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## Part 1

### The Adiabene Narrative as a Skillful Literary Product

#### Introduction

In part 1, our aim is to analyse Ant. 20:17-96 as a piece of literature. Of special importance in this part will be the first chapter whose aim is to gain a preliminary understanding of Josephus' narrative. Therefore, our tentative conclusions in chapter 1 will pave the way for our further analysis in chapters 2-5, where we will discuss aspects of Josephus' narrative in detail. In the end (*conclusions to part 1*), we will arrive at a full understanding of Ant. 20:17-96 as a consciously planned literary product of Josephus that has its own structure, meaning and purpose.

#### 1. The Structure and Meaning of Josephus' *Antiquitates Judaicae* 20:17-96

##### 1.1. Introduction

In chapter 1, our aim is to gain a preliminary understanding of Ant. 20:17-96 as a skilful literary product. The question arises as to how we can achieve this purpose. In other words, how do we approach a narrative with the purpose of understanding its message? It seems that there are two (complimentary) ways to achieve this goal<sup>28</sup>. First, *the structure and content* of particular episodes within the course of the narrative are important; here Josephus' message will be present *implicitly* in the narrative<sup>29</sup>. This is frequently the case, because Josephus' narrative is mostly conducted in the third person discourse and consequently we must read and interpret the structure and the content of the narrative as it proceeds<sup>30</sup>. Secondly, there are also moments when Josephus steps out of the narrative and provides his *explicit comments* on its course<sup>31</sup>. Such editorial activity is very revealing, since it directly reflects Josephus' ideas<sup>32</sup>.

Therefore, our first aim is to analyse the structure and implicit content of Ant. 20:17-96. We will do this by first distinguishing literary units within Ant. 20:17-96 as a whole (chapter 1.2.), and then by finding formal and thematic continuities between these units (chapter 1.3.). Having discerned literary units and the continuities between them, we will finally turn our attention to Josephus' explicit comments in Ant. 20:17-96 and see if such editorial activity might additionally enhance our understanding of Josephus' message in Ant. 20:17-96 (chapter 1.4.).

##### 1.2. The Structure and Content of Ant. 20:17-96

The first aim is to separate the text of Ant. 20:17-96 into narrative units by isolating various markers of unit boundaries, as well as rhetorical features that shape units. In this context, phrases that are commonly used in literary narratives to order the course of the narrative, that is e.g. to finish one episode and begin another, will be of special importance to us as markers of unit boundaries in Ant. 20:17-96 as a whole<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> The method followed here is that of Attridge who used it in his groundbreaking study of Josephus' retelling of biblical narratives in Ant 1-10. See Attridge 1976: 38-42, 109-111, 164, 181-184.

<sup>29</sup> Attridge 1976: 109-111, 164.

<sup>30</sup> Attridge 1976: 109-111, 164.

<sup>31</sup> Attridge 1976: 109-111, 164.

<sup>32</sup> Attridge 1976: 109-111, 164.

<sup>33</sup> I follow here the method of structural analysis used by Williams 1999.

From Ant. 20:17 to Ant. 20:96 and beyond: the Boundaries of the Adiabene Narrative

The episode about the Adiabene royalty (Ant. 20:17-96) appears in book 20 of *Antiquitates Judaicae* within Josephus' narrative on affairs in Judea under the procuratorship of Fadus (Ant. 20:2-99)<sup>34</sup>. More precisely, the Adiabene narrative (20:17-96) appears after Josephus reports the dispute between the Jewish leadership and the procurator Fadus about the vestments of the high priests (Ant. 20:6-16). Immediately after the episode about the Adiabene royalty (Ant. 20:17-96) Josephus goes back to the other affairs of Fadus (the story of Theudas, Ant. 20:97-99). This placement of the Adiabene narrative is of direct importance for the study of the chronology of the Adiabene royalty in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. CE (see chapter 12)<sup>35</sup>. In terms of literary importance, we must notice that the Adiabene narrative takes us away from scenes set in Judea to far-away Adiabene. This means that the Adiabene narrative is a literary unit inserted by Josephus into his narrative focused on Judean affairs, and as such the Adiabene narrative clearly resembles a long narrative digression<sup>36</sup>.

How does Josephus start a new episode about the Adiabene royalty within his report on the procurator Fadus? Josephus begins it with the following sentence: κατὰ τοῦτον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν τῶν Ἀδιαβηνῶν βασιλῆς Ἑλένη καὶ ὁ παῖς αὐτῆς Ἰζάτης εἰς τὰ Ἰουδαίων ἔθη τὸν βίον μετέβαλον διὰ τοιαύτην αἰτίαν. This is a noteworthy beginning since it is marked by two technical phrases: a temporal statement: κατὰ τοῦτον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν (“at about this time...”) and by another introductory phrase: διὰ τοιαύτην αἰτίαν (“due to the following reason”). Both phrases frequently serve Josephus in his writings to structure the narrative<sup>37</sup>. The first phrase belongs to a group of *transition phrases*; they are used by Josephus to mark editorial transitions from one narrative unit to another<sup>38</sup>. In such a group we should distinguish two further subtypes<sup>39</sup>. One can be labelled *chronological* or *temporal* phrases, and this is the case with Ant. 20:17 (further examples can be found in Ant. 20:34, 20:69, 20:92)<sup>40</sup>. Another distinctive subgroup includes *cross-references*, that is statements such as “I shall report that later” (Ant. 20:48.53.96) or “as I have already reported” (Ant. 20:71)<sup>41</sup>. Josephus' “transition phrases” aroused a lot of scholarly discussion especially as indicators of Josephan sources<sup>42</sup>. Whatever can be inferred from their use as indicators of sources, on the literary level, they serve the narrator primarily to order the course of the narrative. Thus, for us they help distinguish narrative segments<sup>43</sup>. Next, the second phrase used in Ant. 20:17 (διὰ τοιαύτην αἰτίαν) appears frequently in Josephus' introductions to smaller episodes when Josephus only announces a new topic and promises to explain it soon in detail (e.g. Ant. 11:298; 12:11; 12:187; 15:252; 15:343; 16:229; 16:271; 17:148; 18:91; 18:109; 18:340 and 343)<sup>44</sup>. Only after such an introduction an actual episode follows<sup>45</sup>. In Ant. 20:17 Josephus announces the topic of the conversion of Helena and Izates and promises to explain this occurrence in more detail in what follows. Thus, in Ant. 20:17 not only does Josephus clearly start a new episode (that will run until Ant. 20:96), but he also delivers a self-contained introduction that gives us the essence of the

<sup>34</sup> Schiffman 1987: 294.

<sup>35</sup> See also Hastings 1898: 416-417; Schiffman 1987: 294.

<sup>36</sup> Hastings 1898: 416-417; Feldman 1987: 51.

<sup>37</sup> See a good illustrative list in Barish 1983: 79-80, n. 38. On a further discussion of Josephus' use of such phrases, see Richards 1939: 38 and S.J.D. Cohen 1979: 71-72, n. 8.

<sup>38</sup> Barish 1983: 23.

<sup>39</sup> Barish 1983: 79-80, n. 38.

<sup>40</sup> Barish 1983: 79-80, n. 38. On this term, see also Williams 1999: 20-21.

<sup>41</sup> On this term, see Petersen 1958: 265-274 and D.R. Schwartz 1982: 245.

<sup>42</sup> Drüner 1896: 82-94 (a full list of Josephus' references); Petersen 1958: 259-274; Williamson 1977: 50-55; S.J.D. Cohen 1979: 53-57, 71-72, n. 8; D.R. Schwartz 1982: 241-268; Barish 1983: 23, 79-82, n. 38-41.

<sup>43</sup> As for their use of indicators of underlying sources, see *conclusions to part 1*.

<sup>44</sup> Barish 1983: 79-80, n. 38.

<sup>45</sup> D.R. Schwartz 1982: 251.

following narrative (Ant. 20:17-96) – it is the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene<sup>46</sup>. Consequently, the first verse (Ant. 20:17) does not have to be connected with the first unit alone (e.g. Ant. 20:17-23 according to Schiffman<sup>47</sup>) of our account (Ant. 20:17-96). It can better be understood as an independent introduction for the whole account<sup>48</sup>. Likewise, the ending of the Adiabene narrative is clearly marked by the use of a cross-reference in Ant. 20:96 (“I shall narrate them later”), as well as by the fact that Ant. 20:97 switches back to Judean affairs at the time of the procurator Fadus. To summarize, Ant. 20:17 is an independent introduction to the Adiabene narrative that runs until Ant. 20:96. What is more, Ant. 20:17-96 is a self-contained unit that was inserted by Josephus within the framework of his narrative regarding events at the time of the procurator Fadus.

Technical phrases used by Josephus in Ant. 20:17-96 helped us set the unit boundaries of the Adiabene narrative, but do they matter for distinguishing narrative segments within it? In addition to the chronological phrase in Ant. 20:17 and the cross-reference in Ant. 20:96 we indeed have more instances of such editorial language within the Adiabene narrative. Namely, in Ant. 20:34 we have the following chronological phrase: καθ’ ὃν δὲ χρόνον (“at about this time”), while in Ant. 20:69 and 92 - μετ’ οὐ πολὺν δὲ χρόνον (“not long afterwards”). Further, we have four cases of cross-references in Ant. 20:48: ταῦτα μὲν ὕστερον ἀπαγγελοῦμεν (“these things we shall indeed narrate later”), 20:53: μετὰ ταῦτα δηλώσομεν (“we shall clarify [it] later”), 20:71: ὡς προεῖπον (“as I have already said”) and finally in 20:96: ὕστερον ἀπαγγελοῦμεν (“we shall report [it] later”). As we can see, there is some difference in this group, since only Ant. 20:71 refers to what has already been said, while Ant. 20:45, 53 and 96 refer to what will be narrated later.

If we take the appearance of technical phrases in Ant. 20:17-96 as markers of its structure, we will have the following units in the Adiabene narrative: Ant. 20:17; Ant. 20:18-33; Ant. 20:34-48; Ant. 20:49-53; Ant. 20:54-68; Ant. 20:69-73; Ant. 20:74-91; Ant. 20:92-96. However, one reservation has to be made, as we shall see (p. 20), the cross-reference in Ant. 20:71 is of a very different character than other cross-references in the Adiabene narrative, and for this reason might not serve as a good marker of a unit boundary. Thus, we can tentatively modify the aforementioned structure (by joining Ant. 20:69-71 with 20:72-74) into seven units (Ant. 20:17 (Introduction), Ant. 20:18-33 (Izates as a Chosen One), Ant. 20:34-48 (the Conversion Story), Ant. 20:49-53 (Helena’s and Izates’ Benefactions), Ant. 20:54-68 (Izates and Artabanos), Ant. 20:69-73 (Izates and Vardanes); Ant. 20:74-91 (the Succession of Parthian kings, Plots against Izates Resulting in Foreign Invasions); Ant. 20:92-96 (Izates’ and Helena’s Death and Burial)), but for a definite solution we will have to wait until we conduct a case-by-case analysis of each unit. Therefore, our next step is to look into each suggested unit with the purpose of analyzing its formal features and thematic content.

### The First Unit 20:18-33 (Izates as a Chosen One)

The boundaries of the first unit are well marked by formal structural features: two technical phrases in Ant. 20:17 and in Ant. 20:34<sup>49</sup>. The beginning of this unit introduces us to new

<sup>46</sup> D.R. Schwartz 1982: 251.

<sup>47</sup> See Schiffman 1987: 295.

<sup>48</sup> Barish 1983: 25. In contrast, Schiffman 1987: 295 subsumes Ant. 20:17 under the first unit which he locates in Ant. 20:17-23.

<sup>49</sup> Both Barish 1983: 26-27 and Schiffman 1987: 295 separate Ant. 20:18-33 into two distinct units – Ant. 20:18-23 and 24-33. Indeed, there is some change in the cast of Monobazos in Ant. 20:24, who is there said to be “old and close to the moment of his death” and this temporal change is also enhanced by the adverb “now” (ἤδη). However, two distinctive technical phrases that serve us to mark unit boundaries are located only in Ant. 20:17 and in Ant. 20:34, and therefore there is no good reason to divide Ant. 20:18-33 into two pieces. Further, both parts are well joined thematically by the theme of Monobazos’ preference to Izates. One may wonder if Barish’s and Schiffman’s divisions are not indebted to the edition of the Loeb Classical Library.

characters in the plot of Ant. 20:17-96, Monobazos, king of Adiabene, and his wife Helena, and goes on to report Izates' birth accompanied by a divine revelation to Monobazos announcing the great future of his new son (Ant. 20:18-19). Next, the text presents the relations in Izates' family (Ant. 20:20-22) – his father's favour over Izates and Izates' half-brothers' envy and hatred because of this favour. As a result of this family discord, Monobazos decides to send Izates to a friendly ruler of Charax Spasini (Charakene), named Abennerigos, to protect him from possible harm by his half-brothers. Izates' arrival in Charax Spasini and his prosperity there (becoming a ruler over a district and marrying the king's daughter) is presented in Ant. 20:22. From Ant. 20:23 the narrative goes on to report on Izates' succession to the throne which, however, takes place in stages, all of which are narrated in Ant. 20:23-33. In short, the narrative speaks of Monobazos' old age and his call for Izates to visit him in Adiabene (Ant. 20:24a) and then of his assignment for Izates to rule in Carron (here Ant. 20:24-26 offers a short excursus on natural and cultural resources of Carron). After Monobazos' death (Ant. 20:26) the narrative reports Helena's performance before the state council (Ant. 20:26-31) that leads to appointing Izates as king of Adiabene and this is presented as fulfilling Monobazos' will. Since Izates is said not to be present in Adiabene at that time, his brother Monobazos is temporarily appointed as trustee of the kingdom (Ant. 20:32); but when Izates arrives, he steps aside for him, and Izates takes over power in Adiabene (Ant. 20:33).

Our main protagonist, then, is Izates, and even if other protagonists temporarily assume leading roles in the narrative (since they are subjects of the clauses: Monobazos in Ant. 20:18-19, Ant. 20:20-22; Helena in Ant. 20:26-31), Izates still appears in the background, and he is the reason and ultimate purpose of the others' actions. Since the plot in this unit starts with the announcement of Izates' birth and comes to a point when Izates takes over power in Adiabene, it means that the narrative takes us on a relatively long journey in time and space with Izates. We therefore witness Izates' development from an infant (βρέφος in Ant. 20:18), to a boy (παῖς in Ant. 20:20.21.22), then a young man (νεανίας in Ant. 20:22-23), until he becomes a successor to his father (διάδοχος in Ant. 20:27). Likewise, we also travel with Izates in space from Adiabene to Charax Spasini (Ant. 20:22-23), back to Adiabene for a short time (Ant. 20:24), next to Carron (Ant. 20:24-25), and finally back to Adiabene for good (Ant. 20:33). One may ask what the reason is to make us travel with Izates in time and space; in other words, is there any thread that ties together all this development from Ant. 20:18 until Ant. 20:33? There is certainly one theme that is explicitly named a few times in the narrative and gives an internal and coherent logic to the whole plot - it is Izates' father's preference for his son<sup>50</sup>. This preference makes Izates envied and hated by his half-brothers (Ant. 20:21) which in turn necessitates him being sent away to Charax Spasini (Ant. 20:22). Further, it is still Monobazos' favour toward Izates that is presented as a decisive element behind Izates moving to Adiabene (Ant. 20:24) and then to Carron (Ant. 20:24-26), and finally, it is again Monobazos' inclination towards Izates that is posthumously recalled during the succession debate between Helena (Ant. 20:27) and the council (Ant. 20:28). However, the question returns – why did Monobazos take on this preference? No reason is explicitly named in the narrative, but as the narrative stands, it is clear that the only reason could be found in Ant. 20:18-19 when Monobazos received a divine revelation announcing not merely Izates' birth, but his future greatness, both being attributed to θεοῦ πρόνοιᾳ (Ant. 20:18). Izates' father apparently took this divine revelation to his heart and mind and acted accordingly<sup>51</sup>. Thus, all development in the narrative between Ant. 20:18 and Ant. 20:33 has to be attributed to the birth announcement in Ant. 20:18-19 that sets the tone for the whole context of the first unit of the Adiabene narrative (Ant. 20:18-33).

<sup>50</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 26.

<sup>51</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 26.

The Second Unit 20:34-48 (the Conversion Story)

Ant. 20:34-48<sup>52</sup> is a very remarkable unit, in terms of structure and content alike. First, our unit starts with a temporal statement in Ant. 20:34: καθ' ὃν δὲ χρόνον ("at about this time") and ends with the cross-reference in Ant. 20:48: ταῦτα μὲν ὕστερον ἀπαγγελοῦμεν ("we will narrate them later"). The use of the phrase "at about this time" is very telling. First, this phrase (καθ' ὃν δὲ χρόνον) is strikingly similar to the temporal statement in Ant. 20:17 (κατὰ τοῦτον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν)<sup>53</sup>. Is it a coincidence that Josephus started the whole Adiabene account with the same kind of temporal phrase as he uses in Ant. 20:34? It does not seem to be so, because the main topic of Ant. 20:17-96 as a whole was already announced in Ant. 20:17, but the first unit (Ant. 20:18-33) knew nothing of it, and it is only in the second unit (Ant. 20:34-48) when it comes back to the fore<sup>54</sup>. Thus, in Ant. 20:34 Josephus finally gets to the main topic of his narrative, and this switch is apparently emphasized by the use of the same vocabulary.

Indeed, Ant. 20:34-48 presents the topic that has already been announced in Ant. 20:17: how it came about that Helena and Izates adopted Jewish traditions. The narrative proceeds, however, in stages. In a nutshell, Izates was first made familiar with Jewish traditions when he was still in Charax Spasini. There he got to know a certain Jew called Ananias who was spreading Jewish traditions among the wives of the king of Charax Spasini (Ant. 20:34)<sup>55</sup>. Next, he was summoned to Adiabene by his father (Ant. 20:35). While in Adiabene, he discovered that not only had his mother become Jewish (Ant. 20:35) but she really enjoyed the practice of the Jewish customs; he was inspired by her example and wanted to follow suit (Ant. 20:38). However, both Helena and Ananias (who was invited by Izates to travel with him from Charax to Adiabene) discouraged him from this step by arguing that it was inappropriate for a king of Adiabene, since his subjects would not tolerate the rule of a Jewish king over them (Ant. 20:39-42). Izates allowed himself to be convinced for a time, but he did not entirely give up his desire. In fact, another Jew, Eleazar, appeared later at the Adiabene court and vigorously convinced Izates that in his present state the circumcision was necessary to avoid impiety (ἀσέβεια) against God (Ant. 20:43-46). The account finishes with both the presentation of Ananias' and Helena's fear over the consequences of this occurrence (Ant. 20:47), and the narrator's personal comments that their fear would not have been realized due to God's protection preserving the fruit of piety (Ant. 20:48: καρπὸς τῆς εὐσεβείας).

The narrative in Ant. 20:34-48 has many interesting features in terms of structural arrangement. Since Ant. 20: 34-48 moves on to a new topic, its chronology has to be reconciled with the previous narrative<sup>56</sup>. Thus, the phrase "at about this time" in Ant. 20:34 not only introduces a new episode (announced in Ant. 20:17), but is also used to reverse the chronology since in Ant. 20:34 the narrative goes back to the time when Izates resided in Charax Spasini, although we already witnessed his move in the narrative from Charax first to Adiabene (to visit his father in Ant. 20:24), then to Carron (20:24) and again to Adiabene (after his father's death in Ant. 20:33). Furthermore, another flashback in the narrative is present in Ant. 20:34. Namely, from Ant. 20:34 up to Ant. 20:38 Izates' contact with Jewish traditions is presented as taking place in stages and under the influence of certain individuals - Ananias is first mentioned in Ant. 20:34, and then the description of his influence upon Izates follows (Ant. 20:35). Likewise, Helena is briefly

<sup>52</sup> Both Barish 1983: 28-34 and Schiffman 1987: 295-296 recognize the same boundaries of this unit: Ant. 20:34-48.

<sup>53</sup> Ant. 20:34 goes with καθ' ὃν δὲ χρόνον, but some manuscripts read καιρὸν in Ant. 20:34 (like in Ant. 20:17), see Feldman 1965: 18, n. 4.

<sup>54</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 27, 29; Schiffman 1987: 295.

<sup>55</sup> See D.R. Schwartz 1996 about whose wives are meant in Ant. 20:34. Although linguistically γυναῖκες τοῦ βασιλέως may refer both to Abbenerigos and Izates, the latter was not yet a king at the moment of his stay in Characene. Therefore, the text can speak only of Abbenerigos' and not Izates' wives.

<sup>56</sup> Barish 1983: 29.

mentioned in Ant. 20:35, and afterwards the report on her influence upon Izates could have been expected, according to the pattern used for Ananias' depiction. Indeed, her influence is reported (Ant. 20:38) but only after Ant. 20:36-37. Instead, Ant. 20:36-37 focuses on Izates' decision upon the fate of his potential enemies and so recalls the moment of Izates' arrival in Adiabene in Ant. 20:32. In Ant. 20:32 Izates is said to arrive in his kingdom, but the question of deciding upon the fate of his potential enemies is not reported there. Consequently, the narrator left an unresolved issue in Ant. 20:32 that is being resolved only in Ant. 20:36-37<sup>57</sup>. However, for a good flow of the plot Ant. 20:36-37 would better fit Ant. 20:33 since the previous verses (Ant. 20:29-32) concerned the council's advice to put Izates' brothers and kinsmen to death and culminated in Izates' arrival in Adiabene in Ant. 20:32. What is the reason to report Izates' dealing with his potential enemies as late as in Ant. 20:36-37 and not in Ant. 20:32? It appears that the reason lies in the opportunity to emphasize the main motif of Izates' act towards his brothers and kinsmen in bonds<sup>58</sup>. As the author states, Izates found it impious (*ἀσεβής*) to kill them or to keep them imprisoned (Ant. 20:37). The motif of piety appears for the first time in the narrative, and this fact sets a theme for the narrative. Furthermore, it is mentioned after Izates' first contact with Jewish traditions has been described, and this may suggest that Izates' desire to act piously was enhanced by that religious influence. Summing up, the narrator mentions Izates' inclinations towards piety in Ant. 20:37-38 and not immediately after Ant. 20:33 because it fits better the religious meaning of Ant. 20:34-35 and 38, although for chronological reasons and for a better flow of the plot it could have been placed immediately after Ant. 20:33. By doing so, the narrator emphasises the role of Jewish traditions in enhancing the piety in Izates' conduct.

#### The Third Unit 20:49-53 (Helena's and Izates' Benefactions)

This unit is very well marked by two cross references. Namely, the first in Ant. 20:48, which closed the previous unit, and the second in Ant. 20:53, which marks out the last boundary of our unit<sup>59</sup>. The unit revolves around Helena's trip to Jerusalem and her benefactions to the people of Jerusalem struck by famine. We are told first that she decided to travel there to thank God for Izates' prosperity (Ant. 20:49), secondly, that she has been supported in her plan by Izates (Ant. 20:50), and thirdly, how she relieved the suffering people of Jerusalem (Ant. 20:51-52). Finally, Ant. 20:53 also recalls help sent by Izates to Jerusalem, so that the narrative can recall Helena and Izates as going hand in hand in their benefactions to the people of Jerusalem in the summary of Ant. 20:49-53. However, it is in fact Helena who assumed the leading role throughout Ant. 20:49-53 and not Izates, who played only second fiddle to his mother.

Ant. 20:49-53 is a short unit with well-marked boundaries, but the question arises as to how it is related to the previous narrative<sup>60</sup>. Izates' prosperity that inspired Helena's devotional trip to Jerusalem is directly attributed to the working of God's providence in Ant. 20:49. This idea expressed at the very outset in Ant. 20:49 ties this unit conceptually with the previous unit wherein the editorial comment in Ant. 20:48 promised God's protection for Izates<sup>61</sup>. In this sense, Ant. 20:49-53 accounts for a continuation of Ant. 20:34-48, this is however not to say that Helena's trip

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<sup>57</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 29. In turn, Schiffman 1987: 296 also recognizes the interrupted flow of the narrative but he only remarks that this results from mixing different sources.

<sup>58</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 29.

<sup>59</sup> The same unit boundaries are suggested by Barish 1983: 35-35 and Schiffman 1987: 296.

<sup>60</sup> According to Schiffman, Helena's journey in Ant. 20:49-53 "constitutes a direct continuation of the story of the conversion, since she wanted to fulfil the obligation of the proselyte". In turn, Barish 1983: 36 stresses that this unit is highly independent (that is, it does not have to come from the same source as Ant. 20:34-48), and was perhaps taken by Josephus from oral tradition.

<sup>61</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 35-36.

is presented as fulfilling a formal requirement for the conversion<sup>62</sup>. On the contrary, it is simply presented as a deed motivated by common devotional needs<sup>63</sup>.

#### The Fourth Unit 20:54-68 (Izates and Artabanos)

This unit is well marked out by the cross-reference in Ant. 20:53 that closed the previous unit and by a temporal statement in Ant. 20:69 which begins the next unit<sup>64</sup>. Ant. 20:54-68 is devoted to Izates' relations with Artabanos, king of the Parthians, a character already mentioned in passing in Ant. 20:37. In Ant. 20:54 we learn of Artabanos' dire situation (as he has to leave his kingdom due to oncoming rebellion). Artabanos escapes to Izates (Ant. 20:55), who kindly welcomes him and shows a great deal of kindness by hosting him at his court (Ant. 20:56-61). The description of their meeting is composed with a great deal of dramatizing skill: sudden surprises (Izates does not recognize Artabanos), two direct speeches, elaborate gestures (leaping down from the horse, hospitality at the banquet table) and drama (Artabanos weeping and bowing his head). Next, Izates contacts the Parthians and secures Artabanos' safe return and the restoration of his throne that is given back to him by a certain Kinnamos who was temporarily holding power in Parthia (Ant. 20:62-65). The unit is ended by the enumeration of the rich rewards that Artabanos bestowed on Izates: the right to use the tiara upright, to sleep on a golden bed, and the district of Nisibis (Ant. 20:66-67)<sup>65</sup>.

This unit in fact starts a new theme of the Adiabene narrative – Izates' relations with Parthian kings that will run till the last unit of the Adiabene narrative. This involves a new subject of the narrative and its new spatial setting. In Ant. 20:54-68 the role of the representative of the Parthian kings is played by Artabanos; however, his person and his dire situation are used by the narrator as an opportunity to reflect on Izates' kindness and his equality to the Parthian kings<sup>66</sup>. Izates' equality to Artabanos is especially emphasized by the very presence of Ant. 20:66-67, as well as by its content. Namely, Ant. 20:65 (Artabanos restored on his throne) resolves the issue which started off the plot in Ant. 20:54 (Artabanos' escape). Thus, Ant. 20:65 might be a good ending for the narrative started in Ant. 20:54. Nevertheless, the narrative goes on to *again* remind us of Izates' help to Artabanos in Ant. 20:66-68 and then to tell us of the rewards given to Izates by Artabanos in return. Especially the first two rewards (the tiara and the golden bed) are said to be reserved for Parthian kings, but Artabanos allows Izates to use them. Ergo, Izates ranks equal to Parthian kings.

#### The Fifth Unit 20:69-73: (Izates and Vardanes)

The new beginning of the narrative in Ant. 20:69 is clearly marked by a temporal statement: μετ' οὐ πολὺν δὲ χρόνον ("not long afterwards") which is used for Artabanos' death and Vardanes' succession to the throne. In turn, in Ant. 20:74 we have the same temporal phrase that marks out the beginning of the next unit – καὶ τοῦτον δὲ μετ' οὐ πολὺν χρόνον ("and not long

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<sup>62</sup> Schiffman 1987: 303-304 believes it is for fulfilling Rabbinic requirements for the process of conversion.

<sup>63</sup> Gilbert 1990-1991: 313, n. 34.

<sup>64</sup> Barish 1983: 37 and Schiffman 1987: 296 suggest the same boundaries for this unit.

<sup>65</sup> Ant. 20:66-68 (Artabanos' repayment of Izates in the form of three gifts: upright tiara, golden bed, Nisibis) is a very important part of Ant. 20:54-68 and consequently its substantial elements should not be shortened (so Schiffman 1987:296 who pays attention only to Izates' acquisition of Nisibis out of three gifts) or even overlooked at all (Barish 1983: 37 does not even include the content of 66-68 in his paraphrase).

<sup>66</sup> This statement has to be understood on the literary level – the narrative presents Izates as equal to Parthian kings. Perhaps, such a presentation could evoke a great deal of controversy from the point of view of historically orientated research, but this is not an issue here. For historical discussion of Izates' standing towards the Parthian crown, see Fowler 2010: 57-77.



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afterwards”)<sup>67</sup>. What is more, in Ant. 20:71 (that is in the middle of Ant. 20:69-73) we have a cross-reference ὡς προεῖπον (“as I have already reported”); this is, however, a remark made in the margin, and reminds us of the plot of the narrative in Ant. 20:49-53. Before and after this cross-reference the narrative is focused on Izates’ relation with Vardanes, and no specific subject change can be detected. Thus, there is no reason to turn our unit into two smaller subunits. In short, Izates’ relations with Vardanes in Ant. 20:69-73 are in fact limited to Vardanes’ plan to go to war against the Romans and his demand for Izates to support this plan. Ant. 20:69 speaks of Vardanes’ plan, and next Ant. 20:70-71 presents Izates’ motivation for his refusal in detail – his personal reasons (family in Jerusalem), as well as his belief in the strength and good luck of the Romans that make them invincible. Ant. 20:72 finishes the plot of this unit by presenting God’s punitive intervention against Vardanes who lost his life due to the rebellion of his subjects.

In presenting Izates’ relations with Vardanes, Ant. 20:49-53 gives us a brief insight into Izates’ further relationship with the world he became part of through his conversion (20:38-48, 20:49-53), but, above all, it delivers some very important statements concerning Izates’ outlook on the role of political powers on the world scene, and in this context, we must say that the message of Ant. 20:49-53 is clearly pro-Roman in its tone<sup>68</sup>.

### The Sixth Unit: Ant. 20:74-91: (The Succession of Parthian kings, Plots against Izates Resulting in Foreign Invasions)

A temporal phrase μετ’ οὐ πολλὸν χρόνον marks out a unit boundary in Ant. 20:74. Another instance of such editorial language can be found in Ant. 20:92 where it begins the last unit of the Adiabene narrative. Thus, based on formal criteria the sixth unit can be found in Ant. 20:74-91, a lengthy section comprising a lot of material. This material can of course be arranged into separate themes: the succession list of Parthian kings (Ant. 20:74), and the plots against Izates resulting in foreign invasions of Adiabene (Ant. 20:75-91). This distinction is made on the basis of rhetorical features such as predominant topics or shifts in temporal and spatial setting. By applying these criteria to 20:75-91, we can further divide the second theme into two topics arranged around the character that assumes the role of Izates’ main enemy: first king Abias (20:75-80) and next the Parthian king, Vologases (20:80-91).

Essentially, Ant. 20:74 is a list of succession of Parthian kings from Gotarzes to Vologases and his brothers, Pacorus and Tiridates<sup>69</sup>. In fact, the narrator very briefly recalls Gotarzes and

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<sup>67</sup> From Ant. 20:73 we considerably part our ways with both Barish 1983: 38-41 and Schiffman 1987: 297 until Ant. 20:92-96 (the last unit). Both Barish 1983: 38-41 and Schiffman 1987: 297 have the following units: Ant. 20:69-74 and Ant. 20:75-91. By contrast, our distinction of the narrative units is strictly based on formal criteria, namely on transition phrases.

<sup>68</sup> Remarkably, Schiffman 1987: 297 refers the message of Ant. 20:49-53 to the political constellation: Izates’ connection with the Jews of Palestine “forced Izates to avoid a confrontation with Rome”. Likewise, he remarks that Izates wisely recognizes the military and political situation on his region. This might be true from the historical point of view, but is not our concern here. What is more, the language that Josephus uses to describe what Schiffman believes to be merely political judgment goes much further than this. Especially the term τύχη touches on deterministic ideas on the course of world and human history. Ergo, Josephus not only describes political *Realien*, but proclaims his ideas from the range of the speculative philosophy of history.

<sup>69</sup> The succession list of Parthian kings is only presented in Ant. 20:74. By contrast, Barish 1983: 38-40 names Ant. 20:69-74 “succession of the Parthian kings”, and this is in fact a typical *pars pro toto* name. Ant. 20:69-74 is named after only Ant. 20:74. The succession of Parthian kings (only Ant. 20:74) is distinguished from the narrative on Vardanes (Ant. 20:69-73) both formally and thematically. The formal distinction is made by the use of the transition phrase. Thematically, Vardanes is not only mentioned in passing, but is presented as a *character*, that is, someone who assumes a certain role in the narrative. Further, the depiction of the relationship between Izates and Vardanes serves Josephus to express an important ideological point in his portrayal of Izates, namely - his pro-Roman inclinations. Thus, one cannot reduce Ant. 20:69-73 only to the content of Ant. 20:74, just as one cannot reduce the role played in the story by Vardanes to those played by Parthian kings enumerated in Ant. 20:74.

Vologases' brothers, since a depiction of their reign would apparently be of no value for the story of Izates unlike the characters of Vardanes and Vologases. This all shows that although the narrator's focus is constantly on Izates (only those Parthian kings are elaborately depicted who were in contact with Izates), he also satisfies the demand of basic chronological order in his reference to Parthian affairs.

The theme of the plots against Izates has in fact a very logical sequence<sup>70</sup>. First, the ultimate reason for rebellions against Izates is expressed right at the outset – it is the conversion of Izates' brother, Monobazos and other relatives that in turn resulted from Izates' adoption of Jewish traditions. This motivation (resentment of the conversion of the royal house) sets the whole context for the unfolding scenes of Ant. 20:75-91. The plotters first call for Abias king of the Arabs, and after Izates defeats him, they resort to Vologases, king of Parthia. In all these cases, they explain their motivation with religious resentment, and in all cases Izates' salvation is attributed to God's providence. Thus, the motif of conversion and that of God's providence not only lie behind all the occurrences in Ant. 20:75-91, but tie this unit with the previous narrative (especially with Ant. 20:34-48 and 49-53).

#### The Seventh Unit 20:92-96 (Izates' and Helena's Death and Burial)

The framing of the last part of Ant. 20: 92-96 is well marked at its beginning as well as at its end<sup>71</sup>. In Ant. 20:92 we have a temporal phrase “not long afterwards (μετ' οὐ πολὺν δὲ χρόνον)” and Ant. 20:96 contains a cross-reference: “we shall narrate [that] later (ἕστερον ἀπαγγελοῦμεν)”. The narrative evolves around two main characters, Izates and Helena and another, Monobazos who complements them. Both Izates and Helena die, and their life is summarized by reference to meaningful aspects of their legacy. Izates is said to rest after a long life and reign, having left rich descendants and securing the succession in the kingdom. Helena in turn is presented by fulfilling the sense of her life through her sons, one most-pious, εὐσεβέστατος (Izates) and the other taking over the family legacy (Monobazos). As for Monobazos, he is presented as loyal to Izates (an explicit connection to Ant. 20:33), and to their mother Helena. Moreover, he is chosen by both to carry on the family legacy. In this way, the narrator paints a picture of a perfect family, but also leaves himself some space to return to it later through the character of Monobazos.

### 1.3. Thematic Continuities in Ant. 20:17-96 and its Genre

Since the presence of literary units within Ant. 20:17-96 is now clear to us, we also want to understand its continuities in order to be able to understand the narrative as a whole. The Adiabene narrative consists of seven distinctive sub-units and the introduction in Ant. 20:17. Especially telling is the fact that we do have the introduction. In prose narratives introduction serves an author to state the purpose and goals of the following account<sup>72</sup>. This is actually quite necessary in Ant. 20 since Ant. 20:17-96 is a lengthy account, and it stands out from the context of Ant. 20. Accordingly, in Ant. 20:17 Josephus tells us that in what follows he is going to explain how it came about that Helena and Izates adopted Jewish traditions. Consequently, one has to draw the conclusion that Ant. 20:17-96 will be the story about the conversion of the Adiabene royal house. However, it is remarkable that the introduction does announce the topic of Helena's and Izates' conversion (Ant. 20:17). But the narrative only returns to it in 20:34 and “there is no mention, or

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<sup>70</sup> This seems to be partly recognized by Barish 1983: 41 who speaks of “a mixture of the two dominant themes in the Adiabene narrative, the religious and the political”.

<sup>71</sup> The same boundaries are suggested by Barish 1983: 41 and Schiffman 1987: 297.

<sup>72</sup> Cairns 1989: 3.

even a hint<sup>73</sup>, of the conversion topic until Ant. 20:34. Likewise, Ant. 20:54-74 (after the conversion) is completely silent on the conversion topic and Ant. 20:92-96, the summary of the whole account, does not explicitly speak about it either. What is more, in Ant. 20:34-48 we find a coherent account wherein the conversion of Helena and Izates is described and the conversion is presented as completed by Ant. 20:48. True, outside Ant. 20:34-48, we find two other units, Ant. 20:49-53 and Ant. 20:74-91, where the topic of conversion is underlying its narrative (all troubles result from Izates' conversions) and again there is a brief reference to it in Ant. 20:71 (where Izates' sends his sons to Jerusalem). Yet, the fact is that if Josephus merely wanted to explain under what circumstances Helena and Izates adopted Jewish traditions (as he told us in Ant. 20:17), he could have stopped his narrative in Ant. 20:34. This all is not to say that the topic of conversion is not important, on the contrary, it is apparently the reason that prompted Josephus to write on the Adiabene royalty, and the conversion is planned by him to be the climax of the story, but there has to be another guiding principle behind the bulk of material that starts well before Ant. 20:34 and still covers a lot of narrative after 20:48<sup>74</sup>. Indeed, Ant. 20:18 starts with Izates' birth, while the last unit, Ant. 20:92-96, tells of his death. Thus, the narrative covers the whole lifespan of Izates. This observation is very important because such an understanding of Ant. 20:17-96 matches a classic definition of an ancient biography as "an account of the life of a man from birth to death"<sup>75</sup>. In fact, ancient literature had a long tradition of biographical writings from the 4th c. BCE until late antiquity<sup>76</sup>. They "form a diverse and flexible group, yet still one with a recognizable family resemblance in both form and content"<sup>77</sup>. Though the term *biographia* was first coined by Damascius as late as in the 5th c. CE<sup>78</sup>, many earlier biographical writings were called *lives* (βίαι or *vitae*)<sup>79</sup>. A few observations on constant features of the biographical genre are warranted<sup>80</sup>.

First of all, ancient biographies were written in continuous prose narrative and cover a person's lifetime in a chronological sequence<sup>81</sup>. Although other protagonists show up in the course of the narrative and some of them can attract some attention, the narrative is centered only on one protagonist, and all others function merely in the background<sup>82</sup>. Next, the presentation of material focused on the protagonist goes along a basic tripartite sequence comprising beginning (ἀρχή), middle (ἀκμή), and concluding account (τέλος)<sup>83</sup>. Such an outline can be filled with a number of recurring topics: birth, ancestry and family, education, deeds, speeches, virtues, and death<sup>84</sup>. Not all such topics have to be covered at all, the less so with the same amount of interest<sup>85</sup>. Birth and death

<sup>73</sup> Schiffman 1987: 295.

<sup>74</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 27, 29, 66.

<sup>75</sup> Momigliano 1971: 11.

<sup>76</sup> See Leo 1901; Dihle 1970; Momigliano 1971; Burrige 2004; Frickenschmidt 1997; Sonnabend 2003; Burrige 2006.

<sup>77</sup> Burrige 2006: 32. There is indeed a long history of discussion as to whether and/or to what extent we may speak of a distinctive genre of biography because in fact we have many biographical writings that differ from each other – see e.g. Momigliano 1971: 111-121; Geiger 1985: 11-15; Burrige 2004: 54-77.

<sup>78</sup> To be precise, fragments of Damascius' *Life of Isidorus* were preserved in the 9<sup>th</sup> c. CE *Bibliotheca* (181, 242) by Photius – see Momigliano 1971: 12.

<sup>79</sup> Burrige 2006: 31.

<sup>80</sup> It is important to note that there is no extant literary theory of writing biography (Momigliano 1971: 11-12; Geiger 1985: 17) and consequently such lists are done by scholars based on sources that came down to us. Here I have consulted: Frickenschmidt 1997: 210-350; Gentili/Cerri 1988: 61-85; Hägg/Rousseau 2001: 1-28; Sonnabend 2003: 1-15, 17-21; Burrige 2004: 54-77; Burrige 2006: 31-33; Freyne 2006: 64-65.

<sup>81</sup> Sonnabend 2003: 18; Burrige 2006: 32-33.

<sup>82</sup> Sonnabend 2003: 18; Burrige 2006: 33.

<sup>83</sup> Frickenschmidt 1997: 210-350.

<sup>84</sup> Sonnabend 2003: 18; Burrige 2006: 33; Freyne 2006: 65.

<sup>85</sup> Freyne 2006: 65.

are in most cases included giving readers a sense of completeness, but most emphasis is in fact laid upon the subject's public life<sup>86</sup>. Here protagonist's deeds and words are presented<sup>87</sup>.

What is very characteristic of ancient biographies is their moralistic aim<sup>88</sup>. In fact, biography writers express moralistic outlooks through their texts by assuming a set of values for whose performance (or lack thereof) their protagonists are praised (or criticized)<sup>89</sup>. However, the first instance is mostly the case - biography writers tend to deliver *model protagonists*, namely they set up positive examples to follow by the audience<sup>90</sup>. Lastly, it is interesting to ask what distinguishes biographical accounts from historiographical writings (see Polybius, 8.2, 10.21; Plutarch, *Alexander*, 1). Namely, while historiography focuses on deeds of protagonists (πράξεις), biographical accounts are centered on the character (ἦθος) of the protagonist<sup>91</sup>. In the second case, the character can be revealed even through apparently trivial episodes<sup>92</sup>. Thus, political and military events, which are the focal point of historiographical accounts, matter for βίος only as long as they allow insight into the character of the protagonist<sup>93</sup>.

How can this all be referred to the narrative on Izates? First, Ant. 20:17-96 in fact covers his lifespan. Next, the course of the narrative indeed follows a sequence so typical of ancient biographies: Izates' birth and youth, his accession to the throne, the conversion, his deeds as king of Adiabene (including one speech in 20:59 and one prayer in 20:90), and finally his death and burial. All periods of his life are narrated in chronological order that is slightly interrupted only twice – once in general by the narrator switching to the topic of conversion (Ant. 20:34-48) and once more specifically by the narrative flash-back in Ant. 20:34-35. Further, one gets the impression that the political and military events narrated in Ant. 20:54-91 serve only as the background to reflect on Izates' extraordinary virtues and God's protection. Lastly, Izates' portrait in Ant. 20:17-96 is so unambiguously positive that there can be no doubt that Izates is presented as a model protagonist and in doing so, Josephus clearly conveys some moralistic ideas to his readers/listeners. All in all, Ant. 20:17-96 is structured as a biography of Izates. Secondly, the conversion story is the main topic of this account, and consequently in Ant. 20:17-96 we may find a biography for Izates, whose narration is centered on his change of life into Jewish customs.

The question arises whether Ant. 20:17-96 can also be treated as Helena's biography, especially since her conversion is simultaneously announced in Ant. 20:17 – her name even comes first there – and her death is reported in the same unit as that of Izates. However, the name of Izates appears thirty-six times in the Adiabene passage (Ant. 20:17, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 (twice), 34, 35, 36, 48, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 66 (twice), 68, 69, 70, 72, 75, 78 (twice), 79, 81, 83, 86, 87, 89, 91, 94) and the name of his mother is recorded only eleven times in Ant. 20: 17-96 (Ant. 20:17, 18, 20, 26, 30, 32, 35, 49, 51, 94). Thus, the numbers themselves suggest that Ant. 20:17-96 is much more about Izates and his conversion than about her. In fact, besides two units – Ant. 20:24-33 and Ant. 20:49-53 – where Helena plays the main role in the narrative, she always plays second fiddle to Izates and rather appears in the background of the narrative so centered on Izates. In the fifth and seventh unit Helena is entirely absent, whereas in the sixth she is only briefly mentioned. Therefore, Ant. 20:17-96 is indeed Izates' biography. As far as Helena is concerned, Ant. 20:17-96 cannot be regarded as a biography of Helena, although it contains some important biographical elements concerning her.

<sup>86</sup> Burridge 2006: 33.

<sup>87</sup> Burridge 2006: 33.

<sup>88</sup> Hägg/Rousseau 2001: 4-5; Sonnabend 2003: 12; Burridge 2004: 76-77.

<sup>89</sup> Hägg/Rousseau 2001: 4-5; Sonnabend 2003: 12; Burridge 2004: 76-77.

<sup>90</sup> Sonnabend 2003: 82-83; Burridge 2004: 76-77.

<sup>91</sup> Gentili/Cerri 1988: 66-67; Sonnabend 2003: 4-8; Burridge 2004: 61-62.

<sup>92</sup> Gentili/Cerri 1988: 66-67; Sonnabend 2003: 4-8; Burridge 2004: 61-62.

<sup>93</sup> Gentili/Cerri 1988: 66; Sonnabend 2003: 4-8.

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Thus, we know so far that Ant. 20:17-96 as a whole is structured as a biography for Izates, and its climax falls on the topic of conversion in Ant. 20:34-48. Thus, the Adiabene narrative can be aptly put as a βίος whose narrative is centered Izates' change of life into Jewish customs. At the same time, we have also observed that the topic of the conversion does not really cover the whole course of the narrative<sup>94</sup>. What, then, are the other topics that predominantly show up within our seven distinctive units of the narrative? There seem to be at least two frequently recurring themes in the Adiabene narrative – the theme of God's providence and that of human piety. Let us give some examples. The theme of God's providence is explicitly expressed in Ant. 20:18 and that accounts for most of the plot in Ant. 20:18-33 (Izates is supported by his father because he is chosen by God's providence) and in Ant. 20:74-91 (it saves Izates from rebellion and foreign invasions). What is more, in Ant. 20:74-91 there is a deep internal connection between the conversion and God's providence (the conversion in fact provokes the dangers from which Izates is saved by God's providence). As for the theme of piety, we have detected its appearance a few times – among others – in Ant. 20:36-37, 20:45, and 20:94. In fact, all these references are very meaningful. In Ant. 20:36-37 the narrator restructured the course of the narrative (flash-back) to introduce the topic of Izates' piety and to connect it with the topic of Jewish traditions. Likewise, in Eleazar's speech (Ant. 20:45) it is the motif of piety that inspired Izates to finally adopt Jewish traditions in full. Thus, not only does the topic of piety come to the fore in a very visible way, but it stays in close connection to the topic of conversion. Furthermore, the topic of piety appears in Ant. 20:94, that is within the summary of the Adiabene narrative which is significant in itself, because the account summaries in biographical writings aim at recapitulating the true character of the protagonist<sup>95</sup>. In this light, piety is emphasized as the essence of Izates' character.

All in all, now we can conclude that the Adiabene narrative as an implicit message is structured as a biography for Izates, and its climax falls on the topic of conversion in Ant. 20:34-48. What is more, the theme of conversion stays in close connection to two other themes, God's providence and human piety, and this connection remains to be explored.

### 1.4. Josephus' Explicit Comments in the Adiabene Narrative

Since we have already read and interpreted the structure and the content of Ant. 20:17-96, it is high time to use our second criterion of exploring the meaning of a passage. Our present purpose is to take a look at Josephus' explicit comments in Ant. 20:17-96.

Where can we find Josephus' explicit comments in Ant. 20:17-96? In a few places Josephus can be directly heard, yet in a very subtle way. Namely, while referring to some Jewish institutions, the narrator adds possessive pronouns that clearly express his attachment to what he is describing. In referring to the Jewish people, he says "all our people" (τὸ πᾶν ἡμῶν ἔθνος) in Ant. 20:52. He does likewise in referring to Izates' sons, sent by their father to learn "our language and culture" (γλῶτταν τὴν παρ' ἡμῖν πάτριον καὶ παιδείαν). Similarly, Josephus' own voice can be heard when, in an excursus on Carron in Ant. 20:25, he adds that the ark of Noah can be seen "to this very day" (μέχρι νῦν).

Further, speeches delivered in direct speech are believed to be Josephus' intentional and often elaborate devices to convey his own agenda<sup>96</sup>. Especially if characters who deliver speeches are presented positively by Josephus, there is every chance to expect them to express ideas close to Josephus himself<sup>97</sup>. This is the case with the Adiabene narrative, where we can find five instances of speech (Ant. 20:27, 44-45, 56-57, 59, 90). In Ant. 20:27 Helena's speech makes the case that

<sup>94</sup> Likewise Barish 1983: 27, 29, 66; Schiffman 1987: 295.

<sup>95</sup> Burrige 2006: 33.

<sup>96</sup> Michel 1984: 945-976.

<sup>97</sup> Michel 1984: 945-976.

“blessed is he who receives his realm from the hands not of one but of many”; in Ant. 20:44-45 Eleazar reminds Izates of strict and unconditional observance to ancestral traditions; in Ant. 20:56-57 Artabanos make us aware of sudden changes of fortune in the life of a king; Izates' speech in Ant. 20:59 shows his loyalty to the other ruler struck by misfortune; and lastly Izates' prayer in Ant. 20:90 makes the case that God helps those who trust in Him.

Finally, we have one very clear explicit comment from Josephus in Ant. 20:48. Take note that it takes place within the conversion story that has been announced by Josephus in Ant. 20:17 as the main topic of the whole account and, what is more, again introduced in Ant. 20:34 by the use of *καθ' ὃν δὲ χρόνον*. Furthermore, this comment takes place immediately after the narrative described Izates' conversion. Indeed, Josephus' remark is very intentionally emphasized in that he most clearly steps out of the narrative and his comment includes no less than fifty-two words. Bear in mind that the introduction sentence took Josephus twenty-four words to introduce the whole account. Thus, Josephus' comment in Ant. 20:48 is extraordinarily long. Its main idea centers on the idea of God's protection to those who (like Izates) are pious. To make it plain, Josephus' editorial comment in Ant. 20:48 stands for his most direct involvement in Ant. 20:17-96 and, given its highly ideological character, can be rightly called his grand manifesto of Ant. 20:17-96.

All in all, do the different cases of Josephus' explicit activity have anything in common? Do they help us understand what point Josephus aimed to make through Ant. 20:17-96? It seems that in fact several suggestions can be made. Josephus' grand manifesto in Ant. 20:48 is very clear in its message. It speaks of Izates' piety and God's protection. What is more, the idea of piety and God's protection in Ant. 20:48 is clearly connected to Izates' circumcision. That is, through his conversion Izates avoided impiety that would hamper him from receiving God's protection. Thus, in Ant. 20:48 we in fact have three ideas brought closely into connection with each other: piety (Ant. 20:94 and 48), God's protection (Ant. 20:48), and the conversion (Ant. 20:17 and 48). Do any of these themes occur in speeches delivered in Ant. 20:17-96? Eleazar's speech (Ant. 20:44-45) indeed deals with the notion of impiety and contrasts it to strict observance of laws that could be achieved for Izates through circumcision. Artabanos' speech (Ant. 20:56-57) is focused on sudden changes of fortune and in doing so, even uses terms that clearly belong to a range of philosophical ideas – *τύχη* and *πρόνοια*. Naturally, Izates' reply (Ant. 20:59) to Artabanos in the form of a speech has to touch on the same topic of changes of fortune (here the noun *μεταβολή* is used apparently as a synonym to *τύχη* from Ant. 20:57 that itself was coupled with the noun *μεταβολή* in Ant. 20:56). By the same token, Izates' speech in Ant. 20:90 conveys the new idea of God's governance of world history as Lord and Ally (*κύριος* and *σύμμαχος*). Thus, three out of five speeches refer to, broadly speaking, the human experience of changes of fortune and one of them clearly ties this perspective with the idea of God's power over history. These cases confirm the significance of the theme of God's protection in our inquiry that was also raised in Josephus' grand manifesto in Ant. 20:48. These findings are in accordance with our conclusions on the structure and implicit content – Ant. 20:17-96 is a *βίος* of Izates, its climax falls on the conversion story, but Izates' conversion has to be seen in the broader perspective of the idea of God's providence and human piety. Additionally, Helena's speech in fact expresses a political idea of how a ruler should be raised to power, and likewise, Artabanos' and Izates' speeches indeed refer to human experience of sudden changes of fortune, but their context is also royal, that is, they speak about changes of fortune in the life of a king. These three cases of political agenda should remind us of Ant. 20:69-73 whose main tone was political in character, too. Therefore, we have also accumulated enough material to pose a question about Ant. 20:17-96 as a writing containing a political agenda – what political message does Josephus convey to his listeners/readers through his moralistic portrayal of Izates in the Adiabene narrative?

1.5. Conclusions and Further Steps

All in all, based on our analysis of the Adiabene narrative, its structure and implicit content, as well as Josephus' explicit comments, we can reach the following conclusions. First, we have found one formal principle underlying Ant. 20:17-96: its structure as a biography. Next, the climax of Izates' biography falls on the topic of conversion, but the theme of conversion has to be seen in the light of two other aspects: God's providence and human piety. Lastly, Ant. 20:17-96 contains some political agenda. These conclusions pave the way for our further analysis - our aim is to discuss first what Josephus' choice of format of telling the story tells his readers (Izates' birth and death; Izates as a king). Secondly, we need to see how Josephus understands the conversion (the conversion story), how he depicts Izates' piety and God's providence (God's providence and human piety), and finally how these three topics can be related to each other (*conclusions to part I*).