

HERODIUM

Final Reports of the 1972–2010 Excavations
Directed by Ehud Netzer

Volume I **Herod's Tomb Precinct**

Roi Porat, Rachel Chachy, and Yakov Kalman

with contributions by:

N. Ahipaz, S. Amorai-Stark, B. Arensburg, A. Barash, A. Belfer-Cohen,
R. Bouchnick, A. Ecker, E. Eshel, G. Foerster, J. Gärtner, M. Hershkovitz,
S. Ilani, R.E. Jackson-Tal, I. Ktalav, T. Minster, R. Nenner-Soriano,
O. Peleg-Barkat, R. Sarig, D.R. Schwartz, G.D. Stiebel, D. Wachs, and B. Zissu



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Contents

Samuel Israel	ix–x
Preface	xi–xxi
List of Loci	xxii–xxviii
List of Illustrations, Plans, Tables, and Plates	xxix–xliv

PART I: Introduction

Chapter 1: Herodium in History (Daniel R. Schwartz)	1–14
Chapter 2: History of Research (Rachel Chachy)	15–19

PART II: Stratigraphy and Architecture

Chapter 3: The Stratigraphy in the Area of Herod's Tomb Precinct (Roi Porat, Yakov Kalman, and Rachel Chachy)	21–200
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PART III: The Mausoleum

Chapter 4: The Reconstruction of the Mausoleum (Rachel Chachy)	201–313
Chapter 5: The Architectural Decoration of the Mausoleum (Orit Peleg-Barkat and Rachel Chachy)	314–348
Chapter 6: The Sarcophagi from the Mausoleum Unearthed at Herodium (Gideon Foerster)	349–361
Chapter 7: Human Bones from the Area of the Mausoleum (Anna Belfer-Cohen, Baruch Arensburg, Alon Barash, and Raheli Sarig)	362–364

PART IV: The Finds

Chapter 8: The Pottery from the Area of the Mausoleum (Judith Gärtner)	365–395
Chapter 9: The Glass Finds from the Area of Herod's Tomb (Ruth E. Jackson-Tal)	396–408

Chapter 10: The Coins from Herodium — the Tomb Area (Nili Ahipaz)	409–425
Chapter 11: The Metal Artifacts from the Area of the Mausoleum (Ravit Nenner-Soriano).	426–431
Chapter 12: Military Equipment from the Area of the Mausoleum and the Theater at Herodium (Guy D. Stiebel)	432–453
Chapter 13: The Latin and Greek Inscribed Pottery from the Area of the Tomb at Herodium (Avner Ecker)	454–459
Chapter 14: The Hebrew and Aramaic Inscriptions from the Area of the Tomb at Herodium (Esther Eshel)	460–473
Chapter 15: Gem and Ring from Herodium (Malka HersHKovitz and Shua Amorai-Stark) .	474–475
Chapter 16: Finds of Animal Remains from the Excavations on the Northern Slope of Herodium (Area A), 2006–2010 (Ram Bouchnick).	476–503
Chapter 17: The Molluscs (Inbar Ktalav).	504–510
Chapter 18: Graffito of a Ship and a Boat (Boaz Zissu).	511–514

Conclusions

Synthesis and Archaeological-Historical Discussion (Roi Porat, Yakov Kalman, and Rachel Chachy)	515–534
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Appendix I

The Geological and Morphological Structure of Herodium and the Quarries for Building Stones and Fill Materials (Shimon Ilani, Tsevi Minster, and Daniel Wachs) . .	535–546
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Color Plates

PART I: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

HERODIUM IN HISTORY*

Daniel R. Schwartz**

To construct and maintain such a magnificent royal fortress and palace as Herodium required a huge effort, which a king would have undertaken only due to some pressing need. But Herodium is very near Jerusalem, and since the days of the Judean monarchy, beginning with David and Solomon at the outset of the first millennium BCE, and down to the days of the Hasmonean high priests, kings, and queen in the last two centuries of that millennium, Jerusalem was, with the sanction of history and sacred texts, the capital of Judea and seat of its rulers. It was the city where the Jews' God had His "house," the Temple, and naturally also the city where the flesh-and-blood rulers of Judea, conceived of as His covenantal partners, maintained their palaces. During such a period, there was no need for Herodium. Indeed, we hear nothing of it until the downfall of the Hasmonean dynasty.

Similarly, once the Romans fully and stably took over rule in Judea, maintaining their provincial capital in Caesarea Maritima and — beginning in the days of Hadrian — transforming Jerusalem into the pagan city of Aelia Capitolina, they too had no need for Herodium.¹ The legion they kept stationed in Jerusalem was sufficient to maintain order in that part of Palestine, and there was no need to bother maintaining a desert fortress not far away. Indeed, after the days of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt, under Hadrian, Herodium drops out of the historical record.

History thus allotted Herodium roles to play only during the anomalous century and a half from the last third of the first century BCE to the first third of the second century CE. It began to function in a period when Jerusalem was still blooming as a Jewish city but its ruler was — as opposed to the Hasmoneans he supplanted — not unambiguously Jewish. That ruler, Herod, although his capital was in Jerusalem, needed a place of his own, a nearby retreat, and that was Herodium's role. Its historical role ended some 65 years after the destruction of the Temple and of Jewish Jerusalem in 70 CE, years during which the Jews' God no longer resided in the city but the Roman Tenth Legion did; it ended with the defeat of the last Jewish rebels who refused to accept that post-70 status quo. Those rebels had occupied Herodium, from which they could see the environs of Jerusalem and dream about reconquering it.² When they were overcome, and the Bar-Kokhba Revolt culminated in what was recognized as "the destruction of the House of Israel,"³ or at least as "the destruction of Judea"⁴ and the transfer of the center of Jewish life in Palestine to the Galilee, Herodium completed its historical role and virtually disappeared from the historical record.

Accordingly, this survey deals with Herodium's history between those two anomalous brackets: between the days of Herod the Great, who reigned when Jerusalem was Jewish pure and simple although he was not, and the days of Bar-Kokhba, who would have fought the Romans from Jerusalem but could not. Most of the known history of Herodium has to do with the earliest part of the period — the days of Herod. The following survey first focuses upon these years, and then turns, perforce more cursorily, to the history of the site after Herod's death, when it twice housed Jewish rebels against Rome.

HEROD AND HERODIUM

Herod's long reign (40–4 BCE) is conventionally divided into three stages.⁵ The first, from his coronation in 40 BCE until *c.* 25 BCE, saw him stabilizing his position, initially by conquering his kingdom in 37 and then by overcoming and eliminating various enemies, both foreign and domestic. The next stage, until *c.* 13 BCE, was the one that made him “Herod the Great” — a peaceful and prosperous period during which his ambitious building projects, and his well-tended diplomatic relations with the highest echelons of the Roman Empire, beginning with Augustus himself, endowed him with great prestige. Those were the days in which it was not thought extravagant to consider Herod, after Augustus and Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa (Augustus' son-in-law, “deputy,” and admiral), the third most esteemed person within the entire Roman Empire (Josephus, *Ant.* 15.361). Finally, however, came the last years of his reign, until his death in 4 BCE — a time when Herod fell from grace with Augustus and, since he was in the seventh decade of his life and far from healthy, he and others were naturally thinking more and more about his death and succession. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that his royal court became a pressure cooker of conspiracies and suspicion, informing, tortured confessions, and executions. These were the terrible years that gave Herod the monstrous reputation that competes so successfully with the impression of grandeur created by his building projects.

Herodium, the site that bears his name, is firmly associated with each of these three stages of Herod's career. That is because all of the evidence supplied about Herodium in Herod's days by the only relevant literary sources, the writings of Flavius Josephus, divides neatly into three sets of texts: accounts of a crucial incident at Herodium at the beginning of Herod's rise to power, of Herod's construction of Herodium in the midst of his reign, and of Herod's burial at Herodium. We shall relate to each of these in turn.

HERODIUM: A CRUCIAL STAGE IN HEROD'S RISE TO POWER

Herod's public career began, alongside that of his older brother Phasaël, when they were appointed by their father, Antipater, in 47 BCE, to serve as governors of the Galilee and Judea, respectively (*War* 1.203; *Ant.* 14.158). Antipater was then at the height of his career, having been confirmed in his position as “procurator of Judea” by Julius Caesar himself (*War* 1.199; *Ant.* 14.143), and Herod, accordingly, enjoyed the protection of friends in high places. Thus, when shortly after his appointment to his Galilean position Herod summarily executed some “bandits” (rebels?) he had arrested, and that engendered an attempt to have him tried for acting *ultra vires*, the Roman governor of Syria, Sextus Caesar (a cousin of Julius Caesar), intervened and brought about a quashing of the charges (*War* 1.211; *Ant.* 14.170). Then, for good measure, Sextus proceeded further to enlarge Herod's realm of authority (*War* 1.213; *Ant.* 14.180).

By the end of the forties, however, everything had changed. Sextus Caesar was killed in a mutiny in 46 BCE, Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44, Antipater died — was probably murdered (*War* 1.226; *Ant.* 14.280–282) — in 43, and in general the Roman world was in turmoil. Indeed, the Roman civil war apparently encouraged anti-Roman rebels, and so Judea of the late forties saw several conspiracies against Rome's men there — of whom Herod and his brother were the most prominent. Herod weathered those local difficulties, one way or another (*War* 1.229–240; *Ant.* 14.285–303), but when the Parthians decided to take advantage of the Romans' internal disorder and, crossing the Euphrates in 40 BCE, invaded Roman Asia Minor and Syria, things quickly got out of hand. In Judea the Parthians were welcomed by the Hasmonean pretender, Mattathias Antigonus, who, along with his late father (Aristobulus II) and his late brother (Alexander), had been opposing Roman rule in a series of uprisings during the past two decades, and together they took over the country. Antigonus became king, Hyrcanus and Phasaël were taken prisoner (Hyrcanus was first maimed, in order to prevent his return to the high priesthood, and then exiled to Parthia; Phasaël was

killed or committed suicide — *War* 1.270–273; *Ant.* 14.366–369), and Herod barely managed to escape. After successfully making his way from Jerusalem via Masada (where he left members of his family) and Alexandria to Rome, in the depths of winter (*War* 1.279; *Ant.* 14.376), his friends in Rome, especially Mark Anthony and Octavian, crowned him king of Judea and sent him back to fight for his kingdom.

In this dramatic story, which transformed Herod within a few months from a fugitive from Judea into a royal “Ally and Friend of the Roman People” in the imperial capital, Herodium was a crucial first station along the way. As Josephus tells the story (*War* 1.265; *Ant.* 14.359–360), when Herod fled from Jerusalem he was pursued by his Jewish enemies (presumably: supporters of Antigonus), and his career and life could have come to an end in a skirmish that took place some 60 furlongs (11–12 km) south of Jerusalem.⁶ Herod, however, managed to survive that fight and, making good his escape, to continue on his way to Rome, a crown, and so, eventually — a kingdom. If not at the time, then certainly in retrospect, he must have realized just how crucial that skirmish had been. It was, therefore, altogether appropriate for him to build at this site the palace and fortress that would memorialize his name and his reign — Herodium.⁷

THE CONSTRUCTION OF HERODIUM

In the grand scheme of Herod’s building projects, Herodium occupies a unique place. Herod’s other projects were dedicated to cities and sites that already existed, such as Jerusalem and the Hasmonean fortresses/palaces at Masada and Jericho; to cities that he built in honor of Rome and Romans, such as Caesarea, Sebaste, and Agrippium; and to sites that he built or renovated in honor of members of his own family, such as Antipatris, Cypros, and Phasaelis (Ill. 1.1).⁸ Although all of his building projects obviously redounded to his own prestige, Herodium was the only site built explicitly in honor of himself.⁹

To understand why Herod undertook this project, we should ascertain *when* he did so. Josephus describes the construction of Herodium in *Ant.*



Ill. 1.1. Herod’s kingdom and the main sites built by him. (based on: Tsafrir Y., Di Segni L., and Green L., *Tabula Imperii Romani Iudaea Palestina* [Eretz Israel in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods], Jerusalem, 1994, fig. 2.)

15.323–325. Given the clear chronological structure of Josephus’ narrative in *Ant.* 15, which is helpfully punctuated by references to Herod’s 13th year at §299, his 17th year at §354, and his 18th year at §380, and given outside sources concerning the first two of those data that show they refer to 25/24 and 21/20 BCE respectively and so are calculated from the real beginning of Herod’s reign in 37 BCE,¹⁰ it seems that Josephus placed the project somewhere between 25/24 and 22 BCE.¹¹ At that time Herod was at the height of his prestige. As Josephus put it, in introducing this part of his narrative, this was a time when everyone was speaking well of Herod due to his efficiency and generosity during a period of famine (§§315–316) and “his affairs were increasingly prosperous” (§318). Indeed, this was around the same time Herod sent two of his sons to be educated in Rome, and Augustus himself took them under his wing (§§342–343);¹² at the same time, Augustus underlined his goodwill by granting Herod

the right to designate his own heir and expanded his realm by annexing three northeastern districts to it (§§343–348). Herod, for his part, paid his dues to the empire both by participating “very usefully” in a military campaign undertaken by the Roman governor of Egypt (§317) and by investing in flattery of “the emperor and the most powerful Romans” (§328), including the construction of numerous monuments in their honor (§§328–330). Josephus singles out, in this context, Herod’s foundation of Caesarea Maritima (§§331–341), which itself was a monument of his loyalty to the emperor and was full of corresponding images and architecture, as well as Herod’s voyage to Mytilene to pay his respects to Marcus Agrippa when he was wintering there in *c.* 22 BCE (§350). The latter paid off soon thereafter. When a delegation of Gadarenes went to Agrippa to complain against Herod for some unspecified reason, Agrippa threw them into chains and sent them to Herod (§351) — just as Augustus himself rebuffed their complaints against Herod two years later, in 20 BCE, at the same time enlarging Herod’s territory even more (§§354–364).¹³

Thus, Herod was in his heyday in the late twenties, and we can well understand his desire to preen himself and celebrate his own success. Herodium was meant to fulfill that function. So whatever earlier stages there may have been in Herod’s involvement at the site (and there is some evidence of such earlier operations¹⁴), the beginning of the massive work that made the site what it is, of which Josephus speaks, fits these years very well.

It should be emphasized, however, that there is something quite remarkable, perhaps even demonstrative, about a king of Judea building his monument outside of Jerusalem, and that that monument commemorates his victory over *Jewish* opponents — supporters of the homegrown dynasty of Jewish high priests that Herod had overcome. In fact it seems that Herod’s official narrative concerning Herodium included, unabashedly, the explanation that it commemorated his victory over “the Jews.”¹⁵ In doing so, Herod rejected, as it were, the notion that he was king of Israel in any traditional sense. By building Herodium outside of Jerusalem, Herod was bespeaking a policy of “live-and-let-live” vis-à-vis his Jewish subjects: they could have Jerusalem and the Temple; he would do his utmost both to preserve and

to glorify them; but he himself was not really one of them, neither ethnically¹⁶ nor culturally. Rather, although of course he did have a palace in Jerusalem too, when he wanted to feel at home, and to entertain his guests without running up against Jewish prudishness and religious sensitivities,¹⁷ he needed someplace else nearby.¹⁸ If from the outset he planned to use Herodium for his burial, this self-distancing from Jerusalem was all the more demonstrative; but it seems we do not know whether that decision was from the outset or only secondary.¹⁹ Be that as it may, Herod’s decision to locate this palace and fortress, named after himself, outside of the Jewish capital, far from the Jews and the seat of their God — indeed, in the direction of Idumea, the Herodians’ ancestral home,²⁰ clearly went hand in hand not only with the generally Roman ambience and style of Herodium, as we now know it, but also with the lack of concern with Judaism’s prohibition of iconic art — which would have raised a ruckus, or worse, in Jerusalem.²¹

Thus, just as Josephus’ account of Herod’s success and prestige in these years focused (as summarized above) on his Roman connections, and is interlaced with a long section (*Ant.* 15.365–379) about religiously-based hostility toward Herod among his Jewish subjects, so too Herodium, by its very location, illustrates the fact, and Herod’s acceptance of the fact, that although he was king of the Jews he was not exactly one of them. Indeed, although Josephus reports that when Marcus Agrippa visited Judea a few years later (15 BCE) he would have rather spent more time in Jerusalem (*Ant.* 16.15), and although Agrippa conscientiously made the diplomatic gestures his visit to Jerusalem entailed (§14; also Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 296–297), nevertheless it seems safe to guess that he had a better time at Herodium — one of the sites where Herod hosted him “with enjoyable food and luxury” (*Ant.* 16.13) of the type a Roman on a junket was used, and entitled, to expect.

HEROD’S BURIAL PLACE

The third and final context in which Herodium figures in the history of Herod is, of course, as his place of burial, which probably has everything to do with the fact that the site bears his name. Herod’s funeral procession, from Jericho to Herodium, is described

by Josephus in some detail, at the very end of *War* 1 (§§670–673) and at *Ant.* 17.196–199; the way Herodium functioned at that time, and its role as the king’s final resting place, are discussed elsewhere in this volume.²² In the present context it is enough to note that although both of Josephus’ accounts list in detail the participation of Herod’s sons and relatives, and then of his guards — who were Germans, Gauls (Galatians?), and Thracians²³ — and his servants, neither says a word about the attendance of any Jewish dignitaries. The closest one gets to them in this context is in Josephus’ report that Herod imprisoned many of them in contemplation of his own demise, ordering that they be executed upon his death so as to engender mourning among the Jews (*Ant.* 17.174–181, 193). This is probably a legend,²⁴ cut of the same cloth as the story of the Innocents of Bethlehem (Matthew 2) and the rabbinic story about Herod killing all the Sages (b. *Baba Bathra* 3b) — but whatever we think of the details and their historicity, they certainly cement the impression of a chasm between Herod and his Jewish subjects. True, the funeral procession probably went via Jerusalem,²⁵ and will thus have bespoken Herod’s claim to have ruled there, just as it expressed the same claim of his heir apparent, Archelaus.²⁶ But it continued on its way, until it arrived at Herodium. The only involvement of Jews with Herod’s burial, so far as we know, is the way some of them smashed his mausoleum and sarcophagus into smithereens when they got the chance a few generations later.

Herodium thus represents, from his opening clash with “the Jews,” via his living it up there in ways that would have offended the sensitivities of his Jewish subjects, to his burial without their attendance and away from their turf, Herod’s side of the chasm between him and the Jews.

HERODIUM AFTER HEROD

After Herod’s death in 4 BCE and Augustus’ disposition of his kingdom, which entailed its dissection and division among several heirs, Judea was first ruled by one of Herod’s sons, Archelaus; in 6 CE he was exiled and from then on Rome sent Roman governors to Judea.²⁷ Given all the buildings on Herodium,

and its strategic advantages, it is not surprising that we find it in first-century lists of district capitals (Josephus, *War* 3.55; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 5.70).²⁸ As such, presumably it played a role in the administration of taxation and justice, and perhaps it had a military garrison as well. The latter possibility is suggested not only by general notions of what provincial government requires, but also by the fact that Herod’s mausoleum managed to survive intact until Herodium was taken over by Jewish rebels.

However, we hear nothing specific about Herodium until the time of the First Jewish Revolt, which began in the summer of 66 and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem in the summer of 70 and the fall of Masada three or four years later. Herodium was occupied and garrisoned by rebels, probably early in the revolt.²⁹ Josephus twice refers to the rebels’ garrison (*War* 4.518–519; 7.163) but does not clarify their identity. We may, however, conclude that they were neither followers of Simon bar Giora (for the first passage reports Simon’s unsuccessful attempt to convince the garrison to turn the fortress over to him) nor Sicarii (for at the time they were Simon’s allies [*War* 4.506]; note also that Josephus says the Sicarii did not venture far from Masada [§507]). Nor were they Zealots, who seem to have focused on Jerusalem alone, and, in any case, are mentioned separately in the same general context (§§514–515), where we read that Simon attacked the Idumeans instead of the Zealots. Thus, both by elimination and also from the flow of the narrative — Josephus reports Simon’s attack on Herodium in the context of his struggle with the Idumeans, stating explicitly that it occurred after Simon invaded their territory — it seems that the fortress was in the hands of Idumeans.³⁰ That, of course, makes perfect sense from a geographical point of view. The Idumeans’ participation in the First Revolt in general, for which Josephus supplies other evidence as well,³¹ and their takeover of Herodium in particular, are impressive pieces of evidence of their assimilation into the Jewish people within a few generations after Herod’s death.³² It is interesting to note, however, that numismatic evidence indicates that the Idumeans left Herod’s mausoleum intact for several years after they occupied Herodium; it was destroyed only late in the revolt.³³ This may point to a process of radicalization as time went by, and/or suggest that other,

more radical rebels, joined the Idumeans at a later stage.

Be that as it may, although Herodium held out for a long time, along with Machaerus and Masada (*War* 4.555), in the end it did fall to the Romans, not long after the conquest of Jerusalem. Although Josephus' report of this incident is quite brief (*War* 7.163), in striking contrast to his long accounts of the capture of the other two fortresses (*War* 7.164–209, 252–406), remains of weaponry suggest that Herodium too did not submit without a fight.³⁴

After the revolt Herodium seems to have remained in ruins and was basically abandoned. It is not clear whether a Roman garrison was stationed there,³⁵ and there is virtually no evidence of anything else at Herodium for more than 60 years.³⁶ Then, however, during the Bar-Kokhba Revolt (132–135/6 CE), Herodium figured again as a rebel fortress, the rebels living on top of the layers of debris that remained from the preceding round.³⁷ Although there is no literary evidence, a hoard of Bar-Kokhba coins and other Bar-Kokhba coins as well,³⁸ networks of tunnels,³⁹ and references to Herodium and its vicinity in Bar-Kokhba's letters, including contracts that seem to have "Simon ben Kosba the Prince of Israel" himself residing at Herodium,⁴⁰ make it clear that Jewish rebels and fugitives recognized the fortress'

advantages and potential and exploited them as best they could. The rebels' life at Herodium is also reflected in evidence of the use of the synagogue,⁴¹ and some other interesting signs of Jewish life at Herodium probably derive from the same years.⁴² Indeed, it seems that Bar-Kokhba maintained control of the area until 135,⁴³ and, presumably, since the rebels could see the environs of Jerusalem from Herodium, they could dream there about reconquering it. But that was not to happen. However difficult it may have been for the Romans to retake Herodium,⁴⁴ by 136 it was all over.⁴⁵

Although some of Herodium's massive remains were always visible, the site's history, and its *raison d'être* as a memorial to Herod, were soon forgotten. If the rabbis, who abominated Herod's memory,⁴⁶ remembered the site at all (which is doubtful), it was merely as "the king's mountain."⁴⁷ Christian pilgrims turned it into "the Franks' Mountain,"⁴⁸ and Arabs, mutilating the first consonant of the king's name from H into F in order to create a name more meaningful than one recalling someone as long-forgotten as him, turned it into "Djebel el-Fredis" — Mountain of Paradise.⁴⁹ It is interesting to wonder how the revival of its ancient name, in modern Israel, will interact with the revulsion Herod's name traditionally arouses among Jews.⁵⁰

APPENDIX: A SECOND HERODIUM?

At *War* 1.419–420, after listing Herod's building projects named in honor of others, Josephus states:

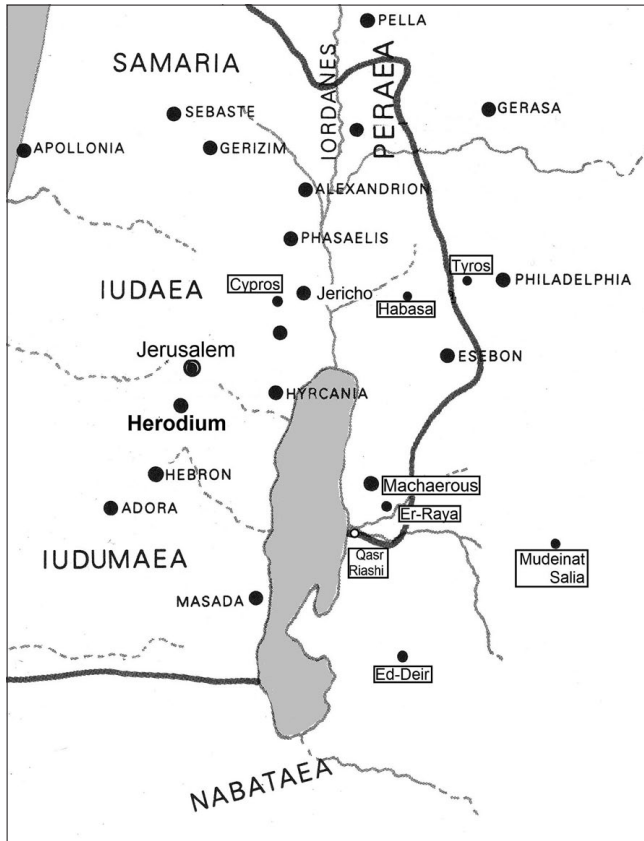
(419a) Παραδου`ς δ' αἰῶνι τούς τε οἰκείους
καὶ φίλους οὐδ' ἐτῆς ἐαυτοῦ μνήμης
ἠμέλησεν, ἀλλὰ φρούριον μὲν ἐπιτείχισας τῷ
πρὸς Ἀραβίαν ὄρει προσηγόρευσεν Ἡρώδειον
ἀφ' ἐαυτοῦ, (419b) τὸν δὲ μαστοειδῆ
κολωνὸν ὄντα χειροποίητον ἐξήκοντα σταδίων
ἀπῶθεν Ἱεροσολύμων ἐκάλεσεν μὲν ὁμοίως,
ἐξήσκη-σεν δὲ φιλοτιμότερον.

Thackeray, in the Loeb Classical Library, rendered that as follows:

(419a) *But while he thus perpetuated the memory of his family and his friends, he did not neglect to have memorials of himself. Thus he built a fortress in the hills on the Arabian frontier and called it after himself Herodium.*
(419b) *An artificial rounded⁵¹ hill, sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, was given the same name, but more elaborate embellishment.*

This is usually taken to mean that, apart from the well-known Herodium near Jerusalem (which is described in §§419b–421), Herod also built another fortress of the same name on his kingdom's border with Arabia. Apart from Josephus' comment that the

Herodium near Jerusalem was “more elaborate” (or more literally: “more ambitious”), however, nothing is known about any such site.⁵² If it did exist, it was probably part of a defensive belt Herod constructed to the east of the Dead Sea (“on the Arabian frontier”), along with the more famous Machaerus.⁵³ Various Transjordanian sites have been suggested (III. 1.2).⁵⁴



III. 1.2. Sites suggested as “the other Herodium.” (based on: Tsafir Y., Di Segni L., and Green L., *Tabula Imperii Romani Iudaea Palestina* [Eretz Israel in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods], Jerusalem, 1994, fig. 2.)

True, some scholars have doubted that a second Herodium ever existed.⁵⁵ But to the extent that opinion was based only upon the fact that such a fortress is mentioned nowhere else, it has very little weight, given the general paucity of our information about such things.⁵⁶ The same goes for an additional argument, offered by E. Netzer: that had there really been two fortresses with the same name, Josephus would have had to clarify, whenever he referred to “Herodium,” which one he meant. Since Josephus

never does that, it is likely — so Netzer argued — that his text is corrupt here.⁵⁷ However, the manuscript evidence seems (according to the Niese-Destinon edition) to be quite unanimous. Moreover, one may doubt that the existence of a small fortress by the desert needed to concern Josephus every time he wanted to refer to the well-known Herodium near Jerusalem.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, the fact is that readers of *War* 1.419 might still suspect, especially given the absence of other references to another Herodium, and perhaps also given their expectation that if Herod had given his name to another site he would have made sure posterity heard more about it, that there was no such second fortress. Indeed, especially given the facts that (a) Josephus does not employ anything as explicit as “another” or “a second,” and (b) he offers numerous details about the second Herodium (§§419b–421) so it is perhaps strange to see it tacked on to a very laconic reference to another one, instead of vice versa,⁵⁹ it is not surprising that some readers have come away with the impression that the text refers to only one fortress.⁶⁰

In fact, it seems that many or most people who read Thackeray’s translation begin §419b on the assumption that Josephus is about to give some additional details about the fortress mentioned in the preceding sentence. It is only the appearance later in §419b of (a) “the same” and (b) “more elaborate,” along with (c) the measure of distance from Jerusalem (which we probably would have expected to find alongside of the reference to “Arabia” if one fortress were meant), that suggest that another fortress is meant.

Those three points do suggest that Josephus meant to refer to a second fortress. Nevertheless, perhaps it will prove worthwhile to hang on to the original impression, for a moment, and see whether there is not more to it than that. I believe that the following considerations will at least place a question mark alongside Schick’s assertion that there is “kein Zweifel” that Josephus meant to refer to two fortresses.⁶¹

- a. In §419a several manuscripts omit *men* after *phourion*. Without it, there is less reason to assume the fortress described there is being distinguished from one described in §419b.

- b. In §419a Josephus refers to the *construction* (*epiteichizō*, lit.: “wall about”) of a *fortress* (*phourion*). In §419b, in contrast, he refers to the *furnishing* (*eksaskeō* — “fit out/equip, furnish, provide”) of a *kolōnos*.⁶² That could easily suggest that §419a refers to the construction of a fortress and then §419b refers to the way it was furnished, which is the usual order in which such things are done. We would have been more sure that the text means to refer to two fortresses if it had employed the same noun and/or the same verb for both.
- c. At three points Thackeray's translation deviates from Josephus' Greek in ways that conform to his assumption that Josephus is referring to two fortresses: (i) at §419a Thackeray offers “memorials,” which prepares us for the notion that more than one such site is about to be mentioned — but Josephus uses the singular; (ii) Thackeray offers “in the hills” but Josephus uses the singular; below, at n. 69, it will become evident how this misleads us; and (iii) at the outset of §419b Thackeray offers “an artificial rounded *kolōnos*” with an indefinite article, which suggests that Josephus is about to discuss a *kolōnos* of which readers have not yet heard.⁶³ Josephus, however, does not use anything similar to an indefinite article, such as a form of *tis*; rather, he uses a definite article, *ton ...kolōnon*, which sounds as if he is discussing something with which the reader is familiar.⁶⁴ This too fits the assumption that §419b is discussing something of which the discussion began in §419a.⁶⁵
- d. Is there, however, anything in §419a that introduces to readers the *kolōnos* described in §419b? Not if we translate *kolōnos* as “hill,” as is done by Thackeray and others. True, *kolōnos* sometimes denotes “hill.” But in this case that meaning is not satisfying, not only because of the issue just now raised concerning Josephus' use of a definite article, but also because:
1. Josephus' usual word for hill, which he employs some 30 times, is *lophos*;
 2. indeed, Josephus makes use of *lophos* in *Ant.* 15.325, twice, for all of the mountain of Herodium, as opposed to the buildings at its base, so if he uses another word, *kolōnos*, just a few lines before, in *Ant.* 15.324 just as in our *War* 2.419, it probably means something else;
 3. *kolōnos* is in general a much rarer word than *lophos*, and Josephus uses it only three times: twice for the top of Herodium (our *War* 1.419 and *Ant.* 15.324), which in both cases he explicitly says was manmade, and once for the “mound” upon which Herod built the Temple of Augustus in Caesarea (*Ant.* 15.339) — which we know was manmade,⁶⁶ and which at *War* 1.414 he terms a *gêlophos*, i.e., *geolophos*, “earth-hill,” which even *sounds* manmade;⁶⁷
 4. *kolōnos* can mean “hill,” but it can also mean “hilltop, peak” or “mound.”⁶⁸
- Our conclusion from all of this is that if Josephus uses another term, *lophos*, for the entire mountain, it is likely that he meant *kolōnos* to refer to the top of the mountain.
- e. This translation of *kolōnos* makes sense of the definite article in §419b, for mountains have mountaintops. Anyone who has just read of a mountain, in §419a,⁶⁹ will quite naturally take *ton...kolōnon* to mean “its mountaintop.”
- f. Such an interpretation also creates an easy passage to the next line of *War*, §420, where Josephus goes on to justify his preceding statement by saying “*for (gar)* he surrounded the crest (*akra*) with round towers...” That is, having made a general statement, in §419b, about the mountaintop being fitted out more ambitiously than the rest of the fortress, which was only fortified, he now proceeds to justify that statement in detail. The way Thackeray and other translators⁷⁰ ignore the *gar* at the opening of §420 is, like the way they ignore the definite article at the opening of §419b, an indication that their translation does not quite conform to what Josephus meant to say.
- g. There remains, however, one problem: Josephus says, in §419a, that the fortress was built *pros Arabian*. Some translators take that to mean “near Arabia”⁷¹ or — as Thackeray — “on the Arabian frontier,” and without stretching that probably cannot apply to the Herodium near Jerusalem.⁷² Others, however, capture more of the sense of the preposition by turning it into something that

denotes direction rather than location: “auf einem nach Arabien gelegen Berge,”⁷³ “Im Gebirge nach Arabien zu,”⁷⁴ “upon a mountain towards Arabia.”⁷⁵ Taken that way, all *pros Arabian* need mean from the point of view of the center of Herod’s kingdom was that it was off to the east of Jerusalem and “vis-à-vis Arabia” — something which well fits the view from the top of Herodium, from which Transjordan is clearly visible.

In sum, I suggest we consider translating *War* 1.419 as follows:

Having committed to eternity the memory of his relatives and friends, he did not neglect his own. Rather, having walled in a fortress on a mountain in the direction of Arabia he named it Herodium, after himself; as for its breast-shaped peak, which was manmade, sixty furlongs from Jerusalem — he called it by the same name but fitted it out all the more ambitiously.

Read this way, what remains of the three formulations in §419b that suggested it was referring to a

second Herodium? The two that are comparative (“called by the same name” and “more ambitiously”) lose their force once we imagine that Josephus is distinguishing between two parts of the same palace/fortress: the artificial summit was furnished better than the rest but was not given a separate name. The third consideration, however — the statement of the distance from Jerusalem in §419b, rather than next to “Arabia” in §419a, remains something of a problem — but by itself, and given the view from Herodium, perhaps not as weighty as the other considerations adduced above, that pull in the other direction.

In sum: in the absence of any certainty about identifying any other “Herodium,” the absence of other references to it, and the exegetical considerations assembled above, it seems likelier that we should read *War* 1.419 on the assumption that it refers to only one such site. Indeed, to the extent that we agree that the name Herodium makes sense as the name of the place which Herod planned to be the site of his burial and, accordingly, his central memorial, it is all the more likely that the king gave his name to only one such site.

NOTES

* My thanks to Haim Ben David, Zeev Meshel, Roi Porat, and Zeev Weiss for their help and advice concerning various points discussed in this article.

** The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

1. On Aelia Capitolina from Hadrian to Constantine, see H. Cotton et al. (eds.), *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, I, Berlin 2010, pp. 18–26.
2. Although there has been some debate as to whether Bar-Kokhba’s forces ever retook Jerusalem, it seems most likely that they did not. The argument for that is based mainly on the paucity of numismatic or other evidence for such an achievement. See H. Eshel, “Documents of the First Jewish Revolt from the Judean Desert,” in A. M. Berlin and J. A. Overman (eds.), *The First Jewish Revolt: Archaeology, History, and Ideology*, London 2002, pp. 157–163, and H. Eshel, M. Broshi, and A. J. Jull, “Four Murabba’at Papyri and the Alleged Capture of Jerusalem by Bar Kokhba,” in R. Katzoff and D. Schaps (eds.), *Law in the Documents of the Judaean Desert*, JSJ Supplement 96, Leiden 2005, pp. 45–50. Cf. Y. Zlotnick,

“Coin Finds and the Question of the Conquest of Jerusalem by Bar Kokhba,” *Israel Numismatic Research* 3 (2008), pp. 137–146.

3. See H. Eshel and A. Yardeni, “A Document from ‘Year 4 of the Destruction of the House of Israel,’” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 18 (2011), pp. 1–28.
4. For this rabbinic formulation of the results of Bar-Kokhba’s rebellion, see t. *Terumot* 10:15 (ed. Lieberman, p. 163). For the extent of the destruction, see also Cassius Dio 69.14.1–2 (“...so almost all of Judaea was desolated...”; M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols., Jerusalem 1974–1986, II, no. 440), and N. Belayche, “Déclin ou reconstruction? La Palaestina romaine après la révolte de ‘Bar Kokhba,’” *Revue des études juives* 163 (2004), esp. pp. 28–36.
5. See E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, I (new English ed. by G. Vermes and F. Millar), Edinburgh 1973, p. 296. This tripartite scheme, followed by many, is basically built upon Josephus’ narrative in

- the first book of his *War*, where ch. 21, on Herod's building projects, is the pivot between the story of his rise to success and that of his decline. But in presenting Herod's story thematically Josephus deviated from chronology by recounting various troubles of the first part of Herod's reign in the third part of his account.
6. Josephus repeats that distance between Herodium and Jerusalem several times (*War* 1.265, 419; *Ant.* 14.359, 15.324). It is fairly accurate; as the crow flies, Herodium is about 12.5 km from the Temple Mount.
 7. The construction of Herodium is thus similar to another — much smaller — project of Herod's: his repeated donations to shipping enterprises in Rhodes (*War* 1.424). Josephus certainly expected his readers to realize that Herod did this in grateful or even pious memory of another episode during his flight to Rome that winter: after surviving a shipwreck he managed to make his way to Rhodes, and there was able to build (purchase?) a new ship and so continue on to Rome (*War* 1.280–281; *Ant.* 14.377–378). See P. Richardson, *Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans*, Columbia S.C. 1996, pp. 127 (n. 133) and 192.
 8. For a convenient list of Herod's projects, see Richardson, *ibid.*, pp. 197–202. On Herod's building program, see also E. Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder*, Grand Rapids 2008, pp. 302–306.
 9. On a possible exception, see the appendix below.
 10. On the dating of Aelius Gallus' campaign to the Red Sea (mentioned in *Ant.* 15.317, not long after the reference at 15.299 to Herod's 13th year), see Cassius Dio 53.29 and Schürer, 1.290, n. 8; on that of Augustus' visit to Syria (placed by *Ant.* 15.354 in Herod's 17th year), see Cassius Dio 54.7 and Schürer, 1.291–292. As for the third datum, that Herod began to build the Temple in Jerusalem in his 18th year (*Ant.* 15.380), it too is probably reliable (although contradicted by *War* 1.401, which refers to Herod's 15th year) and probably is based upon the same 37 BCE era; see Schürer, 1.292, n. 12 and D. R. Schwartz, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 88 (1997/98), pp. 349–351. Note also that, shortly after Josephus' account of the building of Herodium, *Ant.* 15.331–341 describes the construction of Caesarea. Although Josephus does not give an explicit date for the beginning of that project, from the combination of §341 (the work took 12 years) and 16.136 (it was completed in Herod's 28th year, i.e., 10/9 BCE), we conclude that work on Caesarea began c. 22 BCE. Similarly, Herod's visit to Marcus Agrippa in Mytilene (*Ant.* 15.350) is to be dated to 23/22 or 22/21; see Schürer, 1.291, n.11 and B. Mahieu, *Between Rome and Jerusalem: Herod the Great and His Sons in Their Struggle for Recognition — A Chronological Investigation of the Period 40 BC–39 CE with a Time Setting of New Testament Events*, *Orientalia Lovaniensi Analecta* 208, Leuven 2012, p. 135. Thus, Josephus' account of the construction of Herodium is clearly placed between 25/24 and 22 BCE.
 11. See especially W. Otto, *Herodes: Beiträge zur Geschichte eines jüdischen Königshauses*, Stuttgart 1913, col. 82, along with cols. 70–72, n. *. True, Josephus relates the construction of Herodium immediately after he reports Herod's marriage with Mariamme II (*Ant.* 15.319–322), and although that marriage is, accordingly, usually dated to c. 25–23 BCE (see Mahieu, *Between Rome and Jerusalem*, p. 189), it has been suggested that it be dated to 29/28 BCE; see N. Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty: Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse*, JSP Supplement 30, Sheffield 1998, pp. 221–222. However, (1) even if that were so, it would not entail redating the foundation of Herodium, for Kokkinos assumes that the report of the marriage is to be read as a flashback; (2) Kokkinos' reason for moving up the marriage is that the later dating entails two corollaries he considers to be quite difficult: that Herod remained unmarried for five years after the death of Mariamme I (c. 29/28 BCE), and that Mariamme II's son was no older than 15 when designated Herod's heir in 7 BCE. However, neither of those corollaries is at all intolerable. Concerning the first, I see no reason to assume Herod could not have gone five years without a wife, but in any case note that Kokkinos himself suggests (pp. 207, 225, 236), although without very weighty arguments, that Herod married two other wives within a year or so of Mariamme I's death. As for the second supposedly difficult corollary, note that, according to Josephus (*War* 1.573, 600; *Ant.* 17.53), Mariamme II's son was only appointed to be a stand-in heir, in case Herod's first son, Antipater, died first. It is difficult to allow either consideration to outweigh Josephus' clear placing of the marriage after Aelius Gallus' campaign of c. 25 CE (*Ant.* 15.317) and before the foundation of Caesarea in 22 BCE (*ibid.*, 331ff.).
 12. For the argument that they went to Rome a few years earlier, c. 27 BCE, see Mahieu, *Between Rome and Jerusalem*, pp. 186–188. The point is not crucial in the present context.
 13. For the dating of this event to Herod's 17th year, see n. 10.
 14. Dr. Silvia Rozenberg points, in private correspondence, to evidence of Hellenistic-style decorative art at Herodium, of a type that disappeared by the mid-twenties, having been covered up by Roman-style designs, and Roi Porat points, correspondingly, to stratigraphic evidence of construction work that preceded the main project; see S. Rozenberg, *Hasmonean and Herodian Palaces at Jericho IV: The Decoration of Herod's Third Palace at Jericho*, Jerusalem 2008, pp. 355–364, and Conclusions, below.
 15. This observation derives from *Ant.* 15.323, where the account of the construction of Herodium opens with

- the explanation that it was the site of Herod's victory over "the Jews" — not "other Jews" or "his enemies among the Jews" or the like. True, Herod's enemies in the skirmish are termed "Jews" *simpliciter* in Josephus' accounts of it in *War* 1.265 and *Ant.* 14.359 as well, but in those cases the formulation is not especially noteworthy, for in context it serves to distinguish between Herod's Jewish enemies and the Parthians (who, in both books, are mentioned in the preceding paragraph). At *Ant.* 15.323 there is no such justification, and so the rhetorical implication is that, in the Herodian narrative that explained the meaning of Herodium (as reflected here by Josephus' source, probably Nicolas of Damascus — see Otto, *Herodes*, 70–72, n. *, also — with regard to "polished stones" at *Ant.* 15.324 — my "On Herod's and Josephus' Building Materials," forthcoming in Hebrew in an *Eretz-Israel* volume in memory of Ehud Netzer), there was a chasm between Herod and the Jews.
16. For Herod as a "half-Jew," see *Ant.* 14.403; for Herod's attempt to upgrade his ancestry, see *Ant.* 14.9; and for Jews who insisted even generations later that Herod's descendants were not their "brethren," see *Ant.* 19.332 and m. *Sotah* 7:8, along with D. R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 23, Tübingen 1990, pp. 124–130.
 17. As he did in Jerusalem; see *Ant.* 15.267–279, 365–379; 17.149–163, also J. W. van Henten, "The *Panegyris* in Jerusalem: Responses to Herod's Initiative (Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.268–291)," in A. Houtman, A. de Jong, and M. Misset-van de Weg (eds.), *Empsychoi Logoi: Religious Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst*, Leiden 2008, pp. 151–173, and, in general: G. Fuks, "Josephus on Herod's Attitude towards Jewish Religion: The Darker Side," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 53 (2002), pp. 238–245.
 18. As Fuks ends his article (*ibid.*): "in matters that were not crucial for his own survival the king was ready to get his own way without bringing himself into a direct clash with the majority of his subjects."
 19. Certainly the particular location of the grave was not planned from the outset, as the construction of the mausoleum required various secondary changes; see Chapter 3 and Conclusions, below. However, it is possible that Herod originally planned to be buried somewhere else at Herodium (see Conclusions, below).
 20. Note that although Josephus (*War* 3.55) lists "Idumea" as a separate toparchy, alongside En-Gedi, Herodium, and others, at *War* 4.518–519 he nevertheless places Herodium within the Idumeans' territory. For the continued distinction between Idumeans and Judeans in Herod's day, although several generations had passed since John Hyrcanus coerced the former to become Jews (*Ant.* 13.257–258, etc; see A. Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 18, Tübingen 1988, pp. 44–78); see my "Josephus on Herod's Uncles," in J. Geiger, H. M. Cotton, and G. D. Stiebel (eds.), *Israel's Land: Papers Presented to Israel Shatzman on His Jubilee*, Raanana 2009, esp. pp. 39*–40* and 51*–52* (in English). Note that during his flight from the Parthians, in 40 BCE, Herod deposited members of his extended family for safekeeping in Idumea (*War* 1.267), just as more than two generations later it was to Idumea that Herod's grandson turned when he was dispirited and lonesome (*Ant.* 18.147).
 21. As late as 2004 it was thought that at Herodium "there is no archaeological evidence of decoration that would have offended scruples based on the second commandment" (P. Richardson, *Building Jewish in the Roman East*, Waco, Texas 2004, p. 227), an assessment that went along with Richardson's more general one that "He[rod] was a Jew, committed to the Temple, accepting the commandments dealing with images and figurative representations" (*Herod*, p. 186). But today there is plenty of such evidence — including, especially, the figural artwork in the royal box behind the theater. See E. Netzer, Y. Kalman, R. Porat, and R. Chachy-Laureys, "Preliminary Report on Herod's Mausoleum and Theatre with a Royal Box at Herodium," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 23 (2010), pp. 84–108. And see: S. Rozenberg, "Interior Decoration in Herod's Palaces," in S. Rozenberg and D. Mevorah (eds.), *Herod the Great; the King's Final Journey*, Jerusalem 2013, pp. 166–223. For the intensity of the opposition such art would arouse in Jerusalem, see *War* 1.648–655 and 2.169–174; *Ant.* 17.149–163 and 18.55–59. In general, see L. I. Levine, "Figural Art in Ancient Judaism," *Ars Judaica* 1 (2005), pp. 9–26, and Fuks' study cited above, n. 17.
 22. See Chapter 3 and Conclusions, below.
 23. On these units, see I. Shatzman, *The Armies of the Hasmonaeans and Herod: From Hellenistic to Roman Frameworks*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 25, Tübingen 1991, pp. 183–185.
 24. Which in rabbinic literature floated into the dossier of another stock villain — "King Jannai" (Scholion to *Megillat Ta'anit*, 2 Shevat [ed. Noam, pp. 109–111]).
 25. The natural route from Jericho to Herodium passed through or near Jerusalem. Moreover, note that at *War* 1.673 Josephus states that Herod's body was conveyed 200 furlongs, and that figure corresponds fairly closely to his statements elsewhere that Jericho was 150 furlongs from Jerusalem (*War* 4.474) and Jerusalem was another 60 from Herodium (see above, n. 6); this probably indicates that Josephus thought the procession took that route. It is not clear, but also of lesser importance, whether Josephus' figures correspond to the true distances; for the Jericho-Jerusalem leg, which he says was 150 furlongs, i.e., about 29 km. Wilkinson reports considerably less: 12.5 miles = 20

- km (J. Wilkinson, "The Way from Jerusalem to Jericho," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 38/1 [March 1975], p. 24). As for the statement, at *Ant.* 17.199, that the procession went "eight furlongs" — if it is not a scribal error, perhaps it means that the full cortege, described there, accompanied the corpse only for the first eight furlongs. For an alternative suggestion, that Josephus meant the procession went eight stadia *per day* (which is not stated in *War* 1.673, *pace* A. Wikgren's note on *Ant.* 17.199 in the Loeb *Josephus*), see the note ad loc. in W. Whiston (trans.), *The Genuine Works of Flavius Josephus...*, II, Boston 1849, p. 53. As C. Schick remarked, however ("Der Frankenberg," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palaestina-Vereins* 3 [1880], p. 97, n. 1), the logistics of such a slow procession would have been extremely difficult, if not prohibitive. Cf. Mahieu, *Between Rome and Jerusalem*, pp. 294–295.
26. In a lecture on this topic Prof. Albert Baumgarten has pointed to the symbolic meaning of kings' tours of their realms, referring to C. Geertz, "Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," in idem, *Local Knowledge*, New York 1983, pp. 121–146.
 27. For the details of the provincialization of Judea, see W. Eck, *Rom und Judaea: Fünf Vorträge zur römischen Herrschaft in Palaestina*, Tria Corda 2, Tübingen 2007, pp. 1–51.
 28. For Pliny's list of Judea's "toparchies," and a comparison of it to Josephus', see Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1.474–478, also B. Isaac, *The Near East Under Roman Rule: Selected Papers*, Mnemosyne Supplementum 177, Leiden 1998, pp. 165–167, and H. M. Cotton, "Aspects of the Roman Administration of Judea/Syria Palaestina," in W. Eck (ed.), *Lokale Autonomie und römische Ordnungsmacht in den kaiserzeitlichen Provinzen vom 1. bis 3. Jahrhundert*, Schriften des historischen Kollegs 42, München 1999, pp. 84–86.
 29. Josephus does not report this takeover in so many words, but it is clearly implied by his references to the rebel garrison there; see immediately below. That it happened early in the revolt is a reasonable inference from the rebels' early takeover of fortresses at Jericho and Machaerus (*War* 2.484–486); so M. Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod until 70 A.D.*, Edinburgh 1989, p. 367.
 30. So too Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, pp. 232–233, n. 70.
 31. See, in general, Kasher, *ibid.*, pp. 224–239.
 32. Cf. above, n. 20. On unusual *miqvaot* at Herodium, which might be from this period and reflect Idumean custom, see A. Grossberg et al., "Unusual *Miqvaot* from the Days of the Rebellions against Rome at Herodium," *Judea and Samaria Studies* 20 (2010/11), pp. 63–83 (in Hebrew). In this context, note that the synagogue of Herodium matches the style of the few other Judean synagogues known from the period, while no Idumean synagogues are known, so if — as is usually assumed (e.g., L. I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue*, New Haven 2005², p. 63) — Herod's triclinium was transformed into this synagogue already during the First Revolt, it might point to the presence of other Jewish rebels in Herodium; see below, n. 34. However, the original excavator dated the transformation of the triclinium into a synagogue to the Bar-Kokhba Revolt (see V. C. Corbo, *Herodion I*, Jerusalem 1989, p. 75, and one of the current excavators, Roi Porat, reports that he tends to agree.
 33. See Chapter 3 and Conclusions, below.
 34. See G. Stiebel, "The *militaria* from Herodium," in G. C. Bottini, L. Di Segni and L. D. Chrupcała (eds.), *One Land, Many Cultures: Archaeological Studies in Honour of Stanislaw Loffreda OFM*, Jerusalem 2003, pp. 218–219.
 35. For the assumption that usually there was none, see E. Netzer et al., "Herodium during the Two Jewish Revolts," in A. Tavger, Z. Amar and M. Billig (eds.), *In the Highland's Depth: Ephraim Range and Binyamin Research Studies*, Beit-El 2011, p. 60 (in Hebrew). But see also Chapter 3 and Conclusions, below.
 36. True, a marriage contract of 124 CE refers to a village "of the toparchy of Herodium" (*P. Mur.* 115, lines 2 and 21, in *Les Grottes de Murabba'ât*, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 2, Oxford 1961, no. 115, pp. 248–249). However, the use of the name "Herodium" to specify the toparchy in which this village was located need not indicate that Herodium itself was functioning in any significant way.
 37. See R. Porat, E. Netzer, Y. Kalman, and R. Chachy, "Bar-Kokhba's Revolt Coins from Herodium," *Israel Numismatic Journal*, Vol. 17 (2010), pp. 96–103.
 38. See A. Spijkerman, *Herodion, 3: Catalogo delle monete*, Pubblicazioni dello Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 20, Jerusalem 1972, pp. 23–95; B. Zissu and H. Eshel, "The Geographical Distribution of Coins from the Bar Kokhba War," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002), p. 161; R. Porat, "Bar Kokhba Coins from Herodium (Hebrew University Expedition)," *ibid.* 17 (2009/10), pp. 98–105.
 39. On these finds at Herodium, see E. Netzer, "Jewish Rebels Dig Strategic Tunnel System," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 15/4 (July–August 1988), pp. 18–33. Tunnels such as these, which were built to allow the rebels to make short sorties and then disappear, only to pop out elsewhere on the mountain and attack again, are to be distinguished from the networks of refuge caves so familiar from this period (on which see Cassius Dio 69.12.3 and A. Klöner and B. Zissu, "Hiding Complexes in Judea: An Archaeological and Geographical Update on the Area of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," in P. Schäfer (ed.), *The Bar Kokhba*

CHAPTER 1: HERODIUM IN HISTORY

- War Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Second Jewish Revolt Against Rome*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 100, Tübingen 2003, pp. 181–216. The difference is especially apparent in the greater height of the tunnels at Herodium, which allowed the defenders swift mobility underground.
40. See *P. Mur.* 24, esp. 24C and 24D. Concerning 24E Yadin argued, correctly, that the opening formula need not imply that Bar-Kokhba himself was at Herodium; his name could serve for dating purposes only, and it is one of his “camps” that is in Herodium. See Yadin, “Expedition D,” *IEJ* 11 (1961), pp. 51–52. But 24C and 24D are phrased differently: they make no reference to any “camp,” and the plain reading is that Bar-Kokhba himself “resided” in Herodium.
 41. This is so whether it was constructed, at the expense of Herod’s triclinium, during the First Revolt or the Bar-Kokhba Revolt; see above, n. 32.
 42. On ostraca from Herodium with the Hebrew alphabet (and more) — writing exercises? magic texts? — dated between the two revolts, see A. B. de Vaate, “Alphabet-Inscriptions from Jewish Graves,” in J. W. van Henten and P. W. van der Horst (eds.), *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy*, AGAJU 21, Leiden 1994, p. 153.
 43. So H. Eshel, “The Bar-Kochba Revolt, 132–135,” in S. T. Katz (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism, IV: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, Cambridge 2006, p. 113. For the suggestion that Bar-Kokhba had a mint at Herodium, see Zissu and Eshel, “Geographical Distribution,” p. 164.
 44. For finds that may be remains of the final battle for Herodium, see Stiebel, “*Militaria* from Herodium,” p. 220. In general, see W. Eck, “Hadrian’s Hard-Won Victory: Romans Suffer Severe Losses in Jewish War,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 33/5 (Sept./Oct. 2007), pp. 42–51. For Apollodorus of Damascus’ recommendations to Hadrian concerning siege-warfare, see his *Poliorcetica* and Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*, II, no. 322; it has been suggested that this advice was needed in the context of the final stages of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt. See Stern, *ibid.*, pp. 134–135, and E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule* (corrected ed.), Leiden 1981, pp. 451–452.
 45. Cf. above, notes 3–4.
 46. See D. R. Schwartz, “Herod in Ancient Jewish Literature,” in N. Kokkinos (ed.), *The World of the Herods*, *Oriens et Occidens* 14, Stuttgart 2007, pp. 45–53.
 47. This term appears, in Hebrew and Aramaic, numerous times in rabbinic literature, but there is quite a debate as to what it means. For the suggestion that it refers to Herodium, see J. Milik in *DJD* II, p. 126. For the debate, and a different suggestion, see Y. Shahar, “*Har HaMelekh* — A New Solution to an Old Puzzle,” *Zion* 65 (1999/2000), pp. 275–306 (in Hebrew); pp. 296–297 discuss the possibility of identifying it as Herodium.
 48. On the legend about Crusaders that lies behind this name, see R. Rubin, “One City, Different Views: A Comparative Study of Three Pilgrimage Maps of Jerusalem,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 32 (2006), pp. 283–284. My thanks to Prof. Rubin for his help with this point.
 49. On this Arabic name (perhaps “Mountain of Small Paradise”), and its derivation from “Herodium,” see Schick, *ibid.*, pp. 89–90, n. 1.
 50. For a typically hostile attitude (although with its own “clinical” approach), see A. Kasher (with E. Witztum), *King Herod: A Persecuted Persecutor: A Case Study in Psychohistory and Psychobiography*, *Studia Judaica* 36, Berlin 2007. On p. 130 Herodium is characterized as “ostentatious” and as testimony to Herod’s emotional needs, a footnote comparing it to Nero’s *Domus Aurea* and observing that “the megalomania of both Herod and Nero is widely known.” So too *ibid.*, p. 228: “delusions of grandeur (megalomania).”
 51. In a note ad loc., Thackeray adds “Literally, ‘in the form of a breast.’”
 52. I see nothing at all to support the suggestions that it is the Herodium mentioned at *Ant.* 16.13 (so R. Harmand’s note on *War* 1.419 in T. Reinach [ed.], *Oeuvres complètes de Flavius Josèphe*, V, Paris 1911, p. 85, where the reference is given as “*Ant.* 16.14”) or that it was located near Jericho. For the latter suggestion, which builds upon the “eight stadia” of *Ant.* 17.199 (see n. 25) and rejects the “200 stadia” of *War* 1.673 but only on the basis of the mistaken notion that there are no Greek manuscripts that read the latter, see H. Eshel and Y. Bin-Nun, “The Other Herodium and Herod’s Grave,” in Z. Ehrlich (ed.), “... *Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Menasheh...*,” Jerusalem 1984/85, pp. 77–82 (in Hebrew).
 53. So Otto, *Herodes*, col. 82, and Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, pp. 153–155.
 54. For references and discussion, see D. W. Roller, *The Building Program of Herod the Great*, Berkeley 1998, pp. 168–169, and A. Lichtenberger, *Die Baupolitik Herodes des Großen* (Abhandlungen des DPV 26), Wiesbaden 1999, pp. 113–115.
 55. See A. Segal, “Herodium,” *IEJ* 23 (1973), p. 29, n. 16; see also E. Netzer, *Greater Herodium*, *Qedem* 13, Jerusalem 1981, p. 103.
 56. As was noted by E. J. Vardaman, “Herodium: A Brief Assessment of Recent Suggestions,” *IEJ* 25 (1975), p. 46.
 57. E. Netzer, *The Palaces of the Hasmoneans and Herod the Great*, Jerusalem 2001, p. 140, n. 7 to ch. 12.
 58. Compare, for example, the way Jerusalemites refer to “Bethlehem” and New Yorkers refer to “Syracuse” without feeling the need to clarify that they mean the ones near them and not those in the Galilee and in Sicily, respectively.
 59. As Richardson put it, the way Josephus mentions the

- famous Herodium is “curiously subordinated to his description” of the other one (*Building Jewish*, p. 257). Richardson does not, however, put this observation to work in any argument.
60. See the quote from Milik in n. 73, also H. Drüner, *Untersuchungen über Josephus*, Diss. Marburg, Marburg 1896, pp. 59, 61. Neither discusses the issue, but the way they allude to our passage clearly indicates they took it to refer to a single fortress.
 61. Schick, “Frankenberg,” pp. 91–92. I suppose that the fact that Schick felt the need to emphasize this indicates that it crossed his mind that the passage might refer to only one.
 62. Thackeray translates “hill” but at this stage I prefer to leave the word untranslated.
 63. Others too: Ullmann: בנה תל; Williamson (“an artificial hill”); Clementz (“einem...Hügel”), Harmand (“une colline”).
 64. Contrast, for some nearby examples, the way Josephus avoids all articles and thus expresses an indefinite sense at §403 (Herod built “a city” with magnificent walls), §404 (he founded “a temple”), §408 (he noticed “a city”), and §417 (he founded “a city”).
 65. In passing, I’ll note that Whiston’s translation corresponds to Josephus’ Greek, against Thackeray, on all three points: “a memorial...upon a mountain...that hill” (*Genuine Works*, II, p. 202). On the other hand, Thackeray’s English corresponds, as often, to Harmand’s French (see above, n. 53) on two of the three points: “sa propre memoire” but “dans la montagne” (which means “in the mountains”) and “une colline artificielle”; cf. L. Ullmann and J. J. Price, “Caveat lector: Notes on Thackeray’s Translation of the *Bellum Iudaicum*,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 23 (2004), pp. 273–278.
 66. See K. G. Holum, “The Temple Platform: Progress Report on the Excavations,” in K. G. Holum, A. Raban, and J. Patrich (eds.), *Caesarea Papers 2*, Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplement Series 35, Portsmouth 1999, pp. 17–26; see also Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod*, p. 103. My thanks to Prof. Holum, and to Prof. Joseph Patrich, for help with this point.
 67. See Liddell-Scott-Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford 1968, p. 348, s.v. *gêlophos* and p. 346, s.v. *geôlophos*. Since all natural hills are made of earth, and are nonetheless called *lophos*, it seems that *gêlophos* refers to earth that has been piled up artificially. Similarly, note that at *War* 1.420 Josephus uses *gêlophos* with regard to the top of Herodium and states it was man-made — which is what he said in §419 of the *kolônos*. That is, it seems that for Josephus *gêlophos* = *kolônos* and refers to a mound, or a platform — which is what a mountaintop would look like if lopped off the mountain.
 68. See Liddell-Scott-Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 974, s.v. *kolônos* (“heap, hill-top, peak”). That dictionary cites Apollonius Rhodius 1.1120, where an editor comments that *kolônos* means “culmen” — summit (G. W. Mooney [ed.], *The Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius* [1912, reprinted Amsterdam 1964], p. 138; indeed, the two seem to be etymologically related). Thus, for example, Marcus used “mound” for *kolônos* in his Loeb translation of *Ant.* 15.339, and Schick (“Frankenberg,” p. 91) used “Gipfel” for *kolônos* in *Ant.* 15.324.
 69. This is the point of my insistence, above, upon the difference between Thackeray’s plural “hills” and Josephus’ singular *orei*.
 70. Ullmann, Williamson, Harmand.
 71. L. Ullmann (trans.), *Yosef Ben Matityahu/[Titus] Flavius Josephus: History of the Jewish War against the Romans*, Jerusalem 2009, p. 165 (in Hebrew).
 72. Note, however, that J. Milik, apparently thinking of our passage, wrote, in connection with his discussion of the penetration of Arabs into southern Judea in the Early Roman period, that “d’après Josephé, l’Arabie commençait à partir d’Hérodiûm, ce qui doit se comprendre dans le sens géographique aussi bien qu’ethnique” (DJD II, p. 157). See above, n. 60.
 73. Schick, “Frankenberg,” p. 91.
 74. Otto Michel and Otto Bauernfeind, *Flavius Josephus: De Bello Judaico — Der jüdische Krieg*, I, Bad Homburg vor der Höhe 1960, p. 111.
 75. W. Whiston, *Genuine Works*, II, p. 202.