

# STUDIA ANTIQUA

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A STUDENT JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY  
OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY  
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# STUDIA ANTIQUA

A STUDENT JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY  
OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

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# STUDIA ANTIQUA

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME 16

SUMMER 2017

Abbreviations .....IV

Editor's Preface ..... VIII

Heta Björklund

Comparing Greco-Roman Uterus Votives and Byzantine Uterus  
Amulets .....9

Jolynne Minnick

A Samaritan Temple to Rival Jerusalem on Mount Gerizim ..... 22

Rachel Huntsman

Friends, Foes and Trading Partners: The Exchange of Architectural Styles  
Between Herodian Judea and Nabataean Petra ..... 30

## ABBREVIATIONS

All abbreviations are taken from *The SBL Handbook of Style*, (8.4).

AASF	Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
AJP	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ArOr	<i>Archiv Orientalní</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago, 1999. Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford 1907
BMes	<i>Bibliotheca mesopotamica</i>
BSac	<i>Bibliotheca sacra</i>
BSC	Bible Student's Commentary
BT	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CDME</i>	<i>A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian</i> . Edited by R. O. Faulkner. Oxford, 1962.
<i>COS</i>	<i>The Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by W. W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden, 1997–.
<i>DDD</i>	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> . Edited by K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst. Leiden, 1995.
<i>DJD</i>	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
<i>EBib</i>	Etudes bibliques
<i>EDNT</i>	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by H. Balz, G. Schneider. Grand Rapids, 1990–93.
<i>EgT</i>	<i>Eglise et théologie</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
<i>HBC</i>	<i>Harper's Biblical Commentary</i> . Edited by J. L. Mays et al. San Francisco, 1988.
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HTS</i>	Harvard Theological Studies
<i>IB</i>	<i>Interpreter's Bible</i> . Edited by G. A. Buttrick et al. 12 vols. New York, 1951–57.
<i>ICC</i>	International Critical Commentary
<i>IDB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville, 1962.
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>IOS</i>	Israel Oriental Studies
<i>JAC</i>	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>

## ABBREVIATIONS VI

<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
<i>JFSR</i>	<i>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996.
<i>MDB</i>	<i>Mercer Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by W. E. Mills. Macon, 1990.
<i>NewDocs</i>	<i>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</i> . Edited by G. H. R. Horsley and S. Llewelyn. North Ryde, N. S.W., 1981–.
<i>NIB</i>	<i>The New Interpreter's Bible</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OTS	Old Testament Studies
<i>OtSt</i>	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East

SP	Sacra pagina
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964–76.
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Verei</i>

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

I am happy to present to the reader this latest issue of *Studia Antiqua*. This is my first issue as journal's editor. This has certainly been a learning experience for me and one full of growth. I can only assume that the editing staff and reviewers who have had to put up with me have also experienced their share of growth through this. I am deeply indebted to the contributors, editors, reviewers, advisors, and donors who have made this all possible.

This issue represents a time of transition and experimentation and I have slowly implemented some new ideas that will be more apparent in the coming issue. One of the major changes we will be making to *Studia Antiqua* is the decision to cut down to one issue a year, which is why this issue was a little later in being published. I am grateful to all the individuals who listened to my ideas and have been supportive of the changes being made.

This year's issue saw an incredible eight submissions. After discussion with wonderful, attentive reviewers the decision was made to publish three of the submitted articles. I am incredibly grateful for every single student that submitted their work. The journal wouldn't be possible without you. Also in this issue I am excited to publish our first article from a student that does not attend BYU. The other two students presented their papers at this year's Students of the Ancient Near East Symposium. Unintentionally all these articles draw heavily upon archaeology and examine the material culture of varying regions and times.

The first article comes from a student who just completed his PhD at the University of Helsinki Heta Björklund. His paper, which is part of the dissertation he recently defended, focuses on the similarities in function between Greco-Roman uterus votives from the Classical and Hellenistic periods and Byzantine uterus amulets from tenth and twelfth centuries CE. The second article was written by Jolynne Minnick, who discussed the archaeological finds on Mount Gerizim and argued that the Temple of the Samaritans was meant to rival the Jewish temple at Jerusalem. Lastly, Rachel Huntsman explored the relationship Herod the Great had to the Nabateans through architectural similarities and other archaeological finds found at Petra in Jordan. All these papers make fascinating contributions to archaeological research in their respective time periods.

This journal would be impossible without the devoted time and talents of our faculty reviewers. They go above and beyond the call of duty as volunteers to our cause. I consider their continued efforts to us students the most important aspect of this journal, and what really makes the entire experience worthwhile. I also wish to thank our financial donors for their support to *Studia Antiqua*. I would especially like to thank the Religious Studies Center, which provides the internship that makes this student journal possible. I am grateful to all involved.

Haley Wilson-Lemmon  
Editor-in-Chief, *Studia Antiqua*



# COMPARING GRECO-ROMAN UTERUS VOTIVES AND BYZANTINE UTERUS AMULETS\*

HETA BJÖRKLUND

*Heta Björklund completed her PhD in Classical studies in 2017 at the University of Helsinki.*

## INTRODUCTION

This paper will examine two groups of archaeological finds to see if common elements behind their use can be identified. The first group is Greco-Roman uterus votives from Classical (510–323 BCE) and Hellenistic (323–146 BCE) periods, and the second group is Byzantine uterus amulets from tenth and twelfth centuries CE.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of both the uterus votives and uterus amulets has been thought to be aiding the donor of the votive or the wearer of the amulet in pregnancy and childbirth. The votives have been seen as part of a reciprocal relationship between the donor and the deity, and serving as thanks for the healthy children or successful childbirth granted by the deity.<sup>2</sup> The amulets have been considered apotropaic and meant to protect women and their children from child-killing or child-stealing demons, such as the Gello.<sup>3</sup> They were also thought to provide safety from the “wandering womb.” In antiquity, it was commonly believed that the uterus could leave its proper place and wander around the body, causing different ailments depending on where in the body it

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\* The author wishes to thank Peregrine Horden and Laura Aho for their helpful comments on this article.

<sup>1</sup> These Byzantine uterus amulets represent but a fraction of all uterus amulets in use during antiquity and later up until the modern period. This article will focus only on a very specific type of Byzantine uterus amulets (see section 1.2), selected because of the manageable number of specimens (about 60 amulets are known) and their temporal distance from the uterus votives. Analysis of and comparison between uterus votives and contemporary Greek and Roman gemstone uterus amulets has been done by Véronique Dasen and S. Ducaté-Paarmann, “Hysteria and Metaphors of the Uterus in Classical Antiquity,” in *Images and Gender: Contributions to Hermeneutics of Reading Ancient Art*, ed. Silvia Schroer (Fribourg and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 239–261. Votives related to fertility, pregnancy, and childbirth include other types of votives in addition to anatomical uterus votives, such as women with doves, women with children, women with hands over pudenda or on wombs, kneeling nude women, and keys (see, e.g., Jens D. Baumbach, “‘Speak, votives, ...’, Dedicatory practice in sanctuaries of Hera,” in *Le donateur, l’offrande et la déesse: Systèmes votifs des sanctuaires de déesses dans le monde grec*, ed. Clarisse Prêtre (Kernos Suppléments 23) (Liège: Presses universitaires de Liège, 2009), 203–223, Table 1). The amount of this material is so large that in the confines of this article it is possible to concentrate only on the anatomical uterus votives.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Rebecca M. Ammerman, “Children at Risk: Votive Terracottas and the Welfare of Infants at Paestum,” *Hesperia Supplements* 41 (2007): 131–151; Folkert T. Van Straten, “Gifts for the Gods,” in *Faith, Hope and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World*, ed. Henk S. Versnel (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 65–151, 70–73; Dasen and Ducaté-Paarmann, “Hysteria and Metaphors of the Uterus in Classical Antiquity,” 250; Véronique Dasen, “Femme à tiroir,” in *Naissance et petite enfance dans l’Antiquité, actes du colloque de Fribourg, 28 nov.-1<sup>er</sup> dec. 2001*, ed. Véronique Dasen (Fribourg and Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 127–144.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Jean-Jacques Aubert, “Threatened Wombs: Aspects of Ancient Uterine Magic,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 30 (1989): 412–449; Richard P. H. Greenfield, “Saint Sisinnios, the Archangel Michael and the Female Demon Gylou: The Typology of the Greek literary stories,” *Βυζαντινά* 15 (1989): 83–142; Jeffrey Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 56 (1993): 25–62; Christopher A. Faraone, “Magical and Medical Approaches to the Wandering Womb in the Ancient Greek World,” *Classical Antiquity* 30 (2011): 1–32; Viltanioti, Irini Fotini. “La démonsse Yellô dans la Grèce ancienne, byzantine et moderne,” in *Actes du colloque « Anges et Démons » tenu au Musée en Piconrue à Bastogne le 1<sup>er</sup> et 2 octobre 2009* (Brussels: Ministère de la Communauté Française de Belgique, 2012), 173–189; Camilla Asplund Ingemark and Dominic Ingemark, “More than Scapegoating: the Therapeutic Potential of Stories of Child-killing Demons in Ancient Greece and Rome,” in *Therapeutic Uses of Storytelling: an Interdisciplinary Approach to Narration as Therapy* (Lund, Sweden: Nordic Academic Press, 2013), 75–84.

settled. Several different ailments, gynecological and other, were grouped under the concept of “wandering womb.”<sup>4</sup>

The paper will fall into three main sections. The first section will give a general introduction to uterus votives and uterus amulets (including their composition, appearance, and dating). The second section will examine the circumstances that necessitated the use of votives and amulets. The third section will examine the presumed functional principle behind the votives and amulets, the mechanism that was thought to provide efficacy to the votives and amulets, and the ritual framework of their use.

## UTERUS VOTIVES

This section is not meant as a full treatise on the subject of uterus votives, but as a primer. It will give the reader a general introduction to the composition, appearance, dating, location, and use of uterus votives. Anatomical votives in general and uterus votives in particular have been thoroughly studied elsewhere, and I direct the reader to those for further reading.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Plat. *Tim.* 91c: “And in women again, owing to the same causes, whenever the matrix or womb, as it is called,—which is an indwelling creature desirous of child-bearing,—remains without fruit long beyond the due season, it is vexed and takes it ill; and by straying all ways through the body and blocking up the passages of the breath and preventing respiration it casts the body into the uttermost distress, and causes, moreover, all kinds of maladies.” (αἱ δ’ ἐν ταῖς γυναιξὶν αὖ μῆτραί τε καὶ ὑστέραι λεγόμεναι διὰ ταῦτά ταῦτα, ζῶον ἐπιθυμητικὸν ἐνὸν τῆς παιδοποιίας, ὅταν ἄκαρπον παρὰ τὴν ὥραν χρόνον πολλὸν γίγνηται, χαλεπῶς ἀγανακτοῦν φέρει, καὶ πλανώμενον πάντῃ κατὰ τὸ σῶμα, τὰς τοῦ πνεύματος διεξόδους ἀποφράττον, ἀναπνεῖν οὐκ ἔων εἰς ἀπορίας τὰς ἐσχάτας ἐμβάλλει καὶ νόσους παντοδαπὰς ἄλλας παρέχει.) Translation by Bury, Robert Gregg, ed. and transl., *Plato. Timaeus. Critias. Cleitophon. Menexenus. Epistles* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929), 250–251; Aret. *De curatione acutorum morborum*, 2.10; *PGM VII* 260–271; Hippocr. *Steril.* 35. Large parts of Hippocrates’s *Nature of Women* are devoted to the movement of the uterus and how to make it return to its place (Hippocr. *Nat. Mul.* 3–8, 14, 26, 30–31, 32.46, 38, 40, 44, 47–49, 54, 58, 62, 87); Sor. *Gyn.* 3.29 (1.3.8. in the translation of Temkin, Owsei, ed. and transl. *Soranus’ Gynecology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 9: “Although the uterus is not an animal (as it appeared to some people), it is, nevertheless, similar in certain respects, having a sense of touch, so that is contracted by cooling agents but relaxed by loosening ones.” While Soranus does not share the belief of an animalistic uterus, he references it.); Gal. *De Locis Affectis* 6.5; Gal. *De Uteri Dissectione* 4. For modern research on “the wandering womb,” see, e.g., Lesley Dean Jones, “The Cultural Construct of the Female Body in Classical Greek Science,” in *Women’s History & Ancient History*, ed. Sarah B. Pomeroy (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 111–137; Mark J. Adair, “Plato’s View of the ‘Wandering Uterus,’” *The Classical Journal* 91 (1996): 153–163; Christopher A. Faraone, “New Light on Ancient Greek Exorcisms of the Wandering Womb,” *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 144 (2003): 189–197; Faraone, “Magical and Medical Approaches to the Wandering Womb in the Ancient Greek World”; Aubert, “Threatened Wombs: Aspects of Ancient Uterine Magic.”

<sup>5</sup> E.g., William Henry Denham Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902); A. Comella, “Riflessi del culto di Asclepio sulla religiosità popolare etrusco-laziale e campana di epoca medio- e tardo-repubblicana,” in *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell’Università degli Studi di Perugia* 20 (1982–1983): 216–244; Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987); Sara B. Aleshire, *The Athenian Asklepieion* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1989); Sara B. Aleshire, *Asklepios at Athens* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1991); Bronwen L. Wickkiser, *Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Bronwen L. Wickkiser, *The Appeal of Asklepios and Politics of Healing in the Greco-Roman World* (University of Texas, 2003). PhD diss.; Gerhard Bauchhenss, “Menschliche Körperteile, Anatomische Exvotos,” in *Dedications. Thesaurus Cultus Et Rituum Antiquorum, Vol. I* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), 403–405; John Boardman, Thomas Mannack, Claudia Wagner, Evgenia Vikela, and Björn Forsén. “Greek Votive Objects,” in *Dedications. Thesaurus Cultus Et Rituum Antiquorum, Vol. I* (The Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), 281–288; Björn Forsén, “Models of Body Parts,” in *Dedications. Thesaurus Cultus Et Rituum Antiquorum, Vol. I* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), 311–313; Jean MacIntosh Turfa, “Anatomical Votives,” in *Dedications. Thesaurus Cultus Et Rituum Antiquorum, Vol. I* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), 359–368; Sfameni Gasparro, Giulia, Valentina Cali, and Ernesto De Miro, eds. *Il culto di Asclepio nell’area Mediterranea. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Agrigento 20. –22. Novembre 2005.*

Uterus votives are a subset of anatomical votives that were used specifically to promote uterine health and fertility.<sup>6</sup> They are found in more than 200 sites in Italy,<sup>7</sup> mainly from Vulci, Tarquinia, Latium, Campania, Daunia, and western Lucania, between the end of fourth century and the end of second century BCE.<sup>8</sup> The total number of finds is in the thousands, with more than 1,300 finds from Central Italy alone.<sup>9</sup> Ammerman estimates that up to 90% of all Italian terracotta votives (not just of uterus votives) belong to the votive practice of the central Italian complex, where the main stress was on the protection of women's fertility and of new-born children.<sup>10</sup> In Greece, anatomical votives depicting uteri are found from the Archaic (800–480 BCE) to the Hellenistic (323–146 BCE) period but are less common than in Italy.<sup>11</sup> The main deities called to help in matters of pregnancy and childbirth were Hera, Aphrodite, Eilethya, and Artemis. In Temple of Hera I (“the Basilica”) at Paestum, more than twenty uterus votives have been found.<sup>12</sup>

The uterus votives vary in shape, but often resemble a jar. They can be classified in four main types: an almond shape (*tipo di forma a mandorla*), ciabatta shape (*tipo di forma a ciabatta*), crested shape (*tipo crestato*), and an elongated shape with a cylindrical neck.<sup>13</sup> A votive shaped like a uterus did not necessarily mean that the donor's uterus itself had a

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(Rome: Gangemi, 2010); Teresa Alfieri Tonini, “Il culto di Asclepio e Igea in Tracia: il caso singolare di Pautalia e Dintorni,” *Aristonothos* 6 (2012): 219–229; Emma-Jayne Graham, “The Making of Infants in Hellenistic and Early Roman Italy: A Votive Perspective,” *World Archaeology* 45 (2013): 215–231.

<sup>6</sup> Anatomical votives are votives that represent the body part or organ that the deity was hoped to heal. The most common body parts depicted in anatomical votives in Greece and Rome were hands, feet, eyes, breasts, and genitals. In Italy, they were at the height of their popularity in Latium and southern Etruria between the fourth and second century BCE, while during the Imperial period they remained popular mainly in the provinces. In Greece, anatomical votives occur within cults of deities associated with health and healing such as Apollo, Artemis, Eilethya, Hygeia, Opis, Demeter, and Asclepius (Laura Aho, “Asklepioksele omistetut Votiivipiirtokirjoitukset.” [In Finnish, “Votive inscriptions dedicated to Asclepius.”] (Master's thesis, University of Helsinki, 2013), <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/38185/asklepio.pdf>, 38–39, 49–52; Dasen and Ducaté-Paarmann, “Hysteria and Metaphors of the Uterus in Classical Antiquity,” 243–244; Ammerman, “Children at Risk: Votive Terracottas and the Welfare of Infants at Paestum,” 143–144; F. Graf, “Healing Deities, Healing Cults” *Brill's New Pauly* s.v. Brill Online, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347bnpe505390> (accessed September 28, 2016)). Anatomical votives are made of clay, wood, metal, wax, or marble. Ammerman, “Children at Risk: Votive Terracottas and the Welfare of Infants at Paestum,” 131 concludes that most donors could not afford expensive votives. The most common material for votives across the board was clay. It can be assumed that in general, votives made from expensive materials, such as costly metals, were used by the wealthier classes, whereas those made of wood or clay were used by the lower classes. Yet it can not be stated that all wooden and clay votives were donated by people belonging to lower classes – depending on the occasion and the deity, votives made of cheaper materials could have been favored also by people who could have afforded more expensive materials.

<sup>7</sup> Ulrike Ehmig, “Risikobewältigung bei Schwangerschaft und Geburt in der römischen Antike: lateinische dokumentarische und archäologische Zeugnisse,” *Arctos* 47 (2013): 111–129, 122.

<sup>8</sup> Maria Fenelli, “Depositi votivi in area etrusco-italica. Medicina nei secoli,” *Arte e Scienze* 1 (1995): 367–382, 374–375; Dasen and Ducaté-Paarmann, “Hysteria and Metaphors of the Uterus in Classical Antiquity,” 243–244. For votive uterus keys, see Dasen and Ducaté-Paarmann, “Hysteria and Metaphors of the Uterus in Classical Antiquity,” 254–255.

<sup>9</sup> Ehmig, “Risikobewältigung bei Schwangerschaft und Geburt in der römischen Antike: lateinische dokumentarische und archäologische Zeugnisse,” 123; Graham, “The making of Infants in Hellenistic and Early Roman Italy: a votive perspective,” Table 1, 220–222.

<sup>10</sup> Ammerman, “Children at Risk: Votive Terracottas and the Welfare of Infants at Paestum,” 150.

<sup>11</sup> Dasen and Ducaté-Paarmann, “Hysteria and Metaphors of the Uterus in Classical Antiquity,” 244.

<sup>12</sup> In addition to the uterus votives, other fertility dedications are found in Hera's main sanctuaries. Figures of women with doves or dove figurines are found in Heraia at Perachora, Tiryns, Argos, Samos, and Temple of Hera at Foce del Sele at Paestum, while the votive type of a woman with child occurs in all of these as well as Temple of Hera I (“the Basilica”) at Paestum (Baumbach, “‘Speak, votives, ...’ Dedicatory practice in sanctuaries of Hera,” 206, 213, 221, Table 1).

<sup>13</sup> Fenelli, “Depositi votivi in area etrusco-italica. Medicina nei secoli,” 314–375; Dasen and Ducaté-Paarmann, “Hysteria and Metaphors of the Uterus in Classical Antiquity,” 244.

physical or medical problem. It could also be a return gift to the deity for a fulfilled wish or prayer for children or health.<sup>14</sup> Uterus votives were deposited in the sanctuary of the deity they were donated to.

It is likely that a great portion of the donors of votives were women,<sup>15</sup> and of all anatomical votives, uterus votives were especially important to them.<sup>16</sup> The portion of women making up the donors of inscribed votives varies both geographically and between Greek and Latin inscriptions.<sup>17</sup> Uterus votives do not spell out explicitly what was their exact purpose. Most uterus votives do not have inscriptions, and on the ones that do, the inscription did not typically state what the reason was for donating the votive or what specifically was hoped to be gained by the use of it. At its simplest, a votive inscription could be just the name of the deity it was dedicated to, with sometimes the name of the donor.<sup>18</sup> Common phrases were settled into abbreviations, such as VSLM (*votum solvit libens merito*). Typical inscriptions included terms for donating or dedicating, such as *donum* (gift), *sacrum* (consecrated, sacred), and *votum* (vow) in Latin, and ἀνάθημα (that which is set up), δῶρον (gift), εὐχή (prayer, vow), μνημεῖον (memorial, monument), and εὐχαριστήριον (expressive of gratitude) in Greek.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Aho, “Asklepiokselles omistetut votiivipiirtokirjoitukset,” 38; Aleshire, *The Athenian Asklepieion*; Björn Forsén, *Griechische Glieder Weihungen. Eine Untersuchung Zu Ihrer Typologie Und Ihrer Religions—Und Sozialgeschichtlichen Bedeutung. Papers and Monographs of the Finnish Institute at Athens, Vol. 4* (Helsinki: Finnish Institute at Athens, 1996); Forsén, “Models of Body Parts.” The general consensus is that votives were given to deities as conditional gifts, as a payment of a wish fulfilled, not unconditional gifts given purely in honor of the deity. Votives have also been found in graves, but considering the principle of function of votives, these are not about communicating with the dead or with underworld deities, but most probably about recycling votives as grave goods.

<sup>15</sup> F. Graf. “Healing deities, healing cults” *Brill’s New Pauly* s.v. Brill Online, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347\\_bnp\\_e505390](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e505390) (accessed September 28, 2016).

<sup>16</sup> On the use of uterus votives for the protection of children, see Ammerman, “Children at Risk: Votive Terracottas and the Welfare of Infants at Paestum.”

<sup>17</sup> According to Aho’s calculations, of votives dedicated to Asclepius, the percentage of female donors was about five. Of votives with Greek inscriptions, the percentage is five, and with Latin inscriptions it is three. However, of the anatomical votives at the Athenian sanctuary of Asclepius, half of the donors are women (Aho, “Asklepiokselles omistetut votiivipiirtokirjoitukset,” 101). Jacquemin has found the proportion of votive donors to be one woman to ten men. Jacquemin also notes that while epigraphists tend to overlook the significance of female donors, archeologists tend to over-attribute finds of personal adornments to female donors (Anne Jacquemin, “L’inverse est-il vrai? Peut-on penser la donatrice dans un sanctuaire masculin?,” in *Le donateur, l’offrande et la déesse. Systèmes votifs des sanctuaires de déesses dans le monde grec*, ed. Clarisse Prêtre (Kernos Suppléments 23) (Liège: Presses universitaires de Liège, 2009), 69–79; see also Jörg Rüpke, “Dedications accompanied by inscriptions in the Roman Empire: Functions, intentions, modes of communication,” in *Dedicatio sacra nel mondo greco-romano: diffusione, funzioni, tipologie—Religious Dedications in the Greco-Roman World. Distribution, Typology, Use*, eds. John Bodel and Mika Kajava (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2009), 31–41.

<sup>18</sup> Aho, “Asklepiokselles Omistetut Votiivipiirtokirjoitukset,” 33, 34, 49; Maria Letizia Lazzarini, *Le Formule delle Dedicato Votive nella Grecia Arcaica* (Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1976), 58–60, 87–109, 111–139; Günther Schörner, *Votive im Römischen Griechenland* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2003), 13–20. Laura Aho has studied the structure of votive inscriptions and found the *pro salute* structure typical of Latin inscriptions, while the ὑπέρ particle combined with the genitive case was characteristic of Greek inscriptions. The reason for giving a votive was typically expressed with the Latin particles *ex* (most commonly *ex voto*), *ob*, and *causa*, and the Greek ἐκ and ἐνεκα (Aho, “Asklepiokselles omistetut votiivipiirtokirjoitukset,” 45, 47, 49).

<sup>19</sup> Aho, “Asklepiokselles omistetut votiivipiirtokirjoitukset,” 45, 47, 49; John Bodel, “‘Sacred Dedications’: A Problem of Definitions,” in *Dedicatio Sacra nel Mondo Greco-Romano: Diffusione, Funzioni, Tipologie—Religious Dedications in the Greco-Roman World. Distribution, Typology, Use*, eds. John Bodel and Mika Kajava (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2009), 17–30, 20–22 raises the important question of whether changes in Greek and Latin dedicatory formulas reflect underlying changes in practice or belief, or if the changes happen only on the linguistic level. In addition, it must be noted that while consecration and

Given the high rates of infant and maternal mortality and the precariousness of pregnancy and childbirth, one would expect more inscriptions to explicitly give thanks for a successful birth. However, only two votive altar inscriptions from Italy state this purpose clearly: one from third century BCE and another from second century CE. This lack has been noted by Ehmig, who concludes that non-epigraphic votives must have played a bigger role than inscriptions as thanks for a successful birth.<sup>20</sup>

### BYZANTINE UTERUS AMULETS

As with the preceding section on uterus votives, this introduction to Byzantine uterus amulets is by no means meant to be exhaustive, but to give the reader a basic understanding of what these amulets are. For broader and more detailed treatments on the subject, one should turn to the principal works on the matter.<sup>21</sup>

The group of Byzantine uterus amulets that is the focus of this article vary in material, including lead, bronze, silver, gold, and gemstone, and in shape, from pendants to tokens and rings. The surviving body of these Byzantine amulets has been dated “post-iconoclastic,” broadly between tenth and twelfth centuries CE, on epigraphic and stylistic grounds.<sup>22</sup> The amulets form a coherent group by two features: a magical formula addressing the uterus (Gr. *hystera*), therefore known as the *hystera* formula,<sup>23</sup> and a motif of a face surrounded by

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dedication were one and the same in the Classical Greek world, in the Roman world, they were different, yet complementary, concepts.

<sup>20</sup> Ehmig, “Risikobewältigung bei Schwangerschaft und Geburt in der Römischen Antike: Lateinische Dokumentarische und Archäologische Zeugnisse,” 113–115. Ehmig examines uterus votives (pp. 121–123), gemstone uterus amulets (pp. 124–126), and uterine keys (pp. 126–128), and identifies three motifs used in Roman antiquity in context of pregnancy and childbirth: swaddled child (*Wickelkind*), uterus motif, and key motif (p. 128).

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g., Campbell Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets, Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950), 79–94; Armand Delatte, and Philippe Derchain. *Les Intailles Magiques Gréco-Egyptiennes* (Paris: Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque nationale, 1964); Vitalien Laurent, “Amulettes Byzantines et Formulaires Magiques,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 36 (1936): 300–315; Schlumberger, Gustave. “Amulettes Byzantines Anciens,” *Revue des études grecques* 5 (1892): 73–93; Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition”; Jeffrey Spier, “A Revival of Antique Magical Practice in Tenth-Century Constantinople,” in *Magic and the Classical Tradition*, eds. Charles Burnett and William F. Ryan (London: The Warburg Institute, 2006), 29–36; Jeffrey Spier, “An Antique Magical Book Used for Making Sixth-Century Byzantine Amulets?,” in *Les Savoirs Magiques et Leur Transmission de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance*, eds. Véronique Dasen and Jean-Michel Spieser (Florence: Sismel, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2014), 43–66; Gary Vikan, “Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984): 65–86; Gary Vikan, “Art and Marriage in Early Byzantium,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 145–163; Gary Vikan, “Magic and visual culture,” in *Greek Magic: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, ed. J. C. B. Petropoulos (London: Routledge, 2008), 53–57; Alicia Walker, “A Reconsideration of Early Byzantine Marriage Rings,” in *Between Magic and Religion*, eds. Sulochana Ruth Asirvatham, Corinne Ondine Pache, and John Watrous (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 149–164.

<sup>22</sup> Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” 31–33. However, the dating is not ironclad, and earlier dates for some of the finds have been suggested (see, e.g., Vikan, “Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium,” 78).

<sup>23</sup> For the *hystera* formula, see, e.g., François Lenormant, “Une Incantation Magique Chaldéenne,” *Revue archéologique* 34 (1877): 254–262; Laurent, “Amulettes Byzantines et Formulaires Magiques”; Alphons A. Barb, “Diva Matrix: A Faked Gnostic Intaglio in the Possession of P. P. Rubens and the Iconology of a Symbol,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 16 (1953): 193–238, notes 300–303 on pages 236–237; Alphons A. Barb, “Antaura. The Mermaid and the Devil's Grandmother: A Lecture,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 29 (1966): 1–23; Vikan, “Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium,” 77; Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” 29–31, 44–50; Spier, “A Revival of Antique Magical Practice in Tenth-Century Constantinople,” 32; Spier, “An Antique Magical Book used for Making Sixth-Century Byzantine Amulets?,” 54–65; Faraone, “Magical and Medical Approaches to the Wandering Womb in the Ancient Greek World,” 23; Heta Björklund, “Classical Traces of Metamorphosis in

snakes, known as the *hystera* motif.<sup>24</sup> The formula is repeated in a range of variations, all comparing the uterus to animals, reflecting the belief, already formed in antiquity, of the uterus as an independent being with an animal nature. One variation of the formula reads ὕστε[ρα] μελάνη μελανομένη ὡς ὄφης ἤλησε κε ὡς δράκον συρίζι (“uterus, black, blackening, slither like a snake and hiss like a serpent”),<sup>25</sup> while another reads ἡστέρα μελάνη μελανομένη ὡς ὄφης κήλησε ὡς θάλασσα γαλήνησον ὡς πρόβατον πραην κε ὡς κατνός... (“uterus, black, blackening, calm like a snake, be calm like sea, be gentle like a lamb and like a cat...”).<sup>26</sup> I have previously argued that the formula echoes the typical language used to portray metamorphosis in Greek and Latin literature.<sup>27</sup>

The amulets also include other inscriptions to convey that they are for the well-being of the uterus,<sup>28</sup> as well as the Trisagion formula,<sup>29</sup> Psalm 90 (LXX 91),<sup>30</sup> and numerous images. A demon figure is often depicted together with the rider saint, the demon prostrate and pierced with the rider saint’s lance or trampled by his horse.<sup>31</sup>

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the Byzantine Hystera Formula,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 70 (2017): 151–166. See also Louis Arnaud, “L’Exorcisme κατὰ τῆς ἄβρας Attribué à Saint Gregoire,” *Échos d’Orient* 16 (1913): 292–304.

<sup>24</sup> The *hystera* motif has been treated in Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets*, 90–91; Barb, “Diva Matrix: A Faked Gnostic Intaglio in the Possession of P. P. Rubens and the Iconology of a Symbol,” 201–202, 208–212; Barb, “Antaura. The Mermaid and the Devil’s Grandmother: A Lecture,” 9; Vikan, “Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium,” 76–81; Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” 38–42.

<sup>25</sup> Translation by Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” 29, with modifications. A lead pendant from Asia Minor (inv. no. ω-198, State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 1, Pl. 1a).

<sup>26</sup> Translation by Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” 29, with modifications. A bloodstone amulet (inv. no. MP-H-1865, Muzeum Narodowe Ziemi Przemyskiej, Przemyśl, Poland; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 57). Note that here the formula mistakenly asks the uterus to “calm like a snake” instead of “slither.” In Björklund, “Classical Traces of Metamorphosis in the Byzantine Hystera Formula,” 158 I have suggested reading κατνός as καπνός (smoke), but on further consideration, I think that the reading suggested by Laurent, “Amulettes byzantines et formulaires magiques,” 304 and reproduced in Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” 29 as *cat* is equally, if not more, possible.

<sup>27</sup> Björklund, “Classical Traces of Metamorphosis in the Byzantine Hystera Formula.”

<sup>28</sup> πρὸς ὀφέλιαν ὕστερας on a lead amulet (inv. no. 1207, Numismatic Museum, Athens; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 8) and ὕστέρηκον φυλακτέριον on a lead amulet (Archaeological Museum of Corinth; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 10), a silver amulet (Archaeological Museum of Corinth; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 40), and a bronze amulet (Archaeological Museum of Corinth; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 44). These are not intentional, but the result of the amulet maker mistakenly inscribing the title of the spell from the magical handbook along with the actual inscription.

<sup>29</sup> Ἄγιος ὁ Θεός, Ἄγιος ἰσχυρός, Ἄγιος ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. In Latin it is known as *Ter Sanctus*. The amulets often use Ἄγιος Ἄγιος Ἄγιος as shorthand for the Trisagion.

<sup>30</sup> “You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.” (Ps. 90(91).13 NRSV).

<sup>31</sup> The following amulets depict the prostrate demon figure with the rider saint: a lead amulet from Constantinople (Schlumberger 63, Cabinet des Médailles, Paris; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 16), a lead amulet from Asia Minor (inv. no. ω-1161, the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 17), a lead amulet (once in Constantinople, property of P. Khirlanghijid; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 18), a lead amulet from Constantinople (Schlumberger 19, Cabinet des Médailles, Paris; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 19), a lead amulet from Asia Minor (inv. no. 986.181.74, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 20), a lead amulet from Asia Minor (Zurich market, L. Alexander Wolfe and Frank Sternberg, Auction xxiii, 1989, lot 258; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 21), a lead amulet from Asia Minor (in a private collection; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 22), a lead amulet (in a private collection; see Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition,” no. 24), a silver amulet from Asia Minor (inv. 1980.5, Ashmolean

By their design, the Byzantine uterus amulets were clearly meant to be worn upon the person as a pendant or a ring, or carried in a pocket—not placed in a church or sanctuary. Due to the lack of a definite find context,<sup>32</sup> it remains unclear whether amulets were inherited from generation to generation or if a new one was made for each wearer. Also unclear is what level of attention was devoted to the customization of the amulet or whether they were purchased *prêt-à-porter*.

#### CIRCUMSTANCES OF VOTIVE PRACTICE AND AMULET USE

In this section, I will focus on the realities of women's lives that contributed to the use of votives and amulets in antiquity and Byzantine period. Up until the medical advances of the twentieth century, pregnancy and childbirth posed great risks to a woman's life and health. The rates of maternal and infant mortality are assumed to have been high. From Early Neolithic to Roman Imperial era, death in childbirth and from complications after birth were common enough to result in a lower average age at death for women than men.<sup>33</sup> Estimates of maternal death in Classical antiquity fall between 5 in 20,000 to 25 in 1,000.<sup>34</sup> In addition, those who survived childbirth and postpartum complications could still face a lifetime of debilitating factors such as fistulas or uterine and vaginal prolapse.

The lack of actual medical science and understanding of female physiology led to the grouping of many gynecological ailments under the umbrella term "wandering womb."<sup>35</sup> As already stated, the shape of uterus votives often resembles a jar, which makes sense in the light of textual sources that compare the uterus to a jar or a box.<sup>36</sup> In texts such as the Hippocratic corpus, we encounter the idea that the uterus could be attracted by pleasant smells and repulsed by unpleasant smells; had the uterus been displaced, it could be cajoled back to its proper place by placing fragrant balms or ointments near the vagina and smelly ones under the nostrils.<sup>37</sup>

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Museum, Oxford; see Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition," no. 33), two lead amulets from Istanbul (inv. nos. 11.20 (M) and 11.188 (M), Istanbul Archaeology Museums, see Kiziltan, Zeynep and Gulbahar Baran Çelik, eds., *Stories from the Hidden Harbor: Shipwrecks of Yenikapi* (Istanbul: Ege Yayinlari, 2013). Exhibition catalogue, 133, nos. 80 and 81).

<sup>32</sup> James Russell, "The Archaeological Context of Magic in the Early Byzantine Period," in *Byzantine Magic*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995), 35–50.

<sup>33</sup> Among adult females (15+ years), in the Classical era, the average age at death was 36.8 years; in the Hellenistic period 38 years; in the Roman Imperial era, 34.2 years (Ian Morris, *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 76–77, Table 4). In Roman Egypt, the female life expectancy at birth landed between 20 and 25 years, averaging at 22.5, and at 10 years old, between 34.5 and 37.5 years (Roger S. Bagnall, and Bruce W. Frier. *The Demography of Roman Egypt* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 90, 138). In the early 14th century, female life expectancy at birth was 22.5 years. Data from the Byzantine period is unfortunately sparse, and the data that does exist is from different periods that are not comparable with each other. However, as a general trend, in the Byzantine period life expectancy remained low (Angeliki E. Laiou, "The Human Resources," in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century, Vol. 1*, eds. Angeliki E. Laiou and Charalampos Bouras (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 47–55).

<sup>34</sup> *OCD* s.v. "Childbirth" (E. G. Clark). Revised 3rd edition (2003), 321. While Emiel Eyben, "Family Planning in Graeco-Roman Antiquity," *Ancient Society* 11–12 (1980–1981): 5–82 concentrates on ancient male writers' views on family planning and abortion, speculation on women's possible reasons for using contraception is relegated to the conclusions. These reasons, curiously, are not thought to include wishing to not die in childbirth.

<sup>35</sup> See note 4.

<sup>36</sup> E.g., Hippocr. *Epidemiae* 6.5.11; Hippocr. *De mulieribus* 1.33; Hippocr. *Genit.* 9.3.

<sup>37</sup> Hippocr. *Nat. Mul.* 3: "Open her mouth and pour in very fragrant wine, and hold evil-smelling fumigants under her nostrils and fragrant ones below her uterus." (καὶ τὸ στόμα διαγαγὼν οἶνον εὐωδέστατον ἐγγέαι, καὶ προσέχειν πρὸς τὰς ῥίνας καὶ ὑποθυμῆν τὰ κακώδεα, ὑπὸ δὲ τὰς ὑστέρας τὰ εὐώδεα.); Hippocr. *Nat.*

Folklore provided an explanation for child and maternal deaths: demons that killed pregnant women and killed or stole newborn children. The first mention of such a demon, here called Gello, in literature dates back to Sappho: Γέλλως παιδοφιλωτέρα (“fonder of children than Gello”).<sup>38</sup> The belief in Gello was still alive in Michael Psellus’s (1017/1018–1078) time, since he references the superstitions surrounding her, while stating that such demons were not real and people should give up the belief in them.<sup>39</sup> It was commonly believed that women who died before their time (that is, unmarried and childless) would become child-killing demons themselves.<sup>40</sup> The idea that one could stop these demons and secure the favor of gods by the use of amulets and votives provided a sense of control.

### THE PRESUMED FUNCTIONAL PRINCIPLE OF VOTIVES AND AMULETS

This section will illustrate the principle in which votives and amulets were thought to work through the concept of “the law of similarity,” compare the use of votives and amulets to that of Roman *tabulae*, and consider the magical power accorded to writing as well as to holy or magical images.

As explained in the previous section on the life circumstances necessitating the use of votives and amulets, women faced great risks to their life and health when pregnant and

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*Mul.* 26: “When the uterus causes suffocation, hold all sorts of evil-smelling fumigations under the patient’s nostrils: pitch, sulfur, horn, lamp wick, seal oil, castoreum; below her genitalia (sc. fumigate with) fragrant ones.” (Οκόταν πνίγωσιν αἱ ὑστέραι, ὑποθυμῖν χρή τὰ κακώδεα πάντα ὑπὸ τὰς ῥίνας, ἄσφαλτον, θεῖον, κέρας, ἐλλύχνιον, φώκης ἔλαιον, καστόριον· ὑπὸ δὲ τὰ αἰδοῖα τὰ εὐώδεα.) Hippocr. *Steril.* 35: “Fumigate beneath her genitalia with evil-smelling substances and beneath her nose with fragrant ones.” (ὑποθυμῖν δὲ ὑπὸ τὰ αἰδοῖα κακώδεα, ὑπὸ δὲ τὰς ῥίνας εὐώδεα.) Translation by Paul Potter, ed. and transl., *Hippocrates, Vol. 10. Generation. Nature of the Child. Diseases 4. Nature of Women and Barrenness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 197, 225, 391. Aret. *De causis et signis acutorum morborum*, 2.11: “Sometimes the mouth of the womb only, as far as the neck, protrudes, and retreats inwardly if the uterus be made to smell to a fetid fumigation; and the woman also attracts it if she smells to fragrant odours.” (προσπίπτει κοτὲ τὸ στόμιον τῆς ὑστέρης μόνον μέσφι τοῦ αὐχένος, ἀλλ’ αἰθὶς εἰσὼ δύεται, ἣν ὀσφραίνεται ἡ ὑστέρα θυμῖσι κακώδεϊ. ἔλκει δὲ αὐτὴν καὶ ἡ γυνή, ἣν ὀσφραίνεται θυμῖτων εὐωδέων.) Translation by Francis Adams, ed. and transl., *The Extant Works of Aretaeus, The Cappadocian* (Boston: Milford House Inc., 1972 [1856]). See also Holt Parker, “Women and Medicine,” in *Blackwell Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, eds. Sharon L. James and Sheila Dillon (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 107–124; Adair, “Plato’s View of the ‘Wandering Uterus’”; Faraone, “New Light on Ancient Greek Exorcisms of the Wandering Womb.”

<sup>38</sup> Sapph. *Fr.* 178. Zenobius preserves this fragment in his *Proverbs* (Zen. 3.3 (i 58 Leutsch-Schneidewin), and explains the reference thusly: “a saying used of those who died prematurely, or of those who are fond of children but ruin them by their upbringing. For Gello was a girl, and since she died prematurely the Lesbians say her ghost haunts little children, and they attribute premature deaths to her.” (ἐπὶ τῶν ἁώρως τελευτησάντων, ἧτοι ἐπὶ τῶν φιλοτέκνων μέν, τροφή δὲ διαφθειρόντων αὐτά. Γελλὼ γάρ τις ἦν παρθένος, καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἁώρως ἐτελεύτησε, φασὶν οἱ Λέσβιοι αὐτῆς τὸ φάντασμα ἐπιφοιτᾶν ἐπὶ τὰ παιδία, καὶ τοὺς τῶν ἁώρων θανάτους αὐτῇ ἀνατιθέασιν.) Translation of Sappho and Zenobius by David A. Campbell, ed. and transl., *Sappho, Alcaeus. Greek Lyric, Volume I: Sappho and Alcaeus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 177. See also Martin L. West, *The East Face of Helicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 58.

<sup>39</sup> Psellus records that the nature of Gello is believed to be antithetical to childbirth (ἡ Γιλλὼ δύναμις τις πρὸς τὰς γενέσεις καὶ τὰς οὐσίας ἀντίθετος), that Gello was said to kill pregnant women and to harm the womb (αὕτη γοῦν τὰ τε κυοφορούμενα, φησὶν, ἀναιρεῖ καὶ ὅποσα τῆς μήτρας διολισθήσοι) and mothers of deceased infants called their children Γιλλόβρωτα, “eaten by Gello” (τὰ γοῦν συντακέντα τῶν νεογνῶν Γιλλόβρωτα αἱ περὶ τὴν λεγὼ ὀνομάζουσιν). Psellus also recommended people to give up the belief in demons (τὰ μὲν ἀνάγων εἰς ὑψηλοτέρας ἐννοίας, τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ δοξῶν ἀρχαίων εἰς τὰς δημόδεις ὑπολήψεις κατάγων). Michael Psellus: *Philosophica minora II*, 49.1–28 (ed. Martin L. O’Meara, ed., Michael Psellos: *Philosophica Minora II* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1989)).

<sup>40</sup> Sarah Iles Johnston, *Restless Dead. Encounters Between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 164–165 (see also pages 188–199, 224); Karen Hartnup, ‘On the Beliefs of the Greeks’: *Leo Allatios and Popular Orthodoxy* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 155–157 (see also pages 85–172).



giving birth, leading to an overall lower life expectancy up until modern times. Getting pregnant might be difficult, miscarriages could happen, one could die in childbirth, and children could die. In absence of medical science and understanding of bacteria, viruses, and the mechanism of diseases, these events must have seemed random and illogical. Both health and sickness were thought to be in the hands of the gods, and it was hoped that they could be influenced by prayers, gifts, and magical means. Many magical ways of healing are built on the concept of “sympathetic magic.”<sup>41</sup> It is based on “the law of similarity”—the concept of *similia similibus curantur* (“like cures like”).<sup>42</sup> The law of similarity and the idea of *sympatheia*—that same produces and attracts same, that objects once in contact continue to have an effect on each other, that a part represents the whole—was still alive and well in Byzantium.<sup>43</sup>

Votive practice was centered around a sanctuary or a cult site of a deity. This context must be taken into account when analyzing a votive and its meaning. Ammerman concludes that the meaning and purpose of votives can not be studied without comparing the votive within its own frame of reference: by viewing it against other votives within the same sanctuary as well as in the wider context of the city-state or area.<sup>44</sup> A votive must always be considered in connection with its donor (whether or not named by inscription), the donor’s connection to the deity the votive was dedicated to, and the wish or prayer of the donor. The

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<sup>41</sup> Such magical healing spells are preserved in the Hellenistic Greco-Egyptian magical papyri (Karl Preisendanz, Ernst Heitsch, and Albert Henrichs, eds., *Papyri Graecae Magicae = Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri*. 1–2 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1974); Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986)). Even though many spells in the magical papyri give recipes including several ingredients, these ingredients did not have any medically effective substances that could have healed ailments.

<sup>42</sup> This was eloquently put into words in James Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1922. Repr., New York: Cosimo Books, 2009 [1922]), 11: “First, that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause; and, second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed. The former principle may be called “the law of Similarity,” the latter the Law of Contact or Contagion.” While I do not think Frazer should be unquestioningly used as an authority, and many of his ideas deserve the rejection they have received, in this instance I think he might be describing something that is essential in the way humans categorize and associate things and see causal links between events. The effect of magical thinking on people’s decision making and psychology has been studied by e.g., Eugene D’Aquili, and Andrew Newberg, *The Mystical Mind: Probing the Biology of Religious Experience* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999); Jeffrey S. Levin, and Preston L. Schiller, “Is there a Religious Factor in Health?,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 26 (1987): 9–36; Andrew Newberg, Eugene D’Aquili, and Vince Rause, *Why God Won’t Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* (New York: Ballantine, 2002); Andrew Newberg and Mark Robert Waldman, *Why We Believe What We Believe: Uncovering our Biological Need for Meaning, Spirituality, and Truth* (New York: Free Press, 2006). On general works on the psychology and biology of religion, see, e.g., Henk S. Versnel, “Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer,” in *Faith, Hope and Worship. Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World*, ed. Henk S. Versnel (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 1–64; H. W. Pleket, “Religious History as the History of Mentality,” in *Faith, Hope and Worship. Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World*, ed. Henk S. Versnel (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 152–192; Richard Kieckhefer, “The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic,” *The American Historical Review* 99 (1994): 813–836; Walter Burkert, *Creation of the Sacred: Tracks of Biology in Early Religions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996); Newberg and Waldman, *Why we Believe what we Believe*; Robert N. McCauley, *Why Religion is Natural and Science is Not* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>43</sup> Katerina Ierodiakonou, “The Greek Concept of *Sympatheia* and its Byzantine Appropriation in Michael Psellos,” in *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, eds. Paul Magdalino and Maria Mavroudi (Geneva: La Pomme d’Or, 2006), 97–117.

<sup>44</sup> Ammerman, “Children at Risk: Votive Terracottas and the Welfare of Infants at Paestum,” 132–133. Rebecca M. Ammerman, “The Naked Standing Goddess: A Group of Archaic Terracotta Figurines from the Sanctuary in the Località Santa Venera at Paestum,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 95 (1991): 203–230 has reconstructed the beliefs that influenced the use of votives, and how these beliefs have been set in the framework of a specific cult.

more personal the votive was to the donor and the more time and effort had been exerted in procuring or manufacturing it, the better and more efficiently it was thought to work. This emphasis on the effort suggests most votives would have been manufactured by the donors themselves, and many were. On the other hand, several found votives are made in molds,<sup>45</sup> meaning there was commercial mass production. A mass-produced votive could have been bought on the way to the sanctuary.

The shape of the votive could renew and strengthen the already existing aspects and functions of the deity that the votive was dedicated to, but it could also create wholly new meanings. These new meanings could be short-lived and unique, meaningful to only one worshipper's personal relationship with the deity.<sup>46</sup> Behind the act of donating a votive is the idea of a reciprocal relationship between the worshipper and the deity where the worshipper first asks the deity for a favor and vows to give a return gift, if and when the favor is granted. After the favor is granted, the worshipper donates a votive to the deity in a sanctuary or a temple. In this way, a votive serves as thanks for a granted favor.<sup>47</sup> Anatomical votives fall under the sphere of representative magic: the idea that not only the votive but the body part depicted by the votive became property of the deity. By producing a replica of a uterus and dedicating it to a deity, it was hoped that the uterus of the donor would also come under that deity's protection.

Contemporary to the votive practice was the Roman practice of using tablets (*tabulae*) in making treaties and contracts (between humans as well as between humans and gods in ritual settings). The *tabulae* were not simply a surface on which the words specifying the contract were written, nor (in Meyer's words) "a memorandum of an action" but an integral part in the process of generating and facilitating the desired outcome. The result could not have been realized, were it not for the existence and the act of making and inscribing the *tabula*. In this, *tabulae* were required to complete the chain of action and to bring it to closure. Making and inscribing a *tabula* was integral in the process of making a contract or vow true both in the world of humans and the world of deities.<sup>48</sup> As this example of *tabulae* shows, writing is not merely writing, but it makes the words written true in the physical world. Therefore, inscribing magical formulas on an amulet was not only an act of reproduction of text but a magical act in and of itself.<sup>49</sup> This belief that the power of magical

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<sup>45</sup> M. Haase. "Votive practice" *Brill's New Pauly* s.v. Brill Online, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347\\_bnp\\_e12208090](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e12208090) (accessed September 28, 2016); Ammerman, "Children at Risk: Votive Terracottas and the Welfare of Infants at Paestum," 139–140.

<sup>46</sup> M. Haase. "Votive practice" *Brill's New Pauly* s.v. Brill Online, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347\\_bnp\\_e12208090](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e12208090) (accessed September 28, 2016).

<sup>47</sup> E.g., Bodel, "Sacred dedications": A problem of definitions," 18, 22; Rüpke, "Dedications accompanied by inscriptions in the Roman Empire: Functions, intentions, modes of communication," 31–33; Elizabeth A. Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 101–102; see also *Dig.* 50.12.2pr (Ulpian): *Si quis rem aliquam voverit, voto obligatur. Quae res personam vovetis, non rem quae vovetur obligat. Res enim, quae vovetur, soluta quidem liberat vota, ipsa vero sacra non efficitur* ("Where a person vows anything, he is bound by his vow, but the obligation attaches to him who makes the vow, and not to the property; for where anything is vowed and delivered, it releases the person, but the property does not become sacred." Translation by Samuel Parsons Scott, *The Civil Law* (Cincinnati: Central Trust, 1932)).

<sup>48</sup> Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice*, 92, 96, 101.

<sup>49</sup> Compare this with the hand-copying of magical manuscripts and books, written in Latin or the vernacular European languages, in medieval Europe. The hand-copied manuscripts and books continued circulation in thousands, despite the invention and spread of the printing presses. One reason proposed for this was the widely held idea that a printed book had no intrinsic magical power, and in order to be effective, the ritualistic copying of a new book by hand was required. Yet, most people in need of magical fixes were not "earnest practitioners" who would have cared whether the spell came from a printed book or a painstakingly hand-copied grimoire. The continued popularity of the hand-copied manuscript was due to the fact that the demand for printed books exceeded the supply, and so manuscripts continued to be copied. Owen Davies,

formulas was realized when they were written down or recited out loud played a large role in Greco-Roman magical practice.<sup>50</sup> By inscribing the magical *hystera* formula on the amulets, the amulet maker not only copy the text, but made its message real.

In order to illuminate the mechanism that was perceived to provide efficacy to the Byzantine uterus amulets, I will take a parallel from the post-iconoclastic idea of how Christian imagery exerted power in the case of textile decorations. In Maguire's view, the difference between pre- and post-iconoclastic textile decoration was not only due to developments in technology and changes in fashion, but to "a new consensus about the way in which Christian imagery worked."<sup>51</sup> In the post-iconoclastic thought, images were not considered to be able to contain power in and of themselves, but only as intermediaries. The real, and only, source of power was God. While God's power might have worked through the images, the images themselves were not powerful or magical, whereas in pre-iconoclastic thought, the images themselves could have harbored innate power.<sup>52</sup> By depicting the rider saint conquering the demon in the Byzantine uterus amulets, it was hoped that through *sympatheia* this would also take place in real life: the divine power of God, working through the image of the rider saint, would repel and defeat the child-killing demon believed to be — symbolically or factually — behind gynecological and fertility problems. The amulets were apotropaic, meaning they aimed to avert evil and protect the wearer of the amulet. They were not left as thanks to God the way votives were deposited in the sanctuaries. If they were, one would expect to see variations of εὐχή or χάρις in their inscriptions (as is the case with Greco-Roman uterus votives<sup>53</sup> and Byzantine marriage rings<sup>54</sup>), not the exhortation "help the wearer," βοηθεῖ τῆς φορούσης.<sup>55</sup>

Both in the use of *tabulae* and the magical power of writing, and in the power accorded to images, we can see the same underlying principle as in the use of votives and

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*Grimoires: A History of Magic Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 30, 53–54; Robert Mathiesen, "The Key of Solomon: Toward a Typology of the Manuscripts," *Societas Magica Newsletter* 17 (2007): 1–9; Stephen Charles Haar, *Simon Magus: The First Gnostic?* (Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 158–159; Florent Heintz, *Simon 'Le Magicien': Actes 8, 5–25 et L'Accusation de Magie contre les Prophètes Thaumaturges dans l'Antiquité* (Paris: Cahiers de la Revue biblique, 1997), pt. 4.

<sup>50</sup> This idea of correct recitation ensuring efficacy can be seen in early Roman law, where following strict ritual was key for an agreement or a verdict to be recognized as valid. The tiniest mistake would render the whole affair invalid, forcing the participant to start over (Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice*, 87, 91; Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 205ff). See also Fritz Graf, "Magie et Ecriture: quelques Réflexions," in *Écrire la Magie dans l'antiquité: Actes du Colloque International (Liège, 13–15 Octobre 2011)*, ed. Magali de Haro Sanchez (Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2015), 227–237; David Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: The Power of the Word in Egyptian and Greek Traditions," *Helios* 21 (1994): 189–221. It is notable that this requirement of flawlessness apparently was not a concern with the Byzantine uterus amulets. They display misspellings (e.g., δράκον for δράκων in an enameled copper pendant, inv. no. OA 6276, Louvre) that one would not expect to be present had the amulet maker been following a magical handbook flawlessly (although one must allow for the possibility that the handbook been copied erroneously). In addition, they do not distinguish between long and short vowels (ο and ω; δράκων written as δράκον, λέων written as λέον, ὥς written as ὅς) or between letters which were pronounced the same (η and ι; snake written as both ὄφις and ὄφης).

<sup>51</sup> Henry Maguire, "Magic and the Christian Image," in *Byzantine Magic*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995), 51–71.

<sup>52</sup> However, this is a theological distinction, and it is unclear whether lay folk using holy or magical images would have cared about such distinctions.

<sup>53</sup> See note 19.

<sup>54</sup> Walker, "A Reconsideration of Early Byzantine Marriage Rings," 154.

<sup>55</sup> See, e.g., a silver ring in British Museum (Ormonde Maddock Dalton, *Catalogue of the Early Christian Antiquities and Objects from the Christian East in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography of the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1901), 24, no. 142).

amulets: objects in this world (the mundane world of humans) carrying their power and meaning into another (heaven or the world inhabited by deities).

## CONCLUSION

In the pre-modern era, pregnancy and childbirth could be life-threatening for both the woman and the child. When faced with the possibility of death or a life-time of post-partum medical problems, one must have felt powerless and helpless. Since the deaths of mothers and children must have seemed unpreventable and random, folklore provided an explanation in the form of child-killing and child-stealing demons. The medical wisdom of antiquity grouped many gynecological ailments under the umbrella term “wandering womb.” Rituals for repelling the demons and the wandering womb with amulets and the offering votives gave the feeling of at least doing something. Several steps of the process— the preparing or buying the votive or amulet, the journey to a sanctuary to deposit the votive —helped to resolve the anxiety revolving around the issue.

The intended goal behind the use of uterus votives and uterus amulets was ultimately the protection of women’s fertility<sup>56</sup> and of new-born children— in fact, several uterus amulets plainly state that they were for the well-being of the uterus.

The power of both the votives and the amulets lies in representative and sympathetic magic, and the concept of “the law of similarity.” The votives worked through representative magic: as the votive reproduction of the uterus was donated to the deity, the real physical uterus of the donor became under the deity’s protection as well. In the case of amulets, inscribing the amulet with the *hystera* formula, the *hystera* motif, and the rider saint defeating a demon was thought to influence real events through *sympatheia* as images of saints transmitted God’s power and writing itself was a magical act.

Votive practice was based on a reciprocal relationship between the donor and the deity.<sup>57</sup> Votives served as thanks for a favor already granted by the deity in the past, while amulets were apotropaic and tried to avert misfortune in the future. I would suggest that this temporal aspect is more important than the choice of material— votives made of metal, just like the uterus amulets, have been found, and while no clay uterus amulets from the Byzantine period have been found, there is no technical reason why one could not have been manufactured. This is underlined by the fact that votives were left in a sanctuary, having fulfilled their purpose, while amulets were carried upon one’s person as a defense.

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<sup>56</sup> An interesting case of pilgrimages for fertility in more recent times is the legend of the Dutch Margaret of Henneberg, married to Count Herman of Henneberg. There are several variants of the legend, but in all the Countess mocks a woman of lower status with a multiple pregnancy (in some account twins, quadruplets in others). The woman then curses the Countess to give birth to as many children as there are days in a year. On Good Friday in 1276, the Countess gave birth to 365 finger-sized children, who all died, along with their mother. While Margaret of Henneberg did indeed die on Good Friday in 1276, in reality she only had two children, a son and a daughter. In the 17th century, childless women would travel to the Henneberg family castle in Loosduinen, Netherlands, to wash their hands in the basin where, according to the legend, the 365 babies were baptized. Literature suggests that the legend was prompted by a hydatiform mole (Bondeson, Jan and Arie Molenkamp. “The Countess Margaret of Henneberg and Her 365 Children,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 89 (1996): 711–716; L. J. Rather, “Ambroise Pare, the Countess Margaret, Multiple Births, and Hydatidiform Mole,” *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 47 (1971): 508–515).

<sup>57</sup> The votive practice never really ended. As Christianity took over, the votive practice of Graeco-Roman religion was carried on in the new religion. Especially in the Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches, votives still play a major part in religious practice. The British Museum has several examples of modern anatomical votives in its collections (e.g., a stone spleen from sixteenth-seventeenth century Spain (inv. no. 1957,0205.1), an amber phallus from eighteenth-nineteenth century Italy (inv. no. WITT.116), wax phalli from eighteenth century Italy (inv. nos. WITT.319 and WITT.320), and Sicilian silver lungs from between 1950–2002 (inv. no. Eu2002,05.6).

# A SAMARITAN TEMPLE TO RIVAL JERUSALEM ON MOUNT GERIZIM

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## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the Common Era (CE), when Judea was officially named a Roman province, there was a clear division between the Samaritans and the Jews. According to the writings of the ancient historian Josephus, the estrangement dated back to the time of Nehemiah with the ostracism of the Samaritans by the returning Jewish exiles from Babylon. In response to being denied the right to help rebuild the temple to YHWH in Jerusalem, the Samaritans built their own temple to YHWH on Mount Gerizim to rival the temple in Jerusalem. Until Yitzhak Magen began his excavations of Mount Gerizim in 1983,<sup>1</sup> scholars tended to ignore the possibility of the temple and questioned the exact location if it had even existed. The few scholarly articles written before or during Magen's excavations continued this skepticism based on previous surveys, smaller excavations of the site, and the literary evidence—or lack thereof.<sup>2</sup> However, despite the lack of literary sources regarding the temple, Magen's excavations offer strong evidence to support a Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim dated to the Persian period. This means that the Samaritans were building their own temple contemporary with the Jews rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. The archaeological evidence is supportive of Magen's claim of a temple on Mount Gerizim where priestly rituals and sacrifices took place and Josephus's claim that there were similarities between the Samaritan and Jerusalem Temples.<sup>3</sup> The existence of another temple to YHWH, contemporary with the rebuilding of the one in Jerusalem, showcases the growing contention between the Jews and the Samaritans and gives a probable beginning to the infamous divide between the two nations.

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<sup>1</sup> Magen Yitzhak, "The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim in Light of the Archaeological Evidence." Pages 157-193 in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century*

*BCE*. Edited by Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Rainer Albertz. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Robert T. Anderson wrote one such article in 1991 called "The Elusive Samaritan Temple." Although he does not outright deny the existence of the temple, he believes it was highly unlikely based on earlier surveys of the site, previous excavations, and the lack of evidence in the literature. Anderson relied primarily on the lack of reference to a Samaritan Temple outside of Josephus's *Antiquities* (that dated the temple to the Hellenistic period) and an obscure reference in Abu'l Fath's *Annals* in the fourteenth century CE (here the temple is dated to the Persian period), as well as the lack of archeological evidence from surveys and small excavations. Early surveys and excavations were not on the same area of Mount Gerizim as Magen's excavations but on what is now known as the place for the Temple of Zeus built by the Emperor Hadrian. The Samaritan literature holds no account of a temple on Mount Gerizim but does mention a tabernacle there. The Hebrew Bible places the tabernacle in Shiloh and has no remarks concerning a Samaritan Temple anywhere. Anderson, Robert T. "The Elusive Samaritan Temple." *The Biblical archaeologists* (June 1991): 104–107.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.8.

## HISTORY OF MOUNT GERIZIM

In the Hebrew Bible there are numerous references to the city of Shechem, which was built between Mount Gerizim and its sister peak, Mount Ebal. The first is Abram's visit to the Promised Land in Genesis 12, and another appears when Jacob purchases land near Shechem in Genesis 33. For Mount Gerizim, one of the earliest references is when Moses is recounting the blessings and curses to Israel in Deuteronomy. "When the Lord your God has brought you into the land that you are entering to occupy, you shall set the blessings on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal."<sup>4</sup> Moses gave this same command again in Deuteronomy 27 when he ordered the Levites to bless Israel from Mount Gerizim, and curse Israel from Mount Ebal.<sup>5</sup> The command was fulfilled in the eighth chapter of Joshua:

All Israel, alien as well as citizen, with their elders and officers and their judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark in front of the levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Israel.<sup>6</sup>

Mentions of Mount Gerizim by name are scarce following the Israelites entrance into the Promised Land.

When the land was divided among the tribes, Mount Gerizim and Shechem were part of the land given to the tribe of Ephraim and as such were part of the Northern Kingdom of Israel under the divided monarchy until the Assyrian destruction of Israel in 721 BCE (Before Common Era).<sup>7</sup> In 2 Kings 17 Assyria took the indigenous Israelite people from the Northern Kingdom of Israel and placed them elsewhere in the Assyrian Empire.<sup>8</sup> The population vacuum was filled with foreign peoples who took on a form of YHWH worship according to 2 Kings 17:24–28.<sup>9</sup> Considering the evidence that the

<sup>4</sup> Deuteronomy 11:29, NRSV.

<sup>5</sup> Deuteronomy 27:11–14, NRSV.

<sup>6</sup> Joshua 8:33, NRSV.

<sup>7</sup> Magen, Yitzhak. *Mount Gerizim Excavations Volume II: A Temple City. Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2008. 172.*

<sup>8</sup> Bustenay Obed in his book *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire* states that the Assyrian deportation system was "one of the cornerstones of the construction and development of the Assyrian Empire" (19). In the three centuries of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, scholars estimate the Assyrians deported a total of four and a half million people from their homes. The greatest amount of deportations occurred during the reigns of Tiglath-Pileser III, Sargon II, and Sennacherib—the period of time in which the Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed. However, these numbers do not suggest a total deportation of the population, in fact, they show that the Assyrians were selective in what portion of the population was moved. Members of the royal family were deported, as well as higher government officials, but the Assyrians were not restrictive in their selection also taking from the working classes as well. Men and their families were deported together, with whole communities transplanted to another area of the empire. Whole communities were less likely to try to return to their own land because of the continued kinship of their religion and culture. Obed, Bustenay. *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (Wiesbaden, 1979).

<sup>9</sup> According to Obed, Sargon II took the Israelites to Assyria and the "cities of the Medes" (27) and then settled people from Mesopotamia to Samaria. The Assyrian Empire often deported peoples from the

Assyrian Empire did not, perhaps, deport an entire population, it is possible that a small population of Israelites continued to live in the area of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, while some also fled south to Jerusalem. If part of the population remained, then at the time of Nehemiah, the Samaritans would have been a mixture of Gentiles and Israelites who worshipped YHWH. Roughly a century later, when Babylon sacked Jerusalem, they also left a portion of the population behind while the rest of the population was taken into captivity. This remnant may have interacted with the Samaritans, and further population mixing likely occurred. If the Samaritans worshipped YHWH due to being part Israelite, it would help explain why they wanted to aid the Jews in the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem when the exiles returned from Babylon.<sup>10</sup>

### LITERARY EVIDENCE OF A TEMPLE ON MOUNT GERIZIM

As briefly mentioned above, the only major source for a temple to YHWH on Mount Gerizim is found in Josephus's *Antiquities*; although a passing reference to the characters of Josephus's story can be found in the book of Nehemiah but they remain unnamed. There are no references of a Samaritan temple in the Samaritan religious or secular corpus besides a small reference to the temple in Abu'l Fath's *Annals*, from the fourteenth century CE.<sup>11</sup> In the eighth chapter of *Antiquities*, Josephus tells the story of the priest Manasseh, the brother of the high priest at the Jerusalem temple. Manasseh was married to Nicaso, the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria.<sup>12</sup> Due to the prophet Ezra's reforms regarding the marriages to Gentiles some Israelites had entered into during the Babylonian captivity,<sup>13</sup> the elders in Jerusalem were not willing to allow Manasseh to continue in aiding his brother in the Jerusalem temple because he was married to someone outside the covenant. The returning Jews from Babylon did not believe that the Samaritans worshipped YHWH, but this was likely not the case.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, the elders told Manasseh that he must either divorce his wife, or never work at the altar in the temple again.<sup>15</sup> Manasseh told his father-in-law, Sanballat, that although he loved his wife, he would not allow himself to be deprived of working at the altar to stay with her. Sanballat promised Manasseh that if he would not divorce Nicaso, then Sanballat would supply Manasseh not only with a temple to work in but a high priesthood position as well.<sup>16</sup>

Josephus wrote that this interaction between Sanballat and Manasseh took place contemporarily with Alexander the Great's conquest of the Near East around 332 BCE.<sup>17</sup> However, in Nehemiah 13 this event is also alluded to when referring to the marriage of

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east to the west, and then the west to the east. They would also deport different groups of the same people to different areas of the empire, and vice versa many different foreign peoples were put together in one new area.

<sup>10</sup> Ezra 4, NRSV.

<sup>11</sup> Anderson, "The Elusive Samaritan Temple." 104–107.

<sup>12</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.8.309.

<sup>13</sup> Ezra 9:1–10:5, NRSV.

<sup>14</sup> Shanks, Hershel, ed. *Ancient Israel From Abraham to the Roman Destruction of the Temple*. Washington DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.8.306–307.

<sup>16</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.8.309–310.

<sup>17</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.8.304–305.

Levites to foreign wives. “And one of the sons of Jehoiada, son of the high priest Eliashib, was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; I chased him away from me.”<sup>18</sup> This offers two separate dates for the initial construction of the Mount Gerizim temple based on three separate literary passages: around 332 BCE during the conquests of Alexander the Great as told by Josephus; a century earlier, during the time of Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, as shown through the passage in Nehemiah; and in the fourteenth century CE writings of Abu’l Fath. The strong archaeological evidence shown by Magen’s excavations makes an earlier dating preferable and shows the growing contention between the two peoples, because the temples would be going up at the same time.

## GEOGRAPHY OF MOUNT GERIZIM

Mount Gerizim is part of a central mountain range near the ancient city of Shechem in what is now the West Bank. Gerizim is one of the two highest peaks in Samaria, with an elevation of 886 meters above sea level. Its sister peak just north of Shechem is Mount Ebal, which stands 936 meters above sea level.<sup>19</sup> Mount Gerizim was not part of any major road system in ancient Samaria but was connected with ancient Shechem by a single road. The mountain itself is not suitable for agriculture and lacks a source of running water.<sup>20</sup> Cisterns are prominent features in all building on Mount Gerizim, and the inhabitants depended on rainfall for their water supply. The mountain consists of rock too brittle for construction<sup>21</sup>, thus many blocks for the Hellenistic period buildings were shipped in from elsewhere in Samaria. The weather on Mount Gerizim is cold and windy and it is often covered in snow in the winter.<sup>22</sup> All these features make it clear that the building of a temple on Mount Gerizim was not a convenient undertaking, but was motivated by traditional religious views that the Samaritans held regarding the mountain.

## THE EXCAVATIONS OF MOUNT GERIZIM

Yitzhak Magen worked continually on the Mount Gerizim excavations for eighteen years beginning in 1983.<sup>23</sup> He believes that the Samaritan temple was the first structure built on Mount Gerizim,<sup>24</sup> despite the city of Shechem and the surrounding area having been occupied since the early Bronze Age.<sup>25</sup> Magen divides the building of the sacred precinct into three phases: Persian/Iron Age (mid-5<sup>th</sup> century BCE)<sup>26</sup>, a Hellenistic expansion (ca. 200 BCE)<sup>27</sup>, and the construction of the surrounding Hellenistic city. During the Persian period the sacred precinct measured 96 meters north to south by 98 meters east to west. At its largest during the Hellenistic period it measured 212 meters

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<sup>18</sup> Nehemiah 13:28, NRSV.

<sup>19</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 5.

<sup>23</sup> Magen, “The Dating of the First Phase,” 157.

<sup>24</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 97.

<sup>25</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 4.

<sup>26</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 103.

<sup>27</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 98.



north to south by 136 meters east to west.<sup>28</sup> The Samaritan temple was destroyed by the Hasmonean dynast John Hyrcanus I around 111-110 BCE.<sup>29</sup> Following its destruction, there was a large gap in the archaeological evidence until the Byzantine period when the Emperor Zeno (476-491 CE) built the Church of Mary Theotokos on the mountain.<sup>30</sup> The remains of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim are nonexistent because the Byzantine church was built directly on top of the temple's ruins.<sup>31</sup>

According to Josephus's *Antiquities*, the original Persian period precinct built by Sanballat for Manasseh was an imitation of the Persian period temple built in Jerusalem.<sup>32</sup> The northern wall of the precinct was 73 meters long and housed a six-chamber gate that measured 14 by 15 meters.<sup>33</sup> The gate is almost completely preserved because it was incorporated into the new gate built during the Hellenistic expansion.<sup>34</sup> Little of the eastern and southern walls and their gates remain from the Persian period because they were destroyed in the Hellenistic period expansion to the south and east.<sup>35</sup> Like the northern wall, the western wall was preserved fully at 84 meters in length, 2 meters high, and 1.3 meters thick. It was built using large fieldstones made from the natural rock on the mountain. There is no gate along the western wall likely because the Holy of Holies of the temple was on the western edge of the precinct. This would then place the altar on the east side of the precinct.<sup>36</sup> As stated earlier, the Persian period precinct was in use for two hundred and fifty years before the Hellenistic expansion.<sup>37</sup>

The temple was renovated and expanded during the Hellenistic period in the early second century BCE.<sup>38</sup> The sacred precinct no longer imitated the temple in Jerusalem, and the building materials were better. Many building stones from the Hellenistic period that were found on Mount Gerizim bear stonecutter marks that indicated they were brought in from outside the Gerizim area. This hints that the Hellenistic renovations of the precinct were built around the Persian period walls, increasing their width. These stones can easily be seen on the western and northern walls of the site.<sup>39</sup>

All three gates of the precinct were extended or remade during the Hellenistic expansion. The Hellenistic north gate was built outside the Persian gate, but it made the northern entrance smaller than it was before.<sup>40</sup> This changed the inflow of traffic into the precinct. In the Persian period pilgrims coming to the temple entered in through the north or south gate and exited through the opposite gate. This is similar to the flow of traffic at the Jerusalem temple. By making the north gate smaller, the inflow of pilgrims was redirected to the eastern gate—which became the main gate. In the Hellenistic period, the eastern gate was extended along with the whole eastern wing of the precinct. Large monumental staircases came up the steep slope of the mountain, and large courtyards

<sup>28</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 143.

<sup>29</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 98.

<sup>30</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 245.

<sup>31</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 97.

<sup>32</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.8.

<sup>33</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 115.

<sup>34</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 116.

<sup>35</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 120.

<sup>36</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 110.

<sup>37</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 98.

<sup>38</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 103.

<sup>39</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 112.

<sup>40</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 118.

were built to accommodate the pilgrims who would come to sacrifice at Mount Gerizim.<sup>41</sup> The southern area of the precinct saw just as much renovation as the eastern area. Most of the Persian period wall was gone, and the gate as well. The Hellenistic expansion pushed the southern wall south, and the southern gate moved to the southwest corner of the precinct. This western gate was the second entrance for the pilgrims.<sup>42</sup>

The final phase of the Mount Gerizim temple was the construction of the Hellenistic city on the north and west slopes of the mountain. There appears to be no central planning to the city, and it might have grown organically as the population increased with the popularity of the temple.<sup>43</sup> The city had no major defenses, but there was evidence of some attempts at defense when John Hyrcanus I attacked and burned the city in 111-110 BCE. The population most likely consisted of priests and Levites who officiated at the temple. It is possible that when Alexander the Great seized Samaria, the capital, a large number of non-Levites moved to the area, which might have become the new Samaritan center.<sup>44</sup>

### ARCHITECTURAL REMAINS AND SMALL FINDS OF SACRED PRECINCT

The finds from the Mount Gerizim temple precinct consisted largely of pottery shards, coins, and bones. There were also a few architectural remains of a door lintel, some capitals, and some altars. Many inscriptions were found, but none *in situ*. The small finds show an earlier date for the precinct on Mount Gerizim. As stated earlier, Josephus placed the construction of the Samaritan temple contemporary with Alexander the Great's movement east; however, the pottery finds were dated to the Persian, Hellenistic, and Byzantine periods, and there is a distinct layer of Persian period shards from the fifth century BCE.<sup>45</sup> The same can be said for the coins found. Although many of them were from the Hellenistic period, there were some earlier coins that were dated to the same time as the pottery.<sup>46</sup> Along with the literary evidence, the small finds of the pottery and coins were large enough to comfortably date the original sacred precinct to the Persian period, contemporary with Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple.

Although none were found *in situ*, the inscriptions found on Mount Gerizim help support the claim Magen has made that there was a temple on Mount Gerizim and that it was for the worship of YHWH. Many of the inscriptions were made to YHWH from a faithful member of the community at Gerizim.<sup>47</sup> The collection of inscriptions were written in the Greek, Aramaic, and Paleo-Hebrew languages, and they all contained votive offerings and formulas related to a house of YHWH like "House of God," "before God," and "before the Lord." One particular Aramaic inscription read that the temple on Gerizim was a "House of Sacrifice."<sup>48</sup> This is the same title that was given to Solomon's temple by the Lord in 2 Chronicles 7:12. "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this

<sup>41</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 122–129.

<sup>42</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 103.

<sup>43</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 98.

<sup>45</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 167.

<sup>46</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 168.

<sup>47</sup> Magen, Yitzhak. *Mount Gerizim Excavations Volume I*. Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 155.

place for myself as a house of sacrifice.” This inscription shows that the Samaritans saw their temple as equal to, or greater than, the temple in Jerusalem.

The presence of sacrificial inscriptions suggests that there were some priestly ritual sacrifices being performed on Mount Gerizim, and the presence of bone fragments supports this claim. There are two areas that had layers of ash and bone fragments. One was in the fortified enclosure on the western side of the precinct where cooking pot fragments were also found.<sup>49</sup> It is possible that the area was where the remains of the sacrifices were disposed of when they left the altar of the temple. The other area was a large ash and bone layer on the eastern side of the precinct. If the temple were situated like the Jerusalem temple, then it would have been facing the east with the main altar on the eastern side. However, it was in the northeastern corner of the Persian period precinct where the remains of a clay altar were later found with a thick later of ash and bone on the floor. This might have been another altar on which sacrifices could be burned when the main altar was in use. It is also possible that this area was the “Place of Ashes,” as found in Leviticus 1:16, where sacrifices were prepared before going out to the main altar of the temple.<sup>50</sup> Either way, this area appears to have been used for the deposit of the sacrificial bones not only from the altar in the “Place of Ashes” but also from the main altar before the temple when it was cleaned.<sup>51</sup> The rest of the ash and bone fragments were found in the fill of the Hellenistic floor of the precinct. In total, there were over 400,000 bone fragments found around the sacred precinct, and although not all of them have been analyzed, the ones that have were of animals that were sacrificed young, mostly less than a year old.<sup>52</sup>

Although the small finds were important in Magen’s dating of the original precinct, it was the discovery of two stone capitals that can artistically link the precinct on Mount Gerizim to the Persian period, and in extension to the temple(s) in Jerusalem because of the architectural similarities to capitals of the Iron Age.<sup>53</sup> The capitals were adorned with a tree of life and nature motifs that were extremely popular in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE,<sup>54</sup> but this Phoenician style disappeared from most architecture at the end of the Iron Age.<sup>55</sup> The capitals themselves were dated to the Persian period, but their design was similar to the capitals that have been found in other monumental building projects of the Israelite monarchy before the Babylonian exile. Those capitals too had a natural design theme; however, the Iron Age capitals usually had a central triangle that was lacking from the Mount Gerizim capitals. The masonry work of the capitals on Mount Gerizim was reminiscent of the capitals of another famous temple in the Levant—the Iron Age temple built by King Solomon of Israel—of which no archaeological evidence remains, but a literary description does.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 108.

<sup>50</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 117.

<sup>51</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 108.

<sup>52</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 160–162.

<sup>53</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 152–154.

<sup>54</sup> Stern, Ephraim and Yitzhak Magen. “Archaeological Evidence for the First Stage of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim.” *Israel Exploration Journal* (2002): 49–57.

<sup>55</sup> Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Vol. 2*, 152.

<sup>56</sup> Stern, “Archaeological Evidence.”

## COMPARISON TO JERUSALEM TEMPLES

The first Israelite temple was built sometime around 968 BCE under the reign of King Solomon, son of King David, and took a total of seven years to complete.<sup>57</sup> The Babylonians in 586 BCE destroyed this temple, and a new temple was rebuilt under the guidance of Zerubbabel and dedicated in 515 BCE, which was then renovated by Herod the Great.<sup>58</sup> As stated in the Hebrew Bible and the *Letter of Aristeas*, the second temple built by Zerubbabel was made in the image of Solomon's temple, using the same dimensions, but the returning exiles lacked the funds to make it in the grandeur of Solomon's temple.<sup>59</sup> Solomon's temple was essentially a larger version of the Israelite tabernacle, and its tripartite floor plan is similar to other contemporary temples in the ancient Near East. Descriptions of Solomon's temple are found in 1 Kings 5-7, where it mentions Solomon hiring workers from Tyre in Phoenicia. Architectural similarities between Solomon's temple and other contemporary temples are likely due to this hiring of outside help. Like other temples of its time, Solomon's temple faced east with the Holy of Holies at the west most part of the temple, and a two-columned porch at the east.<sup>60</sup> In this same way, the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim was situated facing east with the main altar outside the eastern doors, and the lack of a gate on the western wall of the precinct is probably due to the Holy of Holies being that close to the western wall.

As stated above, the second Israelite temple was built in the image of Solomon's, and according to Josephus, the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim was built in the same image of Zerubbabel's temple. Therefore, there may be some connection between the Samaritan temple and Solomon's temple—particularly with the columns found by Magen in his excavations. The outside porch of Solomon's temple had two large freestanding pillars, either made of stone or bronze, which were eighteen cubits high with an additional five cubits each for their capitals.<sup>61</sup> The description of the capitals is as follows:

There were nets of checker work with wreaths of chain work for the capitals on the tops of the pillars... the tops of the pillars in the vestibule were of lily-work, four cubits high... there were two hundred pomegranates in rows all around... the tops of the pillars was lily-work.<sup>62</sup>

What are described as lily-work on Solomon's capitals may be the vertical volutes of Aeolic capitals. These capitals certainly seem to share a nature motif with the ones found on Mount Gerizim, and the capitals on Mount Gerizim share a similar structure to the capitals of temples contemporary with Solomon's.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> 1 Kings 6:38, NRSV.

<sup>58</sup> William J. Hamblin and David Rolph Seely. *Solomon's Temple: Myth and History* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2007), 23.

<sup>59</sup> Hamblin, *Solomon's Temple*. 41.

<sup>60</sup> Hamblin, *Solomon's Temple*. 30.

<sup>61</sup> Philip P. Betancourt, *The Aeolic Style in Architecture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 38–40.

<sup>62</sup> 1 Kings 7:17–22, NRSV.

<sup>63</sup> Hamblin, *Solomon's Temple*. 26.

## CONCLUSION

Despite the lack of literary evidence that fueled the skepticism regarding the existence of a Samaritan temple, the excavations on Mount Gerizim by Yitzhak Magen have solidified its existence. Following Magen's final publications, a Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim has been widely accepted in the academic community; however, the dating of the original precinct is still discussed. Although many of the small finds from Magen's excavation have been dated to the Hellenistic period, the existence of Persian period findings, with their own strata, help support Magen's claim for an earlier date of the original precinct construction. The similarities of the capital motifs to those of other capitals of the Persian period also help support Magen's earlier date. The bone fragments, altars, and inscriptions found at Gerizim at least show that it was a temple built for the worship of YHWH just like the one in Jerusalem.

The importance of an earlier date for a Samaritan temple to YHWH is that it is a tangible example of the growing contention between the Samaritans and the Jews. It is evidence that two temples to YHWH were being built contemporarily with each other and were competing with each other over which was the true temple to YHWH. And although there is no evidence linking the two temples outside of Josephus, the archeological remains of the sacred precinct on Mount Gerizim are similar enough to those described in the Hebrew Bible that we may gain a simple picture of what the Jerusalem temple would have looked like in the Persian period since none of the temple remains after Herod's renovations. Outside of its possible connection to the temples in Jerusalem, the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim has a rich history from its beginning to its end and remains to this day an important religious center for the Samaritan people.

# FRIENDS, FOES, AND TRADING PARTNERS: THE EXCHANGE OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES BETWEEN HERODIAN JUDAEA AND NABATAEAN PETRA

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## INTRODUCTION

Literary evidence from ancient historiographers, such as Josephus, describe extensive political connections between Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra. For instance, Herod the Great (ruled 37–4 BCE) was connected to the Nabatean royal house through his mother, but Josephus’s writings depict a strained relationship between the rulers of these two kingdoms.<sup>1</sup> Such writings, however, are largely silent on matters of social and material history. On the other hand, archaeologists have spent much time tracing Herodian and Nabataean architectural features to Hellenistic or Roman sources without always spending much time examining unique connections between these neighboring kingdoms.<sup>2</sup> Material evidence suggests important economic ties and cultural interaction between these neighboring kingdoms; however, this paper will demonstrate that Herod’s building program not only served as a conduit for Roman techniques and styles but sometimes exerted a direct, unique influence on architecture in Petra.

As Alexander the Great conquered the Near East, Hellenism followed closely behind him. This process of Hellenization continued and was accelerated as his successors followed the Alexandrian precedents by establishing Greek poleis in their kingdoms. For instance, Ptolemaic kings founded Ptolemais in Palestine, and Philadelphia in modern Amman.<sup>3</sup> As the spread of Hellenism continued, Greek temple styles flooded the Mediterranean and the Near East. Examples of Hellenistic buildings and architecture continued to shape the entire Near East, with some of the largest classical cities being built outside of Greece. The Ionic order and, in particular, Greek models began to define how temples were built, and palaces, fortresses, and civic buildings were increasingly adopting Greek forms.<sup>4</sup> Notably, Hellenism even encroached on the conservative Jewish kingdom. Before the Maccabean revolt (167–160 BCE), a gymnasium was built in Jerusalem and, less shockingly, the first agoras and burial loculi began to appear in smaller communities in the northern Negev.<sup>5</sup> Because Roman architecture itself was heavily influenced by Hellenistic styles, the advent of Roman power and influence in the first century BCE reinforced Greek influence, adding to it new features of Roman engineering and stylistic elaboration.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Josephus *AJ* 14.121–22, 370–76; 15.108–15; 16.220–28.

<sup>2</sup> Ehud Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod the Great Builder* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 288–92; Jane Taylor, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom of the Nabataeans* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 91. While Taylor observes that the two kingdoms “doubtless . . . lifted ideas from each other” as well as from Hellenistic and Roman sources, she only notes direct architectural connection between Herodian Judaea and Nabataea in passing.

<sup>3</sup> Jodi Magness, *The Archaeology of the Holy Land: From the Destruction of Solomon’s Temple to the Muslim Conquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 67.

<sup>4</sup> J. B. Ward-Perkins, *Roman Imperial Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 309.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Macc 1:14–15. See also Magness, *The Archaeology of the Holy Land*, 76, 81.

<sup>6</sup> Ward-Perkins, *Roman Imperial Architecture*, 309.

By observing the pattern of Hellenization and then Romanization and using similar vessels to duplicate building layouts, scholars have made several proposals on the trajectory of the cultural influence between Herodian Judaea and Nabataea. Two of these proposals I will mention specifically. Andreas Kropp has observed that the diffusion of architectural features seems to follow a consistent pattern: generally there was overall eastward progression from Rome to Herodian cities and then to Petra.<sup>7</sup> Stephan Schmid, however, has suggested that there may have been a reciprocal exchange of goods and ideas between Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra. This is seen in the use of planting pots in Petra's city center which resemble ones used in Jericho and pseudo-Nabataean fine wear used by the elite in Jerusalem.<sup>8</sup> Significantly, these two theories do not have to contradict each other, because while the trajectory of architectural trends proceeded eastward, I assert that there was simultaneously trade between the nations of Judaea and Nabataea which influenced each other. Another remarkable recent connection between Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra was made by Leigh-Ann Bedal in her research about the "Lower Market" next to the Great Temple in Petra.<sup>9</sup> Bedal has documented how the pool complex, which was previously thought to have simply been a market, in fact mirrors the layout of Herod's pleasure garden at the Herodion.<sup>10</sup> Because this pool complex dates to the reign of Aretas IV (ruled ca. 9 BCE–40 CE), this layout likely originated in Judaea and was later replicated in Petra's city center.<sup>11</sup>

As a result, Bedal's approach, which sees important Herodian mediation, is particularly helpful because rather than only looking at general Hellenistic or Roman features that might have been duplicated by the Nabataeans, it considers specific examples, such as floor plans and layouts. This paper will review some of these specific examples—such as similar implementations of Roman engineering in porch extensions and local adaptations of Hellenistic features, such as the placement of urns on funerary monuments—which reinforce the proposition that there was a path of influence from Rome to Petra through Judaea, because these archaeological features appear in Judaea before they do in Petra. New evidence also needs to be considered—namely the use of hexagonal flooring first in Herodian Masada and then in the Great Temple complex in Petra contemporary with the creation of this flooring pattern in Italy—suggesting an even closer architectural connection than previously thought between these two kingdoms.

## SETTING THE HISTORICAL STAGE

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<sup>7</sup> Andrea J. M. Kropp, "Nabataean Petra: The Royal Palace and the Herod Connection," *Boreas* 32 (2009): 43–60. Kropp notes a pathway from Rome through Judaea to Nabataea.<sup>7</sup> This view may be preferable to direct Roman influence since Nabataea had been resistant to Rome until Aretas IV, who only began his reign at the end of Herod's life. This is based on the story that Josephus presents in *AJ* 16:271–355 and because the Petran era of building projects (which were built in a more classical style) does not begin until Aretas's reign or possibly until the very end of Obodas III's reign. See Taylor, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom*, 104–19.

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth R. Macaulay-Lewis, "Planting Pots at Petra: A Preliminary Study of *ollae perforatae* at the Petra Garden Pool Complex and at the 'Great Temple,'" *Levant* 38, no. 1 (2013): 159–70; Malka HersHKovitz, "Herodian Pottery," in *Herod and Augustus Papers Presented at the IJS Conference, 21st–23rd June 2005*, ed. David M. Jacobson and Nikos Kokkinos (Boston: Brill, 2008), 325–59.

<sup>9</sup> Leigh-Ann Bedal, "A Pool Complex in Petra's City Center," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 324 (November 2001): 23–41.

<sup>10</sup> Bedal, "A Pool Complex in Petra's City Center," 23–41.

<sup>11</sup> Bedal, "A Pool Complex in Petra's City Center," 23–41.

The relationship between Judaea and Nabataea can best be termed as strained. One of the earliest mentions of the relationship between the Jews and the Nabataeans dates to before the independence of Judea. Soon after the Jewish revolt (167 BCE), the Jewish leader Judas Maccabeus (influential from 167 BCE until his death in 160 BCE) is reported to have met the Nabataeans “peaceably.”<sup>12</sup> This peace ended in Alexander Jannaeus’s reign (103–76 BCE) when Aretas II (103–96 BCE) gave aid to Gaza, which Alexander was trying to capture. Under Obodas I (96–86 BCE), the Nabataean army defeated Alexander in the Golan, but later the Nabateans, under Aretas III (86–62 BC), were beaten after they attempted to invade Judaea from Damascus.<sup>13</sup>

A shift in Judaeon-Nabataean politics came with the introduction of Herod’s father, Antipater, to the Judaeon political scene. After being appointed as the chief official of Hyrcanus (king of Judaea 67–66 BCE; ethnarch 47–40 BCE), one of the first accomplishments Josephus attributes to Antipater was the establishment of friendly relations with the Nabataeans and other peoples who had previously been antagonistic to Judaea. The diplomatic relationship between Judaea and Nabataea was sealed with a personal one, with Antipater marrying Cypros, the daughter of a Nabataean nobleman. When Aristobulus (king of Judaea 66–63 BCE) took Jerusalem from his brother Hyrcanus shortly after their mother’s death in 67 BC, Antipater took the dethroned Hyrcanus to Petra, where Hyrcanus promised Aretas III that he would return cities to Nabataea that had been taken by Alexander Jannaeus. Aretas then took the combined forces of the Nabataean army and the Jews who followed Hyrcanus in order to attempt to take Jerusalem back from Aristobulus.<sup>14</sup>

During the squabbles between the Hasmonean brothers Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, Antipater brought his Nabataean wife back to Petra, along with their children, one of whom was Herod. Nevertheless, when Herod came into power (37–4 BCE), he was not friendly with the new Nabataean king, Malichus I (ruled 59–30 BCE). When Herod was fighting against Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, for control of Judaea, he sought aid from Malichus, but Malichus refused to help him. Relations continued to sour until 32 BCE, when Judaea and Nabataea went to war against each other, resulting in Jewish victory in 31 BCE.<sup>15</sup> Relations improved under the next Nabataean king, Obodas III (30–9 BCE). This can be seen through Josephus’s records, which state that Obodas’s minister, Syllaeus, was dining with Herod when Syllaeus saw his host’s sister, Salome, and started pursuing her to be his wife. He and Salome started a scandalous affair, but Herod refused a marriage between the two unless Syllaeus was willing to convert to Judaism, which he was not.<sup>16</sup>

While Aretas IV (9 BCE–40 CE) was a much younger contemporary of Herod, their reigns overlapping less than five years, they had similar approaches to their relationship with the Roman Empire. When Syllaeus went to Rome to complain about Herod and to try to take the Nabataean throne after the death of Obodas III in 9 BCE, he was surprised to find that Aretas had already risen to power. Because Augustus was not pleased with Aretas’s accession without his acknowledgement,<sup>17</sup> Aretas sent many gifts to Augustus in an effort to please him, but they were refused. Augustus even considered giving the Nabataean kingdom to Herod and probably would

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<sup>12</sup> 1 Macc 5:25.

<sup>13</sup> Josephus, *AJ* 13.358–76, 392–94.

<sup>14</sup> Josephus, *AJ* 14.8–21, 121.

<sup>15</sup> Josephus, *AJ* 14.121–22, 370–76; 15.108–15.

<sup>16</sup> Josephus, *AJ* 16.220–28.

<sup>17</sup> He was displeased because Aretas’s succession was not authorized by Rome.



have were it not for Herod's declining health and his bad relationship with and murders of his various sons. Eventually, Augustus finally accepted Aretas's ambassadors and gifts, confirming his kingship and establishing a similar relationship with the Nabataeans as he had with Judaea.<sup>18</sup>

After Herod's death, Aretas IV had another connection with the Herodians through his daughter. She married Herod Antipas, who was the tetrarch of Galilee (4 BCE–49 CE), but he divorced her in 27 CE to marry his lover Herodias.<sup>19</sup> This marriage and the attempted marriage between Syllaeus and Salome are important to establishing a connection between Herod and Aretas IV because they are specific examples of situations in which influential figures of both Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra would have been able to see the architectural styles their neighbor was implementing. Similarly, Herod's matriarchal line, through Cypros, suggests that there were opportunities for noble men and women, along with any handlers, servants, or guards, to have direct exposure to each other's architecture.

### HEROD'S AND PETRA'S BUILDING PROJECTS

After acquiring his kingdom, Herod began his next great accomplishments: his extensive building projects.<sup>20</sup> The Jerusalem temple, Fortress Antonia, Masada, Caesarea Maritima, palaces at Jericho, and the palace and tomb complex known as the Herodian are just a few of these. The rebuilt and expanded Jerusalem temple is one of his most well-known projects, leading it to be known as "Herod's temple," but he also built other religious buildings—such as a memorial for the patriarchs and matriarchs in Hebron, and temples for the imperial cult.<sup>21</sup> His appreciation for Hellenistic and Roman traditions can be seen in cultural buildings like hippodromes, amphitheaters, baths, and gymnasias.<sup>22</sup> He built "fortlets," established military colonies to defend his borders,<sup>23</sup> and implemented infrastructure such as water systems, sewers, and roads.<sup>24</sup> While his rationale behind all of these building projects is unknown,<sup>25</sup> these structures no doubt advanced his public reputation and pleased multiple groups of people. For his Jewish subjects he rebuilt the temple, making sure that it would not be defiled in doing so by having it built by Jewish priests.<sup>26</sup> To appease and seek favor with his Roman patrons, he established the imperial cult in Gentile regions of his kingdom, building temples to Roma<sup>27</sup> and Augustus in Caesarea Maritima<sup>28</sup> and another temple to Augustus in Paneias.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, the Nabataean kingdom started a large building project in Petra years later during the end of Obodas III's reign and at the beginning of Aretas IV's. It was at this time when Nabataean leadership started following Herod's lead in cultivating a relationship with Rome, as

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<sup>18</sup> Josephus, *AJ* 16.271–355.

<sup>19</sup> Josephus, *AJ* 18.109–15.

<sup>20</sup> There were also familiar, local, and intraregional conflicts which can be read about in Josephus *AJ* 15.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Richardson, *Herod, King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 183–84.

<sup>22</sup> Richardson, *Herod*, 186.

<sup>23</sup> Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod*, 218–28.

<sup>24</sup> Richardson, *Herod*, 188–91.

<sup>25</sup> For more information on reasoning behind these projects, see Richardson, *Herod*, 191–95.

<sup>26</sup> Richardson, *Herod*, 195. Richardson also states that this is one of the examples in which Herod needed to "play up" his Jewishness because he came from an illegitimate Jewish line.

<sup>27</sup> The patron goddess of Rome.

<sup>28</sup> Magness, *The Archaeology of the Holy Land*, 173.

<sup>29</sup> Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod*, 218.

seen by Syllaeus's visits to Rome and Aretas's attempts to get in the favor of Augustus. The specific examples of architecture I will be examining come from these building periods.<sup>30</sup>

## ARCHITECTURAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN JUDAEA AND PETRA

Of all Herod's building projects, the most famous was his rebuilding and massive expansion of the Jerusalem temple. He first doubled the external size of the temple proper while maintaining the internal dimensions of the porch, holy place, and Holy of Holies (cf. 1 Kings 6). Most of the overall precinct's expansion, however, took the form of an extension of the platform. Originally constituting a five-hundred-cubit square, in 23 BCE the platform began to be expanded by Herod to its current irregular rectangular shape, which is the platform upon which the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque now stand.<sup>31</sup> Herod's extension of the platform employed Roman technology and engineering, creating a *cryptoporticus*, or a system of arches, which supported the platform above it (See figure 1).<sup>32</sup> This technology avoided the expensive and difficult process of filling in the space between retaining walls and also created a large open space beneath the southern end of the Temple Mount that is now known as Solomon's Stables.

Similarities to this platform can be seen in the porch of the Urn Tomb in Petra. The Urn Tomb, dated approximately to the first century CE,<sup>33</sup> is numbered among the Palace Tombs because it is adjacent to the Corinthian Tomb and the Tomb of Sextus Florentinus. While the Urn Tomb is like other tomb façades in Petra in its general shape and function, it also features its own artificial platform in the front of the façade (seen in figure 2). This platform consists of arched structures similar to the *cryptoporticus* used by Herod's Temple Mount extension mentioned previously (compare the close-up of the vaulting in figure 3). These two buildings are thus examples of using Roman engineering to create platforms for local monuments, but because Herod's temple was completed earlier and was much more famous, the builders of the Urn Tomb would certainly have been familiar with it and may well have patterned their platform on it. *The Use and Placement of Funerary Urns at the Mausoleum at the Herodian and the Lion Triclinium*

The Herodian, built between 23–15 BCE,<sup>34</sup> was a large complex encompassing twenty-five hectares that included a palace-fortress, bathhouse, pool complex, and mausoleum.<sup>35</sup> Ehud Netzer's excavations have revealed that the mausoleum, described by Josephus as the burial place of Herod,<sup>36</sup> was a three-story monument with a pedestal and a *tholos*<sup>37</sup> above it and with funerary urns as decorations (see figure 4).<sup>38</sup> This type of structure was unusual in the Hellenistic period, but Herod's use of it can be seen as paying tribute to the earlier Mausoleum of Augustus,

<sup>30</sup> Taylor, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom*, 104–19.

<sup>31</sup> See Richardson, *Herod*, 197; Dan Bahat, "The Architectural Origins of Herod's Temple Mount," in Jacobson and Kokkinos, *Herod and Augustus Papers Presented at the IJS Conference, 21st–23rd June 2005*, 238–41.

<sup>32</sup> Magness, *The Archaeology of the Holy Land*, 148.

<sup>33</sup> Amos Kloner, "Amphorae and Urns as Grave Markers in Idumaea, Judaea, and Nabataea," *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 28 (2010): 74.

<sup>34</sup> Richardson, *Herod*, 199.

<sup>35</sup> Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod*, 179–201.

<sup>36</sup> Josephus, *BJ* 1.667–69.

<sup>37</sup> A cylinder usually topping a structure.

<sup>38</sup> Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod*, 195–99.

which took a similar form.<sup>39</sup> What sets the building apart is not its decoration with funerary urns but rather their placement on the roof of the monument. Herod's tomb has one central urn and six urns on the edge of the roof, which was not usual for this time.<sup>40</sup>

Parallels can be seen in certain tomb façades in Petra that likewise have funerary urns on the edge of the roof rather than in other places where they are usually found. For instance, the Lion Triclinium, dated to the first century CE, has a façade similar to other monuments at Petra, including a gable over the entryway (see figure 5).<sup>41</sup> Cut from the rock, this monument does not have a physical roof, but the gable serves, for the purpose of this paper, as a pseudoroof. This gable includes an urn at the apex, another on the right-hand corner of the gable, and the remains of an urn on the left-hand corner.<sup>42</sup> In many places around Petra, there are also *acroteria*, or platforms where it appears an urn could be placed, and once again these are found on both the apex and the sides of these gables.<sup>43</sup>

While urns began to be widely used in the Levant for funerary purposes between 100 BCE and 100 CE, Peleg-Barkat has noted that the specific placement of urns along the edges of the roofs of funerary monuments presents similarities between monuments in Judaea and Nabataea that are not widely paralleled elsewhere.<sup>44</sup> While there are differences between a freestanding monument and a stone-cut façade, a similarity can be seen by the additional placement of funerary urns on the edges of monuments as well as simply on the top.

#### *Hexagonal Flooring Patterns in Masada and the Great Temple*

Masada, which was constructed between 37 and 10 BCE,<sup>45</sup> is one of Herod's grand projects and the most notable of his desert fortresses. This is due in part to the fame Josephus gave it in describing the Roman siege and the mass suicide of the zealots who held the fortress during the First Jewish Revolt (66–73 CE).<sup>46</sup> Positioned on top of a massive plateau, this desert fortress-palace was well protected as well as luxurious. The Northern Palace was a feat to build, as it cascades down the side of the mountain in three tiers that include sleeping quarters, a courtyard, and baths.<sup>47</sup> In this palace we find another example of a connection between architectural décor used in both Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra. In rooms seventy-eight and eighty-eight in the Northern Palace, as well as in the *palaestra*<sup>48</sup> of the bathhouse, is an allover hexagonal flooring pattern, the earliest example of which is found outside of Italy (figure 6).<sup>49</sup> Besides being the first example outside of Italy, the usage of the allover hexagonal flooring patterns here follows so closely the stylistic trends in Rome that some scholars attempt to move the dating of these rooms so that they will postdate the introduction of the style in Italy.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Orit Peleg-Barkat, "Fit for a King: Architectural Décor in Judaea and Herod as Trendsetter," *The American School of Oriental Research BASOR* 371 (2014): 154.

<sup>40</sup> Peleg-Barkat, "Fit for a King," 155.

<sup>41</sup> Kloner, "Amphorae and Urns," 68–69, 74.

<sup>42</sup> Kloner, "Amphorae and Urns," 68–69.

<sup>43</sup> Kloner, "Amphorae and Urns," 73.

<sup>44</sup> Peleg-Barkat, "Fit for a King," 155.

<sup>45</sup> Richardson, *Herod*, 148.

<sup>46</sup> *BJ* 7.252–406

<sup>47</sup> Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod*, 29–31.

<sup>48</sup> Wrestling field in the gymnasium or bathhouse.

<sup>49</sup> Foerster, Gideon. *Masada V The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965 Final Reports: Art and Architecture*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1995.

<sup>50</sup> Rina Talgam and Orit Peleg, "Appendix 5: Mosaic Pavements in Herod's Day," in Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod*, 288–92. Talgam, Peleg, and Foerster conclude that these floors can be dated between 37 and 30 BC: the earlier date as opposed to the proposed dating at 12 BC, after Herod's return from Rome.

Herod's quick adoption of this new trend seems to attest to his close connections with his Roman patrons and his personal visit to Rome at the advent of the reign of Augustus.

This same allover hexagonal flooring pattern is found in the Lower Temenos of the Great Temple in Petra, where it is executed on a much bigger scale than in Herod's palace at Masada (see figures 7 and 8). One of the many new construction projects started in the late first century BCE, the Great Temple may have been commissioned by Obodas III and its completion may be attributed to Aretas IV.<sup>51</sup> A similar allover hexagonal flooring is present in a much bigger setting than in Masada. Given that the end of the reigns of Herod and Obodas was a period when relations between Judaea and Nabataea were reasonably friendly, builders in Petra may well have picked up this very new style from Herodian projects.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has looked at some similarities in architecture between Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra, tying the archaeology with the history provided by Josephus. The historical ties need to be taken critically because Josephus wrote literarily as opposed to scientifically, as history is written today, with the result that some of the stories he recorded concerning Judaeans and Nabataean kings may have been distorted. In addition, further research needs to be done to find more connections between the Herodian building project and the one undertaken during the end of Obodas III's and Aretas IV's reign. Nevertheless, existing archaeological evidence supports important connections between Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra.

The first indication of this connection is in the general trend of an eastward progression of architectural styles and engineering techniques from Rome through Judaea to Petra. The literary accounts of the responses of these kingdoms to growing Roman influence support this transfer of engineering and styles. While Hellenism had already strongly influenced different forms of architecture in the Levant,<sup>53</sup> this growing progression of Roman influence is evident specifically in the construction of artificial platforms through *cryptoportici* and the use of allover hexagonal flooring patterns. The implementation of this pattern resulted from the relationship specific leaders had with the Roman Empire. It was in this very period that Antipater and his son Herod began actively seeking out Rome's help for Judaea. Likewise, with Syllaeus's visit to Rome in the same period, we have our first literary evidence of a Nabataean leader going to Rome to try to establish a relationship, a precedent which Aretas IV followed. Strikingly, Aretas IV seems to have tried to follow the lead of Herod, who strived and succeeded in forming a close relationship with Rome; subsequently, it is during the reigns of these two kings that the biggest expansion of building projects occurred.

Thus, it seems that as the leaders of Herodian Judaea and Nabataean Petra realized the necessity of a relationship with Rome, their openness to Roman influence allowed, or even encouraged, adoption of architectural styles from Italy, beginning a blending of Roman architectural styles with local features. Interestingly, the period in which Judaea and Nabataea had the closest relationship—which was marked by accounts of Herod dining with Syllaeus, the minister of Obodas III, and by Syllaeus's attempted marriage to Salome, Herod's sister—coincided with the arrival of shared architectural features.<sup>54</sup> This period was shortly before the appearance of allover hexagonal flooring, first in Masada and then in the Great

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<sup>51</sup> Taylor, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom*, 113-119.

### 37 HUNTSMAN: FRIENDS, FOES, AND TRADING PARTNERS

Temple, which may suggest that this style traveled more easily between Judaea and Nabataea due to a less strained political situation.



**Fig. 1.** “Solomon’s Stables,” or the *cryptoporticus* underneath the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Image courtesy of Bible Places.com, September 2009 Newsletter and Free Photos, accessed December 5, 2016, <http://www.bibleplaces.com/newsletter/2000909september.htm>.



**Fig. 2.** The Urn Tomb, featuring the artificial platform creating a porch (Photo by R. Huntsman June 6, 2016).



**Fig. 3.** Interior of the *cryptoporticus* providing support for the porch in front of the Urn Tomb (Photo by R. Huntsman, June 6, 2016).



**Fig. 4.** Herodian replica (Photo courtesy of Shmuel Bar-Am from Bar-Am, Aviva and Shmuel, “Herod’s Mountain Hideaway,” *Times of Israel*, September 7, 2013, accessed December 5, 2016, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/herods-mountain-hideaway/>)





**Fig. 5.** Lion Triclinium in Petra, with visible Urns on the top of the gable and on the right side (Photo by R. Huntsman, May 3, 2017)



**Fig. 6.** Allover hexagonal mosaic flooring at Herod's northern palace at Masada (Photo by R. Huntsman, May 8, 2017)



**Fig. 7.** Allover hexagonal flooring design in the Great Temple at Petra (Photo by R. Huntsman, May 27, 2016)





**Fig. 8.** Allover hexagonal flooring design in the Great Temple at Petra. Original on bottom of image, reconstruction on top (Photo by R. Huntsman, May 27, 2016).