

# HEROD

KING OF THE JEWS AND  
FRIEND OF THE ROMANS



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## CHAPTER 8

# Herod's Buildings

### INTRODUCTION

Several important studies of Herod have given due weight to his buildings. The reason is obvious: his buildings represent an enduring aspect to his career—observable today to even casual observers—and are the most easily appreciated aspect of his volatile and not always admired life. The buildings are stunning in their size, boldness, and complexity. In addition to non-technical appreciations of his work by scholars of Herod, an enormous amount of archaeological work has been done on his projects, usually because of their significance as examples of Second Temple Jewish structures. A few persons, most notably Ehud Netzer, have both an archaeological and architectural interest in his work, and this has resulted in some fine studies of individual projects.<sup>1</sup>

Herod's building activity can be approached from the point of view of geographic location, building type, chronological development, methods, materials, and strategy—all of which I will comment on before summarizing his work. Herod was not a megalomaniac advancing his own reputation—though this may be true in part—but he had clear and larger goals for advancement of Judaism in the Mediterranean world.

### GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Following this chapter, Appendix A's list of Herod's projects is categorized primarily according to location; these projects covered most regions of the east—

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1. Individual projects: see, for example, Netzer's editing of the field notes of Yigael Yadin in the official final publication of Masada. *Studies of Herod*: Schalit devotes about seventy-five pages to them, Grant covers the ground in parts of five chapters, Perowne gives over all of four chapters to his buildings. A recent introduction to New Testament archaeology by J. McRay has four full chapters surveying Herod's structures.

ern Roman Empire from Idumaea to Epirus (western Greece), including many intervening provinces and several islands of the Aegean. One obvious and one not so obvious feature emerge: first, a great deal of his building activity focused on his own region, especially Jerusalem and Judea; and second, there was no uniform pattern of distribution and there are some areas where there was no building at all (see maps 5 and 6).

To begin with the second issue first, contrary to expectations, Herod did not build farther west than the western coast of Greece. He was close to Augustus and dependent on Rome; he made several trips there; his male children were educated there; he had close friends there: these reciprocal contacts might have spawned an outburst of creative activity in the capital city. While one inscription might give evidence of a direct or indirect interest in a synagogue in Rome (see Appendix B), nothing dependable points to any Roman projects. He probably thought of Italy as Augustus and Marcus Agrippa's special field of action; certainly Italy was not an ideal place for Herod to parade his benefactions.

More surprisingly, Herod sponsored no projects in North Africa, including Egypt and Alexandria. After the deaths of Cleopatra and Antony there was little hindrance to such projects, unless Egypt's special relationship to the Emperor required care that one not appear to tamper in its affairs. Perhaps special factors in Herod's relationship with Egyptian Jews militated against benefactions, though there is no evidence of general strains or tensions.

Herod built in many other eastern provinces, though not in Macedonia, Galatia, Pontus and Bithynia, Cyprus, Crete, or Cappadocia (the latter still a dependent kingdom under his friend Archelaus), and relatively little in Asia (there is no recorded benefaction to Ephesus). Nor did Herod bestow his largess on any of the non-incorporated neighbors: Thracia, Commagene, Nabatea, Armenia, or Parthia. The literary evidence shows no buildings in the Decapolis cities, including Hippos and Gadara, that were under his control for a substantial part of his reign.

In his home territories, it is surprising that there are few benefactions in Galilee; Gaulanitis, and the adjacent regions, and relatively few in Peraea. (1) Herod's early career and his reputation were made in Galilee, and he might have recalled his glory days there through attention to noteworthy sites. He did not. Even Sepphoris benefitted little, according to both the literary and the archaeological record. (2) The common view that Galilee was a hotbed of dissent requiring control through force is contradicted by the fact that there is no record of any fortresses or fortified palaces having been built there. Herod's building activity indicates that Galilee must have been relatively quiet. (3) It would have been politic to locate public works projects in Galilee to strengthen its finances (as I shall argue is one of his motives); their absence suggests that

such support was either unnecessary or undesirable. In Gaulanitis and the adjacent regions and in Peraea the issues are similar but less clear.

There was more building activity in Idumaea. The suggestion has been made that there was a large amount of building activity in Idumaea, in the shape of forts or "fortlets"; altogether about thirty or so sites have been proposed in various studies. Though this estimate is incorrect in my view, if even a small portion are to be attributed to Herod, were these fortlets for defense of Herod and his holdings, for intimidation of Idumaeans, for protection from Nabatea or Egypt? Until a more precise list of Herodian projects can be drawn up, and a pattern of fortlets seen, it is impossible to say.

In general, the majority of Herod's buildings were to be found in the heartland of his own territory, in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria, including the coast lands. There was a surprising paucity of work in Galilee, Gaulanitis, and Peraea, with the evidence for Idumaea still uncertain. There was a wide distribution of work extending as far as Greece, but nothing in the western or southern portions of the empire.

The pattern fits three possible explanatory rationales. (1) These areas included the core of the late-Hellenistic world (excepting the absence of Macedonia) and may have been just the areas where a patron such as Herod would get special credit for his work. (2) They formed the eastern portion of the Empire in the early days of Augustus and represented a region of potential influence that would enhance Judea's stability. (3) It was here (excepting Alexandria and Rome, the two largest cities of the Empire) that the greatest concentrations of Diaspora Jews were found.

In the first rationale, this was where his buildings would be most appreciated, in the second where he could build most profitably and with least risk of treading on Augustus's toes, in the third where his involvement would be the most beneficial to world Judaism. The decision to stay away from areas not yet integrated into the Empire, such as Thrace and Commagene, may have been a political decision not to tamper with delicate political alliances.<sup>2</sup> Whether any of these explanations, or some combination of all of them, is on the mark cannot be known. That some explanation is needed, however, is hinted at by Josephus: "Often, however, [Herod's] noble generosity was thwarted by the fear of exciting either jealousy or the suspicion of entertaining some higher ambition, in conferring upon states greater benefit than they received from their own masters" (*War* 1.428). This comment of Josephus's helps provide an explanation of the absence of projects in a number of areas.

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2. See the general comments in Sullivan, *Near Eastern Royalty*, pp. 9-24; Millar, *Roman Near East*, chaps. 1-2; A. Lintott, *Imperium Romanum. Politics and Administration*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), Part I.

## MAJOR PROJECTS

Herod's benefactions cover a diverse range of projects. Some can be known in great detail from both literary and archaeological descriptions (Masada, Herodium, Caesarea Maritima); some from literary description but not from archaeological investigation (Antonia Fortress, Jerusalem Palace); some from archaeological excavations that are ignored in the literary remains (water works, Temple of Apollo in Rhodes). The farther away from Jerusalem the project is the less that is known, for Josephus and his sources are less interested in these and less knowledgeable. One class of benefactions—those to cities or regions in the Hellenistic world—is unknown in any detail.

Little can be said about these. All are outside Herod's territory and only one, Balanea in Syria, is at all near. Included are a few cities (Phaselis in Lycia, Pergamum, Athens, Nicopolis, Olympia) and several provinces, regions, or islands (Cilicia, Lycia, Ionia, Lacedaemon [Sparta], Rhodes, Chios, Samos). We have no detail at all about many. Athens is mentioned in passing (*War* 1.425), yet there are three inscriptions (see Appendix B) naming Herod—two from the Agora and one from the Acropolis—all three attesting a benefaction. Three cases are especially interesting. Josephus says that Herod built the majority of the public buildings at Nicopolis, which was founded by Augustus to celebrate his victory at Actium in 31 BCE over Antony and Cleopatra (*War* 1.425; *Ant.* 16.147). Silent as the excavations are on this point, Herod may have felt it appropriate to give dramatic force to his decision, late in the day, to support Octavian. According to Josephus (*War* 1.424), Herod made donations at Rhodes on several occasions for shipbuilding and on one occasion to the restoration of the recently-burnt Temple of Pythian Apollo. These contributions began in 40 BCE (*Ant.* 14.378) and continued well beyond 31 BCE, following his meeting with Octavian. At Olympia (*War* 1.426–27; *Ant.* 16.149) Herod endowed the games at a point when they had fallen on hard times, partly perhaps as a result of the earthquake of 36 BCE; he may have contributed to the restoration of the buildings, though the literature and inscriptions are silent.<sup>3</sup>

New cities were his most dramatic projects; all were in his own territory. The most remarkable were Caesarea Maritima—built on a Hellenistic site but so expanded as to make it unrecognizable—and Sebaste, built on the site of ancient Samaria, the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel (see below).

Others were less grand but significant: his rebuilding of Agrippias (Anthedon), the new foundations of Antipatris (Aphék)<sup>4</sup> and of Phaselis (Fasayli). He established new military settlements, villages, or towns around which

3. See W. D. Dinsmoor, "An Archeological Earthquake at Olympia," *AJA*, series 2, 45 (1941): 399–427; M. Lämmer, "Eine Propaganda-Aktion des Königs Herodes in Olympia," in *Perspektiven der Sportwissenschaft* (Schorndorf: Hoffmann, 1973), pp. 160–73.

4. *NEAEHL* 1.67–72.

he settled demobilized veterans of his armies, presumably with civic structures though probably of a minor character. Those known are Gaba (Sha'ar ha-'Amaqim on the Plain of Esdraelon),<sup>5</sup> Pente Komai ("Five Villages," just north of Sebaste, where he probably settled six thousand colonists; *War* 1.405), Bathyra (in Batanea), and Heshbon (Hesban, in Peraea). There were military colonists in other areas (for example in Idumaea; see *War* 2.55), but no details survive. These colonies derived from a combination of need, availability of land, and strategic location.<sup>6</sup> Herod had large royal estates (Plain of Esdraelon, Western Samaria, Idumaea) or new land available to distribute (e.g., Batanea, Peraea),<sup>7</sup> which helped to shape their location.<sup>8</sup>

Some of the same general factors applied also to Antipatris, Agrippias, and Phaselis. The latter case is a good example.<sup>9</sup> Herod prized his huge royal estates in the Jericho area, from which he derived a substantial income.<sup>10</sup> A new city to the north of Jericho, extensively irrigated, would have stimulated new agricultural developments to complement Jericho's riches and encourage new trade. It was on an important north-south transportation route, easily accessible to Jerusalem.

Antipatris and Agrippias were also close to Herodian estates; Agrippias provided another (minor) outlet to the sea between Gaza and Ashkelon. Antipatris was a new town in the Sharon plain astride the main route between Jerusalem and Caesarea Maritima, with the added advantage that it was near the royal estates in Samaritis at Qiryat Bene Hassan.<sup>11</sup>

Caesarea Maritima and Sebaste were the most significant in complexity, size, and strategic importance. Caesarea Maritima was Herod's showpiece city; it was a major outlet to the Mediterranean, home for the Judean navy, the largest harbor in the Mediterranean. It rearranged trade patterns in the area. Produce, trade, and people flowed in both directions; it was a city where Hellenistic and Roman ideals jostled with Jewish convictions, where Roman, Greek, Jew, Nabatean, and Egyptian would rub shoulders daily. The city covered 164 acres and included a large number of state-sponsored or royal structures:<sup>12</sup> the

5. *NEAEHL* 4.139-40.

6. Note the social importance of land allocation in Italy by Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Julius Caesar.

7. Again note the similarity to the ways in which land was freed and distributed to demobbed veterans in Rome.

8. On royal estates, see Fiensy, *Social History*, chap. 2, pp. 24-48; S. Applebaum, "The Settlement Pattern of Western Samaria," in S. Dar, with a historical commentary by S. Applebaum, *Landscape and Pattern. An Archaeological Survey of Samaria, 800 B.C.E.-636 C.E.* (Oxford: BAR/IS, 1986).

9. Regrettably it has not been excavated, but a visit to the site immediately turns up evidence of the city.

10. Strabo, *Geog.* 16.2.41, emphasizes the wealth of the palms, fruits, and balsam products.

11. See Fiensy, *Social History*, pp. 38-42; *NEAEHL* 4.1316-18.

12. *NEAEHL* 1.270-91 and literature cited there.

harbor itself with its installations and warehouses; water and sewage facilities; walls; gates; streets; agora; hippodrome; theater; amphitheater; Promontory Palace; and the Temple of Roma and Augustus hovering over the whole at the focal point of the harbor.

Sebaste was different, symbolically valuable as the ancient capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The Temple of Roma and Augustus in Sebaste was built directly over the old royal palaces of King Ahab, perhaps intended to make explicit the symbolic succession. Like Caesarea, Sebaste's new name and temple paid homage to Augustus; in both cities Herod could be less careful of local religious sensibilities. Sebaste was similar in size to Caesarea; though less complex, it covered 160 acres that included among state-financed projects walls, gates, streets, aqueducts, agora, hippodrome, theater, and the Temple of Roma and Augustus.<sup>13</sup>

#### FORTRESSES AND PALACES

The most dramatic of Herod's buildings, heavily overlaid with legend and well preserved in the archaeological record, Herod's fortresses were places of drama and excitement. Several variant types can be distinguished. (1) *Walls*. In a few cases Herod built or restored walls of cities: Caesarea Maritima, Sebaste, Jerusalem and—outside his territory—Byblos. He may also have built walls in a number of other places, not yet clearly established. (2) *Fortresses primarily*. The literary and archaeological records do not always allow certainty, but the following should be thought of mainly as fortresses: the Antonia in Jerusalem, Masada, Cypros, Docus, Alexandreion, Hyrcania, Machaerus, and perhaps also Herodium East (in Peraea). (3) *Fortresses with generous living quarters*. Several of Herod's forts seem oriented more to royal life than to protection: the towers Phaselis, Hippicus, and Mariamme incorporated into but hovering over the Royal Palace in Jerusalem and, of a quite different order, the Northern Palace at Masada and the Upper Palace at Herodium, near Bethlehem. (4) *Fortlets or unknown*. There may be a series of fortlets in Idumaea or Peraea.<sup>14</sup> A fortress call Agrippina probably occupied the site of the later Crusader fortress at Belvoir; and a fort still probably occupied the site of Keren Naftali, overlooking Lake Huleh. Esbus (Heshbon) may have functioned as a fortress for part of Herod's reign.

It is often claimed that these forts formed a system defending Herod's borders from external attack and providing internal security against the deep hatred of the people. One sequence of fortresses suggests a strong line of externally oriented strongholds, most of which would have been near enough to provide

13. *NEAEHL* 4.1300–1310.

14. See A. Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans and Ancient Arabs* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1988), p. 155, which shows a security belt (also p. 154, n.64, and literature cited there).

internal security if needed: Masada, Machaerus, Hyrcania, Cypros-Docus, Alexandreion, and perhaps Agrippina. All were within signalling distance of each other, easily defended, and extremely strong. Three factors modify this view. (1) Without exception these forts went back to Maccabean foundations, when the need for this particular line of defense was pressing. Their genius, especially their brilliant locations, was Maccabean. The literary and historical evidence confirms that the Hasmoneans were more in need of defense and more anxious about security than Herod. Herod restored, refurbished, modernized, and improved them—especially the water systems and royal apartments—but these were his establishments in neither location nor purpose. (2) In Herod's day this line of defense made little sense. Though some of the forts played a strategic role in the first days of Herod's rule,<sup>15</sup> for the majority of his reign they were irrelevant as fortresses. The Jordan valley was not the natural border it had been in earlier days and there was no need for a major defensive line at that point, since he controlled almost the whole of the adjacent territory east of the Jordan (Peraea).<sup>16</sup> (3) In refurbishing them, the archaeology makes clear, attention was paid to the living amenities.<sup>17</sup> While they were fortified and in extremely strong positions (Hyrcania, Machaerus, and Masada, along with Herodium, were the last fortresses to fall in the Great Revolt), in Herod's day they were mainly wilderness retreats that could be used in an emergency as places of refuge, with basic royal amenities for an enjoyable visit if one needed solitude. Their remote locations also encouraged their use for executions.

At Jerusalem and Jericho there was a sequence of structures: in both cases the earliest Herodian palace was a reconstruction of a Hasmonean palace, superseded in both places by a purpose-built palace, in Jericho two later palaces. The Hasmonean palace at Jericho was the largest of the three, but the last of them, now known as the Winter Palace, is demonstrably the most interesting.<sup>18</sup> At Jerusalem the later Royal Palace was a vast affair with two large wings, raised on a podium to create a platform for the requisite structures, gardens, and pools, and overlooked by three great towers to the north.<sup>19</sup>

15. Alexandreion was rebuilt by Pheroras in 39/38 BCE.

16. Note that Herod's children, Antipas and Philip, were the ones to construct walls at several cities: Sepphoris, Bethsaida, Pania, Betharamphtha-Julias (*Ant.* 18.27–28).

17. There were strong points of similarity among these. They turned their backs to the exterior. There was an interior court around which living and service facilities were arranged. Much attention was paid to the collection of water and there was sometimes provision for a bath complex. There were a few imaginative elements in the design, with some gracious touches in the way the design was carried out—columns, capitals, paved courtyards, fresco work, stuccoed architectural decoration, and the like. But there is little evidence of intricate mosaics, elaborate fresco work, or spaces designed for pleasurable purposes, though some of that type of work is present, especially in Masada's Northern Palace.

18. See E. Netzer, *NEAEHL* 2.682–92.

19. Brief description by H. Geva, *NEAEHL* 2.736, with literature cited on pp. 756–57.



In Judea, in addition to the palaces at Jericho, was Herodium, one of Herod's most imaginative structures, a fortified palace with extensive related facilities clustered around the bottom of the hill, including at least two other palaces—the Intermediate Palace and the Lower Palace. Herodium was one of Herod's favorite places, a retreat near Jerusalem with facilities suitable for large-scale entertaining.

In Idumaea, Masada is known from both literature and archaeology. There were two main palaces, the earlier Western Palace and the Northern Palace, along with several minor residences for nobles. Both main palaces were significant, but the Northern Palace was far more interesting architecturally.<sup>20</sup> In Samaritis the only known palace, which was more of a fort, was at Alexandreion. On the coast land adjacent to Samaritis, the Promontory Palace at Caesarea Maritima has recently been re-excavated and provides excellent new evidence of a palace built purely for pleasure.

In Galilee there may have been a Herodian palace at Sepphoris (*Ant.* 17.271), of which no evidence has yet been found in the excavations there, though there is some evidence of Herodian-style masonry. It may be that the palace, like the theater, was built by Antipas. In Gaulanitis there may have been a palace at Panias. In Peraea Herod had a substantial but unfortified palace at Betharamphtha,<sup>21</sup> across the Jordan River from Jericho, still unexcavated; to judge from the extent of the tell it was of a considerable size (*War* 2.59, 168, 252; *Ant.* 18.27–28). The fortified palace at Machaerus, associated with the later beheading of John the Baptist, marked the border with Nabatea and was undoubtedly more fortress than palace. In Phoenicia Herod apparently had a palace at Ashkelon, though nothing is known of it.

Only four of these can be known in detail and are relevant: leaving aside the fortified palaces, the Winter Palace at Jericho, the Northern Palace at Masada, the Upper Palace at Herodium, and Promontory Palace at Caesarea Maritima. Coincidentally, these four palaces were much alike, all falling within the villa style that was such an interesting part of Roman architecture.<sup>22</sup> All had architectural flair, made dramatic visual impression, used circular elements, and showed up-to-date technology in a coherent solution. The four together make a good case for a single architectural genius behind Herod's buildings. All four used a site most patrons would have shied away from in horror and turned its disadvantages into an opportunity to show off, with flair, imagination, and drama.

20. E. Netzer, *Masada*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993).

21. Deduced from Josephus's comment that it was Antipas who threw up walls around Julius. This would confirm the earlier view that fortification was not a primary concern of Herod's.

22. See A. G. MacKay, *Houses, Villas and Palaces in the Roman World* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975).

The Northern Palace at Masada is the most obvious example; it occupied a knife-edge with three platforms spread over a thirty-five meter (110 foot) vertical drop—the top platform being semi-circular, the middle circular, and the lowest rectangular.<sup>23</sup> It opened out on a view as spectacular as any villa anywhere in the Roman world, looking north up the Rift valley, east to the Dead Sea, and west to the wilderness. Less obviously dramatic, until one thinks about its main use in the winter months, was the Winter Palace at Jericho, set on both sides of the Wadi Qelt with the two sides mirroring each other and connected by a bridge over the wadi.<sup>24</sup> The flair lay in the rejection of the obvious solution—build near the oasis with its natural advantages of water, warm winter weather, abundant fruits and vegetables. Instead, like the Hasmoneans before him, Herod built away from the oasis, so that water had to be brought by aqueduct from up the wadi. The drama came from the opportunities inherent in having a torrent pass under the bridge whenever it rained in the hills east of Jerusalem. On the north side of the wadi was a fine villa, on the south side a magnificently executed garden, a huge pool, and an artificial mound with a splendid gazebo, perhaps with a small bath complex, the whole taking advantage of views of the oasis and the Dead Sea.

In the Upper Palace at Herodium the flair was in making a hill appear to be an artificial mound, constructing a circular palace to suit the conical top, with views of both wilderness and agricultural land just at the border line between “desert and sown,” incorporating public and private spaces, together with a small bath.<sup>25</sup> The structure was designed for use as Herod’s mausoleum after his death. The palace most recently excavated, the Promontory Palace at Caesarea Maritima, combined several features of the Northern Palace and the Winter Palace; it was focussed on a pool and was anchored to the shore by various service facilities around a large colonnaded courtyard; at the western (sea) end there were public or entertaining areas with a huge semi-circular vantage point to catch the sunset.<sup>26</sup>

These were the best—perhaps the only—true villas in Israel. Though large farmsteads have been discovered, there is little evidence that the elite in Jerusalem (quite wealthy, to judge from houses in Jerusalem) built country houses

23. The top level (the entrance) had living spaces, the middle level (still a controversial matter) probably was a whimsical circular gazebo, and the lowest level was the main retreat area, with a small three-room bath complex tucked out almost in mid-air underneath the floor level. See Netzer, *Masada* vol. 3, Part IV.

24. Netzer, “Jericho: Tulul Abu el-‘Alayiq,” *NEAEHL* 2.682–91.

25. The old view that the whole hill is artificial, often repeated in modern books, is simply false. The artificiality appears from the way, once the main structure’s ring was built, fill was placed around it to smooth the transition from hill to building, thus seeming to finish off the natural hill in an obviously “artificial” manner, a perfect “breast” as Josephus says.

26. B. Burrell, K. Gleason, and E. Netzer, “Uncovering Herod’s Seaside Palace,” *BAR* 19/3 (1993): 50–52, 76.

for their pleasure and relaxation. Unlike the other end of the Empire—Gaul, Germany, Britain, and Spain, where the local elites delighted in villas—few existed in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. More remarkable, however, is that some of the dramatic elements in these Herodian structures, notably the vertical drop at Masada's Northern Palace, pre-dated analogies in the Roman world.<sup>27</sup> The use of round elements was another distinctive element in Herod's palaces. Especially notable was Herodium's round structure to be used as a mausoleum, echoing the great Mausoleum of Augustus in Rome, whose date may well be later.

Herod's villas were technologically up-to-date (*opus reticulatum*, *opus quadratum*, *opus sectile*, with vaults both circular and barrel, full Roman baths, mosaics, plaster work, frescoes, painting in the latest style, and so on). They contained no decorative effects offending against the second commandment, though one might have expected him to suit himself in his private spaces. Apparently the lack of such art reflects his personal commitment to Judaism.<sup>28</sup>

Each of these palaces was a coherent solution to a deliberately chosen challenge. Each was primarily for private use, though all incorporated rooms that were intended for public or semi-public occasions. Each showed a delicate, refined hand at work, sensitively responding to the mixture of personal, public, site-related, and environmental challenges. Each focussed on the building's main purpose: view (Northern Palace), enjoyment of the sea (Promontory Palace), seclusion (Upper Palace), or dramatic natural climate (Winter Palace). The Royal Palace in Jerusalem may have had a distinctive feature, perhaps public entertainment and statecraft; regrettably little can be said about it.

#### RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

The Upper Palace at Herodium was, in one sense, a religious building—it was a mausoleum. Consistent with this project, though different in the details, Herod built another circular structure as a family mausoleum in Jerusalem, just north of the Damascus Gate,<sup>29</sup> which has much in common with Augustus's mausoleum in Rome but pre-dates it. In the sequence of large, round, family tombs, the Herodian ones come early, perhaps at the beginning. Herod also built a memorial to David at the entrance to his tomb, which he plundered at a needy point in his career (*Ant.* 16.179–84).<sup>30</sup>

27. The nearest comparison to Masada is Tiberius's villa at Capri, built at the top and down the cliff face; it is forty or fifty years later.

28. It has been argued that in some of his baths the cold pool functioned as a *mikveh* (Masada and Cypros, to mention two). If correct, this adds to our understanding of Herod's practices.

29. E. Netzer, "Remains of an Opus Reticulatum Building in Jerusalem," *IEJ* 33 (1983): 163–75.

30. Enthusiastically but indecisively, H. Shanks, "Is This King David's Tomb?," *BAR* 21/1 (1995): 62–67.

In Hebron, Herod built a kind of maquette for the Temple in Jerusalem, a memorial for the Patriarchs and Matriarchs (Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah), the Haram al-Khalil. He built a similar memorial to Abraham just north of Hebron at Mamre, recalling the oaks that were located there according to the Bible. Located in Idumaea, both structures demonstrated an aspect of the early phases of Herod's religious program: he recalled common antecedents of both Idumaeans (Edomites) and Israelites.<sup>31</sup> In undertaking these projects he walked a fine line between those Idumaeans who, like his own family, had embraced Judaism and those who remained attracted to the old Edomite traditions.

He also participated in a Temple to Ba'al Shamim at Si'a, near Canatha (Qanawat, on the Jebel Druze). The evidence for this (see Appendix B) was found on a statue base with an inscription in the remains of the porch. He probably contributed financially to the project,<sup>32</sup> thus indicating an accommodation with Nabatean religious interests.

Herod's primary interest, with the exception of the Temple in Jerusalem, was the Imperial cult, for which he built three temples to Roma and Augustus:<sup>33</sup> one in Caesarea Maritima dominating the harbor and city center, one in Sebaste at the highest point of the city, and one in Pnias alongside the grottoes dedicated to the god Pan.<sup>34</sup> From his confirmation as king in 31 BCE, Herod maintained a consistent loyalty to Augustus, to which he gave visible form with these three temples. He chose sites that were unlikely to offend: Strato's Tower, a long-time Hellenistic city, renamed Caesarea; Samaria, capital of the Northern Kingdom, renamed Sebaste; and Pnias, long associated with the pagan god Pan. That there is no recollection of disputes over these temples indicates the success of his choices of sites.<sup>35</sup> All of these cities must have had a substantial number of Jews, who accommodated themselves, presumably, to this homage to the Emperor. Since the Jerusalem Temple offered prayers to God on behalf

31. The primary literature gives no indication of either as Herodian projects, though the construction evidence is unmistakable. These are good examples of the limited nature of the literary records.

32. The style and structure are typically Nabatean, unlike anything else that Herod was involved in or developed on his own.

33. Augustus insisted that temples for the cult be dedicated to Roma and him together. He prohibited Emperor worship in Rome itself, though he allowed it in other parts, especially in the East.

34. The first two have been identified in excavations; the last is currently being clarified in ongoing excavations. The excavator of the Pan caves believes that the Temple to Roma and Augustus is the largest of the small temples backed up against the cliff within which are caves and numerous inscriptions to Pan, though this seems unlikely to me.

35. *Ant.* 15.365 could allude to difficulties in 20 BCE when Herod remitted taxes to win back people's favor, lost by resentment at the dissolution of religion and the disappearance of customs; it is too general to be sure.

of the Emperor daily, it could be argued that the temples of Roma were merely an extension of that provision for homage to Augustus.

Outside his own territories Herod helped with other religious structures. Josephus tells us Herod built temples in Tyre and Berytus (Beirut), but he gives no details (*War* 1.422) and none have emerged archaeologically. Josephus also says that Herod restored the Temple of Pythian Apollo in Rhodes (*War* 1.424; *Ant.* 16.147) in addition to the gifts he gave for shipbuilding there. This temple has been extensively excavated and partly restored, though details of the construction history are lacking, so that we have no confirmation of Josephus's rather casual remark concerning Herod's involvement. The Temple to Pythian Apollo sits in a wonderfully articulated complex of civic buildings on the Acropolis in Rhodes, including a stadium, odeum, and terraces in the best Hellenistic manner.<sup>36</sup> Probably this temple also owes nothing to Herod apart from money. He may have helped to rebuild religious structures at Olympia that were shattered in a serious earthquake in 36 BCE. The statue base on the Acropolis in Athens may have celebrated a Herodian benefaction connected with the worship of Athena in the Parthenon, but there is no literary evidence of this.

Herod's enormous contribution to the rebuilding of the Second Temple—Josephus calls it a work of great piety (*War* 1.400–401)—needs a book in itself.<sup>37</sup> The rebuilding's organization and careful preparations, the quality and the enormous quantities of materials used, the vast scale and drama of the Temple, its innovations, its integration into the existing cityscape, the demand to continue regular worship—all are truly staggering. Determined to leave Judaism richer for his having been king, Herod undertook this project and persuaded the priestly hierarchy of its viability, even gaining their agreement to important innovations such as the courts of women and gentiles. Reactions were varied but generally positive: "He who has not seen the Temple has not seen a beautiful building" (*b.Baba Bathra* 4a). Some, though, must have been offended by the money lavished on it. Some, such as the folk responsible for the Dead Sea Scrolls, felt the new Temple was further evidence of the bankruptcy of the leaders of Judaism. Others, however, valued the employment the project provided; when the Temple was more or less finished in the early 60s, eighteen

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36. Some of Herod's early coin types have a tripod like the tripods associated with the worship of Pythian Apollo. It is not clear whether this is intended as a deliberate reference to this renovation project or to the incense tripod in the Temple in Jerusalem. There is another shape of tripod altogether on several of Herod's coin types; the legs on this are more like the kind of tripod legs found in Israel. Since no representation of the tripod in the Temple is known, the question cannot be settled.

37. See P. Richardson, "The Social-Historical Significance for Gentiles and Women of Herod's Temple Architecture," in J. Halligan and Philip Davies, eds., *Second Temple Studies*, forthcoming.

thousand people were put out of work, a fact that helped to foment the great revolt, according to Josephus.

The Temple was to serve all Jews, though in fact it could serve only those who came to it. Synagogues provided for the rest. The records suggest that Herod built no synagogues, though nothing could have been more natural. There are two possible exceptions to this general picture. (1) There was a synagogue at Masada dating from the Sicarii occupation during the Great Revolt; an earlier stage may also have housed a synagogue, and if so, that earlier stage might have been associated with Herod's work at Masada.<sup>38</sup> (2) A fragmentary inscription, though its reading is uncertain, from the Jewish catacombs in Rome can be read to refer to a "Synagogue of the Herodians"; if that reading is correct, Herod was seen in some way as the synagogue's patron (Appendix B).<sup>39</sup>

Herod's buildings allow preliminary judgments on Herod's religious convictions. He was a Jew, committed to the Temple, accepting the commandments dealing with images and figurative representations. He was devoted to the Patriarchs and Matriarchs of Israel and to the dead members of his family. His commitment to Augustus was almost as strong as his commitment to Yahweh; he had no reservations about building temples to honor Augustus within his own kingdom. He also contributed to other cults, for example, to Ba'al Shamim, to Pythian Apollo, to temples in Tyre and Sidon, and perhaps to cults in Olympia and Athens (see chap. 10).

#### CULTURAL BUILDINGS

Theaters, hippodromes, stadia, amphitheaters, baths, and gymnasia were part of Hellenistic culture, though foreign to religious Jews. Part of the strangeness came from the activities held in such places (dramatic events, games, spectacles, nude athletic competitions, study of philosophy); part derived from the styles of the buildings, with their figurative decorations sometimes offensively portrayed; part related to the quasi-religious character of the events that took place there. That Herod built a number of such structures is important to his portrait.

Jerusalem was the most sensitive place in the Jewish world, yet it had had a gymnasium since before the Hasmonean revolt of 165 BCE (1 Macc. 1:14-15). Josephus says that Herod built a theater, a hippodrome, and an amphitheater. The theater was located on the north slope of Er-Ras (the south side of Wadi es-Shamm), a few hundred meters south of the Hinnom Valley, where it had a

38. Netzer, *Masada*, vol. 3, discusses the possibilities and concludes that its original Herodian structure was a stable, a view I find unconvincing.

39. P. Richardson, "Augustan-era Synagogues in Rome," in K. Donfried and P. Richardson, eds., *Judaism and Christianity in Rome in the First Century*, forthcoming.

view of the whole south wall of the city.<sup>40</sup> An amphitheater is once referred to by Josephus and a hippodrome twice (*Ant.* 15.268 for the former; *War* 2.44 and *Ant.* 17.255 for the latter), though he may be sloppy in his terminology and may merely refer to the same structures.<sup>41</sup> The last two passages are incidental references to Pentecost pilgrims (4 BCE) being located south of the city. Josephus probably confuses hippodrome and amphitheater in these three passages; it seems likeliest that Herod built an amphitheater—possibly a hippodrome—on a flat site southwest of the city, not yet identified.<sup>42</sup>

In two of Herod's favorite places, Herodium and Jericho, he built similar facilities, in both cases developing unorthodox solutions. Just below the Intermediate Palace at Herodium he constructed a "course" of some kind, on axis with an important but mysterious "monumental building." No analogy exists for this combination of structures.<sup>43</sup> At Jericho he combined a hippodrome-like "course" with a theater-like building at one end, so that the viewing area was not along the sides, as in a hippodrome or stadium, but from the starting or finishing end.<sup>44</sup> These two unique solutions to spectacles were at his own private palaces, where the public would not attend. For public purposes more traditional structures were provided.

Examples of public arenas can be seen at Caesarea Maritima, where the Herodian hippodrome has been excavated parallel to the sea shore. It was damaged by wave action from the Mediterranean (it was built too close), and was later filled in and covered over. A new hippodrome was subsequently built on the east side of the city. Just south of the hippodrome Herod built a theater,<sup>45</sup> and in the northeast part of the city an amphitheater can be detected, though it

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40. The shape of the cavea can still be seen. Test holes in the nineteenth century confirmed the identification, but no scientific excavation has been carried out. On theaters, see A. Segal, *Architecture and the Theatre in Eretz Israel during the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 1991).

41. *Ant.* 15.268 distinguishes the "amphitheater" from and later than the "theater." He locates the former in the "plain," probably to be understood as the Rephaim Plain, southwest of the city proper.

42. *Ant.* 15. 268–91 incorrectly uses the word *theatron* for contests typically carried on in a hippodrome, stadium, amphitheater, or gymnasium, but not in a *theatron*. In the "trophies incident" the structure in question was for animal contests (15.274), suggesting strongly that the second building—where the trophies were hung—was an amphitheater.

43. There was no obvious provision for viewing areas for this course, though the Intermediate and Upper Palaces provided vantage points, suggesting a "private" purpose.

44. The theater-like structure at Jericho was, uncharacteristically, made of mud brick. The sides and rear face formed a rectangle, not a semi-circle as in other theaters built on a flat site, creating a space at the rear of the cavea. The site is almost on axis with the Winter Palace, though a good distance north of it.

45. The excavators concluded that the earliest phase of this much rebuilt theater was Herodian. The most recent excavations seem to imply that the hippodrome and palace, and possibly the theater, formed a carefully articulated trio of buildings.

is unexcavated. At Sebaste there was a Herodian phase of the still visible theater<sup>46</sup> and a stadium carved at one end into the hill on which the city sits.<sup>47</sup> Herod built a bath at Ashkelon, gymnasia in Ptolemais, Tripolis, and Damascus, and theaters in Sidon and Damascus (in Damascus the location of the theater can be determined from the semi-circular street pattern to the south of the Omayyad Mosque and on one side of "Straight Street").

Three statements summarize Herod's cultural building projects. (1) Herod built cultural facilities mostly in places where religious proclivities would not cause problems—hellenized cities in his own areas and Hellenistic cities elsewhere. (2) His attraction to these buildings prompted him to experiment with novel forms in places where only he and his guests used them. (3) The two such structures he built in the Holy City expressed his cultural convictions at the center of Judaism, but he located them outside the city and minimized their offense by using a limited decorative vocabulary.<sup>48</sup>

#### COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Some large-scale constructions were intended to promote trade.<sup>49</sup> The most important was Caesarea Maritima with its enormous harbor installations, warehouse facilities, commercial space, and the like. Smaller but analogous facilities were provided in other new cities, especially Sebaste (at the center of a rich agricultural area), but also in Agrippias, Antipatris, Phaselis, and others. In Jerusalem, the Temple reconstruction provided for commercial activity along the streets adjacent to the Temple retaining walls.<sup>50</sup> Whether other parts of the city also had state-sponsored shopping or commercial facilities is not certain.

Two sites deserve special mention. (1) To the north of the Winter Palace at Jericho was a cluster of buildings whose purpose has not yet been fully clarified; likely they constituted a manufacturing or refining area, connected with the royal estates at Jericho. If confirmed, this fact would imply that Herod maintained a close watch on the products (perfumes, ointments, opobalsam, and date wine) he produced; if this could be generalized, it could have repercussions on the commercial and manufacturing activities near his other estates in

46. See J. W. Crowfoot, "Samaria Excavations: The Stadium," *PEFQS* (1934): 62–73, and plates I–VI.

47. At Sepphoris, the theater cut into the north slope of the city's hill shows no first-century BCE evidence, a conclusion that coheres with Josephus's silence.

48. The so-called trophies incident showed Herod's reserve with respect to decorative matters (*Ant.* 15.268–91).

49. On the economy in general, Z. Safrai, *The Economy of Roman Palestine* (London: Routledge, 1994).

50. Evidence for shops is quite certain along the south wall (below the terrace at the Huldah Gates), under the main pier supporting the outer end of the stair at "Robinson's arch," and along parts of the street beside the Western Wall.



western Samaria, the Plain of Esdraelon, Idumaea, and so on. (2) En Boqeq, at the southwest corner of the Dead Sea, had a small industrial installation producing pharmaceuticals and cosmetics;<sup>51</sup> nothing connects it directly with Herod himself, but it is possible—perhaps even probable—that he had a finger in that pie too. Under the procurators the area was an Imperial estate; perhaps it already was a royal prerogative under Herod.

Outside his own territories, Herod provided benefactions for commercial facilities at four locations, intended no doubt to impress upon citizens his interest in trade and commerce. At Tyre and Berytus he constructed “halls, porticoes . . . and markets” (*exedras de kai stoas . . . kai agoras*, *War* 1.422), referring in part to commercial activity.<sup>52</sup> At Antioch he repaved the main street and fitted it with colonnades—thus introducing the first covered shopping street. In Chios he rebuilt a *stoa* destroyed by Mithridates, possibly, but not certainly, a storehouse.

Herod's commercial and manufacturing interests show intriguingly in his dealings with the shipbuilding industry at Rhodes. Josephus's allusions to these dealings seem to indicate two related things:<sup>53</sup> benefactions in general to support the industry itself in whatever way was appropriate<sup>54</sup> and, following the construction of a trireme, giving his business to Rhodes when he needed large warships.

I use the modern term “infrastructure” to cover state projects: roads, sewers, reservoirs, and aqueducts are the most obvious needs. Herod was involved in far more of this type of work than the literary record tells us (since most ancient authors are not interested in such matters) or than we can infer from archaeology—the projects are not readily datable. There is no hint in the literature that Herod built roads, yet it is inconceivable that he was inactive on this front, given his new cities, relations with neighboring states, interest in trade and the economy. His extensive harbor facilities at Caesarea Maritima were undoubtedly state-funded; he probably provided minor harbor facilities elsewhere, as at Anthedon-Agrippias or Joppa.

Clearly visible in the archaeological record, and occasionally in the literary record, are provisions for water and sewage. The concern for waste removal at Caesarea Maritima is commented on by Josephus, who describes it as an engineering marvel.<sup>55</sup> There were sewers below the Temple court in Jerusalem,

51. M. Gichon, “En Boqeq,” *NEAEHL* 2.395–99.

52. The *stoa* originally was a long storehouse for grain and *agora* clearly meant market place.

53. At *War* 1.280 he commissions the building of a trireme to take him to Italy in 40 BCE. At *War* 1.424 he provides funds *eis nautikon* (“for shipbuilding”); at *Ant* 16.147 *pros naupegian* (“for shipbuilding”).

54. Shipbuilding sheds have been excavated alongside the harbor in Rhodes, though not from this period. A full report has never appeared.

55. The rise and fall of the Mediterranean flushed out the city sewer system, according to *Ant.* 15.340.

where the sacrificial cult created a very heavy load of blood and waste that needed to be carried away, and under the street west of the western wall.<sup>56</sup> Appropriate attention was given to similar projects in urban contexts such as Sebaste.

Water facilities are more obvious today.<sup>57</sup> In Jerusalem Herod built several major reservoirs, partly for citizens' needs and more particularly for the Temple's needs. This was presumably state work at Herod's direction. The following were in whole or part Herodian: the Pool of Israel (north of the Temple precinct), the Struthion Pool (at the Antonia Fortress), the Mamillah Pool (northwest of the Jaffa Gate), Hezekiah's Pool (northeast of the Jaffa Gate), the Sheep Pool (Pool of Bethesda at St. Anne's), possibly the Birkat Sitti Maryam (outside St. Stephen's Gate), and the Birkat es-Sultan (Serpent's Pool, southwest of the Jaffa Gate). Most were above the level of the Temple platform and could supply water for cultic purposes. Some were also intended for the city's general water supply.

Herod's most ambitious water project was Solomon's Pools, where water was collected within a bowl-shaped area south of Bethlehem and brought by aqueduct to the city—a distance of twenty-four kilometers as the aqueduct flows (another system in the Wadi Arub extended the length to sixty-one kilometers). The route followed the contours in some places, cut through the hills in another, and eventually approached Jerusalem along the Hinnom and Tyropoean valleys to enter the Temple across Wilson's arch at platform level. Of the three enormous reservoirs, one and maybe two were built by Herod; one was probably built by Pontius Pilate a generation later with money "borrowed" from the Temple resources. Herod revised installations at the Gihon Spring on the Ophel (City of David), at Warren's Shaft leading to Hezekiah's Tunnel, and at the Siloam and Hamra Pools at the junction of the Kidron and Hinnom valleys.

Herod's careful attention to water is confirmed by the evidence of other Herodian sites. All the fortresses had intricate water facilities—aqueducts, cisterns, collecting basins, and so on (traceable at Hyrcania, Herodium, Jericho, Docus, Cypros, Masada, Alexandreion, and Machaerus). Caesarea Maritima, Sebaste, Pnias, and Phaselis all had extensive facilities. At Laodicea ad Marum in Syria Herod provided an aqueduct for the city.

In his own palaces he satisfied his needs with pools of different kinds: at Herodium, a large pool with a gazebo in the middle reached only by boat, the whole surrounded by stoas alongside a landscaped garden; at Jericho, a large pool with a more or less matching garden, overlooked by a central gazebo

56. It was carried away in sewers below the platform, one of which can still be seen in the south wall. From here the waste went—as the city waste does today—down Wadi Kidron past Mar Saba and to the Dead Sea.

57. On some of the following, *NEAEHL* 2.746–47.

crowning an artificial mound; at Caesarea Maritima, a pool in the interior of the palace with a statue in the middle; and at the royal palace in Jerusalem, "deep canals and ponds everywhere, studded with bronze figures, through which water was discharged, and around the streams were numerous cots for tame pigeons" (*War* 5.181–82). He built swimming pools at both Masada (south of the Western Palace) and at Machaerus, and perhaps elsewhere.

Water was the most crucial infrastructure need, for which Herod provided imaginatively. He tended to sewage facilities in his largest urban centers and provided significant commercial and industrial facilities. These kinds of facilities did not attract much attention from contemporary authors; the evidence is all the more impressive.

#### STRATEGY AND RATIONALE

The reasons for this largess—a program almost overpowering in its scope—were complex. It will not do to attribute such a program to megalomania or paranoia.<sup>58</sup> The reasons for it change as need and Herod's circumstances change, so ultimately the question requires reassessment of the social conditions of Herod's reign. In the following analysis I have conjectured the dating of many projects (see Appendix A), though most dates should be considered merely educated guesses.

When introducing a list of Herod's projects, Josephus says encomiastically: "Thenceforth he advanced to the utmost prosperity; his noble spirit rose to greater heights, and his lofty ambition was mainly directed to works of piety" (*War* 1.400; *kai to pleon tēs magalonoias epeteinen eis eusebeian*). He then goes on to deal with Herod's piety toward Judaism and its cult center, piety toward his patrons Antony and Augustus and Agrippa, piety toward his family members, and then toward himself. Josephus's artificial approach integrates differentiated aspects of one quality: piety.<sup>59</sup> His unitary approach is attractive, but overlooks many factors.

58. P. Richardson, "Religion and Architecture. A Study in Herod's Piety, Power, Pomp and Pleasure," *Bulletin of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies* 45 (1985): 3–29.

59. In *War* 1.400 Josephus attributes to Herod "utmost prosperity," "noble spirit" (or "moral stature"?), "superb generosity" (or "lofty ambition"?), and "works of piety." At the conclusion of the section (1.429–30) he summarizes his life: "Herod's genius was matched by his physical constitution. . . . He was blessed by good fortune. . . ." These contrast starkly with evaluations after his death: "the most cruel tyrant . . . , he crippled the towns in his own dominion, he embellished those of other nations, lavishing the life blood of Judea on foreign communities. . . . he had sunk the nation to poverty and the last degree of iniquity" (*War* 2.84–86, in the mouths of the Jewish delegation in Rome); "he was . . . cruel to all alike and one who easily gave in to anger and was contemptuous of justice. And yet he was as greatly favoured by fortune as any man . . ." (*Ant.* 17.191, in Josephus's own words).

**A. GRATITUDE AND HONOR.** Early in Herod's career, gratitude was a dominant motif—part of his “piety.” Herod renamed the fortress in Jerusalem after his patron of the moment, Mark Antony. The same motive was evident in his gratitude to Rhodes for the help he received there on his way to Rome while fleeing from Antigonus in 40 BCE; though short of funds he assisted Rhodes to repair the damage caused by the war against Cassius (*Ant.* 14.377–78).<sup>60</sup> He was grateful to Rhodes a second time, when Octavian confirmed his kingship in 31 BCE. Gratitude was his earliest and his strongest motive as benefactor—exactly what one should expect in a society dominated by a patronage system with strong notions of honor. He accrued honor from large expenditures in memory of benefactors and communities that had helped him. What is startling is the extent of these projects.

**B. SELF-PRESERVATION.** The defensive line of fortresses along the Rift Valley were Maccabean foundations whose location and style were set. Their rebuilding was among Herod's first tasks. Parthia had just withdrawn, Nabatea continued to threaten, Antigonus was still active (until 37), and the population was not friendly. During the early and middle 30s, then, self-preservation and defense were considerations. As late as the 20s he fortified two major cities, Sebaste and Caesarea Maritima, as was customary at the time (see map 5).

It is easy to exaggerate, however. Two factors lessen defense as a motive. First, Herod did not continue to build fortified structures throughout his reign. As stability became a reality he built unprotected structures—the palaces at Jericho, Betharamphtha, and Caesarea, for example. Of the later projects, only Herodium was truly fortified, and its architectural character was strongly influenced by its eventual use as a mausoleum. Apart from the rebuilding of the Maccabean fortresses there is no evidence of a strong sense of self-preservation or of “paranoia” behind Herod's programs. A second factor that lessens defense as a motive is that there were *no* rebuilt fortresses in Galilee or Gaulanitis (there may have been a couple of existing ones), only a few in Peraea (Machaerus, and possibly Herodium East and Esbus), and one in Idumaea (Masada).<sup>61</sup> Peraea and Idumaea were the likeliest problem areas for Herod. The popular picture of Herod as an embattled monarch who kept his people in subjection by force of arms, with well-manned fortresses spread throughout his territory, does not persuade in an archaeological and architectural analysis. He may have kept people in some degree of subjection, but the motive of self-defense has been exaggerated.

60. Ironically, for Cassius had helped him in his career at a crucial moment.

61. On “fortlets” in Idumaea, see above. If accurate, danger from Nabateans was the likeliest reason, since Egypt had been incorporated into the Empire and Cleopatra was dead.

**C. PERSONAL COMFORT.** Herod liked creature comforts. Among early projects were renovations of Hasmonean palaces in Jerusalem (though no trace remains) and in Jericho (now extensively excavated). His delight in lavish surroundings never left him; he continued obsessively through the late 30s and 20s and into the 10s to build imaginative residences for himself, his family, and his guests. Enjoyment of his surroundings came out in smaller ways: gardens, pools, gazebos, small baths, vistas that overlooked the landscape or seascape, and attractive yet restrained decoration. We don't know if he ever relaxed to enjoy his buildings, but he created surroundings that would make life enjoyable.

**D. PIETY.** Another early rationale was "piety" (above, per Josephus), especially for family. Provision of suitable memorials was a concern of the upper classes, for which purpose Herod created a large circular family tomb in Jerusalem before the end of the 30s and Herodium as his own memorial in the 20s. He covered the caves at Hebron (associated with the Patriarchs and Matriarchs) with a memorial, in effect to distant ancestors,<sup>62</sup> as a focus for local piety (late 30s). In a project just north of Hebron at Mamre he memorialized Abraham alone.<sup>63</sup> In Jerusalem he tried to alter public opinion of his desecration of David's tomb by adding another grand memorial.

Herod's strategy in building memorials was closely related to religion; his interest in the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, for example, may have been intended to win approval among Idumaeans and Jews. His religious project at Si'a at about the same time (32/31 BCE) was aimed to "normalize" relations with Nabateans following a period of conflict.<sup>64</sup> Early experiments with a strategy of "piety" were insignificant, however, compared to his interest in the Emperor cult and his relationship to Judaism (see below, and chap. 10).

**E. ECONOMIC EXPANSION.** Before Actium, none of Herod's projects had especially large or ambitious goals; all were specific reactions to particular needs. The projects were spread out, with not more than one or two going on at the same time as would be expected in a period of consolidation. After 30 BCE the pace and scale of his projects increased dramatically. Enormous projects were undertaken and several ran concurrently. At some point in the early 20s, accelerating in the late 20s and early 10s, Herod adopted a strategy of economic

62. It is remarkable that he gave equal weight to the Matriarchs.

63. The evidence for both these projects is archaeological; the early dates are conjectural.

64. Participation in a Temple of Ba'al Shamim could have angered Jews, though that danger was lessened by the possibility of seeing Ba'al Shamim as an alternative name for the God of Israel. In the Hebrew Bible God can be called *elohe hashamim*, an exilic title (Ezra 1:2; 2 Chron. 36:23; elsewhere in Ezra and Nehemiah 11 times; Jonah 1:9 "the Lord God of Heaven"; Dan. 2:18, 19, 28, 44; Gen. 24:7; Ps. 136:26). Israel could absorb the Canaanite title Ba'al into its understanding of God.

expansion. The building of Sebaste (27 BCE) signalled this phase, while he was still completing Masada, the theater and amphitheater in Jerusalem, and founding Pente Komai, Gaba, and perhaps Phaselis. In the late 20s his construction activities were staggering: Sebaste was still under construction (27–12), Caesarea (22–10), the Temple in Jerusalem (23–15 for the main parts), Herodium (23–15), Pania (ca. 20), Nicopolis (sometime after 27), and possibly the Northern Palace at Masada.

The projects during this period were broadly conceived (military settlements, new cities, trade facilities, religious buildings, personal comfort projects—several of which have already been noted), but the overall strategy seems to have been aimed to stimulate the economy of Judea, enhance its trade position, and secure full employment. “Public works” and “infrastructure” projects, most of which cannot be dated, were probably linked with these, and had the same general strategy.

**F. CULTURAL INTEGRATION.** The cultural buildings noted earlier, most constructed from the early 20s through the 10s, formed part of a strategy. Herod’s motive was in part obtaining popular support, in part encouraging Roman culture. Many of the cultural buildings were built in three main cities inside his realm (Jerusalem, Sebaste, and Caesarea) and in several places outside his territory; they were built not when he was consolidating his position in the 30s, but later when he was seeking greater cultural integration.

In addition, features of other structures coincided with this thrust toward cultural integration; the Temple in Jerusalem included Roman features (the Royal Basilica, the stoas); many buildings incorporated Roman decorative elements (Corinthian and Doric columns, Pompeian interior decoration); and urban design elements reflected late Hellenistic civic patterns (Hippodamian plans, agoras). Herod minimized offensive elements, but he was a good Roman and a “Hellenist.”

**G. IMPERIAL PIETY.** Following Octavian’s acclamation as Augustus in 27 BCE, there was a growing development, especially in the east, of the Emperor cult, to honor him and the goddess Roma. Herod could probably have avoided participation; no one would have insisted that Judea—a monotheistic country—participate in building Sebasteia. But Herod embraced the Emperor cult, first at Sebaste (after 27), then Caesarea (sometime after 22), and Pania (sometime after 20), all sites where strong objections were not likely to arise. His rationale was simple: the Augustan age required “piety” toward Augustus, and Judea must participate to attain its proper place. The amount of popular support these shrines gained is uncertain.<sup>65</sup>

65. P. Richardson, “Religion, Architecture and Ethics: Some First Century Case Studies,” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 10/2 (1988): 19–49.

**H. JEWISH PIETY.** It will seem odd to those wishing consistency that just when Herod was engaged in building temples to Roma and Augustus he dealt with the priests in Jerusalem to rebuild the Second Temple. To take its place on the international scene Judea's cult center had to rank with the cult centers of others. Suspicion of Herod as patron of the Second Temple must have been intense; he was untrustworthy, perhaps even illegitimate. Precautions were taken, therefore, to ensure that God's worship continued uninterrupted and undefiled, that work would be speedily completed, and that the holy place would be built by priests.

This project alone (beginning in the late 20s and continuing to the end of his life and beyond) assured Herod a place in Jewish religious history. Perhaps Josephus's report is pointed in the right direction (*Ant.* 15.380–425, especially 382–87): Herod was motivated by prestige, by piety, and by the peace and wealth of Judea. It is almost impossible to imagine he wanted to undertake the work—or was able to get agreement from the priestly authorities—without a strong personal commitment to Judaism. Other aspects of his piety, and his innovation, show in the provision for women and Gentiles in the Temple.

**I. INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION.** As Herod moved onto the international stage in the 10s, especially with his expedition with Marcus Agrippa to the Black Sea and Pontus, his interest in international questions increased. Though active internationally as early as 40 BCE, by the 10s Herod was concerned for his own role and reputation. He was engaged in the Olympic Games, supported Diaspora Jewish communities in the Islands and in Asia Minor, invested in trade facilities elsewhere: all activities aimed to establish Judea as a premier province in the Empire. This objective came relatively late. It is ironic that it coincided with the disastrous deterioration in his personal life, the result of which was deterioration in his relations with Augustus and diminution of his reputation internationally (see map 6).

#### CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The evidence of Herod's benefactions, public works, and building activities might now be read differently from the usual way; it opens the way for a more integrated analysis of his reign and allows for a more generous evaluation of his role. A few additional comments are required.

All of Herod's structures were up-to-date in both materials and methods of construction. Some of the design elements were ahead of their time; some of the innovations had no earlier Roman antecedents. His use of concrete that set underwater conformed to its contemporaneous mention by Vitruvius; the harbor at Caesarea was the largest experiment with this new technology at this period and was hugely successful. The organization needed to gather the mate-

rials, obtain the technical experts, and coordinate the work was prodigious. And early on Herod imported other innovations for wall, floor, and roof construction (the little vault at Herodium may be the earliest of its kind).

His designs were innovative also. The rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem best exemplifies this—not only its vast size, but such elements as the retaining walls, the brilliantly varied entrances and exits (including a bridge to the western hill, two pedestrian overpasses at the southern corners, a dramatic pair of tunnels and stairs to dramatize the holy place itself, and a bridge across to the Mount of Olives for the red heifer ceremony), a series of courtyards defining levels of holiness, and so on.

There remains an unanswerable question: Who was responsible for this remarkable body of work? We do not know if it was Herod or someone acting under him—and if the latter, was it one person or a whole stable of architects? Several factors point to Herod's important role: the combination of influences that reflected Herod's own background, the wide-ranging innovations, and the absence of references to architects when there must have been popular comment on the structures. At the least, Herod must have been a remarkable patron, perhaps even greater than either Augustus or Marcus Agrippa, the only two rivals he had in his period. At the most, he played an important architectural role himself.



## Appendix A

### LIST OF HEROD'S BUILDINGS

#### A. In Jerusalem

1. Antonia Fortress, with porticoes connecting it to Temple, apartments, cloisters, bath, four towers (site of al-Omariyya school) [37–35 BCE]  
BJ 1.401; 5.238–46; AJ 15.292, 409, 424; 18.91–95; 20.30
2. Hasmonean Palace rebuilt [mid-30s BCE]  
BJ 2.344; AJ 20.190
3. Royal Palace (Caesareum and Agrippaeum—two buildings—with banqueting halls, one hundred guest rooms, cloisters, courtyards, and pools) [23 BCE]  
BJ 1.402; 5.156–83, 246; AJ 15.292, 318
4. Phasaelis, Mariamme, and Hippicus Towers [mid-30s BCE]  
BJ 1.418; 2.46, 439; 5.144, 147, 161–75; 7.1–2; AJ 16.144; 17.257 [possibly later]
5. Family Tomb (north of Damascus Gate) [before 30 BCE]  
BJ 5.108, 507
6. Temple, Temenos, Courtyards [23 BCE–64 CE]
  - Sanctuary, BJ 1.401; AJ 15.380–425; 17.162; 20.219–22; cf. Pliny NH 5.70 (BJ 1.401 implies 23; AJ 15.380 implies 20) [23–22 BCE]
  - Forecourts [23–15 BCE]
  - Temenos with retaining walls, various gates
  - Royal Basilica, BJ 5.184–227
  - Solomon's Porticoes (remodeling only?)
  - Other Porticoes, AJ 17.259–63
  - Exits and overpasses at south-west corner (Robinson's Arch) and south-east corner
  - Bridge to upper city (Wilson's Arch)
  - Streets and shops
  - Plazas and Miqvehs outside Huldah Gates
  - Water and sewage systems
  - Gate, BJ 2.5
  - Gate of Marcus Agrippa, BJ 1.416 [before 15 BCE]
  - Golden Eagle, AJ 17.151 [before 15 BCE]
  - Beautiful Gate
7. Memorial at entrance of David's Tomb (unknown) [10 BCE]  
AJ 16.179–84; 7.392–94; 16.188
8. Theater (slope of south side of Wadi es-Shamm) [before 28 BCE]  
AJ 15.268–91
9. Amphitheater (Rephaim Plain?) [before 28 BCE]  
AJ 15.268
- Hippodrome (probably identical to previous) [before 28 BCE]  
BJ 2.44; AJ 17.255

**Aqueducts and Reservoirs**

10. Solomon's Pools (south of Bethlehem, with aqueducts to Jerusalem and S. to 'Arrub)
11. Pool of Mamillah (Western Jerusalem)
12. Hezekiah's Pool (north of Petra Hotel)
13. Sheep Pool (St. Anne's), 5 porticoes (Herodian acc. to Jeremias)
14. Struthion Pool (Antonia Fortress)
15. Pool of Israel (at North wall of Temple Mount)
16. Birkat Sitti Maryam (at St. Stephen's Gate)
17. Gihon Spring; Hezekiah's Tunnel; Siloam and Hamra pools
18. Various aqueducts to serve the pools mentioned above and Temple needs

**B. In His Own Territory**

1. Alexandreion (Sartaba), fortified palace restored by Pheroras [39/38 BCE]  
 BJ 1.133-37, 161-72, 308, 334, 528-29, 551; AJ 13.417;  
 14.48-52, 82-94, 394, 419; 15.84, 185; 16.13, 317; Strabo  
*Geog.* 16.2.40; m.Rosh Hash. 2.4
2. Hyrcania (Khirbet Mird), refortified palace with water system [37 (32?) BCE]  
 BJ 1.161, 167, 364, (664?) 684; AJ 13.417; 14.89; 15.366; 16.13;  
 17.187; Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.40
3. Masada [37-10 BCE]  
 BJ 1.236-38, 264-67, 286-87; 2.408, 433-34, 446-47, 653;  
 4. 339, 516, 555; 7.252-407; AJ 14. 296, 361-63, 390-91,  
 490; 15. 184; Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.44; Pliny NH 5.73  
 Fortification: casemate wall around top  
 Western Palace  
 Other palaces  
 Storehouses  
 Administrative buildings  
 Barracks  
 Synagogue  
 Baths  
 Cisterns  
 Northern Villa  
 Pools and gardens
4. Machaerus (Makhwar), fortified palace with ramparts, towers,  
 cisterns, adjacent town, aqueducts [20s BCE]  
 BJ 1.161, 164-77; 2.485-86; 4.555; 7.164-210; AJ 13.83,  
 89-97, 417; 18.111; Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.40; m.Tamid 3.8;  
 j.Shiit 9.2.38d
5. Cypros (Kipros) Fortified Palace above Jericho [30s BCE]  
 BJ 1.407, 417; 2.484; AJ 16.143

6. Docus (Jebel Qarantal) Fortress [30s BCE]  
 Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.40; 1 Macc 16:11–16; AJ 13.230–35; BJ 1.54–56
7. Herodium West (= Har Hordos; Jebel el-Fureidis) Fortress [23–15 BCE]  
 BJ 1.265, 419–21, 673; 3.55; 4.55, 518–19; 7.163; AJ 14.360; 15.323–25; 16.13; 17.199 9.199? Pliny NH 5.70  
 Upper palace with towers, apartments, cisterns  
 Stadium or course  
 Monumental building  
 Pool with gazebo, gardens  
 Large intermediate palace by course  
 Other palaces, service buildings  
 Aqueducts and cisterns
8. Herodium East (= Kh. es-Samra?) Arabian frontier [after 30 BCE]  
 BJ 1.41
9. Hebron, memorial to Patriarchs and Matriarchs over Cave of Macphelah [30s BCE]  
 BJ 4.530–33
10. Mamre (= Ramat et Khalil), memorial [30s BCE]  
 BJ 4.530–33
11. Si'a (near Canatha), temple of Ba'al Shamim [32–31 BCE]
12. Jericho (= Tulul Abu el-Alaiq) BJ 1.407; Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.40  
 Reconstruction of Hasmonean Palace [37–35 BCE]  
 Second Palace (now covered over) [18–9 BCE]  
 Winter Palace on Wadi Qelt  
 Gardens and pools  
 Strabo, *Geog.* 16.2.40  
 Hippodrome *cum* theater, plus pavilion (= Tel es-Samrat)  
 BJ 1.659, 666  
 [Amphitheater ? probably part of above]; AJ 17.161, 175–78, 194  
 Adjacent town with manufacturing areas (perfume? wine? dates? balsam?)  
 Aqueducts – Wadi Qelt  
 Cemetery (= Nuseib el-Aweishireh)
13. Betharamphtha (= Tell Er Rama), palace; renamed Livias/Julias by Agrippa  
 BJ 2.59, 168, 252; 4.438; AJ 17.277; 18.27; 20.159; Pliny NH 13.44; Ptol. *Geog.* 5.15.6; Eus. *Onom.* 49.12; j. Shebit 9.2
14. Sepphoris (= Zippori), palace  
 BJ 2.56, 574; AJ 18.27; 17.271  
 Arsenal ?
15. Caesarea Maritima (Qesari) [22–12 BCE]  
 Harbor, mole, breakwater, towers, docks  
 Warehouses and commercial buildings

- Promenade  
 Temple to Roma and Augustus  
 Amphitheater  
 Theater  
 Hippodrome (all three for quinquennial games)  
 Promontory Palace (= Praetorium, Acts 23.35)  
 Walls and North gates  
 Aqueducts  
 BJ 1.156, 408–16; 2.266; AJ 14.76, 121; 15.293, 331–41;  
 16.136–41; 20.173
16. Sebaste (Shomeron) [27–12 BCE]  
 Walls, gates, fortifications, AJ 15.292, 296–98  
 Colonnaded streets (probably later)  
 Temple to Roma and Augustus, AJ 15.298  
 Forum  
 Pre-Basilical building (later?)  
 Stadium (Pre-Herodian—Busink; Herodian—Netzer)  
 Theater (later?)  
 Aqueducts  
 BJ I.64, 403, 415; AJ 13.275; 15.292–93, 296–98, 342;  
 16.136–41; Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.34
17. Pnias (= Banyas), Temple to Roma and Augustus [after 20 BCE]  
 Palace  
 Walls and fortifications?  
 BJ 1.404–406; AJ 15.363–64
18. Phasaelis (El Fasayili), new city [after 30 BCE?]  
 BJ 1.418; 2.98, 167; AJ 16.145; Pliny NH 13.4.44 [ = 12–10?]
19. Ascalon (Tel Ashqelon), baths, fountains, colonnades, palace [after 30 BCE]  
 BJ 1.422; 2.98; AJ 17.321
20. Antipatris (Afek), new city [9 BCE]  
 BJ 1.417–18; AJ 16.142–43; 11.329; 13.390
21. Agrippias (Anthedon), port—refounded and rebuilt [after 30 BCE]  
 BJ 1.87, 118, 416; AJ 13.357; 14.9
22. Pente Kornai (= Fondaquma), village for soldiers, AJ 15.296 [27–20 BCE]
23. Gaba (Sha'ar ha-'Amaqim) military colony [28–24 BCE ?]  
 Life 115–18; BJ 2.459; 3.36; AJ 15.294, 299; Pliny NH 5.19.75  
 (?)
24. Bathyra (Busr El-Hariri?), Babylonian military colony [9–6 BCE]  
 Life 55–61; AJ 17.23–29 [= Samamim?]
25. Heshbon (Hisban near Amman), military colony refortified [28–24 BCE ?]
26. Esbus (fortress?), AJ 15.294, 299
27. Idumaeen settlement in Trachonitis [9/8 BCE]

*Uncertain*

1. Aroer, fortified town in Negev
2. En Boqe, industrial installation near Dead Sea
3. Batanea, fortresses
4. Malatha, fortress (84x56 m.) settlement adjacent
5. Gittha, rebuilt by Machaeras for Herod, *War* 1.326
6. Agrippina (Jarmuth), at Belvoir
7. Oresa, BJ 1.266, 294; AJ 14.361, 400
8. Zif, fortress, 7 km south of Hebron
9. Adora (= Dura), fortress, BJ 1.2.6; AJ 13.9.1; 1 Macc 13:20
10. Tell Qasile (Joppa), Herodian public building in Stratum IV
11. Calirrhoe, hot springs
12. Gedor (east of es-Salt)
13. Keren Naftali (west of Lake Huleh)

**C. In Phoenicia and Roman Province of Syria**

1. Ptolemais (Akko), gymnasium, BJ 1.422
2. Damascus, BJ 1.422
  - Gymnasium
  - Theater
3. Tyre (= Sour) BJ 1.422
  - Halls
  - Porticoes
  - Temples
  - Market places
4. Sidon, theater (BJ 1.422)
5. Byblus, walls, BJ 1.422
6. Berytus (Beirut), BJ 1.422 [cf. AJ 19.335 re Agrippa I
  - amphitheater, baths, porticoes]
  - Halls
  - Porticoes
  - Temples
  - Market places
7. Tripolis (Trablus), gymnasium, BJ 1.422, 212
8. Laodicea-on-sea (Latakia), aqueduct, BJ 1.422 [36 BCE ?]
9. Balanea (near Latakia), lightened taxes, BJ 1.422
10. Antioch (Antakya), broad paved street, colonnade [30 or 20? BCE]
  - BJ 1.425; AJ 16.148, 427

**D. In Asia Minor and Greece (mostly 14 BCE on occasion of visit with Marcus Agrippa)**

- BJ 1.400; AJ 15.12-15; 16.16ff (re Itinerary) 16.24 (re benefactions)
1. Unnamed towns in Cilicia, "tax relief," BJ 1.428

2. Lycia, "gifts," BJ 1.425
3. Phaselis in Lycia, "tax relief," BJ 1.428
4. Ionia, "liberality," BJ 1.425; AJ 12.125; 16.27
5. Pergamum, "Herod's offerings," BJ 1.425
6. Rhodes, restored city
  - Rebuilt Pythian Temple [40? BCE]
  - Money for ship-building [40, 30? BCE]
- BJ 1.280, 387, 424; AJ 15.183; 16.147; 14.378
7. Cos, revenue for gymnasiarch (endowment?), BJ 1.423
8. Chios, colonnades, money to repay loan from Augustus,
  - AJ 16.18-19, 26
9. Samos, "gifts," BJ 1.425; AJ 16.23-24
10. Athens, "Herod's offerings," BJ 1.425
11. Elis, Olympic Games, endowed with funds [12 (8?) BCE]
  - restoration work? BJ 1.426-27; AJ 16.149
12. Lacedaemon (Sparta) "Herod's offerings," BJ 1.425
13. Nicopolis, "the greater part of their public buildings" [after 29 BCE]
  - BJ 1.425; AJ 16.147
15. Delos (?Syros) epigraphic reference
  - possibly for gymnasium (*xystos*) at stadium

## Appendix B

### INSCRIPTIONS AND COINS

#### INSCRIPTIONS

Several important inscriptions mention Herod or other members of his family by name. They originate both from within his kingdom and from sites associated with Herod beyond his own borders (see maps 5 and 6).

#### 1. *Masada*

C. Sentius Saturninus, Consul  
Philonian wine from the estate of L. Laenius  
for King Herod the Jew

Thirteen Latin inscriptions, all in more or less the above form and on wine jugs' handles from a shipment of 19 BCE, were found at Masada.<sup>66</sup> The date supplied could refer to the vintage, but it probably refers to the date of shipment. The type of wine and the estate are not otherwise known, but it was probably from southern Italy. The handles were found in several locations: in storerooms (three), in building IX (one), in the northwest section of the wall near the synagogue (three), and in the floor of the Herodian-level of the synagogue (one). Different inscriptions are found on #817 (also referring to 19 BCE) and on #818 (to 14 BCE).

With varying degrees of completeness, the inscriptions refer to "King Herod the Jew," as the editor insists (*regi herodi iudaico*, not "Herod King of the Jews"). The attestation of a supplier of wine in Italy is good evidence for others' views of Herod as a Jew, and probably for his viewing himself in just this way.

In addition to these thirteen, six other jars were stamped with consuls' or others' names, one dated to 27 BCE (#795), "Year of Caesar's seventh and Agrippa's third consulate," and one (#796) to 26 BCE, possibly indicating Masada's well-advanced construction at that time. Evidence for products other than wine was clear: "honey" (#800), medicinal frankincense (#801), "honey wine" (#821), "apples from Cumae" (#822, perhaps also ##823-25), "fish sauce" (*garum*; #826, referring in lines 4-5 to the "king" and probably to "Herod the Jew" as in the previous cases; somewhat similarly up to #850). There were also Latin amphora stamps referring to Nepos and dates on the handles to 27-26 BCE (##946-47, see also ##948-50).

These jars provide evidence both of a wide range of imported products on

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66. H. M. Cotton and J. Geiger, *Masada II: Latin and Greek Documents* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989), pp. 133 and following with figures 795-950. The date is established from the consulship of Saturninus. These thirteen are numbers 804-16.

Masada at a relatively early period and of indisputable references to Herod the King as a Jew. The evidence is specially significant found in Judea and having come from Italy.

2.(a) *IEJ 20 (1970):97–98 (Jerusalem)*

Year 32 of King Herod, Benefactor, Friend of Caesar  
Inspector of markets  
Three minas

This Greek inscription on a limestone weight, with uncertain provenance, is in three lines, with the first running around the weight, and the other two lines within.<sup>67</sup> Year 32 corresponds to 9/8 BCE. The name Herod is signified by the first two letters of the name in a monogram. This is the only known Judean inscription referring to Herod as “Benefactor” (*Eu[ergetês]*) and as “Friend of Caesar” (*philok[aisaros]*). (For Diaspora inscriptions to the same effect, see below.) The linking of Herod’s kingship, benefactions, and relationship to Augustus in this Judean artifact is important, even if it is merely the weight of a Herodian official, the *agoranomos*; it stands as evidence that Herod had no compunctions about promoting his imperial connections.

2.(b) (*Ashdod*)<sup>68</sup>

In the time of King  
Herod  
pious  
and friend  
of Caesar

This is a new and persuasive reading of a lead weight from Ashdod that argues for a provenance under our King Herod, not Herod of Chalcis, the only other plausible suggestion. The argument can be strengthened by noting the anchor on the reverse, a symbol of Herod of Judea that was irrelevant to Herod of Chalcis (see plate X). The language is similar to 2(a) above, which might on the strength of 2(b) be read as “pious” (*eusebias*) rather than “benefactor” (*euergeton*). The two weights and their descriptions of Herod are coherent and important.

67. Y. Meshorer, “A Stone Weight from the Reign of Herod,” *IEJ 20 (1970): 97–98*, plate 27, who believes that *euergetés* and *philokaisaros* do not otherwise appear in reference to Herod, but see below.

68. A. Kushnir-Stein, “An Inscribed Lead Weight from Ashdod: A Reconsideration,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 105 (1995): 81–84*.



### 3. SEG 1277 (*Jerusalem*)

[In the reign of Herod the King]  
 in the 20th year, upon the high priest  
 [Simon, S]paris Akeonos  
 [a foreign resident] in Rhodes  
 [donated the] pavement  
 [at a cost of {?}] drachmas

A fragmentary Greek inscription found south of the Temple Mount by B. Mazar and his team in debris in a pool,<sup>69</sup> refers to a donor named Sparis or Paris, probably a Jew living in Rhodes.<sup>70</sup> The gift was some of the paving for the courtyard or, more likely given the location of the inscription, of the platform south of the Temple Mount. The inscription supports the earlier of the two possible datings for the start of construction on the Temple, ca. 23 BCE, since Herod's 20th year was 21/20 BCE (on the one reckoning; on the other it was 18/17 BCE). The form of the inscription conforms to many records of benefactions.

### 4. *Delos* (?*Syros*)

*King Herod to the people of . . .*

Three fragments of a very large Greek inscription were found in 1874 (sic), 1987, and 1988 on Syros.<sup>71</sup> The editor argues persuasively that the provenance of the inscription was Delos, not Syros, where no large buildings from antiquity have been discovered. The letters are 12 cm (4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" ) high, on marble slabs that were part of the architrave of a large Doric building (*regulae* and *guttae* survive partially), probably from a portico or perhaps a porch. There was a Jewish community on Delos, but the grand building of which these fragments were a part could hardly have been a building for the community, as the reference to *dēmos* ("people") in the inscription makes perfectly clear. The editor argues for the *xystos* (a covered colonnade in a gymnasium attached to the stadium).

The inscription makes three important points: that Herod made benefactions to Greek communities where there were Jewish communities, but those

69. SEG 33 (1983): 1277, p. 184–85; B. Isaac, "A Donation for Herod's Temple in Jerusalem," *IEJ* 33 (1983): 86–92, plate 9B. The inscription was intended to be inserted in a wall. The reference to "year 20" must be a part of a regnal formula, linked with a reference to a high priest. The only king who ruled more than twenty years and who was not also high priest was Herod, hence the reconstruction; at the same time this allows identification of the high priest as Simon son of Boethos.

70. Isaac provides evidence, *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91, for Jews in Rhodes.

71. E. Mantzoulinou-Richards, "From Syros: A Dedicatory Inscription of Herodes the Great from an Unknown Building," *Ancient World* 18/3–4 (1988): 87–99

donations were for the people (*dêmos*) at large; that he made very large benefactions sometimes, as this testifies; and that not all his gifts have survived in the literature (it was a plausible deduction that he might have given to Delos, but there was no evidence until the present detective work).

With this, Mantzoulinou-Richards links two other inscriptions, one of which (SEG 16.490) I have hesitantly included below. The other I hesitantly include here as an addendum.

SEG 16.488 (Chios)

[so and so was honored for such and such]  
 which he repaired with his own money  
 and for all the many and great things  
 he donated to the city and for his perpetually  
 providing anointment oil for the athletes  
 for his virtuousness and his benevolence  
 toward the city. The supervisor of the repairs  
 was Apollonios, son of Apollonios the Philologist.

This dovetails with my number 10, below, in both titulature and name, Apollonios son of Apollonios. That dedication was made on Delos, before the Temple of Apollo; the honoree was not our Herod but his son Antipas, the tetrarch. This, on Chios, is arguably from the same period and directed to the same person, though nothing but plausibility links the inscription with any Herod. It does not seem correct to attribute it to our Herod.

5. OGIS # 415 (Si'a)

To King Herod, master,  
 Obaisath, son of Saodos  
 placed the statue at his own expense

The Greek inscription, now lost, was copied by W. H. Waddington from a statue base on the porch to the right of the entrance of the Temple of Ba'al Shamim at Si'a. The Marquis de Vogüé found fragments of statues in the vicinity, some of less-than-life-size, including two heads that he took back to Paris. The statue of Herod was life-size, as determined from the foot still attached to the base. "Other fragments of this statue, and a badly mutilated torso, indicated to M. de Vogüé that Herod's effigy had been the special object of early Christian violence."<sup>72</sup>

The statue with its base was donated to the Temple of Ba'al Shamim by a

72. H. C. Butler, *Architecture, Southern Syria*, Division II A, Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria, 1904-5 (Leiden: Brill, 1907), p. 379.

member of a family associated with Si'a (Obaisath and Saodos, Nabatean names, are known from other inscriptions at Si'a). The inscription referred to our Herod, the only member of the family known simply as "King Herod." It appears to recognize some involvement by Herod in the building of the Temple, the statue being a grateful recognition. Though the inscription is undated, the building's construction period was late 30s BCE, and the inscription may date from the same period.

Statues of Herod are unattested in Judea and Galilee; this is the nearest known statue to the Holy Land. That Herod appreciated recognition seems a reasonable deduction, though he accepted no such honors in Jewish territory where it would cause offense. His title was clearly "king," linked with a second term of honor, "master" or "lord," probably to be explained here as a term appropriate to the relationship between Obaisath and Herod, perhaps with Herod as patron. It is surprising that no inscriptions have been found in Herod's own territory that recognize his very extensive building activities, especially given the frequency of inscriptions recognizing the contributions of patrons in the Roman world. It is not clear whether this is accidental, or whether it was a deliberate policy on Herod's part to minimize his own role.

6. OGIS # 414; CIAtt 3. 550 (*Athens, Acropolis*)

The people to King Herod

friend of Romans

because of his good works and good will toward the city.

Found behind the Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens, the base, which must have carried a statue, was apparently the gift of the Athenian *dêmos* in gratitude to Herod. The inscription highlighted two aspects of Herod's relationship to the Athenians—his "good works" (*euergesia*) and his "good will" (*eunoia*). The impression Josephus gives in *War* 1.425 corresponds to this: Athens, among other cities, was "laden with Herod's offerings." Placing a statue on the Acropolis implied that a portion of his largess was devoted to improvements of some kind in that location; the most logical explanation would be contributions to some aspect of the cult of Athena, though other explanations are possible.

One of the descriptive phrases supplied in the inscription is part of the title of this book: King Herod was "friend of Romans" (*philoromaios*). The term is found in reference to others than Herod—it was the Greek equivalent of one part of the Latin phrase *rex socius et amicus populi Romani*, a designation given to client kings on occasion, and applied, for example, to Hyrcanus II as ethnarch.

7. OGIS 427; CIAtt 3. 551 (*Athens, Acropolis*)

The people

to Herod the pious King and friend of the Emperor

because of his moral excellence and good works.

Dittenberger applies this to Agrippa I, also "King" (cf. Acts 12:1), but this is unlikely. The location in Athens, the usage "king," and the description of the person honored suggest Herod.

Found on the Acropolis in Athens, west of the Erechtheion, this must also have been connected with Herod's gifts to the city. This was more effusive, however, and struck two notes additional to those in 6, above. Herod was friend of the Emperor—a fact attested to in glowing terms by Josephus—as in 2(a) and 2(b), above. He was also not merely a person of "good works," but a person of "piety" (*eusebês*) and of "moral excellence" (*aretê*). Though discordant and overdone when compared to the usual evaluations of Herod's character, the terms used offer contemporary counter-evaluations of Herod. Josephus uses the term "piety" without blushing (see chap. 8), linked in part with Herod's relationship to Augustus. The inscription is thus consistent with literary sources.

#### 8. SEG 12 [1955] 150<sup>73</sup> (Athens, agora)

The people  
for Herod the pious King and friend of the Emperor  
because of his moral excellence and good works

This inscription was found in the agora in Athens in damaged condition. It was restored in its initial publication so that it gave an identical reading to the previous one. Even the name is missing from this one, though, so it is not a certain testimony to Herod.

#### 9. OGIS 416 (Cos)

Herod  
—son of Herod the King—  
Tetrarch  
Philo Aglaos of the family of Nikon  
his guest and friend.

The inscription was addressed to Herod's son, Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee or possibly Philip, tetrarch of Gaulanitis, Auranitis, Batanea, and Trachonitis. Whomever, he was identified as "son of Herod the King" in an inscription from Cos, where the elder Herod had donated funds to sustain the office of a gymnasiarch. It confirms that "Herod the King" meant in antiquity our Herod, unless clarified specifically; it also demonstrates that other members of the family were known as Herod, both popularly and formally.

73. See also B. D. Merritt, "Greek Inscriptions," *Hesperia* 21 (1952): 340–80; see #14, p. 370.

10. OGIS 417 (*Delos*)

The Athenian people and those  
 living on the island,  
 for Herod, son of Herod the King,  
 Tetrarch  
 on account of piety and good  
 will shown to them  
 when Apollonios, son of Apollonios of Phamnous was *epimelētēs*

Likewise dedicated to Herod Antipas (or Philip), specified as the “son of Herod the King,” and using adjectives noted above, this inscription was found on Delos in front of the Temple of Apollo. Our Herod is not recorded as having given any benefaction to Delos, though as the discussion above (4) suggests, it is probable. The reference to Athens in the first line strengthens the possibility. Since Herod provided funds for rebuilding the Temple of Pythian Apollo at Rhodes, the Herodian association with Apollo is not far to seek.

11. CIJ 173 (*Rome*)

. . . synagogue  
 . . . of the Herodians  
 . . . a blessing to all.

For this inscription, which may refer to a synagogue of the Herodians in Rome, see chapter 11, where I argue that the Jewish community in Rome, out of gratitude for Herod's constructive role with respect to Jewish privileges in the Diaspora at large, named a synagogue after him during his lifetime.<sup>74</sup> The Roman Jewish community also named synagogues after Augustus and Marcus Agrippa, and possibly after a governor of Syria, Volumnius, who was a friend of Herod's. The inscription, if reconstructed correctly, suggests that during his lifetime this particular Jewish community was more positive toward Herod than Josephus tells us they were at his death, when they joined the Judean delegation's vigorous criticism of him.

The next two generations of Herod's descendants were not generally identified in inscriptions by their relationship to Herod the King. Occasionally, despite Herod's own failure to use the adjective “great,” Agrippa I and II have it used of them on inscriptions. Some of the terms applied to Herod recur in these inscriptions of the first century CE (the list is not complete). I translate only the portions immediately relevant to Herod's descendants.

74. Further, Richardson, “Augustan-era Synagogues in Rome.”

12. (OGIS 418) "For the deliverance of the powerful King Agrippa . . ."
13. (OGIS 419) "Concerning great King Agrippa, friend of the Emperor, pious, and friend of the Romans . . ."
14. (OGIS 420) "Concerning great King Marcus Julius Agrippa, friend of the Emperor and friend of the Romans . . ."
15. (OGIS 421) "Concerning the great Marcus Julius Agrippa . . ."
16. (OGIS 422) ". . . for great King Agrippa . . ."
17. (OGIS 423) ". . . for King Agrippa the powerful."
18. (OGIS 424) "King Agrippa, friend of the Emperor [and friend of the Ro]mans . . ."
19. (OGIS 425) ". . . to the great powerful King Agrippa, his son Agrippa made it."
20. (OGIS 426) ". . . to the powerful King Agrippa."
21. (OGIS 428) ". . . daughter of King Julius Agrippa . . ."
22. (SEG 16.490) "The Great King . . . has sent another donation . . . a thousand denarii . . . [the courier] Philatas son of Philatas."

To summarize, the name Herod *simpliciter* was usually used of Herod of Judea; he was always referred to as "King" in these inscriptions (6–8, above, refer to King Herod). His son Antipas was sometimes called simply Herod, but he was tetrarch (not king) so there was no confusion. His grandson Agrippa I and great-grandson Agrippa II were usually called Agrippa, not Herod, or in the latter case sometimes with full name. The numismatic evidence is strong that Agrippa I referred to himself as "great" (*meγas*). The inscriptions with this style then likely refer to Agrippa I also: 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, and 19, the last of which clearly indicates that the older Agrippa was referred to as "great" and the younger not. Number 21, above, must refer to Agrippa I, since it refers to his daughter, likely Berenice. Since both Agrippa I and II have the same full name it is not always possible to decide between them: thus, 21 seems uncertain, as are 17, 18, and 20.

King Herod was "friend of Romans" and "friend of the Emperor," and the other adjectives describing him are the sort of overblown descriptions expected in major benefactions: a person of "piety," "good works," "good will," "moral excellence." The distribution of inscriptions concerning Herod the King is revealing: Masada, Jerusalem, Ashdod, Si'a, Rome, Athens, Cos, and Delos. All were areas where Herod was active; in the cases of Athens, Cos, and Si'a there is confirming literary evidence of benefactions.

Since the language of inscriptions was so stereotyped, it is tenuous to identify the dedicatee by the language used. By comparison with the restraint in the inscriptional references to King Herod, those associated with his grandson and great-grandson were more exaggerated; for example the frequent use of *kyrios*, probably equivalent to "powerful," is noticeable. The designation "great" is

absent from the epigraphic evidence for Herod, but is found in inscriptions of Agrippa I. This dovetails, as we shall see in a moment, with the absence of the adjective from his coins. When Josephus uses the term (in one very brief genealogical section in *Ant.* 18.130–36), he either takes a title known to be used of his own contemporary Agrippa II and applies it to his great-grandfather or, alternatively, he simply means the “elder” Herod.<sup>75</sup>

#### COINS

The epigraphic and numismatic evidence from Herod's reign agree both on the absence of the adjective “great” (*megas*) and on the presence of the title “king” (*basileus*). The two kinds of evidence are also generally consistent in the case of Herod Antipas (usually called “Tetrarch” on coins and inscriptions), in the case of Agrippa I (called “king and friend of the Emperor” on both, as well as “great”), and in the case of Agrippa II (who is the first to be called by his Roman names on both). The epigraphic and numismatic styles are remarkably similar.

Herod's coins were unilingually Greek, whereas the coins of Alexander Jannaeus were frequently bilingual and those of Mattathiah Antigonus (Herod's rival) sometimes bilingual. The coins of Hyrcanus II, with whom Herod's fortunes were so tightly bound in the years prior to 40 BCE, were always in Hebrew, though occasionally with Greek monograms (resembling those on Tyrian, Seleucid, and Ptolemaic coins) on the reverse that probably referred to Antipater, Herod's father and Hyrcanus's financial minister and head of the mint.<sup>76</sup> Many of Herod's earlier coins had similar disputed monograms; the interpretation of his monogram devices should follow the interpretation of the earlier ones.

The coins can be classified into two groups: dated and undated. All dated coins refer to “year three” and have a monogram; undated coins have no monogram. The device in all cases is very like a *chi-rho* or *tau-rho* symbol, frequently interpreted as an abbreviation for *tritos* (*TR*) or third. Since, however, the date is given in standard form on these and only these coins, this proposal

75. The first modern scholar to raise this question about *megas* was H. G. A. Ewald, *History of Israel* (London: Longmans, Green, 1874 [1843–55]), vol. 5, p. 473. Cf. J. M. Jost, *Geschichte des Judentums und seiner Secten* (Leipzig: Dorffing und Franke, 1857), p. 319, n.2; F. W. Madden, in W. L. Alexander, *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1864) 2: 286–92; F. W. Madden, *History of Jewish Coinage* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1864), p. 83–84; E. M. Smallwood, *Jews*, p. 60, n.1.

76. Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, p. 46, accepts Kanael's proposal in this regard; see B. Kanael, “The Greek Letters on the Coins of Yehohanan the High Priest,” *BIES* 16 (1952): 52–55 (in Hebrew). The monograms include *alpha*, *alpha* contained within *pi*, *alpha* above *pi*, and either *alpha* (?) or *lambda* alone.

means that one group of coins had two ways of giving the date on the same face, while the other group had no date. Meyshan was the first to disagree with this theory, arguing that the monogram and date cannot say the same thing;<sup>77</sup> he claimed the monogram referred to the minting authority of Tyrus (Tyre). This suggestion is plausible, for Tyrian coinage was the accepted currency for payment of the Temple tax in Jerusalem.<sup>78</sup> Another interpretation of the dated coins is provided by Meshorer:<sup>79</sup> the monogram refers to "Tetrarch," that is, to Herod's appointment as tetrarch by Mark Antony in the year 42. Hence, Meshorer claims, year three counting from 42 is 40 BCE, the very year in which Herod was named king by the Senate in Rome. He suggests, in support of this, that "this self-confident monarch" would hardly wait for three years (i.e., until the taking of Jerusalem in 37 BCE) to mint his own coins, as the usual interpretation of year three supposes.

Attractive as Meshorer's argument seems, there are several contrary arguments. (1) The year of Herod's appointment as tetrarch may have been 41, not 42. (2) His appointment as tetrarch was jointly with his brother Phasael, of whom there is no mention; in any case he had been appointed "governor" by Cassius in 42, by Sextus Caesar in 46, and by his father, Antipater—acting for Julius Caesar—in 47, any of which dates would have done equally well. (3) It is almost inconceivable that he would offend the Senate that had appointed him with a claim to authority earlier. (4) The monogram can barely be interpreted as a convoluted way of saying *TETR* (see Meshorer, pp. 10–11), but the gymnastics smack more of modern contrivance than of ancient habits. (5) Herod arrived in his domain in early 39, not 40, and could only have begun minting coins then. (6) He was not half so "self-confident" in 39 when he was battling his way to power.

Meshorer claims that Herod minted these early year-three coins from 40 to 37, probably in Samaria, while he consolidated his hold; they were therefore competitive with Antigonus's coinage. The care with which these early coins were struck was part of the competition; later, when his hold was firm, his coinage was produced with noticeably less care (following Kanael). This argument, too, sounds forced.

I cannot offer a new interpretation of the data, but the following conclu-

77. J. Meyshan, "The Chronology of the Coins of the Herodian Dynasty," *Eretz Israel* (1950–51): 104–14 (in Hebrew), abbreviated in *PEQ* (1959).

78. Meshorer has argued that Herod may have minted later issues of Tyrian shekels himself, especially those with the monogram *kappa-rho* (= *kosmos romaion?* or, as Meshorer prefers = *kratos*—that is "power, authority"). See his later treatment, *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, esp. pp. 6–9. I have discussed aspects of Tyrian coinage in a paper to the SBL meetings, "Why Turn the Tables? Jesus' Protest in the Temple Precincts," *SBL Seminar Papers 1992* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

79. Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, pp. 5–30; A. Strobel, *ANRW* 2.20.2: 988–1187, esp. 1063–83.



sions best agree with the evidence. (1) The dated and monogrammed coins were early and from a different mint than Herod's later mint in Jerusalem (the undated coins). (2) If the monogram referred to Herod's appointment as tetrarch, the earliest possible date for minting coins was 39 BCE. But it is likelier that the monogram referred neither to "year three" nor to "tetrarch" but to the minting authority, either Tyre or some person with the initials *TR*. (3) Herod may have minted Tyrian shekels in Jerusalem, with their approval of course, during a portion of his reign.

The undated coins can sometimes be interpreted on the basis of historical allusions, though different conclusions from Meshorer's are sometimes indicated. (1) The "anchor" coins probably referred to the construction of Caesarea Maritima, and were evidence of the importance Herod attributed to this new port in strengthening the economy, improving international contacts, and even allowing for the development of a navy.<sup>80</sup> (2) The unusual coin with an "anchor" and a "war galley" is more likely to refer to Herod's naval support for Marcus Agrippa's expedition against Pontus in 14 BCE, not to the founding of Caesarea Maritima. The expedition was important to Herod, built upon and cementing the close friendship between the two. It was the one time—so far as we know—that Herod's fledgling navy was used in a Roman action, and it provided an opportunity for Herod to visit many Diaspora Jewish communities. (3) The eagle design was associated, as Meshorer claims, with the construction of one portion of the Temple, perhaps the building of a gate over which the eagle was found. This was probably completed and so named when Marcus Agrippa visited the Temple in 15 BCE (contra Meshorer).<sup>81</sup> (4) The coin with the vine was later and rarer, also associated with the Temple project.

Every coin of Herod referred to his kingship, often in abbreviated form, consistent with epigraphic references to him; it was the one fixed datum in his view of himself.<sup>82</sup> Few of the symbols referred to Herod himself; most had to do with Jewish or Roman symbolism, not with his own rights or actions or honors.<sup>83</sup> This also is similar to the epigraphic evidence, especially the absence of inscriptions in the Holy Land. Meshorer notes that five of the seven symbols on the dated coins appear also on Roman republican coinage of the period 44 to 40 BCE (tripod, apex, palm branches, caduceus, and aphlaston). The two

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80. The coins of Alexander Jannaeus and also of Agrippa I that use the anchor-type refer to a seaport for Judea, with the same motivations. See also the discussion of the Ashdod inscription, above.

81. Alternatively the eagle may be associated with Herod's assistance in the construction of the Temple of Ba'al Shamim at Si'a, where eagles of exactly this form decorated several of the gates. It should be dated to about 31 BCE.

82. All but a couple of coin inscriptions are in the genitive ("of King Herod"); the exceptions are in the nominative ("King Herod").

83. For the symbolism see Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, pp. 18–29.

additional symbols are the shield and fruit. The fruit Meshorer interprets as a poppy-head, not a pomegranate—associated with the worship of Demeter and Kore at Sebaste—wrongly claiming that Herod built the Temple of Kore, for which there is no evidence other than the proximity of that temple to his Temple of Roma and Augustus. Meshorer falls back lamely on the popularity of the cult to explain why Herod would mint a coin in the years 40–37, well before he had rebuilt Samaria and renamed it Sebaste in honor of Augustus. It is likelier the fruit is a pomegranate and is similar to Hasmonean use of this symbol.

In contrast, the symbols on the undated coins struck in Jerusalem reflect Jewish art, the Temple, or Jewish symbols, claims Meshorer: table = Temple furniture; diadem = symbol of royalty;<sup>84</sup> wreath = royalty;<sup>85</sup> palm branches = Temple ritual; vine = Temple; anchor = maritime cities and trade;<sup>86</sup> double cornucopia with caduceus = Moses' staff; single cornucopia = half of the value of the double; galley = Caesarea Maritima; eagle = divine power.<sup>87</sup>

The symbols on Herod's coins are often described as "ambiguous," capable of being interpreted by Jews in one way, by Hellenists in another. Meshorer's later work emphatically rejects this interpretation that he had earlier shared; he now suggests two stages, dated coins using Roman republican symbols and undated using Jewish symbols.<sup>88</sup> A theme of the dated coins was to win over the Samaritan population—he sees the poppy-head as decisive. The shield and helmet, which were not used in contemporary Roman coins, might be seen better not as representing Roman military support—so Meshorer—but as referring to the military struggle for Jerusalem. There were no blatantly military symbols in the undated coins except for the war galley, referring to a foreign, not an internal, military venture.

Noteworthy, however, is what was not found on Herod's coins. (1) There were no human representations; Herod conformed to Jewish sensibilities and his predecessors' usage.<sup>89</sup> (2) No coins followed Imperial or even Republican practice by noting Herod's military or political triumphs. The war galley hints

84. The diadem often has a *chi*-cross inside it. Meshorer argues that *chi* was a symbol of priesthood (citing *b. Kerithoth* 5.2) and that the combination symbolized the cooperation between the priesthood and the kingship.

85. Meshorer incorrectly states that one coin (#18) with a wreath reads "Herod the Great"; actually it reads Herod the King.

86. Alexander Jannaeus used the anchor and cornucopias also; Herod's issue may be intended to claim that he was successor to the Hasmoneans, after his marriage to Mariamme in 37 BCE.

87. Meshorer points to the important difference between a Roman eagle with wings outspread and the eagle on Herod's coins with wings folded in the Hellenistic manner. Eagles at Si'a and elsewhere in the Nabatean world also had folded wings.

88. Meyshan earlier had attempted to describe many of the dated-coin symbols as Jewish: e.g., the *thymiatérion* was not a pagan symbol but a reference to a small altar in the Temple.

89. Tyrian shekels used to pay the Temple tax showed the god Melkart and an eagle.

at such an aim, but it was Marcus Agrippa's expedition, not Herod's. The coins merely identified Herod as king—no victories, no political ambitions, no honors. (3) The coins departed from Antigonus's types with menorah and table of shewbread (repeated on Titus's triumphal arch following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE). A later *baraita* to *Avodah Zarah* 43a forbade such symbols: "A man may not make a house after the design of the Temple, . . . a table after the design of the table or a candelabrum after the design of a candelabrum. He may, however, make one with five, six or eight [branches], but with seven he may not make it even though it be of other metals." The status of the *halachah* at the time of Herod and Antigonus cannot be determined; while there is a Second-Temple grafitto with a seven-branched menorah and a shewbread table, first-century synagogues avoid symbols associated with the Temple prior to its destruction.<sup>90</sup> The attitudes that shaped the *baraita* may have been at work in Herod's time.<sup>91</sup> His avoidance of such symbols is as important as Antigonus's—the high priest's—use of them.

#### CONCLUSION

The inscriptions and coins can hardly be overemphasized in providing contemporary evidence of Herod's character. He maintained an unexpected reserve, followed convention, and was regarded effusively by others. The reserve—almost conservatism—was evident in the simple designation "King," recognition of him as a Jew, the absence of "great," avoidance both of human likenesses and of too-sacred symbolism. Herod followed convention in using Hasmonean symbolism (the double cornucopia and the pomegranate), possibly minting Tyrian coins locally used in paying the Temple tax, and using Roman republican symbols to tie himself to the Senate in Rome from which he derived his royal power. He was regarded externally as a important patron, a man of kindness, generosity, good will, and piety, a friend of Romans and of the Emperor. These features contrast with the usual picture; though none is inconsistent with Josephus's picture, the balance and composition are radically different.

90. P. Richardson, "Augustan-era Synagogues."

91. Later synagogues, third century CE onward, used "sacred" or even pagan symbols (zodiacs, Helios) in the decorative motifs, both in two- and three-dimensional applications.