

# BACCHIUS IUDAEUS

A Denarius Commemorating Pompey's  
Victory over Judea

James M. Scott, BACCHIVS IUDAEVS

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*Once again, for Gail*

With 13 figures and 2 tables

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## Preface

This book is part of a larger project on Dionysus and the Jews that I have been conducting over the past several years. In the course of this research, I have encountered many texts and several artifacts that are either not generally known or are seldom considered by scholars of early Jewish literature and of the New Testament. Symptomatic of this situation is the dearth of information on Dionysus and the Jews in the standard reference works in these fields. The denarius under discussion in this book is a case in point. This coin is not widely known, and when it is referred to, it tends to be treated as a sidelight rather than the focus of concerted study.

Given the specialized nature of their subject matter, my findings on this coin are being published as a separate study. It may seem extravagant to devote a whole book to one coin, but the importance of the “Bacchius Iudaeus” denarius is commensurate with its apparent connection with the beginning of the Roman occupation of Judea in 63 BCE. Hence, if we can set this coin in its proper context and show its manifold connections within both Palestine and Rome, then we gain access to yet another piece of the puzzle that will hopefully help to complete the historical picture. Moreover, since this coin contributes to our understanding of the broader subject of Dionysus and the Jews, we now have further evidence from the history of religions to contextualize that linkage. It is particularly gratifying that numismatic evidence, which is underutilized by scholars oriented on ancient literary texts, should be useful for this purpose.

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Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the help of Spencer Jones in the final stages of producing this book, including the creation of the index.





## Introduction

Our subject is a denarius minted in Rome in 55 BCE which is visually fascinating but conceptually enigmatic. On its obverse, around the head of a female figure with turreted crown, appears the name A. Plautius, who held the office of *aedilis curulis* in that year; on its reverse is a camel, in front of which a male figure kneels on his right leg, holding the camel's reins in his left hand and extending a branch in his right hand; the legend reads: *BACCHIVS IVDAEVS* (Fig. 1).

M. Crawford summarizes the interpretations that have most frequently been offered for this coin:<sup>1</sup>

The obverse type doubtless refers to the Ludi Megalenses, celebrated by the Curule Aediles. The reverse type presumably refers to the surrender of an Eastern ruler, doubtless in the course of Pompey's campaigns; it matters little whether the legend refers to Dionysius of Tripoli (Josephus, *Ant.* xiv, 3, 2; so Th. Reinach, *Les Monnaies juives*, 29; A. Kindler, *SCMB* 1951, 53) or Aristobulus the High Priest (so Duc

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1 M.H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* (2 vol.; rev. edn; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1.454–55 (no. 431/1), Pl. LII, 7. (Hereafter, Crawford, *CRR*, with item number, will be used.) For proponents of the view that Bacchius Iudaeus is a military leader otherwise unrecorded in history, see, e.g., E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian* (SJLA 20; Leiden: Brill, 1976), 26 n. 16; M. Goodman, *The Roman World 44 BC – AD 180* (Routledge History of the Ancient World; London: Routledge, 1997), 251–53; M.O. Wise, *Thunder in Gemini* (JSPSup 15; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 215: “Bacchius was an otherwise unrecorded leader in the Jewish revolt, more prominent in the actual warfare than was the imprisoned Aristobulus. He probably led the forces within the temple. Here then is a man who was perhaps the most important Jewish leader of the war from the perspective of the Roman leadership, yet he did not merit even a mention in Josephus’ accounts. That fact is a salutary reminder that we really know very little about the detailed course of these events.” See further E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)* (3 vol. in 4; rev. edn; Edinburgh: Clark, 1973–87), 1.237 n. 14; R. Turcan, *Numismatique romaine du culte métroaïque* (EPRO 97; Leiden: Brill, 1983), 12–13; T. Reinach, *Jewish Coins* (Chicago: Argonaut, 1966), 29–30; H.St.J. Hart, “Judaea and Rome: The Official Commentary”, *JTS* n.s. 3 (1952) 172–98, on p. 178–79; [E.] Klebs, “Bakchios Iudaeus”, *PW* II.2 (1896) 2789; P.G. Lever, “On the Bacchius Propaganda Coin”, *Numismatic Circular* 96 (1988) 114; O. Keel, “Die kultischen Maßnahmen Antiochus’ IV. Religionsverfolgung und/oder Reformversuch?”, in O. Keel and U. Staub, *HelLENismus und Judentum. Vier Studien zu Daniel 7 und zur Religionsnot unter Antiochus IV* (OBO 178; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 2000) 87–121, on p. 115: “Die Münze ist wohl ein weiteres Zeugnis dafür, dass manche Vertreter der griechisch-römischen Welt die jüdische Religion als Bacchusreligion zu verstehen versuchten.”



Fig. 1. Denarius. Rome, 55 BCE. (Crawford, RRC, no. 431/1)

de Luynes, *RN* 1858, 382–4; E. Babelon, *RBN* 1891, 5; K. Kraft, *JNG* 1968, 16–19, citing Josephus, *Ant.* xiv, 34–6 as evidence for the Roman assimilation of Jehovah and Bacchus); neither explanation is altogether free from difficulties.

Given these difficulties, Y. Meshorer takes another tack, attributing the coin to twofold confusion on the part of the Romans relating to the Hebrew name of Aristobulus, on the one hand, and to the nature of the Jewish cult, on the other:<sup>2</sup>

In the first place, the name Bacchius is indeed the Latin form of Dionysius but this does not explain the epithet “the Jew,” since he [sc. Dionysius of Tripoli] was not a Jew. On the other hand, the difficulty in identifying the submissive figure as Aristobulus stems from the epithet “Bacchius,” since its relationship to him is unexplained. Nevertheless, it seems to us that “Bacchius the Jew” can be identified with Aristobulus II. If we follow most scholars in assuming that his Hebrew name was Yehudah, like that of Aristobulus I, the epithet “the Jew” can be attributed to the fact that he was the ruler of the territory of “YHWDH” (Judah). This apparently confused the Romans who perhaps held the view that his name “YHWDH” was none other than his title as ruler of Yehudah (Judah), and they therefore termed him “the Jew” (*Iudaeus*). In order to explain the strange epithet “Bacchius” associated with Bacchus, we must again turn to Josephus who relates the following about the present given by Aristobulus to Pompey (in 64 B. C. E.):

“When Pompey not long afterward came to Damascus and was advancing into Coele-Syria, there came to him envoys from all of Syria and Egypt and Judaea. Aristobulus, for example, sent him a fine gift, which was a golden vine worth five hundred talents. This gift is also mentioned by Strabo of Cappadocia in the

2 Y. Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins From the Persian Period to Bar Kokhba* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press; Nyack, NY: Amphora, 2001) 28–29.

following words. ‘There also came from Egypt an embassy and a crown worth four thousand pieces of gold, and from Judaea either a vine or garden; *terpōlē* (delight) is what they called this work of art. Moreover we ourselves have examined this gift, which has been set up in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome, and has an inscription reading, ‘From Alexander, the king of the Jews.’ It was valued at five hundred talents. And it is said to have been sent by Aristobulus, the ruler of the Jews.’”

From this it follows that the gift of a man named Yehudah, who was the ruler of Judah and therefore called “the Jew,” was well known in Rome. This gift, a golden vine, was regarded by the Romans as representing his cult or a cultural trait of his. Since the Romans considered the vine to be connected with Bacchus, the god of wine, they readily arrived at the epithet “Bacchius,” which can be translated “master of the vine.” If this coin was indeed minted to mark the conquest of Judah by Pompey, and the oriental figure on it is Aristobulus II, it suggests that his Hebrew name was Yehudah, and it is therefore possible to attribute the “YHWDH HKHN HGDWL WHBR HYHWDYM” [“Yehudah the high priest and the council of the Jews”] coins to him. This is certainly not conclusive evidence, but it does corroborate our view that “YHWDH” coins were minted by Aristobulus II.

The problem with this suggestion is that we do not know the Hebrew name of Aristobulus II, so the idea that *IVDAEVS* is based on Roman confusion with his alleged Hebrew name remains speculation.<sup>3</sup> And yet, as the following additional arguments show, the connection between Aristobulus’ gift of the golden vine and the Roman identification of the Jewish cult as Bacchic seems quite promising:

Josephus describes the beginning of the Roman era in Judea with a short narrative: When Aretas was compelled by Antipater to raise an army of 50,000 troops in order to attack Aristobulus and thereby force the return of Hyrcanus to the kingship in Jerusalem, Scaurus, who had been sent into Syria by Pompey, intervened at the very moment when Aristobulus, besieged in Jerusalem, was about to succumb to Aretas’ superior forces (*JW* 1.124–30). Subsequently, both Hyrcanus and Aristobulus brought their quarrel before Pompey in Damascus, where Aristobulus presented the Roman general with a munificent gift: a golden vine worth 500 talents (*Ant.* 14.34). In further describing the gift, Josephus (*Ant.* 14.35–36) cites Strabo: “There also came from Egypt an embassy and a crown worth four hundred pieces of gold, and from Judaea either a vine or garden (εἶτε ἄμπελος εἶτε κήπος); ‘delight’ (τερπωλή) is what they called this work of art. Moreover we ourselves

3 Cf. J.C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress; Assen, the Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 2004), 342 n. 266 and 345 n. 274; T. Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, Part I: Palestine 330 BCE–200 CE* (TSAJ 91; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2002), s.v. Ἀριστόβουλος–Aristobulus [2], 266–67; idem, “The Greek Names of the Hasmoneans”, *JQR* 78 (1987) 1–20, on p. 13. See further S. Ostermann, *Die Münzen der Hasmonäer. Ein kritischer Bericht zur Systematik und Chronologie* (NTOA 55; Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 5, 8 et passim.

have examined this gift, which has been set up in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome, and has an inscription reading, ‘From Alexander, the king of the Jews.’ It was valued at five hundred talents. And it is said to have been sent by Aristobulus, the ruler of the Jews.”<sup>4</sup> The collocation of terms ἄμπελος and τερπωλή here recalls the etiological tale told by Nonnus about Dionysus’ lover Ampelos, the beautiful satyr youth whose untimely death the wine god mourned, thereby turning his body into a grape vine and creating wine from his blood: “Ampelos (Ἄμπελε), you have brought mourning to Dionysos who never mourns—yes, that when your honeydropping wine shall grow, you may bring its delight (τερπωλήν) to all the four quarters of the world (ὅλα τετράρυγι κόσμῳ), a libation for the Blessed, and for Dionysos a heart of merry cheer. Lord Bacchos has wept tears, that he may wipe away man’s tears!” (Nonnus, *Dion.* 12.167–69). A version of the tale is known already to Ovid (*Fasti* 3.403–14), so it seems reasonable to suppose that Nonnus, who preserves much ancient lore about Dionysus,<sup>5</sup> employs a well-known collocation of terms here.<sup>6</sup>

Although the Maccabees reacted strongly against Antiochus IV’s Hellenistic reforms, it was not long before the Hasmoneans themselves became thoroughgoing “philhellènes” (“lovers of things Greek”), and Aristobulus I even proudly adopted the sobriquet “Philhellene” during his short reign in 104/3 BCE (Jos. *Ant.* 13.318: χρηματίσας μὲν Φιλέλλην). Hence, the same Hasmoneans who adopted so many Hellenistic ways—names, dress, emblems, monuments, coinage, titulature, military tactics—could easily have also adopted a Greek name for a prominent work of art, replete with Dionysian associations.<sup>7</sup>

4 Cf. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas*, 342 n. 266: “Only *Antiquities* mentions Aristobulus’s spectacular gift to Pompey, valued at five hundred talents, although, in quoting Strabo about the present, Josephus includes his statement that ‘Alexander, the king of the Jews’ had sent it (14.3, 1 [§§ 34–36]). Why the statement mentions Alexander rather than Aristobulus is puzzling.”

5 Dating from the mid-fifth century CE, the *Dionysiaca* of Nonnus, the massive, 48-book epic on the life of Dionysus, is a palimpsest to be read against earlier mythical material. Cf., e.g., G. Bowersock, “Dionysus as an Epic Hero”, in N. Hopkinson (ed.), *Studies in the Dionysiaca of Nonnos* (Cambridge Philosophical Society Supplements; Cambridge: Cambridge Philosophical Society, 1994), 156–66, on p. 160. Note, for example, the continuity in Bacchic funerary rites as expressed in the epigram of the Hellenistic poet Dioscorides (*Anth. Pal.* 7.485 [mid-second century BCE]) and Nonnus, *Dion.* 19.162–98 many centuries later. Cf. F. Graf/S. I. Johnston, *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife: Orpheus and the Bacchic Gold Tablets* (London/New York: Routledge, 2007), 162.

6 Cf. F. Graf, “Ampelus [4]”, *BNP*, 1 (2002) 597: “Depictions show that this figure with its telling Dionysian name was pre-Hellenistic.” See also M. A. Zagdoun, “Ampelus”, *LIMC* I/1 (1981) 689–70. Since the point of the collocation is based on the Greek meaning of the terms, there is no need to speculate about a possible Hebrew name behind the object. Cf. R. Marcus, *LCL*, 466 n. a (on *Ant.* 14.35): “From the description of the object as a vine or garden it may be conjectured that its Heb. name was *‘eden* = ‘delight.’”

7 Just as there was a centrifugal force of the Hasmoneans seeking to embrace the broader Hellenistic world in almost every respect, so also the Romans, who burst on the scene in 63 BCE, would apply a centripetal force seeking to incorporate Judea within its world. The “*Bacchios Iudaeus*” denarius can be understood as the result of the interaction of these forces on each other. See the conclusion for further reflections along this line.

We may surmise that Aristobulus' gift to Pompey was taken from the Hasmonean Temple, since a golden vine(s) was also located in the Herodian Temple (cf. Jos. *JW* 5.210; *Ant.* 15.395; *m. Middot* 3:8), and the golden vine of the Temple may have been a symbol on the Bar Kokhba coins.<sup>8</sup> Patrich suggests that the inscription on the vine given to Pompey, "From Alexander, King of the Jews" (Jos. *Ant.* 14.36), indicates that Aristobulus looted this exemplar from the treasury of the Temple in Jerusalem, where it was kept, to which it was donated as an offering by Alexander Jannaeus.<sup>9</sup> If, as E. P. Sanders suggests, the vine and grape clusters at the entrance to the Temple were meant to recall a glorious moment in Israel's history, the enormous cluster of grapes brought back by those who spied out the land at the time of Moses (Num 13:21–27),<sup>10</sup> that might provide a further connection with Dionysus, insofar as the scene also evoked the image of the Oschophoria, an Athenian vintage festival dedicated jointly to Athena and Dionysus commemorating the ritual carrying in procession of vine branches hung with bunches of grapes.<sup>11</sup>

With this additional evidence, the oft-suggested connection between Aristobulus' gift of the golden vine (from the Temple) and the "*Bacchivus Iudaeus*" denarius does indeed seem to merit further investigation.

Whether Aristobulus is therefore the kneeling figure portrayed on the coin is a question that needs additional consideration. The most we can say at the moment is that Aristobulus gave a Dionysian gift to Pompey, that he was the Jewish/Judean high priest who surrendered to Pompey in 63 BCE, and that he was paraded through Rome in Pompey's triumphal procession in 61 BCE.

In the following, we shall investigate the question from two angles. First, we will examine Pompey's own agenda. It will be shown that the year our denarius appeared, 55 BCE, was the same year in which Pompey dedicated his spectacular theater-temple in Rome, and, furthermore, that these very public displays are related as expressions of Pompey's Dionysian pretensions. Second, we will examine each element of the denarius in question, looking for clues as to the meaning of *Bacchivus Iudaeus*. It will be shown that the Latin inscription refers first and foremost to the god Bacchus/Dionysus via an *interpretatio Romana*. Finally, we will explore the possible implications of our investigation for the precise date of the fall of Jerusalem in 63 BCE.

8 Cf. J. Patrich, "The Golden Vine, the Sanctuary Portal, and Its Depiction on the Bar-Kokhba Coins", *Jewish Art* 19/20 (1993–94) 56–61.

9 Patrich, "The Golden Vine, the Sanctuary Portal, and Its Depiction on the Bar-Kokhba Coins", 58.

10 Cf. E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE* (London: SCM; Philadelphia, PA: Trinity Press International, 1992), 244.

11 On the Oschophoria, see further in chapter 3.

## Chapter 1: Pompey

### Coins Commemorating Pompey's Conquests

It is our thesis that the minting of the “*Bacchius Iudaeus*” denarius was not a stand-alone event. Rather, it must be seen in light of Pompey's overall military and political agenda during this period of time. The coin is, in fact, part of a whole series of other denarii designed to throw a spotlight on Pompey's triumphal procession in 61 BCE and his other conquests in the run-up to the dedication of his spectacular theater-temple complex in Rome.

The first thing we need to recognize is that, as the numismatist K. Kraft has demonstrated, our denarius is part of a series of six denarii minted in Rome within the very short time frame of c. 55/4 BCE, the reverses of which were designed to publicize Pompey's conquests in Asia, for which he had celebrated a triumph in 61 BCE.<sup>1</sup> For example, to underscore the fact that his third triumph was a celebration of Pompey the Great as world conqueror, three different denarii were issued during this time frame in Rome:<sup>2</sup> one portrays Victoria with a palm frond and surrounded by four wreaths; another features a globe surrounded by four wreaths, which recalls the globe carried in the triumphal procession of 61 BCE;<sup>3</sup> and yet another contains three trophies,<sup>4</sup> corresponding to the three continents of the earth over which Pompey had triumphed—Libya/Africa (81 or 80 BCE), Europa (71 BCE), and Asia (61 BCE)—thereby encompass-

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1 K. Kraft, “Taten des Pompeius auf den Münzen”, *JNG* 18 (1968) 7–24.

2 Cf. Kraft, “Taten des Pompeius”, 20, with Taf. 1.6–8. See also M. Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 20–21, with fig. 4.

3 See further in chapter 3 (with Fig. 11 there). Cf. Kraft, “Taten des Pompeius”, 15: “Schon seit langem ist erkannt, daß die drei gleichartigen Kränze auf diesen beiden Denartypen nur auf die drei Triumphe des Pompeius anspielen können und daß der vierte Kranz mit den Bändern jenen goldenen Kranz meinen muß, der dem Pompeius durch Volksbeschluß zum Gebrauch im Theater zugestanden wurde.” On this coin and the globe carried in the triumphal procession of 61 BCE, see also C. Nicolet, *Space, Geography, and Politics in the Early Roman Empire* (Jerome Lectures 19; Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 37; Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 20 (fig. 4), 30.

4 Pompey reportedly had a signet ring with three trophies of victory carved on it, the presentation of which was used to confirm his death to Caesar (Dio 42.18.3: “Even when he had died, they did not believe it for a long time, not, in fact, until they saw his signet ring that had been sent; it had three trophies carved on it, as had that of Sulla”). Cf. Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 14–15.

ing the whole *oikoumene*.<sup>5</sup> In keeping with his self-image as a world conqueror, Pompey paraded his identification with Alexander the Great, from whom he derived the surname *Magnus* ("the Great"), reportedly wearing a cloak that had once belonged to Alexander himself during his third and final triumph (App. *Mith.* 117).<sup>6</sup> He also later displayed a portrait of Alexander by the

5 Cf. Plut. *Pomp.* 45.5: "The greatest factor in his glory, and something that had never happened to any Roman before, was that he celebrated his third triumph over the third continent. For others before him had triumphed three times. But he held his first triumph over Africa, his second over Europe, and his final one over Asia, and so in a way he seemed to have brought the whole world under his power in his three triumphs." K.M. Girardet, "Der Triumph des Pompeius im Jahre 61 v. Chr.—*ex Asia?*", *ZPE* 89 (1991) 201–15, on p. 210. Lucan (6.817–18) refers to Pompey's triumphs over Europe, Africa and Asia, and to the irony that he and his two sons each died on one of those continents: "O pitiable wretches, you must fear Europe and Africa and Asia: Fortune divides your graves among the lands you triumphed over" (*Europam, miseri, Libyamque Asiamque timete: distribuit tumulos vestris fortuna triumphis*). For other statements that Pompey triumphed over "Asia" and/or the whole inhabited earth, see further Girardet, "Der Triumph des Pompeius", 210 n. 39, 211, 214 with n. 54, 215; D. Feeney, *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginning of History* (Sather Classical Lectures 65; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 59–67. See further Nicolet, *Space, Geography, and Politics*, 31–33. The Roman historian, Cassius Dio, refers to one trophy carried in the third triumph as "huge and expensively decorated, with an inscription attached to say 'this is a trophy of the whole world'" (Dio 37.21.2).

6 Cf. P. Green, "Caesar and Alexander: Aemulatio, Imitatio, Comparatio", *AJAH* 3 (1978) 1–26, esp. on pp. 4–5, 9, 10, 16; A. Kühnen, *Die imitatio Alexandri in der römischen Politik (1 Jh. v. Chr. bis 3 Jh. n. Chr.)* (Münster: Rhema, 2008); D. Michel, *Alexander als Vorbild für Pompeius, Caesar und Marcus Antonius. Archäologische Untersuchungen* (Collection Latomus 94; Bruxelles: Latomus, revue d'études latines, 1967); R. R. R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 136. Green ("Caesar and Alexander," 4–5 et passim) argues that Pompey (rather than Caesar) consciously modeled himself on Alexander and promoted himself as the New Dionysus. Note, however, that in view of his triumphs celebrated in 46 BCE and his subsequent apotheosis, Virgil (*Aen.* 1.286–90) praises Julius Caesar as "loaded with the spoils of the East (*spoliis Orientis onustum*), thus comparing Caesar with the originator of the triumph, Dionysus, himself an example of a god who had entered heaven after earthly successes." Cf. N. Holmes, "Nero and Caesar: Lucan 1.33–66", *CP* 94 (1999) 75–81, on pp. 79–80; P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Jerome Lectures; Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 44: "For Pompey, the comparison with Dionysus or Heracles was still understood as a metaphor for the splendors of his military victories in the East. But Julius Caesar was perfectly open in proclaiming himself a demigod." After Augustus, cultic veneration of the emperor became fashionable, and the competent, virtuous emperor was expected to emulate Dionysus and the like. Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.38: "Most regarded it as an indication of his lack of self-confidence, and certain people interpreted it as a sign of his degenerate nature. The best of mortals, went the argument, were desirous of the greatest heights; so it came about that Hercules and Liber (= Dionysus) among the Greeks and Quirinus [Romulus] among us had been added to the number of the gods. Augustus had done better because he had set his hopes on it. All other things were immediately available for the principes: only for one thing should they prepare insatiably, that their memory should be bountiful, for if they spurned fame, they spurned their accomplishments of virtue."



fourth-century-BCE painter, Nicias of Athens, in the portico of his theater-temple complex (Plin. *HN* 35.132).

Besides these denarii depicting Pompey's conquest of the whole inhabited earth, Kraft argues, there are other coins that portray acts of individual submission: the surrender of Tigranes of Armenia (a warrior with a spear leads a horse by a tether; a round shield lies next to the warrior's left foot)<sup>7</sup> and the subjugation of Aristobulus of Judea.<sup>8</sup> The final denarius that Kraft includes in this series of coins dating to around 55/4 BCE commemorating Pompey's victories pertains to the war against the pirates—a sea trophy flanked by two men (presumably pirates taken as prisoners).<sup>9</sup>

Kraft explained this sudden flurry of denarii minted in Rome around 55/4 BCE to commemorate Pompey's conquests as a consequence of the fact that Pompey's power was then at its zenith, at least in terms of the political office that he held at that time if not his popularity. It is certainly noteworthy that publicity for Pompey's conquests did not take place immediately after the triumph of 61 BCE, but rather six years later. This corresponds precisely with the development of Pompey's political power. For immediately after the triumph, Pompey was in a relatively weak position: he had to fight hard for provisions for his veterans, and his arrangement of affairs in the East succeeded only after the alliance with Caesar and Crassus against the opposition of the senate majority. By 55/54 BCE, however, Pompey had come into his own, at least in terms of the political office that he held at the time. In 55, he was elected, together with Crassus, to consul amidst turbulent circumstances, with the help of soldiers taken from Caesar's army. These strong-arm tactics did not set well with either the elite or the populace. However, while Crassus went to the East to conduct the war with the Persians in 55 BCE, Pompey remained in Rome, enabling him to attempt to consolidate his power and influence there, with the ambition for personal domination over Rome.<sup>10</sup> It was during these heady days of Pompey's waxing political influence, Kraft argues, that moneyers who were adherents of Pompey or who were promised advancement by him, including the A. Plautius who issued the denarius in question,<sup>11</sup> emphasized the great deeds of the one who was expected soon

7 Kraft, "Taten des Pompeius", 10–15, 20, with Taf. 1.2.

8 Kraft, "Taten des Pompeius", 16–19, with Taf. 1.3.

9 Kraft, "Taten des Pompeius", 8–10, with Taf. 1.1.

10 On Pompey's ambition for personal domination over Rome, which he tried to disguise and deny, see J. Leach, "Pompey's 'Principate': Third Consulship and the Rift with Caesar 54–50", in idem, *Pompey the Great* (Kent: Croom Helm, 1978), 150–72.

11 As Kraft points out ("Taten des Pompeius", 19), A. Plautius was a close member of Pompey's party and, as tribune, agitated for Pompey in 56 BCE (Dio 39.16.2). It was with Pompey's support that A. Plautius was elected to aedile in 55 BCE, at which time he minted the denarius in question.

to become the unrivaled dictator. It is not obvious that Pompey actually aimed to be sole dictator in 55—or at any time before special circumstances brought about a temporary appointment in 52 (and even then as sole consul, not as dictator).<sup>12</sup> More probably, Pompey's partisans recognized the precarious nature of their leader's bid for power at this time and sought to undergird it with a burst of numismatic propaganda.<sup>13</sup>

## Pompey's Theater-Temple

Although Pompey's bid for influence and power go a long way toward explaining the appearance of denarii around 55/4 BCE that commemorate his conquests, an extravaganza in that same year also deserves special mention in this connection. For 55 BCE was also the year in which Pompey dedicated his massive theater-temple complex in Rome.<sup>14</sup> The dedication ceremony took place in September with great pomp and fanfare and probably coincided with Pompey's fiftieth birthday on the 29th, just as the second day of his triumphal procession had taken place on his birthday in 61 BCE.<sup>15</sup> Clearly, Pompey's purpose in

12 On coinage dated to 54 BCE which is associated with opposition to Pompey's real or supposed intentions of achieving sole rule, see Crawford, *CRR*, no. 432.

13 Beard (*The Roman Triumph*, 28) argues that by 55 BCE, Pompey's political pre-eminence had in fact been eroded. Cf., e.g., *Cic. Att.* 2.19 (59 BCE), which refers to the popular sentiment that was openly expressed against Pompey at both a gladiatorial show and a theatrical show. For a succinct summary of Pompey's major setbacks and declining popularity in the years between 60 and 55 BCE, which form the necessary background for understanding Pompey's construction of a permanent entertainment venue in Rome in order to counteract that downward trend, see J. Shelton, "Elephants, Pompey, and the Reports of Popular Displeasure in 55 BC", in S. N. Byrne and E. P. Cueva (ed.), *Veritatis Amicitiaeque Causa: Essays in Honor of Anna Lydia Motto and John R. Clark* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1999), 231–71, on pp. 237–41.

14 Cf., e.g., P. Gros, s.v. "Theatrum Pompei", in E. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (5 vol.; Malibu, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1993–2000) 5.35–38; M. A. Temelini, "Pompey's Politics, and the Presentation of His Theatre-Temple Complex", *Studia Humaniora Tartuensia* 7.A.4 (2006) <http://www.ut.ee/klassik/sht/2006/temelini1.pdf>; J. M. Davidson, "Vitruvius on the Theater in Republican Rome", in S. K. Dickison/J. P. Hallett (ed.), *Rome and Her Monuments: Essays on the City and Literature of Rome in Honor of Katherine A. Geffcken* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2000) 125–72, on pp. 126–31. On the close connection between theatrical productions and Roman temples, see S. M. Goldberg, "Plautius on the Palatine", *JRS* 88 (1998) 1–20.

15 Cf. Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 26: "The triumphal aspects of this whole building complex were emphasized even more starkly in the celebrations that marked its inauguration in 55 BCE.... The date chosen for the festivities is itself significant. Although not explicitly recorded in any surviving ancient evidence, it was almost certainly the closing days of September (shortly after Cicero delivered his speech *In Pisonem* [Against Piso], as that speech

undertaking this ambitious architectural project and staging its elaborate grand opening was to draw as much attention to himself as possible, hoping thereby to extend his influence and power in the capital city.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, we may see the denarii and the theater as two sides of the same coin, so to speak. In effect, they

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makes clear). In other words, the inauguration of the buildings took place over the anniversary of the third triumph—making in the process another stupendous birthday celebration for Pompey.” See also F. B. Sear, “The *Scaenae Frons* of the Theater of Pompey”, *AJA* 97 (1993) 687–701, on p. 687 n. 1. It should be noted, however, that the precise day of Pompey’s birth (and therefore also the day of his third triumph, of the inauguration of his theater, and of his death) is a somewhat complicated matter, owing apparently to the confusion between Julian dates and pre-Julian dates after the Ides in months where Caesar changed the length. This problem is seen with the birthdays of people like Augustus, who lived under both systems, but the confusion surrounding Pompey’s dates seems to show that the problem also applies to people who lived wholly under the pre-Julian calendar. Cf. Feeney, *Caesar’s Calendar*, 150–51; E. Greswell, *Origines Kalendariae Italicae* (4 vol.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1854) 3.480–81: “It is agreed that the triumph of Pompey, De Mithridate, De Piratis, and De Oriente in general, was celebrated *Per Biduum*; and that these two days were iii Kalendas Octobres, and Pridie Kalendas Octobres; the latter of which was his true birthday—though the former might easily have been supposed to be so. It is agreed too that by a remarkable coincidence he was killed on one of those days on which he had celebrated his triumph; and in reality on the second, Pridie Kalendas Octobres, September 29 Roman, his actual birthday. His birthday might be rightly assumed Pridie Kal. Octobres, and yet the day of his death be supposed to have been the first of the two days of his triumph; iii Kal. Oct.: in which case it might be said that he was killed Pridie Natales, as it is by Velleius Paterculus [ii. 53]. Or his birthday might have been supposed iii Kal. Oct. and the day of his death the second of the two days of his triumph; in which case it might be said that he perished the day after his birthday, as it is by Plutarch in his life of Pompey [Cap. lxxix]. But the true day of his death was his birthday, September 29 Roman U. C. 706, July 24 B. C. 48: and so it is represented by Plutarch himself in two other instances [Camillus, xix: Symposiaca, viii. i. 1. Cf. Dio, xlii. 5. Appian, B. C. ii. 86. Zonaras, x. 9. 487 C. Cicero, De Divinatione, ii. 9, 22. Lucan misled by the ambiguity of the Roman date of the death of Pompey, Sept. 29, and not reflecting on the inequality of the civil year to the natural at the time, supposes the day of the arrival of Pompey at the Mons Casius, which was also that of his death, the day of the autumnal equinox.]” I am indebted to Chris Bennett for consultation on pre-Julian and Julian calendars with respect to Pompey’s dates. We shall have occasion to return to the issue of Pompey’s birthday in chapter 3.

16 Cf. Shelton, “Elephants, Pompey, and the Reports of Popular Displeasure in 55 BC”, 237: “Pompey’s plan for a permanent theater appears to have been a bid for the popular favor which he thought would elevate him above his senatorial colleagues and secure for him enduring supreme power in the Roman state.” Although by the late Republican period, public entertainments had become a key means for politicians to shape popular opinion and garner votes, the extravagant public spectacles held at the inauguration of Pompey’s theater reportedly backfired when the crowd reacted against the staged slaughter of about twenty elephants, which were evidently intended to remind the Romans of his past triumph over Africa. Note, however, Shelton’s argument that the reported audience reaction “tells us more about a tradition of anti-Pompeian commentary than about humane sentiment among the Roman public” (*ibid.*, 231; cf. pp. 266–69).

provide Pompey with “a continuous ‘triumph’”<sup>17</sup> whereby he hoped to convert his past military glory into political capital.<sup>18</sup>

In the years following his triumph of 61 BCE, Pompey commissioned the first permanent, stone-built theater in Rome, with a temple of Venus Victrix (his patron deity who had sponsored his conquests) situated at the top of the *cavea* (Fig. 2).<sup>19</sup> Most important for our purposes, the theater-temple complex was lavishly adorned with programmatic displays of statuary. The curia, for example, contained a giant statue of Pompey (three meters high) holding a globe in his left hand (Fig. 3), representing his role as world conqueror (see further above).<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere in the same complex, fourteen figures representing the nations he had conquered lined a portico and recalled the placards of the nations that had been carried in the triumphal procession (Diod. Sic. 40.1.4). Thus, through the coins and the theater (not to mention the triumphal armory on display in the temple of Venus Victrix),<sup>21</sup> the ephemeral triumphal procession of 61 BCE was monumentalized in the form of a permanent record and constant reminder of the Pompey the Great's achievements, especially his conquests.<sup>22</sup>

17 For the expression, see R.C. Beacham, *The Roman Theatre and Its Audience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 158, in reference to Pompey's theater. See also E. Champlin, “Agamemnon at Rome: Roman Dynasts and Greek Heroes”, in D. Draund/C. Gill (ed.), *Myth, History, and Culture in Republican Rome: Studies in Honour of T.P. Wiseman* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2003) 295–319, on p. 298. Champlin (ibid., 297–305) discusses how Pompey's victories over Mithridates and Tigranes recalled the Greek victory over Troy under Agamemnon, West over East; hence, during the games of 55 BCE celebrating the opening of his theater, Pompey presented himself as Agamemnon, the “King of Kings.” This obviously complements his presentation of himself as Dionysus.

18 Cf. Shelton, “Elephants, Pompey, and the Reports of Popular Displeasure in 55 BC”, 241–42: “He also wanted to convert his military glory into unassailable political authority by securing durable support from the masses. Greenhalgh notes that Pompey had built ‘a palace of entertainment which would associate his name permanently with pleasure and detract from the glory of whoever happened to put on a show there.’”

19 On the reconstruction, see further R. Beacham/H. Denard, “The Pompey Project. Digital Research and Virtual Reconstruction of Rome's First Theatre,” *Computers and the Humanities* 37 (2003) 129–39.

20 For the statue, see Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 26, 27; C.H. Hallett, “Appendix F: Two Portraits in Heroic Costume Identified as Pompeius Magnus”, in idem, *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait 200 BC–AD 300* (Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 337. We shall return to this statue in our discussion of *Pss. Sol.* 2:29 in chapter 3.

21 Cf. Temelini, “Pompey's Politics and the Presentation of his Theatre-Temple Complex, 61–52 BCE,” 10 n. 48. Pompey's theater was full of booty from the East brought back for the triumph, including trees and plants, animals, and art objects.

22 On the various means through art and architecture that Pompey used to cement the memory of his triumphs in the public record and in people's memories, see Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 18–31; A.L. Kuttner, “Culture and History at Pompey's Museum”, *TAPA* 129 (1999) 343–73.

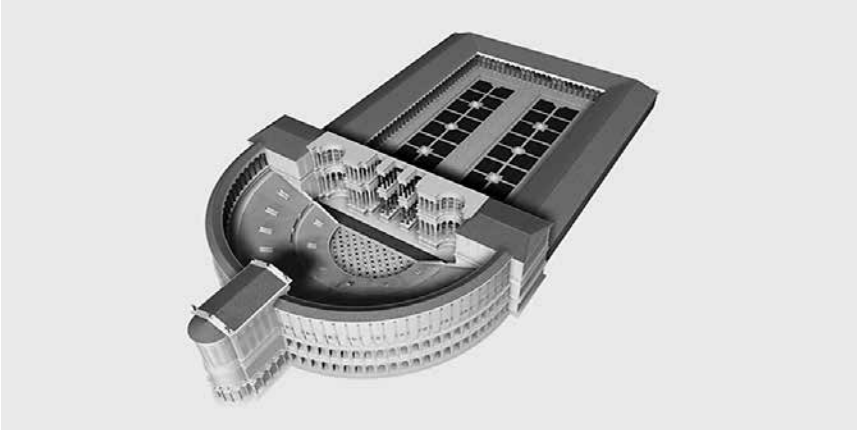
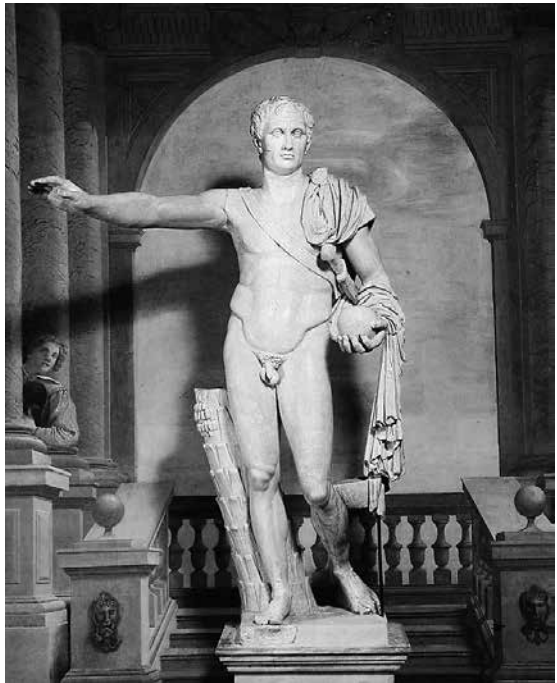


Fig. 2. Pompey's enormous theater-temple complex, dedicated in 55 BCE. This three-dimensional reconstruction, based on nineteenth-century drawings by Luigi Canina, shows the Temple of Venus (bottom left) overlooking the auditorium; beyond lie the porticoes, gardens and a sculpture gallery. Model created by Martin Blazeby, King's College, University of London. <http://www.pompey.cch.kcl.ac.uk/Blazeby.htm>

Fig. 3. The colossal nude statue, now in the Palazzo Spada, Rome, that was originally discovered in the area of Pompey's theater and is thought to be a portrait of Pompey the Great himself, contemporary with the building's original dedication in 55 BCE: The statue wears a chlamys over the left shoulder and holds a globe in the outstretched left hand, symbolic of Pompey's role as world conqueror.



## The Fourteen *Nationes* Conquered by Pompey

Given the direct relationship between the coin series and the theater-temple complex as monuments of Pompey's triumph(s), we may now focus more specifically on the aforementioned statues of fourteen *nationes* conquered by Pompey. Pliny indicates their location (HN 36.41). Suetonius seems to give us a crucial piece of information. In 68 CE, after Nero had learned that Julius Vindex, his governor in Gaul, was leading a revolt against his rule, the emperor began to have nightmares. According to Suetonius, Nero dreamed that "he was surrounded and immobilized by the statues of the nations (*simulacra gentium*) dedicated in Pompey's theater" (Nero 46). This illustrates not only the prominence and familiarity of the statues as a monument in Rome,<sup>23</sup> but also perhaps the inclusion of the Judean nation among the fourteen statues. Gaul was not one of the nations that Pompey had conquered, so it could not have been among the statues of the nations in Pompey's theater that Nero saw himself surrounded by in his dream. On the other hand, since Judea had been conquered by Pompey, and since the Jewish revolt against Rome famously began during Nero's reign in 66 CE and was still raging in 68, it seems likely that Nero's nightmare presupposes that Pompey's theater included a statue of the Judean nation.

Can this possibility be further substantiated? Which fourteen nations were portrayed on the statues of Pompey's theater? Since the theater-temple complex, including the statues of the fourteen nations, is no longer extant, we cannot appeal to direct archaeological evidence, nor is there any explicit statement about the matter in literary or inscriptional sources.<sup>24</sup> We do have, however, the following inscription, recorded in Diod. Sic. 40.4, which was perhaps dedicated in the temple of Venus on the day of Pompey's triumph in 61 BCE and recalled his conquests in the East since his campaign against the pirates:<sup>25</sup>

Pompey had inscribed on a tablet, which he set up as a dedication, the record of his achievements in Asia. Here is a copy of the inscription: "Pompey the Great, son of Gnaeus, Imperator, having liberated the seacoast of the inhabited world and all islands this side Ocean from the war with the pirates—being likewise the man who delivered from siege the kingdom of Ariobarzanes, Galatia and the lands and prov-

23 Cf. also Tac. *Ann.* 13.54.3: during Nero's reign, "barbarians" who visited Rome were shown, among other sights, Pompey's theater, "where they might behold the greatness of the people (*quo magnitudinem populi viserent*)."

24 Cf. Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 38, with n. 79.

25 See, however, Beard's skepticism about the reliability of this so-called "inscription": *The Roman Triumph*, 39.

inces lying beyond it, Asia, and Bithynia; who gave protection to Paphlagonia and Pontus, Armenia and Achaia, as well as Iberia, Colchis, Mesopotamia, Sophene, and Gordyene; brought into subjection Darius king of the Medes, Artoles king of the Iberians, Aristobulus king of the Jews, Aretas king of the Nabataean Arabs, Syria bordering on Cilicia, Judea, Arabia, the province of Cyrene, the Achaeans, the Iozysi, the Soani, the Heniochi and the other tribes along the seacoast between Colchis and the Maeotic Sea, with their kings, nine in number, and all the nations that dwell between the Pontic and the Red Seas; extended the frontiers of the Empire to the limits of the earth; and secured and in some cases increased the revenues of the Roman people—he, by confiscation of the statues and the images set up to the gods, as well as other valuables taken from the enemy, has dedicated to the goddess twelve thousand and sixty pieces of gold and three hundred and seven talents of silver.”

Of course, this list contains more than just a list of conquered *nationes*; it also includes subjected lands and rulers. Moreover, the list includes more than fourteen conquered *nationes*. How many more than fourteen is unclear, since some *nationes* are not even named (e.g., “all the nations that dwell between the Pontic and the Red Seas”). How, then, is it possible to ascertain which of the nations was included among the fourteen statues in Pompey’s theater?

First and foremost, the *nationes* adorning the theater surely represent Pompey’s major conquests and additions to the empire. The aforementioned coin series may be helpful in ascertaining which of the nations was considered “major” in this regard. Since, as we have seen, one of the coins that was issued near the time of the dedication of Pompey’s theater portrayed the surrender of Tigranes of Armenia, and “Armenia” is listed in the Pompeian inscription as one of the lands brought under subjection by Pompey, we may surmise that Armenia was one of the fourteen statues of the *nationes* included in Pompey’s theater. Likewise, since one of the coins in the series portrayed the subjugation of a figure accompanied by the inscription, “*Bacchius Iudaeus*,” and both “Aristobulus king of the Jews” and “Judea” appear prominently in the aforementioned Pompeian inscribed tablet, we may be reasonably sure that Judea was included among the statues of the *nationes* in Pompey’s theater.<sup>26</sup> Pliny’s summary of Pompey’s conquests over the East gives some cause for pause about the inclusion of Tigranes of Armenia among the fourteen *nationes*, for

26 The importance of Judea to Pompey is also shown by another means. Cf. Kuttner, “Culture and History at Pompey’s Museum”, 345: Pompey displayed, “for the first time in a Roman triumph, living trees (*Nat.* 12.111) brought from Asia and Africa to be transplanted to life in Rome, like the traditional *evocatio* of enemies’ gods—balsam (*Nat.* 12.111) from the royal paradise in Judaea....” Were these balsam trees planted in the portico of Pompey’s theater-temple complex as a permanent display?

there Tigranes seems to be an addendum to the list of fourteen nations and peoples (HN 7.97–98):<sup>27</sup>

Cnaeus Pompeius Magnus, Imperator, having completed a thirty years' war, routed, scattered, slain or received the surrender of 12,183,000 people, sunk or taken 846 ships, received the capitulation of 1538 towns and forts, subdued the lands from the Maeotians to the Red Sea, duly dedicates his offering vowed to Minerva.

This is his summary of his exploits in the East. But the announcement of the triumphal procession that he led on September 28 in the consulship of Marcus Piso and Marcus Messalla was as follows:

After having rescued the sea coast from pirates, and restored to the Roman People the command of the sea, he celebrated a triumph over Asia, Pontus, Armenia, Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, the Scythians, Jews and Albanians, Iberia, the Island of Crete, the Bastarnae, and, in addition to these, over King Mithridates and Tigranes.

In any case, the Jews/Judeans are once again seen as a special focus of Pompey's triumphal procession of 61 BCE and therefore a likely candidate for inclusion in the fourteen statues. Similarly, in Appian's description of the procession, "Aristobulus king of the Jews" is specifically mentioned, first, as one of the kings led in triumph at the head of the procession and then again later in the same text as having been the only prisoner who was put to death at once (App. *Mith.* 117.573, 578).<sup>28</sup> The very fact that Cicero nicknames Pompey "Hierosolymarius" (*Att.* 2.9.1), alluding to the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 BCE,<sup>29</sup> further underscores that the general highly prized his subjugation of Judea and therefore would have wanted to include it among the fourteen *nationes* in his theater. Finally, we may mention that in his *Pharsalia* (2.590–94), Lucan quotes Pompey's boast, which includes a direct reference to Judea:

The Arab owns me conqueror; so do the warlike Heniochi, and the Colchians famous for the fleece they were robbed of. My standards overawe Cappadocia, and Judea given over to the worship of the unknown god (*et dedita sacris incerti Iudaea dei*), and effeminate Sophene; I subdued the Armenians, the fierce Cilicians, and the range of Taurus.

27 Cf. Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 25: "... significantly or not, the number fourteen [in Pliny's list] coincides with the total number of nations whose names, according to Plutarch, were carried at the front of the triumphal procession itself (or, alternatively, with the list of conquests that Pliny quotes from the 'announcement' of the triumph)."

28 In actual fact, Aristobulus was not put to death immediately, but rather continued to play a role in Jewish history for another twelve years. In 56 BCE, the year before the dedication of Pompey's theater, he was again active in Judea and was for a second time taken prisoner to Rome, where he resided until he was poisoned by supporters of Pompey in 49 BCE. Cf. Stern, *GLAJJ*, 2.184; Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 130.

29 Cf. Stern, *GLAJJ*, 1.201–2.



Lucan may have derived this idea from Livy, who is quoted by the scholia to Lucan at this point.<sup>30</sup> In any case, the alleged quote illustrates once again that Pompey included the Jews/Judea among his greatest conquests.

Indirect archaeological evidence for the inclusion of the Jews/Judea among the fourteen statues of the *nationes* in Pompey's theater may perhaps be gleaned from the *ethne* reliefs in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias,<sup>31</sup> a complex that was begun probably under Tiberius and finished under Nero (c. 20–60 CE).<sup>32</sup> A Sebasteion is a temple devoted to the imperial cult, from *Sebastos*, the Greek translation of *Augustus*. This one was dedicated by the local inhabitants to Aphrodite and the Julio-Claudian emperors (called the θεοῖς Σεβαστοῖς Ὀλυμπίοις).<sup>33</sup>

30 Cf. Stern, *GLAJJ*, 1.330, citing *Scholia in Lucanum* 2.593: "And Judea given over to the worship of an unknown God. Livy on Jews: 'They do not state to which deity pertains the temple at Jerusalem (*Hierosolyma fanum cuius deorum sit non nominant*), nor is any image found there, since they do not think the God partakes of any figure.'" On the unnamed/unknown God of the Jews, see also Dio 37.15.2 (cf. Stern, *GLAJJ*, 2.349–53). See further P. W. van der Horst, "The Altar of the 'Unknown God' in Athens (Acts 17:23) and the Cult of 'Unknown Gods' in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods", *ANRW* II.18.2 (1989) 1426–56; Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 506.

31 Aphrodisias is a city in Caria in Asia Minor (modern Turkey).

32 R. R. R. Smith, "Simulacra Gentium: The *Ethne* from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias", *JRS* 78 (1988) 50–77; on the inscriptions of the bases, see further J. Reynolds, "New Evidence for the Imperial Cult in Julio-Claudian Aphrodisias", *ZPE* 43 (1981) 317–27; idem, "Further Information on the Imperial Cult at Aphrodisias", *Studii Clasice* 24 (1986) 101–17. For the record of each inscribed base in the *ethne* series at the Sebasteion of Aphrodisias (including description, text, letters, date, findspot, original location, last recorded location, history of discovery, bibliography, translation, commentary, and photographs), see the Inscriptions of Aphrodisias Project (InsAph), s.v. "Lists of Monuments: F (false 'base')": <<http://rae2007.cch.kcl.ac.uk/iaph/workspace/toc/monu/F.html>>. I am grateful to R. R. R. Smith for consultation on the *ethne* reliefs at Aphrodisias.

33 For purposes of the present discussion, it is interesting to note that there may have been a special relationship between emperor worship and the cult of Dionysus in Aphrodisias during the time the Sebasteion was being built. For example, an honorary inscription for Emperor Claudius found at Aphrodisias is dedicated by the demos and Menandros Diogenous, high priest of Claudius and Dionysus (ἀρχιερεὺς αὐτοῦ καὶ Διονύσου [MAMA 8, no. 447 = *CIG* 2739]), suggesting that Claudius shares a temple with Dionysus. Cf. A. D. Nock, "ΣΥΝΝΑΟΣ ΘΕΟΣ", *HSCP* 41 (1930) 1–62, on pp. 31, 43; Reynolds, "New Evidence for the Imperial Cult in Julio-Claudian Aphrodisias", 320. See already on Antiochus III sharing cultus with Dionysus in the latter's temple at Teos: P. Herrmann, "Antiochos der Grosse und Teos", *Anadolu* 9 (1965) 29–160, on pp. 35–36. Similarly, an honorary inscription of the second century CE found at Smyrna for an Asiarch by the *hiera synodos* of *technitai* (artists) and *mystai* (initiates) of Breiseus Dionysos refers to the honorand as "temple-warden of the *Sebastoi* [i.e., the Roman emperors] and *bakchos* of the god [i.e., Dionysus]" (*CIG* 3190; *IGRR* IV 1433; *SEG* XVII 517; *ISmyrna* 639; cf. V. Hirschmann, "Macht durch Integration? Aspekte einer gesellschaftlichen Wechselwirkung zwischen Verein und Stadt am Beispiel der Mysten und Techniten des Dionysos von Smyrna", in A. Gutsfeld/D.-A. Koch [ed.], *Vereine*,

Smith describes the place of the reliefs within the overall archaeological conception of the Sebasteion.<sup>34</sup>

Relief panels decorated the façades of the portico buildings along their entire [east-west] length. There was a relief in each intercolumniation of the upper two storeys, set between engaged half-columns—originally a total of 190 reliefs. [...] The iconography of the reliefs was clearly conceived together, with a broad, overriding programme that divided the subject matter into four distinct categories and registers. These correspond to the upper and lower storeys in each portico. The nature or extent of a detailed programme within each register is debatable, but a coherent, over-all, four-part plan is quite clear. The south portico had emperors and gods above, Greek mythology below. The north portico had allegories (and probably emperors) above, the series of *ethne* below.

Thus, like Pompey's theater-temple complex in Rome, which was also oriented along an east-west axis, the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias combines Roman victory iconography<sup>35</sup> and cultic symbolism.

Smith goes on to describe the *ethne* reliefs, personifications of originally up to fifty peoples and places portrayed as individual, standing, draped women, each differentiated by a number of (assumed or ascribed) national/racial characteristics (e.g., head type, hairstyle, headgear, clothing, and attributes). The sheer perfusion of so many outlandish peoples, some of them obscure or from remote places, created a visual impression of Rome's vast and varied empire, although that variety was also carefully regulated and measured to create an in-

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*Synagogen und Gemeinden im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien* [STAC 25; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2006] 41–59). On the relationship between the imperial cult and the cult of Dionysus in the Roman Empire, see A.-F. Jaccottet, "Das bakchische Fest und seine Verbreitung durch Kult, Literatur und Theater", in J. Rüpke (ed.), *Festrituale in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (STAC 48; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2008) 201–13, on pp. 208–9; L. Di Segni, "A Dated Inscription from Beth Shean and the Cult of Dionysos Ktistes in Roman Scythopolis", *SCI* 16 (1997) 139–61, on pp. 149–52; H. Bru/Ü. Demirer, "Dionysisme, culte impérial et vie civique à Antioche de Pisidie", *REA* 109 (2007) 27–49; H. W. Pleket, "An Aspect of the Emperor Cult: Imperial Mysteries", *HTR* 58 (1965) 331–47; A. Brent, "Ignatius of Antioch and the Imperial Cult", *VC* 52 (1998) 30–58; S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), xvii, 31, 37, 67 n. 34, 85 n. 34, 104 n. 17, 109 n. 58, 118, 224, 245, 250, 253, 257. On the relationship between Hellenistic ruler cults and the "Artisans of Dionysus" (i.e., large organizations, spread throughout the Mediterranean, of musicians, poets and those involved in various ways with dramatic performance), see J. Lightfoot, "Nothing to Do with the *Technitai* of Dionysus?", in P. Easterling/E. Hall (ed.), *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 209–24, on pp. 220–22.

34 Smith, "*Simulacra*", 51.

35 Cf. Smith, "*Simulacra*", 57, 58–59.