

The "Hellenisation" of the Nabataeans: A New Approach*

Although many studies are devoted to detailed analysis of special aspects of Nabataean art and history, for a long time no serious attempt has been undertaken to put the entire art and culture of the Nabataeans into a broader framework. P. J. Parr listed and commented the then available evidence for the beginnings of Nabataean culture in a paper for the Eighth International Congress of Classical Archaeology at Paris in 1963.¹ Since then excavations offered much more material allowing an analysis of the different trends that influenced Nabataean culture.²

The aim of this paper is to give a short overview on what is known about Nabataean material culture in its best understandable categories today and to look for whether there is any common line of development or even a model that could fit to most of these categories.³ It is clear that although the result will be in general terms a positive one, there are always exceptions from such mod-

els as they necessarily include much generalisation. Also, the author is fully aware that this cannot be more than a first proposal and that much further research on the single topics is required.

Looking for the beginning of Nabataean material culture one is struck in the first place by the fact that there seems to be almost no evidence that could be assigned to the Nabataeans before around 100 BC, although they are historically reported since 312 BC.⁴ Earlier, the theory of continuity between the Edomites and the Nabataeans was occasionally supported but recently has lost most of its attraction, mainly because there is no archaeological evidence as was shown by manifold survey activities.⁵ During the third and second century BC there are historical references on the Nabataeans showing that they have to be localised somewhere in Central and Southern Jordan,⁶ but again, no material remains of this presence exist. In cases where an archaeological context is reported for old-

* The author would like to thank B. Kolb (Basel) for discussing the manuscript and manifold suggestions.

¹ P. J. Parr, The Beginnings of Hellenisation at Petra, in: *Le rayonnement des civilisations grecque et romaine sur les cultures péripériphérique. Huitième Congrès International d'Archéologie Classique*. Paris 1965: 527-533. Although restricted to the then available evidence, P. J. Parr observes the same sudden input from Hellenistic prototypes in Nabataean culture around 100 BC as is reported in the present paper. More difficult is his dating to the fourth to second century BC for the earlier structures found within his excavations. Unless a detailed excavation report is available it seems better not to deal with them.

² A fruitful attempt to shed some light on the culture of the Nabataeans and to put it into a wider context has been undertaken by Wenning (1989); a concise overview is further given by K. Dijkstra, *Life and Loyalty. A Study in the Socio-Religious Culture of Syria and Mesopotamia in the Graeco-Roman Period Based on Epigraphical Evidence*. Leiden 1995: 34-80; quite inspiring although rather superficial is the chapter "arte nabatea" in: G. Garbini, *Aramaica, Studi semitici* 10. Rome 1993: 211-219; strongly tending towards an ideological interpretation of Nabataean culture and therefore to be considered with caution is J. Patrich, *The Formation of Nabatean Art. Prohibition of a Graven Image Among the Nabateans*. Jerusalem 1990; similar: T. N. D. Mettinger, *No Graven Image? Israelite Aniconism in Its Near Eastern Context*. Stockholm 1995: 57-68.

³ In general on the process of acculturation and hellenisation see the

volume by B. Funck (ed.), *Hellenismus. Beiträge zur Erforschung von Akkulturation und politischer Ordnung in den Staaten des hellenistischen Zeitalters*. Tübingen 1996; cf. further E. Will, *Guerre, acculturation et contre-acculturation dans le monde hellénistique*, *Polis* 1 (1988) 37-62.

⁴ Diod. 19, 94, 1; 95, 2ff.

⁵ In favour of a continuity: J. R. Bartlett, From the Edomites to the Nabataeans: A Study in Continuity, *PEQ* 111 (1979) 53-66; already more sceptical: *idem*, From Edomites to Nabataeans: The Problem of Continuity, in *Nabataeans* 1990: 25-35; see also P. Bienkowski, The Chronology of Tawilan and the "Dark Age" of Edom, in *Nabataeans* 1990: 35-44; on new surveys referring to the older ones by N. Glueck see G. L. Mattingly, Settlement on Jordan's Kerak Plateau from Iron Age IIC through the Early Roman Period, *ibid.* 309-335; S. Hart and R. Falkner, Preliminary Report on a Survey in Edom 1984, *ADAJ* 29 (1985) 255-277; S. Hart, Survey and Soundings between Tafileh and Ras en-Naqb 1985, *LA* 35 (1985) 412-414; *idem*, Some Preliminary Thoughts on Settlement in Southern Edom, *Levant* 18 (1986) 51-58; *idem*, Five Soundings in Southern Jordan, *Levant* 19 (1987) 33-47. On the origin of the Nabataeans see D. F. Graf, The Origin of the Nabataeans, in *Nabataeans* (1990) 45-75; E. A. Knauf, Die Herkunft der Nabatäer, in Lindner 1986: 74-86; J. T. Milik, Origines des Nabatéens, in A. Hadidi (ed.), *SHAJ* I. Amman 1982: 261-265.

⁶ Diod. 3, 42, 5; 3, 43, 4f.; 2. Makk. 5, 8; 1. Makk. 5, 25; 9, 35; Jos. Ant. 12, 8, 3.

er finds, mostly stamped amphora handles, it is clear that these are intrusive.⁷ It is but in the very late second or early first century BC that a sudden development in this field started that shall be examined in the following.⁸

The easiest evidence may be collected from the coins because there is usually little doubt about their date and ethnic belongings.⁹ The earliest, anonymous mints are attributed to Aretas II (reg. 120/10-96 BC)¹⁰ or Aretas III (reg. 87/84-62 BC),¹¹ with recent finds supporting the earlier dating.¹² The earliest attributable coins—clearly modelled on Hellenistic prototypes—were minted by Aretas III from 84 BC onwards first in Damascus, but probably quite soon afterwards (after 72 BC?) in Petra.¹³ Not only the style of the first Nabataean coins is purely Hellenistic but also their Greek inscriptions. In the following development the inscriptions are changed into Aramaic while the style of the coins, especially the portraits of the Nabataean kings follow some general fashions. For instance the coins of Aretas IV (9 BC - AD 40) show the king's head in a style similar to contemporary Roman coins, although he wears the traditional Nabataean haircut with long curls in the neck.¹⁴ A further sign of a certain Romanisation in Nabataean coin minting may be shown

by the fact that from the year 14/13 BC on coins of Obodas III and later from Aretas IV show the king crowned by a (laurel?) wreath, while earlier on all the Nabataean kings were shown exclusively diademed according to the habits of Hellenistic kings. Obodas III minted for the last five years of his reign coins with both types of portraits,¹⁵ as did Aretas IV for the first four years of his reign,¹⁶ but after 5 BC Nabataean kings are exclusively shown with the wreath on their coins. The further stylistic development leads to the somewhat "wooden" portraits of Rabbel II showing a continuing dissolution of the naturalistic design in favour of a stronger ornamentalisation. As a matter of fact, this seems to be a characteristic that is seen within several peripheral cultures of the wider Mediterranean area. The same evolution from naturalistic to ornamental may be traced within South and East Arabian coins imitating Athenian and other Greek prototypes,¹⁷ or within Celtic coins imitating prototypes of Philipp II of Macedonia and others.¹⁸ But also the culture of the Scythes and other peoples from the Black Sea area show a similar dealing with once naturalistic prototypes, mainly from the Greek world.¹⁹

If we compare the picture obtained from Nabataean

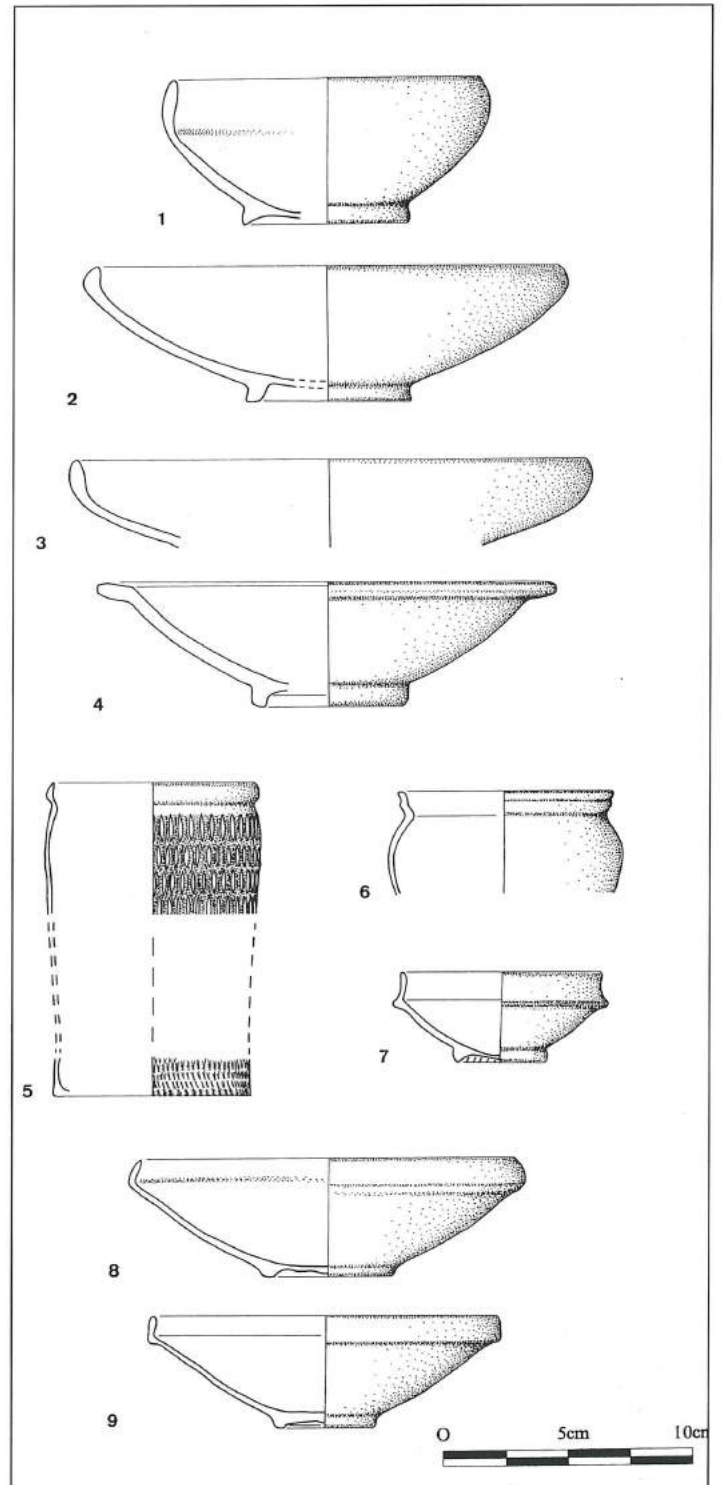
- ⁷ C. Schneider, Die Importkeramik, in *Ez Zantur I*, 130-132, 141f.
⁸ Some of the reflections on the early material culture of the Nabataeans have been presented in a paper devoted to the process of the sedentarisation of the Nabataeans: Schmid, forthcoming a.
⁹ On the coinage of the Nabataeans see K. Schmitt-Korte, in Weber and Wenning 1997: 101-104; *idem*, in Lindner and Zeitler s. a.: 135-148; Weiser and Cotton 1996: 268ff.; K. Schmitt-Korte and M. Price, Nabataean Coinage - Part III. The Nabataean Monetary System, *NumChron* 154 (1994) 67-131; M. Peter, in *Petra und die Weihrauchstrasse. Cat. of an exhibition, Zurich/Basel*, Zurich 1993: 18ff.; Schmitt-Korte 1990; K. Schmitt-Korte and M. Cowell, Nabataean Coinage - Part I. The Silver Content Measured by X-Ray Fluorescence Analysis, *NumChron* 149 (1989) 33-58; Meshorer 1975.
¹⁰ M. Peter, in *Ez Zantur I*, 91ff. with note 413 cat. no. 1 and 2; J. M. C. Bowsher, Early Nabataean Coinage, in *Nabataeans* 1990: 221-228; Meshorer 1975: 9ff. 85f. pl. 1 cat. nos. 1-4. sup. 1.
¹¹ Schmitt-Korte 1990: 125f.
¹² Weiser and Cotton 1996: 268 with note 240; A. Kushnir-Stein - H. Gitler, Numismatic Evidence from Tel Beer-Sheva and the Beginning of Nabataean Coinage, *IsrNumJ* 12 (1992-93) 13-20.
¹³ Meshorer 1975: 12ff. 86f. pl. 1 cat. no. 5-8. Schmitt-Korte and Price (above note 9) 95f. C. Augé, Sur la figure de Tyché en Nabatène et dans la province d'Arabie, in F. Zayadine (ed.), *Petra and the Caravan Cities*. Amman 1990: 131f. On the uncertainties about the beginning of the mint in Petra cf. K. Schmitt-Korte, in Weber and Wenning 1997: 101f. with fig. 105.
¹⁴ Good pictures by J. M. C. Toynbee, *Roman Historical Portraits*. London 1978: 155 fig. 307, 308.
¹⁵ Wreath: Meshorer 1975: 92 nos. 33, 35, 37, 39; no. 37 is interpreted by Meshorer as diademed but as Schmitt-Korte 1990: 110 nos. 21, 22 shows wears a wreath; diademed: Meshorer 1975: 92 nos. 32, 34, 36, 38; Schmitt-Korte 1990: 111 no. 24.
¹⁶ Diademed: Meshorer 1975: 94-96 nos. 46, 47, 47A, 50, 52, 55; Schmitt-Korte 1990: 116f. nos. 52-54; wreath: Meshorer 1975: nos. 48-49A.
¹⁷ M. Huth, The "Folded-Flan" Coinage of Eastern Arabia: Some Preliminary Comments, *ArabAEpig* 9 (1998) 273-277; E. Haerincq, More Pre-Islamic Coins from Southeastern Arabia, *ibid.* 278-301; S. C. Munro-Hay, Coins of Ancient South Arabia, *NumChron* 154 (1994) 191-203 especially 192, 198-200; *idem*, Coins

- of Ancient South Arabia, II, *NumChron* 156 (1996) 33-47, *idem*, The Coinage of Shabwa (Hadramawt) and other Ancient South Arabian Coinage in the National Museum, Aden, *Syria* 68 (1991) 393-418; C. Arnold-Biucchi, Arabian Alexanders, in W. E. Metcalf (ed.), *Mnemata: Papers in Memory of Nancy M. Waggoner*. New York 1991: 99-115; P. Naster, Remarques au sujet des imitations des monnaies d'Athènes dans la Presqu'île arabique, in P. Naster, *Scripta Nummaria. Contributions à la méthodologique numismatique*. Louvain-La-Neuve 1983: 141-146; in general terms see D. T. Potts, *The Pre-Islamic Coinage of Eastern Arabia*. Copenhagen 1991.
¹⁸ D. Keller, Gedanken zur Datierung und Verwendung der Stater Philipp II. und ihrer keltischen Imitationen, *SchwNumRu* 75 (1996) 101-119; A. Sasiyanou, Copies and Imitations of Thasian Tetradrachms, in *Proceedings of the XIth International Numismatic Congress I*. Louvain-La-Neuve 1993: 123-131.
¹⁹ In general on Scythian and related art see E. Jacobson, *The Art of the Scythians. The Interpretation of Cultures at the Edge of the Hellenic World*, *Handbuch der Orientalistik* 8, 2. Leiden 1995; V. Schiltz, *Die Skythen und andere Steppenvölker. 8. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis 1. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* Munich 1994; P. Zazoff, Bildchiffren der skytho-thrakischen Kunst, *HamBeitrA* 18, 1991 (1996) 167-180. The tendency towards ornamentalisation can be seen in an exemplary way within the so-called "Rolltiere". Earlier it was believed that the Scythians arrived in the Black Sea area without a material culture at their own and started taking over and further developing foreign prototypes; cf. R. A. Stucky, Achämenidische Ortbänder, *AA* (1976) 13-23 especially 20f. with the older references. As good this theory would have fit for a parallel to what can be observed in Nabataean culture, it seems now that the Scythians already had a culture of their own and the taking over of naturalistic (Greek) prototypes and their change towards ornamentalisation was just one aspect within it; see B. Brentjes, Ortband, Rolltier und Vielfrass. Beobachtungen zur "skythischen" Akinakes Zier, *AMI* 27 (1994) 147-164 especially 159ff.; on the manifold and complex aspects of the Scythian culture see also K. V. Cugunov, Der skythenzeitliche Kulturwandel in Tuva, *EurAnt* 4 (1998) 273-309 especially 303-305; cf. on similar evolution and contacts within Celtic and Scythian art: M. Guggisberg, «Zoomorphe Junktur» und «Inversion». Zum Einfluss des skythischen Tierstils auf die frühe keltische Kunst, *Germania* 76 (1998) 549-572.

coins with what we know about their pottery, there are some striking parallels. Again, there is no pottery that could be dated before the late second or early first century BC.²⁰ The first fine ware pottery follows in shapes and the often occurring reddish or brownish slip truly the late Hellenistic pottery of the Near East (FIG. 1: 1-4).²¹ In fact, if this pottery were not known to be found in Nabataean territory, the shape and surface treatment would not distinguish it from any other pottery of the Hellenised East.²² After this sudden initiation of Nabataean pottery a development leading to a distinguished own Nabataean style started, however, external influences are not uncommon. These can be observed in fine ware pottery in the late first century BC when some characteristic prototypes from the Roman thin-walled and sigillata pottery are adopted, but only for a very short time (FIG. 1: 5-7).²³ The main shapes, i.e. mostly open drinking bowls and plates probably used for eating, of the second half of the first century BC and the beginning of the first century AD are in most cases developed versions of the initial vessels of the earlier phases (FIG. 1: 8, 9).

In the second half of the first century AD a remarkable change in the decorative patterns of painted pottery can be observed. So far the Nabataean potters and painters did prefer different small elements covering the entire vessel, such as quite realistic ivy and other leaves. Now they use few but big motifs offering much free space between them. Also, with the exception of the pomegranate, the floral elements lose much of their realism becoming all the more abstract (FIG. 2: 1). The beginning of this new style falls almost exactly together with the accession to the throne by Rabbel II, and can be dated to around AD 70/80.²⁴

The same phenomena as seen in fine ware pottery occurs in the field of pottery lamps. Again, no lamps dating before the very late second century BC are known from any stratified Nabataean context. The earliest lamps are either imports or more or less accurate imitations of common late Hellenistic types.²⁵ Following the general evolution in the Mediterranean area, lamps from the later first century BC and the beginning of the first century AD found at Nabataean sites are either Roman imports or imitate Roman prototypes.²⁶ It is but towards the second quarter and to a greater extent in the second half of the first century AD that a characteristic Nabataean lamp type—the so-called Negev 1 type—makes its appear-



1. 1-9: Petra, az-Zanṭūr. Nabataean fine ware pottery. Drawings by the author.

²⁰ On Nabataean fine ware pottery see S. G. Schmid, *Die Feinkeramik*, in *Ez Zantur I*, 151-218; *idem*, in Weber and Wenning 1997: 131-137, both with further references.

²¹ On this phenomenon see also Schmid 1996: 130 with note 17; L. Hannestad, *The Hellenistic Pottery from Failaka, Ikaros. The Hellenistic Settlements 2*. Copenhagen 1983: 83-120, both with further references.

²² The only distinguished characteristic is the rarely occurring simple

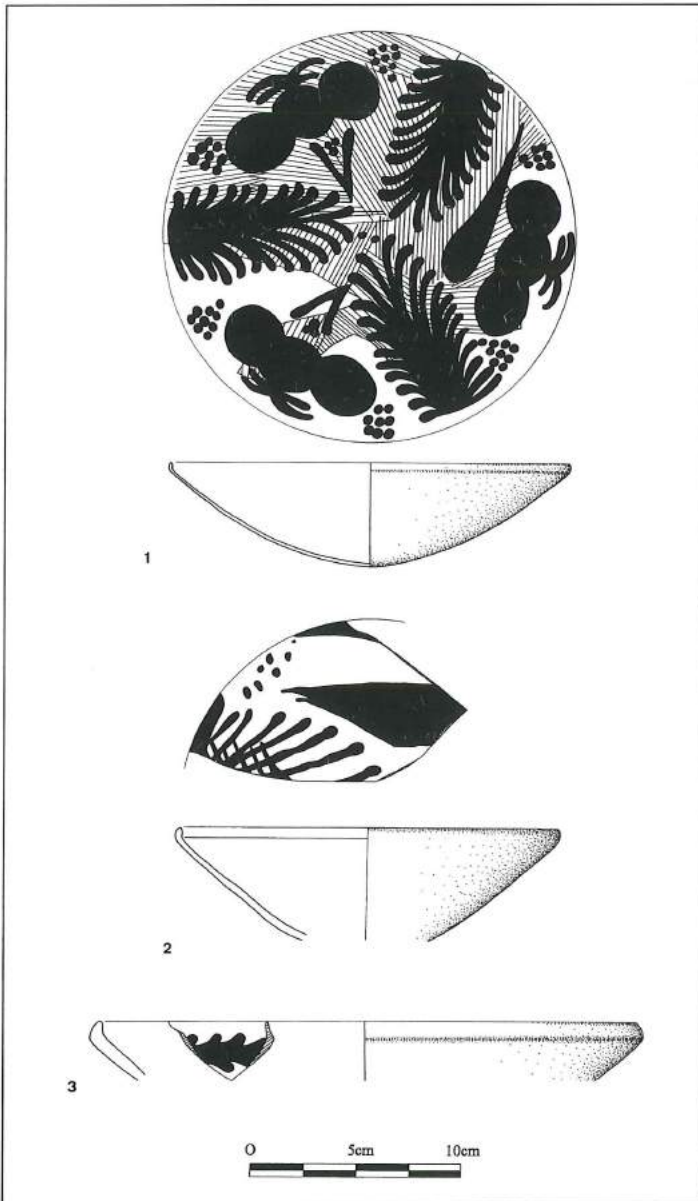
painting. For a possible explanation of this see Schmid 1996: 130 with notes 18-22; cf. Schmid 2000: chap. VIII. 4.; XI. 1.; XIII. 1.

²³ Schmid 1996: 132f.

²⁴ On Nabataean pottery from the later first and the early second century AD and its historical context see Schmid 1997.

²⁵ I. Zanoni, *Tonlampen*, in *Ez Zantur I*, 311-313 nos. 1. 2.

²⁶ Zanoni (above note 25) 316-319 nos. 10-13.



2. 1-3: Petra, az-Zanṭūr. Nabataean painted pottery. Drawings by the author.

ance.²⁷

Somewhat more difficult—at least at a first look—is the picture in the field of one of the most eye-catching

²⁷ Zanoni (above note 25) 314-16 nrs. 7-9. Interestingly, the Negev 1 type, too, seems to have close fore-runners in Hellenistic types, mainly from Alexandria: J. Mlynarczyk, *Terracotta Mould-Made Lamps in Alexandria (Hellenistic to Late Roman Period)*, in J.-Y. Empereur (ed.), *Commerce et Artisanat dans l'Alexandrie hellénistique et romaine*, *BCH Suppl.* 33. Paris 1998: 338f. 341 fig. 12a. b.

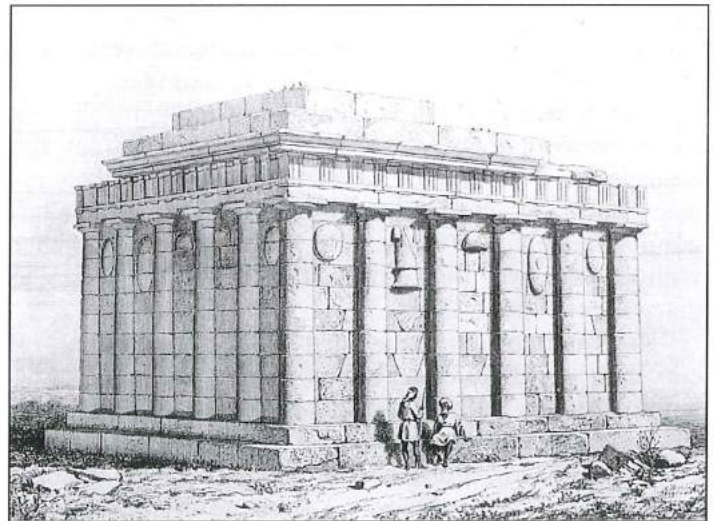
²⁸ Schmid, forthcoming b with the abundant bibliography dealing with these monuments; see Schmidt-Colinet 1981 and McKenzie 1990 for detailed analysis; cf. further J. S. McKenzie, *Alexandria and the Origins of Baroque Architecture*, in *Alexandria and Alexandrianism. Papers Delivered at a Symposium Organized by the J. Paul Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities and Held at the Museum April 22-25, 1993*. Malibu 1996: 109-125 especially 116-118; S. Gagsteiger, in Lindner and Zeitler s.a.: 49-62.

²⁹ On the Hegra tombs see McKenzie 1990: 11-31; A. Schmidt-

features of Nabataean culture, the monumental tomb façades. Although it has been shown on several occasions that there is no need to date such spectacular monuments representing more Western oriented Hellenistic influence, like al-Khazna, in the late first or even second century AD but rather to the later first century BC,²⁸ the fact that there existed at least as early already the more traditional and simpler monuments seems to speak against the general picture drawn in this paper so far.

Indeed, at Hegra the earliest inscription dates one of these monuments that are usually said to represent a more traditional Arabic style in the year AD 1.²⁹ In Petra it is the chronological sequence of the theatre that gives an indication for dating some of these monuments. As the theatre was built most probably in the first century AD and as the installation of its cavea destroyed several of these simpler tombs, these had to be cut into the rock before the construction of the theatre.³⁰

However, while discussing the Nabataean tomb façades one of the earliest monuments usually is not considered at all: the now destroyed tomb of Hamrath at Suwayda (FIG. 3).³¹ After all we know this rectangular



3. Suwayda, Tomb of Hamrath. After M. de Vogüé, *Syrie Centrale: architecture civile et religieuse, du Ier au VIIIe siècle*. Paris 1865-1877: pl. I.

Colinet, *The Mason's Workshop of Hegra, its Relation to Petra, and the Tomb of Syllaios*, in: *SHAJ* II. Amman 1987: 143-150; *idem*, *A Nabataean Family of Sculptors at Hegra*, *Berytus* 31 (1983) 95-102; J.-C. Balty, *Architecture et société à Pétra et Hégra. Chronologie et classes sociales; sculpteurs et commanditaires*, in: *Architecture et société. De l'archaïsme grec à la fin de la république romaine, Actes du Colloque international organisé par le Centre national de la recherche scientifique et l'Ecole française de Rome (Rome 2-4 décembre 1980)*. Paris 1983: 303-324.

³⁰ On the dating of the theatre see McKenzie 1990: 35, 143f. The excavator dates the theatre in the reign of Aretas IV (9 BC - AD 40): P. C. Hammond, *The Excavation of the Main Theater at Petra, 1961-1962. Final Report*. London 1965: 55-65.

³¹ R. E. Brünnow and A. von Domaszewski, *Die Provincia Arabia* 3. Strassburg 1909: 98-101; Fedak 1990: 86f., 148-150.

monument divided by semicolumns and adorned by weapon reliefs should be dated to the early first century BC and it may very well be that such monuments could consist the missing link to the Hellenistic world in Nabataean sepulchral architecture. For instance, on the island of Rhodes several monuments show similar characteristics.³² The same rectangular construction on a stepped base, subdivided by semicolumns is provided by the so called Ptolemaion in the Rhodini park (FIG. 4).³³ As the most probable reconstruction of its upper part is a stepped pyramid it becomes clear that the "Ptolemaion"



4. Rhodes, Rhodini park. Funeral monument called "Ptolemaion". Photo by the author.

stands in the tradition of such monuments as the Mausoleum at Halikarnassos.³⁴ This may be the way to explain the tomb of Hamrath and other similar constructions, too. They represent a mixture between traditional funeral architectural elements and a strong Greek influence.³⁵ Another funeral monument from Rhodes even shows further parallels to the tomb of Hamrath as it was originally decorated with weapon reliefs very similar to the ones from Suwayda.³⁶

Several other monuments from Petra, although not as spectacular as the huge main façades and therefore not as often considered, belong to the same category of eclectic monuments as had been pointed out by Fawzi Zayadine.³⁷ Recent investigations in Jarash showed that such free standing monuments—in this case a two storied round monument in shape of a tholos, quite similar to the upper part of al-Khazne, the Corinthian Tomb and ad-Dayr—existed elsewhere in Jordan too.³⁸

As far as the more complicated façades of al-Khazna and others are considered, it has been shown that they reflect quite accurately the very rich built architecture of their times, i.e. the late Hellenistic years in the case of al-Khazna or the years around AD 100 in the case of ad-Dayr.³⁹ Therefore, al-Khazna reflects the palace architecture of the Hellenistic age, as do the rich private houses of Delos, represented here by the "House of the Hermes" (FIG. 5).⁴⁰ Such characteristic features as the two (or more) storied peristyles of Hellenistic palace architecture are not only copied in the houses of the living but also in the last resting places of the dead as may be shown with examples from the Mustapha Pasha necropolis at Alex-

³² In general on Rhodian funerary monuments see P. M. Fraser, *Rhodian Funerary Monuments*. Oxford 1977, mostly dealing with smaller monuments; B. D. Mette, *Skulptur und Landschaft. Mythologische Skulpturengruppen in griechischer und römischer Aufstellung*. Doctoral thesis, Univ. of Cologne 1992: 6-60; H. Lauter, *Hellenistische Sepulkralarchitektur auf Rhodos*, in S. Dietz and I. Papachristodoulou (eds.), *Archaeology in the Dodecanese*. Copenhagen 1988: 155-163; *idem*, *Kunst und Landschaft - ein Beitrag zum rhodischen Hellenismus*, *AntK* 15 (1972) 49-59; Fedak 1990: especially 83-87.

³³ Lauter 1988 (above note 32) 155f.; A. Konstantinopoulos, *Αρχαία Ρόδος. Επισκόπηση της ιστορίας και της τέχνης*. Athens 1986: 229-231; Lauter 1972 (above note 32) 55f.; Fedak 1990: 85-87; on the Rhodian "parks" with their grottoes and triclinia see also E. E. Rice, *Grottoes on the Acropolis of Hellenistic Rhodes*, *BSA* 90 (1995) 383-404.

³⁴ The bibliography on the Mausoleum is legion; a good insight may be found with K. Jeppesen, *Das Mausoleion von Halikarnass*, *Forschungsbericht 1997, Proceedings of the Danish Institute at Athens 2*. Aarhus 1998: 161-231, as well as with the articles by P. Higgs, I. Jenkins *et al.*, K. Jeppesen, S. Walker, K. J. Matthews and G. B. Waywell, in I. Jenkins and G. B. Waywell (eds.), *Sculptors and Sculpture of Caria and the Dodecanese*. London 1997; see also Fedak 1990: 71-74.

³⁵ Lauter 1988 (above note 32) 156; H. Lauter, *Die Architektur des Hellenismus*. Darmstadt 1986: 214; Fedak 1990: 86f. H. Lauter quotes parallels from Cyrene. This would of course fit well the often discussed Alexandrian influence in Nabataean tomb archi-

ecture.

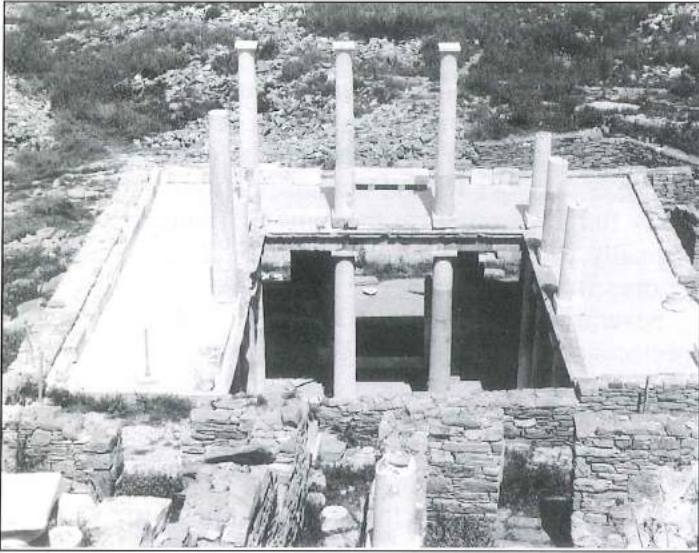
³⁶ Lauter 1988 (above note 32) 157 fig. 1; G. Konstantinopoulos, *Νέα ευρηματα εκ Ροδου και Αστυπάλαιας*, *AAA* 6 (1973) 116 fig. 3.

³⁷ F. Zayadine, *Ein Turmgrab in Bab es-Siq*, in Lindner 1986: 217-221 with references to similar tombs around Jerusalem. On similar monuments from Numidia, like the Nabataean funeral architecture contesting the peripheral eclecticism between local tradition and Hellenistic influence, see F. Coarelli and Y. Thébert, *Architecture funéraire et pouvoir: réflexions sur l'hellénisme numide*, *MEFRA* 100 (1988) 761-819; F. Rakob, *Numidische Königsarchitektur in Nordafrika*, in: H. G. Horn and C. B. Rüger (eds.), *Die Numider. Reiter und Könige nördlich der Sahara*. Cologne/Bonn 1979: 119-171; *idem*, *Architecture royale numide*, in: *Architecture et société* (above note 29) 325-348 and in a broader frame G. Camps, *Modèle hellénistique ou modèle punique? Les destinées culturelles de la Numidie*, in *Actes du IIIe Congrès international des études phéniciennes et puniques, Tunis 11-16 novembre 1991*. Tunis 1995: 235-248.

³⁸ J. Seigne and T. Morin, *Preliminary Report on a Mausoleum at the Turn of the BC/AD Century at Jarash*, *ADAJ* 29 (1995) 175-191.

³⁹ Schmid, forthcoming b; McKenzie 1990: 119f.

⁴⁰ On the Hellenistic houses of Delos see now M. Trümper, *Wohnen in Delos. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Wandel der Wohnkultur in hellenistischer Zeit*. Rahden 1998; on the "House of the Hermes" *ibid.* 234-241 cat. no. 35; M. Kreeb, *Untersuchungen zur figürlichen Ausstattung delischer Privathäuser*. Chicago 1988: 36-40, 200-215 cat.nr 24; both with the references to the excavations reports.



5. Delos, house of the Hermes. Photo by the author.



6. Alexandria, Mustapha Pasha necropolis. Photo by the author.

andria (FIG. 6) or from Nea Paphos on Cyprus.⁴¹

It is interesting to see that quite a few of the Nabataean tombs containing Western elements show a strong tendency to evoke a third dimension, i.e. at least the illusion of a peristyle courtyard, one of the most typical features of Hellenistic houses and palaces. Al-Khazna has a kind of a small courtyard incorporated in its ground floor and evokes a peristyle in its upper storey,⁴² the Urn Tomb shows additional colonnaded *stoai* at its sides,⁴³ while the so-called Roman Soldier Tomb together with the opposite Triclinium 235 and built structures between them formed an entire complex (FIG. 7:1),⁴⁴ readily comparable to the most spectacular Hellenistic palace architectures known, as for instance the Palazzo delle Colonne (FIG. 7:2), the description of Ptolemy IV's *thalamegos*,

or some of the Judaeian palaces (FIG. 7:4), all of them large scale interpretations of Vitruvius' description of the Greek house (FIG. 7:3).⁴⁵ Not only do such richly decorated tombs offer comparable structures, but also "traditional" monuments (however, still with pediments) too, as does the Tomb 813.⁴⁶ Most probably, many more tombs would turn out as containing three dimensional features if they would not have been eroded or covered by sand and earth. We therefore see that much of the former enigmatic Nabataean funeral architecture in fact follows quite well the common shapes and forms of the Hellenised and Romanised Near East. With the reference to the extension, either in reality or evoking it in relief, towards a third dimension in the form of courtyards, *stoai* and peristyles we obtain a new criterion for a classification of the Nabataean

⁴¹ Mustapha Pascha: A. Adriani, *Repertorio d'arte dell'Egitto greco-romano*. Serie C I. Palermo 1966; II. Palermo 1963: 107ff., especially 128ff. pl. 48ff.; McKenzie 1990: 64f.; Nea Paphos: J. Mlynarczyk, *Nea Paphos in the Hellenistic Period, Nea Paphos 3*. Warsaw 1990: 87-94, 223-232; *eadem*, *Palaces of Strategoi and the Ptolemies in Nea Paphos. Topographical Remarks*, in: W. Hoepfner and G. Brands (eds.), *Basileia. Die Paläste der hellenistischen Könige. Internationales Symposium in Berlin vom 16.12.1992 bis 20.12.1992*. Mainz 1996: 193-202 especially 200ff. points out the close familiarity between such peristyle tombs and the dwellings of the rich and wealthy. On the island of Rhodes there are, beside the above mentioned free standing monuments, quite similar *hypogaea* as the ones from Alexandria and Nea Paphos: Konstantinopoulos (above note 33) 226f. fig. 253.

⁴² McKenzie 1990: pl. 79-81.

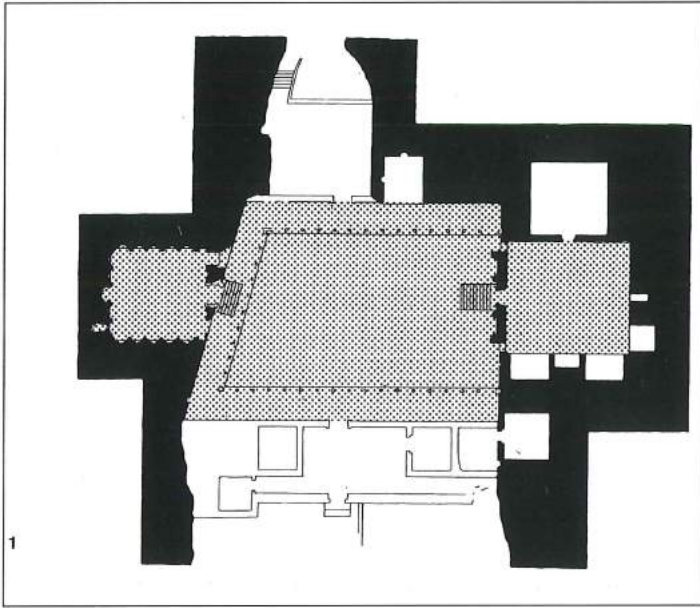
⁴³ McKenzie 1990: pl. 91, 93.

⁴⁴ McKenzie 1990: pl. 98, 100, 103, 104. The entire complex of the Roman soldier tomb and the triclinium 235 has not yet obtained the attention it would deserve, although already W. Bachmann, C. Watzinger and T. Wiegand, *Petra. Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen deutsch-türkischer Denkmalschutzkommandos 3*. Berlin/Leipzig 1921: 75-94 pointed out its importance; cf. further Schmidt-Colinet 1981: 77-82; Gagsteiger (above note 28) 59ff. Already with an extensive cleaning or a small scale excavation be-

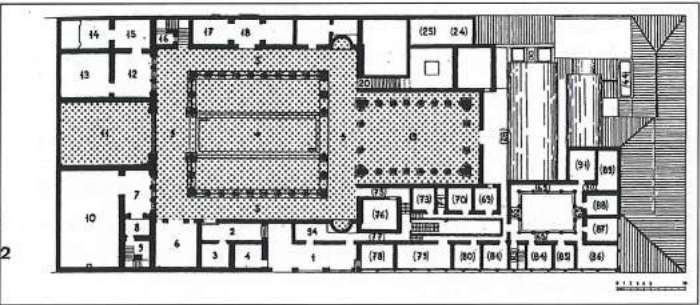
tween these two structures much additional information could be gained.

⁴⁵ See Schmid, forthcoming b with further references on the quoted monuments; cf. further Nielsen 1994: 136ff. (*Thalamegos*); 146ff. 284ff. cat. 22 (*Palazzo delle Colonne*); 193ff. 297f. cat. 28 (*Herod's first winter palace*). The connection between al-Khazna and Hellenistic palace architecture has been underlined by R. A. Stucky, *Hellenistisches Syrien*, in *Akten des XIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Klassische Archäologie, Berlin 1988*. Mainz 1990: 26. On the connection between Vitruvius' description and reality as well as palace architecture see C. Zoppi, *L'architettura abitativa in età ellenistica. Il modello vitruviano e i documenti superstiti*, *Rend-Nap 63* (1991-92) 157-198; J. Raeder, *Vitruv, de architectura VI 7 (aedificia Graecorum) und die hellenistische Wohnhaus- und Palastarchitektur*, *Gymnasium 95* (1988) 316-368; K. Reber, *Aedificia graecorum. Zu Vitruvs Beschreibung des griechischen Hauses*, *AA* (1988) 653-666. On the palaces of the Hasmonaeans and of Herod see now E. Netzer, *Die Paläste der Hasmonäer und Herodes' des Grossen*, *AW Sonderh.* Mainz 1999.

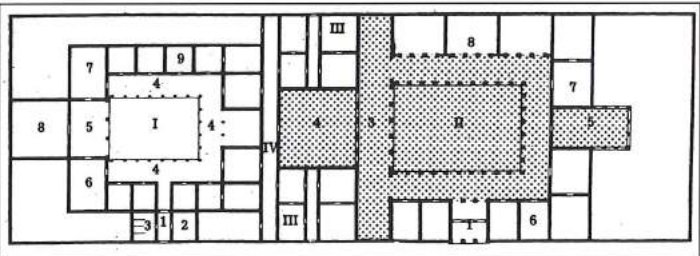
⁴⁶ McKenzie 1990: pl. 163f.; F. Zayadine, *Excavations at Petra (1973-1974)*, *ADAJ 19* (1974) 142-150; *idem*, *Ein aristokratisches Grab*, in Lindner 1986: 229-237; C. Bockisch, in Lindner and Zeitler s.a.: 89-97.



7. 1: Petra, Roman Soldier Somb and Triclinium 235. After Schmidt-Colinet 1981: 78, fig. 19.

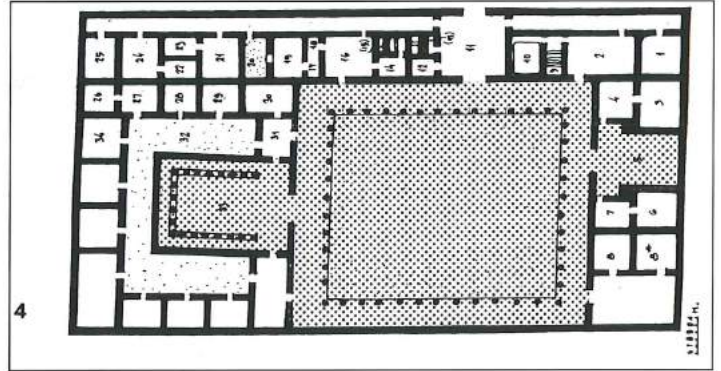


7. 2: Ptolemais, Palazzo delle Colonne. After Nielsen 1994: 147, fig. 78.



7. 3: Reconstruction of Vitruvius' description of the Greek house. After Nielsen 1994: 139, fig. 72.

tombs, because these features clearly reflect the above mentioned tendencies in Hellenistic palaces, houses and funeral monuments.⁴⁷



7. 4: Jericho, Herod's first winter palace. After Nielsen 1994: 196, fig. 105.

We may preliminarily conclude from this that the situation of Nabataean tomb façades at Petra and their cultural backgrounds is much more puzzling than it seems at a first look. Beside the traditional separation in one storied and two or more storied monuments, or in rather western and rather oriental creations, it becomes obvious that within all of these categories different evolutions and therefore subdivisions take place, like the one pointed out above. It can be shown then, that again the earlier monuments, both in their simpler form like the tomb of Hamrath and in more elaborated versions like al-Khazna, clearly take over tendencies very common in the Hellenised Near East of the first century BC. These are worked on as may be reflected in the Urn Tomb, the Corinthian Tomb, the Roman Soldier Complex or Tomb 813 within the first century AD. On the other hand, later monuments like ad-Dayr clearly show stronger Roman influence, for instance the supplementary external row of columns in the upper storey.⁴⁸

According to the inscriptions from Hegra, the simpler and more oriental façades were in use all over the first century AD. As for Petra there is another argument pointing towards an earlier date for the highly elaborated façades showing stronger western influence and a comparably later date for the simpler, stronger oriental tombs. Logically the rich upper class of Petra would have tried to occupy topographically dominating places for their tombs. The best possibility to place such façades is undoubtedly the al-Khubtha northern slope where the so-called "Royal Tombs" are located, i.e. the Corinthian Tomb, the Urn Tomb and the Palace tomb, all clearly showing elements of elaborated Hellenistic architecture. Most of the orien-

⁴⁷ For the Urn Tomb this had already been observed by Schmidt-Colinet (above note 29, *SHAJ* II) 143-150 especially 149f.; cf. in a wider range on the same subject *idem*, *Exedra duplex. Überlegungen zum Augustusforum*, *HefteABern* 14 (1991) 43-60. As interesting A. Schmidt-Colinet's hypothesis about the Urn Tomb being the grave of Aretas IV imitating the forum of Augustus at Rome is, however, there is hardly any further evidence supporting it, because the Urn Tomb too can be explained as variation of a Hellenistic peristyle house/palace.

⁴⁸ This additional row of columns, not yet occurring on al-Khazna and the Corinthian Tomb for instance, is a characteristic element of Roman architecture from the late first century onwards. See for example the library of Celsus at Ephesos or the market gate at Milet: V. M. Strocka, *Wechselwirkungen der stadtrömischen und kleinasiatischen Architektur unter Trajan und Hadrian*, *IstMitt* 38 (1988) 294ff. with notes 10 and 16 for further bibliography and S. Schorndorfer, *Öffentliche Bauten hadrianischer Zeit in Kleinasien. Archäologisch-historische Untersuchungen*. Münster 1997: *passim*.

talising tomb façades are located in the different wadis leading away from the city's centre and one is tempted to say that they were installed with the continuing growing of the city and therefore not only according to a social order but rather to a relative chronological sequence.⁴⁹

Although not always related to a precise dating, similar observations can be made on Nabataean sculpture and reliefs too. Their is a group showing distinctly Hellenistic and Roman characteristics, like the figural decoration of al-Khazna or three series of reliefs, representing weapons, busts and erotes respectively.⁵⁰ The sculptural decoration of al-Khazna would of course be subject to the same chronological classification as is the entire monument, i.e. in the second half of the first century BC. Further, Fawzi Zayadine and others showed on several occasions that most of the figures represented there clearly belong to the Hellenistic iconography.⁵¹ The relief blocks with the above mentioned weapons, busts and erotes were all found in the neighbourhood of Qaşr al-Bint or the entrance gate to its temenos. Although not without dispute, it seems now probable that they belong to the reign of Aretas IV, i.e. the very late first century BC or the beginning of the first century AD.

If we compare these sculptures and reliefs to the sculptural finds from Khirbat at-Tannūr we see obvious stylistic differences.⁵² Their clearly less naturalistic and somewhat wooden faces and dresses reminded Nelson Glueck of Palmyrene and Parthian sculpture.⁵³ Furthermore, at Khirbat at-Tannūr several construction phases were observed although their chronological date was

not easy to establish. For the time being, we may restrict ourselves to only a few remarks. Only a few reliefs like the so-called Atargatis panel and a bust of Helios could be attributed to an earlier phase, called phase II at Khirbat at-Tannūr. Although close to the above mentioned sculptures from Petra they already show some stylistic differences. Nelson Glueck dated this phase in the years of Aretas IV and therefore contemporaneous to the above referred reliefs from Petra. If this is correct, we would witness a kind of provincial style in order to explain the stylistic differences to Petra. More interesting are the reliefs from phase III at Khirbat at-Tannūr, including the famous dolphin and grain goddesses showing clearly stronger stylistic differences with the reliefs from Petra. N. Glueck suggested a dating in the early second century AD without giving sure evidence.⁵⁴ It shall further be mentioned that all the pottery illustrated in N. Glueck's reports on Khirbat at-Tannūr and thought to be evidence for dating belongs to our phase 3c and would therefore confirm a date in the early second century AD.⁵⁵

Rather close in style to the later sculptures from Khirbat at-Tannūr is another series of relief blocks that was found in Petra in the destruction debris of the above mentioned temenos gate.⁵⁶ With their somewhat stiffly carved features they are not only related to the later pieces from Khirbat at-Tannūr but also clearly different from the earlier series from the same area. As this later phase of the temenos gate has a most probable *terminus post quem* of AD 76, this would lead to a fine confirmation of the observations made so far.⁵⁷

⁴⁹ As K. S. Freyberger, *Zur Datierung des Grabmals des Sextus Florentinus*, *DaM* 5 (1991) 1-8 has pointed out, there is good evidence to date this monument earlier than the usually adopted *terminus ad quem* of AD 129 (on this see McKenzie [1990] 33, 47, 165). However, if Freyberger's proposition of a Augustean date is correct, then we would have to suppose that the al-Khubta northern slope was already occupied at that time what seems rather improbable. The miniature architecture of the so-called Tomb of Sextus Florentinus shows strong similarities with the Palace Tomb, the Corinthian Tomb and the so-called Bāb as-Siq Triclinium. I therefore would like to propose a analogue date for all these monuments that should be oriented at the probably date of the Bāb as-Siq Triclinium (McKenzie 1990: 34 with notes 15-18 for the somewhat puzzling evidence) and therefore around the third quarter of the first century AD.

⁵⁰ McKenzie 1990: 134f. pls. 60-66 with the older references; Lyttelton and Blagg 1990: especially 95-100; for further finds see M.-J. Roche, *Bustes fragmentaires trouvés à Pétra*, *Syria* 67 (1990) 377-395. On the blocks with busts and weapons see also I. Kader, *Propylon und Bogentor. Untersuchungen zum Tetrapylon von Latakia und anderen frühkaiserzeitlichen Bogenmonumenten im Nahen Osten*, Mainz 1996: 132-136; K. S. Freyberger, *Die frühkaiserzeitlichen Heiligtümer der Karawanenstationen im hellenisierten Osten. Zeugnisse eines kulturellen Konflikts im Spannungsfeld zweier politischer Formationen*, Mainz 1998: 15-18.

⁵¹ See for instance F. Zayadine in the 3rd edition of M. Lindner (ed.), *Petra und das Königreich der Nabatäer. Lebensraum, Geschichte und Kultur eines arabischen Volkes der Antike*, München 1989 in the year 1980: p. 244 fig. 31; *id.*, *L'iconographie d'Isis à Pétra*, *MEFRA* 103 (1991) 283-306; Lyttelton and Blagg 1990: 102ff.

⁵² On Khirbat at-Tannūr see Glueck 1965. For a precision of the chronological sequences see Wenning 1987: 77ff. and J. S. McKenzie, *The Development of Nabataean Sculpture at Petra and Khirbat Tannur* *PEQ* (1988) 81-107. Kader (above note 50) 130f. and especially Freyberger (above note 50) 34-41 insist on a date in the reign of Aretas IV for the entire sculptural decoration from Khirbat at-Tannūr that seems impossible to the present writer.

⁵³ Glueck 1965: 248-259 and others.

⁵⁴ Glueck 1965: 138; cf. Wenning 1987: 77ff. and McKenzie (above note 52); indeed, these sculptures bear quite some stylistic and technical similarities to a group of sculpture from the Hawrān, dated to the second and third centuries AD: S. Diebner, *Bosra: Die Skulpturen im Hof der Zitadelle*, *RdA* 6 (1982) 52-71.

⁵⁵ Glueck 1965: pls. 73a, 74a, 75a,b. All the other pottery—some of them earlier in date—illustrated in *Deities and Dolphins* comes from Petra and 'Ammān and is not related to the temple of Khirbat at-Tannūr. N. Glueck (*ibid.* p. 139) refers to such pottery as being found under the pavement of phase II. Therefore, they would pre-date even the earlier sculpture. However, as N. Glueck refers himself, some of the pottery may have been intrusive from higher levels. Unless there is no comprehensive study of the pottery from Khirbat at-Tannūr relating it to layers and construction phases it should be used only very carefully as dating evidence.

⁵⁶ McKenzie 1990: 133f. pls. 58, 59.

⁵⁷ McKenzie 1990: 36, 132ff. pl. 47 b-d; the dating of the temenos gate is connected with a trench done a few meters away: P. Parr, *A Sequence of Pottery from Petra*, in J. A. Sanders (eds.), *Essays in Honor of Nelson Glueck: Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century*, New York 1970: 348ff. especially 369f.; cf. Lyttelton and Blagg 1990: 92, 95.

The evolution in Nabataean sculpture follows therefore the same model as do other categories of material culture, such as coins or pottery. It starts with a naturalistic style, clearly adopted from late Hellenistic examples and leads to a more abstract and stronger ornamentalising representation. The peak of this evolution are the aniconic *baityloi*, that, although they existed in earlier times too, show a considerable increase in the later first century AD.⁵⁸

If we try to put this picture in the context of the Nabataeans' history we have first of all to explain why there should be no material culture from their first historical mention in 312 BC up till around 100 BC. The description given by Diodorus of Sicily depicts them as nomads or semi-nomads frequenting once or twice a year the same place for trade and other business.⁵⁹ If so, then the Nabataeans would have had almost no need for a "normal" material culture.⁶⁰ In this case our evidence would suggest that their sedentarisation took place around 100 BC when they were forced to create a more permanent infrastructure in order to remain competitive in trade. The end of the second/beginning of the first century BC was marked by the definitely undergoing of the Seleucid dynasty leading to a vacuum of power in the Syro-Phoenician area that led also to the rise of the Hasmonaeans on the one hand⁶¹ and by a increase of Ptolemaic long distance trade, mostly due to the discovery of the direct sea route from South Arabia to India, on the other hand.⁶² Both events may have encouraged the Nabataeans to start settling on a more permanent base in order

to fill in a part of the gap left by the Seleucids and to face the Ptolemies in long distance trade.⁶³ The sedentarisation then led to the creation of a material culture. But as there was no immediate preceding local material culture, the Nabataeans did the most logical thing: They oriented their new material culture according to the mainstreams of the contemporary Hellenistic world in its Near Eastern variant, as it was on display at Alexandria and Seleukeia, but also at the trading places the Nabataeans frequented like Rhodes, Kos, Priene, Milet or Delos and others.⁶⁴

The stronger Roman influence falls together with the taking over of the Seleucid empire by Pompey in 63 BC and of Ptolemaic Egypt by Octavian in 30 BC and his attempts to directly control long distance trade on the Arabian Peninsula, as reflected by the expedition of Aelius Gallus.⁶⁵ It is clear that the continuously stronger Roman influence in the Eastern Mediterranean since Pompey's campaigns in the 60s of the first century BC led also to new cultural elements in these regions. It is also during the early Roman imperial years that historical sources report direct contacts between Nabataeans and Romans.⁶⁶ Finally, the decisive change around AD 70 towards a somewhat stronger abstract and ornamentalised art marks the efforts of Rabbel II to reorganise the Nabataean kingdom in the unsuccessful attempt to remain independent of Rome.⁶⁷

We therefore see that there is in fact no continuous process of "Hellenisation", i.e. a step by step taking over of what is considered as Hellenistic art and culture,⁶⁸ but rather the opposite. The Nabataeans took over at once an

⁵⁸ R. Wenning, Das Ende des nabatäischen Königreiches, in A. Invernizzi and J.-F. Salles (eds.), *Arabia antiqua. Hellenistic Centers Around Arabia*. Rome 1993: 81-103 especially 86-93; Wenning 1989: 257.

⁵⁹ Diod. 19, 95, 1f.; cf. Schmid, forthcoming a..

⁶⁰ Of course during this entirely nomadic period there may have been other categories of material culture like textiles (carpets etc.) or wooden tools and idols that are not preserved.

⁶¹ S. Sherwin-White and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *From Samarkhand to Sardis. A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire*. London 1993: 217-229; T. Fischer, *Seleukiden und Makkabäer. Beiträge zur Seleukidengeschichte und zu den politischen Ereignissen in Judäa während der 1. Hälfte des 2. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* Bochum 1980; *idem*, Hasmonaeans and Seleucids: Aspects of War and Policy in the Second and First Centuries B.C.E., in A. Kasher et al. (eds.), *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel. Collected Essays*. Jerusalem 1990: 3-19.

⁶² R. Drexhage, *Untersuchungen zum römischen Osthandel*. Bonn 1988: 7ff. The passage as well as the using of the Monsoon winds were known to the South Arabian people for a longer time, but they hid their knowledge from their rivals in trade; cf. L. Casson, *The Periplus Maris Erythraei. Text with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*. Princeton 1989: 11f. 283ff.; see also K. A. Kitchen, *Documentation for Ancient Arabia I. Chronological Framework and Historical Sources*. Liverpool 1994: 22-25 on the date of the *periplus*.

⁶³ Comparable phenomena, i.e. Arab tribes pushing into gaps of power at the periphery of the Mediterranean world and creating new political factors and eventually becoming sedentarised, occurred on several occasions in antiquity: P. Funke, Die syrisch-mesopotamische Staatenwelt in vorislamischer Zeit. Zu den ar-

abischen Macht- und Staatenbildungen an der Peripherie der antiken Grossmächte im Hellenismus und in der römischen Kaiserzeit, in:

Funck (above note 3) 217-238.

⁶⁴ All these places are known to have been visited by Nabataeans according to inscriptions, or to have maintained contacts with the Nabataeans as in the case of Priene. On that see Wenning 1987: 22-24, M.-J. Roche, Remarques sur les Nabatéens en Méditerranée, *Semitica* 45 (1996) 73-99.

⁶⁵ Strabo 16, 4, 22-24; M. G. Raschke, New Studies in Roman Commerce with the East, *ANRW* 2, 9, 2. Berlin/New York 1978: especially 650ff.; S. E. Sidebotham, *Roman Economic Policy in the Erythra Thalassa 30 B.C.-A.D. 217*, *Mnemosyne Suppl.* 91. Leiden 1986: 48ff. 113ff.; *idem*, Aelius Gallus and Arabia, *Latomus* 45 (1986) 590-602; *idem*, Romans and Arabs in the Red Sea, *Topoi* 6 (1996) 785-797 for an general overview; cf. further J. W. Eadie, Strategies of Economic Development in the Roman East: The Red Sea Trade Revisited, in D. H. French and C. S. Lightfoot (eds.), *The Eastern Frontier of the Roman Empire. Proceedings of a Colloquium held at Ankara in September 1988*, *BAR Int. Series* 553 I. Oxford 1989: 113-120; F. de Romanis, *Cassia, cinnamomo, ossidiana. Uomini e merci tra Oceano Indiano e Mediterraneo*. Rome 1996: 19ff.

⁶⁶ In the sense of increasing presence of Nabataeans in Italian ports and cities: Roche (above note 64) 86-95, 99.

⁶⁷ Wenning 1989: 257f. and especially Wenning (above note 58) 81-103.

⁶⁸ Such a process of Hellenisation has been proposed for South Arabia by J. Pirenne, Les phases de l'hellenisation dans l'art sud-arabe, in *Le rayonnement* (above note 1) 535-541 with a first phase of a rather autochthon culture and occasional Western influence and a second phase with a strong Western influence.

almost completely Hellenised culture around 100 BC. Towards the second half of the first century BC and the first half of the first century AD they were open to stronger Roman tendencies as well as to first steps leading towards a proper Nabataean “style”. Such a culture at their “own” is only attended in the next step during the second half of the first century AD when Nabataean potters as well as their sculptors and coin cutters had continuously freed themselves from the earlier prototypes. It is difficult to consider whether this last step in evolution indeed falls together with the accession to the Nabataean throne by Rabbel II, “the one who renewed and rescued his people”, or whether he was following an already occurring general stream. Funny enough, it is but shortly before losing their political independence in AD 106 when the Nabataeans had really developed their own material culture with the last of the above described phases.

Interestingly, most of the immediate geographical neighbours of the Nabataeans show a different model of cultural evolution. Most of them were sedentarised for a quite long period, so we find well established local cultures that are increasingly influenced by Hellenistic and Roman features, until they become more or less completely Hellenised or Romanised, the latest with their in-

corporation to the Roman empire.

Looking for similar phenomena as found within the Nabataean culture we have to leave the Near East and to turn towards Central Asia. There can be seen a comparable suddenly increased input of western, i.e. Hellenistic culture that is due in these cases to the conquests of Alexander the Great.⁶⁹ The Greek colonists established within a very short time a strongly Hellenised culture, as can be seen mainly in coins⁷⁰ and pottery⁷¹ while in the field of architecture is found—beside the imported Greek elements—an important amount of local forms and shapes.⁷² Already during the first ca. 150 years after the founding of these Greek settlements there are some tendencies towards a similar evolution as was observed in the case of the Nabataeans. The first coins of the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek kings show perfectly Greek coins with typical Hellenistic portraits of the ruler and Greek inscriptions (FIG. 8:1).⁷³ But already during the third century BC occur the first issues with a mixed legend, i.e. in Greek on the one side and in local script on the other, becoming most popular from ca. 200 BC onwards (FIG. 8:2).⁷⁴ Around the middle of the second century BC the territories of most of these Greek kingdoms were conquered by nomads originating from regions in nowadays

⁶⁹ In general see B. A. Litvinskij, *La civilisation de l'Asie centrale antique*, Archäologie in Iran und Turan 3. Rahden 1998; Harmatta *et al.* 1996; A. Invernizzi (ed.), *In the Land of the Gryphons. Papers on Central Asian Archaeology in Antiquity*. Firenze 1995; E. Errington and J. Cribb (eds.), *The Crossroads of Asia. Transformation in Image and Symbol*. Cambridge 1992; C. Rapin, Greeks in Afghanistan: Ai Khanoum, in J.-P. Descœudrs (ed.), *Greek Colonists and Native Populations*. Oxford/New York 1990: 329-342; K. Karttunen, Taxila. Indian City and a Stronghold of Hellenism, *Arctos* 24 (1990) 85-96; F. L. Holt, *Alexander the Great and Bactria. The Formation of a Greek Frontier in Central Asia*. Leiden 1988; U. P. Arora (ed.), *Graeco-Indica. India's Cultural Contacts with the Greek World*. New Delhi 1991; J. Ozols and V. Thewaldt (eds.), *Aus dem Osten des Alexanderreiches. Völker und Kulturen zwischen Orient und Okzident. Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indien*. Cologne 1984, all with manifold further references. Still not replaced is D. Schlumberger, *Der hellenisierte Orient. Die griechische und nachgriechische Kunst ausserhalb des Mittelmeerraumes*. Baden-Baden 1969.

⁷⁰ Due to the circulation and publication of many coin hoards from Central Asia without precise archaeological context, the bibliography about this subject is much richer than in the cases of pottery or architecture: N. Smirnova, Bactrian Coins in the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art, *AncCivScythSib* 2 (1995) 335-352; O. Bopearachchi, *Monnaies gréco-bactriennes et indo-grecques. Catalogue raisonné*. Paris 1991; *idem*, Graeco-Bactrian Issues of Later Indo-Greek Kings, *NumChron* 150 (1990) 79-103; O. Guillaume, *Graeco-Bactrian and Indian Coins from Afghanistan*. New Delhi 1991; *idem*, *L'analyse de raisonnements en archéologie: le cas de la numismatique gréco-bactrienne et indo-grecque*. Paris 1987; F. L. Holt, The Euthydemid Coinage of Bactria: Further Hoard Evidence from Ai Khanoum, *RNum* 23 (1981) 7-44; C. M. Kraay, Demetrius in Bactria and India, *NumAntCl* 10 (1981) 219-233; R. B. Whitehead, *Indo-Greek Numismatics*. Chicago 1970; G. Le Rider, Monnaies de Taxila et d'Arachosie. Une nouvelle reine de Taxila, *REG* 80 (1967) 331-342; A. N. Lahiri, *Corpus of Indo-Greek Coins*. Calcutta 1965; M.-T. Allouche-Le Page, *L'art monétaire des royaumes bactriens. Essai d'interprétation de la symbolique*

religieuse gréco-orientale du IIIe au Ier s. av. J.C. Paris 1956.

⁷¹ J. C. Gardin, La céramique hellénistique en Asie centrale. Problèmes d'interprétation, in *Akten des 13. Internationalen Kongresses für Klassische Archäologie, Berlin 1988*. Mainz 1990: 187-193; *idem*, Les relations entre la Méditerranée et la Bactriane dans l'antiquité, d'après des données céramologiques inédites, in: J.-L. Huot *et al.*, (eds.), *De l'Indus aux Balkans. Recueil à la mémoire de Jean Deshayes*. Paris 1985: 447-460; *idem*, Die Ursprünge der Kusana-Keramik, in Ozols and Thewaldt (above note 69) 110-126.

⁷² I. Pitschikjan, Die Entwicklung des baktrischen Palast-Tempels, in: *Basileia* (above note 41) 226-233; Nielsen 1994: 124-128, 278-280 cat. no. 19; P. Bernard, The Greek Kingdoms in Central Asia, in: Harmatta *et al.* 1996: especially 110-116; *idem*, L'architecture religieuse de l'Asie centrale à l'époque hellénistique, in *Akten des XIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Klassische Archäologie, Berlin 1988*. Mainz 1990: 51-59. The local elements are predominantly present in palace architecture, while other buildings, such as theatres and *gymnasia* show purely Greek features as can be seen at Ai Khanoum. In general terms, the Hellenistic rulers of the East adopted a lot of their oriental fore-runners, mainly because the forms of royal representation were not well developed in mainland Greece. The local tradition of the Bactrian palace buildings is obvious, as well as their connections to Babylon and the Achaemenid empire: V. Sarianidi, Monumental architecture of Bactria, in Huot *et al.* (above note 71) 417-432.

⁷³ The coins illustrated on figs. 8:1-4 are from the Vasiliou collection at the Numismatic Museum of Athens. I wish to thank its director I. Touratzoglou and E. Ralli for the permission to publish these coins. The collection containing Parthian and Graeco-Bactrian as well as Indo-Greek coins has been published by Eip. Papanagiotou and M. Oikonomidou, Συλλογή Ι. Βασιλείου, *ADelt* 28, 1973 (1975) Meletai 71-96. The chronology follows the recently published one by Bopearachchi 1991 (above note 70): 453.

⁷⁴ This being not related to stronger non-Greek influence but to the fact that new territories in India were conquered by the Greeks and the coins therefore had to be understandable by the new subjects too.



8. 1: Athens, Numismatic Museum. Coin of Eucratides I (ca. 170-145 BC = *ADelt* 28, 1973 [1975] Meletai: 86 no. 54 pl. 51, 42). Photo by the author.



8. 3: Athens, Numismatic Museum. Coin of Spalyris (ca. first half of the first century BC = *ADelt* 28, 1973 [1975] Meletai: 93 no. 108 pl. 55, 87). Photo by the author.



8. 2: Athens, Numismatic Museum. Coin of Agathocles (ca. 190-180 BC = *ADelt* 28, 1973 [1975] Meletai: 85f. no. 53 pl. 51, 41). Photo by the author.



8. 4: Athens, Numismatic Museum. Coin of Azes I. (ca. middle of the first century BC = *ADelt* 28, 1973 [1975] Meletai: 91 no. 97 pl. 54, 78). Photo by the author.

Turkestan and China.⁷⁵ Therefore the surviving Greek settlements were cut off from their direct connection to Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean and in the material culture a stronger tendency towards local elements can be observed. The coins now are consequently inscribed in local alphabets on one side and show at least partially non-Greek iconographic elements (FIG. 8:3, 4), and the pottery develops its own style too, although there are occasionally influences from the West. Last reminders of these former Greek cultural spots in Central Asia can be seen in the arts of the Kushan and the well known Gandhara reliefs, incorporating both local and western elements.⁷⁶

Although in general terms quite similar to the lines of

development in Nabataean material culture, there are some crucial differences, mainly of socio-political nature. The first Graeco-Bactrians were in fact Greeks, simply producing their own crafts in a place far away from their homelands. The first Nabataeans producing material culture in contrary were already "at home" in Central Jordan around 100 BC since more than two hundred years, but they had no preceding material culture they could work on and therefore they adopted a foreign one, taking over the cultural "*lingua franca*" of the region. In the further development the Graeco-Bactrians and Indo-Greeks continuously lost their former cultural roots because it became increasingly difficult to maintain a direct contact to the Mediterranean.⁷⁷ The Nabataeans on the other hand did develop their own material culture in a surrounding that would have been extremely favourable to maintain the former, i.e. Hellenistic one. Therefore, one could say that it was probably by distancing themselves from the pre-

⁷⁵ K. Enoki, G. A. Koshelenko and Z. Haidary, The Yüeh-Chih and their Migrations, in Harmatta *et al.* 1996: 171-189; Y. A. Zadneprovskiy, The Nomads of Northern Central Asia after the Invasion of Alexander, *ibid.* 457-472; P. Bernard, Les nomades conquérants de l'empire gréco-bactrien. Réflexions sur leur identité ethnique et culturelle, *CRAI* (1987) 758-768.

⁷⁶ B. N. Puri, The Kushans, in Harmatta *et al.* 1996: 247-263; G. A. Pugachenkova *et al.*, Kushan Art, in Harmatta *et al.* 1996: 331-395; L. Nehru, Hellenism in Gandharan Sculpture, in *Akten des XIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Klassische Archäologie, Berlin 1988*. Mainz 1990: 317-319. As L. Nehru correctly points out, the West-

ern influences in Gandhara sculpture are not the result of one single period of East-Western contacts but of several such interactions from the Achaemenid to the Roman period, although the Hellenistic input may be considered the most important one; cf. also M. Taddei, Neue Forschungsbelege zur Gandhara-Ikonographie, in Ozols and Thewaldt (above note 69) 154-175; see now the bibliography on Gandhara by P. Guenée *et al.*, *Bibliographie analytique des ouvrages parus sur l'art du Gandhara entre 1950 et 1993*, MemAcInsr 16. Paris 1998.

⁷⁷ This shall not be understood as a negative development, because while losing their former culture they created a new one.

dominant Hellenistic and later on the Roman cultural elements in their immediate neighbourhood that the Nabataeans became a socio-cultural unity.⁷⁸

With the model drawn in this paper it seems possible to integrate much of what is commonly attributed to Nabataean material culture. However, as stated at the beginning, there are also some differing tendencies.⁷⁹ It would of course be very comfortable to explain them with different social or tribal groups, all the more as this would perfectly fit the system and organisation of the Nabataean "state" as it has been proposed on several occasions by E. A. Knauf.⁸⁰ However, there have also been criticisms about this rather theoretical typologisation of an entire people.⁸¹ It shall be enough pointing out that ethnological studies could show that with the process of sedentarisation a stronger specialisation in terms of trade, crafts and administration is observed, leading, of course, to the creation of different social groups within a society.⁸² In the earlier stadium of sedentarisation there were people within that community that could be called part-time-sedentarised because they were involved in long distance camel trade and therefore on the road for about six months a year, while others were permanently resident.⁸³ With the introduction of new means of transport most of the former camel riders had to change their occupation and new social differentiation was created.⁸⁴ Partially the same can be concluded in the case of the Nabataeans. With their definite sedentarisation—at least in and around Petra—ca. 100 BC, necessarily some specialisation had to take place.⁸⁵ In order to maintain their economic wealth, i.e. the supply of spices and other goods from South Arabia, some people would have travelled along the peninsula for most of the year.⁸⁶ Others would have specialised in crafts and industry as can be seen in the case of

pottery, because the Nabataean pottery is for sure the product of professional potters from its first stage on.⁸⁷

The typical Nabataean culture did not entirely perish with the incorporation of the Nabataean kingdom to the Roman empire, as for instance the characteristic Nabataean painting on pottery occurs at least into the fourth century AD as well as do the shapes of that pottery (FIG. 2:3, 4).⁸⁸ However, from AD 106 onwards, no new elements can be found but rather a degeneration of the already established features.⁸⁹ Could this be an indication for cultural and artistic development in a positive sense being possible only within politically independent societies?⁹⁰

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78 On this cf. also J. Bouzek, Griechische Kunst in den Randkulturen: ihre Rezeption, Funktion und Umbildung, in D. Rössler and V. Stürmer (eds.), *Modus in rebus. Gedenkschrift für Wolfgang Schindler*. Berlin 1995: 115: "Es scheint also eine Regel zu sein, dass eigenständige Kunststile in der Alten Welt für ihre Herausbildung zwar den fruchtbaren Kontakt mit griechischen Vorbildern benötigten, aber gleichzeitig auch Distanz, damit die Kraft der griechischen Kunst nicht die Ausprägung der spezifischen Elemente unterdrücken konnte".

79 Mainly in sacral architecture, where a strong oriental influence is obvious; on Nabataean temples see Wenning 1987: 288; Wenning 1989: 250f.; K. S. Freyberger, in Weber and Wenning 1997: 71-84.

80 E. A. Knauf, in Weber and Wenning 1997: 14-24 with the older references.

81 M. C. A. Macdonald, Was the Nabataean Kingdom a "Bedouin State"?, *ZDPV* 107 (1991) 102-119.

82 S. Altorki and D. P. Cole, *Arabian Oasis City. The Transformation of 'Unayzah*. Austin 1989.

83 Altorki and Cole (above note 82) 67-82; however, this did not exclude the camel riders from having houses in their homecity.

84 Altorki and Cole (above note 82) 101f. 208-231. The careful analysis in the case of 'Unayzah would offer many more inspiration for reconstructing the process of sedentarisation and social diversification among the Nabataeans. On this subject see Z. T. Fiema, Nab-

ataean and Palmyrene Commerce - The Mechanisms of Intensification in Palmyra and the Silk Road, *AAS* 42 (1996) 189-195.

85 On this see Schmid, forthcoming a.

86 As is proven by the finds of Nabataean pottery at sites such as al-Jawf, Thâj, Hegra, Qaryat al-Fau, Gharrain, Ma'rib, Qana and Khor Rori; on these see Schmid 2000: chap. X. As this pottery apparently was not used as an export good, these finds point to presence of Nabataeans.

87 Schmid, forthcoming a.

88 On some fragments of this late painted pottery with a well defined late fourth and early fifth centuries AD context see S. G. Schmid, in *Ez Zantur I*, 168 with notes 614. 615; R. Fellmann Brogli, *ibid.* 240 fig. 844-849.

89 On the Roman annexation of Nabataea see Schmid 1997.

90 The fact that no new elements are introduced into Nabataean culture after AD 106 but only older features are repeated should also beware from an interpretation that there was a continuing Nabataean political entity into the second to fourth centuries AD. In fact, the observation made in this paper would finally offer a possibility to explain why there still are remainders of Nabataean cultural elements long after the end of the Nabataean kingdom and resolve the *aporia* observed by Dijkstra (above note 2) 38-40 and others.

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