

the volume is that it demonstrates the need to take into account issues of military administration in any discussion of the functioning of the Roman army.

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D. Jacobson and N. Kokkinos (eds.), *Herod and Augustus: Papers Presented at the IJS Conference, 21st-23rd June 2005*, Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2009. 506 pp. ISBN 978-90-04-16546-5.

This volume contains nineteen papers that were presented at a conference organized by the editors on the theme ‘Herod and Augustus’. It testifies to the enduring scholarly fascination with Herod,¹ including his relations with Augustus and Rome. Scholars’ engagement with Herodian studies has increased in the last generation, a trend associated with the expansion of archaeological explorations of Herodian sites, as well as with new directions in the study of the writings of Flavius Josephus. The recent discovery of Herod’s mausoleum and theatre at Herodium by the late E. Netzer is just one remarkable example of this fascinating development.² Innovative investigations of Josephus’ writing methods have affected the understanding of the historian’s narrative of the Herodian period.³ Still, the topics discussed and the issues debated in scholarly research concerning Herod’s policies and his integration within the Roman Empire are enduring themes.

The main question examined by the contributors in the first section, ‘Augustan and Herodian ideology’, is whether Herod’s policies and deeds characterize him as a Roman client king, a Jewish king, or a Hellenistic king. Erich S. Gruen (‘Herod, Rome, and the Diaspora’, 13-27) explains away the significance of Herod’s intervention on behalf of the Jews of Ionia: it was an exceptional case that does not indicate that he assumed the role of the protector of Diaspora Jews everywhere. He argues that Herod strove to present himself as Rome’s collaborator, as indicated by the names he gave to some of his building projects (e.g. Antonia, Caesarea) which advertised to his subjects his close ties with the Roman rulers of the Mediterranean. Herod’s foundations, buildings and benefactions indicate, according to Gruen, that he fits the model of the magnanimous Hellenistic king. Achim Lichtenberger (‘Herod and Rome: Was Romanization a Goal of the Building Policy of Herod’, 43-62) reaches a similar conclusion. Although Herodian buildings display some characteristic Roman materials and technologies, they were initially meant to express wealth and grandeur of a Hellenistic king rather than assimilation to Roman values. In contrast to Gruen’s view on this topic, Lichtenberger claims that Hellenistic monarchy had to be balanced by a show of dependency on Rome. In sum, a programmatic Romanization cannot be imputed to Herod.

A much wider perspective leads Karl Galinsky (‘The Augustan Programme of Cultural Renewal and Herod’, 29-42) to view Herod’s policies and activities within the context of the Augustan “programme”.⁴ That “programme” is considered a flourishing stage in a long process of

¹ For a brief survey of studies on the Herodian dynasty see N. Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty*, Sheffield 1998, 24-6.

² For a preliminary report see E. Netzer *et alii*, *JRA* 23 (2010), 84-108. Netzer, the leading researcher of Herodian sites, passed away (28.10.2010) after tragically falling downhill while working at Herodium.

³ See, e.g., S. Mason, *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 6 (2003), 145-88.

⁴ For the Augustan “programme” Galinsky refers in particular to works by A. Wallace-Hadrill, N. Purcell and G. Wolf (see their contributions in K. Galinsky [ed.], *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Cambridge 2005, 55-84, 85-105, 106-129, respectively), as well as to P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Ann Arbor 1988; see also A. Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome’s Cultural Revolution*, Cambridge 2008, with the review article of R. Osborne and C. Vout, *JRS* 100 (2010), 233-45.

cultural transformation that entailed, *inter alia*, the extension of the Roman horizon to the entire Mediterranean, with the creation of a cosmopolitan culture that integrated contributions from all quarters. Hence, 'Herod's architecture ... shares in the cosmopolitanism and the eclectic blending of traditions — Greek, Roman, native ... — that is typical ... both of Augustus' buildings in Rome and the hybrid architecture of the provinces' (38); moreover, '[without] Herod's role and his far flung cultural activities ... the East would have been much less Roman' (40). In brief, different perspectives generate different judgements. But, how important was Herod for Augustus and Rome? Gruen, highlighting Herod's absence from the *princeps'* *Res Gestae*, doubts whether Augustus paid much notice to the cultural activities of Herod, 'the ruler of a distant and minor principality' (17). In contrast, for Galinsky 'Herod was a major figure in the Augustan reign, and probably the most dominant one in the east' (30).

The second section presents papers on 'Literary and Documentary Evidence'. It is generally agreed that Josephus' description of Herod's reign is mainly based on Nicolaus of Damascus whose account was adulatory. Mark Toher ('Herod, Augustus, and Nicolaus of Damascus', 65-81) argues that Nicolaus' account was written in Rome, after the king's death, and was included in his self-exculpatory autobiography. He also suggests that while describing the deadly family intrigues in which Herod was involved while settling his succession, Nicolaus was mindful of Augustus being vexed with the same problem. However, even if Toher is right, it is not self-evident that Nicolaus' autobiography was free from any adulation of Herod, and one may also comment that Toher's arguments do not help to elucidate the positive portrayal of Herod in *War* as against cases of negative depiction in the *Antiquities*. These differences between the images of Herod in *War* I and *Antiquities* XIV-XVII, and their analysis by R.A. Laqueur, are re-examined by Joseph Sievers ('Herod, Josephus, and Laqueur', 83-112). Laqueur's main contention that Josephus did not slavishly copy his sources is endorsed by Sievers, and yet he plausibly argues that only some of the changes introduced in the *Antiquities* were due to Josephus himself, while in other cases he followed Nicolaus. Donald T. Ariel ('The Coins of Herod the Great in the Context of the Augustan Empire', 113-26) suggests that the era of Herod's year-three coins starts with Octavian's reconfirmation of Herod's rule in 30 BCE; the coins were struck in Samaria to celebrate the city's re-foundation as Sebaste in 27 BCE. This attractive proposal needs some corroborative evidence before it can be accepted as hard fact. In the last article in this section ('Dating Documents in Herodian Judaea', 127-54), David Goodblatt tackles the question whether the Herodian date formulas specified the territorial or ethnic/national entity over which Herod ruled. The negative evidence is taken to suggest that Herod deliberately avoided using any ethnic or territorial name. However, that this reticence alludes to his dreaming of becoming a ruler of the Levant is no more than a speculation.

The third section ('Augustan and Herodian Building Programmes') comprises three articles. Joseph Geiger ('Public Building and the Economy', 157-69) highlights the employment benefits accruing from the public building projects to the local population. Pointing out that a similar consideration for the employment of the free poor played a role in Augustus' and Agrippa's building projects, Geiger suggests that the Roman policy served as a model for Herod. According to Ehud Netzer ('Palaces and the Planning of Complexes in Herod's Realm', 171-80), the planning of complexes, e.g. Herodium, was primarily due to Herod's creative imagination and profound understanding of the building art. Although in some cases use was made of Roman elements, Romanization was somewhat limited and there was no direct line between Herod's and Augustus' architectural concepts. Conversely, Joseph Patrich's detailed examination of the literary and archaeological evidence about Herod's theatres and stadia ('Herodian Entertainment Structures', 181-213) shows a development from wooden to masonry construction, which reflects

a similar development that took place in Rome. All in all the Herodian entertainment structures testify to amalgamation of Greek and Roman functions and styles.⁵

Caesarea and the Temple Mount are treated in the section entitled 'Individual Herodian Sites'. Barbara Burrell's discussion ('Herod's Caesarea on Sebastos: Urban Structures and Influences', 217-33) of the foundation of Caesarea and its enormous artificial harbour Sebastos points to the employment of both Hellenistic and Roman political, cultural and technological ideas and practices. For example, the construction of the hippodrome and the theatre close to the royal palace was typical of Hellenistic kings; the harbour was accomplished thanks to the use made of Italian pozzolana and builders, as well of the barge method of construction otherwise evidenced only in the Ptolemaic harbour at Alexandria. According to Dan Bahat ('The Architectural Origins of Herod's Temple Mount', 237-45), the pre-Herodian Temple Mount is the one which is described in the Mishnah; it had been built in the third-second century BCE, and its layout heavily influenced Herod's plans to rebuild the Temple. This whole subject has long been debated, and no doubt will remain controversial.⁶

The fifth section ('Applied Arts in the Herodian Kingdom') contains two articles. Silvia Rozenberg ('Wall Paintings of the Hellenistic and Herodian Period in the Land of Israel', 249-65) delineates the transition from Hellenistic to Roman styles and motifs in the Herodian wall paintings, with Herod preferring to have his most important palaces decorated by Roman artists. Her conclusion that the Herodian-Roman examples are closest to the Second and Third Style gets support from the recent discovery of Herod's theatre at Herodium and from her own monumental study of Herod's Third Palace at Jericho.⁷ As Malka HersHKovits shows ('Herodian Pottery', 267-78), innovation in the pottery types, together with the continuation of local traditions, also characterizes the pottery of the Herodian period. The importation of foreign wares influenced the local production and repertoire, from the ordinary kitchen to the palace.

Varied topics are treated in the section titled 'Administration and Client Networks', Antony Barrett ('Herod, Augustus, and the Special Relationship', 281-302) discusses Josephus' puzzling statement that in 20 BCE Augustus appointed Herod procurator of all Syria and that other procurators were not to take any action without consulting him. Barrett suggests that Herod acted in Syria not as governmental procurator but as Augustus' private agent, advising the procurators of Augustus' private properties 'how to manage them for the best financial return' (300). If so, Herod as a friendly king would have a unique kind of relationship with Augustus. A more general topic is dealt with by Denis B. Saddington in his discussion of the role of the armies of friendly kings ('Client Kings' Armies under Augustus: The Case of Herod', 302-23). He argues that from a Roman angle Herod, and his army, provided stability in a strategic area and was consulted as an expert on the client kingdoms of the Near East. Stephen D. Schmid ('Nabataean Royal propaganda: A Response to Herod and Augustus?', 325-59), presents the similarities between Nabataean and Herodian art and architecture, due to both Nabataea and Judaea coming under Hellenistic-Roman influences, but draws attention to certain significant differences, including the Nabataean refraining from calling buildings after the names of Augustus and members of his family and from adopting specific building techniques such as pozzolana and *opus reticulatum*. The similarities are suggested to express a kind of rivalry and competition between the Nabataeans and Herod, the differences to indicate the Nabataean state being more independent. John Creighton ('Herod's Contemporaries in Britain and the West', 361-81) exploits numismatic and archaeological finds to argue that in the Augustan period a process of cultural Romanization took

⁵ Needless to say, Patrich could not take into account the small, stone-built theatre discovered in Herodium (see n.2).

⁶ See, e.g., J. Patrich, 'The Building Project of Simeon the Just On the Temple Mount', in *New Studies on Jerusalem* 16 (2010), 141-52 (Hebrew).

⁷ See Netzer *et alii* (n.2), 96; S. Rozenberg, *The Decoration of Herod's Third Palace at Jericho* (E. Netzer [ed.], *Hasmonean and Herodian Palaces at Jericho*, Vol. IV), Jerusalem 2008.

place in Britain, Mauretania, Gaul and Noricum, evidenced in the adoption of Augustan iconography in coinage and of items of material culture such as buildings, food and ceramics. He infers that, like Herod, the local rulers of these regions 'found common purpose with the elite in Rome, and ... helped fashion new social identities for themselves' (379).

Finally, in the only article in the section 'Religion under Augustus and Herod', Daniel R. Schwartz ('One Temple and Many Synagogues: On Religion and State in Herodian Judaea and Augustan Rome', 385-98) construes Herod's control of the High Priests as the subjection of religion to the state, a situation which remained in force under the Roman governors of Judaea. More important, his magnificent Temple became the focus of the Jewish-Roman conflict. In 66 CE, the suspension of the daily 'loyalty sacrifices' (*War* 2.409-17) touched off the Jewish rebellion. Thus, contrary to his intentions, Herod laid the foundation for the fatal Jewish-Roman confrontation, ending with the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem.

In the introduction the editors claim that 'whereas previous research has tended to focus on the life and deeds of Herod the Great as a separate phenomenon within the context of the Holy Land, it is becoming increasingly clear that Herod's ambitious building projects reflected those of Augustus' (9). The first part of this claim does not do justice, at least, to A. Schalit's consideration of Herod's career and accomplishments within the context of the Hellenistic-Roman world.⁸ As for the question whether Herod's deeds reflected Augustus' activities, several contributors (Toher, Ariel, Geiger, Barrett, Saddington and Creighton) indeed give considerable weight to the Roman perspective; however, a few (Gruen and Lichtenberger) prefer to lay emphasis on the Hellenistic background, others (Galinsky, Netzer, Patrich, Burrell, Rozenberg, Hershkovitz and Schmid) delineate the mixture of Greek, Roman and local influences, and the contributions of some participants (Sievers, Bahat, Goodblatt and Schwartz) are rather of little relevance to the Augustan aspect of Herod's policy. All in all, this collection of articles contains a good number of acute observations and innovative ideas, but is marked by a traditional rather than a revolutionary approach to the "Herodian phenomenon".

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Ryan S. Olson, *Tragedy, Authority and Trickery: The Poetics of Embedded Letters in Josephus*, Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2010. xiv + 254 pp. ISBN 978-0-674-05337-3.

This book is less a focused study of embedded letters in Josephus than a comparative study of that phenomenon in all Greek historiography, with Josephus as the central exhibit. The term 'embedded letters' reveals Olson's narratological approach (without much of the verbiage attending Narratology). By 'embedded' he means letters which are mentioned, summarized or directly quoted, as an integral part of complex action, motivating the characters and advancing the narrative itself. Josephus' massive *oeuvre* contains many instances of this technique (over 300 by Olson's count), and Olson not only examines in detail the main and most revealing cases, but compares them extensively to parallel uses of embedded letters in the Greek historians before him. The main claim is that Josephus uses letters in a 'meta-textual' manner to comment on the thoughts, intentions and actions of historical characters, and to provide the reader with the opportunity to reach independent judgment regarding individual cases. While letters are quoted by the first historians, Herodotus and Thucydides, and also by later historians (Xenophon, Polybius, Diodorus and Dionysius receive detailed treatment), those writers used embedded letters more for

⁸ A. Schalit, *König Herod: der Mann und sein Werk*, Berlin 1969.