1. The Problem

A passage in the Antiquities that has long troubled researchers is the first report about Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes (Ant. 13.171-73), here called αἱρέσεις (to be translated "schools" or "schools of thought" rather than "sects"). Scholars have puzzled about the origin and location of this passage, which has no apparent connection to its context. Daniel Schwartz expresses a common assessment when he states: "As it stands, the function of this passage is incomprehensible. Josephus has inserted a brief account of the three sects, confined to their views on free will and determinism, between his paraphrase of 1 Macc 12:23 and that of 12:24, making no use of it in this context." Schwartz then argues that Josephus adopted this passage in somewhat mutilated form from Nicolaus of Damascus.

Mason offers a quite exhaustive discussion of our passage, arguing that it stems entirely from the pen of Josephus. Regarding the location of Ant. 13.171-173 with respect to 1 Maccabees he follows Schwartz, stating that "Ant. 13.170... corresponds to 1 Macc 12:23. Between his paraphrase of 1 Macc 12:23 and 24, Josephus splices into his narrative our passage on the Jewish schools." Both these scholars commit a small but significant oversight, one that becomes immediately evident

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2 Ibid. 162.
4 Ibid. 197.
in a synopsis. As a matter of fact, Ant. 13.170 corresponds not to 1 Macc 12:23 but to 12:18, and expands it. Ant. 13.174 indeed picks up again at 1 Macc 12:24. 1 Macc 12:19-23, however, has no immediate parallel in the Antiquities.

2. Author’s Revisions and “Publication” in Ancient Rome

If I am not mistaken, here we have a rare instance which enables us to observe an ancient author revising his own work by cutting out one text and pasting on another. A description of such a procedure is found in a frequently cited letter of Cicero to his friend and “publisher” Atticus:

Now I have to own up to a piece of carelessness. I sent the book “On Glory” to you and in it a preface which is in Book III of the “Academics.” This happened because I have a volume of prefaces from which I am in the habit of selecting when I have put a work in hand. And so back at Tusculum I pushed this preface into the book which I have sent you, forgetting that I had used it up already. But in reading the “Academics” on shipboard I noticed my mistake. So I scribbled out a new preface straight away, and send it herewith. Please cut the other off and glue this one on (tu illud desecabis, hoc adglutinabis). Give my love to Pilia and my heart’s darling Attica.

Cicero wrote this somewhat embarrassed note on July 25, 44 BCE, during a stopover in Vibo, at the southern tip of the Italian peninsula. Unfortunately, his treatise On Glory has not survived, neither has Book III of the Academics, i.e. the beginning of the second half of its final edition. Thus we do not have the pleasure to know the contents of his prefaces, nor are we able to tell whether his request to cut off one preface and glue on another was successful. There are several other incidents in which he requested changes to be made in manuscripts he had already submitted to Atticus for copying and “publication.” In one instance, he asked the name of the author of a comedy to be corrected to Aristophanes—and this correction appears in the entire manuscript tradition available to us. In another instance, he asked to remove

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6 Cicero, Att. 414.4 (16.6.4) (Shackleton Bailey, LCL).
8 “I am pleased to hear [that you are actually reading the Orator] and shall be still