This book is not intended as a general introduction to Josephus, an update of St. John Thackeray's *Josephus: The Man and the Historian* (1929). It is true, Rajak covers incidentally much of the agenda of such an introduction—the basic facts of Josephus' life, the chronology of his writings, the "assistant theory", the lost Aramaic account of the Jewish War, and so on. But all this material is subordinated to a more limited purpose, which is hinted at in her subtitle, viz, the assessment of Josephus' reliability as an historian. Josephus' opportunist transfer to the ranks of the enemy, and the charlatanry by which he achieved it, have left a bad taste in the mouths of many modern historians. Y. Baer, H. R. Moehring, S. J. D. Cohen and others, in varying degrees, have given negative appraisals of his work. Rajak, however, maintains he is not such a bad historian. He is, to be sure, biased, but his bias is really without guile, and only such as one would expect from a man of his class and education. She disposes successfully of some of the contradictions which are cited regularly to impugn his reliability (notably those supposed to exist between the *Bellum* and the *Vita*), and she argues strongly that we have no right to brand Josephus as a propaganda hack of the Flavians, Josephus emerges from her analysis as an historian of passion and commitment, indeed, but also one of surprising integrity and veracity.

Rajak begins by establishing Josephus' position within the Jewish society of his time, and considering the forces—educational, social and religious—which shaped his outlook. Her basic purpose is to identify, and ultimately discount, his prejudices. Noteworthy is her insistence that, according to his lights, Josephus was loyal to Judaism, and that this loyalty was a fundamental element in his self-definition right to the end of his life. Yet at the same time he was open to, and able to absorb, significant elements of Greek culture. His use of the word *statis* illustrates the kind of synthesis he achieved. Time and again Josephus invokes the classic Greek concept of *statis* to interpret the Jewish War, but he sees in *statis* more than the Greek historians would have seen. Drawing on the Hebrew prophetic tradition he regards *statis* as a sin against God, a violation of the Torah which merits divine punishment (pp. 91ff). The Hebraic and Greek elements are so smoothly blended in his thought that their disparate origins pass unnoticed. Paul the Apostle has been dubbed "the first European", i.e., the first thinker to produce a truly harmonious synthesis of the two traditions on which European culture rests. From Rajak's picture it seems that Paul's contemporary Josephus could also be claimed as one of the first Europeans.

Anyone trying to establish Josephus' reliability faces a stark problem. If we lay aside the meagre (and clearly inferior) testimony of Tacitus, Suetonius, Cassius Dio and the Talmud, we are thrown back on Josephus as our only witness to the detailed course of the Jewish War. How, then, can we check his story? Rajak's solution is simple: she tries to show that Josephus provides a coherent, inherently plausible, account of events, one which conforms to known historical patterns. Josephus represents the war as a revolution within a rebellion, an internal social and political struggle which took place within the framework of an uprising against a foreign power. He sees the former as in many ways more important than the latter; the Jews' break with Rome was simply the "trigger" which set off the violent upheavals in Palestinian Jewish society, which finally brought it to disaster. Rajak shows that Josephus' account of the revolution fits well the anatomy of revolution as described...
by Crane Brinton and others. On the whole, her argument is convincing. But historical analogy is a dangerous tool. To some extent she has given herself as a hostage into the hands of the modern authorities on whom she relies. Should Brinton’s analysis prove seriously flawed (and needless to say it has been attacked), her case will be weakened. However, it is characteristic of her good judgement that she has chosen the essentially descriptive Brinton as her mentor, rather than one of the more heavily ideological modern theorists of revolution.

Rajak, then, gives us a picture of Josephus as a representative of the Jewish élite which dominated Palestinian Jewish society before AD 66, and she assesses his activities as an historian. But she does more than this. She makes a direct contribution to the actual history of the war. The fact is that the story of the Jewish War can, in the end, only be told by paraphrasing Josephus. It is interesting to note how even the most sceptical of modern scholars come back to this. In contrast to the atomistic ad hoc approach of many others, Rajak presents a systematic reading of Josephus which offers us some hope of neutralizing his prejudices, and penetrating to the events behind his narrative.

There are, to be sure, points where one could take issue with her. In her eagerness to exonerate Josephus she sometimes comes close to special pleading: see, e.g., her defence of his genealogy (“What we are told requires that Josephus’ grandfather be 73 when Josephus’ father was born, while his great-grandfather be 65 when his grandfather was born. And why not?”, p.16); or her determination to accept more or less at face value Josephus’ account of his early exploration of the Jewish sects (“There is no reason why two or three months could not be sufficient for some kind of basic course in each discipline”, p. 35). Her account of the Pharisees (pp. 29ff) takes a rather traditional academic line, but she fails to do justice to all the problems that entails. She is aware of the dangers of anachronism in quoting Rabbinic evidence for the pre-70 period, but still sometimes a little uncritically appeals to late sources. (One hopes that some of the Rabbinic material on pp. 24ff has been cited simply for “atmosphere”, and not for hard, historical fact). And it is surprising, given her admirable socio-economic orientation, that she has not made more use of New Testament sociologists such as Gerd Theissen, some of whom have useful things to say about first century Palestinian Jewish society. But these are very minor complaints. This is unquestionably a splendid book, vigorously written and full of scintillating observations. It is a major contribution to the study of Josephus and his times.

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John Koenig, Christian Professor of New Testament at General Theological Seminary in New York, has produced this book for Christian readers. It sets out to examine the charge which is sometimes made, that parts of the New Testament are anti-Semitic. Himself preferring the term anti-Judaic, Koenig tends to restrict his analysis to the Gospels and the Pauline epistles, although Hebrews, I Peter, and Revelation receive passing treatment in the notes. He stresses the importance of