

that G gives them all in the longer form is a sign of lack of sincerity. Editors sometimes employ a circumflex to show the tense they intend. Briscoe himself allows us *petisset* at 8.10.ext.1.

I have noticed perhaps twenty misprints (all trivial, and mostly in the apparatus): a tiny haul in this very long text. That, like everything else, shows what careful labours have gone into this fine edition.

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Nikos Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty. Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998. 518 pp.

This book consists of ten chapters of text and ten appendices. Also included are fourteen figures of family trees, three chronological charts and three maps. In the first three chapters the author deals with the history of Idumaea and Herod's ancestry; in the remaining seven, he follows the history of the family from the generation of Herod's father, Antipater, to the last known Herodians of the second century AD. The majority of the appendices are devoted to chronological points, ranging in time from Herod's appointment as king to the date of Agrippa II's death. However, appendices are not the sole repositories of discussions on chronology; a large proportion of the main text is devoted to this subject too, either directly or by implication. Although omitted from the title, chronology is in effect one of the major topics of the book, if not the main one.

In spite of the fact that so much has already been written on the Herodian dynasty, there is certainly room for a book of the scope envisaged by Kokkinos. Many problems touching upon the genealogy and chronology of the dynasty are interconnected, so that it makes excellent sense to discuss them under the same roof. Given the great volume of evidence to be examined and of modern literature to be consulted, the author's readiness to meet this challenge deserves appreciation. The painstaking reconstruction of the history of the family down to its most obscure members must have been a formidable task.

Kokkinos does not confine himself merely to putting together the conclusions and suggestions made by his predecessors. On the contrary, more often than not he disagrees with their opinions. The book contains many unconventional views, on matters both historical and chronological. Thus the author suggests that the Herodian family was descended from Hellenised Phoenicians rather than ethnic Idumaeans; he is also of the opinion that the role of the Herodians in Judaeen affairs in the first century AD was much greater than commonly believed. The accepted chronologies of the last years of Herod, of Agrippa I and of the period leading to the First Jewish Revolt are revised as well. However, if the book is problematic, which it is, the author's polemic spirit is not the reason. His way of arguing things is. Since my own fields of interest happen to be numismatics and chronology, I shall expand primarily on these issues.

Throughout the book, there is no dividing line between what can be said for certain and what is a mere possibility; assumptions or conclusions based on them are often treated as if they were facts. A few examples later in this review will illustrate

the point. Treatment of primary evidence is not always accurate either. Thus, on p. 279 (n. 58) we read: "According to Josephus, Flaccus was still alive in early 35 ... (Ant. 18.96, cf.18.88)", or on p. 281: "Ant. 18.152-54 says that after the death of Philip a serious argument broke out between Damascus and Sidon", or on p. 378: "... Acts 12.3-5 ... testifies that Agrippa was still in Jerusalem at Passover in April 44 AD". Josephus gives no dates while talking about Flaccus, nor does he specify the timing of the quarrel between Damascus and Sidon. The book of Acts mentions the feast of Passover but with no indication of the year.

Forced interpretations of primary evidence also occur. Note 78 on p. 226 says: "The numismatic evidence makes it clear that when Archelaus became ethnarch, he dropped his name and officially adopted the dynastic title 'Herod', exactly as Antipas did after his brother's deposition in CE 6". In fact, neither "dropping" nor "adopting" follow from numismatic evidence, since no documentation exists on the exclusive official use of the names Archelaus and Antipas beforehand. What we do know is that at least two other sons of the king bore the name Herodes, and there it was certainly not a "dynastic title" but simply a part of their *cognomina*. In BJ II.9.1 (167) Josephus mentions Ἡρώδης ὁ κληθεὶς Ἀντίπας which makes sense if additional names were used in order to differentiate between Herod's sons named after their father. Kokkinos, however, insists that we should read Ἀντίπας ὁ κληθεὶς Ἡρώδης (p. 233, n. 102). In other words, when a literary source conflicts with author's theory it is the source which he prefers to modify.

The reader who turns to the book for an occasional chronological reference should be aware of yet another peculiarity. The author has an obvious preference for certain dates, some of which concern the history of early Christianity; his treatment of relevant points of the Judaean chronology is often tangibly influenced by this preference. A good example is the discussion in Appendix 8 (pp. 385-386), which concerns the chronology of the last procurators of Judaea. It may be worthwhile to explain this matter in some detail.

The author begins by stating that "the question of the year in which Festus succeeded Felix may reasonably be resolved on the evidence of procuratorial coins". He then assumes that the coins dated to the fifth year of Nero, i.e. from October 58 to October 59, belong to Festus, and that they were minted "at the beginning of this time span" i.e. in autumn 58. This leads to the conclusion that "Festus would have arrived in the summer of 58 *at the latest*" and that "Paul's journey to Rome (Acts 25.12, 21, 25) should date to the winter of 58/9". Further on, Kokkinos mentions the later era of Agrippa II (60 AD) which he calls the "era of Neronias". According to him, since it was during the tenure of procurator Albinus that Agrippa II rebuilt the city of Caesarea Paneas and renamed it Neronias, "the procurator must have arrived at Judaea in 59/60". He then redates to 59/60 the death of James the brother of Jesus, an event which according to Josephus (Ant. 20.200-203) took place in the interval between the procuratorships of Festus and Albinus.

In fact, procuratorial coins are of no use for dating the comings and goings of the Judaean governors. These coins name only the reigning emperor or a member of his family and are all dated by the imperial regnal years. Therefore, it is more exact to classify these coins under the name and the year of the reigning emperor, rather than under procuratorial names. To presume that a certain series belongs to a specific

procurator and then to use it for proof of this procurator's presence in Judaea in a given year makes for a circular argument.

In order to show that summer 58 is the *terminus ante quem* for the arrival of Festus, the author not only assumes that the coins of 58/9 were minted by this procurator, but also that they were minted at the very beginning of this year, i.e. in autumn 58. This choice is entirely arbitrary, since the coins can equally well be placed at the end of the same year, namely in summer/early autumn of 59. In note 83 on p. 228 Kokkinos suggests that the first procuratorial coins dated by the year 36 of Augustus (5/6 AD) were minted by procurator Coponius as late as August, 6 AD. By the same logic, the *terminus ad quem* for the procurator who was responsible for the coins of 58/9 should be summer 59 and not summer 58.

The author is right in correcting the later era of Agrippa II from 61 to 60 AD. He is, however, less convincing in what follows. Calling the era of 60 AD the "era of Neronias" implies that Agrippa introduced a new system of reckoning for no other reason than the refoundation of this particular city. The idea, popular in some quarters, is hardly a viable one. There is not a single documented example of a regnal era introduced this way, and evidence to that effect will hardly ever be found, since regnal reckoning normally bears on the length of the rule and not on the ruler's deeds. It is of course possible that after getting some new territories (or a higher status) from Nero in 60/61, Agrippa rebuilt the city of Caesarea Paneas and renamed it Neronias as a gesture of gratitude towards the emperor. This, however, would not make the regnal era stem from the foundation, nor would it necessarily mean that the two chronologies are identical. But even if one assumes that Neronias was founded in 60/61 and that the event coincided with Albinus' presence in Judaea, the *terminus ad quem* for the arrival of the procurator would still be the summer of 61, not the year 59/60.

The author thus appears to move the dates of the procurators up not because the evidence really demands it but because this would permit him to redate in the same direction Paul's journey and the death of James. Since his scheme affects the chronology of the last procurator, Florus, as well, his moving up of the beginning of the First Jewish Revolt by one year (i.e. from 66 to 65 AD) appears to be due to the same cause. Kokkinos discusses the matter at length in Appendix 9. Here, it may be sufficient to review what he says about the coin evidence (pp. 394-5).

The author addresses mainly the coins of 'year 5' of the Revolt. He calls the existence of these coins a conundrum and argues that their common attribution to the last four months of the revolt, namely from April 70 to the fall of the Temple, creates tension. The reason which he does not state directly but at which he strongly hints is that known quantities of coins dated 'year 5' are such that they would better suit the preceding year, i.e. 69/70, counting from April to April. This of course would push all the chronology of the Revolt one year up. In order to prove his point Kokkinos cites the following observation by Y. Meshorer (*Ancient Jewish Coinage*, 1982, vol. II, p. 123): "The motivations behind the minting ... are unknown ... The several different dies indicate that the quantity of coins struck in the last four months of the war was not small. Surprisingly these issues are not among the most rare in Jewish coinage". The citation, however, is not complete. The next sentence of the same passage says: "At least ten specimens are housed today in various collections"; this makes it clear that, although known in more than one exemplar, coins of year 5 are

extremely rare. A comparison with the quantities of the preceding years, which are measured in hundreds, would easily show that coins of year 5 could not have been struck in 69/70.

Since the use of numismatic evidence in the book affects a variety of issues, it may deserve some further comment. Kokkinos writes in the preface (p. 13) that, for reasons which one may perfectly understand, it was impossible for him to update all the bibliography. It may be useful then to correct here some factual mistakes which resulted from this. The coin discussed at the end of p. 135 belongs to Maresha, not Ascalon. The conquest of Idumaea by Hyrcanus I occurred c.110 BC (and not c.127 BC, pp. 94, 110, 111) as clearly demonstrated by coins from excavations. The Ascalonian coin of Demetrius II discussed on p. 129 (n. 162) is a forgery. The coin of Agrippa I (p. 277, n. 47; p. 289) does not relate to Caligula's sister and grandmother but to his wife and daughter. The medal bearing the letters KA and thought to originate in Caesarea is a jeton from Alexandria (p. 370 n. 3).

As regards the matters of interpretation, there are instances where the author shows sound judgement: for example, when he says that coins minted in Tiberias under Claudius had nothing to do with Agrippa II (p. 320 n. 188). However, he all too often connects coins with historical events by ascribing to them commemorative, dedicatory or similar functions (pp. 289, 297, 311-2, etc). Although fairly widespread, interpretations of this kind are less than helpful since they create the impression that we know the reasons for the minting of a specific series, when in fact we do not. The primary function of coins was to serve as means of payment and exchange; thus the question which should be asked in each specific case is why the need for them arose. To suggest that coins were produced for a purpose other than their usual one is to claim an exception and this cannot be done without due justification. Coin designs and legends are often proffered for such justifications but the logic behind the claim is faulty. What one sees *on* a coin cannot be automatically turned into the reason for striking the coin itself. To decide to mint coins because they were needed as means of payment and exchange, and then to choose for them designs or legends carrying a message would have been a perfectly normal process. That this is what happened in the overwhelming majority of cases is beyond doubt. Of course, there was sometimes a connection between an historical event and the minting of coins; however, it is through the need for coins caused by the event that such a connection would have been created, not through abstract desires to celebrate, commemorate, and so forth.

The method just discussed is used with especial frequency in the discussion of the coins of Ascalon (pp. 128-36). According to the author, the Herodian family originally came from this city; thus, in order to show the connection, he associates Ascalonian coins with events concerning Herod and his ancestors whenever possible. Sometimes the date on a coin is the sole ground for the association, at other times monograms and portraits supply the link. Kokkinos claims for example that, since a few monograms on Ascalonian coins give an abbreviated form of the name Herodes, they should be interpreted as a sign of a "Herodian authority". He nowhere explains how this "authority" functioned within a city with Greek institutions, nor why the monograms in question could not have been of the same order as many others found on Ascalonian coins, i.e. representing simply the persons who supervised the production of a particular series. As he himself shows on pp. 126-8, the name

Herodes is well-attested in the region; cities like Ptolemais, Tyre and Antioch have similar monograms on their coins. On top of this, among the monograms he cites, only those of 107/6, 99/8 and 49/8 give the name of the moneyer as HP or HPW. The rest either lack the initial *eta* or have elements incompatible with the suggested reading. One monogram of the year 109/8 reads ΔIO, another consists of the letters Λ, I and O (p. 130); the monogram on the coin dated MA (41=64/3 BC) reads ΔΩ (p. 132).

Most of the male heads on Ascalonian coins of the first century BC are identified by the author with Antipater and Herod. No explanations are given why these identifications are the only ones possible. On p. 133 he suggests that the 'old bearded' Antipater appears on coins of year 56 "upon his promotion by Caesar to the position of *epitropos* of Judaea". Coins of the year 56 belong to 49/8 BC, while the promotion of Antipater occurred in 47. A "reasonably young portrait" on coins dated 63 (42/1) and 64 (41/40) is identified with Herod the Great (p. 134). The man on the former is bearded, the latter has a trident behind his shoulder. A young deity with a trident behind his shoulder appears on an Ascalonian coin struck in 106/5 BC (*BMC, Palestine* pp. liv-lv, pl. XL, 18), long before Herod was born. Therefore, the chances that the coin dated 64 shows the king rather than the same deity are not very great.

These and earlier examples may give some idea about the ways in which the author often presents his arguments. It goes without saying that an inadequate treatment of the evidence compromises not a few of his theories. It would be unjust, however, to think that all suggestions found in the book are of no value. There are some of definite interest, as for instance the suggestion that the Parthians may have destroyed Maresha because it was the centre of Herod's activity in Idumaea (p. 100). As for Kokkinos' major conclusions, that on the role of the Herodian dynasty in the Judaeian affairs of the first century AD may well deserve serious consideration.

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Hayim Lapin, *Early Rabbinic Civil Law and the Social History of Roman Galilee: A Study of Mishnah Tractate BABA' MEŠI'A*, Brown Judaic Studies 307, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995. x + 368 pp.

In view of the paucity of direct evidence for ancient economic history, the historian of Palestine and surrounding regions should certainly welcome any attempt to bring rabbinic sources to bear on questions of this sort. A particularly promising candidate for such investigation is the Mishnaic (and Talmudic) tractate *Baba Meši'a*, which deals with such legal topics as lost and found property, bailees, sale and hire. Rabbinic sources, however, are not necessarily amenable to such exploitation. The difficulties involved in moving from academic discussions, embedded in literary texts with complex redactional histories, to life in the real world have been extensively discussed in recent years. Much of the discussion has been generated by Jacob Neusner, who in his more recent writings has treated rabbinic texts as ideological or