

Ex Manubiis: Literary Representations of Flavian Spectacle

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Abstract

The Roman emperor Vespasian was declared emperor *in absentia* at the end of 69 CE, the Year of the Four Emperors; he was the first man from outside the Julio-Claudian family to hold imperial power for more than a few months, remaining in power until his death in 79 CE and succeeded by his son Titus. Vespasian won the conflict with military force, but once in power he faced the unique challenge of demonstrating the legitimacy of his reign without the pedigree of an old Roman family name to draw upon, and so he relied on other means of stabilizing his power. Vespasian returned to Rome bearing an influx of wealth from the Judaeian War, and he funded lavish spectacles and buildings like the Colosseum from the spoils (*ex manubiis*).

Vespasian's buildings and spectacles were impressive displays of his wealth and generosity to the people of Rome, but spectacles can only awe and impress the immediately present audience in Rome for the short time that they last; the Colosseum stays standing as a reminder, but it is inert without its shows. Written descriptions of the spectacle, on the other hand, could travel widely and cheaply, extending the reach of Vespasian's grand displays through time and space. This thesis is concerned with two such pieces of writing: Josephus' description in *Bellum Judaicum* of Vespasian and Titus' double triumph in 71 CE; and Martial's *Liber spectaculorum*, a collection of epigrams about the inaugural games of the Colosseum in 80 CE. I argue that these literary representations of spectacle effectively reproduced the original spectacles for the reading audience through a variety of rhetorical and literary techniques, ultimately presenting an affirmative view of Flavian rule over the Roman empire, and Roman rule over the world.

Preface

This thesis is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Heather Odell.

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I. Introduction

(1) Outline

This thesis is primarily concerned with the two most substantial extant literary representations of Flavian spectacle: the joint triumph of Vespasian and Titus in 71 CE as recorded in Flavius Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*; and the inaugural games of the Colosseum under Titus in 80 CE as recorded in Martial's *Liber spectaculorum*. As such, my scope is limited to the first two Flavian emperors, Vespasian and Titus; Domitian figures slightly in some discussions, but remains largely unconsidered. Spectacle encompasses not only the games of the circus and the arena (which are usually meant by the specialized Latin word *spectaculum*) but also “the external, visible components of all rituals and public acts”¹. These spectacles occupied an important place in Roman society, both reflecting and creating the power of the emperors providing the display.

In describing these Flavian spectacles, the texts of Josephus and Martial continually reperform the original spectacle, reinforcing imperial power in much the same way as the physical performances did for the audience on that day. The scale is both smaller and larger in the text than in the original, “real” performance of the spectacle: the performance is smaller on the page, as details and experience are obviously, inevitably lost; but the audience is incalculably larger and further away, as the texts have the power to address readers all over the empire after the end of the spectacle itself. In addition to providing a new interpretive frame for those who personally attended these events, the texts also provide the spectacle to those who did not.

First, this introductory chapter will examine Vespasian's humble beginnings, his rise to power in the east in 69 CE, and his triumphant return to Rome, which is essential historical context for understanding both Josephus and Martial's writings. I provide a short overview of

¹ Feldherr 1998:13.

the usual format of the triumph, before moving on to the theoretical framework I apply to my reading of Josephus' description of the Flavian triumph. Next, I briefly consider the ways in which spectacles could be memorialized in the Roman world before discussing the construction of the Colosseum with the spoils of the triumph, the building's inaugural games, and Martial's strategies in recording those games in epigram; finally, I address some general differences between Martial and Josephus' audiences.

(2) Vespasian's Rise to Power

As the first generation of his paternal family to rise to senatorial rank, Titus Flavius Vespasianus initially seemed an unlikely candidate for emperor of Rome. Nevertheless, he would become the first non-Julio-Claudian to control the empire for more than a few months, found the Flavian dynasty which would rule Rome for 27 years, and build the most famous monument of ancient Rome, the Colosseum. Vespasian succeeded in holding on to imperial power where the other three emperors of 69 CE, the Year of the Four Emperors, all failed. Their failures were largely military, as Vespasian was in possession of the largest number of troops, but once in control he faced a unique challenge due to his undistinguished family background; one scholar calls him "the least likely to succeed"² of the four claimants to the throne in 69 CE.

However, precedent appeared as 69 CE progressed and the need for the imperial claimant to display proper lineage gradually reduced. First, there was Galba, from an aristocratic, Republican background with ties to the imperial family; second, there was Otho from a family which was new in the late Republican period; and third was Vitellius, whose stock was a matter

² Morgan 2006:170.

of debate even in antiquity, descending either from Faunus king of the Aborigines or from a freedman³, although his recent ancestors were politically successful⁴.

Vespasian, on the other hand, was politically a self-made man, the first generation of his (paternal) family to reach senatorial rank⁵. Born in Sabine country in November 9 CE⁶ under the rule of Augustus to a moderately well-off family, both Vespasian and his brother would reach the consulship. Vespasian's father was moderately successful, but it is unknown whether he reached official equestrian status⁷; his mother Vespasia Polla, however, was from a senatorial family in Umbria and her brother entered the senate during the time of Augustus, reaching the praetorship⁸. Vespasian's own heritage notwithstanding⁹, he presented his sons with a potential problem in the highly questionable heritage of his wife¹⁰, which perhaps contributed to Vespasian's desire to mark his older son Titus as the imperial heir so early in his reign by including him as a *co-triumphator*.

³ Suetonius writes goes through the two very different accounts of the origins of the Vitellii in the first sections of his life of Vitellius (*Vitellius* 1-2.1), summarizing that, "In any event, Publius Vitellius of Nuceria [grandfather of the emperor Vitellius], whether of ancient stock or of parents and forefathers in whom he could take no pride, unquestionably a Roman knight and a steward of Augustus' property, left four sons of rank" (*Ceterum P. Vitellius domo Nuceria, sive ille stirpis antiquae sive pudendis parentibus atque avis, eques certe R. et rerum Augusti procurator, quattuor filios ... reliquit*, Suet. *Vitellius* 2.1 [trans. Rolfe]).

⁴ Levick 2008:134.

⁵ Levick 1999:5.

⁶ Specifically, either 17 November 9 CE (Levick 1999:4), or 7 November 9 CE (Morgan 2006:171).

⁷ Vespasian's father is sometimes ascribed the post of centurion, although he did no military service until he gained the responsibility of collection a tax on goods in the province of Asia, and went on to become a money-lender (Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 2); he likely reached equestrian rank, or close enough to pass. Indeed, Suetonius' inability to find evidence for a certain anecdote about Vespasian's grandfather Petro (a Gallic name) suggests the obscurity of Vespasian's paternal line (Levick 1999:5-6).

⁸ Levick 1999:6.

⁹ Vespasian seems to have embraced his humble origins, however, including his rural accent—Suetonius records that when Vespasian's pronunciation of *plostra* was corrected to *plaustra* by a certain Mestrius Florus, the next day the emperor greeted the man as Flaurus (Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 22).

¹⁰ Vespasian did not marry up, and his wife Flavia Domitilla even had her claim to Roman citizenship brought into question; her father, who was "no more than a clerk to a quaestor" (*nec quicquam amplius quam quaestorio scriba*, Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 3 [trans. Rolfe]), brought in a lawsuit to have her declared a freeborn citizen of Rome. The necessity of going through this suit suggests that there was some question about whether she was a former slave (Levick 1999:12); we also hear from Suetonius in the same passage that Flavia Domitilla was the former mistress of an equestrian (Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 3).

In any case, Vespasian began his political career as a young man: he served first in the vigintivirate, held the questorship in the mid-30s, and gained the aedileship on his second try¹¹. He entered the praetorship in 39 or 40; already as praetor designate, Vespasian demonstrated an understanding of the importance of spectacle by using private money to supplement games in the spring of 40 CE after Caligula's claimed successes in Germany¹².

Vespasian spent much of the 40s successfully campaigning in Britain, receiving *ornamenta triumphalia* and a pair of priesthoods from the emperor Claudius, awards beyond what was expected for a man of his rank¹³. His role there as the legate of legion II Augusta between 43 and 47 CE would help Vespasian with that legion 20 years later during his bid for empire¹⁴. Back in Rome, Vespasian obtained the consulship in 51 CE at nearly 42 years of age¹⁵; there followed a period of relative inactivity as Vespasian waited until a proconsulship was available in 62 CE, governing the province of Africa¹⁶.

When the Judaeen War began in the 60s, Vespasian's extensive military experience made him an attractive choice for the command, particularly since his relatively humble background made him a non-threatening selection for Nero¹⁷; this was a critical consideration for a military position which would put him in charge of three legions¹⁸. In 67-8, Vespasian was already

¹¹ His first bid for the next position on the *cursus honorum* failed, however—he was defeated in his bid for aedileship in the summer of 36, but in 37 Vespasian ran for office again and was elected to the last place (Levick 1999:8-10).

¹² Levick 1999:11, cf. Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 2.3: “In his praetorship, to lose no opportunity of winning the favour of Gaius, who was at odds with the senate, he asked for special games because of the emperor's victory in Germany” (trans. Rolfe).

¹³ Levick 1999:19, cf. Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 4.1: “he received the triumphal regalia, and shortly after two priesthoods, besides the consulship, which he held for the last two months of the year” (trans. Rolfe).

¹⁴ Morgan 2006:172.

¹⁵ Levick 1999:13.

¹⁶ Levick 1999:23, cf. Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 4.2: “The chance of the lot then gave him Africa, which he governed with great justice and high honour” (trans. Rolfe; his note mentions that this position began in 63 CE).

¹⁷ Morgan 2006:174.

¹⁸ Levick 2008:132. They were legions V Macedonica, X Fretensis, and XV Apollinaris (Morgan 2006:174); Tac. *Hist.* 5.1 names the legions under his control.

within striking distance of Jerusalem¹⁹, and he was still in Judaea when Nero committed suicide in June 68²⁰. When Galba was declared emperor, Vespasian initially sent his elder son Titus to greet the new emperor in 68 CE²¹; however, Titus had only travelled as far as Corinth when he learned of Galba's death, and turned back east²². Instead, Titus helped bring about better relations between Vespasian and the governor of Syria, Gaius Licinius Mucianus, who had an additional three legions under his control²³.

Meanwhile in Italy, Otho assassinated Galba on 15 January 69 and took charge of the Praetorian Guard; however, his rule was cut short when Aulus Vitellius defeated him at Bedriacum on 14 April 69²⁴, after marching into Italy with the Rhine armies. Vitellius pursued his victory by marching on Rome itself, leaving many discontented supporters of Otho in the city. These unhappy losers of the conflict were said to be the first to declare for Vespasian as emperor, although his official bid for emperor was not until 1 July 69 on the initiative of Tiberius Julius Alexander, the prefect of Egypt who controlled two legions; this was followed by a salutation from Vespasian's troops in Judaea two days later on 3 July 69²⁵.

In October 69, Flavian forces defeated the Vitellians at Cremona in Italy²⁶, while Vespasian remained in Alexandria²⁷. This had the advantage of keeping Vespasian away from the upheaval of civil war, although it cost Vespasian the life of his brother, who was executed by

¹⁹ Levick 2008:132.

²⁰ Levick 1999:xxi.

²¹ Titus had been on campaign with him in Judaea as the legate of legion XV Apollinaris under Vespasian's overall command (Morgan 2006:175), cf. Tac. *Hist.* 5.1.

²² Morgan 2006:179, cf. Suet. *Div. Tit.* 5.1.

²³ Levick 2008:132.

²⁴ Levick 1999:xxi.

²⁵ Levick 2008:132-3, cf. Suet. *Div. Vesp.* 8.3 which dates the salutation by the troops to the 11 July ("the fifth day before the Ides"); Tac. *Hist.* 2.79 records that the troops at Alexandria under Tiberius Alexander took the oath on 1 July, while Vespasian's own troops took the oath on 3 July.

²⁶ Levick 1999:xxi.

²⁷ Levick 2008:133.

Vitellian supporters the day before Vespasian's troops took the city on 20 December 69. Full imperial power was conferred upon Vespasian *in absentia* on 21 December 69²⁸.

(3) Triumphal Return to Rome

After Vespasian's success, Titus remained a loyal son and supported his father's position²⁹. Josephus describes the reunion of the three Flavians in Italy as a happy occasion for the Romans, not least because Titus' arrival triggered the joint triumph of Vespasian and Titus (*BJ* 7.119). Considering Vespasian had returned to Rome by October 70 CE³⁰, his decision to wait until June 71 CE to hold a triumph (despite the senate's decree of a triumph for each [*BJ* 7.121]), was clearly deliberate. It had the benefit of presenting one larger celebration rather than two smaller ones, while allowing Vespasian to clearly indicate his dynastic intentions by including his elder son in his moment of imperial triumph. It also incorporated elements of the formal imperial arrival (*adventus*) into the triumph for the first time, as would become standard in later empire³¹.

The constant elements of the Roman triumph are several³². First, a Roman general with *imperium* could be granted a triumphal parade (*pompa triumphalis*) if certain standards of military victory had been met; he became the *triumphator*, and he could not enter the city limits

²⁸ Levick 1999:xxi.

²⁹ Suetonius writes that "from that time on he never ceased to act as the emperor's partner and even his protector" (*neque ex eo destitit participem atque etiam tutorem imperii agere, Div. Tit. 6* [trans. Rolfe]).

³⁰ Beard 2007:356.

³¹ Beard 2003:556.

³² It should be noted that the following reconstruction of the triumph leans heavily on Josephus' account, particularly in terms of the route and the activities leading up to and after the procession; this is a common problem in triumphal reconstructions, since Josephus provides one of the most detailed accounts. These issues are discussed throughout Mary Beard's *The Roman Triumph*, but especially pp.92-106. The frequent use of Josephus in reconstructions is especially problematic because his insistence on the customariness of the Flavians' actions is (at least in part) politically motivated (discussed in the following chapter), but is sometimes cited as evidence of his reliability.

from his return from war until the day of the parade³³. The morning of the procession, the *triumphator* donned the clothing traditional for the role; his appearance incorporated iconographic elements of both kingship and divinity³⁴. After a ritual breakfast and prayers, the *triumphator* mounted the triumphal chariot and crossed the *pomerium*, entering the city through the so-called Triumphal Gate (*porta triumphalis*)³⁵.

The *pompa triumphalis* consisted of three main sections: first the defeated enemy (further grouped into the spoils, then the captives, and finally visual representations of scenes from the war³⁶); second the *triumphator*; and third the victorious Romans, soldiers first with other officials following behind. The procession then moved to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, where the *triumphator* waited the news that the enemy leaders had been executed in the forum; then more prayers were performed, and finally the soldiers (and the public) were dismissed to a meal at state expense, paid for with triumphal spoils.

The history of the Roman triumph has often been written around the larger narrative of a moral decline from the days of the noble Republic down to the principate, with the spoils of war becoming more obscenely lavish as time went on³⁷. However, a clear break did occur in the principate under Augustus, when the *ius triumphandi* (“right to triumph”) was set aside as the

³³ However, there is some doubt as to whether this rule was followed to the letter, including in Vespasian’s case (Beard 2007:100). Because of the long period between his return in October 70 CE and the triumph in June 71 CE, some have suggested that it was impractical for Vespasian to have stayed outside the city, and therefore unlikely.

³⁴ Östenberg 2009:3, cf. Versnel 1970:56-93. In particular, the distinctive visual appearance of the *triumphator*’s ceremonial trappings make him resemble the statue of Jupiter Optimus Maximus to which the procession led, and as such “the triumphator himself made immanent in his own person the divine power that underpinned his victory” (Feldherr 1998:16).

³⁵ It is unknown whether the gate was the same at each triumph, or even whether it was a standalone arch or an actual gate into the city, and Josephus’ claim that such a gate was always used is suspect, as a triumphal gate is only mentioned four other times in ancient literature (Beard 2007:96).

³⁶ Östenberg 2009:9.

³⁷ In this formulation, M. Claudius Marcellus and Scipio Africanus (who were granted triumphs in 211 and 201 BCE respectively) are agents of change, bringing in vast amounts of wealth from the falls of Syracuse and Carthage, and taking the triumph from an early purification ritual honouring the gods, to a celebration of the individual *triumphator*. Recently, this idea of a sudden break with Marcellus and Scipio has been criticized as overly simplistic, incorporating too much of the ancient authors’ biases and rhetoric (Östenberg 2009:4).

exclusive honour of the imperial family; after 19 BCE, no one outside the imperial family could be granted a triumph by the senate. Following this practice, the number of triumphs decreased significantly; Vespasian and Titus' joint triumph was the 320th in Roman history, but the first since Claudius' in 44 CE³⁸. However, others could still receive triumphal ornaments (*ornamenta triumphalia*), as Vespasian received from Claudius in the 40s.

(4) Interpreting the Triumph in Josephus

While the triumph certainly served important political and religious functions, it should also be understood as a performance. In 1999, Brilliant discussed the triumph as a public theatrical performance, and emphasized the importance of the triumph's spectators and their emotional experience of the civic ritual³⁹. In 2007, Beard wrote a deconstruction of the Roman triumph, pointing out that earlier scholarship had often taken accounts of the procession from disparate time periods and attempted to piece together a single diachronic procession; Beard thoroughly interrogated the standard so-called facts of the triumph that have resulted from these analyses, and questioned what we can determine actually happened at each individual triumph for which we have evidence.

More recently, Östenberg has pulled together elements of both Brilliant and Beard's analyses, combining them with a cultural approach to reading ritual that first developed in anthropology in the 1970s, largely brought about by Victor Turner and Clifford Geertz. This approach is heavily influenced by Clifford Geertz's seminal essay on Balinese cockfighting, which argues that for an individual society, a ceremony is "a story they tell themselves about

³⁸ Beard 2007:69-70

³⁹ "The visual splendor of the Roman triumph could thus create memorable impressions of such vivid authority that they put ceremony before history, obscuring the anterior bloody, violent, and precarious aspects of war ... The more intense the spectator's experience of the parade, the more he is psychologically implicated in its performance, the stronger the affect and, thus, his appreciation of the transcendent *triumphator*, the cynosure of all eyes" (Brilliant 1999:221).

themselves”⁴⁰. In this reading, the Roman triumph, with its emphatic display of (victorious) Romanness staged by Romans for Romans, with the presence of the defeated to serve as the “other”, creates a narrative which supports the hegemonic view of the rightness of Rome’s power.

The presence of this “other” is critical, as it smoothes the hierarchical differences between the Romans themselves, as participants in the procession and spectators in the stands: regardless of their status within Roman society, all are triumphant Romans in opposition to the defeated foreigners in the procession. This is reflected in the different roles that the emperor plays in Josephus and Martial’s texts. In Josephus’ triumph, the emperor frames the event, but he is not inserted or glorified throughout as he is in Martial’s games. Josephus’ narrative choice contributes to the illusion, present on the day of the triumph as well as in its written record, that the property presented in the procession is communal; it is in fact within the emperor’s control, but on the day of the triumph these riches ostensibly belong to the city of Rome, and therefore to its people and its gods.

As a ritual performance (or a performative ritual, to use another term), the Roman triumph both expressed and constructed cultural meaning⁴¹. In his 1998 book on Livy, Feldherr discusses the importance of spectacle to Roman society, and the power of literary texts to reperform these values after the spectacles themselves had ended. He emphasizes the importance of the *triumphator* himself to the ritual, and of the triumph to “create a context where power was at once recognized and manifested through the influence that the presence of the ruler exerted upon the community”⁴². In the case of Vespasian, whose triumph needed to act as accession

⁴⁰ Östenberg 2009:7

⁴¹ Östenberg 2009:9.

⁴² Feldherr 1998: 15.

ritual and *adventus* as well, the triumph's capacity to simultaneously create and reinforce power was necessary and useful.

Much of the triumph's social power was in its visual nature and how its representations could evoke at a distance the glory of successful war in the minds of the spectators. The Greek historian Polybius defines the triumph as ceremonies "through which the sight [*enargeia*] of the deeds that [the *triumphator*] has accomplished was set before the eyes of the citizen general"⁴³. The term *enargeia* is significant for its relevance to rhetorical techniques in antiquity, referring to the effect of embedding vivid visual imagery in a text to make an audience seem to see the events described⁴⁴. The same *enargeia* that Polybius describes as essential to the triumph's mimicry of war is also used by Josephus for his text's mimicry of the triumph⁴⁵.

Andrew Feldherr's *Spectacle and Society in Livy's History* examines the use of spectacle within Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*, but his theoretical basis for examining textual spectacle can be fruitfully applied to Josephus' description of the triumph as well. Feldherr suggests that "Livy assimilates the audience's experience of his text to their experience of the actual spectacles"⁴⁶—that is, Livy uses his readers' experience of the spectacles of their own times to conjure up the spectacles of the past. By reading episodes of spectacles alongside the social functions of those displays, he further shows "how the narrative strategies that Livy adopts to engage the gaze of his audience allow his text to reproduce the political effects of the events described and thus to act upon the society of his own time"⁴⁷.

⁴³ Polybius 6.15.8, translation from Feldherr 1998:16.

⁴⁴ Feldherr 1998:4: "Greek and Roman rhetorical treatises frequently described the aim of making an audience seem to see directly the events described in a literary work, a stylistic quality they designated as *enargeia* in Greek and in Latin as *demonstratio*, *illustratio*, *evidentia*, or *sub oculos subiectio* (placing beneath the eyes) ... other Greek terms are ἐκφρασις and ὑποτύπωσις."

⁴⁵ Indeed, the defining aspect of *enargeia* is that it produces an illusion, and "thus exists in a constant tension between presence and absence" (Webb 2009:103).

⁴⁶ Feldherr 1998:3.

⁴⁷ Feldherr 1998:3.

In subsequent chapters, I will demonstrate that Josephus and Martial both adopt similar techniques in their depictions of Flavian spectacle. There is an added layer of experience in the texts of Josephus and Martial in that they are writing about recent spectacles, rather than those of the distant past as is often the case in Livy—thus, they can sometimes draw upon the spectators’ own memories of those precise events, although they are also addressing the readers of the wider empire who lacked these common experiences to draw upon. The authors also rely upon repeated mention of their own visual experience as an authenticating and authorizing mechanism for their writings.

In the case of Josephus, it is important to remember ancient writers themselves in both the Greek and Latin traditions conceived of good history as being a visual creation⁴⁸. This emphasis on the visibility of texts is even more noteworthy considering that they were generally heard rather than read; the use of vivid narrative techniques in written history serves to make the hearer a witness of the events described⁴⁹. These aspects of the general historiographic tradition and the importance of visual description within it support the critical importance of exploring the use of spectacular narrative in Josephus’ description of Vespasian’s triumph.

Feldherr also describes the seamless quality of the relationship between the historian’s recording of public acts and their original performance:

“The narrative takes its place in the sequence of public acts it records, eliding the boundaries between the representation and the event represented, and so becomes *inlustre* in a double sense: both ‘making the audience see,’ the rhetorical definition of an *inlustris* style, and brilliant or luminous in itself”⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ Livy, for instance, conceives of his own history as a luminous monument to look upon (*documenta in inlustris posita monumenta intueri*, *Livy praef.* 10) (Feldherr 1998:1), while Plutarch writes that the best historian makes his narrative a painting for the reader to see (Feldherr 1998:5).

⁴⁹ Feldherr 1998:6-7.

⁵⁰ Feldherr 1998:12.

This elision of boundaries is especially interesting for Josephus' writing on this contemporary historical event that many of his (Roman) readers would have attended, so that there is already a referent in the memory of the audience independent of Josephus' description.

In Josephus' text, there is an intense focus on the defeated rather than the victorious. While the Flavian *triumphatores* frame the narrative, appearing when Josephus describes the outset and the conclusion of the procession, the central portion of the text describes the captives and spoils. The emphasis on the former wealth and greatness of the defeated serves several purposes in Josephus' text: it glorifies the Jews as having accumulated such vast stores of wealth; it glorifies the Romans for having the strength to plunder such wealth; and, most importantly, it serves as a warning of what happens to those who attempt to stand against the power of Rome.

(5) The Afterlife of Spectacles

By providing this description, Josephus extends the life of the spectacle to readers throughout the empire. The afterlife of spectacles was an important concern for the *editor* financing the entire display, as all these shows were costly affairs of short duration. There were several ways that *editores* could commemorate their spectacles to ensure their fellow Romans remembered their generosity⁵¹. Epigraphy was one option for commemoration, although its dependence on formulaic phrases lacked the personalization of narrative elements⁵². Some chose to produce commemorative paintings of *munera* instead⁵³, while others commissioned reliefs, such as the

⁵¹ There were large social benefits to reminding the public of private munificence: "in a society fuelled by public acts of private generosity a person's urge to perpetuate the evidence of his (or her) benefaction is readily understandable." Coleman 1998:24.

⁵² Coleman 1998:24-5.

⁵³ Pliny the Elder attributes the first commemorative painting of *gladiatoria munera* to C. Terentius Lucanus in the late second century BCE: "C. Terentius Lucanus was the first who had combats of gladiators painted for public exhibition: in honour of his grandfather, who had adopted him, he provided thirty pairs of gladiators in the Forum, for three consecutive days, and exhibited a painting of their combats in the Grove of Diana (*hic multis iam saeculis*

Arch of Titus which commemorates the Flavian triumph. Many mosaics depicting games survive as well⁵⁴; these were generally laid in prominent places in the homes of *editores* and often incorporated narrative by means of short inscriptions, providing a more vivid reminder of the games than inscriptions. However, both painted and mosaic pictorial representations of spectacle share important disadvantages with epigraphic and relief testimonies to public beneficence: they are necessarily limited to a single location; and they are difficult and expensive to reproduce⁵⁵.

The written word, however, recorded and copied on papyrus, escapes both these problems. It can create the personalized narratives difficult to convey in epigraphy or mosaics, while its portability makes it possible to advertise the *editor*'s munificence to a far wider audience. The logic is the same for disseminating descriptions of Vespasian's triumph; pictorial representations, such as those on the Arch of Titus, are only visible to those in the city, whereas literary descriptions travel, and travel at a relatively low cost. Further, as Feldherr demonstrates in the case of Livy, many of the visual benefits of pictorial representations (whether they are painted, mosaic, or carved) can be transmitted effectively through a literary text, as long as the author achieves the effects of *enargeia* in his writings.

Vespasian, it seems, understood the value of spectacle in supplementing the legitimacy of the imperial power that he had initially gained through military means and experience. He delayed his own triumph for months to wait until the procession could include his son and present the most advantageous spectacle, funded with the spoils of the war, and the work of Flavius Josephus was encouraged, and perhaps commissioned, by the imperial family.

summus animus in pictura, pingi autem gladiatoria munera atque in publico exponi coepta a c. terentio lucano. is avo suo, a quo adoptus fuerat, triginta paria in foro per triduum dedit tabulamque pictam in nemore dianae posuit, Natural Histories 35.33). Trans. Bostock.

⁵⁴ Coleman 1998:26.

⁵⁵ Coleman 1998:27-8.

Vespasian also used the spoils of the war to finance a building program in the city of Rome, including the Temple of Peace, which Josephus appends to the description of the triumph (*BJ* 7.158-61)⁵⁶. Of course, Vespasian also used the earnings of the war to build the ultimate venue for Roman spectacle: the Flavian amphitheatre.

(6) *Ex manubiis*: The Colosseum

The most lasting memorial to Vespasian's reign as Roman emperor is the Colosseum, or the Flavian Amphitheatre. Construction of the massive building started early in his reign, and resulted in the largest amphitheatre ever built in the Roman world, measuring 188 x 156 meters and accommodating approximately 50,000 spectators⁵⁷.

While the Colosseum was inaugurated during Titus' reign, most of the building was constructed under Vespasian using the proceeds of the Judaeen War, and he clearly intended to dedicate the building himself. A recently restored inscription, surviving in traces beneath a fifth-century record of repairs to the Colosseum, records that the amphitheatre is dedicated by Titus, but his credit is based on the insertion of the single initial "T" very close between the other words⁵⁸.

The restored inscription reads as follows: *I[mp(erator)] T(itus) Caes(ar) Vespasi[anus] Aug(ustus)] | amphitheatru[m nouum (?)] | [ex] manubIs (vac.) [feri iussit (?)]* ("The emperor Titus Caesar Vespasian Augustus ordered the new amphitheatre to be constructed out of the spoils of war")⁵⁹. Coleman notes that the phrase *ex manubIs* (= *ex manubiis*) must be a reference

⁵⁶ The narrative briefly moves ahead several years from 71 CE to 75 CE, when Vespasian dedicated the Temple of Peace, built from the spoils of the Judaeen War in order to house the treasures from the spectacle, as well as the countless other treasures and works of art (*BJ* 7.158-61).

⁵⁷ Welch 2007:131.

⁵⁸ "Evidently the crucial 'T' distinguishing Titus' nomenclature from Vespasian's was inserted afterwards, destroying the even spacing of the initial letters and ensuring that posterity would regard the Flavian amphitheatre as the son's achievement, rather than the father's" (Coleman 2006:lxvi).

⁵⁹ Coleman 2006:lxv-lxvi.

to the spoils from the campaign which Vespasian and Titus led in Judaea, and which culminated in the sacking of Jerusalem in 70 CE; this aligns with Martial's assertion in *Lib. spect.* 2.12 that the amphitheatre was a gift to the people (*deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini*), and the claim is "entirely consonant with the triumphant general's obligation to spend his share of the booty in the public interest"⁶⁰.

The Colosseum dominated the downtown Roman landscape, towering over the surrounding buildings and located at the confluence of several major roads within the city⁶¹. Its central location is exceptional for an arena, as most amphitheatres were located on the edges of the towns they served, but Vespasian's selection may have been influenced by his awareness that Augustus had once expressed a desire to build an amphitheatre "in the middle of the city" (*urbe media*, Suet. *Vesp.* 9.1)⁶². This particular location for the public amphitheatre also held political value, as it was built on the former lake of Nero's Golden House⁶³, a point which Martial emphasizes in *Lib. spec.* 2.

As a physical building, the Colosseum remains an impressive and permanent monument to the generosity of the Flavians, as it was in antiquity. However, there was a problem for the emperors who built it: all the spectacles staged there were inherently temporary, leaving no trace in the arena; even if the arena itself was a permanent reminder, it was an inert presence without

⁶⁰ Coleman also points out that the inscription, referring to the building as the *amphitheatrum nouum*, "gives the lie to the conventional assumption that it was known as the Flavian Amphitheatre, *Amphitheatrum Flauium*"—rather, since it was the only amphitheatre in Rome at the time, it may have been known simply as the *amphitheatrum* (Coleman 2006:lxvi).

⁶¹ Welch 2007: 131-2.

⁶² Welch 2007:133. Welch further comments that while lack of funds may have been one reason Augustus did not pursue the construction of an amphitheatre in the city, a more satisfying explanation is that he wanted to avoid the impropriety of acquiring and demolishing a significant tract of land in the city, as Nero would do later with much criticism (Welch 2007:310).

⁶³ Welch 2007:131.

spectacles. This is where the *Liber spectaculorum* was a unique⁶⁴ and useful book of poetry for the dynasty, in that it gives what was ephemeral permanent life. Martial's collection provides a series of spectacular vignettes, brief moments of the inaugural games memorialized in epigram for (hopefully) all time.

Martial treats Flavian display in a very different manner than Josephus, but he shares the essential function of perpetuating a spectacle (or set of spectacles) through his text. He takes individual moments from the games, some great and some small, and he puts a continually imperial spin on them. Martial's text is dominated by the presence of the *Caesar*, who is frequently addressed directly and almost constantly assigned credit for the games and their venue. Where Josephus provides a negative example of behaviour by focusing on the defeated, their former wealth, and what *not* to do in the face of Roman imperial power, Martial instead provides a series of positive examples: his panegyric poems offer a version of reality replete with examples of the appropriate responses to imperial greatness.

(7) The Audience

Both Josephus and Martial memorialize their respective subject matter by recording it for their contemporaries as well as posterity⁶⁵. Their texts allowed the Flavians' spectacles to be admired by readers all over the empire, but their differing choice in language demonstrates their different goals and audiences. Martial wrote in Latin, and his audience was likely the elite Romans of both city and empire; Coleman's 1998 article envisions the emperor Titus distributing copies of the text to the Roman officials posted in the provinces, to be disseminated among the elites

⁶⁴ In this it is unique: "we have no other collection comparable to the *Liber spectaculorum*, in which ephemeral displays are monumentalized in verse" (Coleman 2006:lxxiv).

⁶⁵ Mason 2005:74 notes "the otherwise trite premise that *audience does matter* for understanding a work's aims ... a text is not self-interpreting: it has no independent meaning. It is rather a medium or 'middle term' between two parties."

outside Italy⁶⁶. As such, his poems take Roman hegemony and the legitimacy of the imperial system for granted; he seeks to further glorify the emperor within the system, but the presence and power of the system is assumed.

Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*, on the other hand, was aimed at the residents of the Roman empire further on the fringes, and explains why Roman rule of the world is legitimate and resisting it is futile. His work was originally written in Aramaic for a Jewish audience, while the surviving version is written in Greek; it is directed at those who had rebelled against the Roman empire, or who might consider such action in the future, and the clear moral of the story is that to challenge the Romans is a mistake⁶⁷. In this morality play, so to speak, the Flavian triumph is a crowning moment, demonstrating the power, prestige, and wealth of the Romans, as well as the pathetic fate of those who challenge them.

⁶⁶ Coleman 1998:32.

⁶⁷ Steve Mason persuasively argues that Josephus' main audience for the *Bellum Judaicum* was the elites of the Roman capital itself, rather than the members of the outer empire. However taking his individual points into account, I see no reason not to imagine a dual audience, particularly considering the earlier publication of an earlier version in Aramaic. As evidence, Mason first writes that ancient publication was "normally a local and social project" (Mason 2005:78); however, this would seem to be contradicted by Coleman 1998:32, which discusses the distribution of certain texts by the Flavian emperor throughout the empire. Mason also cites the "Atticistic Greek" of *BJ*, compared to the "unaided natural voice" of his later works, as evidence that his audience was Roman Greek-speakers; however, arguments based on closer dialectical readings of the text would seem to be undermined by the admitted use of *synergoi* or "assistants" in translating the works mentioned in *Against Apion* 1.50 (discussed further below in Chapter II, Section 2). Mason does mount a convincing argument that Josephus intended native Romans to read *BJ*, but his insistence that the Roman audience is primary sometimes seems driven by the desire to undermine the traditional viewpoint that Josephus was a mouthpiece for Roman propaganda in the east. I feel that while the reading audience for Josephus' works at Rome would have been substantial, that it is imprudent to rule out a large audience in the wider empire.

II. Josephus

(1) Outline

This chapter discusses the literary representation of the joint triumph of Vespasian and Titus in June 71 CE⁶⁸ in Book 7 of Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*. I argue that Josephus attempts to support, explain, and ultimately legitimate the new Flavian dynasty by presenting a vivid and positive description of the parade's splendour. His writing includes a marked focus on sight and the visual aspects of the parade, the overall effect of which is rhetorical *enargeia*. This imitates the effect of the original triumph, allowing readers throughout the empire to experience some degree of the awe produced by the triumph, extending the reach of the Flavian spectacle far beyond that single day of festivities in the city of Rome itself. The impact of this literary display is to provide a warning to the residents of the empire through the negative *exemplum* of Judaeian behaviour in rebelling against Roman hegemony; the underlying lesson of Josephus' text and the Flavian triumph is that defeat and disaster will befall those who challenge Roman power. This message is aimed at provincial readers, hence Josephus' decision to publish the text in Greek to reach a wider Mediterranean readership.

However, Josephus also includes comments aimed at native Italian readers, particularly in his focus on customariness in the triumph. Josephus' insistence on describing Vespasian and Titus' actions in the triumph as traditional and customary betrays the new dynasty's need for and concern with legitimacy, and attempts to help fill that need by situating the Flavians as only the most recent in a long line of Roman *triumphatores*. Josephus also places Roman power in its global context, as he describes the spoils of the triumph as representing the wealth of all human

⁶⁸ Domitian participated as well, although he was not a *triumphator*.

civilization, which is now the possession of the Romans alone. Finally, Josephus ensures that the underlying guarantors of all this prosperity are the Flavian *triumphatores*, who have provided these benefits through their leadership.

The cumulative effect of Josephus' focuses on visibility, custom, and Roman wealth, with the Flavians underlying it all, is to perpetuate the ephemeral display of the triumphal procession. The text itself imitates the spectacle, reproducing it for readers throughout the empire and in later times, providing them with an emotionally and intellectually compelling argument in favour of Roman (and specifically Flavian) power over the Mediterranean world.

(2) Josephus

Unlike Martial, Titus Flavius Josephus provides us with ample information about his life. He appears in his own *Bellum Judaicum*, and later wrote an autobiography (*Vita*). Josephus was born Yosef ben Mattityahu into an aristocratic Jewish family with priestly heritage in 37 CE (*Vita* 1)⁶⁹, and he fought for the Jews during the Judaeen revolt of the 60s, attempting to defend the town of Jotapata from Titus and the Roman army in 67⁷⁰.

The siege of Jotapata was particularly troublesome to the Romans, and so Vespasian ordered the city to be razed (*BJ* 3.338), but sought to capture the commander Josephus alive by sending a friend of Josephus to coax him out of hiding after the city's fall (*BJ* 3.340-349). Contemplating his options, Josephus happened to remember certain divine dreams he had experienced foretelling the fates of the Jews and the Roman sovereigns⁷¹. Following this

⁶⁹ Edmondson 2005:1; also see Mason 2003:561 for further historical context.

⁷⁰ Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum* 3.316-97 describes the fall of the city Jotapata.

⁷¹ Josephus calls them "[dreams] through which God foretold to him the fates of the Jews and the futures of the Roman sovereigns," δι' ὧν ὁ θεὸς τὰς τε μελλούσας αὐτῷ συμφορὰς προσήμανεν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τὰ περὶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίων βασιλεῖς ἐσόμενα (*BJ* 3.351).

revelation, Josephus called upon God to witness that he crossed over to the Roman side only in service of God⁷².

Josephus came among the Romans to enter Vespasian's presence, where he himself became a spectacle for the Romans⁷³, but Titus immediately took a liking to him and interceded on Josephus' behalf. Vespasian resolved to send Josephus to Nero, but Josephus requested a private interview and prophesied that Vespasian and Titus would both one day become emperor⁷⁴. At first Vespasian thought this was flattery, but when he learned Josephus had correctly prophesied the fall of Jotapata after a forty-seven day siege as well as his own capture, Vespasian began to favour him, or so Josephus tells us (*BJ* 3.403-408).

Thus, Josephus presents his decision to go over to the Roman side of the conflict as divinely mandated; within the history's chronology, Josephus places his prophecy of Vespasian's imperial status a full two years before the army would acclaim him *imperator* in July 69 CE. This context is essential to Josephus' presentation of the Flavian dynasty in his *Bellum Judaicum*, as his own defeat (and that of his people) is marked by divine sanction, providing justification for his support of the Flavians both in the war and in his writings. Additionally, from the beginning of his dealings with the Flavians, Josephus posits that he enjoys especial favour with Titus⁷⁵.

⁷²Josephus records his oath: "I willingly surrender to the Romans alive; but I call you to witness that I go not as a traitor, but as your servant," δίδωμι μὲν Ῥωμαίοις τὰς χεῖρας ἕκων καὶ ζῶ, μαρτύρομαι δὲ ὡς οὐ προδότης, ἀλλὰ σὸς ἄπειμι διάκονος (*BJ* 3.354). However, it takes him until *BJ* 3.392 to actually turn himself over to the Romans, due to the objections of his fellow Jews, in an argument that Josephus calls a πόλεμον ("war," 3.392) and which results in the death of the others hiding with him through a strange process which involved lots and so was ascribable to divine providence.

⁷³ "The Romans all assembled for the sight of him," οἱ δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι πάντες ἐπὶ θεῶν αὐτοῦ συνέτρехον (*BJ* 3.393).

⁷⁴ Josephus writes that he told them, "You will be Caesar, Vespasian, and emperor, you and your son here" (σὺ Καῖσαρ, Οὐεσπασιανέ, καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ, σὺ καὶ παῖς ὁ σὸς οὗτος, *BJ* 3.401).

⁷⁵ It is Titus who especially pities Josephus when he emerges from the cavern ("In particular, Titus was especially touched by the endurance of Josephus in these misfortunes and by pity for his youth," μάλιστα δὲ τὸν Τίτον ἐξαιρέτως τό τε καρτερικὸν ἐν ταῖς συμφοραῖς ἤρει τοῦ Ἰωσήπου καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἡλικίαν ἔλεος, *BJ*

This positive relationship with the Flavians apparently continued; after the fall of Jotapata, Josephus accompanied Vespasian to Alexandria, then Titus to Jerusalem (*Vita* 417-21). Next he went to Rome with Titus, staying upon his arrival in the former home of the Flavians, and he received land from the Flavians to replace his former holdings near Jerusalem (*Vita* 422-3). After Vespasian's death, his favourable treatment continued from Titus and Domitian (*Vita* 428-30).

The close relationship between Josephus and the Flavian emperors is often treated as evidence of his bias and a reason to distrust all his writings. Indeed, one of the most common criticisms leveled against Josephus as a source is that his involvement in the war and with the Flavians from their imperial beginnings renders his account irreparably tainted:

At best, he is accused of 'inveterate sloppiness' and a sometimes willful disregard for chronology. At worst, his whole account of the war is criticised as the misleading product of a self-serving traitor, eager to cast himself and his new patrons (notably Titus) in an undeservedly favourable light.⁷⁶

I follow Beard in dismissing these ideas as a close-minded approach to Josephus' writings; his unapologetic bias toward the Flavian family provides a unique view of what the imperial family itself wished to have disseminated in writing about the war and their accession to power, with the resulting text getting us "as close as we ever can to the 'official version' (or one of the 'official versions') of the Flavian accession"⁷⁷.

Josephus himself emphatically claims that his account is truthful, and cites its publication under the Flavian emperors as evidence that he had nothing to hide (*Vita* 361-3). Further, he makes claims of imperial patronage for the publication of his history of the Judaeen War in *Vita*, writing:

3.396); when Vespasian treats Josephus with courtesy, he does so with Titus' cooperation ("with Titus assisting with these honours," Τίτου τῆ τιμῆ συνεργοῦντος, *BJ* 3.408).

⁷⁶ Beard 2003:545

⁷⁷ Beard 2003:556

For the emperor Titus so wanted for the knowledge of these events to be handed down to mankind from my works alone that with his own hand he fixed his seal to my books and ordered for them to be published.

ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὐτοκράτωρ Τίτος ἐκ μόνων αὐτῶν ἐβουλήθη τὴν γνῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παραδοῦναι τῶν πράξεων, ὥστε χαράξας τῇ ἑαυτοῦ χειρὶ τὰ βιβλία δημοσιῶσαι προσέταξεν (*Vita* 363)⁷⁸.

This imperial encouragement makes Josephus' project far more clear-cut than Martial's.

Whereas Martial appeared to be writing in hopes of future patronage, Josephus was writing from a privileged position of favour already. That said, he still had much to gain; Josephus writes that he was regularly accused by others who envied him in Rome, but that the Flavians never believed these accusations (*Vita* 424-9). The ongoing precariousness of his position at Rome suggests that he needed to remain in the Flavians' favour.

The publication of the *Bellum Judaicum* is not as straightforward, however. The first sections of the work claim to be writing out of the necessity of correcting the inaccuracies of other written accounts⁷⁹. Additionally, the *Bellum Judaicum* was not originally written in Greek—Josephus is instead “translating into the Greek language what [he] previously composed in [his] vernacular tongue and sent to the barbarians in the interior” (Ἑλλάδι γλώσση μεταβαλὼν ἅ τοῖς ἄνω βαρβάροις τῇ πατρίῳ συντάξας ἀνέπεμψα πρότερον, *BJ* 1.3). This original language must be Aramaic⁸⁰, and nothing else is known of this earlier version. Josephus claims elsewhere that he wrote with translation assistance (“using some assistants for the Greek language,” χρησάμενός τισι πρὸς τὴν τὴν Ἑλληνίδα φωνὴν συνεργοῖς,

⁷⁸ Cited at Beard 2003:544, Edmondson 2005:4, and others.

⁷⁹ “Others who were present, either from flattery toward the Romans or from hatred toward the Jews, have given false accounts of the events” (οἱ παραγενόμενοι δὲ ἢ κολακεία τῇ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἢ μίσει τῷ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους καταψεύδονται τῶν πραγμάτων, *BJ* 1.2). Also see Josephus' similar claim at *BJ* 1.6.

⁸⁰ Edmondson 2005:4, citing Rajak 1983:174-84 and Millar 1993:499-500.

Against Apion 1.50). There is nothing to indicate how free or loose this adaptation from the Aramaic may have been, nor to indicate the role of the “assistants” he mentions⁸¹.

Nevertheless, Josephus’ choice of language demonstrates that his readership was not only the Roman elite; he wrote for the greater empire, for the less Romanized, Greek-speaking areas of the Mediterranean. His text provided a dire warning to any states contemplating war with the Roman state, pointing to the fate of the Jews as an *exemplum* of what awaits those foolish enough to stand against the power of Roman hegemony. Thus, where Martial provides sets of positive *exempla* in the form of proper ways to respond to Roman power and the divinity of the emperor, Josephus’ text is populated by negative *exempla*, explaining what *not* to do in the Roman empire. The focus on the Jews’ defeat has the convenient side effect for Josephus that any aggrandizement of the Jewish people then becomes an aggrandizement of the Roman people—when Josephus points to the wealth and greatness of the Jews, the underlying message is how much wealthier and greater the Romans must have been to overcome them.

In this sense, Josephus was in a different position than Martial; whereas Martial wrote as a Roman for Romans (the poet’s Spanish heritage notwithstanding), Josephus wrote as a foreigner primarily for a foreign audience—first Aramaic readers, then Greek. Although his text also displayed Romanness to the educated Roman elite who could understand the Greek, the stronger message was for the educated elites of the subject states of the empire, showing what happens to those who rebel against Rome. Josephus delivered this message from the position of an outsider to the empire⁸², but he positioned his foreignness as an advantage to his history, in

⁸¹ Some credit Josephus’ assistants with the entire work, while others view them more as proofreaders (Beard 2003:547).

⁸² “With great expenditure and labour, although I am a foreigner, I present this record of achievements to the Greeks and Romans” (καὶ γὰρ μὲν ἀναλώμασι καὶ πόνοις μεγίστοις ἀλλόφυλος ὢν Ἑλλησὶ τε καὶ Ῥωμαίοις τὴν μνήμην τῶν κατορθωμάτων ἀνατίθημι, *BJ* 1.16).

that he has seen both sides of the war and is therefore an ideal spectator (and interpreter) of the war he describes in this memorial (μνήμη)⁸³.

(3) The Triumph

The crowning moment of this project is the long description of the joint triumph of Vespasian and Titus (*BJ* 7.123-57), appearing at the midway mark of the final book of his history⁸⁴. A long-standing Roman tradition, the triumph underwent changes during the imperial period. Early in the principate, triumphs ceased to be awarded for anyone outside the imperial family⁸⁵, and as a result the frequency of triumphs steeply declined⁸⁶. Vespasian's triumph came a full 26 years after the most recent triumph under Claudius⁸⁷, and the elapsed time between triumphs doubtless added to the grandeur of Vespasian's procession.

Like Augustus before him, Vespasian needed to manage the optics of a triumph (and accession) resulting from civil war. The final stages of conflict with the Vitellians had been bloody and brutal, as Vitellius' Praetorian Guard fought Vespasian's men until the complete taking of the city on 20 December 69 CE⁸⁸. By this time, however, the Vitellians had already burned the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus⁸⁹, which may have still been in a state of ruin at the time of Vespasian and Titus' triumph in 71 CE⁹⁰.

⁸³ Chapman 2005:290.

⁸⁴ The description of the triumph is "the centrepiece of the whole book" (meaning Book 7), which, as the final book of the history, puts the triumph in a place of prominence (Beard 2003:550).

⁸⁵ Beard 2007:69.

⁸⁶ The fifth-century CE Christian historian Orosius counted all recorded triumphs and calculated that the joint triumph of Vespasian and Titus was the three hundred and twentieth triumph held in Rome (Beard 2007:69). Of those 320 triumphs, however, only 13 occurred after 29 BCE, since before this change, triumphs were much more common, and during some periods they were "more or less annual", with twelve triumphs between the years 260 and 251 BCE alone (Beard 2007:42).

⁸⁷ Beard 2007:70.

⁸⁸ Levick 1999:51, cf. Levick 1999:xxi for the dates.

⁸⁹ Levick 1999:51; she also mentions that Tacitus commented on the shameful nature of the deed.

⁹⁰ Beard writes that "the culminating location of the ceremony, the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, [was] still a pile of rubble after its complete destruction during the recent civil war (the final sacrifices must have been carried out amidst the devastation)" (Beard 2007:100). However, it seems to me unlikely that the Flavians and their

Regardless, the upheaval of 69 CE was felt acutely in Rome, and Vespasian needed to present his triumph as being over a foreign enemy, much like Octavian after the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra⁹¹. One of the defining features of the triumph is the inclusion of “a pronounced other, the defeated, whose presence served as an antipode of normative community and reinforced a sense of oneness among all Roman participants”⁹². This display of otherness is conversely and simultaneously a self-affirming display of Romanness, performed through the difference between the defeated Jews and the victorious Romans, both in the procession and in the audience⁹³. The monotheistic Jews were a convenient group to submit to this othering process because of their considerable religious differences; the Romans were suspicious and skeptical of their practices, and the years-long war in the east worsened Roman attitudes toward them⁹⁴. They were seen as rejecting and challenging normative Roman society, and therefore threatening the world order based on Roman hegemony⁹⁵, which the triumph reaffirmed.

Generally the triumphal procession was divided into two sections: first the defeated, together with the spoils, then the Romans afterward. Between these two groups came the *triumphator*, acting as the focal point and dividing the procession into conquered and conquerors⁹⁶. This, too, represents Augustan innovation: previously, Roman magistrates were at

supporters would have left the temple in rubble for well over a year before carrying out the sacrifices there, and I have yet to come across Beard’s view of the temple’s condition in other sources.

⁹¹ “Cynics might have observed that the roll call of exotic captives in Virgil’s version of Octavian’s triumph was a loaded cover-up for the fact that there too civil war (against Antony) lay immediately behind the celebrations—just as the hand-picked Jewish prisoners and the Jewish spoils in the triumph of Vespasian and Titus were a useful disguise for the defeat of the Roman enemies in the civil war that put the new Flavian dynasty on the throne in 70 CE” (Beard 2007:124).

⁹² Östenberg 2009:8.

⁹³ “By this repeated ritual performance, with vibrant emotion, Rome time and again emphatically expressed and created what she was and should be. In the triumph, Rome defined herself by displaying others ... to clearly distinguish Romans from other participants, the triumphal performance required a fixed and easily legible role-playing ...” (Östenberg 2009:262).

⁹⁴ Östenberg 2009:117, cf. Tacitus *Histories* 5.13, which calls the inhabitants of Judaea “a people which, though prone to superstition, is opposed to all propitiatory rites” (trans. Moore).

⁹⁵ Östenberg 2009:279.

⁹⁶ Östenberg 2009:263.

the beginning of the procession, rather than behind the *triumphator* with the other Romans⁹⁷. The triumph also put forward an important fiction about the communality of the spoils; in the parade, the wealth gained from conquered nations is presented as the joint property of the *populus Romanus*, when in reality warfare disproportionately enriched the *triumphatores* and emperors⁹⁸. Staged immediately after Titus' return from the east, the Flavian triumph marked the accession of a new imperial family, with clear dynastic intentions. It was a combination of “imperial *adventus*, victory parade, and accession ritual ... the Flavian *coronation*, the official launch party and press night of the Flavian dynasty”⁹⁹, and Josephus' version of events is the insider's report.

(4) The Visuals

From his first mention of Titus' arrival in Italy, Josephus emphasizes visibility, writing that “the sight of the three men together in the same place provided the crowd of citizens with miraculous joy” (τῷ δὲ πλήθει τῶν πολιτῶν δαίμονιόν τινα τὴν χαρὰν παρεῖχε τὸ βλέπειν αὐτοὺς ἤδη τοὺς τρεῖς ἐν ταύτῳ γεγονότας, *BJ* 7.120). The articular infinitive links the happiness of the crowd to the physical sight of the Flavians together. In the same section, the Flavians are described in terms of their visibility, as Josephus describes them as “those about to be seen” (τοῖς ὀφθησομένοις, *BJ* 7.122).

The spoils in the triumph are often described in terms of their visibility, with words from the θαῦμα/θέα root, as well as the πρέπω root. θαῦμα/θέα words relate to sight and

⁹⁷ Östenberg 2009:263, cf. Dio's description of Augustus' triumph over Cleopatra and especially Dio 51.21.9, which states that the magistrates followed behind him with the senators, whereas previously the magistrates were in front and only the senators went behind the *triumphator*.

⁹⁸ Östenberg 2009:273.

⁹⁹ Beard 2003:548.

spectacle, usually in the wondrous or miraculous sense¹⁰⁰, while *πρέπω* refers to something which is conspicuously visible¹⁰¹. Both roots appear when Josephus laments his inability to describe the spoils¹⁰²; there, speech and writing fail Josephus in the face of Roman wealth, which was originally Jewish wealth. Soon after, he calls this wealth *θαυμαστά* twice (*BJ* 7.133, 7.136), while the pictorial stages are a *θαύμα* (*BJ* 7.139). Later on, Domitian and his horse constitute a *θέα* (*BJ* 7.152). This focus on seeing contributes to the *enargeia* of Josephus' account, prompting the reader to picture the day's events.

Josephus also attributes this concern with visibility to the *triumphatores*' organizational efforts, writing that the Flavians sent the triumph through the theatres of the city specifically to make it easier for the crowd to see: (“leading the triumph through the theatres, so that seeing would be easier for the crowds”, τὸν θρίαμβον διὰ τῶν θεάτρων διεξελαύνοντες, ὅπως εἶη τοῖς πλήθεσιν ἡ θεὰ ῥάων, *BJ* 7.132). The Flavians' consideration of the triumph's optics was expressed earlier in the narrative when the tallest and handsomest captives (μεγέθει τε καὶ κάλλει σωμάτων ὑπερβάλλοντας, 7.118) were earmarked for the triumph along with the leaders¹⁰³. The minor visual aggrandizement here contributes to the overall impressiveness of the spectacle both in person and in writing.

Josephus writes that even of the crowd of prisoners “none were seen unadorned” (οὐδὲ τὸν αἰχμάλωτον ἦν ἰδεῖν ὄχλον ἀκόσμητον), and their clothing was varied and beautiful

¹⁰⁰ LSJ 1996:786, under both *θαυμαστός* and *θέα*; Chantraine 1968:425 notes the common root and defines the words as relating to “*vue, spectacle*”.

¹⁰¹ LSJ 1996:1461 defines *πρέπω* primarily as “to be clearly seen, to be conspicuous”; Chantraine 1968:935 defines it as “*apparaître distinctement*”.

¹⁰² “It is impossible to worthily describe the multitude and magnificence of those spectacles” (ἀμήχανον δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἀχίαν εἰπεῖν τῶν θεαμάτων ἐκείνων τὸ πλῆθος καὶ τὴν μεγαλοπρέπειαν, *BJ* 7.132).

¹⁰³ “Out of the prisoners, [Titus] chose the leaders Simon and John, and seven hundred men excellent in the stature and handsomeness of their bodies, and ordered them to be immediately conveyed to Italy” (τῶν αἰχμαλώτων δὲ τοὺς μὲν ἡγεμόνας Σίμωνα καὶ Ἰωάννην, τὸν δ' ἄλλον ἀριθμὸν ἑπτακοσίους ἄνδρας ἐπιλέψας μεγέθει τε καὶ κάλλει σωμάτων ὑπερβάλλοντας προσέταξεν εἰς τὴν Ἰταλίαν αὐτίκα μάλα κομίζεσθαι, *BJ* 7.118). Notably, this sentence appears as the last in a series of mentions of preparation for the triumph (Beard 2003:553).

(τῶν ἐσθήτων ποικιλία καὶ τὸ κάλλος, *BJ* 7.138). The overall effect of Josephus' descriptions of the attractiveness and adornment of the captives, together with his emphasis on visuality, is twofold: it increases the prestige of Josephus' triumph (as well as the defeated Jews); and its vividness adds to the cumulative *enargeia* of the procession¹⁰⁴. This *enargeia* encourages his audience to react emotionally to the events, effectively turning readers into spectators of the triumph¹⁰⁵.

(5) The Pictorial Stages

Another important visual aspect of the triumph is the use of pictorial stages as artistic representations of the events of the war. However, the physical composition and afterlife of the objects is a matter of some debate. Importantly, mimesis itself comes up in Josephus' description of the pictorial stages (also sometimes called "floats"¹⁰⁶); this mention is significant because Josephus' description of the artwork is itself mimetic, even as the pictorial stages imitate the war's events. Josephus' long description of the paintings works toward several of his narrative goals, and is worth quoting in full:

But nothing in the procession excited so much astonishment as the structure of the moving stages; indeed, their massiveness afforded ground for alarm and misgiving as to their stability, many of them being three or four stories high, while the magnificence of the fabric was a source at once of delight and amazement. For many were enveloped in tapestries interwoven with gold, and all had a framework of gold and wrought ivory. The war was shown by numerous representations, in separate sections, affording a very vivid picture of its episodes. Here was to be seen a prosperous country devastated, there whole battalions of the enemy slaughtered; here a party in flight, there others led into captivity; walls of surpassing compass demolished by engines, strong fortresses overpowered, cities with well-manned defences completely mastered and an army pouring within the ramparts, an area all deluged with blood, the hands of

¹⁰⁴ The *enargeia* of Josephus' text is also helped by such things as the simple inclusion of many details, which Quintilian says are necessary expansions on simple statements of fact to allow the writer to penetrate the emotions of the reader (Webb 2009:91).

¹⁰⁵ Chapman 2005:291.

¹⁰⁶ Beard 2007:145.

those incapable of resistance raised in supplication, temples set on fire, houses pulled down over their owners' heads, and, after general desolation and woe, rivers flowing, not over a cultivated land, nor supplying drink to man and beast, but across a country still on every side in flames. For to such sufferings were the Jews destined when they plunged into the war; and the art and magnificent workmanship of these structures now portrayed the incidents to those who had not witnessed them, as though they were happening before their eyes. On each of the stages was stationed the general of one of the captured cities in the attitude in which he was taken¹⁰⁷.

θαῦμα δ' ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα παρείχεν ἢ τῶν φερομένων πηγμάτων κατασκευή. καὶ γὰρ διὰ μέγεθος ἦν δεῖσαι τῷ βεβαίῳ τῆς φορᾶς ἀπιστήσαντα, τριώροφα γὰρ αὐτῶν πολλὰ καὶ τετρώροφα πεποίητο, καὶ τῇ πολυτελείᾳ τῇ περὶ τὴν κατασκευὴν ἦν ἡσθῆναι μετ' ἐκπλήξεως. καὶ γὰρ ὑφάσματα πολλοῖς διάχρουσα περιβέβλητο, καὶ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἐλέφας οὐκ ἀποίητος πᾶσι περιεπεπήγει. διὰ πολλῶν δὲ μιμημάτων ὁ πόλεμος ἄλλος εἰς ἄλλα μεμερισμένος ἐναργεστάτην ὄψιν αὐτοῦ παρείχεν. ἦν γὰρ ὄραν χώραν μὲν εὐδαίμονα δηουμένην, ὅλας δὲ φάλαγγας κτεινομένας πολεμίων, καὶ τοὺς μὲν φεύγοντας τοὺς δ' εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν ἀγομένους, τείχη δ' ὑπερβάλλοντα μεγέθει μηχαναῖς ἐρειπόμενα καὶ φρουρίων ἀλίσκομένας ὀχυρότητας καὶ πόλεων πολυανθρώπους περιβόλους κατ' ἄκρας ἐχομένους (144) καὶ στρατιὰν ἔνδον τειχῶν εἰσχεομένην, καὶ πάντα φόνου πλήθοντα τόπον, καὶ τῶν ἀδθανάτων χεῖρας ἀνταίρειν ἰκεσίας, πῦρ τε ἐνιέμενον ἱεροῖς καὶ κατασκαφὰς οἰκῶν ἐπὶ τοῖς δεσπότηταις, καὶ μετὰ πολλὴν ἐρημίαν καὶ κατήφειαν ποταμοὺς ῥέοντας οὐκ ἐπὶ γῆν γεωργομένην, οὐδὲ ποτὸν ἀνθρώποις ἢ βοσκήμασιν ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἔτι πανταχόθεν φλεγομένης. ταῦτα γὰρ Ἰουδαῖοι πεισομένους αὐτοὺς τῷ πολέμῳ παρέδωσαν. ἡ τέχνη δὲ καὶ τῶν κατασκευασμάτων ἐδείκνυτο ὡς παροῦσι. τέτακτο δ' ἐφ' ἑκάστῳ τῶν πηγμάτων ὁ τῆς ἀλίσκομένης πόλεως στρατηγὸς ὃν τρόπον ἐλήφθη (BJ 7.139-47).

Josephus emphasizes the intense realism of the display, stating these representations engross the spectators of the triumph so much that they feel as if they were present for the actual events (ὡς παροῦσιν). Further, the paintings are a very vivid sight (ἐναργεστάτην ὄψιν); the use of the superlative of ἐναργής is particularly significant, since *enargeia* is a rhetorical term for the stylistic quality of making the audience seem to directly see the events described in a literary

¹⁰⁷ Trans. Thackeray.

work¹⁰⁸. The implication is that these pictorial representations give the most vivid version to spectators, but by describing them himself, his text extends the *enargeia* of the paintings to his readers.

Josephus' description of the individual war scenes is itself mimetic, imitating the effect of the paintings. Just as the representations provide moments of the war, snapshots of individual defeats lacking context, Josephus' description resists falling into ekphrases of individual paintings. Instead, he gives an ekphrasis of the paintings as a set, the total carnage of the war in short bursts. This is truer to the spectators' experience of watching the paintings go by, and imitates the specific kind of mimesis enacted by the carrying of the paintings through the procession. Beard goes so far as to suggest that Josephus' comments on the potential danger of the painted scenes falling onto the spectators are mimetic of the dangers of war¹⁰⁹.

Toward the end of his description of these paintings, Josephus includes a clear warning to his readers: "for, in being persuaded to war, the Judaeans gave them over to such things" (ταῦτα γὰρ Ἰουδαῖοι πεισομένους αὐτοὺς τῷ πολέμῳ παρέδωσαν, *BJ* 7.146). This short passage demonstrates that Josephus views the fate of the Jews, defeated and dragged through the triumph, as their own responsibility. His decision to make this a factual statement emphasizes the larger lesson of his history, that destruction awaits those who attempt to shake off the hegemony of the Roman Empire. This negative *exemplum* of behaviour is further emphasized by the degradation of the generals forced to adopt the pose of their defeat, encapsulating the sheer humiliation at work in the triumph¹¹⁰.

There is also the question of the physical use(s) of the visual representations of the war in the triumphal procession. For the representations described in Josephus, Östenberg envisions

¹⁰⁸ Feldherr 1998:4.

¹⁰⁹ Beard 2003:551.

¹¹⁰ Östenberg 2009:156.

more than a commemorative triumphal painting; rather, on account of the use of *πήγματα* (which can mean anything fastened together, but which is often used to describe either bookcases, or movable platforms or scaffolding used in the theatre¹¹¹), together with the display of the defeated generals in the pose (*τρόπος*) in which they were taken, Östenberg suggests a form of built set incorporating the defeated general.

Östenberg's view is based on her argument that there are two separate types of visual representations produced in relation to the triumph: commemorative paintings for display after the procession, and tableaux carried in the procession with scaffolding (*pegmata*) for prisoners (or actors) to reenact the defeat. She suggests that multi-scened paintings or complex illustrations depicting any kind of narrative would not have been comprehensible to spectators in the crowded triumph¹¹²; however, she also suggests that scaffolding-mounted displays (as she suggests Josephus describes) could have stopped in the theatres to allow more people a longer look at them¹¹³, which seems to undermine the value of that argument.

Östenberg also cites the story of L. Hostilius Mancinus narrating his own triumphal paintings¹¹⁴. This anecdote is treated as evidence that there was a genuine need for interpretive help if members of the public were to understand the intended messages of the painting; however, it is nowhere stated that his explanations were actually necessary, and so the story does not prove that narrative paintings of the war would require interpretive help to make them comprehensible in a processional context.

¹¹¹ Östenberg 2009:253.

¹¹² Östenberg 2009:249.

¹¹³ Östenberg 2009:255.

¹¹⁴ Mancinus, as Pliny the elder tells us, was the first to enter Carthage; he was so proud of his wartime exploits there that he commissioned paintings of his own accomplishments and placed them in the forum. However, unsatisfied with the thoroughness of this representation, Mancinus then stood near the paintings so that he could narrate his individual deeds to the people viewing the paintings (*L. Hostilius Mancinus, qui primus Carthaginem inruperat, situm eius oppugnationesque depictas proponendo in foro et ipse adsistens populo spectanti singula enarrando*, Pliny *Natural Histories* 35.7).

Despite these problems with Östenberg's categories, the interpretation that these visual representations were three-dimensional objects incorporating the captives into a painted backdrop is attractive and convincing. However, given the financial and temporal cost of producing such large and complex displays, it seems likely they would have been used for the purposes of both of Östenberg's categories of visual representations; that is, they likely would have been able to incorporate the living bodies of the defeated generals into the image during the procession, but also to function as standalone pieces afterward. Nevertheless, Josephus' detailed description of the pictorial stages in the triumph makes a definite contribution to the *enargeia* and impressiveness of the spectacle.

(6) The Customs

Another major theme in Josephus' diction is customariness. Josephus bookends his description of the triumph with insistence that the Flavians' actions are prescribed and proper, emphasizing their adherence to tradition at the outset and conclusion of the triumph. This focus on tradition contributes to the legitimacy with which the Flavians wished to shroud their accession to power, distracting from the civil war and pointing instead to their (more) legitimate victories¹¹⁵. As they are about to set out for the procession, Vespasian and Titus are wearing the customary (or more literally, paternal) purple robes (πορφυρᾶς δ' ἐσθητῆρας πατρῶιους, *BJ* 7.125); they make the lawful prayers (εὐχὰς ... νενομισμένας, *BJ* 7.128); and they dismiss the soldiers to the customary meal (τὸ νενομισμένον ἄριστον, *BJ* 7.129). The repetition of νομίζω in successive sections draws particular attention to its use; here as a participle, it is best rendered as "customary"¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁵ Beard 2003:554.

¹¹⁶ LSJ p.1179 νομίζω I.

A much-cited passage on the so-called Triumphal Gate also displays the Flavians' adherence to custom, as Vespasian "withdrew to the gate from which triumphs were always sent, and on this account it derived its name" (ἀνεχώρει τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ πέμπεσθαι δι' αὐτῆς αἰεὶ τοὺς θριάμβους τῆς προσηγορίας ἀπ' αὐτῶν τετυχυῖαν, *BJ* 7.130)¹¹⁷. These mentions all appear before the procession actually begins, and at the conclusion of the procession, Josephus returns to this theme once more:

The triumphal procession ended at the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, on reaching which they halted; for it was a time-honoured custom to wait there until the execution of the enemy's general was announced¹¹⁸.

Ἦν δὲ τῆς πομπῆς τὸ τέλος ἐπὶ τὸν νεῶ τοῦ Καπετωλίου Διός, ἐφ' ὃν ἐλθόντες ἔστησαν, ἦν γὰρ παλαιὸν πάτριον περιμένειν, μέχρις ἂν τὸν τοῦ στρατηγού τῶν πολεμίων θάνατον ἀπαγγείλη τις. (*BJ* 7.153)

The substantive *πάτριον* recalls its use to describe the purple robes at the outset of the procession. The word literally means "of or belonging to one's father", but (as here) is more general, meaning "derived from one's fathers, hereditary"¹¹⁹. The use of *παλαιὸν* reinforces this idea, meaning not only ancient, but "venerable, held in esteem"¹²⁰.

Josephus draws attention to custom one more time in his description of the triumph: after the Flavians waited according to this *παλαιὸν πάτριον*, they ended the triumph by obtaining good omens with the customary prayers (ἐπὶ ταῖς νομιζομέναις καλλιερῆσαντες εὐχαῖς, *BJ* 7.155). The placement of a participle from *νομίζω* here recalls its use earlier before the procession began and imbues Josephus' description (and therefore the event he describes) with an aura of credibility, custom, and history. These choices in diction allow Josephus to position

¹¹⁷ However, as noted in the introduction, Josephus' claim about this gate is highly suspect, as a triumphal gate is mentioned only four other times in the ancient literature (Beard 2007:96-101).

¹¹⁸ Trans. Thackeray.

¹¹⁹ The LSJ also provides an example from *BJ* 1.24 where it is best understood as meaning "according to the custom of one's fathers", which is sufficient to justify translating it as customary both here and at *BJ* 7.125 (LSJ p.1348, *πάτριος* II).

¹²⁰ LSJ p.1290, *παλαιός* II.3.

the Flavians within the long and noble tradition of the Roman triumph, which extends past Augustus into Republican times.

The emphasis on the Flavians' adherence to custom bestows the weight of historical precedent on Vespasian and Titus' triumph, as well as placing the Flavians in their historical context. This represents a thematic continuity between Martial and Josephus: although they refer to historical tradition in very different ways, as Martial makes explicit reference to individual Julio-Claudian emperors in several of his poems while Josephus' comments are more general, both are concerned with situating their emperors (and their work) within Roman historical continuity, as I shall demonstrate fully in my next chapter. The difference in their level of focus, from Martial's specificities to Josephus' generalities, can be explained by the difference in their audiences, as Martial's Latin language readers could be expected to have a greater familiarity with Roman imperial history than the wider readers of Josephus' Greek-language history.

(7) The World

However, the triumph is also concerned with the global position of Rome and its people. The all-encompassing nature of the triumph is first anticipated by Josephus' insistence that the entire population of the crowded city was present, crowding the streets in preparation for the parade¹²¹. More importantly, however, the global nature of the procession is concerned with defining and displaying Romanness in opposition to the qualities of the defeated, who are simultaneously rejected as foreign others and embraced as conquered subjects¹²². While conquest continued to be the focus through the triumphs of Pompey, Caesar, and Octavian, by the time the empire was established, the triumph was more concerned with representing the continuation of Roman

¹²¹ "Not a soul among that countless host in the city was left at home: all issued forth and occupied every position where it was but possible to stand" (οὐδείς οἴκοι καταλέλειπτο τῆς ἀμέτρου πληθύος ἐν τῇ πόλει, πάντες δ' ὄπη και στῆναι μόνον ἦν οἷόν προεληλυθότες τοὺς τόπους κατελιήφεσαν, *BJ* 7.122).

¹²² Östenberg 2009:274.

mastery over the already-conquered world. In this new formulation, the triumph displays the spoils not only of a specific people, but of the entire world, making the *orbis terrarum* the same as the *orbis Romanus*¹²³.

Josephus' account of the triumph reflects this representation of wealth and the world, particularly in his description of the wealth in the procession, which begins:

It is impossible adequately to describe the multitude of those spectacles and their magnificence under every conceivable aspect, whether in works of art or diversity of riches or natural rarities; for almost all the objects which men who have ever been blessed by fortune have acquired one by one—the wonderful and precious productions of various nations—by their collective exhibition on that day displayed the majesty of the Roman empire. Silver and gold and ivory in masses, wrought into all manner of forms, might be seen, not as if carried in procession, but flowing, so to speak, like a river; here were tapestries borne along, some of the rarest purple, others embroidered by Babylonian art with perfect portraiture; transparent gems, some set in golden crowns, some in other fashions, swept by in such profusion as to correct our erroneous supposition that any of them were rare¹²⁴.

Ἀμήχανον δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἀχίαν εἰπεῖν τῶν θαυμάτων ἐκείνων τὸ πλῆθος καὶ τὴν μεγαλοπρέπειαν ἐν ἅπασιν οἷς ἂν τις ἐπινοήσειεν ἢ τεχνῶν ἔργοις ἢ πλούτου μέρεσιν ἢ φ' ἄθροισμα σπανιότησιν. σχεδὸν γὰρ ὅσα τοῖς πᾶσι ἀνθρώποις εὐδαιμονήσασιν ἐκτήθη κατὰ μέρος ἄλλα παρ' ἄλλοις θαυμαστά καὶ πολυτελῆ ταῦτ' ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἀθρόα τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίας ἔδειξε τὸ μέγεθος. ἀργύρου γὰρ καὶ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἐλέφαντος ἐν παντοίαις ἰδέαις κατασκευασμάτων ἦν ὄραν οὐχ ὥσπερ ἐν πομπῇ κομιζόμενον πλῆθος ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις ῥέοντα ποταμόν, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐκ πορφύρας ὑφάσματα τῆς σπανιωτάτης φερόμενα, τὰ δ' εἰς ἀκριβῆ ζωγραφίαν πεποικιλμένα τῆ βαβυλωνίων τέχνη. λίθοι τε διαφανεῖς, οἱ μὲν χρυσοῖς ἐμπεπλεγμένοι στεφάνοις, οἱ δὲ κατ' ἄλλας ποιήσεις, τοσοῦτοι παρηγέχθησαν ὥστε μαθεῖν ὅτι μάτην εἶναι τι τούτων σπάνιων ὑπειλήφαμεν (BJ 7.132-5).

In this passage, Josephus writes that the entire wealth of humankind was displayed by the power (ἡγεμονίας) of Rome on a single day. The Flavian conquest represents not only the defeat of the rebellion in Judaea, but the continued subjugation of the entire world, as Josephus extrapolates the seized wealth of Judaea to stand in for the wealth of the world, which is now the

¹²³ Östenberg 2009:290.

¹²⁴ Trans. Thackeray.

property of Rome¹²⁵; the inclusion of Babylonian goods helps construct this image, but more importantly Josephus writes that the triumph represents almost all the wealth of mankind (*BJ* 7.133).

After describing this wealth with a broad global focus, Josephus narrows his view to the specifically Judaeian spoils of the war. He describes in detail the artifacts looted from the temple, including the golden Shewbread table (*BJ* 7.148), the menorah (*BJ* 7.148-9), and a copy of the Jewish Law (*BJ* 7.150). The passage demonstrates that Josephus imagines a reading audience generally unfamiliar with Jewish religious practice, as he describes the objects rather than naming them¹²⁶. His catalogue of objects is remarkably similar to the representation of the spoils on the Arch of Titus, portraying much the same plundered artifacts¹²⁷. It has been suggested that the corroboration between the two indicates that Josephus' text was consulted as a source for the decoration of the arch¹²⁸.

The global aspect of the triumph is reinforced by Josephus' excursus describing the dedication of the Temple of Peace at the end of his section on the triumph. This impressive Temple of Peace is included in Pliny the Elder's list of "the most beautiful works the world has ever seen" (*pulcherrima operum quae umquam vidit orbis*)¹²⁹; Pliny cites these wonders as

¹²⁵ "Although the triumph officially celebrated the subjugation of a revolt in Judaea only, along with the Jewish spoils, it staged natural rarities, riches, and objects of art produced by peoples far and near and coming from all over the world" (Östenberg 2009:291).

¹²⁶ The menorah, for instance, is described in such periphrastic detail that it is difficult to imagine a primarily Jewish reading audience: "a lampstand, likewise made of gold, but constructed on a different pattern from those which we use in ordinary life. Affixed to the pedestal was a central shaft, from which there extended slender branches, arranged trident-fashion, a wrought lamp being attached to the extremity of each branch; of these there were seven, indicating the honour paid to that number among the Jews," λυχνία χρυσεῖ μὲν ὁμοίως πεποιημένη, τὸ δ' ἔργον ἐξήλλακτο τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν χρῆσιν συνηθείας. ὁ μὲν γὰρ μέσος ἦν κίων ἐκ τῆς βάσεως πεπηγώς, λεπτοὶ δ' ἀπ' αὐτοῦ μεμήκυντο καυλίσκοι τριαίνης σχήματι παραπλησίαν τὴν θέσιν ἔχοντες, λύχνον ἕκαστος αὐτῶν ἐπ' ἄκρον κεχαλκευμένος. ἑπτὰ δ' ἦσαν οὗτοι τῆς παρὰ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἑβδομάδος τὴν τιμὴν ἐμφανίζοντες, *BJ* 7.148-9 (trans. Thackeray).

¹²⁷ Beard 2007:152.

¹²⁸ Chapman 2009:110.

¹²⁹ Pliny *Natural Histories* 36.102.

showing that “the world has been conquered”¹³⁰. Josephus’ inclusion of the Temple of Peace together with the triumph represents a significant chronological departure, since the temple was not completed until 75 CE; in the following section, he returns to his former place in the narrative of the Judaean War in the east (*BJ* 7.163)¹³¹. In the Temple of Peace, as in the triumph itself, Josephus describes the wealth of the world compressed into a single (Roman) location:

For, besides having prodigious resources of wealth on which to draw he also embellished it with ancient masterpieces of painting and sculpture; indeed, into that shrine were accumulated and stored all objects for the sight of which men had once wandered over the whole world, eager to see them severally while they lay in various countries¹³².

τῆ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ πλούτου χορηγία δαιμονίῳ χρησάμενος, ἔτι καὶ τοῖς ἔκπαλαι κατωρθωμένοις γραφῆς τε καὶ πλαστικῆς ἔργοις αὐτὸ κατεκόσμησεν. πάντα γὰρ εἰς ἐκεῖνον τὸν νεῶ συνήχθη καὶ κατετέθη, δι’ ὧν τὴν θέαν ἄνθρωποι πρότερον περὶ πᾶσαν ἐπλανῶντο τὴν οἰκουμένην, ἕως ἄλλο παρ’ ἄλλοις ἦν κείμενον ἰδεῖν ποθοῦντες (*BJ* 7.159-60).

He then goes on to specify which of the plundered religious objects of Jerusalem are housed in the Temple of Peace, and which are instead housed in the palace of Vespasian himself.

The specific provenance of the other “ancient masterpieces” is left unmentioned, in what has been perceived as an intentional slight toward the Greek and Egyptian objects considering their naming in Pliny’s *Natural Histories*¹³³. Regardless, this passage shows that the entire wealth of the world has been assembled in one place as a “concentrated spectacle of what is best from all reaches of the empire”¹³⁴; Josephus’ use of ἄνθρωποι here insinuates that this byproduct of Roman conquest is a benefit for mankind. The cumulative effect is to extend the spectacle of wealth staged by the Flavians in the triumph in two ways: it is extended through

¹³⁰ Chapman 2009:111, discussing Pliny *NH* 36.101-2.

¹³¹ Beard 2003:555.

¹³² Trans. Thackeray.

¹³³ Chapman 2009:112.

¹³⁴ Chapman 2009:112.

time in its continuous staging as a visual display within the Temple of Peace, memorialized there for future visiting members of the public¹³⁵; and it is also extended through Josephus' writing, allowing those who will never visit the city of Rome to experience some measure of Vespasian's display there.

Josephus' preoccupation with the Romans' relationship to the human world draws attention to his general lack of interest in the natural world. While animals are mentioned in his description of the triumph, Josephus is more concerned with the adornment of the animals' attendants than with the beasts themselves¹³⁶. This contrasts with descriptions of earlier triumphs, such as certain third century triumphs which included elephants¹³⁷; it also contrasts with Martial, who is very concerned in his *Liber spectaculorum* with the emperor's relationship to the natural world¹³⁸. Josephus, however, is far more concerned with the human realm of

¹³⁵ Chapman 2009:114 interestingly muses upon whether Josephus would have acted as a kind of tour guide, bringing other Romans there to point out and discuss the objects he describes in such detail in his history.

¹³⁶ "Many species of animals were led, all wearing appropriate ornament. The people leading each group were adorned with purple and gold-embroidered clothes," ζώων τε πολλαὶ φύσεις παρήγοντο κόσμον οικείου ἀπάντων περικεμημένων. ἦν δὲ καὶ τὸ κομίζον ἕκαστα τούτων πλῆθος ἀνθρώπων ἀλουργαῖς ἐσθῆσι καὶ διαχρύσοις κεκοσμημένον, *BJ* 7.136-7 (trans. Thackeray).

¹³⁷ Östenberg 2009:172

¹³⁸ Josephus' lack of interest in the natural world perhaps contrasts most strongly with Pliny the Elder's *Historia Naturalis*; the text explores the natural world, of course, but it is also intensely interested in the cultural significance of nature, since an animal's natural history necessarily includes its Roman history, and specifically its imperial history. The enormous 37-volume work is dedicated to Titus in its preface, and thus it is offered ostensibly to Caesar first, and to his readers second—this posits the emperor as the ideal reader, in much the same way that Martial's arena posits the emperor as the ideal spectator of the games (Gunderson 2003:646, cf. my discussion of Martial below in chapter III, section 8). (It should be noted that Sinclair's essay in the same volume presents a different ideal reader—he suggests that Pliny's ideal reader is Pliny himself [Sinclair 2003:279.]) The same article also makes reference to a certain metaphor of Pliny's at *HN* 8.34, where he presents Nature as the *editor* of a fight between snakes and elephants, which Gunderson sees as aligning Caesar with nature: "Nature offers and consumes these spectacles of herself and for herself. And if the world is Caesar's, then Nature's shows are his by extension" (Gunderson 2003:647). Thus, Pliny's work, like Martial's, offers a view of the natural world circumscribed by the imperial world; the emperor rules them both.

Despite its ostensible focus on the natural world, Pliny's *HN* also reaffirms certain aspects of the imperial aristocratic system. In a short metaphor, Pliny presents himself as a borrower of knowledge, taking his facts from previous authors but giving them credit, so that he might avoid being a thief (*HN praef.* 23). This represents the idea that knowledge about the natural world is a finite resource, that has already been sufficiently compiled (Murphy 2003:309), but more importantly it perpetuates the validity of the aristocratic ideal of munificence. Murphy connects Pliny's metaphor on being a borrower of knowledge to the virtue of borrowing if necessary to provide *beneficia* to the public; thus, while Caesar borrowed money to put on games, Pliny borrows knowledge in order to arrange it for his readers (Murphy 2003:310-13).

affairs. This may also explain why his textual description of the triumph leaves out other aspects of the natural world, such as the personification of a river (considered to be the River Jordan) seen in reliefs on the triumph on the Arch of Titus¹³⁹. Rather, he focuses on the manmade spoils, and most of all on the Jewish-made prizes of the war.

(8) The *Triumphatores*

Josephus' description of the Jewish spoils of the war marks them as the most important by placing them in a privileged position at the narrative end of the procession, despite the strong likelihood that in the procession itself they appeared *before* the pictorial stages (whose long description narratively precedes them)¹⁴⁰. Josephus' account masks these narrative excursions in order to maintain a place of prominence for the Jewish artifacts, which in his version appear to immediately precede the *triumphatores*. Indeed, much as Josephus' description of the triumph is framed with references to custom, so too is the narrative framed with strategic mentions of the central figures themselves.

It is Titus' arrival which triggers the triumph in the first place, and the meeting of the Flavians is noted as a sight of joy (*BJ* 7.120-1); on the day of the procession, Josephus describes Vespasian and Titus first (*BJ* 1.124), and there follow several sections on their appearance, procession, acclamations from troops, and recitation of prayers. Josephus' description of these preliminary stages of the parade ends with the Flavians "driving the triumph through the theatres, in order to make it easier for the crowds to see" (τὸν θρίαμβον διὰ τῶν θεάτρων διεξελαύνοντες, ὅπως εἶη τοῖς πλήθεσιν ἡ θέα ῥάων, *BJ* 7.131). From there, Josephus launches into the long description of the triumph itself, allowing the Flavians to narratively launch his textual procession.

¹³⁹ Östberg 2009:236

¹⁴⁰ Östberg 2009:113

Josephus ends his description of the triumphal parade with the Flavians as well, despite the fact that they would have appeared at the midpoint of the parade, with all the Roman troops and magistrates behind them. Almost immediately after his description of the Jewish spoils, Josephus turns to the *triumphatores*:

Last of all the spoils was carried a copy of the Jewish Law. Then followed a large party carrying images of victory, all made of ivory and gold. Behind them drove Vespasian, followed by Titus; while Domitian rode beside them, in magnificent apparel and mounted on a steed that was itself a sight¹⁴¹.

ὁ τε νόμος ὁ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐφέρετο τῶν λαφύρων
τελευταῖος. ἐπὶ τούτοις παρήεσαν πολλοὶ Νίκης ἀγάλματα
κομίζοντες. ἐξ ἐλέφαντος δ' ἦν πάντων καὶ χρυσοῦ ἡ κατασκευή.
μεθ' ἧς Οὐεσπασιανὸς ἤλαυνε πρῶτος καὶ Τίτος εἶπετο, Δομετιανὸς δὲ
παρίππευεν, αὐτὸς τε διαπρεπῶς κεκοσμημένος καὶ τὸν ἵππον
παρέχων θέας ἄξιον (BJ 7.150-2).

From this point, Josephus' narrative moves to the end of the procession at the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, so that the description of the procession in motion begins and ends with the Flavian *triumphatores* who were responsible for the conquest of the Jews. Their involvement here is deliberately understated, as they underwrite the entire triumph in Josephus; rather, he allows the splendour and spectacle to remain the focus, with the Flavians bookending the procession rather than dominating throughout.

(9) Conclusion

Josephus presents a specifically Flavian interpretation of the world, one which legitimates the new dynasty by focusing on the wealth they made available to Rome in the triumph by their victories in the east. The social functions of the triumph are often mimicked through Josephus' text, as he reproduces vital aspects of the triumphal procession in the structure of his chapters. The wealth on display is presented as the joint property of the Roman people as a whole through

¹⁴¹ Trans. Thackeray.

the communal nature of the triumph, but underwritten by the dominating presence of the Flavians both in the text and the procession. Using the rhetorical properties of *enargeia* throughout his discussion, Josephus extends the lifespan of Vespasian and Titus' joint triumph, largely through the use of visual terms and the ekphrases of visual elements such as pictorial stages.

Josephus further supports the Flavian *triumphatores* by insisting on the traditional and customary nature of their actions throughout, with so determined a focus that it has been suggested it represents a departure, a triumph as afterlife of the ritual rather than true life¹⁴². Regardless, the triumph allows the world to be imported to Rome as a property of the empire, putting the world on display for Roman spectators within a framework that emphasizes their power over it. Josephus' text mimics this effect by insisting upon the all-encompassing nature of the Flavian wealth; both in the procession and in the Temple of Peace afterward, the spoils of the Judaean War represent the wealth of the world. By making the Flavians the precipitate cause of this wealth, Josephus makes a strong statement of support for the power and legitimacy of the newly-founded Flavian dynasty.

¹⁴² Beard 2007:328.

III. Martial

(1) Outline

This chapter will explore the socio-political functions of Martial's *Liber spectaculorum*¹⁴³. I discuss the life of Martial, and his social and financial position; the collection's transmission and circulation; which set of games are represented by the poems; and the likely date of publication, where I will conclude that, despite a recent argument from Kathleen Coleman that the text is undateable, publication under Titus is by far the most likely scenario.

After considering these matters external to the text, I turn to the poems themselves and how their content furthers Flavian political aims. One key concept that drives my interpretation is Gunderson's concept of substitution in the arena, as Caesar's version of reality is first presented in the arena and then reflected in Martial's text. After considering the first poems in the collection, which locate the arena and its games in their global and Roman contexts, I will treat the two main themes of substitution in the texts:

- a. poems with mythical content, wherein myths are reified and surpassed by the events of the arena. Caesar's reality replaces the mythical one, which is often described using authoritative words to increase the impressiveness of the substitution.
- b. poems which feature animals and the subjugation of the natural world. These generally include an animal performing some kind of task which it was obviously trained to do, but Martial insists that it constitutes the animal's natural reaction to Caesar's divinity; in this

¹⁴³ In referring to Martial's untitled book of poems on the games, I follow the lead of Coleman 2006 in using *Liber spectaculorum* rather than *Liber de spectaculis* to differentiate it from Tertullian's later work on Roman spectacles, entitled *de Spectaculis*. The lower-case *s* is intended to serve as a reminder that this is a descriptor, rather than a true title affixed to the work.

way, Martial substitutes the version of reality more flattering to the emperor for what the crowd knows to be true.

From these readings, I will argue that the overall impact of the collection is to glorify the Flavian emperors as divine rulers and to praise their substantial contributions to the city of Rome. By preserving this imperial version of reality in his texts, Martial extends the lifespan of the Flavians' essentially ephemeral spectacles through time as well as through space by making them known throughout the empire.

(2) Martial

Nearly all our knowledge of the life of Marcus Valerius Martialis is (somewhat problematically) derived from the contents of his poems¹⁴⁴. Martial was born between 38 and 41 CE¹⁴⁵ in Bilbilis, a highly Romanized *municipium* in Spain¹⁴⁶; his name, as well as the names of his parents Fronto and Flaccilla, suggests that he came from a Spanish family which had gained Roman citizenship¹⁴⁷, while his good education demonstrates that his parents must have been well off, at least within their community.

In 64 CE, Martial arrived at Rome still in his early 20s. He did not seem to enjoy great favour under Nero, not even reaching tribunate status until the time of Flavian rule¹⁴⁸. His earliest surviving published work, the *Liber spectaculorum*, is generally considered to describe

¹⁴⁴ The exception is his retirement and death in Spain, which is attested by Pliny the Younger's obituary for Martial in *Epistula* 3.21.

¹⁴⁵ Sullivan 1991:2. The dating is based on Martial 10.24, written for the poet's fifty-seventh birthday and dateable to the years 95-98

¹⁴⁶ Watson and Watson 2003:4. Martial names Bilbilis as his hometown at epigram 12.18, and describes his pride at her resources: "me my Bilbilis, proud of her gold and iron, revisited after many Decembers, has received and made a rustic," *me multos repetita post Decembres / accepit mea rusticumque fecit / auro Bilbilis et superba ferro* (trans. Shackleton Bailey). Bilbilis was known for its iron and the manufacture of swords, while the nearby river was known for its alluvial gold (Watson and Watson 146); the archaeological remains include a theatre and a bath complex, suggesting a highly Romanized town (Watson and Watson 4). See Sullivan 1991:172-83 for a more detailed discussion of the Romanization of Martial's homeland and the archaeological record of the area.

¹⁴⁷ Watson and Watson 2003:1; Martial addresses his parents by name at epigram 5.34.

¹⁴⁸ Sullivan 1991:3-4.

the inaugural games of the Flavian amphitheatre and to have appeared in 80 CE. His first two surviving books of epigrams were published much later, in 86-7, but it seems necessary that some work was circulated privately over a number of years, both before and after the *Liber spectaculorum*¹⁴⁹. This early circulation theory would also contextualize the poet's boastful introduction of himself in the first poem of his first book of epigrams as *toto notus in orbe Martialis | argutis epigrammaton libellis* ("Martial, known the world over for his witty little books of epigrams", 1.1.2¹⁵⁰)¹⁵¹.

Martial continued to live in Rome for the next 34 years, until he retired to his Spanish hometown in 98, living in a villa provided by a patroness until his death around 104¹⁵². While his marital status in his later life is unclear, his petition to the emperor for the *ius trium liberorum*, which allowed him to accept legacies from patrons, on the basis that Fortune did not provide him with children suggests an infertile marriage rather than voluntary bachelordom¹⁵³. While Martial attained equestrian status and an honorary tribunate¹⁵⁴, his financial position has been debated¹⁵⁵. While the apparent discordance of the equestrian Martial complaining in his epigrams about his poverty has sometimes been attributed to simple poetic persona, these

¹⁴⁹ Sullivan notes the improbability that Martial would have waited 16 years after his arrival in Rome to begin writing at all (Sullivan 1991:4), while Watson and Watson write that it "seems certain that M. was honing his skills as an epigrammatist" during this time period (Watson and Watson 2).

¹⁵⁰ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

¹⁵¹ Watson and Watson 2003:2.

¹⁵² Watson and Watson 2003:3; Martial thanks his patroness Marcella for this villa in epigram 12.31.

¹⁵³ Watson and Watson 2003:2-3. At 2.91. Martial requests that Caesar should allow the appearance of what Fortune forbids, namely that he seem to be the father of three children (*quod fortuna uetet fieri, permitte uideri, / natorum genitor credar ut esse trium*, 2.91.5-6). Poem 2.92 thanks Caesar for granting this right.

¹⁵⁴ Tennant 2000:145.

¹⁵⁵ See Tennant 2000:139-40 and Watson and Watson 2003:3 for summaries of these debates. White has argued that the wealth required by equestrian status (property equivalent to HS 400,000) would have provided the income to maintain a reasonable standard of living in Rome (White 1978:88-9), while Saller suggests it provided only the bare minimum (Saller 1983).

comments appear so frequently that his elite audience must have accepted their fundamental validity¹⁵⁶.

Further, Martial's wealth likely appeared genuinely small in the context of imperial Rome¹⁵⁷. For comparison, Tennant notes that Pliny the Younger, whose annual income has been estimated at HS 1,100,000, described his own wealth as *modicae facultates* ("of moderate means," *Epistulae* 2.4)¹⁵⁸. Even accounting for Pliny's own literary and public personae and the political motivation to downplay one's own wealth, the evidence still suggests that Martial's finances were leaner than many of his contemporaries in court. Thus, it is likely that Martial had a real and necessary interest in gaining favour, with the hope of translating that popularity into financial patronage¹⁵⁹. Martial certainly had ample motivation to apply his wit and writing to produce a flattering work, such as the *Liber spectaculorum*, to attract the attention and favour of the Flavians.

It is unclear whether Martial ultimately received patronage from the Flavians beyond the granting of the *ius trium librorum*¹⁶⁰. Only one poem in Book I of his epigrams suggests a personal relationship with the younger Flavian emperor, when Martial writes that the hand of his personal copyist is known to the Caesars (*nota Caesaribus*, 1.101.1-2)¹⁶¹. Additionally, Watson

¹⁵⁶ Martial's relative poverty is corroborated by Pliny's *Ep.* 3.21, which mentions giving Martial a monetary gift for travel expenses upon his return to Spain (Tennant 2000:153-4).

¹⁵⁷ Tennant 2000:140 notes that "an individual's perception of his or her financial status is a notoriously subjective matter and one in which a self-pitying envy of the affluence of others is easily excited." This does, admittedly, require that one accept Martial's complaints of poverty as earnest rather than poetic posturing.

¹⁵⁸ Tennant 2000:141-2.

¹⁵⁹ Tennant 2000:145.

¹⁶⁰ Watson and Watson 2003:10-11. Coleman's 1998 paper goes even further, suggesting that Martial was a favourite of Titus precisely *because* of these poems he wrote for the inauguration, and that this early glorification of Titus may have negatively predisposed Domitian toward the poet. However, this position is complicated by Coleman's rejection of the traditional dating of the *Liber spectaculorum* to the reign of Titus in her 2006 book.

¹⁶¹ Coleman 1998:29-30 explains that the plural here must imply at least Titus and Domitian, if not Vespasian as well. The poet claims in later volumes that Domitian was accustomed to read and praise his poetry, as he writes: *ipse etiam tanto dominus sub pondere rerum | non dedignatur [has nugas] bis terque revolvere Caesar* "even Lord Caesar himself with all his load of business does not scorn to unroll [these trifles] twice and again", 6.64.14-15; and *namque solent sacra Caesaris aure frui*, "for they are wont to enjoy Caesar's sacred ear", 7.99.4 (trans. Shackleton

and Watson suggest that Martial's genre could be to blame for his relative lack of success: epigram may have been a less prestigious genre of literature, considering it was excluded from Domitian's poetry competitions¹⁶². However, Coleman notes that Martial may have had motivations other than literary prestige for this selection, since the genre is ideally suited to flattery: "epigram is the vehicle for courtly poetry *par excellence*, its tools hyperbole, paradox, the cleverly constructed compliment"¹⁶³. This could perhaps explain Martial's adherence to the genre.

(3) The Collection

While it is unclear what benefits Martial derived from his epigrams in the *Liber spectaculorum* after their publication, they may have been published with the emperor's encouragement¹⁶⁴. The prevalence of imperial content and the collection's singular focus on the games distinguish it from the numbered collections of Martial's poems (largely private epigrams), as well as from the extant corpus of epigrams generally¹⁶⁵.

Unfortunately, however, this epigrammatic record of spectacles has several textual problems. Only one branch of the tripartite manuscript tradition preserves the *Liber spectaculorum*, and only in six manuscripts of varying length and quality¹⁶⁶. Sullivan believes the book is "in mutilated and truncated form"¹⁶⁷, with less than half the volume surviving; he

Bailey). However, it is unclear what degree of truth these lines contain; they could be boastful claims made in jest, or serious statements of authority.

¹⁶² Watson and Watson 2003:11.

¹⁶³ Coleman 1998:30.

¹⁶⁴ Sullivan 1991:6 and Coleman 1998:32 both suggest this.

¹⁶⁵ Coleman 1998:29. The surviving text that bears the greatest resemblance to this collection of poems is an epigrammatic cycle about Claudius' triumph over Britain, written in elegiac couplets and attributed to Seneca in the *Anthologia Latina* (*Anth. Lat.* 1.417-24 Shackleton Bailey); however, while Martial's poems focus on individual scenes as a vehicle for praising the emperor, pseudo-Seneca's poems treat Claudius' victory over Britain in the abstract (Coleman 1998:18)

¹⁶⁶ The differences between them suggest that the collection may have already been unstable in antiquity, perhaps as a result of the circulation of competing editions (Coleman 2006:xxi-xxii).

¹⁶⁷ Sullivan 1991:8.

bases his argument on the comparative length of Martial's numbered books of epigrams, but the poet's *Xenia* and *Apophoreta* are shorter as well¹⁶⁸, leaving "a wide margin for speculation"¹⁶⁹ about the original length of the book¹⁷⁰.

(4) The Occasion

Despite the textual problems associated with the collection, there is consensus that the occasion celebrated is the inaugural games of the Flavian amphitheatre in June 80 CE, and that Martial hastily penned the collection and published it later that same year. One possible piece of evidence for the 80 CE date is *Lib. spec.* 35, which requests the emperor's forgiveness for rushed work:

Pardon the hasty work. He deserves not to displease you, Caesar, who hurries to please you¹⁷¹.

*Da veniam subitis: non displicuisse meretur,
festinat, Caesar, qui placuisse tibi.*

However, this poem survives separately in the *Florilegium Gallicum*, where it is accompanied by *Lib. spec.* 36 on gladiatorial combat. This pairing is used to explain its attachment to the rest of Martial's poems on the spectacles, and so its placement in the *Liber spectaculorum*, while plausible, is uncertain¹⁷², and therefore of limited usefulness in dating the collection's production and publication.

A more convincing argument for the 80 CE date lies in the comparison of Martial's poems with other surviving sources for the inaugural games of the Colosseum. This particular

¹⁶⁸ At 274 and 458 lines respectively, compared with approximately 214 lines of the *Liber spectaculorum*.

¹⁶⁹ Coleman 2006:xxxiv.

¹⁷⁰ Its fragmented state has resulted in varying numeration systems between collections; I follow the numeration of Coleman's 2006 commentary throughout. Additionally, Coleman's commentary entirely omits what is poem 37 in Shackleton Bailey's Loeb edition of Martial's epigrams (where Shackleton Bailey writes that the poem "do[es] not belong in this book", p.39); the poem is preserved by the scholiast to Juvenal Satire 4 (Coleman 1998:17).

¹⁷¹ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

¹⁷² Coleman 2006:260-1.

set of games was impressive by all accounts. The Roman historian Suetonius, writing in the following century, tells us:

At the dedication of the amphitheatre and of the baths which were hastily built near it he [Titus] gave a most magnificent and costly gladiatorial show. He presented a sham sea-fight too in the old *naumachia*, and in the same place a combat of gladiators, exhibiting five thousand wild beasts of every kind in a single day¹⁷³.

amphitheatro dedicato thermisque iuxta celeriter exstructis munus edidit apparatissimum largissimumque; dedit et navale proelium in veteri naumachia, ibidem et gladiatores atque uno die quinque milia omne genus ferarum (Div. Tit. 7.3).

Suetonius' account is relatively close to the games in time, although he was not born until circa 70 CE¹⁷⁴. Cassius Dio also provides an account of the inauguration of the Colosseum immediately following discussion of Titus' benefactions after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, another occasion when he displayed generosity to the people¹⁷⁵. Dio is a later source than Suetonius, with his date of birth variously placed between 155 and 164 CE¹⁷⁶, but his account shares many details with both Suetonius' and Martial's versions.

Notably, all three accounts include a *naumachia* occurring in a place where one had occurred before. Suetonius identifies it only as "the old *naumachia*" (*in veteri naumachia, Div. Tit. 7.3*); however, there was only one previous *naumachia* in Rome at the time, and so Augustus' *stagnum* must be the one meant¹⁷⁷. Both Martial and Dio specify that there were aquatic displays in the location where Augustus previously held a naval battle. Dio in particular

¹⁷³ Trans. Rolfe.

¹⁷⁴ Bradley 1997:2-3, in the introduction to Vol. I of Rolfe's 1997 Loeb edition of Suetonius. Suetonius was only about 10 years old at the time of the games, he would be unlikely to have a clear and accurate memory of the games even if he himself was in attendance.

¹⁷⁵ Coleman 2006: xlvi. It is worth noting that Dio's description of the games occurs in the context of Titus' generosity, immediately after his discussion of Titus' funding of repairs after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

¹⁷⁶ Cary 1961: vii, in the introduction to Vol. I of his Loeb edition of Cassius Dio.

¹⁷⁷ Coleman 2006:xlvi.

is very clear in describing two separate venues for aquatic spectacles at the games¹⁷⁸. First he describes the flooding of the Flavian amphitheatre itself for this purpose:

Titus had suddenly filled this same theatre with water and brought in horses and bulls and some other domesticated animals that had been taught to behave in the liquid element just as on land. He also brought in people on ships, who engaged in a sea-fight there¹⁷⁹.

τὸ γὰρ θέατρον αὐτὸ ἐκεῖνο ὕδατος ἐξαίφνης πληρώσας ἐσήγαγε μὲν καὶ ἵππους καὶ ταύρους καὶ ἄλλα τινὰ χειροῆθη, δεδιδαγμένα πάνθ' ὅσα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς πράττειν καὶ ἐν τῷ ὑγρῷ, ἐσήγαγε δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπους ἐπὶ πλοίων. καὶ οὗτοι μὲν ἐκεῖ ... ἐναυμάχησαν (Dio 66.25.2-3).

Second, Dio describes the location of similar events in another performance space, “a place which Augustus had once excavated for this very purpose” (ὁ ποτε ὁ Αὐγούστος ἐπ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ὠρύξατο, Dio 66.25.3¹⁸⁰), which must be the same *stagnum* of Augustus mentioned in Suetonius and Martial. Martial, in keeping with the panegyric of the *Liber spectaculorum*, exploits the comparison for flattery, writing that the Flavian Caesar has outdone Augustus in the same location:

*Augusti labor hic fuerat committere classes
et freta nauali sollicitare tuba.
Caesaris haec nostri pars est quota?*

It had been Augustus' labor to pit fleets against each other here and rouse the waters with naval clarion. How small a part is this of our Caesar! (*Lib. spec.* 34.1-3)¹⁸¹

This poem on the *naumachia* occurs separate from the other poems on water games, the cycle *Lib. spec.* 27-30; this earlier cycle of poems describes events within the Flavian amphitheatre itself¹⁸², aligning Martial's set of events with the inaugural games described by Dio.

¹⁷⁸ Coleman 1993:48.

¹⁷⁹ Trans. Cary.

¹⁸⁰ Trans. Cary.

¹⁸¹ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

¹⁸² Coleman 1998:17.

Martial and Dio overlap further in that both describe the participation of women in beast-fights in the arena. Dio writes that “animals both tame and wild were slain to the number of nine thousand; and women (not those of any prominence, however) took part in despatching them”¹⁸³ (ἄλλα τε ἐς ἑνακισχίλια καὶ αὐτὰ καὶ βοτὰ θηρία ἀπεσφάγη, καὶ αὐτὰ καὶ γυναῖκες, οὐ μέντοι ἐπιφανεῖς, συγκατειργάσαντο, Dio 66.25.1). This corroborates Martial’s *Lib. spec.* 7 and 8, which both describe women fighting in the arena; *Spect.* 8 in particular describes a woman in a beast fight, as Martial tells us that a lion has been killed by a woman:

Illustrious Fame used to sing of the lion laid low in Nemea’s spacious vale,
Hercules’ work. Let ancient testimony be silent, for after your shows, caesar,
we have now seen such things done by women’s valor¹⁸⁴.

*Prostratum vavsta Nemees in valle leonem
nobilis Herculeum Fama canebat opus.
prisca fides taceat: nam post tua munera, Caesars,
haec iam feminea uidimus acta manu (Lib. spec. 8).*

These major sites of overlap between the events featured in Suetonius, Dio, and Martial strongly suggest that (at the very least) many of the poems in the *Liber spectaculorum* describe the inaugural games of the Colosseum.

(5) *Caesar*

Given the instability of the collection, however, Coleman questions whether these kinds of corroborations are sufficient to date the entire collection. She suggests rather that some poems were written later, under the reign of the emperor Domitian. This uncertainty about the identity of Martial’s *Caesar* exists in part because Martial simply calls him *Caesar* throughout (the standard mode of address for the emperor in Martial’s works generally)¹⁸⁵. In a major departure from her 1998 publication which took the more traditional line that the book was written for

¹⁸³ Trans. Cary.

¹⁸⁴ Trans. Shackleton Bailey

¹⁸⁵ Coleman 2006:xiv.

Titus in 80 CE soon after the inaugural games, Coleman's introduction to her 2006 commentary of the *Liber spectaculorum* performs a very thorough study of the evidence for dating the collection¹⁸⁶ and comes to a different conclusion.

Coleman agrees that the book's focus on the Flavian amphitheatre (as well as the mention of baths at *Lib. spec.* 2.7, which must be the *Thermae Titi*) strongly suggests a date under Titus because of the recentness of the construction¹⁸⁷. Similarly, she points out that the comparisons with Nero (discussed below) would have been more effective under Titus. However, she is skeptical about the value of the similarity of Martial's games to Suetonius and Dio's inaugural games, writing that "if there is an absence of contradiction, there is also an absence of corroboration"¹⁸⁸.

In favour of a Domitianic date for the poems, Coleman notes that the divine qualities ascribed to Caesar, his power over the natural world, and some of the epithets used are more strongly associated with Domitian in the surviving sources¹⁸⁹. The rhinoceros featured in *Lib. spec.* 9 and 26 may suggest a Domitianic date because the same species appears on a bronze quadrans issued under Domitian by the Roman mint, since the image would have been less beneficial if a rhinoceros had been recently displayed in the city by the elder Flavian; further, Martial mentions a rhinoceros at *Apophoreta* 14.53.1, written under Domitian¹⁹⁰. There is also a depiction of a rhinoceros from the architrave of the *Templum Divi Vespasiani*, in which a two-

¹⁸⁶ Coleman 2006:xlvi-lxiv.

¹⁸⁷ Coleman 2006:xlvi.

¹⁸⁸ Coleman 2006:xlvi. Similarly, other displays in the *Liber spectaculorum* match events attested elsewhere in Titus' reign, such as the *bestiarii* (which are not directly attested under Domitian), the public display of *delatores* (informers, cf. *Div. Tit.* 8.5), and possibly the granting of *missio* to two gladiators in a combat (*Lib. spec.* 23, cf. *Div. Tit.* 8.5). Coleman concludes that while the evidence suggests that certain epigrams are from the reign of Titus, there is nothing which provides definitive proof that the entire book of poems celebrates the inauguration or that Martial's Caesar must be Titus (Coleman 2006:l-li).

¹⁸⁹ Coleman 2006:li-liv. Further, the reference to an *ursus Caledonius* in *Lib. spec.* 9 may suggest a later date, since the formal campaign entered the region in 83-4; the nocturnal swim performed by a Leander in *Lib. spec.* 28 aligns with the night-spectacles attested under Domitian elsewhere (Coleman 2006:liii-liv, citing *Stat. Silu.* 1.6.85-90, *Suet. Dom.* 4.1, *Dio* 67.8 for the night spectacles).

¹⁹⁰ Coleman 2006:liv-lvi.

horned rhinoceros is shown confronting a bull; this scene, along with other registers on the same frieze, has been associated with the events described in Martial's poems¹⁹¹. The inclusion of these scenes in Vespasian's temple credits him with the inaugural events of the Colosseum he did not live to see completed; Coleman, however, suggests that "we should see the decoration not as a record of events being projected back into Vespasian's reign, but rather as free invention inspired by a remarkable animal recently seen in action in the Flavian amphitheatre"¹⁹².

I disagree with Coleman—while it's true that the artist need not be depicting an individual performance for the scene to convey meaning, if we accept that the rhinoceros displayed in the Colosseum is the first in Rome since the time of Augustus, it seems impossible to discount that the scene acted as a direct reference from Vespasian's temple to events in the building he built. Thus, it does appear that the frieze gives posthumous credit for the Colosseum's games to the emperor who funded its construction, as well as the emperor who staged the performances¹⁹³. The rhinoceros also provides an example of how one symbol can be recycled in different kinds of propaganda produced by different people connected to the imperial power: the rhinoceros appears in the arena, in the poem about the arena, on the *quadrans*, and in the temple. This system does not require a central puppeteer, but only a network of people responding to the same system of images.

After laying out arguments in favour of dating to both Titus and Domitian, Coleman concludes that the collection represents poems written under and about *both* emperors¹⁹⁴; the *Liber spectaculorum* is descended from a collection that Martial arranged and published based

¹⁹¹ Coleman 2006:105.

¹⁹² Coleman 2006:106.

¹⁹³ While it's also possible that this frieze was commissioned by Domitian for Titus and Vespasian both, the same reasoning applies.

¹⁹⁴ Coleman 2006:lx: "One may therefore reasonably suggest that it is an unwarranted and *a priori* reductivism to suppose that all the surviving epigrams were composed for a single occasion and a single Caesar."

on shorter sequences previously presented to the emperors about various spectacles, therefore including poems written about both Titus and Domitian¹⁹⁵. While her theory is certainly attractive in its openness, it seems needlessly complex. The arguments in favour of a Domitianic date are based largely on the absence of evidence, which seems unpersuasive compared to the long list of similarities between Martial's games and the inaugural games described in the historiographical sources.

While I believe that the *Caesar* of Martial's *Liber spectaculorum* is Titus alone, Martial's decision to leave the emperor's precise identity anonymous is important. He is identified only as *Caesar*, and not by any personal name. This creates an abstracted and anonymous *Caesar*, whose personal identity and *praenomen* is less important than his identity simply as emperor. Coleman eloquently notes that, "Martial's 'Caesar' starts to look almost like an idealized abstraction, above identification; maybe that impression is not so far from the experience of some of the readers among Martial's wider public"¹⁹⁶. It is even possible that this anonymized *Caesar*, largely absent personal identification, provides a more effective portrait of the *Caesar* by leaving associations open—the poems are addressed simply to the *Caesar* who provides the *Caesareo amphitheatro* of Poem 1, which is Titus, Domitian, and Vespasian at different times and in different ways. The anonymized Caesar extends the political usefulness of Martial's poems as propaganda past the reign of Titus, for future Flavians to display their generosity in building the Flavian amphitheatre for the city of Rome¹⁹⁷. In this sense, although the arena is

¹⁹⁵ Coleman 2006:lxii-lxiii.

¹⁹⁶ Coleman 2006:lxiv.

¹⁹⁷ Of course, at the time of writing, Martial had no way of knowing that Titus's reign would be so short, and that his younger brother would be the final Flavian emperor.

“fantastically and spectacularly Flavian,” the poems are malleable in that one emperor can be substituted for another¹⁹⁸, as perhaps became the case after the early death of Titus in 81 CE.

(6) The Poems: History and Geography

Close readings of Martial’s poems show their contribution to the establishment of the Flavian imperial identity and divinity which justified their assumption of power from the preceding Julio-Claudian dynasty. Publication so soon after the critical juncture of Titus’ accession to power in 79 CE may have helped smooth that transition, and the abstracted Flavian *Caesar* may have proved useful for Domitian as well. The poems form a unique loop between emperor and poet, as Martial returns the emperor’s games to him in versified form¹⁹⁹. The arena is a unique venue for these types of comparisons, as “a place where truth is produced, exchanged, and reproduced as a specific and specifically differentiated and articulated Roman truth”²⁰⁰. Gunderson continues:

Seeing, believing, Caesar, and the arena: the four notions all go together in Martial’s poems. The arena serves as a factory of truth, and Titus serves as both the inspector and the ideal consumer of the goods therein produced. But Martial is very much aware of the ironies of the situation: ‘fabricating a truth’ might well seem like the construction of specious wares, mere artifice at the expense of the truly true. Martial embraces the paradox. Not only is the arena displayed as the place where truth is put on display by and for Caesar, but so too is the logic of substitution perfectly acceptable within this context. What the arena manifests can and will be taken ‘in the place of’ the truth. That is, it becomes effectively true by first being spectacularly true. Moreover, the accumulation of stagey counterfeits for reality does not compromise the arena, rather it shows the malleability of reality itself when confronted with the apparatus of the arena. And, lastly, Martial’s verbal substitutes for the truth of the thing themselves try to both reproduce and outstrip the visual rhetoric of the original. Thus the textual show shows how such substitution is a virtuous necessity and an opportunity for virtuosity and

¹⁹⁸ Gunderson, Erik. “The Flavian Amphitheatre: All the World as Stage.” *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*. Eds. A.J. Boyle and W.J. Dominik. Leiden: Brill, 2003. p.656.

¹⁹⁹ “The emperor is both the origin and the destination of the meaning and message of the spectacular” (Gunderson 2003:650).

²⁰⁰ Gunderson 2003:649.

mastery on the part of the poet become (re)*editor*. We are not to imagine a sad parody of the actual and the true, but rather the actual production of the actual and the true. The truth-value of these truths, though, are themselves bound to a chain of associations and substitutions coordinated by the ideology of the arena and the privileged position of the emperor within that ideology.²⁰¹

That is, the emperor provides and endorses the alternate reality established by the games of the arena, and Martial reconfigures that hyperreality into a literary format before delivering it again, ostensibly addressed to the emperor who gave them in the first place; in both instances, the public looks on and feels wonder at *Caesar*'s power to provide an improved and marvelous version of the world.

Indeed, Martial's Caesar is arguably the focal point of the collection, rather than his games: a form of *Caesar* or *Caesareus* appears in eighteen of the thirty-six poems²⁰², and *Caesar* is one of the most frequent words in the collection²⁰³. Gunderson points out that, as a focal point, *Caesar* provides the central power and metaphor that lends meaning to the games: "the metaphor of the emperor as truth guarantees the meaning of other truths even as they all become oriented towards and legible through him"²⁰⁴.

Gunderson draws attention to the use of substitutions in *Liber spectaculorum*, showing how Martial toys with reality by providing a new version to his readers. This starts in the first poem of the collection, where Martial praises the Flavian amphitheater as a new wonder of the world:

Let barbarous Memphis speak no more of the wonder of her pyramids, nor
Assyrian toil boast of Babylon; nor let the soft Ionians be extolled for
Trivia's temple; let the altar of many horns say naught of Delos; nor let the
Carians exalt to the skies with extravagant praises the Mausoleum poised in

²⁰¹ Gunderson 2003:653-4.

²⁰² Coleman 2006:lxxi.

²⁰³ Appearing 20 times, the only words that appear more often than *Caesar* are *sum*, *qui*, and *hic*; in addition, *Caesareus* appears twice.

²⁰⁴ Gunderson 2003:651.

empty air. All labor yields to Caesar's Amphitheatre. Fame shall tell of one work in lieu of all²⁰⁵.

*Barbara pyramidum sileat miracula Memphis,
Assyrius iactet nec Babylona labor,
nec Triviae templo molles laudentur Iones;
dissimulet Delon cornibus ara frequens,
aere nec uacuo pendentia Mausolea
laudibus immodicis Cares in astra ferant.
omnis Caesareo cedit labor amphitheatro:
unum pro cunctis Fama loquetur opus. (Lib. spec. 1)*

5

This poem introduces the recurring concept that the Flavian dynasty provides gifts and entertainment exceeding historical precedents²⁰⁶ as Martial lists Wonders of the World²⁰⁷. This catalogue then “lead[s] to the punch-line that [the amphitheatre’s] pre-eminence renders the other wonders superfluous”²⁰⁸: *Fama* will speak only of Caesar’s amphitheatre, one wonder in place of all. This substitution, the *Caesareum amphitheatrum* for all the wonders of the world, is the first of many Martial makes in the poems. It places the arena in its global context, both geographically and temporally—it is not only the first (and therefore greatest) arena in the city of Rome, it is the greatest structure in the history of the world, rendering the former wonders superfluous.

²⁰⁵ Trans. Shackleton Bailey

²⁰⁶ The poem performs this crescendo both in content and in structure, being composed of “an accumulation of successive clauses with similar content culminating in a climax” (Coleman 2006:2).

²⁰⁷ Coleman 2006:4-10. The canonical number of Wonders is seven, although when poets use the wonders to claim immortality for work, they often mention just a selection of them (cf. Propertius 3.2.19-22, Horace *Odes* 3.30.1-2). Here, Martial lists the pyramids (1), Babylon (2), the temple of Artemis at Ephesus (here, as *Triviae templo*, line 3), the Altar of Horn at Delos (4), the Mausoleum of Mausolus of Caria at Halicarnassus (5-6), and finally the Flavian amphitheatre (7-8) for a total of six Wonders. However, when a new building is submitted as a Wonder of the World, the number seven is usually acknowledged, as the new work must be either a substitute for one of the seven, or an eighth addition to the list; with this in mind, Coleman suggests that it is likely Martial intends Babylon (*Spec.* 1.2) to represent both wonders associated with it (the walls and the hanging gardens) to make the Flavian amphitheatre the seventh (this selective list includes only buildings, excluding the statues sometimes included in other lists of the Wonders of the World).

²⁰⁸ Coleman 2006:4.

In his second poem Martial continues to offer the Colosseum as a substitute for what came before, but narrows his focus to the city of Rome and its immediate history. He compares the Flavian amphitheatre to Nero's Domus Aurea:

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 outermost part of the palace's end. Rome has been restored to herself, and under your rule, Caesar, the pleasures that belonged to a master now belong to the people²⁰⁹.

*Hic ubi sidereus propius uidet astra colossus
 et crescunt media pegmata celsa via,
 inuidiosa feri radiabant atria regis
 unaque iam tota stabat in urbe domus;
 hic ubi conspicui venerabilis amphitheatri 5
 erigitur moles, stagna Neronis erant;
 hic ubi miramur velocia munera thermas,
 abstulerat miseris tecta superbus ager;
 Claudia diffusas ubi porticus explicat umbras,
 ultima pars aulae deficientis erat: 10
 reddita Roma sibi est et sunt te praeside, Caesar,
 deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini. (Lib. spec. 2)*

Here is another set of substitutions, albeit a more complicated one: the *Domus Aurea* is replaced by the Flavian amphitheatre, Rome is returned to Rome, the *deliciae* (pleasure) of line 12 change owners, and a Flavian replaces Nero²¹⁰. To exalt this substitution, Martial contrasts the pairs throughout—Nero's halls were hateful (*inuidiosa atria*, 3), he was a harsh king (*feri ... regis*, 3) and a master (*domini*, 12), and his estate itself is arrogant (*superbus*, 8), while the current *Caesar* has provided a venerable building (*conspicui venerabilis amphitheatri | erigitur moles*, 5-6), returned Rome to herself (*reddita Roma sibi est*, 11), and given Nero's pleasures over to the people (*deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini*, 12). This substitution builds on the previous one

²⁰⁹

²¹⁰ Gunderson 2003:652.

by narrowing the gaze of the reader from the place of the amphitheatre in global history and geography, to its place within the recent history and urban geography of Rome.

Further, the poem's substitution provides a map in verse; the double focus on the past and present buildings means "our poem is like a palimpsest: it supplies a map of the contemporary area, but at the same time we see traces of the same district under Nero"²¹¹. The contrast, together with the praise heaped upon Caesar's building here, clearly claims that the Flavians have made a change for the better. Additionally, Coleman has demonstrated that the *pegmata* of line 2 refer to the scaffolding of the under-construction Arch of Titus, so that Martial is guiding the reader through a progression of Flavian monuments²¹² (the amphitheatre, the baths, and the arch), thereby expanding the focus of the poem.

This broader view of the city allows Martial to glorify a set of Flavian contributions to Rome all at once, rather than the amphitheatre alone; further, the amphitheatre and the Arcus Titi are monuments built by both Vespasian and Titus, which has the advantage of glorifying the entire dynasty's contributions, rather than that of one individual Flavian²¹³; this generalized compliment also works well with Martial's consistent address of the emperor as unnamed *Caesar*. The map in verse plotted through the poem as a series of monuments amplifies the geographic dimension of the substitutions, while the contrast with Nero provides historical framework.

²¹¹ Coleman 2006:19.

²¹² Coleman 1998:19-20 thoroughly explores the use of the word *pegmata* in line 2 of *Lib. spec.* 2; this word here has been variously interpreted to refer to scaffolding for construction on the Colossus, the Thermae Titi, the Flavian amphitheatre itself, or other nearby buildings; it has also been suggested that the *pegmata* refer to stage-equipment stored nearby for use in the amphitheatre. Coleman argues that the *pegmata celsa* are scaffolding on the Via Sacra, assembled for the on-going construction of the Arcus Titi. See also Coleman 2006:27, "I therefore conclude that the *pegmata celsa* are scaffolding on the crest of the Via Sacra, being put up (*crescunt*) for the Arcus Titi: Martial's guided tour of the Flavian monuments near the site of the Domus Aurea proceeds smoothly from the Colossus (1), via the Arcus Titi (still under construction, 2) to the Flavian amphitheatre (also not yet completed, though already in use, 5), with the Thermae Titi (7) overlooking it to the north and the Porticus Claudia (9) to the south."

²¹³ While it may seem odd now to describe scaffolding as an elegant compliment to the emperor, it would have been logical and perhaps even necessary, since the poet did still have to deal with the "challenge of fitting actuality to epigram" (Coleman 1998:20); he could hardly pretend to his contemporary audience that the arch was complete.

This theme of historical substitutions, where the Flavian emperor improves upon what the Julio-Claudians have already given the Roman people, reappears in a later poem. *Lib. spec.* 34 compares the Flavian *naumachiae* with the Julio-Claudians’:

It had been Augustus’ labor to pit fleets against each other here and rouse the waters with naval clarion ... So no more of Fucinus and the lake of direful Nero; let this be the only sea fight known to posterity²¹⁴.

*Augusti labor hic fuerat committere classes
et freta navali sollicitare tuba...
Fucinus et diri taceantur stagna Neronis:
hanc norint unam saecula naumachiam* (*Lib. spec.* 34.1-2, 11-12).

Here Martial describes a spectacle outside the arena, referring to the naval battle held in the old *stagnum* of Augustus²¹⁵; like *Lib. spec.* 2, it expands the reader’s view of the city beyond the Colosseum. There is another set of historical substitutions, as the Flavian *naumachia* replaces the water spectacles of all the Julio-Claudians who came before him: the contributions of Augustus, Claudius (who staged the *naumachia* at Fucinus²¹⁶), and Nero. By increasing the scope of the historical substitution, Martial further aggrandizes the Flavian emperors; their accomplishment surpasses and replaces not only the *ferus rex* Nero, but even the venerable Augustus. The use of *saecula* (34.12) draws attention to the permanence of the replacement, looking forward to the future even as it rewrites the past; from now on, the centuries will be silent about past accomplishments, instead describing *unam naumachiam*, much as *Fama* in *Lib. spec.* 2 replaces all the Wonders of the World with the Flavian amphitheatre as *unum opus*.

²¹⁴ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

²¹⁵ cf. discussion of the inaugural games above, Coleman 1993:48.

²¹⁶ Cassius Dio 61.33.3-5.

(7) The Poems: Mythology

This language of historical substitutions recurs in the poems that place the arena's spectacles against a mythical backdrop. In these poems, mythology provides a precedent for Caesar's arena to match, reify, or surpass; the real, visual brutality of the events is often eclipsed by the emperor's greatness in being able to provide such spectacles. Thus, Martial's eagerness to substitute real events in the arena for mythical events, and indeed to write that they surpass the original stories, participates in the reality-bending spectacle of the games²¹⁷.

Lib. spec. 6 is the first of these poems in the collection, referring to the story of Pasiphae. Judging from the popularity of artistic renderings of the story from Pompeii, it seems Martial's audience would have been quite familiar with the myth, and renderings of bestial intercourse involving women were also fairly common on terracotta lamps²¹⁸. Martial writes:

Believe that Pasiphae was mated to the Dictaeon bull; we have seen it, the old legend has won credence. and let not hoary antiquity plume itself, Caesar: whatever Fame sings of, the arena affords you²¹⁹.

*Iunctam Pasiphaen Dictaeo credite tauro:
uidimus, accepit fabula prisca fidem.
ne se miretur, Caesar, longaeua Vetustas:
quidquid Fama canit, praestat harena tibi (Lib. spect. 6).*

The action described by the poem, namely sexual intercourse between a woman and a bull, was almost certainly an execution²²⁰. For the modern reader in particular, it is difficult to consider

²¹⁷ Gunderson 2003:653-4 suggests that the comparisons and comments that may seem far-fetched or even impossible to the modern reader were accepted by the Roman reader precisely because the emperor's arena made them real.

²¹⁸ "It has been suggested by Welch 1991:281 that such renderings may be souvenirs of the type of display that Martial describes (if not this exact version); but the propensity of the human psyche to indulge in sexual fantasies does not seem to require a commemorative occasion to justify such representations" (Coleman 2006:63).

²¹⁹ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

²²⁰ Cf. Apuleius *Met.* 10.34 (as noted by Coleman 2006:64). The narrator Lucius, at this point still in the shape of a donkey, is meant to have sexual intercourse with a woman condemned to the beasts (*bestiis esse damnatam*). She is clearly intended to die, since Lucius expresses fear that the animal sent in to kill the woman during their sexual union might also eat him (*quod in amplexu venerio scilicet nobis cohaerentibus quaecumque ad exitium mulieris bestia fuisset immissa, Met.* 10.34).

the poem's event as an accomplishment of Caesar's, reifying a myth and surpassing antiquity, when it is also the horrifyingly brutal and public death of a human being for entertainment²²¹.

Nonetheless, this is what the poem demands, and in its Roman context, the question of whether the poem is true is irrelevant: the arena and Martial both frame it as true (*credite* [1], Martial tells us), and so conceptually it must be.

Partway through *Lib. spec.* 6, Martial shifts his address from the plural public (whether they are readers, spectators, or both) (*credite*, 1) to the singular *Caesar* (3). The comparison of past and present through an appeal to *Vetustas* is a *topos* of Flavian poetry²²². Coleman cites two examples from Statius where the direct address of *Vetustas* makes it clear that she is a personification, “the semi-divine incarnation of the past”, rather than an abstract concept; here in Martial however, the direct address is instead to Caesar, perhaps suggesting that he trumps *Vetustas*²²³. The last line of the poem returns to *Fama* singing accomplishments (as in *Lib. spec.* 1)²²⁴, where the evocation of the past and tradition (*Vetustas* and *fama*) places Martial's *Caesar* at the apex of story and history, where all that has come before is outdone.

²²¹ This poem highlights one of the issues of this collection generally: “when is a motif a literary conceit, and when does it reflect actuality?” (Coleman 2006:64). Coleman concludes that, taking into consideration “the Roman ambition to realize the impossible, combined with scant regard for those human lives that were deemed dispensable” there is no reason to discount the possibility that the main event of the poem really did occur. She further describes the graphic logistics by which a woman could be strapped to the appropriate height for the deadly performance; I feel this is an important aspect of the spectacle to keep in mind, as it provides a sobering reminder of the brutal reality behind Martial's poems: “Rather than being strapped directly to the bull, it seems likely that the woman was probably restrained at the appropriate height on a rack or trestle; for a photograph of a blindfolded stallion penetrating an artificial ‘vagina’ on a wooden apparatus of the appropriate height covered with canvas see Hafez (1968: pl. 20C). In the case of our spectacle successful penetration would have resulted in an ultimately fatal rupture of the woman's uterine tissues, and—depending upon the exact configuration of the rack—she might have been trampled by the bull's forelegs as well; but since the context was presumably comparable to Apuleius' scene [Met. 10.34], i.e. the execution of a criminal condemned *ad bestias*, the sequel to the display would in any case be death—if not in the arena itself, then by the sword afterwards” (Coleman 2006:64-5).

²²² Coleman 2006:67.

²²³ Coleman 2006:67-8.

²²⁴ The final ambiguous dative is perhaps best explained by Gunderson's general comment on the use of *tibi*, since in these poems “the dative *tibi* is always to be parsed as a dative of the possessor, a dative of advantage, and a dative of reference” (Gunderson 2003:657).

Lib. spec. 6 is the only place *Vetustas* appears in the collection, while *Fama* appears seven times; this suggests Martial is more interested in the present than the past, as historical and mythical precedents are used to confirm the superiority of the present under *Caesar*. Of the seven appearances of *Fama*, one can be discounted immediately as it belongs to the spurious Poem 36, one is in relation to Caesar's amphitheatre outdoing the Wonders of the World, and the remaining five all feature in poems where the events of the amphitheatre are outdoing, reenactment, or reifying myth (the stories of Pasiphae [6], Hercules [8], Prometheus [9], Carpophorus [17], Jove/Europa [19]).

The word *priscus* often appears with *Fama* and *Vetustas*; this is related to the shared valence of the words, since all three carry meanings related to authority. *Priscus* is old in the sense of ancient, long-existing, or conforming to a past standard of morality²²⁵, and it appears three times in the collection: at 6.2 (Pasiphae poem), at 8.2 (Hercules poem), and at 32.1 (a poem about the *bestiarius* Carpophorus and on how he's outdone all the deeds of old)²²⁶. Of three appearances of *priscus*, two occur in poems that also have the word *Fama*, and the third is another Carpophorus poem; all appearances are related to myth comparisons. *Vetustas*, another age-related word, can similarly refer to something belonging to the ancient or archaic past, or to something of long duration²²⁷. *Fama* differs from these two, in that its primary meaning is related to something said, rather than the age or pedigree of the thing said, but in these poems (and especially when it is personified), *Fama* carries the weight of tradition and story, as well as fame, glory, and renown²²⁸.

²²⁵ Oxford Latin Dictionary, *priscus* 1-3, p.1496.

²²⁶ It also appears at 31.1, but as proper name of a gladiator rather than an adjective, so I have omitted it here.

²²⁷ OLD, *vetustas* 2, 4-5, pp. 2051-2.

²²⁸ OLD, *fama* 4-5, p. 674.

The consequence of these age-related words in the poems on myth is to intensify the importance and value of the substitution *Caesar* performs. The older and longer-established the myth or story, the more impressive it is when the arena surpasses it. For instance, *Lib. spec.* 8.2 tells us that *Fama* used to describe the mythical deeds of Hercules, but now those deeds have been undermined by Caesar's arena:

Illustrious Fame used to sing of the lion laid low in Nemea's spacious vale,
Hercules' work. Let ancient testimony be silent, for after your shows,
caesar, we have now seen such things done by women's valor²²⁹.

*Prostratum uasta Nemees in ualle leonem
nobilis Herculeum Fama canebat opus.
prisca Fides taceat: nam post tua munera, Caesar,
haec iam feminea uidimus acta manu. (Lib. spec. 8)*

The use of *uidimus* reminds us of the importance of sight, and collective sight specifically, in the games; throughout, Martial uses the plural imperative unless he is addressing the emperor or another deity, to remind us that his audience is the plural of the crowd, the plural of the readers. The word *uidimus* also appears in poem 6.2, another mythical poem that shares other similarities with this poem as well.

The mythical basis of this poem serves to compare the past with the new present under Caesar²³⁰ in these asymmetrical substitutions: Hercules' deed is repeated, but Hercules' hand is replaced by a woman's. This counterintuitive is made possible by the wonder of Caesar's arena, and Martial reminds us of Caesar's involvement by addressing him (*post tua munera, Caesar*).

²²⁹ Trans. Shackleton Bailey

²³⁰ "This poem has been classified under the rubric 'Synkrisis-Epigramm', i.e. the past is described in order to be compared with the present and found wanting ... in our epigram the contrast is all the stronger because it is with the world of heroes in the mythical past; the emperor can require of women what Eurystheus required of the strongest heroes" (Coleman 2006:79).

Martial's iussive subjunctive *prisca Fides taceat* ("let ancient testimony now fall silent") participates in the replacement of ancient stories with present-day marvels²³¹.

Lib. spect. 9 is unique within Martial's collection because it describes a myth reenactment based on the Italian story of Laureolus, rather than a Greek tale²³². The poem ends with the lines:

The criminal had outdone the misdeeds of ancient story; in him, what had been a play became an execution²³³.

*vicerat antiquae sceleratus crimina famae,
in quo, quae fuerat fabula, poena fuit (Lib. spec. 9.11-12)*

Here, *fama* appears with yet another age-related word, *antiquae*; this accents the authority of the original story, which is then reduced to a *fabula*, a word with fictitious connotations lacking from its cognate *fama*²³⁴. Both *fama* and *fabula* are here outdone by the present justice of Caesar's *poena* in the arena. Martial's use of tenses here, as well as the chiasmus (*fuerat fabula, poena fuit*), reaffirm the substitution of the arena's display for the past events.

Lib. spect. 14 provides another form of reification—not the outdoing, but the confirmation of a myth. The poem describes a pregnant sow whose piglet, when she is stabbed in the arena, leaps out through the wound:

Amid the cruel perils of Caesar's hunt a light spear had pierced a pregnant sow. One of her litter lept [sic] out of the hapless mother's wound. Savage Lucina, was *this* a delivery? She would have wished to die wounded by further weapons, so that the sad path might open for all her brood. who

²³¹ Additionally, Coleman notes similarities in structure and diction between this poem and *Lib. spec. 6*: each poem starts by summarizing a mythological narrative before expressing the climax—that the emperor is responsible for the greatness of the deeds performed in the arena—via an apostrophe to Caesar (Coleman 2006:79). Both 6 and 8 also include *prisca* and *fides*: (*accepit fabula prisca fidem*, 6.2; *prisca Fides taceat*, 8.3). In *Lib. spec. 6*, *fabula prisca* receives its *fides* from the events of the arena, while in the *Lib. spec. 8*, *prisca Fides* becomes silent. In both poems, the events of Caesar's arena have replaced the myths of the past by rendering them real, making truth out of stories.

²³² Coleman 2006:82.

²³³ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

²³⁴ OLD, *fabula* 4a, p. 665.

denies that Bacchus sprang from his mother's death? Believe that a deity was so given birth: so born was a beast²³⁵.

*Inter Caesareae discrimina saeva Dianae
fixisset grauidam cum leuis hasta suem,
exiluit partus miserae de vulnere matris.
o Lucina ferox, hoc peperisse fuit?
pluribus illa mori uoluisset saucia telis,
omnibus ut natis triste pateret iter.
quis negat esse satum materno funere Bacchum?
sic genitum numen credite: nata fera est. (Lib. spec. 14)*

The poem begins by situating the event within Caesar's domain (*inter Caesareae discrimina saeva Dianae*, 14.1), which accentuates Caesar's role in providing this unusual sight. After describing the "birth", Martial turns the reader's attention to the divine precedent now confirmed by this event; he tells us that no one can doubt that a divine birth occurred this way, if an animal was²³⁶. By allowing an animal's birth to provide confirmation for a god's, Martial presents another substitution: in *Caesar's* arena, even mere animals can perform what was formerly ascribed only to the gods.

(8) The Poems: Nature

Martial uses animals in other forms of substitution within the poems to increase the prestige and legitimacy of the emperor's reign by repeatedly describing their recognition of Caesar's divine status within the arena²³⁷; in sight of the spectators these animals perform unnatural behaviours in response to Caesar's presence, but Martial presents their tricks as natural and spontaneous. Again, the reader needs to put aside modern skepticism about the objective truthfulness of Martial's accounts, and remember the malleability of truth within the arena described by Gunderson.

²³⁵ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

²³⁶ Coleman 2006:128.

²³⁷ Sullivan 1991:10.

Lib. spec. 11 features a rhinoceros²³⁸ tossing a bull into the air in the way that a bull tosses a straw dummy:

The rhinoceros, displayed all over the arena, performed for you, Caesar, battles that he did not promise. How he lowered his head and flamed into fearful rage! How mighty a bull was he, to whom a bull was as a dummy²³⁹!

*Praestitit exhibitus tota tibi, Caesar, arena
quae non promisit proelia rhinoceros.
o quam terribiles exarsit pronus in iras!
quantus erat taurus, cui pila taurus erat! (Lib. spec. 11)*

The presence of the rhinoceros in the arena was itself noteworthy, considering rhinoceroses were infrequently displayed in Rome, and this is possibly the first since 8 CE²⁴⁰. Martial's substitution in the final line is a bull acting as the dummy for a rhinoceros, comparing the magnificence of *Caesar's* games to a tamer display.

The direct address to Caesar in the first line of *Lib. spec.* 11 draws a clear connection between the emperor's presence and the miraculous behaviour of the rhinoceros—the animal is responding to him and performing for him (*tibi, Caesar* 11.1). There is a similar first line in Martial's *Lib. spec.* 20, in which another animal responds to Caesar's divine power. In Poem 20, a pious and suppliant elephant kneels before the emperor:

Devoted and suppliant the elephant adores you, Caesar, he who but lately was so formidable to the bull. He does it unbidden, no master teaches him. Believe me, he too feels our god²⁴¹.

*Quod pius et supplex elephas te, Caesar, adorat
hic modo qui tauro tam metuendus erat,*

²³⁸ A rhinoceros also appears in *Lib. spec.* 26, but there the emphasis is on the feats of the rhinoceros alone; there is no mention of Caesar, directly or indirectly.

²³⁹ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

²⁴⁰ The first rhinoceros to be exhibited at Rome was at Pompey's games in 55 BC (Plin. *NH* 8.71), although Dio attributes the first appearance to 29 CE, when Octavian celebrated a triumph over Cleopatra by slaughtering a number of exotic animals (Dio 51.22.5); Augustus displayed one again in 26 CE (Suet. *Aug.* 43.4), and had one fight an elephant in 8 CE (Dio 55.33.4); after this point, there is no attested appearance of a rhinoceros in Rome until the Flavian era (Coleman 2006:102-3).

²⁴¹ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

*non facit hoc iussus, nulloque docente magistro:
crede mihi, nostrum sentit et ille deum (Lib. spec. 20)*

Again, we see the direct address to Caesar emphasized, with a form of *tu* immediately preceding the vocative *Caesar* (*te* in Poem 20, *tibi* in Poem 11). The elephant had both magical²⁴² and imperial connotations²⁴³, and so its recognition of Caesar's divinity provides additional glorification²⁴⁴.

Martial's insistence that the animal has not been trained to kneel for Titus attempts to preempt any doubt that its action is divinely inspired (hence his admonition for the reader to believe him)²⁴⁵. However, Gunderson points out that the literal truth of the account is not the most important or compelling aspect:

The point of the whole is that the arena produces and reveals truth. 'Believe me' (*crede mihi*, 17.4), says the poet. The world of nature and the social structure of Rome are not antithetical ... Indeed the former recognises the latter. And so too do both these poems and the arena itself teach 'us' how to recognize in nature lessons pertinent to our culture.²⁴⁶

The arena has made the spontaneous kneeling of the elephant a true event, and Martial frames it for us by substituting a reality where the elephant, and therefore the natural world, bows to the divine power of *Caesar*.

Similarly, *Lib. spec.* 33 describes a doe and hounds performing unnatural behaviours in the arena. A hunted doe stops before Titus in the guise of a suppliant and the hounds do not touch her:

As the startled hind fled the swift Molossians and with various cunning
spun lingering delays, suppliant and like to on ebegging she halted at

²⁴² The elephant was "an almost magical beast in ancient thinking" (Sullivan 1991:10).

²⁴³ Coleman 2006:157.

²⁴⁴ Scullard 1974:257-8 discusses this passage, and points out that "some of the more philosophically minded spectators may have ruminated on the relations of animals and gods and if they had read their Pliny they might even recall that elephants were said to kneel in worship before kings" (Scullard 1974:258).

²⁴⁵ It is noteworthy that a letter of Seneca's describes an elephant performing *proskynesis* at the command of its keeper in *Epist.* 85.41 (Coleman 2006:157).

²⁴⁶ Gunderson 2003:655-6.

Caesar's feet; and the hounds did not touch their prey ... Such was the boon she won from knowing her prince. Caesar has divine power; sacred, sacred is this potency, believe it. Wild beasts never learned to lie²⁴⁷.

*concita ueloces fugeret cum damma Molossos
et uaria lentas necteret arte moras,
Caesaris ante pedes supplex similisque roganti
constitit, et praedam non tetigere canes...
haec intellecto principe dona tulit.
numen habet Caesar: sacra est haec, sacra potestas,
credite: mentiri non didicere ferae (Lib. spec. 33.3-4, 7-8)*

Like the elephant, the doe's recognition of Titus' power is natural and innate, not a taught trick; even the possibility that it *could* be a trick is preempted by Martial's insistence that animals have never learned to lie (33.8). Thus, Martial presents an arena (and therefore a world) where animals instinctively feel the might of the divine emperor, which makes them perform actions unnatural for their species²⁴⁸. As representatives of the natural world, Martial uses these animals to teach that the correct course of action for humans as well is to kneel to the emperor and accept his rule²⁴⁹.

(9) Conclusion

The two dominant methods of glorifying *Caesar* in the *Liber spectaculorum* are comparison with the past, and subjugation of the natural world. The unifying theme between these two approaches is substitution. Comparison with the past allows Martial to posit a new and improved version of myth and history, well situated by the first two poems within the Flavians' global and Roman context: the Flavian amphitheatre replaces all previous wonders of the world, as well as Nero and his Golden House, making them all redundant with its all-encompassing greatness.

²⁴⁷ Trans. Shackleton Bailey.

²⁴⁸ Sullivan 1991:10.

²⁴⁹ It is also noteworthy that here both predator and prey respond to the emperor, as the doe kneels and the hounds refrain from attacking her (Coleman 2006:244); the emperor controls not only the meek, but the strong hunters as well.

Similarly, Martial's Flavians have replaced *Fama*'s need for old myths about Hercules, Pasiphae, and the rest; now, Romans can see the stories made true and improved upon in the amphitheatre in the middle of their city. Finally, the usual order of the natural world is replaced by Martial's *Caesar*, as animals perform unnatural behaviours in response to the divine power of his presence.

In each substitution, *Caesar* is integral to Martial's presentation. Martial's writings, often addressed to the emperor, form a closed circuit, where Martial gives back to the emperor the games staged in a new, literary format; as such, the emperor is the central truth of every poem²⁵⁰. These substitutions occur in the arena itself, but they are importantly contextualized for the audience by the poet, who interprets and reimagines the version of the truth presented by the emperor.

The circulation of these poems after the inaugural games of the Flavian amphitheatre extended the life of Titus' event. Any set of games, no matter how great, comes with the problem of inherent temporariness. The permanence of the Flavian amphitheatre was one monumental way to continually remind the Roman populace of the Flavians' gift of games, but Martial's poems capture their essence and extend the life of the spectacle both temporally and geographically, conveying their impressiveness and the power of the emperor to readers all over the empire. Whether or not they were distributed with the emperor's help²⁵¹, it is clear from their (albeit partial) survival in the manuscript tradition that the poems of Martial's *Liber*

²⁵⁰ "The truths of the arena are both found and made. For Martial all such truths are specifically Caesarean truths: each message both comes from him and returns to him" (Gunderson 2003:654).

²⁵¹ Indeed, Coleman goes so far as to suggest a likely process of dissemination for the *Liber spectaculorum* encouraged by the emperor, arguing that Titus would have recognized and exploited the role of panegyric epigrams about the spectacles "extending the memory of Titus' inauguration in space as well as time". Since Titus certainly had the means to circulate to provincial governors copies of certain *senatus consulta* and (according to Lucian) a book of instructions on their positions, he would have had the resources in the form of imperial copyists to allow for the dissemination of Martial's text as well (Coleman 1998:32). While this theory is highly attractive, it is impossible to prove or disprove.

spectaculorum continued to be read throughout the empire long after the games he describes had come to an end, renewing Flavian spectacle with each re-reading.

IV. Conclusion

Josephus and Martial share little in their origin, religion, or ethnicity, hailing from nearly opposite ends of empire, and yet both came to produce texts in support of the Flavian dynasty. Both writers became members of the Flavian court and could have reasonably expected direct financial and social gain from advancing a view of the world favourable to the ruling dynasty in their writings. Josephus and Martial's literary representations of Flavian spectacle are presented in different languages and genres, but they work toward complementary aims. The two texts function in parallel, as both are essentially addressed to two audiences: one Roman, one provincial.

On one level, Josephus speaks to the wider readers of empire, the Greek-speaking (and in his first version, Aramaic-speaking) social elites of subject states, providing them with a negative behavioural *exemplum*, demonstrating what will await them should they attempt a rebellion; to Josephus' Roman audience, this *exemplum* is an affirmation of the essential rightness of Roman hegemony over the Mediterranean. Throughout his description of Vespasian and Titus' joint triumph, Josephus aims to justify the legitimacy of the Roman imperial system itself, as well as Flavian power over that system.

Martial, however, takes for granted the validity of the imperial system and focuses his attention rather on the relationship of the Flavian emperor to that system. Throughout the *Liber spectaculorum*, Martial repeatedly provides positive *exempla* of appropriate responses to imperial power, both through his own respectfully awestruck tone and through his representation of the natural world as reacting to Caesar's divine aura. His work is accessible to both an immediate Roman audience familiar with the city's geography, as well as a wider readership of

Latin-speaking elites in the provinces; the geographic scope of his intended audience is smaller, ignoring the less-Romanized subjects of the Eastern empire.

Both authors provide vivid descriptions of spectacle that reperform the original display with each rereading, continuously justifying the structures of (Flavian) imperial power. Josephus emphasizes visual elements of the triumph throughout his description to produce rhetorical *enargeia*, while emphasizing the Flavians' adherence to custom within the triumph. He also situates the Romans in a favourable historical and geographical context on a global scale, providing a world view where the Roman triumphal procession displays the totality of human wealth and all other states are subject to Roman power. Martial's poems further situate Flavian power in a more specific geographic and historical context, with reference to the urban geography of Rome and to the Julio-Claudian predecessors in imperial power. The cumulative effect of the individual texts is the interpretation of these spectacles (the triumph in Josephus and the inaugural games in Martial) for readers both in Rome and further out in the empire. The authors condense the many varied visual and experiential elements of the original performances into a world view concordant with Flavian rule over the Roman empire, and Roman rule over the world.

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