attitude toward Josephus, of whom he even says that "it would have been an extraordinary feat for Josephus to record the unvarnished truth about anything" (p. 235). In view of Cohen's scepticism the reader is left puzzled when on the same page (181) he finds (in reverse order) the following two sentences: "The narrative is always tendentious, and, because we have no external control, we can never be sure of the underlying events." And: "In this chapter we attempt to determine the events in Galilee and Jerusalem during the first part of the war, 66 — 67 CE." In view of the correct insight reflected in the first sentence, it is not surprising that the attempt announced in the second statement remains just that. Thus we find within a single paragraph on page 191 the following expressions of uncertainty: "we find no reason to doubt," "the apologetic is hard to assess," "we may assume that," "otherwise he surely," "he must have known," "whatever Agrippa told," and "presumably exaggerates." This is hardly a list of historical facts.

The constructive part of this book, therefore, the purpose for which it was written, must be considered a failure. Cohen is not able to describe the role played by Josephus in the first two years of the war. Given the material upon which such a reconstruction would have to be based, such a failure was to be expected. What we have, then, is a historiographical study of Josephus, written in the tradition of Richard Laqueur, whose book on Josephus was published sixty years ago. Cohen's work, while sharing many of the methodological presuppositions of an earlier stage of scholarship, provides important details and some necessary corrections.

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These four lectures, by a prominent theological scholar in the Dutch Reformed Church, were delivered in Münster in 1972, but their publication, held back apparently by the author's illness, was not achieved until after his death. Their original form has been retained. What gives rise to regret is not so much the delay (Josephus-scholarship did not exactly leap forward during the intervening period), but the fact that the themes adumbrated in them could not be developed and more fully documented before appearing in print. Only the original title was broadened, and that into a misleadingly ambitious one.

Such unity as the whole possesses lies in the paradoxical, much repeated assertion that Josephus is a neglected author. The proof — that Schreckenberg's bibliography has 138 pages for the period before 1900, 103 for 1900-45, and only 71 for 1945-70 — is hardly overwhelming. But if van Unnik was trying, by rather ill-chosen means, to express a feeling that there has been a general failure to come to grips with the whole phenomenon of Josephus as a Jewish-Greek writer, then he was saying something worth saying.

The lectures form two pairs: two specialized enquiries are sandwiched between more discursive ones about some of the gaps in our understanding. Of these, the last, on the significance of Josephus for New Testament scholarship, throws out some interesting thoughts: that there are important changes in the course of the
presentation of the Bible in the *Antiquities*; that we might deduce something about the historian's working methods from the section of the *Bellum* which is retold in the *Antiquities*; that apparent connections between Josephus and the New Testament may originate not in Judaism, but in their common Greek background; finally, the fascinating, if obscure idea that Josephus' personal Hellenization might provide some sort of analogy to the Hellenization of Christianity.

In the central pieces, too, there are some acute formulations of interesting questions; but even here the treatment does not go very far. In Lecture II, we attempt but fail to discover whether Josephus' repeated claim in the *Antiquities* not to have added to or subtracted from the Biblical text is a Jewish or a Greek sentiment. And in Lecture III, it is suggested that Josephus' claims about his own prophetic powers, exercised especially at Jotapata, cannot be dismissed as hypocrisy, because he shows a distinct interest in the predictive powers of some of the Old Testament prophets. This aspect of Josephus is extremely difficult for us to grasp, and, even if it is only to remind us of that, van Unnik's sympathetic reflections on the subject are worth noticing.

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The *Passover Haggadah* in its midrashic section that comments on the text of Deut. 26:5-8 emphatically denies that during 'that' night God has used mediators to free his people. In fact the derashah of the *Seder* at Deut. 26:8 "And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt!", interprets: "not through an angel, nor through a seraph, nor through a messenger, but the Holy One, blessed be He, in his glory and in his own person, as it is said . . . (Ex. 12:12)".

This study by Prof. Pesce, member of the *Istituto per le Scienze religiose* at Bologna (Italy), examines Jewish literary traditions which exclude the participation of mediators, be they angelic or human, from God's intervention in favour of the people of Israel. The title, meaning 'God without mediators', although it is a catchphrase with a theological flavour, is in fact a work of *Traditionsgeschichte*, a piece of research along literary-historical lines.

The Jewish anti-mediatory formula, found in the *Passover Haggadah* to Deut. 26:8, does not represent a theological position universally shared within Judaism, either before or after Christianity, but is simply one line of thought among others. It attempts to present God as the only author of specific events in the history of salvation (e.g. the release from Egypt or the giving of the Law to Moses) or in the lives of individuals or groups (e.g. a gift of rain, or child-bearing by a sterile woman).

Pesce's *Introduction* unfolds his subject and assesses the work of the last 50 years in this area, not omitting to acknowledge explicitly his debt to it. The next two chapters clearly and richly present and discuss all the Jewish literary traditions bearing on the anti-mediatory formula of the *Passover* to Deut. 26:8. The first is given over to an examination of the midrashic and targumic traditions, while the