

Malthace, Archelaus, and Herod Antipas: Between Genealogy and Typology

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Perhaps a note sorting out some Herodians, and on the significance of ascribing them to this or that mother, will be an appropriate contribution to a volume in honour of a scholar who has devoted so much work both to names and to women in Jewish antiquity.

Of Herod's three main heirs, Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip, the first two are said to have been full brothers, the sons of Herod and his Samaritan wife, Malthace. Philip, in contrast, is said to have been their half-brother: son of Herod and a Jerusalemite named Cleopatra. Josephus states all of that explicitly in both versions of his table that sets out Herod's nine wives and their progeny (*B.J.* 1.562 and *Ant.* 17.20–21), and it is repeated without hesitation in all the literature about Herod and Herodian family trees of which I am aware.¹

However, there are four passages, all in the context of the succession dispute that followed Herod's death, of which the plain reading contradicts the notion that Archelaus and Herod Antipas were full brothers. Moreover, the first of them instead asserts that Philip was Archelaus's full brother.

1. At *Ant.* 17.188–189, in discussing Herod's revised will, Josephus first reports what Herod bequeathed to Antipas, then what he bequeathed to Arche-

* My thanks to Prof. Julia Wilker for her helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

1 For some standard ones, see those attached to Vol. 8 of the Loeb *Josephus* (R. Marcus and A. Wikgren, *Josephus, VIII: Jewish Antiquities, Books XV–XVII* (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963)), to A. Schalit's *König Herodes* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969), and to Vol. 1 of E. Schürer's *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (new English ed. by G. Vermes et al.; Edinburgh: Clark, 1973). Twenty-plus years later nothing changed, concerning these data, in the genealogical tables in P. Richardson's *Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans* (Columbia, S.C.: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1996), 46–48, and N. Kokkinos's *The Herodian Dynasty: Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 245, and, another decade later, the same data reappear in that in J. Wilker's *Für Rom und Jerusalem: Die herodianische Dynastie im 1. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Frankfurt am Main: Antike, 2007), 563. I did not find any discussion of this issue (or any awareness that there is an issue) in any of these works.

laus, and then what he bequeathed “to his son Philip, who was Archelaus’s full brother” (Φιλίππῳ παιδὶ μὲν τῷ αὐτοῦ Ἀρχελάου δὲ ἀδελφῷ γνησίῳ).² That clear statement that Philip was Archelaus’s full brother indicates almost as clearly that Antipas was not.

2. At *Ant.* 17.219–225 we read first that Archelaus, his mother, and some others embarked for Rome, and then, a few paragraphs later, that Antipas and his mother and some others did the same. That clearly means they did not have the same mother.³
3. At *Ant.* 17.250, in the course of Josephus’s report concerning the competition in Rome between Archelaus and Antipas, we read that before Augustus had made his decision it happened that “Archelaus’s mother, Malthace” died of an illness. Especially in the context of the competition between Archelaus and Antipas, that formulation strongly suggests

2 For a γνήσιος brother being one who shares both parents, see Josephus’s *Vita* 8. For a full picture of Josephus’ usage, see H.St.J. Thackeray, *A Lexicon to Josephus*, II (Paris: Geuthner, 1934), 115. Schalit, *König Herodes*, 642, renders “Vollbruder” at 17.189, without noticing that it contradicts what he assumes in his genealogical table and elsewhere (e.g., his *Namenwörterbuch zu Flavius Josephus* [Leiden: Brill, 1968], 13, 18, 124); in his Hebrew translation of *Antiquities* he renders γνήσιος with the unambiguous “from womb and birth” (cf. Hos 9:11) at our *Ant.* 17.189 and at 19.204.

3 True, what Josephus actually writes in § 225 is that, when going to Rome, Antipas ἐπήγετο his mother. Accordingly, one might consider translating not that he “brought her with him” but, rather, that he “brought her over,” i.e., “persuaded her,” as at 17.327; indeed, the verb has that meaning at *B.J.* 2.21, in the same context, in which we read that Antipas, already in Rome (his trip to which is reported already at the outset of § 220), “won over” his mother. However, that will not work in *Antiquities*, where the report in our 17.225 comes before Antipas arrives in Rome in § 227 and Archelaus had already departed for Rome with his mother in § 219, so Antipas had no access to her. For a plain reading of *Ant.* 17.225, see Hoehner’s paraphrase, below at n. 8. As for the discrepancy between *B.J.* and *Antiquities* here, I suspect that, as so often, Josephus’s narrative in *Antiquities* conforms to what his source, Nicolaus of Damascus, reported, while the version in *War* is edited in a way meant to improve the narrative—perhaps, in our case, specifically to avoid the problem upon which we are focusing. For that usual relationship between parallel narratives in *Antiquities* and *B.J.*, see my “On Herod’s and Josephus’ Building Materials,” *Eretz-Israel* 31 (*Ehud Netzer Volume*, ed. Z. Weiss et al.; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2015), 421–425 [Hebrew]. As for the assumption that Nicolaus underlies much of Josephus’s histories of Herod, see M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974–1984), 1.229–230, also T. Ilan, “Josephus and Nicolaus on Women,” in: *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag*, Vol. 1, ed. by H. Cancik, H. Lichtenberger and P. Schäfer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 221–262. In the present case, moreover, the last of our four sources cited will show very clearly what Nicolaus’s view was.