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.1

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 eastern 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. 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 Perea. (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 benefited 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 Perea 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 "forcets"; altogether about thirty or so sites have been proposed in various studies. Though this estimate is incorrect in my view, even if a small portion are to be attributed to Herod, were these fortlets for defense of Herod and his holding, 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 Perea, with 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. 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.


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, 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.

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 (Anhedon), the new foundations of Antipatris (Aphek) and of Phaselis (Fasayli). He established new military settlements, villages, or towns around which


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 (Shaʿar ha-ʿAmaqim on the Plain of Esdraelon), Pente Komai ("Five Villages," just north of Sebaste, where he probably settled six thousand colonists; War 1.405), Bathyras (in Batanae), and Heshbon (in Perea). There were military colonies 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.6 Herod had large royal estates (Plain of Esdraelon, Western Samaria, Idumaea) or new land available to distribute (e.g., Batanae, Perea),7 which helped to shape their location.8

Some of the same general factors applied also to Antipatris, Agrippias, and Phasellus. The latter case is a good example.9 Herod prized his huge royal estates in the Jericho area, from which he derived a substantial income.10 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 Sarepta at Qiryat Bene Hassan.11

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 convulsions, 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:12 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 demobilized veterans in Rome.
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.
12. NEAEHL 4.270–91 and literature cited there.

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, Hycania, Macheerus, and perhaps also Herodium East (in Perea). (3) Fortresses with generous living quarters. Several of Herod's forts seem oriented more to royal life than to protection: the towers Phasellus, Hippicus, and Marianne 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 Perea.14 A fortress call Agrippina probably occupied the site of the later Crusader fortress at Belvoir; 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

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.20 In Samaria the only known palace, which was more of a fort, was at Alexandria. On the coast land adjacent to Samaria, 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 Pantis. In Perea Herod had a substantial but unfortified palace at Bethanatha, 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 Nabataea 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.22 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.

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15. Alexandria was rebuilt by Phereoros in 39/38 BCE.
16. Note that Herod’s children, Antipas and Philip, were the ones to construct walls at several cities: Sepphoris, Bethsaida, Pantis, Bethanatha-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.
21. Deduced from Josephus’s comment that it was Antipas who threw up walls around it. This would confirm the earlier view that fortification was not a primary concern of Herod’s.
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. 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. 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 opportuni-
ties 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 be-
tween “desert and sown,” incorporating public and private spaces, together
with a small bath. 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
end there were public or entertaining areas with a huge semi-circular
vantage point to catch the sunset.

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 Jeru-
alem (quite wealthy, to judge from houses in Jerusalem) built country houses
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. The
use of round elements was another distinctive element in Herod’s palaces. Espe-
cially 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 quad-
ratum, opus sectile, with vaults both circular and barrel, full Roman baths, mosa-
ics, 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. Ap-
parently the lack of such art reflects his personal commitment to Judaism.

Each of these palaces was a coherent solution to a deliberately chosen chal-
lenge. 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 Pal-
ace), 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, 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).

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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.


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.


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 mikvah (Masada
and Cypros, to mention two). If correct, this adds to our understanding of Herod’s practices.

163–75.

30. Enthusiastically but indelicately, H. Shanks, "Is This King David’s Tomb?*, *BAR* 21/1
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. 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 Shamin at Sí’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, 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: one in Caesarea Maritima dominating the harbor and city center, one in Sebaste at the highest point of the city, and one in Panias alongside the grotoes dedicated to the god Pan. 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 Panias, 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. 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 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. 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. 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...
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 Hasmoncean 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 view of the whole south wall of the city.

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. 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.

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. 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. 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, and in the northeast part of the city an amphitheater can be detected, though it

40. The shape of the caves 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 theater for contests typically carried on in a hippodrome, stadium, amphitheater, or gymnasium, but not in a theater. 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 caves. 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\(^{46}\) and a stadium carved at one end into the hill on which the city sits.\(^{47}\) Herod built a bath at Ashkelon, gymnasium at 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 Omanyyd 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 Judasam, but he located them outside the city and minimized their offense by using a limited decorative vocabulary.\(^{48}\)

**COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Some large-scale constructions were intended to promote trade.\(^{49}\) 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.\(^{50}\) 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, opoponax, 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

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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’ silence.
48. The so-called trophies incident showed Herod’s reserve with respect to decorative matters (Ant. 15.268–91).
50. Evidence for shops is quite certain along the south wall (below the terrace at the Hulda Gate), 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;\(^{51}\) nothing connects it directly with Herod himself, but it is possible—that 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 Byblos he constructed “halls, porticoes . . . and markets” (exedras de kai stoas . . . kai agora, War 1.422), referring in part to commercial activity.\(^{52}\) 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’ allusions to these dealings seem to indicate two related things:\(^{53}\) benefactions in general to support the industry itself in whatever way was appropriate 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 Antheidion-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.\(^{54}\) There were sewers below the Temple court in Jerusalem,

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52. See 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 naumikon* (“for shipbuilding”); at Ant 16.147 *pros naupódian* (“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. Appropri
tate attention was given to similar projects in urban contexts such as
Sebaste.

Water facilities are more obvious today. In Jerusalem Herod built several
major reservoirs, partly for citizens’ needs and more particularly for the Tem-
ples’ 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 pre-
cinct), the Struthion Pool (at the Antonia Fortress), the Manillah Pool (north-
west of the Jaffa Gate), Hezekiah’s Pool (northeast of the Jaffa Gate), the Sheep
Pool (Pool of Bet’nesda 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 kilo-
meters). The route followed the contours in some places, cut through the hills
in another, and eventually approached Jerusalem along the Hinnom and Tyro-
poean 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, cist-
terns, collecting basins, and so on (traceable at Hycania, Herodium, Jericho,
Docus, Cypros, Masada, Alexandreion, and Machaerus). Caesarea Maritima,
Sebaste, Paphos, 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 stoa alongside a landscaped garden; at Jericho, a large
pool with a more or less matching garden, overlooked by a central gazebo
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 larges—a program almost overpowering in its scope—
were complex. It will not do to attribute such a program to megalomania or
paranoia. The reasons for it change as need and Herod’s circumstances change,
so ultimately the question requires reassessment of the social conditions of Her-
od’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:
“Thenceforward 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 tês magaloiouais eteinein 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. His unitary approach is attractive, but overlooks
many factors.

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—at 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.
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). 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 Perea (Machaerus, and possibly Herodium East and Esbus), and one in Idumaea (Masada). Perea 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.

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, as a focus for local piety (late 30s). In a project just north of Hebron at Mamre he memorialized Abraham alone. 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. 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

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Footnotes:
60. Ironically, for Cassius had helped him in his career at a crucial moment.
61. On “forlorn” 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.
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 Eloה haShammA, an exalt 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 B.C.E.) signalled this phase, while he was still completing Masada, the theater and amphitheater in Jerusalem, and founding Pente Komei, Gaba, and perhaps Phaselis. In the late 20s his construction activities were staggering: Sebaste was still under construction (27–22), 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 at stimulating 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 B.C.E., 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 Sebastia. 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.65

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**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. 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 piously 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 B.C.E, 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-
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)
   BJ 1.401; 5.238–46; AJ 15.292, 409, 424; 18.91–95; 20.30
   [37–35 BCE]

2. Hasmonaean Palace rebuilt
   BJ 2.344; AJ 20.190
   [mid-30s BCE]

3. Royal Palace (Caesarea and Agrippa—two buildings—with banquet halls, one hundred guest rooms, cloisters, courtyards, and pools)
   BJ 1.402; 5.156–83, 246; AJ 15.292, 318
   [23 BCE]

4. Phasaelis, Mariamne, and Hippicus Towers
   BJ 1.418; 2.46, 439; 5.144, 147, 161–75; 7.1–2; AJ 16.144; 17.257
   [mid–30s BCE]

5. Family Tomb (north of Damascus Gate)
   BJ 5.108, 507
   [possibly later]

6. Temple, Temenos, Courtyards
   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)
   Forecourts
   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 Miqvahs outside Huldah Gates
   Water and sewage systems
   Gate, BJ 2.5
   Gate of Marcus Agrippa, BJ 1.416
   Golden Eagle, AJ 17.151
   Beautiful Gate
   [23–22 BCE]

   [23–15 BCE]

   [before 15 BCE]

   [before 15 BCE]

   [before 10 BCE]

   [before 28 BCE]

   [before 28 BCE]

   [before 28 BCE]

   [before 28 BCE]
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 Poo. (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
   bj 1.133–37, 161–72, 308, 334, 528–9, 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
   [39/38 BCE]

2. Hyrcania (Khirbet Mird), refortified palace with water system
   [37 (32) BCE]

3. Masada
   [37–10 BCE]

Fortification: casemate wall around top
Western Palace
Other palaces
Storehouses
Administrative buildings
Barracks
Synagogue
Baths
Cisterns
Northern Villa
Pools and gardens

4. Machaerus (Mc'hwar), fortified palace with ramparts, towers, cisterns, adjacent town, aqueducts
   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. Sivitra 9.2.58d
   [20s BCE]

5. Cypros (Kipros). Fortified Palace above Jericho
   bj 1.407, 417; 2.484; AJ 16.143
   [30s BCE]

6. Docus (Jebel Qarantal) Fortress
   Strabo Geog. 16.2.40; 1 Macc 16.11:16–16; AJ 13.230–35; bj 1.54–56
   [30s BCE]

7. Herodium West (= Har Hordos; Jebel el-Fureidis) Fortress
   Upper palace with towers, apartments, cisterns
   Monumental building
   Pool with gazebo, gardens
   Large intermediate palace by course
   Other palaces, service buildings
   Aqueducts and cisterns
   [23–15 BCE]

8. Herodium East (= Kh. es-Samra?) Arabian frontier
   bj 1.41
   [after 30 BCE]

9. Hebron, memorial to Patriarchs and Matriarchs over Cave of Macphelah
   bj 4.530–33
   [30s BCE]

10. Mamre (= Ramat et Khalil), memorial
    bj 4.530–33
   [30s BCE]

11. Să' (near Canatha), temple of Ba' al Shamim
    [32–31 BCE]

12. Jericho (= Tulul Abu el-Alaq) bj 1.407; Strabo Geog. 16.2.40
    Reconstruction of Hasmonean Palace
    Second Palace (now covered over)
    Winter Palace on Wadi Qelt
    Gardens and pools
    Strabo, Geog. 16.2.40
    Hippodrome amm 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 Liviajs/
    Julia 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. Sephoris (= Zippori), palace
   bj 2.56, 574; AJ 18.27, 17.271
   Arsenal?
15. Caesarea Maritima (Qesari)
   Harbor, mole, breakwater, towers, docks
   Warehouses and commercial buildings
   [22–12 BCE]
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. Byblos, walls, BJ 1.422
   —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
9. Balanea (near Latakia), lightened taxes, BJ 1.422
10. Antioch (Antakya), broad paved street, colonnade
    BJ 1.425; AJ 16.148, 427
    [36 BCE ?]
11. [30 or 20? BCE]

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
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.66 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 (*ριγι herodi induxo, 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” (ερυμοι; #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 (#846–47, see also #848–50).

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

66. H. M. Cotten 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.\(^{67}\) 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” (E[negetēs]) and as “Friend of Caesar” (phílokaisaros). (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 agoronomos; it stands as evidence that Herod had no compunctions about promoting his imperial connections.

2. (b) (*Ashdod*)\(^{68}\)
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” (eusebēs) rather than “benefactor” (eusegetōs). The two weights and their descriptions of Herod are coherent and important.

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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,\(^{69}\) refers to a donor named Sparis or Paris, probably a Jew living in Rhodes.\(^{70}\) 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.\(^{71}\) 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 (4½") 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

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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.
donations were for the people (demos) 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, Mantzoulou-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." 72

The statue with its base was donated to the Temple of Ba'al Shamim by a 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; ClAtt 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 demos in gratitude to Herod. The inscription highlighted two aspects of Herod's relationship to the Athenians—his "good works" (energasia) and his "good will" (eunodia). 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; ClAtt 3. 551 (Athens, Acropolis)
The people
to Herod the pious King and friend of the Emperor
because of his moral excellence and good works.

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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" (eisbêgetes) and of "moral excellence" (arete). 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 [1355] 150 (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 Ag'asos 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.

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 Pharnous was epimeletes

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 benefit 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. 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.

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

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 Romans . . .”
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 II . . .”
22. (SEG 16.490) “The Great King . . . has sent another donation . . . a thousand denarius . . . [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” (megas). 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 the restraint 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.75

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 Hycranus 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 Hycranus’s financial minister and head of the mint.76 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-ro or tau-ro 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

means that one group of coins had two ways of giving the date on the same face, while the other group had no date. Meysheh was the first to disagree with this theory, arguing that the monogram and date cannot say the same thing: he claimed the monogram referred to the minting authority of Tyre (Tyre). This suggestion is plausible, for Tyrian coinage was the accepted currency for payment of the Temple tax in Jerusalem. Another interpretation of the dated coins is provided by Meshorer: 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 30 B.C.E., 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 C.E.) 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 Phasa, 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 conclusions 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 B.C.E. But it is likely 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. (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 B.C.E., 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 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 B.C.E (contra Moshorer). (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. 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. This also is similar to the epigraphic evidence, especially the absence of inscriptions in the Holy Land. Moshorer notes that five of the seven symbols on the dated coins appear also on Roman republican coinage of the period 44 to 40 B.C.E (tripod, apex, palm branches, caduceus, and apis). The two

78. Moshorer has argued that Herod may have minted later issues of Tyrian shekels himself, especially those with the monogram koppa-thau (= kosmos roman? or, as Moshorer 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).
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 Baal Shamin at Silo, where eagles of exactly this form decorated several of the gates. It should be dated to about 31 B.C.E.
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 Moshorer, 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 namely 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;44 wreath = royalty;45 palm branches = Temple ritual; vine = Temple; anchor = maritime cities and trade;46 double cornucopia with caduceus = Moses’ staff; single cornucopia = half of the value of the double; galley = Caesarea Maritima; eagle = divine power.47

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.48 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.49 (2) No coins followed Imperial or even Republican practice by noting Herod’s military or political triumphs. The war galley hints

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 Arodah 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 graffito with a seven-branched menorah and a shewbread table, first-century synagogues avoid symbols associated with the Temple prior to its destruction.50 The attitudes that shaped the baraita may have been at work in Herod’s time.51 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 an 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.

44. The diadem often has a chi-cross inside it. Meshorer argues that chi was a symbol of priesthood (citing b. Kenithoth 5.2) and that the combination symbolized the cooperation between the priesthood and the kingship.
45. Meshorer incorrectly states that one coin (#18) with a wreath reads “Herod the Great”; actually it reads Herod the King.
46. 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.
47. 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.
48. Meyshar earlier had attempted to describe many of the dated-coin symbols as Jewish: e.g., the dynamis was not a pagan symbol but a reference to a small altar in the Temple.
49. Tyrian shekels used to pay the Temple tax showed the god Melkart and an eagle.
50. P. Richardson, “Augustan-era Synagogues.”
51. Later synagogues, third century CE onward, used “sacred” or even pagan symbols (zodiacs, Helios) in the decorative motif, both in two- and three-dimensional applications.