

Yuval Shahar

## Josephus Geographicus

### The Classical Context of Geography in Josephus

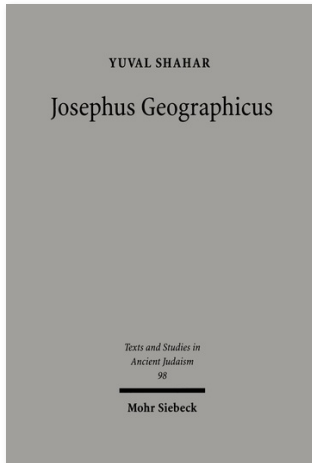
[Josephus Geographicus. Geographie im Kontext der klassischen Historiographie bei Josephus.]

Published in English.

Why did ancient historians include geographical descriptions in their historical works? How does the spatial description fulfill its goal? In this book, Yuval Shahar discusses these two questions, showing that the answers depend on the particular historian and the genre in which he is writing. He analyzes and compares the presentation of geographical space in the writings of Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius and Strabo, with selected illustrations from early Latin historiography. It is clear from this that Flavius Josephus consciously and definitively follows the generic approach of Polybius and Strabo. Moreover, Josephus' descriptions of parts of the Land of Israel are structured in the same way as the descriptions in Strabo's *Geography*, and reflect a hidden dialogue between Josephus and Strabo.

Awareness of these generic characteristics enables a new reading of some of Josephus' most famous descriptions, such as Jotapata, Gamala and Masada, and establishes his credibility.

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unrevised e-book edition 2020;  
Original edition 2004; 2004.  
IX, 305 pages. TSAJ 98

ISBN 978-3-16-158752-8  
DOI [10.1628/978-3-16-158752-8](https://doi.org/10.1628/978-3-16-158752-8)  
eBook PDF 119,00 €

ISBN 978-3-16-148256-4  
cloth 119,00 €

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