

Samuel Rocca

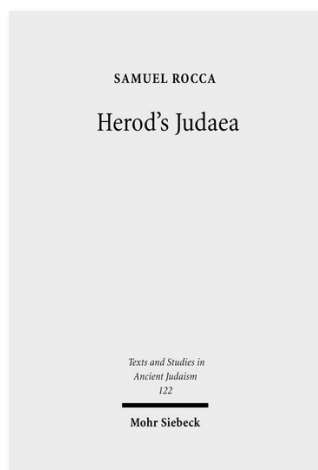
Herod's Judaea

A Mediterranean State in the Classical World

[Das Judäa des Herodes. Ein Mittelmeerstaat in der Antike.]

Published in English.

Samuel Rocca presents an in – depth analysis of Herodian society. The most important facet of this analysis was the relationship between Herod as ruler and the Jewish subjects over whom he ruled. 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. The author contends 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. 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. This trend of Hellenization was present well before the Herodian period but intensified under Herod's rule. It seems 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. Samuel Rocca deals with Herod as the head of Jewish society in Judaea, and hence this study is first and foremost a study of Herodian society. Thus he analyzes the Herodian ideology of rule, the court, the army, the administration, the economy, the ruling political bodies, the city as a microcosm, the religion, and the burial customs. This book anchors 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.



2008. XI, 445 pages. TSAJ 122

ISBN 978-3-16-151455-5
DOI 10.1628/978-3-16-151455-5
eBook PDF 139,00 €

ISBN 978-3-16-149717-9
cloth 139,00 €

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