

SAMUEL ROCCA

# Herod's Judaea

*Texts and Studies in*

*Ancient Judaism*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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122





Samuel Rocca

# Herod's Judaea

A Mediterranean State in the Classical World

Mohr Siebeck

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## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Abbreviations.....  | X  |
| Introduction .....  | 1  |
| 1. <i>Purpose of the Research</i> .....   | 1  |
| 2. <i>Methodology</i> .....   | 3  |
| A. The General Framework .....  | 3  |
| B. Main Features: Methodological Introduction .....   | 4  |
| C. Sources .....  | 5  |
| D. The Use of the Horizontal Approach .....   | 7  |
| E. The Use of Comparative Methodology .....   | 9  |
| F. Positivism versus Relativism .....   | 10 |
| G. Inductive versus Deductive Methodology .....   | 14 |
| H. Terminology .....  | 16 |
| <br>  |    |
| I. Herod the King: Royalty and the Ideology of Power .....  | 19 |
| 1. <i>Herod King of Judaea</i> .....  | 19 |
| 2. <i>Herod and the Jewish Ideology of Rule</i> .....   | 22 |
| A. Herod and the Heritage of the House of David .....   | 22 |
| B. Herod and the Hasmonean Heritage .....   | 29 |
| 3. <i>Herod and the Hellenistic Ideology of Rule</i> .....  | 36 |
| A. Herod, the Last Hellenistic King .....   | 36 |
| B. Herod's Euergetism: The Expression of Herod's Power<br>as Hellenistic King in Foreign Policy ..... | 42 |
| 4. <i>Herod, the Client King of Rome</i> .....  | 52 |
| 5. <i>Herod and Juba II – a Comparison</i> .....  | 58 |
| 6. <i>Conclusions</i> .....   | 60 |
| <br>  |    |
| II. The Court of King Herod .....   | 65 |
| 1. <i>The Origins of the Court of King Herod</i> .....  | 65 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 2. <i>The Royal Court of Herodian Judaea</i> . . . . .   | 72  |
| A. The Composition of the Herodian Court . . . . .   | 72  |
| B. Herod's Family (Syngenes) . . . . .   | 73  |
| i. Herod's Brother and Sisters . . . . .   | 73  |
| ii. Herod's Wives . . . . .  | 75  |
| iii. Herod's Offspring and Heirs . . . . .   | 78  |
| C. Herod's Friends (philoi) and the Rest of His Court . . . . .  | 84  |
| i. The Inner Circle of Friends: Ministers and Advisors<br>(Ptolemy and Nicolaus) . . . . .             | 85  |
| ii. The Inner Circle of Friends: Orators, Ambassadors,<br>and those without Formal Positions . . . . . | 86  |
| iii. The Outer Circle of Friends: Friends of Herod's Sons . . . . .                                    | 87  |
| iv. Visitors (Xenoi): Intellectuals, Dynasts, and Political Envoys . . . . .                           | 87  |
| v. Herod's Military Household . . . . .  | 88  |
| vi. The Domestic Staff . . . . .   | 89  |
| vii. The Herodian Cultural Circle . . . . .  | 91  |
| viii. Those Who Were Different: Concubines, Prostitutes<br>and Catamites . . . . .                     | 95  |
| 3. <i>The setting of the Herodian Court: the Herodian Palace</i> . . . . .                             | 96  |
| A. The Herodian Palace: Origins and Structure . . . . .  | 96  |
| B. City Palaces . . . . .  | 108 |
| C. Winter Palaces . . . . .  | 112 |
| D. Fortified Palaces . . . . .   | 119 |
| 4. <i>Conclusions</i> . . . . .  | 122 |
| <i>Appendix I. Herod's Portrait</i> . . . . .  | 127 |
| <i>Appendix II. The Gymnasium of Jerusalem</i> . . . . .   | 129 |
| <br>   |     |
| III. <i>The Army of King Herod</i> . . . . .   | 133 |
| 1. <i>Herod and his Army</i> . . . . .   | 133 |
| A. The Ethnic Composition and the Strength of Herod's Army . . . . .                                   | 134 |
| B. The Structure of Herod's Army . . . . .   | 140 |
| 2. <i>The Campaigns of Herod's Army</i> . . . . .  | 147 |
| 3. <i>The Fortifications</i> . . . . .   | 153 |
| A. The Sources of Herodian Fortifications . . . . .  | 153 |
| B. The Evolution of Herodian Fortifications . . . . .  | 158 |
| C. The Types and Distribution of Fortifications<br>of the Herodian Kingdom . . . . .                   | 159 |
| i. The Herodian Cities . . . . .   | 160 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| ii. The City Acropolis and the Tetrapyrgia .....   | 168 |
| iii. The Regional Distribution of the Static Defenses<br>in the Herodian Kingdom .....     | 175 |
| 4. <i>Military Colonies and Their Role in Defending<br/>    the Herodian Kingdom</i> ..... | 188 |
| 5. <i>Herod's Navy</i> .....   | 190 |
| 6. <i>Conclusions</i> .....  | 195 |
| <br>   |     |
| IV. The Administration and Economy of the Herodian Kingdom                                 | 197 |
| 1. <i>The Administration of the Herodian Kingdom</i> .....                                 | 197 |
| A. The Sources of the Administrative Division of Herodian Judaea .....                     | 197 |
| B. The Administrative Division of the Herodian Kingdom .....                               | 200 |
| 2. <i>Taxation and Revenues in the Herodian Kingdom</i> .....                              | 203 |
| A. The Taxation System of Herodian Judaea .....  | 203 |
| B. The Income of King Herod .....  | 208 |
| C. Herod's Social Program .....  | 210 |
| 3. <i>The Division of the Land in the Herodian Kingdom</i> .....                           | 213 |
| A. Royal Land and Royal Estates .....  | 213 |
| B. Private Owned Lands .....   | 216 |
| i. The Village .....   | 216 |
| ii. The Manor .....  | 222 |
| 4. <i>The Economic Resources</i> .....   | 227 |
| A. The Agriculture Products .....  | 227 |
| B. Industry: Glass, Purple-Dye, Pottery and Stone .....                                    | 232 |
| C. Markets and Internal Trade .....  | 234 |
| D. International Trade: Maritime Trade and the Spice Route .....                           | 236 |
| 5. <i>Conclusions</i> .....  | 239 |
| <i>Appendix I. The Languages of Herodian Judaea</i> .....                                  | 240 |
| <br>   |     |
| V. The Ruling Bodies of Herodian Judaea .....  | 249 |
| 1. <i>The Legal Position of the Ruler in Herodian Judaea</i> .....                         | 249 |
| 2. <i>Herod and the Judaeian Ruling Class</i> .....  | 251 |
| 3. <i>The Ruling Bodies of the Herodian State</i> .....                                    | 261 |
| A. The Political Constitution of Herodian Judaea .....                                     | 261 |
| i. The boulē .....   | 263 |
| ii. The ekklesia .....   | 266 |



|  |     |
|--|-----|
| iii. The synedrion/Sanhedrin . . . . .                                     | 267 |
| iv. Outside Judaea: The Greek Cities and the Nomadic Tribes . . . . .      | 272 |
| B. The Courts of Herodian Judaea . . . . .                                 | 273 |
| 4. <i>Conclusions</i> . . . . .  | 275 |
| <i>Appendix I. The Law on Thieves in Jerusalem and Rome</i> . . . . .      | 276 |
| <br>   |     |
| VI. The Cults of the Herodian Kingdom . . . . .                            | 281 |
| 1. <i>The High Priest and Temple Cult in the Herodian Period</i> . . . . . | 281 |
| A. The High Priest and the Temple Bureaucracy . . . . .                    | 281 |
| B. The Temple Cult in the Herodian Period . . . . .                        | 287 |
| 2. <i>Herod and the Rebuilding of the Temple</i> . . . . .                 | 291 |
| A. Sources of Inspiration and Parallels for Herod's Temple . . . . .       | 291 |
| B. The Temple and the Temple Mount . . . . .                               | 302 |
| 3. <i>The Synagogue in Judaea: A Civic Center</i> . . . . .                | 306 |
| 4. <i>Herod and the Pagan Cults</i> . . . . .                              | 315 |
| 5. <i>Conclusions</i> . . . . .  | 319 |
| <br>   |     |
| VII. The Herodian City . . . . .   | 323 |
| 1. <i>The Herodian Dynasty and the City</i> . . . . .                      | 323 |
| 2. <i>The Urban Features of the Herodian City</i> . . . . .                | 325 |
| 3. <i>Jerusalem, a Classical City</i> . . . . .                            | 332 |
| A. Demography . . . . .  | 332 |
| B. The Water Supply . . . . .  | 334 |
| C. The Leisure Buildings . . . . .   | 336 |
| D. The Private Buildings of Herodian Jerusalem . . . . .                   | 341 |
| 4. <i>Conclusions</i> . . . . .  | 347 |
| <br>   |     |
| VIII. Herod's Burial . . . . .   | 349 |
| 1. <i>The Death of King Herod</i> . . . . .                                | 349 |
| 2. <i>The Burial of King Herod</i> . . . . .                               | 352 |
| A. Herod's Funeral . . . . .   | 352 |
| B. Herod's Tomb . . . . .  | 354 |
| C. Herod's Burial. Sarcophagus or Ossuary? . . . . .                       | 357 |
| 3. <i>Conclusions</i> . . . . .  | 363 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 4. <i>Appendix I: Monumental Tombs of the Hasmonean and Herodian Period: A Comparative Analysis</i> ..... | 364 |
| 5. <i>Final Conclusions</i> .....   | 370 |
| <br>  |     |
| Bibliography .....  | 379 |
| Indices   |     |
| Index of Sources .....  | 409 |
| Index of Modern Authors .....   | 424 |
| Index of Names and Subjects .....   | 429 |

## Abbreviations

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ASTI                                | <i>Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute</i>                                      |
| ANRW                                | <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>                                       |
| BA                                  | <i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>   |
| BALAS                               | <i>Bulletin of the Anglo-Israeli Archaeological Society</i>                             |
| BAR                                 | <i>Biblical Archaeological Review</i>   |
| BAR                                 | <i>British Archaeological Reports</i>   |
| BAR <i>International Series</i>     | <i>British Archaeological Reports, International Series</i>                             |
| BASOR                               | <i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>                            |
| BASOR, <i>Supplementary Studies</i> | <i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research<br/>Supplementary Studies</i>  |
| BEFAR                               | <i>Bibliothèque des 'Ecoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome</i>                         |
| CHJ                                 | <i>The Cambridge History of Judaism</i>   |
| DEI                                 | <i>Deutsches Evangelisches Institut</i>   |
| DMOA                                | <i>Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui</i>  |
| HUCA                                | <i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>  |
| ICS                                 | <i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>   |
| IEJ                                 | <i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>   |
| IG                                  | <i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>  |
| IMJ                                 | <i>Israel Museum Journal</i>  |
| INJ                                 | <i>Israel Numismatic Journal</i>  |
| JBL                                 | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>   |
| JJS                                 | <i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>  |
| JQR                                 | <i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>  |
| JRA <i>Supp. Series</i>             | <i>Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary Series –</i>                             |
| JRS                                 | <i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>   |
| JSJ                                 | <i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>   |
| JSNT <i>Supplementary Series</i>    | <i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament,<br/>Supplementary Series</i>             |
| JSP                                 | <i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>                                      |
| JSPSup.                             | <i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplementary<br/>Series</i>             |
| JTS                                 | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>   |
| JSQ                                 | <i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>   |
| LA                                  | <i>Liber Annus</i>  |
| MUSJ                                | <i>Mélanges (de la Faculté Orientale) de l'Université Saint-<br/>Joseph de Beyrouth</i> |
| NEAEHL                              | <i>New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavation<br/>in the Holy Land</i>               |
| NTS                                 | <i>New Testament Studies</i>  |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| NTOA                         | <i>Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus</i>                     |
| OGIS                         | <i>Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae</i>                  |
| PAAJR                        | <i>Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research</i>  |
| PEF                          | <i>Palestine Exploration Found</i>                             |
| PEQ                          | <i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>                         |
| QC                           | <i>Qumran Chronicle</i>  |
| RB                           | <i>Revue Biblique</i>  |
| REJ                          | <i>Revue des Etudes Juives</i>                                 |
| REJ, <i>Historia Judaica</i> | <i>Revue des Etudes Juives , Historia Judaica</i>              |
| RQ                           | <i>Revue de Qumran</i>   |
| RFS                          | <i>Roman Frontier Studies, BAR International Series</i>        |
| SCI                          | <i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>                              |
| SEG                          | <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>                       |
| SH                           | <i>Scripta Hierosolymitana</i>                                 |
| SBB                          | <i>Studies in Bibliography and Booklore</i>                    |
| SBFCM                        | <i>Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collection Maior</i>         |
| SBF, <i>Collectio Minor</i>  | <i>Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collectio Minor</i>          |
| TSAJ                         | <i>Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum</i>                  |
| VT                           | <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>                                       |
| WUNT                         | <i>Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament</i>    |
| WCJS                         | <i>World Congress of Jewish Studies</i>                        |
| ZDMG                         | <i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i> |



# Introduction

## 1. Purpose of the Research

The main theme of this book is a in-depth analysis of Herodian society<sup>1</sup>. The most important facet of this analysis was the relationship between Herod as ruler and the Jewish subjects over whom he ruled, with particular emphasis on the influence of Herodian rule on Jewish society. Yet to understand the relationship between Herod and his subjects, between ruler and ruled, it is necessary, as part of the general background, to undertake a general analysis of Herodian Judaea and its relationship with the Classical world, beginning with Augustan Rome, which was then the center of power, and followed by the main centers within the Mediterranean basin and the Hellenistic East<sup>2</sup>. As such, it is possible to classify this book with other studies dedicated to the encounter between Judaism and the Greek world, most notably those of Bickerman, Hengel, and Momigliano.<sup>3</sup>

I have chosen to focus, not on the beginning of the relationship between Judaism and the Greek world, that is, the early Hellenistic period, but rather on the Herodian period, well after the Maccabees' uprising, a time which is generally regarded as a moment of crisis between Hellenism and Judaism. I will argue that in the period considered, even more so than before, the tie between Judaea and the surrounding Hellenistic world reached its peak in Herodian Judaea. Moreover

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<sup>1</sup> In this book, I will give a wider chronological frame for the Herodian period. Thus, although King Herod the Great ruled from 40 till 4 BCE, I will take Pompey's conquest in 63 BCE as the beginning of the period analyzed, and will end in 6 CE, with the dismissal and exile of Archelaus. For the earlier Hasmonean rulers, as well as the later Herodian dynasts as Philip, Antipas, and Agrippa I, I will use an even wider background.

<sup>2</sup> In the period considered in this book, the first century BCE – first century CE, the word “Hellenistic” has a socio-political, as well as a cultural meaning. “Hellenistic” therefore can refer to a socio-politic entity that follows in the steps of Alexander the Great's *diadochi* political creations. During this period, these include the Hasmonean-Herodian state in Judaea, as well as the Ptolemaic reign in Egypt, the Nabataean kingdom, and the Parthian Arsacid monarchy in the East. The cultural meaning of the word “Hellenism” is that in all of these states, as well as the Greek East – then part of the Roman Republic and later on the Empire – is that the Greek language, and to a lesser extent, Greek culture, are dominant, or at least are found side by side with native languages and cultural expressions.

<sup>3</sup> See E. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1988. See also M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism. Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, London 1974. See also A. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom*, Cambridge 1976.

in this period Herodian Judaea had a close knit relationship with Rome, which now dominated the whole Mediterranean, including the Hellenistic East. I will contend that Herod, though a Jewish ruler, regarded both Alexander the Great – the embodiment of the Hellenistic ruler – and Augustus as ideal models who were worthy of imitation. Moreover, I will argue that Herod had many things in common with Augustus in particular. Each began his political career at a very young age. Both not only brought an end to a long and bloody period of civil war in their own countries, but the blessing of many years of peace as well. Last but not least, both created a new regime, different from that which had preceded it. These models of inspiration influenced the shape of society in Herodian Judaea as a whole. In fact, Herod pushed Judaea towards major Hellenization, albeit with many elements more akin to Rome than to the surrounding Hellenistic East. Herodian society was therefore permeated by a general trend not only toward Hellenization, but more specifically, toward Romanization, whether forced or spontaneous, as was the case in other provinces of the Roman Empire. This trend of Hellenization was present well before the Herodian period but intensified under Herod's rule. It seems to me that one of the reasons for the intensification of this trend was King Herod's domination of Judaeian society, which allowed him to dictate socio-cultural trends to a greater extent than Augustus was able to do in Rome. Herod was an absolute ruler, in the Late Hellenistic tradition, whereas Augustus, *primus inter pares*, needed to respect a Republican framework.

In fact, I believe that a comparative study of Herodian Judaea and Augustan Rome is extremely important, no less important than the more obvious comparative study of Judaea and its Hellenistic Eastern neighbors. Herodian Judaea, like Augustan Rome, possessed a non-Greek native culture, religion and language. Both Judaea and Rome thus faced the challenge posed by the Hellenization of their native cultures. Solutions to the challenge of Hellenization that were discovered and adopted by Augustus in Rome had the great prestige of imperial imprimatur. Moreover, generally speaking, since Augustus often employed his own actions as a model for emulation by upper class Romans, it is reasonable to expect that he was also emulated by noble clients around his empire. Thus, a detailed comparison and contrast of Herodian Judaea and Augustan Rome, indicates that Herod, in contrast to his Hasmonaean predecessor, modeled his regime not only on that of Alexander the Great, but on that of his Roman patron.

My research, therefore, is not a biographical study of King Herod. This book does not deal with the Herod's personality nor with his status as tragic figure, as many other scholars have endeavored to do, some of them quite successfully.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> In my work I fully endorse the tangible evidence regarding the personality of Herod produced by research carried out over more than two hundred years by scholars, including the works of H. J. Jones, S. Perowne, M. Grant, A. Schalit and, more recently, P. Richardson and N. Kokkinos. See W. Otto, *Herodes: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Letzten Jüdischen Königshauses*, Stuttgart 1913. This history of the house of Herod appeared some years after E. Schürer's

Instead, my research deals with Herod as the head of Jewish society in Judaea, and hence this study is first and foremost a study of Herodian society. Other studies of Herod fall into one clear-cut category or another, mainly constituting Biblical and New Testament studies or the history of the Jewish people during the period of the Second Temple. Consequently, Herodian Judaea has somehow been removed from its surrounding context, giving the impression of a reality that was untouched, as it were, by the outside world. Even worse is the illusory impression created of Herodian Judaea as part of the “eternal and unmovable East.” In contrast, I attempt in this book to anchor Herodian Judaea as firmly as possible within the surrounding Mediterranean world and therefore within the realities of Hellenistic Roman civilization in order to better understand its multi-faceted dimensions as part of the surrounding contemporary world, and not simply as an entity belonging to a Biblical – New Testament reality.

## 2. Methodology

### A. *The General Framework*

It is worthwhile discussing the methodological approach, or more correctly, the various methodological approaches that I used in writing this book, *Herodian Judaea: a Mediterranean State in the Classical World*. My book has been divided according to various specific topics, following an overall socio-economic approach, dealing primarily with social history and the study of the range of well differentiated social frameworks of Herodian Judaea, such as the court of King Herod, the army of King Herod, the administrative and economic framework of the Herodian Kingdom, its ruling bodies and its cults, the Herodian city itself, and burial practices. The main exception is the first chapter, which is dedicated

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monumental opus dedicated to Late Second Temple period Judaism. However, once more, the work presented him as an auxiliary implement for theology scholars who wanted to know more about the Murder of the Innocents. The following books are briefly surveyed, beginning with S. G. Perowne, *The Life and Times of Herod the Great*, London 1956. Perowne was a British Mandatory official. The figure of Herod presented by Perowne clearly reflects the sense of failure in trying to mediate between the Eternal East and the Modern West encountered by the British during their administration of Palestine. Another work, A. H. M. Jones' *The Herods of Judaea*, Oxford 1967, is probably the first serious attempt to draw a scholarly history of Herod's family. Though outdated, it is still probably a good beginning. However, the figure of Herod is not that central. A. Schalit's *König Herodes. Der Mann und sein Werk*, Berlin 1969, is really a milestone in many respects, and was published in Hebrew (but not in English!). Schalit's work, however, reflects the cultural background of the early years of the newly born State of Israel. M. Grant's *Herod the Great*, New York 1971, *Herod the Great*, is essentially a popular book, well illustrated, for the general public and without too much scholarly pretension. P. Richardson's *Herod King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans*, Columbia (S. C.) 1996, and N. Kokkinos' *The Herodian Dynasty, Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse*, Sheffield 1998, are the latest books published on Herod and his family.



to the Herodian ideology of rule. It seems to me important to reconstruct and to analyze in detail what Herod had to offer his subjects. This can also explain, notwithstanding various primary sources and the bias of many modern scholars, how Herod succeeded in ruling his kingdom peacefully for forty years and how his presence dominated all of the intersecting frameworks of Judean society.

### *B. Main Features: Methodological Introduction*

First of all I would like to discuss the primary sources that I have used, including literary as well as material evidence, while writing this book. My methodology is that of comparative analysis that incorporates elements from the realms of anthropology and social studies, more so than from those of history<sup>5</sup>. The positivistic approach of my book uses inductive and deductive methodology, particularly the former, as well as the binary oppositions of Structural Functionalism versus Functional Structuralism. Though the reader may be puzzled initially as to why a book of history, depends on methodologies more properly relevant to a book dedicated to anthropology and social studies, it should soon become clear that this work is not a recollection and analysis of historical events, but it is primarily a study of Herodian society and of the world of the men who lived in late Second Temple Judaea. Each chapter therefore defines such social structures as the court, the army, the administration, and the city. After identifying these social structures, the various cultures and subcultures of Herodian Judaea are defined, exemplified by the discussion on the Herodian ideology of rule, the attitude of the various sects, the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes, toward Herod's rule, which constituted a revolution in the religious and political culture of Second Temple Judaea, and last but not least, the burial ideology that stood in

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<sup>5</sup> In this part of the book, I do not intend to expound on the philosophy of history or on historical methodology itself, but to approach and explain the methodology I have used in writing the book. See, in general, E. Weinryb, *Historical Thinking, Issues in Philosophy of History*, Tel Aviv 1987 (Hebrew). Weinryb discusses the development of historical methodology, beginning with Ranke and Niebhuhr, pp. 11–14, emphasizing Langlois and Seignobos' s approach. According to these French historians, the historian's task consists of collecting the sources, developing an external and internal critique of the sources, discovering factual evidence based on the sources, organizing the synthesis of facts or their interpretation, and then writing the historical synthesis, pp. 14–17. See also C. V. Langlois and M. J. C. Seignobos, *Introduction to the Study of History*, London 1912. Weinryb deals with other problems of historical methodology as well, as the analysis of the history from the bench of the accused, pp. 17–18, the difference between chronicle and history, pp. 19–28, and an acute analysis of historical language, pp. 28–34. For historical thinking and methodology, see also P. Gardiner, *Theories of History*, New York 1959. Gardiner analyzes the development of the historical process, beginning with Vico, pp. 9–205, the nature of historical knowledge, pp. 211–251, the critics of the classical theories of history, pp. 275–342, and the relationship between history and the social sciences, pp. 476–516.

the background of the magnificent funerary monuments, the carved sarcophagi, and the ossuaries of that period.

### C. Sources

As in any historical work, my book is based on primary sources, particularly two main types – literary sources and archaeological data. The literary sources consist mainly of Josephus and such Jewish literature as Biblical apocrypha, as the Psalms of Solomon, the Testament of Moses, and Rabbinic literature such as the tractate *Middot*. This is complemented by Greek and Latin authors who deal with the contemporary late Hellenistic period and the Roman late Republic and Augustan Period.

Yet the main source for Herod's rule is Josephus<sup>6</sup>, since Josephus and Herod can in fact be considered a unique blend of author and subject. The fact that Josephus dedicates no fewer than four books in his *Antiquities* and one book in *War* to Herod as the most dominant figure, indicates not merely the importance of Herod as subject, but, in comparison with other subjects, most notably the late Hasmonaean rulers, Josephus offers a surfeit of material unmatched by any other contemporary historian. Herod without Josephus would have been consigned to relative obscurity, and our knowledge of his long reign would have been only through later mention of him in Rabbinic literature, along with a few hints in contemporary Greek and Latin authors and in the New Testament. Herod would have been a mute and silent figure, like many of the late Hellenistic Seleucid and Ptolemaic rulers, whose reign is known only through evidence from a few coins and inscriptions. Yet Josephus makes of Herod a ruler whose history is analyzed in detail that rivals that of his contemporary, Mark Antony, or Augustus, and indeed slightly less than figures such as Alexander the Great, Hannibal, and Julius Caesar. Through Josephus we know much more about Herod than about his other contemporary, Cleopatra VII of Egypt.

Yet my use of Josephus as primary source does not mean that I accept all of his statements about Herod at face value, since most of Josephus' remarks about Herod, a self-conscious member of the priestly aristocracy, are first and foremost a personal statement, and more often than not, hostile. Despite this, Josephus is, on the whole, an objective source, since he based himself on the contemporary writings of Nicolaus of Damascus, which is the main source for the segment of *Antiquities* dealing with Herod. Thus a careful reading of Josephus's *Antiquities*, which is more hostile to Herod than the earlier *War*, allows us to infer that Nicolaus' historical writings were, generally speaking, more favorable to Herod's policy than were those of Josephus, and of course were contemporaneous. *War*,

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<sup>6</sup> On Josephus see T. Rajak, *Josephus, The Historian and His Society*, London 2002.

where Herod is presented by Josephus in a more positive light – probably a function of his Roman audience or a desire, in the wake of the First War, to valorize a ruler who was without doubt pro-Roman – must be used no less carefully than *Antiquities*. For this approach, Herod scholars are indebted to D. Schwartz's book on Agrippa I and its reconstruction of the various sources used by Josephus when writing about this later Herodian ruler, whose reign was chronologically much closer to Josephus' times.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, even if Josephus is seen to be emotionally involved in judging Herod's rule, he is much less personally involved than in his description of the Jewish War, to which he was not merely a witness, but also a participant. Last but not least, Josephus is not just a source relating to ancient Jewish history, written by a Jew, but a written source that followed the canons used by contemporary Classic historians, including the use of Greek language.

As mentioned earlier, I have used a great deal of archaeological evidence as the basis for my interpretation of Herodian Judaea. More often than not, material culture supplements literary sources and vice versa, and my work is no exception<sup>8</sup>. The material evidence I have used is various and differentiated, and it includes epigraphy, numismatics, and archaeological remains. All these remains, silent witnesses to the past, assume a voice of their own when blended together with literary sources. Thus, while Josephus enables us to reconstruct the composition of Herod's court, it is archaeological data which sets the background through material evidence of Herod's palaces. Another good example is the study of Herod's armed forces. While Josephus can be helpful in reconstructing the size and composition of Herod's army, the various fortifications scattered through Herod's kingdom can be reconstructed only through material evidence. Thus for the study of Herodian Judaea I followed the research model that various scholars have already applied to contemporary Augustan Rome, blending art and material culture with a more traditional general background of general history and literature to give a good sense of the period concerned, as Zanker and Galinsky have already done so successfully.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> On the reconstruction of the sources used by Josephus for the life of Agrippa I, see D. Schwartz, *Agrippa I, The Last King of Judaea, TSAJ 23*, Tübingen 1990, pp. 1–38.

<sup>8</sup> In this, the use of archaeological evidence, I have followed quite consciously in the footsteps of Rostovtzeff. As Momigliano writes, although the great Russian historian could be more intuitive than logical – in that he did not study, in depth, the problematic of political liberty (but did Mommsen do any better?); in that he oversimplified the economic structures, in the sense that peasants and slaves were given less than their due; and in that he was unaware of religious problems – his approach to blending history and archaeology deeply modified the historian's approach to Classical history. See A. Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography*, London 1966, pp. 91–104. See also M. I. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Oxford 1941 and M. I. Rostovtzeff and P. M. Fraser, *The Social And Economic History of the Roman Empire*, Oxford 1963.

<sup>9</sup> See P. Zanker, *Augusto e il potere delle immagini*, Torino 1989, and K. Galinsky, *Augustan Culture, An Interpretative Introduction*, Princeton (N. J.) 1996.

Combining literary and material evidence is like putting together the pieces of a puzzle, though unlike a real, material puzzle whose pieces can always be matched up, in our historical puzzle there is no predetermined image that can guide us to a final, successful, and complete solution and there are many missing pieces, still to be uncovered. Yet by combining literary and material evidence we can succeed in reducing the number of missing pieces and coming closer to a true image of the past.

#### *D. The Use of the Horizontal Approach*

The main characteristic of this book is its use of what may be termed a horizontal chronological approach. When writing about history, it is possible to use two main chronological approaches to a subject, one a horizontal and the other a vertical method. The horizontal approach is the study of a determined subject, along horizontal lines, thereby limiting it to a “short” chronological span of time. Although this is limited by the presence of primary sources, which provide the historian, “a priori,” with an image of the period which is as complete as possible, it also allows for an “in-depth” analysis of the social structures and cultural background of the given historical period. Moreover this analysis extends spatially, more often than not, extending to the surrounding neighboring cultures. The vertical approach, which has been eschewed in this book, is just the opposite, dealing with a specific topic along extended chronological lines, and spans of time. More often than not, a vertical approach avoids any reference to possible influences on or from neighboring cultures.

In this book, the horizontal approach is characterized by an in-depth analysis of a greatly reduced time frame, that of Herodian Judaea, which spanned a period of approximately fifty years. This time frame, even for the Classic period, can be considered relatively short. Thus, in contrast to a vertical approach, the book isolates a specific period in the history of the Jewish people, from an “a priori” Biblical and early Second Temple Period background, and an “a posteriori” Mishnaic – Talmudic background. Therefore the various social structures and cultures which characterized the Herodian society are analyzed and compared, not to earlier and successive structures present in the Jewish society in Antiquity, but in the light of similar structures that were present in the neighboring Hellenistic and Roman world. The methodology which I employ is not a new one, and has been used by historians such as Bickerman in his reconstruction of early Hellenistic Judaea until the time of the Maccabee’s rebellion,<sup>10</sup> by Baumgarten in

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<sup>10</sup> See Bickerman, *Jews in the Greek Age*.

his reconstruction of the multiplication of the Sects in the Hasmonean period,<sup>11</sup> by Schwartz in his reconstruction of the literary evidence surrounding the figure of Agrippa I,<sup>12</sup> by Gruen in his reconstruction of the political world of Late Republican Rome,<sup>13</sup> and by Galinsky, MacMullen, and Zanker in their studies of Augustan Rome.<sup>14</sup> As this incomplete list of examples suggests, one of the reasons for the horizontal approach in my work is that it has been used more often than not, to analyze the surrounding Classic world, to which I frequently refer.

Yet there are certain limitations to the use of the horizontal approach when it comes to comparative material related to the Hellenistic East, of which Herodian Judaea could be considered an integral part, particularly as regards the use of literary as well as epigraphic, numismatic, and archaeological material. Thus I approached this period, whose chronological background spans three hundred years, horizontally, and not vertically, despite the long time span considered. I believe this to be justified by the fact that social and political institutions, as well as culture, although it certainly evolved, had more often than not been analyzed on a horizontal basis, and not on a vertical basis. The first to use this horizontal approach, on such a long span of time was of course Rostovtzeff.<sup>15</sup> Other scholars have followed suit, even when this collected evidence has comprised a more general study of the period, as the study of the French scholar Will, or Bickerman's magisterial analysis of the Seleucid institutions, or Mooren's study of the Ptolemaic court or simply the thematic collection of papyri, or Nielsen's research of Hellenistic palaces.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, our knowledge of specific spans of time in the Hellenistic period is relatively poor, and thus such a period can still be considered from a horizontal perspective and not vertically. A more cautious approach has nonetheless prevailed in recent years. Good examples of this contemporary trend includes Billow's research on Antigonus Monophthalmos, dedicated to the creation of the Hellenistic state, but which covers a very short span of time, or the research of Sekunda on the Late Hellenistic armies of the Seleucids and Ptolemies, in which the authors reconstruct a social structure within the context

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<sup>11</sup> See A. I. Baumgarten, *The Flourishing of the Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era, An Interpretation, Supplements to the Journal for the History of Judaism* 55, Leiden 1997.

<sup>12</sup> See Schwartz, *Agrippa I*.

<sup>13</sup> See E. S. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*, Berkeley (Ca.), 1974.

<sup>14</sup> See Zanker, *Augusto e il potere delle immagini*, and Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, or the more recent R. MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*, New Haven 2000.

<sup>15</sup> See Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*.

<sup>16</sup> See E. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique, 323–30 av. J.-C.*, Paris 2003, E. Bickerman, *Institutions des Seleucides*, Paris 1938, L. Mooren, "Über die ptolemaischen Hofrangtitel", *Studia Hellenistica* 16 (1968), Antidorum W. Peremans *Sexagenario Ab Alumnis Oblatum*, Louvain 1968, pp. 161–180, and I. Nielsen, *Hellenistic Palaces, Tradition and Renewal, Studies in Hellenistic Civilisation* 5, Aarhus 1995.

of a short span of time, stressing the impact of the Roman Republican armies on the Hellenistic armies, and their consequences.<sup>17</sup>

### *E. The Use of Comparative Methodology*

A clear cut consequence of the horizontal approach to a determined topic in history is more often than not the use of comparative methodology, and thus comparative methodology as such needs to be defined. Comparative methodology can be presented on two levels. On the first simpler level, it is just the comparison of a certain trend to an identical or similar trend present in neighboring societies. On a more complex level, comparative methodology can be defined as the inference of data in the case study of a certain, circumscribed topic for which part of the data is lacking or unclear, drawn from a very similar trend remarked in a neighboring contemporary culture, which of course shares a certain affinity to the subject being studied.

In this book, the use of comparative methodology is dictated by the fact that in the period considered, Judaea – which constitutes our case study – shared many characteristics with the surrounding Hellenistic East and was politically aligned with the most important Mediterranean power, the Roman Republic. In consequence, I wondered if Herodian Judaea was indeed part of the Mediterranean Classical world, and if the society of Herodian Judaea shared many characteristics with its Graeco-Roman neighbors, even if it preserved, somehow a unique character. A comparison with the surrounding Mediterranean world, I felt, could point to the existence of a certain characteristic, which perhaps might be peculiar to Herodian Judaea, or perhaps shared with its neighbors. Therefore in this book I have used comparative methodology to reconstruct and define not only specific social frames, but have extended it to a holistic study of Herodian Judaea.

My approach is quite simple. I either begin with the analysis of a specific aspect or trend in the broader Hellenistic-Roman world, or I determine if it is reflected in Herodian Judaea, or, vice-versa, starting my analysis from Herodian Judaea and proceeding to the broader Hellenistic-Roman world. In this manner I attempt to determine if any given trend was already present in Herodian Judaea, or if it was already present before the period under consideration, thereby establishing if it reflects a broad trend coming from the outside, or if only some specific influences arrived from outside, or if the trend analyzed is characteristic

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<sup>17</sup> See R. A. Billows, *Antigonos the One-Eyed and the Creation of the Hellenistic State*, Berkeley 1997. See also N. Sekunda, *Hellenistic Infantry Reform in the 160's BC*, *Studies on the History of Ancient and Medieval Art of Warfare*, Akanthina 2006.

of Herodian Judaea, with no parallel in the broader Hellenistic-Roman world, and is thus peculiar to Herodian Judaea itself.

The use of comparative methodology is not new to the study of some aspects of the material culture of Herodian Judaea. Thus the relationship between the material cultures of Herodian Judaea and Augustan Italy has been already the subject of a few specific studies, although it has never been the topic of comprehensive and systematic research.<sup>18</sup> While, some specific aspects of the material culture of Herodian Judaea have already been studied and compared to similar aspects of material culture of Augustan Italy, other facets of the material culture of Herodian society are lacking, particularly comparative studies of Judaea versus the Hellenistic East.

#### *F. Positivism versus Relativism*

Of all the accepted approaches to historical research – positivistic, moderately positivistic, negativistic, and relativistic – this specific project dedicated to King Herod Judaea can be defined as positivistic. In fact, one of the reasons, or perhaps the main reason why I decided to choose this subject was because I felt that a positivistic approach to this subject would enable me to uncover, at the very least, moderate knowledge of the Classic past. In this regard I believe that my positivistic approach is more optimistic than Schwartz's moderately positivistic approach.<sup>19</sup> However, I must emphasize that my positivistic attitude does not apply to the Classic past as a whole, but only to certain periods within it that

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<sup>18</sup> Thus there are excellent studies on the following subjects, such as the relationship between the Herodian palace and its parallels in the Hellenistic East and the Roman villa in the West. See G. Foerster, "Hellenistic and Roman Trends in the Herodian Architecture of Masada," *Judaea and the Greco-Roman World in the Time of Herod in the Light of Archaeological Evidence, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, Göttingen 1996, pp. 55–73. See also: R. Förtsch, "The Residences of King Herod and their Relations to Roman Villa Architecture," *Judaea and the Greco-Roman World in the Time of Herod in the Light of Archaeological Evidence, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, Göttingen 1996, pp. 73–121. On the Italic origin (Rome and Pompeii) of the wall frescoes of the Herodian palaces see K. Fittschen, "Wall Decoration in Herod's Kingdom: Their Relationship with Wall Decorations in Greece and Italy," *Judaea and the Greco-Roman World in the Time of Herod in the Light of Archaeological Evidence, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, Göttingen 1996, pp. 139–163.

<sup>19</sup> Seth Schwartz is one of the few scholars writing on the subject who discuss methodology explicitly. In *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 BCE to 640 CE*, Princeton (N.J.) 2001, p. 2, Schwartz gives the definition of the method that he used, which he defines as positive. Thus, according to Schwartz, "it is possible to know something about the distant past, although this knowledge can never claim to be more than a sort of hermeneutical model than can help us make sense of the paltry scraps of information that have come down to us." Accordingly, his criterion of research is "moderately positivistic," though he follows a vertical approach, as he considers a certain facet of Jewish history from the second century BCE till the seventh century CE.

can be approached through the horizontal method. Therefore I see a certain relationship between the positivistic attitude and the horizontal approach.<sup>20</sup> I do not think that the negativist approach deserves any prolonged comment, since its basic contention is that there is no way to reconstruct the distant past or to recuperate history and historiography. Of course most historians who follow this approach in fact present us with a careful reconstruction of the past.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, the relativist approach to history is deserving of comment, since its methodology can be useful in analyzing and understanding Classic literary sources, including Josephus, who is my main source. The relativistic position still found today among scholars was formulated by Hayden White in his book *Metahistory*. According to postmodern relativist historians, any historical account is not truly an historical or historiographical study, but only a literary achievement. Thus, according to White, the historian performs an essentially poetic act, in which he prefigures the historical field and constitutes it as a domain into which he brings to bear the specific theories he will use to explain “what was really happening” during that particular time frame. The historical account is therefore seen as just one among infinity of possible narratives, distinguished or measured not by the standard of truth, but by rhetorical skill. There is thus no real difference between one historical account or another, since any historical account differs from any others not because of its theme, but because of its literary style. History and historiography are therefore mere rhetoric.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> I think that there is a certain relationship between the horizontal approach and a positive attitude to past history. Examples of historians who follow a horizontal approach and are positivistic include Zanker in his reconstruction of the material culture of Augustan Rome, already discussed. See Zanker, *Augusto e il potere delle immagini*. Because I am very much aware of the possible fallacy of the positivistic approach if extended to other historical periods I would like to point out that my wide positivistic attitude cannot in any way extend to other, earlier and later periods of Jewish Classic history. Therefore I cannot say that my attitude would be “positivistic” had I been considering the earlier rule of king Alexander Jannaeus or the later revolt of Bar Kochba. In this case, my approach would have been much less positive, or as Schwartz would have defined it, moderately positive. Other periods in Classical Jewish history, not far removed from the period described, such as the Diaspora’s Revolts of the Trajanic Period or the second part of the second century CE would have found my approach probably quite negativistic. It is impossible to derive enough from the primary sources for those periods to obtain a good idea of what happened or to begin to understand how the ancients would view these periods and what they thought about them. Therefore I think that it is necessary to add that my wide positivistic attitude is conditioned by the horizontal approach to primary sources.

<sup>21</sup> An important negativistic approach, mainly because it reflects a horizontal analysis, is that reflected in Rutgers’ research on the Jewish community of Late Antique Rome. See L. V. Rutgers, *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome: Evidence of Cultural Interaction in the Roman Diaspora, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World*, Vol. 126, Brill 1995.

<sup>22</sup> On Metahistory in general, see Weinryb, *Historical Thinking, Issues in Philosophy of History*, pp. 155–183. Weinryb deals mainly with the Marxist theory of history, as well as the theories of Spengler and Toynbee. See also O. Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, New York 1926 and A. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, New York 1934–1961, and of course E. H. Carr, *What is History?*, Harmondsworth 1961.



White's approach had been criticized by Momigliano and Ginzburg. If the first insisted on the importance of historical facts,<sup>23</sup> Ginzburg accepts in part Hayden's criticism of historical endeavor and tries to find a middle ground between the positivist view of history and the current relativistic mode. According to Ginzburg, historical knowledge is indeed possible, and thus historical sources can be compared to distorted mirrors. Therefore the analysis of the specific distortion of every specific source already implies a constructive element. But a constructive element is not incompatible with proof, which must be considered an integral part of rhetoric. In this he is totally opposed to White, who regards rhetoric as foreign and actually opposed to proof.<sup>24</sup>

I think that White's criticism of history as a literary construction, and thus as metahistory, cannot be dismissed easily, if at all. Although White related

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White formulated his relativistic theory of history and historiography when trying to explain the historical works of various nineteenth century Europe intellectuals, such as Michelet, Ranke, de Toqueville, and Burckhardt among the historians, and Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Croce among the philosophers of history. According to White, the historian performs an essentially poetic act, in which he prefigures the historical field and constitutes it as a domain upon which to bring to bear the specific theories he will use to explain "what was really happening" in it. This act of prefiguration may, in turn, take a number of forms, the types of which are characterized by the linguistic modes in which they are cast. White calls these types of prefiguration by the names of the four tropes of poetic language: Metaphor, Metonymy, Synecdoche, and Irony. According to White, the historical work, which does not differ from that of a poet or a writer, is divided into five stages: chronicle, story, mode of emplotment, mode of argument, and mode of ideological implication. The first stage is the chronicle or the arrangement of events in the temporal order of their occurrence. The second stage is the story, or the characterization of some events in the chronicle in terms of inaugural motifs, or other in terms of terminating motifs, with still others in terms of transitional motifs. The third stage is emplotment. An historian is forced to emplot the whole set of stories making up his narrative in one comprehensive or archetypal story form. According to White, there are four possible modes of emplotment: Romance, Tragedy, Comedy, and Satire. The fourth stage is the mode of argument. Such an argument can provide an explanation of what happens in the story by invoking principles of combination which serve as putative laws of historical explanation. According to White, there are four modes of argumentation: Formism, Organicism, Mechanism, and Contextuality. The last stage is the ideological implication. According to White, the ideological dimensions of a historical account reflect the ethical element in the historian's assumption of a particular position on the question of the nature of historical knowledge and the implications that can be drawn from the study of past events for the understanding of present ones. See H. White, *Metahistory, The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth - Century Europe*, Baltimore (Mar.) 1993. pp. 5-29. See also H. White, "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth," in S. Friedlander (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation, Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1992, pp. 37-53.

<sup>23</sup> See A. Momigliano, "The Rhetoric of History and the History of Rhetoric: On Hayden White's Tropes," *Ottavo contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*, Storia e Letteratura, Roma 1984, pp. 49-59.

<sup>24</sup> See C. Ginzburg, *History, Rhetoric, and Proof, The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures*, New York 1999, p. 1-2, 5, 24-25. See also C. Ginzburg, "Just One Witness," in S. Friedlander (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation, Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1992, pp. 82-96. See also, in concluding, Weinryb, *Historical Thinking, Issues in Philosophy of History*, pp. 389-397 on history as literature, pp. 397-410 on historical narrative, and pp. 411-442 on the rhetoric of history.

only to XIX century historians, it seems to me that his approach it can be transferred to Classic historians such as Josephus, my main primary literary source. Josephus's history can thus be seen and approached as a literary creation. Indeed, more often than not, Josephus's literary style reflects White's four modes of emplotment. As such, Josephus's historical writings can be read as a romance, a tragedy, a comedy, and a satire. The description of the rise of Joseph the Tobiad is a good example of romance.<sup>25</sup> Yet Josephus can resort equally well to tragedy, as in his description of Herod's murder of his second wife, Mariamme, and of his three sons, Alexander, Aristobulus, and Antipater. Likewise, satire is never far away, as in the instance of Josephus's amusing description of Pheroras's refusal to marry Herod's daughter and his wedding to a maidservant. Moreover, the historical writings of Josephus are filled with rhetorical artifices as *topoi*. In this Josephus follows the historical canons of Classical historiography, as Thucydides did before him. Besides, the literary element in Josephus's history or stories is so strong that it can be universalized, or relativized. Therefore Josephus's description of Herod's personal history and his achievements can be, *prima facie*, easily retold as relating to another period and another world. What of Herod as an Italian successful Renaissance warlord? Shakespeare in his rewriting of the Classic story of Anthony and Cleopatra reinvented it as palatable and contemporary for the theatre-going public of Elizabethan England, thereby utilizing an historical plot that could be easily relativized, because of its universal meaning.

Therefore I feel obliged to answer White's criticism of historical endeavor by asking quite seriously, what makes Josephus's literary creation of Herod into a real flesh and blood historical figure who lived in the late first century BCE? It seems to me that it is not Josephus's plot or story line, but rather its background and context that make it real history and not just a literary story. Herod lived in first century BCE Judaea and left his imprints on its material culture: his coins, his inscriptions, as well as his palaces and his huge Temple Mount project make him real, and not merely a literary figure. Therefore it seems to me that the relationship between the literary text and the reality reflected in it transforms the literary plot into real history. Thus if Josephus is indeed a distorted mirror – if we were to apply Ginzburg's central thesis – then the material reality of late first century BCE Judaea is the counter mirror that permit us to reconstruct the reality of that period. In fact, as I have noted earlier, this period is indeed characterized by a wide range of primary sources that are not literary, such as numismatic, epigraphical, and archaeological, that together construct a very detailed image of the period. Moreover, there are relatively high qualitative and quantitative primary sources for the “other” civilizations that characterized the Mediterranean basin,

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<sup>25</sup> See Josephus, *AJ* XII, 160–228 on the Tobiads. See also D. Schwartz, “Josephus' Tobiads: back to the second century?,” in M. Goodman (ed.) *Jews in the Graeco-Roman World*, Oxford 1998, pp. 47–61.

and that surrounded Herodian Judaea, both physically and culturally, mirroring it. In brief, the *realia* described in Josephus's literary creation provide an anchor to reality, and therefore a literary creation can be seen as history. Herod's story therefore is no longer to be regarded as merely universal and relative, but it acquires its specificity, dictated by the archaeological *realia*, free, therefore, from any relativism, anchored securely in reality.

### G. Inductive versus Deductive Methodology

In my research I have used inductive and deductive methodology as well. Because my research deals mostly with social and economic history, the inductive approach has been privileged. Inductive methodology involves reasoning from the particular to the general. Therefore I often begin with specific observations and move to a generalization about the observations. The main problem I faced using inductive methodology was to offer premises that can stand up to criticism. Therefore, if my premises were based on literary sources, I tried to present theories and case studies that had already been developed by other scholars and that seemed sound.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, a great number of my primary sources dealing with social and economic history derive from the world of material culture and have already been used in studies by specialist scholars.<sup>27</sup> In fact, inferences about the past derived from present evidence, as in the case of archaeology, count as induction. Last but not least, I must point out that I have frequently used comparative sources as premises. In the use of inductive methodology, I am following the example of other scholars on whose works I have based my research, most notably Shatzman's analysis of the armies of the Hasmonaeans and Herod<sup>28</sup>. It

<sup>26</sup> See for example E. Gabba, "The Finances of King Herod," *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel*, Jerusalem 1990, pp. 160–168 and J. Geiger, "Rome and Jerusalem: Public Building and the Economy," in D. Jacobson and N. Kokkinos (orgs.), *Herod and Augustus International Conference* – 21 st, 22 nd & 23 rd June 2005, The Institute of Jewish Studies, University College London 2005.

<sup>27</sup> See, for instance, as a good example of the integration of literary sources and material culture for the study of social and economic issues S. Dar, "The Agrarian Economy in the Herodian Period," *The World of the Herods and the Nabataeans, An International Conference at the British Museum*, London 2001, pp. 17–18, see also J. Pastor, *Land and Economy in Ancient Palestine*, London 1997 and the unpublished B. Zissu, *Rural Settlements in the Judaeian Hills and Foothills From the Late Second Temple Period to the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, Thesis submitted for the Degree "Doctor of Philosophy," The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2001 (Hebrew).

<sup>28</sup> In the inductive method, the conclusion – really a generalization – may possibly be true if there is no observation which contradicts the conclusion; but it is not necessarily true if there are further observations which could be made. Thus, the inductive method of reasoning moves toward possible conclusions derived from hypothetical connections between premises, or observations, which are selected from among all possible true premises-observations. See as example of inductive methodology. I. Shatzman, *The Armies of the Hasmonaeans and Herod*, TSAJ 25, Tübingen 1991.

seems to me that the advantage of the inductive method is that the premises are more often than not quite correct.

In this research project, I have likewise followed the deductive method adopted, for example, by various scholars such as Schwartz.<sup>29</sup> Deductive methodology, in contrast to inductive methodology, is often described as reasoning from the general to the specific. Therefore the deductive method reasons from certain premises to a necessary conclusion, moving from the rule to the example. If the premises are true, and if the form is correct or valid, then the conclusion is necessarily true. This method is justified when dealing with primary sources that are literary in nature and with political history, which is only a background and not the main topic in this book.

As I have made clear, inductive and deductive methodologies complete each other, and hence I need to move from the general to the particular (deductive versus inductive, and vice versa) in order to obtain the full picture. In the same way, in describing the various frameworks of Herodian society, I often switch from the structure to the function of a defined framework and vice versa. Therefore, since we sometimes know more about the structure of a particular framework than we do about its function, an analysis of the structure of the framework can provide a better understanding of its function. The reverse likewise holds true, since we sometimes know quite well the function of a specific framework, and analyzing it can therefore help us reconstruct its function.

Thus my analysis of varying social frameworks related to the diverse cultures and subcultures that characterized Herodian Judaea calls for an understanding, *a posteriori*, of how the social structures worked through the use of auxiliary social theory, including structural functionalism and functional structuralism.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, as Schwartz and Baumgarten have done so successfully, I have attempted to apply structural functionalism or functional structuralism to my deeper analysis of the social frameworks of Herodian Judaea.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ideally, the deductive method of reasoning is objective in its conclusions, but subjective in its premises. Thus in the deductive method of study, we take for granted the work which others before us have done in identifying and categorizing various parts and their relationships of the subject we are dealing with, and we use this to develop our understanding of the whole system and to generate true examples of the subject. The best example of the use of deductive method is Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, p. 2. The use of the deductive method is totally justified for various reasons. In fact, Schwartz deals with a broad spectrum of time from 200 BCE until 640 CE. Therefore his analysis is forcefully vertical and not horizontal. Moreover, most of the sources used justify an inductive method.

<sup>30</sup> On structural functionalism see E. F. Talcot Parsons and N. Smelser, *Economy and Society*, London 2003 (1956), and E. F. Talcot Parsons, *Structure and Process in Modern Societies*, Glencoe (Ill.) 1960.

<sup>31</sup> One of the main features that Baumgarten and Schwartz adopted from structural functionalism is the study of the distribution of power in a society and its effect on social integration. See Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, p. 3. See also Baumgarten, *Flourishing of the Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era*.

There is a further reason why I think that the application of structural functionalism is necessary. This type of analysis has been long applied to Greek and Roman history, and since my research takes a comparative approach with respect to the surrounding Hellenistic-Roman world, this is probably the type of analysis best suited to the goals of my research. In fact, the use of structural functionalism can only strengthen the apparent relationship between Herodian Judaea and the surrounding world, using a common social theory of analysis.<sup>32</sup> It is worthwhile to point out that it is occasionally difficult to situate my research totally within this particular social theory or any other type of social theory.<sup>33</sup>

### H. Terminology

Last but not least, some notes on the terminology I have used. In this book I needed to deal with Herodian Judaea and the surrounding, contemporaneous Mediterranean world. To differentiate between them as much as possible, I used three different sources for the terminology. Thus the names of persons and sites coming from the Hellenistic and Roman world are transcribed following the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. To cope with Hasmonaean and Herodian Judaea, I employed the terminology used in the general index of Josephus's *War and Antiquities* in the Loeb Classical Library, compiled by L. H. Feldman. For the terminology tied to the Hebrew Bible, external books, Rabbinic Literature, and the New Testament, I used the terminology found in the *Society of Biblical Literature*.

This book is the revised and expanded version of my Ph.D. dissertation which I wrote at the Bar Ilan University, under the supervision of Prof. Albert Baumgarten.

Many people have contributed in promoting the achievement of this book. First of all I would like to thank my Ph.D. supervisor, Professor Albert Baumgarten for all his endeavors, and his constant help and his precious suggestions,

<sup>32</sup> See L. Foxhall and A. D. E. Lewis, *Greek Law in Its Political Setting: Justifications Not Justice*, Oxford 1996, as example of structural functionalism applied to Classic studies.

<sup>33</sup> The main limit of structural functionalism as social theory is that it presupposes societies whose social structures remain unchanged for long periods of time. Thus structural functionalism tends to cover patterns of behavior which remain unchanged, which can be problematic. See Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, p. 3. Structural functionalism is a social theory that presupposes long range patterns of stability, but Herod's rule was distinguished as a period of tense social changes, in which new patterns of social behavior developed, while others tended to wane. I have tried to resolve the problem, analyzing case studies in which certain social structures appear to be new, in the light of the later period, after Herod's death, when part of Herodian Judaea passed under Roman direct rule, and these changes were already established and had become dominant patterns. Sometimes I did the opposite in order to understand certain social structures that were typical of the earlier years of Herod rule, but which later waned. I therefore analyzed these structures in the light of the earlier Hasmonaean period.

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In concluding this introduction, I hope that my research will succeed in closing numerous gaps in the existing research and help to establish much more clearly the position of Herodian Judaea in the context of the surrounding Graeco-Roman Mediterranean world.