Freyne, *Galilee: from Alexander the Great to Hadrian, 323 BCE to 135 CE* [1980]; and R. A. Horsley, *Galilee: History, Politics, People* [1995]) that are concerned with the history of Galilee; two (T. Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and His Society* [1983]; and P. Bilde, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome* [1988]) that are particularly concerned with Josephus' treatment of the history of Judaea during this period; one (J. J. Price, *Jerusalem under Siege: The Collapse of the Jewish State, 66-70 CE* [1992]) that deals with the history of the revolt of 66-70; and one (S. Schwartz, *Josephus and Judean Politics* [1990]) that surveys the history of Judaea during the years immediately following 70. He also analyzes critically a number of others as well, notably S. J. D. Cohen (*Josephus in Galilee and Rome* (1979) and H. R. Moehring ("Joseph ben Matthia and Flavius Josephus: The Jewish Prophet and Roman Historian," *ANRW* 2.21.2 [1984], 864-944). McLaren takes issue with the consensus that he finds in these various studies, namely that Judaea was racked by an escalating turmoil during this century, that the revolt was inevitable, and that the year 70 marked the end of this era. He emphasizes that rather than assuming that short-term causes alone could not result in war, it is important to be open to the notion that they could.

McLaren insists than Josephus' bias is the life blood of his text and that rather than ask in what sense Judaea was in a state of turmoil we must commence with a more neutral question, namely by asking what was the state of affairs in first-century Judaea. In measuring the state of affairs attention must be paid to establishing what contributes to the labeling of a period as one of stability or turmoil; one must ask whether it was ideals or principles or actual situations that should be used as a means of comparison; one must determine whose perspective is being sought, since to identify the "Jewish" attitude toward Roman rule, for example, requires careful qualification; and finally one must establish the criteria by which to describe individual incidents.

If McLaren had ended his volume with this analysis of the work of others and his statement of conceptual factors that should guide our examination of Josephus' account of the events of first-century Judaea his work would constitute in itself an important contribution. But for McLaren it is not enough to be negative. He presents a positive contribution in suggesting what he calls a case study approach, which consists of three steps: identifying and isolating individual incidents that require investigation, examination of each incident on an individual basis, and drawing together in a synthesis the disparate pieces of information regarding each incident. Thus, for the year 66 he isolates 23 separate incidents in Judaea. He then proceeds to give a sampling of his method in his examination of three incidents--the capture of Masada (*War* 2.408), the rejection sacrifices and gifts offered by foreigners (*War* 2.409-17), and the capture of Machaerus (*War* 2.485-86).

However, as McLaren himself admits, this examination of these incidents separately really leaves unresolved such basic questions as the identity of the participants and the nature of their motivation for undertaking these actions. While it is true that Josephus is
Our chief source for the history of this period, it is not our only source, and McLaren might well have profited from using these other sources, notably Philo (to which he refers only once, even though Philo (Legatio ad Gaium) has a good deal to say about these events and is closer in time to the events themselves), Tacitus' Histories, Book 5 (to which he refers, but very briefly, only three times and which represents a Roman point of view that is not always antagonistic), Dio Cassius (especially 66.4-7, to whom he refers not at all but who represents a more dispassionate Roman point of view) and the Talmud (especially Gitin 55b-57a, which presents important traditions with regard to the rejection of the sacrifices, for example, which confirms Josephus' view that the immediate cause of the war was the failure to accept a sacrifice on behalf of the Roman emperor, but which he refers to only once in order to dismiss it) as measuring rods. Indeed, the shortage of grain and its consequent high price and the implied search finally for dung (Gitin 56a) are corroborated in Josephus (War 5.571). Furthermore that the revolutionaries refused to permit any to leave the besieged city of Jerusalem is clear not only in Josephus (War 5.30) but also in the Talmud (Gitin 56a).

Moreover, in order to appreciate Josephus' search for a distinction between ultimate causes and immediate causes, one must realize that Josephus' model was clearly that of Thucydides, whom McLaren does not mention (and probably Dionysius of Halicarnassus), who stresses such a distinction. Furthermore, if we wish to see where Josephus draws a line of demarcation between Josephus' narrative of events and his interpretation of these events one should examine those portions of Josephus where we can clearly distinguish them, namely in his paraphrase of the Bible, of the Letter of Aristeas, and 1 Maccabees, none of which McLaren mentions, but where we know his sources and can see what he has added, subtracted, and modified, and can often discern his reasons for doing so. Finally, whereas McLaren is skeptical regarding the reliability of Josephus as a historian, we must note that historiography in Josephus' day was a competitive craft, and Josephus himself (War 1.1) remarks that the war of the Jews against the Romans did not lack its historians. He attacks these competitors for their historical inaccuracies (War 1.2, Against Apion 1.46), but he could hardly have done so if he himself had willfully misrepresented the facts. We know of one historical rival, Justus of Tiberias (Life 40), the reliability of whose history of the war Josephus vigorously attacks (Life 357-60). He could hardly have attacked this rival as unreliable if he himself had been utterly careless in his handling of the facts. Moreover, Josephus (Life 361-67) asserts that he presented his history of the war to Vespasian, Titus, and Agrippa II, as well as many others, and that they testified to its accuracy. Furthermore, he attacks the Greek historians for their inaccuracies (Against Apion 1.44-45), and it would have been dangerous to do so in an apologetic work if he himself was subject to the same criticism.

But let not these remarks detract from a genuine admiration for the fresh methodological insights that McLaren offers us throughout his book. His book is the most vigorous fundamental challenge in recent years to those who weigh the method of reading Josephus' historical narrative.