What’s in a Name? Antiochus in Josephus’ ‘Bellum Judaicum’

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The name Antiochus appears some fifty-three times in Josephus’ Bellum Judaicum. It evidently refers to different individual bearers of that name and once is part of a place name (BJ 1.105). If for the moment we leave out of consideration the members of the royal family of Commagene,1 in the vast majority of cases reference is to Seleucid rulers. It has been noted that ‘in several places Josephus’ text gives the wrong surname to a Seleucid ruler’.2 The problem of distinguishing between different bearers of the same name is of course not limited to Josephus but concerns much of ancient—and more recent—prosopography.3 Sometimes the term ‘floating kindreds’ is adopted.4 In this essay I would like to focus on Josephus’ Bellum because the problem seems most acute and puzzling here but has never been addressed systematically.

The Seleucid Kings Named Antiochus in BJ 1

After his extensive prologue, Josephus begins the narrative of the entire work in the following words: ‘ Factional strife arose among the leaders of the Judeans at the time when Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes had a quarrel with Ptolemy VI concerning [all of] Syria’ (BJ 1.31). This sentence is filled with key terms for Josephus’ later narrative. He immediately introduces the key problem, factional strife (στάσις), and the key players.5 It is rather unusual, and unusually precise, to call Ptolemy Philometor ‘the Sixth’.6 Josephus here

1 Mentioned 13 times in BJ 1.322; 2.500; 3.68; 5.460, 463; 7.219–241. In Abraham Schalit, A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus, Suppl. 1: Namenwörterbuch zu Flavius Josephus (Leiden: Brill, 1968), pp. 12–13 the totals are 58 instead of 53 and 17 instead of 13 because he includes occurrences of surnames (e.g. Epiphanes).
2 Ralph Marcus, note a at Ant. 14.249 (LCL).
5 The theme of factional strife has already been emphasised in the prologue (BJ 1.10, 25, 27). The role of Antiochus Epiphanes has been announced at the beginning of the summary of the whole work in BJ 1.19.
6 In ancient documents rulers were identified by name. To avoid confusion, especially among the Ptolemies where all male rulers bore the same name, surnames or parents’ names were added. In a few inscriptions Ptolemy VII (VIII) Euergetes is called Εὐεργέτης ὁ δεύτερος (Euergetes the Second) to distinguish him from Ptolemy III Euergetes (OGIS 170, 171) but no ordinal number
identifies King Antiochus specifically by his surname Epiphanes, as he does on several later occasions, including in his own speech where he recounts the devastation of Jerusalem by ‘Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes’ (BJ 5.394). In a few cases in the Bellum, Josephus identifies other Seleucid rulers by their surname as well. In BJ 1.65 the people of Samaria summon for aid ‘Antiochus surnamed Aspendius’. This reference to Antiochus VIII Grypus is clearly in error—and in Ant. 13.276 Josephus himself corrects it to refer to Grypus’ brother and rival Antiochus IX Cyzicenus. Nevertheless he attempts to distinguish this Antiochus from his namesakes. Similarly, BJ 1.99 introduces ‘Antiochus surnamed Dionysus, a brother of Demetrius and the last of the descendants of Seleucus’.

is attached to the name Ptolemy itself. In literary sources the situation is only slightly different. For Ptolemy VI a global search in TLG turns up only two other cases: Appian, writing in the 2nd century CE, calls him thus in the context of the conflict with Antiochus (35.350). Much later in the Suda, the tenth-century historical encyclopaedia, the entry for Heracleides of Oxyrhynchus states that he was born under ‘Ptolemy VI who made a treaty with Antiochus’ (q 462; ed. Adler 1928–38: 1.2.581). Thus all three references to the sixth Ptolemy are connected with the Sixth Syrian War. A further reference to Ptolemy VI Philometor (and Ptolemy VII Euergetes) is found in a Latin fragment of Porphyry contained in Jerome’s commentary on Daniel (Glorie, CCSL 75 A 843; PL 25.531; Stern, GLAJJ 464)). Sometimes numbers are attached to other Ptolemaic rulers. Josephus himself introduces Ptolemy II Philadelphus as Πτολεµαῖος µὲν ὁ δευτέρος Πτολεµαῖος ὁ λεγόµενος Εὐεργέτης (Apion 2.48). Athenaeus—erroneously according to Jacoby (FGH 2C p. 113)—quotes the fourth book of Histories of a certain Euphantus as speaking about Ptolemy III who ruled over Egypt (Deipno sophistae 6.251d; FGrH 74 F 1). A little further on he states that ‘Poseidonius of Apameia, but later known as a Rhodian, says in the fourth book of his Histories that Herax of Antioch’s . . . became an accomplished parasite of Ptolemy the seventh king, who also bore the name Euergetes, and that he enjoyed the greatest influence with him, as he also did with Ptolemy (VI) Philometor, though he was afterwards killed by him (6.252e; cf. 4.184b; Strabo, Geogr. 17.1.11.796). Similarly, Athenaeus mentions the seventh Ptolemy again in another context in which he quotes Poseidonius (12.549d). This numbering has been proven correct (Michel Chauveau, ‘Un été 145’, Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale 90 (1990), p. 165, n. 111; Werner Huß, Ägypten in hellenistischer Zeit 332–30 v. Chr, München: Beck. 2001, p. 11), although scholars conventionally designate Euergetes as Ptolemy VIII. From these data it appears that Josephus and Appian (and the Suda) may have had a common source, and that ultimately this source may have been Poseidonius. Gustav Hölscher states that Nicolaus of Damascus ‘die Ptolemäer zu numerieren pflegt’, but the only evidence he cites is the present example (Die Quellen des Josephus für die Zeit vom Exil bis zum Jüdischen Kriege, Leipzig: Teubner, 1904, p. 38). Certainty on this issue is of course unobtainable.

This is how Niese and Thackeray emend the MS reading aspondion. Aspendius is an unofficial surname of Antiochus VIII Epiphanes Philopator Callinicus Grypus, related to his temporary exile in the city of Aspendus. Some MSS have Antigonus instead of Antiochus. The parallel passage in Ant. 13.276, part of a much more detailed narrative (Ant. 13.269–282) has Antiochus Cyzicenus (Antiochus IX) instead.

Antiochus XII Dionysius Epiphanes Philopator Callinicus was the youngest son of Antiochus VIII. The Damascus mint issued dated coins in his name in years 226–227 of the Seleucid era (87–85 BCE) and possibly a year or two later. See Alfred R. Bellinger, ‘The End of the Seleucids’, Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences 38 (1949), p. 77.


The last Seleucid ruler, however, was Antiochus XIII who was deposed by Pompey in 64 BCE.
From these clearly identifiable though partly erroneous references to various kings named Antiochus one needs to distinguish less clear references to ‘Antiochus’. These are remarkably clustered toward the beginning of Books 1 and 7 of the *Bellum* and it is to them that I would like to draw attention.

‘With the king’s retreat, however, Judas [Maccabee] did not remain idle but after many of his compatriots joined him and after he rallied those who had survived the battle, he engaged the generals11 of Antiochus near the village of Akedasa and, having proven himself the most valiant in the course of the battle by killing many of the enemy, he was slain, and after a few days his brother John also died, victim of a plot by the sympathisers of Antiochus’ (*BJ* 1.47).

In this sentence Josephus takes up at least four concepts already mentioned earlier in close proximity to each other: (1) not remaining idle (Ἰούδας οὐκ ἠρέµει): see *BJ* 1.38, where Judas suspected that King Antiochus would not remain idle (οὐ γὰρ ἠρεµήσειν Ἀντίοχον ὑπελάµβανε); (2) many compatriots joining (προσγενοµένων δ᾽ ἐκ τοῦ ἔθνους πολλῶν): see *BJ* 1.37 where many join Mattathias (προσγενοµένων δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ δήµου πολλῶν); (3) Judas rallied survivors (ἐπισυγκροτήσα) as he had earlier rallied his countrymen (συγκροτεῖ, *BJ* 1.38); most interestingly, from a literary as well as from an historical point of view, (4) Judas in his last battle is supposed to have engaged the generals of Antiochus (συµβάλλει τοῖς Ἀντιόχου στρατηγοῖς), whom his father before him had defeated (νικά τε τοὺς Ἀντιόχου στρατηγοῖς, *BJ* 1.37).

Mattathias is unlikely to have defeated ‘Antiochus’ generals’. Similarly, Judas’ last opponents were not ‘the generals of Antiochus’12 but two generals of Demetrius I, namely Nicanor who was killed in the battle of Adasa (1 Macc. 7:43–45 // *Ant*. 12.409–410; 2 Macc. 15:25–28) and Bacchides. Judas met his death when confronted by the latter in his final battle at Elasa. At the time, in the fall of 161 or the spring of 160 BCE (1 Macc. 9:3), Antiochus V had been dead for at least one year (2 Macc. 14:2; 1 Macc. 7:1–3; *Ant*. 12.389–390) and Antiochus VI was not yet born. Thus, also the term ‘sympathisers of Antiochus’ is problematic, for chronological as well as for other reasons.13

In the following sentence Josephus briefly alludes to Judas’ brother

11 It is possible that Josephus purposely avoids mentioning Bacchides here because according to his narrative a certain Bacchides had been slain by Matthias (*BJ* 1.36).
12 *Ant*. 12.316, after having related the initial battles between Judas Maccabee and Seleucid forces speaks of ‘the generals/commanders of King Antiochus’ who had been defeated. In the *Antiquities*, Josephus frequently mentions Demetrius’ commanders (see *Ant*. 13.148, 154, 160, 174, 177, 180; cf. 12.272; 14.268; 15.12).
13 According to 1 Macc. 9:36–38 (cf. *Ant*. 13.11), Judas’ brother John was captured and killed by members of a tribe of ‘Iambri’ from Madaba in Transjordan. Here as elsewhere in this short summary, Josephus describes conflicts in terms of pro-Seleucid or anti-Seleucid tendencies. In this case, highway robbery rather than political sympathies may have been the primary motive for the killing. In this period, Seleucid influence in Transjordan was generally weak. Cf. Joseph Sievers, *The Hasmoneans and Their Supporters: From Mattathias to the Death of John Hyrcanus I* (Atlanta: Scholars Press 1990), p. 54.
Jonathan effecting ‘a reconciliation’14 with the child/son15 of Antiochus’ (πρὸς τὸν Ἀντιόχου παῖδα διαλλαγῆς ἐποίησατο, BJ 1.48). The identity of this person is not immediately clear, and probably was not quite clear to Josephus or to his audience. There are three apparent candidates: (1) Antiochus V, the son of Antiochus IV, who was last mentioned in BJ 1.46. Yet, from other sources we know that he was killed in 162 BCE (1 Macc. 7:1–4; 2 Macc. 14:2; Ant. 12.389–390), that is before Jonathan took over. (2) Alexander Balas (who passed himself off as a son of Antiochus IV but probably was not) gave Jonathan the high priesthood and other honours. He should be meant here, if this account is consistent with 1 Macc. 10:1 and Ant. 13.35. (3) Antiochus VI was a boy-king, raised by a guardian who named himself Trypho. This Antiochus is clearly meant in the following sentence where Trypho is introduced as ἐπίτροπος μὲν ὢν τοῦ Ἀντιόχου παιδὸς (BJ 1.49), and may be intended here as well.16 Yet he was a son of Alexander Balas, not of Antiochus.

Even further, not only the roles of Antiochus V (BJ 1.40–46) and Antiochus VI (BJ 1.49) and perhaps Alexander Balas are indistinct. Most surprisingly, even Antiochus VII Sidetes is not clearly set off from his predecessors. He is introduced simply by saying that Simon, Jonathan’s brother and successor, became an ally of Antiochus against Trypho (BJ 1.50).17 An ancient reader (and a modern reader looking only at the Bellum) would not have been able to distinguish between them.

Josephus’ information in the Bellum seems faulty and confused, although it has remarkable internal consistency: before Demetrius III (BJ 1.92, referring to events c. 88 BCE) he does not mention one Seleucid ruler who is not called Antiochus. Even Seleucus I, the founder of the dynasty, is introduced only at BJ 1.99, as ancestor of Antiochus XII Dionysus. Demetrius I (162–150 BCE), Alexander Balas (c.153–145 BCE), and Demetrius II (145–140/39, 129–126/5 BCE) are never named, although they were more important figures than Antiochus V or Antiochus VI. Such insistence on the name ‘Antiochus’, used eighteen times in BJ 1.31–51 alone, often as a class designation rather than a personal name, seems to be significant.18 For Josephus, the connection with ‘Antiochus’ may have been more important than the individual identity of the king in question. Since he had sufficient information at his disposal to correctly identify the opponent of Antiochus IV as Ptolemy VI, it should not

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14 This term (διαλλαγή) is used 7 times in the Bellum, 6 times in Book 1 and once at BJ 7.242, where (Antiochus) Epiphanes (!) of Commagene hopes for a reconciliation with Vespasian.

15 While παῖς is first of all a reference to a young person, or to a slave, this is not necessarily so. Herodotus uses it for ‘son’ (often intending an adult) about 120 times (ThDNT 8.336). Josephus introduces himself to his readers as Ἡρῴδης Ματθίου παῖς (‘Josephus son of Matthias’, BJ 1.3) and regularly uses similar phrases. Thus Thackeray’s translation (LCL) ‘with the young Antiochus’ requires tampering with the text.

16 Thackeray (LCL) in both instances translates ‘the young Antiochus’, This interpretation may be historically correct but in the first instance it requires an emendation (Ἀντίοχου instead of Ἀντιόχου, suggested by Aldrich in 1687). Thackeray claims that Josephus confused Antiochus V and Antiochus VI. If there is confusion it involves more than these two.

17 Schalit, Namenwörterbuch (as in n. 1), s.v. Antiochus VII, even lists Antiochus VII in BJ 1.49, where Jonathan goes to Antiochus (VI) in Ptolemais.

18 Although Herod is mentioned over 250 times in the Bellum, it is rare that his name appears as frequently in such proximity. BJ 1.270–330 seems to be the only such case.
have been impossible for him to be more specific about the Seleucid successors of Antiochus IV. An intentional and deliberate focus on a negative image of ‘Antiochus’ rather than mere sloppiness in identifying individual rulers seems plausible and even probable in BJ 1.19–62.¹⁹

*Antiochus in BJ 7*

If in light of these preliminary findings we turn to BJ 7.41–62, we find an instructive continuation of such a pattern. Here Josephus recounts what happened to the Jewish community in Antioch. After referring twice to the—unnamed—successors of Antiochus in a favourable way (BJ 7.43–44), he introduces a new Antiochus (BJ 7.47) as an imitator of Antiochus Epiphanes in forcing Jews to offer sacrifices ‘according to the laws of the Greeks’, enforcing non-observance of the Sabbath, and killing those who do not comply. This Antiochus, an apostate member of a highly respected Jewish family, also accuses the Jewish community of having plotted to set the city on fire and later of having started a fire that actually burned some of the city’s central public buildings. While there may be some historical elements in this account, it is necessary to first analyse its literary form and function.

In BJ 7.41 Josephus relates that after the fall of Jerusalem, the remnant of the Jewish community of Antioch was in grave danger of extermination. In order to contextualise these events, he proposes to recount the community’s prior history. He suggests that the kings ‘after Antiochus’ had enabled the Jewish community in Antioch to prosper:

Most particularly, the kings after Antiochus granted them the opportunity to dwell there [in Antioch] in security. For, whereas Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes (Ἀντίοχος μὲν γὰρ οἰκήθης Ἐπιφανής) devastated Jerusalem and plundered the temple,²⁰ those who after him assumed kingship returned to the Jews of Antioch all those temple offerings that were made of brass, to be set up (as offerings) in their synagogue. They further permitted them to participate in citizen rights on equal terms with the Greeks (BJ 7.43–44).

Leaving aside the question of the historical value of Josephus’ information on the restitution of temple property and the grants of rights,²¹ I would like to focus attention on the question of the identity of ‘the kings after Antiochus’. That it is unclear which Antiochus is meant may be seen from the divergent and mostly unsubstantiated views of modern scholars: ‘apparently’ Antiochus I,²² ‘much more likely’ Antiochus III.²³ It appears that a majority

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¹⁹ One may contrast the negative image of Antiochus VII in BJ 1.51–62 with the much more positive depiction in Ant. 13.244–252, which cites Nicolaus of Damascus (GLAJJ # 88).
²⁰ The same language is used here as in BJ 1.32; see also the summary (Argumentum) Ant. 12.vii.
²² Thackeray, LCL; Feldman, LCL Index.
of scholars opts for Antiochus IV. Antiochus I is in a way the safest choice, because all Seleucids except Seleucus I, the founder of the dynasty, were his successors. Yet, this choice does not solve the problem, because in Apion 2.39 and Ant. 12.119 Josephus claims that already Seleucus I gave Jews citizen rights in Antioch. Antiochus III was ‘the most illustrious of the name’ (Smallwood, ibid.) and his favourable and protective attitude toward Jews appears from several documents cited in Ant. 12.138–153, but the same cannot be said about his immediate successors, Seleucus IV and Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Thus, even though it is awkward that in this passage the kings ‘after Antiochus’ are introduced before the name Antiochus Epiphanes is specified in the next sentence, it seems most plausible that here too ‘the’ successors of Antiochus IV are intended. Such a conclusion is supported also by the conjunction γάρ introducing Epiphanes and linking him to the previous statement. More important, however, than the successors’ individual identity is their relation to—and distinction from—one particular Antiochus. We have no way of confirming or refuting the statement that brass objects from the Jerusalem temple were returned to the Jewish community of Antioch. Such a gesture of good will may be plausible at the time of Demetrius I or of Alexander Balas, or on the occasion when Jonathan’s troops came to the rescue of Demetrius II, although it would be unclear why the objects should be kept in Antioch and not returned to Jerusalem. It is, however, a blatant generalisation to say that ‘the successors of Antiochus Epiphanes’ returned these goods and that ‘the later kings behaved toward them in the same way’ (BJ 7.45). Hence, except for the wicked Antiochus Epiphanes, all individual differences are blurred. Here, as at the beginning of Book 1, it seems more likely that Josephus did not want to draw any further distinctions, even though more detailed information was available to him through Nicolaus of Damascus or other sources. For his initial audience, however, it would have been clear that Antiochus was a villain, whereas his successors—who here remain unnamed—were not.

24 Schalit, Namenwörterbuch (as in n. 1); Schürer, ed. Vermes and Millar, 3.127; Kasher, Jews in Egypt (as in n. 21), p. 297.
27 The following sentence mentions splendid gifts to the ‘temple’ (τὸ ἱερὸν) where it is not clear whether the one in Jerusalem or a structure in Antioch is intended (BJ 7.45). See Otto Michel and Otto Bauernfeind, Flavius Josephus, De bello judaico: Der jüdische Krieg Griechisch und Deutsch (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), vol. II.2 (1969), pp. 228–29, n. 28.
28 The picture here is somewhat different from that provided in BJ 1, where not only Antiochus IV, but also some of his successors—all named Antiochus—are sworn enemies, at least of the Judean Jews (BJ 1.40, 51, 61, 62). But it is important to note that here the successors are not named at all and that the most likely candidates for the favourable references are Alexander Balas and Demetrius I and II. Thus the entirely negative image of ‘Antiochus’ remains unchanged.
Trouble in Antioch

In Josephus' narrative, trouble in Antioch begins in 67 CE when a certain Antiochus, an apostate Jew, charges that his own father and the other Jews have plotted to burn the entire city (BJ 7.46–47). He proceeds to offer a sacrifice 'according to the laws/customs of the Greeks' (7.50) and suggests that the other Jews be compelled to do the same. A few consent, while those who refuse are killed (7.51). Antiochus even convinces the Roman commander-in-chief (ἡγεµών) to have the army enforce a ban on Sabbath observance, an idea which quickly spreads from Antioch to other cities (7.52–53). When a disastrous fire does break out in Antioch (in late 70 CE?), Antiochus (again) accuses the Jews of arson. An enraged crowd is restrained by the Roman legate Gnaeus (Pompeius) Collega, whose careful investigation proves that the Jewish community is entirely innocent and that certain others have set the fire in order to destroy the records of their debts (7.54–62). Josephus then leaves Antioch aside and introduces other matters, including Vespasian's reception in Rome, and revolts by Germans and Sarmatians. At BJ 7.96 Titus reenters the picture and BJ 7.100–111 describes his visit to Antioch, during which he adamantly refuses the populace's request to either expel the Jews or to diminish their rights stated on bronze tablets. No details on the renegade Antiochus, the fire, specific accusations, or any consequences of the Roman investigation clearing the Jews of all guilt, seem to be remembered.

The account summarised here is the most detailed ancient description of Jewish life in Antioch. Yet, as we shall see below, the actions attributed to Antiochus by Josephus are of a rather tall order and do merit a critical reading. With few exceptions, authors dealing with this account have turned immediately to historical questions. Yet, it seems necessary to first seek a better understanding of the literary context and function of the story. As a further step it is undoubtedly correct to ask what historical realities, if any, we may be able to recover through a close reading of Josephus, even in the absence of other sources.

Michel and Bauernfeind comment on this story at some length. They admit that the figure of Antiochus reminds the reader of Antiochus Epiphanes. 29 BJ 1.88 already states that Alexander Janneus did not rely on mercenaries from Syria because of their innate hatred toward the Jewish people. According to BJ 2.2.479–480, in the fall of 66 CE, among the people of Syria only the citizens of Antioch, Sidon, Apamea, and Gerasa did not attack their Jewish neighbours. 30 John M. G. Barclay, Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE) (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996), p. 256, n. 62, notes that despite Josephus' claim that noncompliance led to the death penalty, 'the Jewish community was still thriving in subsequent years.'

Smallwood, The Jews under Roman Rule (as in n. 23), p. 362, notes the similarity of the charge of arson in Antioch with that in Rome, against the Christians, only a few years earlier. She concludes that in Antioch, too, only a small part of the Jewish community was charged with the plot, but that the larger Jewish community was accused of having caused the actual fire. Her further conclusion that the accused part of the Jewish community must have been the Christians is unsubstantiated. For Kraeling's position, see n. 42 below.

32 The same incident is recalled in Ant. 12.121.

33 'Der jüdische Hellenist Antiochus—sein Name ist für einen Juden außerordentlich und muss in
Kasher goes a step further stating that ‘The entire description of Josephus follows the pattern of an ancient tragedy—the persecutions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Even the name of the Jewish apostate was likely to awaken such an association in Josephus’ heart.’34 By explicitly recalling Antiochus Epiphanes’ intervention in Jerusalem in a history of the Jewish community of Antioch, Josephus certainly wanted the reader to make that association. If this is so, and seeing that elsewhere as well he uses the name Antiochus to remind his audience of the persecutor, one should first of all thoroughly investigate any literary or rhetorical purposes that Josephus may have had in insisting on this name here. The name Antiochus was obviously quite rare among Jews.35 The only other definite occurrence known to me is the father of the Judean envoy Numenius.36 Since his son supposedly was an envoy at the time of Jonathan (152–c.142 BCE), this Antiochus should have been born well before the reign of Antiochus IV and therefore at a time when the name did not have such negative connotations. Yet there are some instances of the name Antiochus that are explicitly attributed to Samaritans and one or two where a Jewish or Samaritan identity is plausible.37 While it is thus not a priori impossible that a respected family of the Jewish community of Antioch

unserer Erzählung Erinnerungen an Antiochus IV Epiphanes wachrufen . . .’ (De bello judaico: vol. II.2 (as in n. 27), pp. 227–30, here 229, n. 31).

34 Kasher, Jews in Egypt (as in n. 21), p. 299.

35 Gideon Fuks argues on this basis that ‘Antiochus (son of) Phallion (also known as) Kaboas’, whose sarcophagus has been found in Beth-Shean (Scythopolis), cannot have been Jewish (Fuks, ‘Antiochus Son of Phallion’, IJE 31 (1981), pp. 237–38.). Kokkinos instead would consider this person a member of the Herodian family and, more precisely, a grandson (due to chronological considerations not a son) of Herod’s uncle Phallion who is briefly mentioned in Josephus, BJ 1.130 and Ant. 14.33 (Nikos Kokkinos, The Herodian Dynasty: Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998, pp. 148–49). No elements of the sarcophagus or of the inscription specifically suggest Jewish origin.

36 1 Macc. 12:16; 14:22; Ant. 13.169; 14.146. The documents in which he is named, especially the Spartan letter (1 Macc. 14:20–23) are not above the suspicion that they were composed or tampered with later. On this see Erich S. Gruen, ‘The Purported Jewish-Spartan Affiliation’, in Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History, 260–146 B.C., in Honor of E. Badian, ed. R. W. Wallace and E. M. Harris (Oklahoma Series in Classical Culture 21; Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), pp. 254–69, esp. 258; Erich S. Gruen, Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition (Berkeley / Los Angeles / London, University of California Press, 1998), pp. 253–68. If the name Antiochus is made up, it would be interesting to investigate its literary significance.

37 A Greek funerary inscription from Hipponion mentioning a Samaritan by the name of Antiochus is included in Lifshitz’s supplement to CIJ 1 (#635a p. 49). Stephanus of Byzantium in his Ἐθνικὰ ἡ τὸν Ἰσραήλ Σαμαρείτης (ed. Meineke p. 552.16). One Greek inscription of the late Roman or Byzantine period from Lod mentions an ‘Antiochus son of Judas’. Although the place of the inscription’s recovery combined with the father’s name makes a Jewish origin likely, the editor does not exclude the possibility that Antiochus was a Samaritan or a Min (Judeo-Christian?). See Ronny Reich, Atiqot 25 (1994), p. 48*. An ‘Antiochus of Bostra’ appears in a Greek funerary inscription from the so-called Tombs of the Prophets on the Mount of Olives. Because of the many Christian symbols in its vicinity as part of other funerary inscriptions, the first editor considered Antiochus a Christian, even though the Hebrew word Shalom or the name Shallum was probably found twice in other parts of the same tomb complex. See Charles Clermont-Ganneau and Aubrey Stewart, Archaeological Researches in Palestine during . . . 1873–1874, London 1899, pp. 353–54, 357, 374. I am very grateful to Tal Ilan for having read an earlier draft of this paper and pointed out to me these references.
in the first century would have used the name Antiochus, it does not seem very likely. In any event, Josephus makes so much of the connection with Antiochus Epiphanes that any personal traits of the apostate become quite secondary—whether or not there existed an apostate whose real name was Antiochus.

The question of the name thus needs to be approached in conjunction with other elements that point to connections with King Antiochus IV. First of all is the combination of apostasy and persecution in the two instances. More specifically, we have Antiochus here offering sacrifice ‘according to Greek law/custom’ (BJ 7.50) as a sign of his apostasy. This practice recalls the voluntary adoption of non-Jewish customs at the time of Antiochus IV (1 Macc. 1:43). Enforcement of such sacrifices, and imposition of the death penalty for non-compliance (BJ 7.50–51) directly recall the decree attributed to Antiochus IV and its execution (1 Macc. 1:41–61; 2 Macc. 6:1–10; BJ 1.34; Ant. 12.253–256). Furthermore, the use of an army for enforcing these regulations, here the non-observance of the Sabbath (BJ 7.52), is a strong reminder of actions during the persecution of Antiochus IV (e.g., 1 Macc. 1:45; 2:31–38; 2 Macc. 6:6), although we have no information about how non-observance of the Sabbath per se was being enforced.

If apart from the direct parallels with the time of Antiochus IV we try to define the actions taken in connection with the Antiochene Antiochus according to BJ 7.47–62, we find the following:

1. Just after Vespasian has landed in Syria (67 CE) Antiochus addresses a citizens’ assembly in the theatre, accusing his own father and the other Jews of having plotted to burn the entire city of Antioch in one night (47).
2. He has identified and holds some foreign Jews as accomplices to the alleged plot (47).
3. He delivers them up to be burnt alive in the theatre (48).
4. When the enraged crowd attacks other Jews, he incites it even further (49–50).
5. In the midst of this turmoil, he furnishes proof of his apostasy and of his hatred for Jewish customs by offering a sacrifice according to the law/custom of the Greeks (ὡσπερ νόμος ἐστὶ τοῖς Ἑλλησιν 50).
6. He recommends that the remaining Jews (τοὺς ἄλλους) be forced to do the same, because by their refusal to offer sacrifice the co-conspirators would be exposed. The Antiochene citizens accept the recommendation, apply the test, and kill all those who do not accept to offer sacrifice, that is all but a few (51).

38 A change of name later in life, perhaps at the time of the alleged apostasy, would be another possibility, but there is no trace of evidence for it.
39 For an address to the citizenry of Antioch, delivered in the theatre by the Roman governor C. Licinius Mucianus, see Tacitus, Hist. 2.80. Tacitus there notes that Mucianus entered the theatre ubi illis consultare mos est (‘where they [the Antiochenes] regularly hold their public assemblies’). For assemblies in Greek theatres see Cicero, Flacc. 16; Livy 24.39.1; Frontinus, Strat. 3.2.6.
7. Antiochus procures soldiers from the Roman commander-in-chief, to enforce non-observance of the Sabbath (52).
8. He organises enforcement so effectively that it prevents Sabbath observance not only in Antioch, but for a short time even in the other cities (52–53).
9. Some time later (November 70 CE?), after a fire destroyed some central public buildings of Antioch, Antiochus accuses the Jews of having started it (55).
10. Believing Antiochus’ statements, the Antiochenes rush upon the Jews (57).
11. They are restrained by the Roman legate Gnaeus Collega (58).
12. Antiochus’ accusations are proven completely groundless by a Roman investigation and the real culprits, whose motive was to destroy debt records, are identified, but the Jews remain in great fear (59–62).

In BJ 7.47–57 (## 1–10 above), Antiochus is undoubtedly presented as a powerful individual indeed. His capacity for mischief as well as the gullibility of the citizenry are practically boundless. Yet Roman intervention quickly and efficiently stops his incitement to violence and exposes his libellous accusations for what they are (BJ 7.58–61). Such a stark contrast seems to fit well with Josephus’ tendency to show Titus and persons directly associated with him in the best possible light, while denigrating others in the process.

The use of names in the entire Antioch episode seems to be significant again. The only persons named are King Antiochus (Epiphanes) and several Roman authorities: Vespasian (BJ 7.46, 58 (‘Caesar’), 59); Gnaeus (Pompeius) Collega, the legate who protected the Jewish community and solved the arson case (BJ 7.58, 60); Caesennius Paetus, the governor designate (BJ 7.59), and of course the main villain, Antiochus. His father, a very respected citizen and ἄρχων (BJ 7.47) of the Jewish community is never identified by name. Neither is the Roman commander identified from whom Antiochus obtains a contingent of soldiers (BJ 7.52). None of the citizens of Antioch or of the members of its Jewish community, especially the victims of persecution, are named. This state of affairs suggests that Josephus’ account is highly stylised. Only the two persecutors, both named Antiochus, and the good Romans are identified. Josephus clearly depicts events in order to evoke the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes at the beginning of Book 1. Here the person of the apostate Antiochus combines the roles of King Antiochus and of his emissary (BJ 1.31–33), and even that of the high priest Menelaus (‘the originator of all the trouble’, Ant. 12.384). If the role of Antiochus the apostate is highly stylised, his name might be created for the same purpose. We may have a somewhat analogous situation in the case of King Agrippa I, who is

called King Herod in Acts 12:1–23, and only there. Daniel Schwartz’s comment seems appropriate: ‘Already the name used for Agrippa, “Herod”, which is not documented elsewhere, testifies that the king is being viewed typologically, as another persecutor in the Church’s Judaean history, following Herod, Herod Antipas, Herodias and the Herodians, who figure as persecutors in the Gospel stories.’

Hostile typology may be similarly at work in the story of Antiochus the Apostate, although it is conceivable that a real apostate by the name Antiochus did exist.

Some of the difficulties in accepting as historical the sequence of events and of actions attributed to this Antiochus may be seen from the attempts to solve real or perceived problems. In what remains the most thorough study of the Jewish community of Antioch, Kraeling argues that in the supposed plot and the actual fire several years later ‘Josephus has here reported two different accounts of one and the same series of events.’ He suggests that a double massacre at the instigation of the same person, the Jewish renegade Antiochus, is highly unlikely. Kraeling also notes that Jewish Sabbath privileges had long been established, citing Ant. 14.241–243, 256–258,

Downey rightly criticises several aspects of Kraeling’s reconstruction of events, especially the dating of the fire in 69 rather than 70 CE, yet Kraeling’s suspicion of a doublet is not groundless. Smallwood claims, evidently in an attempt to explain Antiochus’ influence, that he ‘was holding a magistracy’. Barclay sees a need to explain the intervention of the army in the enforcement of non-observance of the Sabbath. He finds a solution in suggesting that ‘Josephus’ story makes best sense if this Antiochus was a military officer (he was entrusted with soldiers by the governor) and thus caught up in the anti-Jewish sentiment of the army.’

41 Daniel R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1990), p. 120. Schwartz also notes (ibid. n. 50) that it is unlikely that ‘Herod’ was a popular nickname or surname for Agrippa, since he had a brother named Herod (of Chalcis) and Acts 12 is the only place where he is thus called. Kokkinos (*The Herodian Dynasty*, as in n. 35, p. 226, n. 78; p. 301) argues that Herod did become a dynastic name, which Archelaus assumed upon becoming Tetrarch, as evidenced by his coins. It is, however, noteworthy that Agrippa did not use that name on his coins. A somewhat more benign typology, associated with real names, appears to have been adopted by Suetonius (*Tit.* 7.2) in his famous epigram: *Berenicem statim ab urbe dimisit, invitus invitam* (‘He [Titus] at once sent Berenice away from Rome, he reluctantly, her reluctant’). This recalls a line dedicated to the earlier Ptolemaic Queen Berenice: *Invita, o regina, tua de vertice cessi* (‘Reluctantly, o queen, I quit your head’, Catullus, *On Berenice’s Locks* (66.39), based on Callimachus). See Stewart Perowne, *The Later Herods: The Political Background of the New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1958), pp. 198–99.

42 Kraeling, ‘Jewish Community at Antioch’ (as in n. 26), pp. 151–52.


44 Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule* (as in n. 23), p. 361. Antiochus’ father is an ἀγγείον in the Jewish community (*BJ* 7.47) but in the text no office is assigned to Antiochus himself.

45 Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora* (as in n. 30), p. 256. He further notes (pp. 322–23) that ‘this calculated renunciation of Judaism is the most extreme case of assimilation known to us (though it may be parallel to the ‘Jewish critics and opponents of Judaism’ in Egypt . . . ).’ He compares the case of Antiochus with that of the Jews of Scythopolis whose ἀπόστασις is mentioned in *BJ* 2.466–476; *Life* 26 ‘but their decision seems to have been primarily political, rather than a renunciation of their Jewish heritage’ (p. 323, n. 5). The Roman army in Syria did use local
This is an elegant proposal that addresses but does not solve the problem of how the Roman army would get involved in enforcing such an illegal ruling at the suggestion of a local citizen. Tacitus, to be sure, when speaking about events of 69 CE, tells us that in Antioch ‘many civilians were bound to the soldiers by ties of friendship and of marriage’ (Hist. 2.80). Whether a local citizen could become a commanding officer in the Roman legionary or auxiliary forces and then be stationed in his home town is a different question that does not concern us here. Yet, whether military officer or friend of military officers, the role of Antiochus in the whole story seems to be rather oversized, especially if we note the—fortunately—limited impact of his alleged actions.

Smallwood correctly observes that since many Jews seem to have survived after it, the ordeal-by-sacrifice must have affected only a section of the Jewish community (#6 above). She further argues that ‘the charge of arson recalls that said to have been levelled against the Christians in Rome less than three years earlier, which suggests that the Christians were the section of the Jewish community in Antioch against which Antiochus’ initial attack was directed.’ She concludes that ‘the mainspring of Antiochus’ malice against the Christians may have been resentment, possibly even heightened by his own apostasy, against his father’s conversion from orthodox Judaism to a despised schismatic sect’. While her initial observation is helpful, her reconstruction of events has no support in the text and is highly implausible. If the early Christian community was the real target of these measures, it is difficult to explain why ‘the orthodox Jews’ (not only in Antioch) should have been subsequently harassed and forced not to observe the Sabbath. Furthermore, Titus’ insistence on permitting the Jews to remain in Antioch and on maintaining their rights (BJ 7.103–104, 108–111) presupposes the continued existence of a substantial organised Jewish community.

If it is fairly easy to recognise some of the problems of Josephus’ account of the troubles in Antioch caused by Antiochus, a detailed historical reconstruction seems impossible. One may suppose that during and shortly after

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auxiliaries in addition to the the regular legionary forces (BJ 2.502), but they were not stationed in their home towns. See Eric Birley, ‘Local Militias in the Roman Empire’, in E. Birley, The Roman Army: Papers 1929–1986 (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1988), pp. 387–94.


47 According to Ant. 12.120, C. Licinius Mucianus, then Roman governor (ἡγεµών) of Syria (67–69 CE), resisted efforts by the people of Antioch to revoke the privilege of the Jewish community to receive money from the gymnasiarchs for the purchase of kosher oil. This would have happened after all Jews who refused to offer pagan sacrifices had been killed (BJ 7.51). Smallwood considers it likely that Mucianus ‘simultaneously cancelled the much more illegal prohibition of Sabbath-observance’ (The Jews under Roman Rule, as in n. 23, p. 363). Probably the question needs to be asked which Roman ἡγεµών would have actively enforced non-observance of the Sabbath in the first place.


49 Barclay, Mediterranean Diaspora (as in n. 30), p. 256, n. 61.
the Great Revolt the Jewish community of Antioch was endangered through
the action of local citizens, perhaps with the involvement of one of its own
(former) members. That the situation could be inflamed through a malicious
accusation of arson is plausible, but it seems hazardous to go much further in
a historical reconstruction of the incident without a more profound appreci-
ation for its literary expression.

Antiochus and the Temple of Onias, Again

Once more, near the very end of the Bellum (7.423–425), Josephus turns his
attention to Antiochus. Here, as a rather evident inclusio, at last he fulfills his
promise given at the very beginning of his narrative (BJ 1.33) to provide a
more detailed account of the temple of Onias in Egypt. Instead of merely
speaking of the closing of the temple or of its history, Josephus recalls that
Onias the son of Simon had fled from Antiochus to Ptolemy. He further
mentions Ptolemy’s hostility toward Antiochus (πρὸς Ἀντίοχον ἀπέχθειαν, BJ
7.423) which mirrors Antiochus V becoming heir to his father’s hostility to-
ward the Jews (πρὸς Ἰουδαίου ἀπεχθείας, BJ 1.40). Finally, Ptolemy’s friendly
gesture toward the Jews in permitting them to build a temple in Egypt is de-
scribed in stark contrast to Antiochus’ hostile attitude, and is said to provoke
even greater Jewish hostility toward Antiochus (BJ 7.425). Thus the negative
image of Antiochus is carried through till the very end of the Bellum. If, as
Seth Schwartz has suggested, BJ 7.409–436 with the disturbances in Alexan-
dria and the closure of the Temple of Onias belongs to a final revision of Book
7 at the time of Nerva or early in the reign of Trajan, then also the early part
of Book 1 must have been substantially rewritten at that time. Schwartz does
not, however, provide any specific arguments for the late dating of this section
of Book 7. More recently, Jones argues that the Bellum was completed by 81
CE. In any case, our present analysis suggests that the literary structure of

50 A return to στάσις and related themes may signal another part of the inclusio, paired with
the στάσις at BJ 1.31. BJ 7.410 introduces the στάσις τῶν σικαρίων (here the ‘faction of the
Sicarii’). Their insanity (7.412) spreads to Cyrene like a disease (νόσος, 7.437) and threatens to
gulp even Josephus himself along with other citizens in the related charge of ‘revolutionary
activities’ (νεωτερισµός, BJ 7.447–448). The situation is resolved by Vespasian’s astute exposure
of the baseless accusation, and the providential fatal illness (νόσος) of the accuser (BJ 7.450–453).

51 At BJ 7.423 as in 1.32–33 the flight is attributed to Onias III at the time of Antiochus
IV. In Ant 12.386–388 and 20.236, instead, it is the son of Onias III (Onias IV) who flees from
Antiochus V. At BJ 7.423–425, permission to build the temple is given immediately, still at the
time of Antiochus IV, whereas in Ant 13.62–73, Onias IV requests permission to build a temple
only after having lived in Alexandria for some time (62). Josephus inserts this request after the
death of Demetrius I in 150 BCE (Ant 13.61). Among the few constant elements of the different
accounts are the names of the protagonists: Onias and Antiochus (in addition to Ptolemy). Their
roles remain constant, but their precise identification, especially the identity of Antiochus, does
not seem of great concern to Josephus.

52 Seth Schwartz, ‘The Composition and Publication of Josephus’s Bellum Iudaicum Book 7’,

53 Christopher P. Jones, ‘Towards a Chronology of Josephus’, Scripta Classica Israelica 21
Books 1 and 7 cannot be studied simply in isolation. This essay takes its cue from the simple observation of the peculiar recurrence of a name. It does show how Josephus emphasises the figure of Antiochus at the very beginning and again near the very end of his work. It also suggests that at least sometimes Josephus uses that name in a typological sense rather than as primarily in reference to one particular individual. These observations are insufficient for simple conclusions. Yet they point to the need to look more closely at elements that may indicate the structure as well as the purpose of the *Bellum* as an, albeit imperfect, work of art.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{54} This study was begun while I was enjoying the privilege of being a Visiting Scholar at Wolfson College, Oxford, during the Spring of 2002. It has benefited from helpful comments by Martin Goodman, Erich Gruen, Tal Ilan, and Ruth Karp Sartisky. They do not necessarily agree with my conclusions and all remaining deficiencies are of course solely my own responsibility.