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REFERENCES

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- 1 In this paper the author, a specialist of history and antiquities of Adiabene, a minor Parthian kingdom whose kings converted to Judaism in 1st century CE, analyses the concept of Jewish identity in the second temple period. He takes as an example the so-called "Adiabene Narrative", that is to say, Flavius Josephus' account of the conversion to Judaism of the Royal House of the North Mesopotamian Parthian kingdom. The narrative fits perfectly with the model of "Ethnicity", according to which the conversion implies not only the adoption of the religious creed but also of the cultural features and customs, which are felt as ethnically Jewish. The long-lasting effects of the conversion through generations prove that crossing the cultural boundary with success was possible. The "breaking motif" of the narrative, that is to say, the strong negative reaction of the Parthian/Adiabenean ethnos to the conversion of its leaders, constitutes a problem for those who theorize a situation in which multiple ethnicities can coexist (model of dual/multiple/nested ethnicities). The author argues that classical sources tend to ignore the dynasts' conversion or link to Judaism, depicting the Adiabene royalty as a fundamental political entity within the Parthian empire. Strong connections between his members and the Great King are attested many years after the conversion. This circumstance suggests that the "breaking motif" envisaged by Josephus is, in reality, a mere literary *topos* aimed at targeting foreign customs. If we

accept this interpretation, the model of dual/multiple/nested ethnicities concerning Jewish identity remains valid.

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