, “The Beginnings of Byzantine Chronography: John Malalas,” in: *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity*, ed. G. Marasco (Leiden, 2003), 497-527. For a list of references to Josephus in Malalas; E. Jeffreys, “Malalas’ Sources,” in: *Studies in John Malalas*, 184. References to Josephus as “*sophotatos*”: I: 10 (Jeffreys/Scott, 4); X:260 (Jeffreys/Scott, 138).

¹¹ Others listed as such in Malalas: Theophilus: IV:85 (Jeffreys/Scott, 41); Palaiphatos: II:24 (Jeffreys/Scott, 11); Herodotus: II:26 (Jeffreys/Scott, 12); Eusebius Pamphilou: II:11 (Jeffreys/Scott, 5); Euripides: II:31 (Jeffreys/Scott, 15). Josephus is not among the sources listed in Malalas’ preamble (Jeffreys/Scott, 1).

¹² *Testimonium*: X: 247-8 (Jeffreys/Scott, 131); Destruction: X: 260 (Jeffreys/Scott/ 138).

regarding the location of Noah's ark and the destruction of Jerusalem, and with John and Cyril, on Melchizedek.¹³ Although Malalas mentions *Antiquities* as his source for stone tablets erected by the descendants of Seth and their location and on Melchizedek and "[in the] Jewish writings" (*en tois ioudaikois sogrammasin*) for his version of the *Testimonium Flavianum*, the chronicle is not exactly like Josephus' text.¹⁴

One of his major interests is locations and histories of buildings and monuments,¹⁵ hence, the stone tablets and Noah's ark. Biblical history in Malalas' chronicle is eclectic and sparse and it contains no material on the high priests or the Hasmoneans, with the exception of his unique version of the story of the Maccabees, which focuses upon Antioch, another favorite topic of Malalas.¹⁶ Malalas' version of the *Testimonium Flavianum*, linked to the prelude toward the destruction of the Temple, and the passage on the destruction of Jerusalem serve the Christian direction of his chronicle.¹⁷ According to Elizabeth Jeffreys, none of Malalas' references to Josephus indicate that "he had gone directly to the text but rather was using a predigested paraphrase or source; he could equally well be quoting from memory or from his 'general knowledge.'" ¹⁸ Whatever "sound bites" of Josephus he used served his own interests and Christian purposes.

¹³ Noah's ark: I:9-10 (Jeffreys/Scott, 4); Destruction: X: 260 (Jeffreys/Scott, 138); Melchizedek: III:58 (Jeffreys/Scott, 28)

¹⁴ In *Antiquities* I: 68-72 (pillars of Adam's progeny); *Antiquities* I: 179-181 (Melchizedek. Malalas mentions him as celibate; Josephus does not. On the *Testimonium Flavianum* in Malalas: Fishman-Duker, "Second Temple.", 145, note 61. See note no. 18.

¹⁵ A. Moffatt, "A Record of Public Buildings and Monuments," in: *Studies in John Malalas*, 87-110. on M.'s interest in buildings and monuments

¹⁶ E. Bickerman, "Les Maccabees de Malalas," *Byzantion* 21 (1951), 63-84; on Antioch, Moffatt, op.cit., passim.; G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton, 1961).

¹⁷ Fishman-Duker, "Second Temple," 144-146; Mary Whitby, "Biblical Past in Malalas and Paschal Chronicle," especially, 286-290; E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' World View," in: *Studies in John Malalas*, 55-66.

¹⁸ E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' Sources," 167-216; on Josephus, 184.

The anonymous *Chronicon Paschale* (628-630) contains much more material on Biblical and Second Temple Jewish history, interspersed among its lists of ancient kings, Roman consuls and emperors, and as lists of names of Biblical figures and high priests, with narrative selections classified the different rulers. The author's interests include the calendar leading up to the Incarnation, the accurate date of Easter, the life and death of Jesus, the apostles and church history.¹⁹ Unlike Malalas, the author of the *Chronicon Paschale* does not use superlatives. He refers to Josephus as “*sophos*” or learned only once.²⁰ The mention of his name seems sufficiently authoritative. Regarding the Biblical period, he refers twice to specific books of *Antiquities*: incorrectly, to the Babylonian historian Berosus, and correctly, to the location of Jonah when he was cast out of the whale. There is also a non-attributed passage on the origin of the inhabitants of Samaria as Cutheans.²¹ These eclectic references seem to have no logic except for the fact that they are geographical in content.

The subsequent references to Josephus relate to Christian events, such as, John the Baptist's execution, corroborated by the Gospels; the exile of Herod Antipas and Herodias and the accession of Agrippa, corroborated in *Acts of the Apostles*; the Greek meaning of the word “Passover” (“*hyperbasia*”); a list of the high priests from the time of Herod, which resembles that in the Gospels (and signals the beginning of foreign rule over

¹⁹ On the ancient period: Mary Whitby, “The Biblical Past,” 292-302; on the Christian focus: R. Fishman-Duker, “Anti-Jewish Arguments in the *Chronicon Paschale*,” in: *Contra Iudaeos*, eds. O. Limor & G.G. Stroumsa (Tuebingen, 1996), 105-118; on the calendar and the dating of Easter: J. Beaucamp, “La Chronique Paschale: Le temps approprié,” in: *Le Temps chretien de la fin de l'Antiquite au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1984), 451-468.

²⁰ *CP I*, p.417, l.11-12 on the high priests after Herod, which corroborates the information in the Gospels.

²¹ *Antiquities I*: 93 mentions Berosus' account of the flood which later appears in Synkellos. The *CP I*, p. 39 refers to before Noah and does not appear here. Josephus gives lengthy citations from Berosus in *Against Apion*, I, 129ff. but not in the *CP*. On Jonah: *Antiquities* 9:213; *CP I*, p. 190 are similar. On the Cutheans: *Antiquities* 9: 288-89; *CP I*, p.201, l.7-12. Only the part on the location of Cuth and the fact that the Samaritans come from there resembles the passage in Josephus.

the Jews)..²² Most of these references seem to come from Eusebius. Josephus “the writer” (“*suggrapheos*”) is commander of the Jews who is nearly killed predicts Nero’s death to Vespasian.²³ The author of *Chronicon Paschale* copies the section on the destruction of Jerusalem and the number of captives from Malalas, where Josephus appears with Eusebius, confirming the punishment of the Jews.²⁴ Similarly, the author records Josephus’ fifth book on the destruction of Jerusalem” as giving the death of James as the reason for the event.²⁵ This may refer to a Christian version of Josephus’ *War*. Philo joins Josephus in the treatment of the Greek meaning of the word “Passover” and under Vespasian, as those who wrote the histories of the destruction of Jerusalem (probably a misfiled fact – as Eusebius refers to them together as recording the placement of Gaius’ statues in synagogues several decades earlier).²⁶ In conclusion, the *Chronicon Paschale* uses Josephus, with Christian sources, as an authority for the pivotal era of the Incarnation, Crucifixion and destruction of the Temple, but does not base his recording of persons and historical events directly upon the text.²⁷

²²John the Baptist: *CP I*, p. 407- 408 refers to *Antiquities* 18 (116-119). On the exile of Herod II and Herodias and the accession of Agrippa, the *CP I*, p.431-2, there is no direct reference, only “Josephus states; on the Greek meaning of Passover, *CP I*, p.427 (*Antiquities* 2:311), no direct reference, only mention of Philo and Josephus; on the high priests from Herod, *CP I*,p. 417-418, *Antiquities* 18 is given as the source.

²³ *CP I*, p. 450. Josephus is referred to as “Flavius Josephus” and the source is Eusebius’ chronicle.

²⁴ *CP I*, p. 461-462; Malalas, X: 260. The author of the *Chronicon Paschale* even copies Malalas’ subsequent paragraph on the spoils of Temple erected in Antioch (Malalas X: 261, Jeffreys/Scott, 138).

²⁵ *CP I*, p. 463, l.16-21. Synkellos gives the destruction as retribution for the killing of James not give a direct reference to a work by Josephus; he only cites Josephus as the source for the list of statements below (Synkellos, 413; Adler/Tuffin, 490).

²⁶ On Philo, see: note 22; on Josephus and Philo listed erroneously as sources for the destruction of Jerusalem, instead of the statues placed by Gaius (*CP I*, 465, l.9).

²⁷ For example, there is glaring contradiction with Josephus’ accounts both in *War* 1:152-153 and *Antiquities* 14:72. In the section on Pompey’s invasion of Jerusalem in 63 BCE, Josephus states that Pompey did not touch anything in the Temple, including its treasures and vessels. The *CP I*, p. 351, l.1-10 relates that Pompey looted the Temple and took the holy scriptures, the golden goblets and engravings, holy vessels, the golden vine and the bed of Solomon! No source reference is given.

Transformation in the Ninth Century: George Synkellos

A major change in Byzantine chronicle writing takes place in ninth century. After the *Chronicon Paschale*, there do not seem to be any world chronicles for nearly 180 years. With the *Ekloga Chronographica* of George Synkellos, written in c.810, a new era begins.²⁸ Synkellos is much more thorough and meticulous. He quotes, paraphrases, compares and criticizes his sources and gives his own opinions.²⁹ While the capability, perspicacity and erudition of Synkellos must be taken into account, it is clear that his contribution to the transformation of Byzantine chronography was brought about by the emergence of sources.³⁰ Versions of *War* and *Antiquities*, close to the original texts, apparently existed and the latter, in an embellished and interpolated version with material from the *Book of Jubilees*, to which Synkellos refers independently as the *Little Genesis*.³¹

Synkellos identifies Josephus as follows: as the author of the “Maccabean histories” as the source for “what ... happened to or was done by the Jews up until the divine Incarnation,” after the canonical books of Esdras and Nehemiah, and as the author of the “history of the Maccabees,” which, although it “does not belong to divinely inspired scriptures, ... is extremely

²⁸ I. Sevcenko, “The Search for the Past in Byzantium around the Year 800,” *DOP* 46 (1992), 279-293; W. Adler and P. Tuffin, “Introduction,” *op. cit.*, xxix-xxx; “Synkellos’ Contribution to Chronography, xxxv-xlviii; “Synkellos’ Sources and Originality,” lx-lxix.

²⁹ Adler/Tuffin, *ibid.* See also: G. Huxley, “On the Erudition of George the Synkellos,” *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 81c/6 (1981), 207-17, and Sevcenko, *op. cit.*

³⁰ Adler/Tuffin, *op. cit.*; Bowman, *op. cit.*, 368, refers to Schrekenberg regarding manuscripts of Josephus. He notes that there is one manuscript from the ninth century and recommends looking at the transmission of Josephus in Eusebius more thoroughly.

³¹ Adler/Tuffin, “Modes of Chronological Argumentation,” liv, and, Pseudo-Josephus in the text: Adler/Tuffin, 6,11,138, 148,150, 155,159,161, and *passim*.

useful.”³² The latter statement clearly refers to IV Maccabees, which Eusebius attributes to Josephus, while the former to the sections of the *Jewish War* and *Jewish Antiquities* which relate the history of the Hasmoneans. In addition, Josephus is “the Jewish commander who barely managed to escape with his life and predicted to Vesapasian Nero’s demise and accession to power” and that he and Philo recorded the placement of statues, images and altars dedicated to Gaius in synagogues.³³ Both these statements, as in the *Chronicon Paschale*, come from Eusebius.³⁴

According to William Adler and Paul Tuffin, Synkellos’ exhaustive chronicle attempts to present the final, authoritative universal history in the long line of Christian chronicle writers such as Africanus, Eusebius and lost fifth century Alexandrian chronicles (Panodorus), who synchronized the histories of ancient peoples. In that capacity, Synkellos argues with and sharply refutes the work of his predecessors, particularly Eusebius, and to a lesser degree, Africanus, regarding the dates of events or years of kings.³⁵ For example, Eusebius’ dating of Kekrops of Attica as a contemporary of Moses is “a groundless and unsupported assertion.” Or, “Africanus cannot possibly be right that Levi was born in the 87th year of Jacob, nor can Eusebius ...” .³⁶ In contrast, when Josephus provides a wrong date for an event such as “the dismembered woman in Gabaon and the war of eleven tribes against Benjamin,” his error simply is explained as part of “great

³² Synkellos, Mosshammer, 299: 20-23 (Adler/Tuffin, 363); Mosshammer, 329:14-16 (Adler/Tuffin, 397-398).

³³ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 414: 21-22 (Adler/Tuffin, 491) ; Mosshammer, 402:19-20 (Adler/Tuffin, 480).

³⁴ See notes 23 and 26.

³⁵ Adler & Tuffin, “Synkellos’ Sources and Originality,” on Eusebius: lx-lxii; the Alexandrian authorities, lxiii-lxix; on Africanus, “Introduction,” passim.

³⁶ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 175:16-21 (Adler/Tuffin, 216); Mosshammer, 121:8-13 (Adler/Tuffin, 151)

disagreement concerning the chronology from Moses.”³⁷ Josephus’ even receives a compliment, a rare occasion on the part of Synkellos. In the section on the translation of the Bible into Greek, summarized from *Antiquities*, he writes that “with astonishing eloquence, Josephus provides a description of the table inlaid with precious stones.”³⁸

Antiquities itself; Pseudo-Josephus, the version of *Antiquities* with material from Jubilees; and *Against Apion*, supplement information from the Hebrew Bible. Josephus is among the sources which provide the names and years of Babylonian, Egyptian and Phoenician kings, inserted into continuum of the chronicle. The synchronization of names, dates and events of nations connected to the Biblical narrative, such as Egyptians or Assyrians, is a salient feature of the universal Christian chronicle.³⁹ (Greeks and Romans, who are not directly linked to Biblical history receive similar treatment.) Furthermore, Synkellos seems to have perfected this chronographic technique by including excurses of several lines or paragraphs from Josephus throughout the chronicle. Such excurses entitled, “From Josephus”, are followed by a line or two describing the content of the particular excursus. They may come from works by Josephus, such as “the evidence of the Phoenicians about the kingdom of the Tyrians and the temple in Jerusalem” placed under Solomon, taken from *Against Apion*, or from the Pseudo-Josephus/*Jubilees* text, such as a version of the story of Jacob and Esau.⁴⁰

³⁷ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 203: 30-34 (Adler/Tuffin, 252)

³⁸ Synkellos, Mosshammer: 328:20-22 (Adler/Tuffin, 396-7)

³⁹ B. Croke, “The Early development of Byzantine chronicles,” in: *Studies in Malalas*, 27-38; Adler, “Eusebius Chronicle and Its Legacy,.” (note 6); Adler/Tuffin, “Synkellos and the Christian Chronographic Tradition,” xxx-xxxvi.

⁴⁰ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 213-216 (Adler/Tuffin, 265-67); Mosshammer, 124:1-14 (Adler/Tuffin, 155).

Synkellos uses Josephus differently for the Second Temple period. Unlike the Biblical period, where Josephus supplements Scripture with additional information on dates, places and persons, *Antiquities* and *War* serve as major sources for Jewish history and a source for Persian, Greek and Roman history as well. While Synkellos' account of the translation of the Bible in Greek is a summary of that in *Antiquities* XII, his information on the Hasmonean high priests differs from both *Antiquities* and *War* regarding basic points such as John Hyrcanus I's robbing the tomb of Solomon as well as David; the absence of Aristobulus I; the towns captured by Alexander Jannaeus; and the description of "Salina" Alexandra and her sons.⁴¹ Seth Schwartz and others before him have argued that Synkellos did not use Josephus but had a different source. Some of the narrative, however, resembles parts of *War*, and less so, *Antiquities*.⁴² The list of Herod's building projects, under the "Remaining narrative about Herod" seems to draw from Josephus and Eusebius' chronicle.⁴³ Synkellos also uses Africanus and Eusebius for the Herodian dynasty.

The excurses "from Josephus" for the Second Temple period include: a brief paragraph on the founding of the Samaritan Temple on Mt. Gerizim, summarized from *Antiquities* 11: 302-12 and classified under Persian kings; "on the ignoble origins of Herod from *Antiquities* 14"; and a section on

⁴¹ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 349: 1-5-8; 354, 1.20- 356 (Adler/Tuffin, 419; 426-429)

⁴² Seth Schwartz; "Georgius Syncellus' Account of Ancient Jewish History," *Proceedings of the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, B: 2 (Jerusalem, 1990), 1-8. Etka Liebowitz has kindly shown me her dissertation: *Queen Alexandra: The Anomaly of a Sovereign Jewish Queen in the Second Temple Period* submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Chapter Six: "Queen Alexandra's Image in Chronicles from the Early Byzantine Period until the Beginning of the Early Modern Period" discusses Synkellos treatment of her reign and notes previous and subsequent rulers. She does not indicate an alternative source but compares Synkellos with Josephus and attributes his positive views to his own Byzantine Christian outlook on a pious queen.

⁴³ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 379:1.16-380: 1.15 (Adler/Tuffin, 453)

James, attributed to Josephus, with a parallel in Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History*.⁴⁴

From Herod on, Synkellos assumes a definite Christian tone.⁴⁵ Jesus, the apostles, and various calendar calculations regarding prophecies of the Incarnation and the like make up much the text for the period from Herod to the Great Revolt. Synkellos uses several passages from Josephus in order to bolster information brought from the New Testament, as follows: Herod's fear of John the Baptist is summarized from *Antiquities* 18:116-119, Eusebius and the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Josephus' mention of the voice from the sanctuary and the statues introduced by Pilate among the cataclysmic events related via Eusebius signaled the calamities which befell the Jews because of their crucifixion of Jesus.⁴⁶ The appearance of the Egyptian false prophet destroyed by the governor Felix is classified under the *annus mundi*, the 40th year from the Incarnation, and the Emperor Claudius. Here Synkellos asserts that "Josephus concurs in this with the Acts of the Apostles," and in the case of James, "Josephus ... is not in disagreement," with "the disciple" Hegesippus who is quoted by Eusebius.⁴⁷ A passage wrongly attributed to Josephus in the excursus on James (perhaps interpolated into the version of *Antiquities* used by Synkellos) states that the killing of James the Just, brother of Jesus, by the Jews was a reason for the destruction of the Temple.⁴⁸ The section from Eusebius which

⁴⁴ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 308: 1.8-1. 14 (Adler/Tuffin, 373); Mosshammer, 370:1.9-1.25 (Adler/Tuffin, 441); Mosshammer, 1.413: 1.3-25 (Adler/Tuffin, 490)

⁴⁵ Schwartz, op.cit., 6; Synkellos uses Africanus and Eusebius extensively for the meaning of Herod's rule and Herod's actions (Synkellos, Mosshammer, 374 (Adler/Tuffin, 446); Mosshammer, 384 (Adler/Tuffin, 457)

⁴⁶ Synkellos: Mosshammer, 394:1.18-1.22 (Adler/Tuffin, 472) This passage comes from Eusebius' chronicle and is in Malalas and the *Chronicon Paschale* as well.

⁴⁷ Synkellos, Mosshammer, 407: 1.7-1.10 (Adler/Tuffin, 484); Mosshammer, 413z; 1.1-1.4 (Adler/Tuffin, 490)

⁴⁸ Synkellos: Mosshammer, 413: 1.5-1.8 (Adler/Tuffin, 490)

cites Josephus on the number of captives, the destruction of Jerusalem and the punishment of the Jews, which appears in Malalas and the *Chronicon Paschale*, also occurs in Synkellos in the same vein.⁴⁹ Indeed, Josephus serves as a proof text, corroborated by other sources, for the sad fate of the Jews.

Despite this tendentious use of Josephus, Synkellos' chronicle clearly marks a breakthrough for the genre. The late Ihor Sevcenko has demonstrated that Synkellos inclusion and discussion of ancient texts not only demonstrated a "search for the past in Byzantium around 800 A.D." but "the beginnings of the first Byzantine humanism" and the harbinger of the Byzantine revival of the ninth century.⁵⁰ Paul Lemerle has documented this renewal in his comprehensive study, *Byzantine Humanism: The First Phase*, written in 1971.⁵¹ Although Lemerle argues for some type of continuity with classical Greek and Hellenistic culture, prior to the ninth century, he notes that the dearth of ancient texts and manuscripts affected intellectual creativity, which would include the writing of history.⁵² While he places the first stages of the Byzantine revival during the late eighth and early ninth centuries, as Sevcenko points out regretfully, Lemerle does not even mention Synkellos.⁵³ For Lemerle, the real activity takes place from the mid-ninth century, with the Patriarch Photius, whose access to and descriptions of ancient sources, including works of Josephus, are recorded in his bibliographical

⁴⁹ Synkellos: Mosshammer, 471: 1.1-1.8 (Adler/Tuffin, 493-4). Its source is Eusebius. Unlike Malalas or the *Chronicon Paschale*, Synkellos does not include the Antiochean material.

⁵⁰ Sevcenko, op. cit., 293; See also: W. Treadgold, *The Byzantine Revival: 780-842* (Stanford, 1988), especially 373-380. The book concentrates upon politics.

⁵¹ P. Lemerle, *Byzantine Humanism: The First Phase*, tr. H. Lindsay and A. Moffatt (Canberra, 1986)

⁵² Lemerle, "The Dark Ages: Break or Continuity?", op. cit., 81-120, and "Intellectual Ferment...", 121-169. He does not focus on the writing of history.

⁵³ Sevcenko, op. cit., 283.

compendium, the *Bibliotheca*, which Bowman has discussed, and with Arethas of Patras.⁵⁴ According to Sevckenko, the initial burst by Synkellos, occurs in Palestine where he and the chronicler Theophanes, who continued his universal history, spent many years.⁵⁵ While it may be far-fetched and certainly cannot be documented, could this partial recovery and use of Greek texts somehow be linked with the Hebrew documents whose discovery in a cave near Jericho was reported by Timotheus, Patriarch of Seleucia, in ca. 800?⁵⁶ Such conclusions are speculative, but perhaps, we should explore the possibility.

To Be Continued

Part Two: George the Monk, George Kedrenos, John Zonaras and Michael Glykas

⁵⁴ Lemerle, op.cit., 205-280 (on Photius, 205-235); on manuscripts and descriptions of Josephus' in Photius' *Bibliotheca*, see: Bowman, "Josephus in Byzantium," 368, and Schreckenberg, op.cit., 120-122.

⁵⁵ Sevckenko, op.cit., 289-290; Adler/Tuffin, "Introduction," xxix-xxx, who dismiss overemphasizing Synkellos' Palestinian ambiance and information, xxx, note. 9.

⁵⁶ For a translation from Syriac of the letter of Timotheus I, Patriarch of Seleucia concerning manuscripts in caves near Jericho in ca. 800, see: Y. Yadin, *The Message of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York, 1957), 75-77; and most recently, see: M. E. Stone, *Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2011), 190-192.