JOSEPHUS CONSTRUCTS THE SAMARI(T)ANS: A STRATEGIC CONSTRUCTION OF JUDAEEAN/JEWISH IDENTITY THROUGH THE RHETORIC OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

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Abstract

In this essay I argue that Josephus performs a dual dynamic discourse made up of the discourses of inclusion and exclusion in various dimensions—ethnic, geographical, political, religious, and cultural—so as eventually to construct Judaean/Jewish identity in both an inclusive and exclusive relationship with the Samarians/Samaritans in the context of the destruction of the Second Temple. What is interesting is that Josephus does not deploy the rhetoric of inclusion and the rhetoric of exclusion in a dichotomous manner (sameness vs. difference), but along a continuum with varying degrees of both sameness and difference. It is assumed that the boundary per se between Judaean/Jews and Samarians/Samaritans is fictive and fluid rather than real and fixed. Therefore, Josephus' attitudes towards the Samarians/Samaritans can be inclusive at times and exclusive at other times, depending on a specific context. The point is that for Josephus, Judaean/Jewish identity-making consists of the twofold process of both assimilation with and distinction from the Samarians/Samaritans. In this regard, Josephus makes the most of the Samarians/Samaritans as a foil against which the Judaean/Jewish people may establish a strategic construction of their identity.

As a New Testament scholar, I am making an inquiry into the historiographical relationship between the Judaean/Jews and the Samarians/Samaritans in antiquity, which the New Testament

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writings, implicitly rather than explicitly, address. Just to name a few examples: Matt. 10:5 (Jesus instructs his disciples not to

1 In the essay I by no means take Josephus' works as a historical report at face value. Rather I deem his writings historiographical in such a way as to focus on how they were written. In this regard, I pay special attention to Josephus' geopolitical location, as an author residing in Rome, the centre of the Roman Empire, assuming that his social context has an impact on his writing. Cf. John M. G. Barclay, Negotiating Diaspora: Jewish Strategies in the Roman Empire (Library of Second Temple Studies, 45; London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), p. 5.

On 'Judaean' and 'Jew', see Shaye J. D. Cohen, The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 69–106. First, the Greek term Ιουδαίος is applied to a people inhabiting its ancestral land and it should be translated as 'Judaean' in an ethno-geographical sense. Second, Ιουδαίος can refer to people who are not Judeans in an ethnic or geographic sense but become 'Judaens' by being integrated into the Judaean state as citizens or allies in a political sense. Third, Ιουδαίος can also address non-Judeans in terms of ethnic and/or geography but who become 'Jews' in terms of religion and/or culture by converting to Judaism and taking on the Jewish way of life.

On 'Samarian' and 'Samaritan', see Reinhard Pummer, The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), pp. 4–7. Similar to the definition of 'Judaean' and 'Jew', one can distinguish 'Samarian' (Σαμαρεύς) from 'Samaritan' (Σαμαριτης) with geopolitical and religious and/or cultural connotations respectively. 'Samarian' refers to those inhabiting the city and province of Samaria in geographical/political terms, whereas 'Samaritan' means those 'Samarians' worshipping YHWH in Mount Gerizim as a sacred place, in religious and/or cultural terms. The first use of Σαμαριται in the ancient literary texts occurs in 2 Kgs. 17:29 LXX. Here the Greek term Σαμαριται refers to the deported Israelite inhabitants of Samaria after the defeat of the Northern kingdom by the Assyrians. Interestingly, this implies that the Gerizim religious/cultural community is the offspring of the Assyrian colonizers or the mixed people as narrated in 2 Kgs. 17:24–41. For the history of scholarship in relation to this distinction, see also Hans G. Kippenberg, Garizim und Synagoge: Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur samaritischen Religion der aramäischen Periode (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1971); R. J. Coggins, Samaritans and Jews: The Origins of Samaritanism Reconsidered (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1973); Rita Egger, Flavius Josephus und die Samaritaner: Eine terminologische Untersuchung zur Identitätsklärung der Samaritaner (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag, 1986); Martina Böhm, Samaren und die Samaritai bei Lukas: Eine Studie zum religionshistorischen und traditionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund der lukanischen Samarientexte und zu deren topographischer Verhaftung (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999).

I take the phrase Judaean/Jewish to mean that the connotation of Ιουδαίος is not distinguishable unless otherwise specified or apparent from the context. Once it is clear enough, I will try to clarify which of the two the text refers to. The same applies to the case of Samarian/Samaritan or Samari(t)an in an abbreviated form. Note that Samari(t)ans are meant to be read as Samarians/Samaritans. I use both forms of designation on occasion, the former for brevity and the latter for clarity.
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enter the town of the Samaritans); Luke 9:52 (Jesus’ messengers enter the Samaritan villages); Luke 10:29–37 (the parable of the good Samaritan); Luke 17:11–19 (the Samaritan leper thanks Jesus for his healing); John 4:1–42 (the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman); John 8:48 (Jesus is charged with being a Samaritan); Acts 8:25 (the apostles preach in many Samaritan villages). To be sure, the New Testament seems more likely to convey negative, polemical attitudes towards the Samaritans within the Jewish/Christian context. Still, the New Testament writings have quite limited evidence regarding the Samaritans. In this regard, a question arises how the Jews, in ancient times, perceived the Samaritans in relation to but distinction from the New Testament. In this essay, I shall focus on Josephus’ works, a main Jewish resource about the Samaritans, so that I may delve into the matter of the Judaean/Jewish and Samarian/Samaritan rapport in antiquity and subsequently, and the boundary between the two ethnic or racial groups.

The thesis here is that Josephus performs a dual dynamic discourse made up of the discourses of inclusion and exclusion in various dimensions—ethnic, geographical, political, religious, and cultural—so as eventually to present Judaean/Jewish identity in both an inclusive and exclusive relationship with the Samarians/Samaritans, in the context of the destruction of the Second Temple. What is interesting is that Josephus does not

2 On this, see Fernando F. Segovia, ‘Toward Latino/a American Biblical Criticism’, in Randall C. Bailey, Tat-Siong Benny Liew, and Fernando F. Segovia (eds.), They Were All Together in One Place?: Toward Minority Biblical Criticism (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), pp. 193–226; Denise Kimber Buell, Why this New Pace: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). According to Segovia, the discourse of ‘race’ has become conflated with the discourse of ‘ethnicity’ since the 20th c. Contrary to the trend to see ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ as biological and cultural respectively, one can instead construe both as a sociocultural construct. Given a blurry borderline between race and ethnicity as sociocultural constructs, one can therefore use them interchangeably. Even if I translate the Greek terms related to peoplehood such as genos, ethnos, laos, and phyllos in a certain way, the connotation of each translation, in Buell’s words, is interchangeable, for any modern term by no means has a one-to-one correspondence to the ancient term.

3 Cf. Gerd Baumann, The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities (Zones of Religion; New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 95. Baumann argues that there are two different discourses—one is the essentializing discourse that stresses the inherency of ethnic identity and the other is processual or instrumental discourse that emphasizes its mutability or strategy—in the construction of ethnicity. Interestingly enough, he goes further
perform the rhetoric of inclusion and the rhetoric of exclusion in a dichotomous manner (sameness vs. difference), but along a continuum with varying degrees of both sameness and difference. Simply put, Josephus deploys both the rhetoric of inclusion and the rhetoric of exclusion simultaneously, albeit in a dynamic tension. By and large, this makes readers, both ancient and contemporary, puzzled over the ambiguous relationship between Judaeans/Jews and Samaritans/Samaritans in antiquity as described by Josephus. In some passages, he perceives the Samaritans/Samaritans as belonging to the Judaeans/Jews; in others, he regards them as separate from the Judaeans/Jews. It is to be borne in mind that identity-making consists of the twofold process of both assimilation with and distinction from the other group(s). By way of the oscillatory rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion in dealings with the Samaritans/Samaritans, Josephus ultimately aims to reconstruct Judaean/Jewish identity in the diasporic context.

It is worth noting that the boundary per se between Judaeans/Jews and Samaritans/Samaritans is fictive and fluid rather than real and fixed. For this reason, Josephus is able to recognize identity in constant flux. He accepts the Samaritans/Samaritans as part of the Judaean/Jewish community so long as they are by saying that these two opposing discourses, in reality, coexist and serve as a 'dual discursive construction' rather than mutually excluding one from the other. Alongside Baumann, I claim that the discourse of inclusion and the discourse of exclusion actually coexist and play a role as a dual discourse in a dynamic tension.

In a similar vein, in early Christian studies Buell also affirms that the earliest Christian identity in an ethnic dimension employed a dual discourse, which consists of the discourse of fixity and the discourse of fluidity. For example, gentile Christians could have Jewish ancestry, while sustaining their own ethnic identity. To my mind, the upshot of this is that the rhetoric of fixity and the rhetoric of fluidity in the formation of Christian identity turned out to be quite ambivalent. On this, see Denise Kimber Buell, 'Ethnicity and Religion in Mediterranean Antiquity and Beyond', *Religious Studies Review* 26/3 (2000), p. 246; Buell, *Why this New Race*, pp. 7–9.


5 Ibid., pp. 9–10.

6 The rhetoric of exclusion comes into play in order to efface similarities and stress differences, especially when the boundary line is made so blurry that one ethnic group is threatened by the other ethnic group(s). On the contrary, the rhetoric of inclusion comes to the fore if one has the powers to expand beyond itself to the others.
condusive to the formation of Judaean/Jewish identity. Otherwise, he would treat the Samarians/Samaritans as separate from the Judeans/Jews. As a result, I would maintain that the ‘unambiguous’ purpose of Josephus’ works in his ‘ambiguous’ relation to the Samaritans is to consolidate Jewish identity threatened by the destruction of the Temple.

In this essay, I will deliberately use race and ethnicity interchangeably in the analysis of the texts in antiquity. As Denise Buell argues, it would be a mistake to consider race as immutable and ethnicity as mutable, so that the latter may be regarded as appropriate for antiquity as an analytical device, but the former as anachronistic in ancient times. Both race and ethnicity as modern analytical categories are interchangeable in their application to ancient literature since neither of the terms has a precise counterpart in antiquity. Nevertheless, it is to be kept in mind that we have no choice but to interpret the past within the limits of such modern notions in order to render our analyses understandable and convincing to modern readers. As Buell notes, ‘We cannot avoid reckoning with modern ideas about race, ethnicity, and religion, so the problem is not that modern ideas are distorting historical analysis, since we can only interpret the past from the vantage point of the present.’

I. THE RHETORIC OF INCLUSION AND THE RHETORIC OF EXCLUSION

For the exploration of the Judaean/Jewish and Samaritan rapport in Josephus’ writings, I will set out to formulate an interpretative framework for the historiographical construction of Judaean/Jewish identity in the Hellenistic and Roman context by utilizing Shaye Cohen’s categories—ethnic, geographic, political, religious and/or cultural—as presented in The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties. In Cohen’s opinion, the Greek word Ἰουδαίος in antiquity has several different connotations: ethnic, geographical, political, religious and/or cultural. Remarkably, Cohen makes a stark contrast between ethnic-geographic identity and political/religious/cultural identity; the first group of identity is immutable; the second is mutable. Yet, in a fundamental sense, I look upon ancient

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7 Buell, Why this New Race, p. 21.
8 Ibid., p. 5.
9 Cohen, The Beginnings of Jewishness, p. 109. Cohen deftly defines ethnicity as follows: ‘Ethnicity is closed, immutable, an ascribed characteristic based on birth’ (p. 136). He goes on to claim that (ethnic)-geographic identity was immutable even in diasporic circumstances, a context in which the Judeans had
Judaean/Jewish identity as a complex composite construction, wherein ethnic, geographic, political, religious, and cultural criteria were all flexible and dynamic. The reason for this is that ethnic-geographic identity itself is a social construction rather than a primordial or essential entity, being subject to change in a spatio-temporal context. In this regard, ethnic-geographic identity was as malleable as political, religious, and cultural identity. As will be argued below, Judaean/Jewish identity has the following dynamic tensions in interaction with the Samarians/Samaritans: the Judaean could include and exclude the Samarians; the territory of Judaea could include and exclude Samaria; the Judaean citizens could include and exclude the Samarians; Jewishness could include and exclude the Samaritans’ religious tenets and way of life. Unlike Cohen, I go further, arguing that the conceptual boundary between ethnic-geographic and political/religious/cultural identity could itself be porous. To illustrate, Cohen assumes only that the relation between ethnicity and religion in antiquity became increasingly permeable.\(^\text{10}\) But I think that the alleged boundary between one identity category and all the other identity categories in antiquity was fuzzy, porous, and crossable. As is the case with Josephus, the boundary between geography and politics and that between religion and culture in antiquity overlapped and supplemented each other. Thus, I reformulate Cohen’s analytical categories of identity as malleable and permeable.

Let me further situate my overall position in current scholarship regarding Josephus on Judaean/Jewish and Samaritan relations.\(^\text{11}\) First, Rita Egger contends that Josephus to live in the land other than Judaea, regardless of whether narrowly or broadly defined. On the contrary, Cohen regards religious, cultural, and political identity in Jewish antiquity as mutable, given that non-Judaean could become Jews by means of religious, cultural, or political transformation.

\(^{10}\) Ibid., pp. 109–10.

looks upon the Samaritans as part of the Jewish community, but raises polemics against the Samarians or Cutheans as descendants of the Medians and Persians. Second, Richard J. Coggins admits that Josephus has animosity against the Samaritans, while at the same time treating them as part of the Jewish people. Interestingly, Coggins sees Josephus’ descriptions of the Samaritans as an attempt to establish Jewish self-definition in contrast with Samaritans. Lastly, Louis H. Feldman points out that Josephus holds quite ambivalent attitudes towards the Samaritans, by adding that he explicitly expresses antipathy towards them, especially in *Jos* and yet that he implicitly presents them as part of the Jewish community. The present study is, therefore, an attempt to shed fresh light on Josephus’ ambivalent attitudes in his interaction with the Samarians/Samaritans, in particular within the interpretative framework of the rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion.

The basic assumption underlying this essay is that identity construction, in general, operates within the dialectical framework between self and other and by extension, ‘us’ and ‘them.’ It is interesting that identity is predicated on difference which is in a relative state, not in an absolute one. The reason is that the boundary is an imaginary line drawn to separate one from the other. Hence identity-making is an ongoing construction involving both similarity and distinction between self and other. For

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15 On the dialectical framework, see Robert Miles and Malcolm Brown, *Racism* (2nd edn., Key Ideas; London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 51. According to Miles and Brown, identity construction has the dialectical framework of representational inclusion and exclusion. Through the dialectic framework, the self shapes the neat boundary to be distinguishable from the other. In so doing, the self can create the criteria by which to portray the self in a positive manner, and conversely the other in a negative manner. The same norms may function to superiorize and include the self and at the same time inferiorize and exclude the other, albeit with reversed meanings. Thus, Miles and Brown succinctly note: ‘the imagination of the Other is simultaneously an imagination of the Self, each reflecting and refracting a kaleidoscope of contrasting attributes’ (p. 86). In short, Miles and Brown demonstrate a way in which the boundary between self and other is drawn along with the dialectic of inclusion and exclusion. However, I maintain that such a dialectical framework should be remoulded in a more dynamic fashion, given that the boundary between self and other is itself mutable, depending on the specific sociocultural context.
17 Ibid.
example, there is a controversy over whether or not Josephus perceives the Samarians/Samaritans as part of the Judaean/Jews. Josephus sometimes regards the Samarians/Samaritans as a people (έθνος) parallel to, but independent of, the Judaean/Jews and other times he looks upon them as part of the Judaean/Jewish community. Due to the fictive, fluid boundary between self and other, identity formation proves unstable and malleable, with ambiguity and uncertainty.

Another assumption is that the construction of the self stands in juxtaposition to the construction of the other. This means that the other is to be invented as counterpart to the self and vice versa. As Tim Whitmarsh remarks, 'the other is the shadow of the self'. One may go so far as to say that the same components used for shaping identity—such as ethnicity, geography, politics, religion, and/or culture—are germane to both the construction of self and the construction of other. This being the case, it can also be said that Josephus' construction of 'Judaeaness/Jewishness' runs parallel to his construction of 'Samarianness/Samaritaness'.

The final assumption is that literary texts themselves perform a facet of identity of the writer with a certain readership in mind. Along the lines of Judith Lieu, I uphold the performative dimension of identity in and through texts. In this respect, identity, in general, has a tendency to be internalized within text and, at the same time, the latter shapes the former. As is often the case with Josephus, his writings as texts achieve and are achieved by the construction of Roman-Jewish identity, thereby becoming a 'site of identity formation'. In other words, Josephus' works

19 Whitmarsh, Greek Literature and the Roman Empire, p. 24.
20 Ibid., p. 22.
21 On performativity, see J. L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words (2nd edn., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975); Judith Butler, Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performativé (New York and London: Routledge, 1997). With reference to performativity, one needs to understand the performative language of J. L. Austin. For him, performative language is a language performing what it says. The point is that performativity is an endless process of citation of the norms and ideologies of the social world. See also Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex' (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 239. Butler notes: 'Performativity is...not a singular "act", for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms.' This being the case, one may go so far as to say that text itself performs what it cites.
indeed perform the Roman-Jewish identity they embody. It is interesting to note that Josephus, as a Roman citizen, could be seen as maintaining his dual identity. Jonathan Edmondson argues: 'Flavius Josephus—despite his Roman citizenship and obvious links to the Flavian emperors—still retained a strong Jewish identity... But still he could not help seeing the world through Jewish eyes.' I construe Josephus' identity as a matter of degree, a continuum between Jewish identity and Roman identity. Martin Goodman cogently argues: 'Since Roman Jews experienced no difficulty in accepting the logical possibility of such gentile Romans becoming Jewish while remaining Roman, they should have found it equally easy to see themselves as fully part of Roman society even when they also wished to stress their Jewish identity.' In this light, it is to be noted that Roman-Jewish identity, as Josephus' works construct it, is neither manifest nor natural, but rather artfully created to appeal to different readers. Not surprisingly, 'Josephus' audience matters for interpretation'. To be more precise, Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum* (*BJ*) is predominantly designed for royal readers, such as Vespasian and Titus, especially for the sake of imperial propaganda; his other works, *Antiquitates Judaicae* (*AJ*), *Vita* (*V*), and *Contra Apionem* (*CAp*), are designated mostly for Jewish readers in defence of Jews and Judaism. Thus, each work of

between Jewish and Christian identity, in general I agree with Lieu that text *per se* accomplishes and is accomplished by identity construction. If this is right, one can argue that Josephus' writings as texts accomplish and are accomplished by identity formation.


26 Steve Mason, 'Reading Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*', in Joseph Sievers and Gaia Lembi (eds.), *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), p. 73.

27 Seth Schwartz, *Josephus and Judean Politics* (Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition, 18; Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1999), pp. 13-21; Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as a Historian* (Leiden: Brill, 1979); H. St J. Thackeray, *Josephus, the Man and the Historian* (The Hilda Stich Stroock Lectures; New York: Jewish Institute of Religion Press, 1929). As he states in *CAp* 1.51, Josephus devotes his first work *BJ* to the Roman rulers Vespasian and Titus, in the service of the Flavian dynasty, not long after the end of the Jewish War (66-70 CE). In his work *BJ*, Josephus sets out not only to paint the Jewish War in a pro-
Josephus performs a certain feature of identity, being aware of diverse readers. Now let me turn to Josephus’ sophisticated use of the rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion aimed at strategically constructing Jewish identity in lesser assimilation to and more distinction from the Samaritans in terms of ethnicity, geography, politics, religion, and culture.

II. ETHNICITY

In this section I shall demonstrate Josephus’ equivocal stance on the ethnic association of the Samarians with the Judaeans. On the one hand, Josephus implicitly admits that the Samarians had common kinship with the Judaeans. On the other hand, he explicitly describes the Samarians as foreign to the Judaeans in Roman light but also to exonerate the Jewish people from the responsibility for the war with the aim of restoring Judaism. In his second project, AJ, Josephus no longer remains restricted to Roman imperial propaganda. Reinforcing ties with Judaism, in the books of AJ he voluntarily displays his increasing interest in the defence of the Jewish people. Josephus writes V in order to defend himself from the charges of his crimes as a general in Galilee during the Jewish War. CAp is an apologetic document to generate counter-arguments against anti-Jewish discourse prevalent in Rome and Alexandria in the late first century CE in defence of the Diaspora Jews.

28 For the sake of convenience, I would like to offer a sketchy outline of Josephus’ description of the Samari(t)ans according to his works. In his work AJ, Josephus relates a variety of stories with regard to the origins and characteristics of the Samari(t)ans, starting with his recounting of 2 Kgs. 17:24–41(9.288–91) and ending with the massacre of Samari(t)ans on Mount Gerizim (20.118–36). In addition, Josephus narrates the Samari(t)ans in the restoration period (11.19–20, 84–8, 97, 114–19, 174–5); the Temple on Mount Gerizim in the time of Alexander the Great (11.302–3, 306–12, 321–5, 340–7); the Samari(t)ans in the Tobiad story (12.156, 168, 175); the Samari(t)ans in the time of Epiphanes IV (12.257–64); the Jewish–Samaritan debates on the rightful temple (12.7–10; 13.74–9); the Samari(t)ans in the Roman period and the Samaritans in the time of the Herodian dynasty (17.20, 69–70, 342–4); the Samaritans scattering human bones around the Temple (18.29–30); the Samari(t)ans and Pontius Pilate (18.85–9); and the battle between Galileans and Samari(t)ans (20.118–36).

In BJ, too, Josephus provides a rather brief summary of the Samari(t)an history; to name a few points, the conquest of Shechem and the destruction of the Gerizim temple by John Hyrcanus (1.62–3); the Herodian dynasty and the Samaritans—Herod the Great (1.562), Antipater (1.592), and Archelaus (2.111); the enmity between Galileans and Samari(t)ans in the Roman period (2.232–46); and the Massacre of the Samari(t)ans on Mount Gerizim in the Roman period (3.307–15).

Finally, in CAp, Josephus describes the incorporation of Samaria in Judaea (2.42–3). It would exceed the scope of the essay to discuss all of the above passages. Therefore, I will try to analyse the selected passages relating to the given topic.
origin. In the final analysis, Josephus attempts to contrast the Samarians with the Judaeans in terms of the origin of descent in order to strengthen Judaean identity by rejecting its ethnic affiliation with the Samarians.

In AJ 9.291, Josephus presents a striking sketch of the Samarians being fair-weather friends in declaring their ethnic identity in connection with the Judaeans: 'But when they [Samarians] saw the Judaeans prospering, they changeably called them their kinsmen on the grounds that they were descended from Joseph and had the origin of their kinship from him, but when they saw the Judaeans going through adversity, they declared that they did not belong to them at all, nor is there anything good for them in friendship or race, and they avowed themselves to be aliens of another race' (οἱ πρὸς μεταβολὴν συγγενεῖς μὲν ὅταν εἴδον πράττοντας βλέποντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἀποκαλοῦσιν ὡς ἐξ Ἰωάννου φύντες καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκείθεν τῆς πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἔχοντες οἰκείοτητος, ὅταν δὲ πταῖσαν τὸ δίκαιον, οὐδάμοθεν αὐτοῖς προσήκειν λέγουσιν οὐδὲ εἶναι δίκαιον οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς εὔνοιας ἢ γένους, ἀλλὰ μετοίκους ἀλλοεθνεῖς ἀποφαίνουσιν αὐτοὺς). At face value, Josephus accuses the Samarians of being duplicitous and opportunistic in the declaration of their origin and descent. On the contrary, he suggests that the ethnic boundary between Judaeans and Samarians was so thin that the origin of the Samarians could be traced back to either Judaeans or non-Judaeans with great ease. In either case, Josephus is keenly aware that to a certain extent the Samarians had kinship with the Judaeans, but he intends to present their origin as non-Judaean as possible. In the words of Feldman, 'in Josephus’ own day the Samaritans had not yet broken away completely from Judaism, at least in their own perception.' Or to put it more positively, the Samarians were closely intertwined with the Judaeans in terms of origin.

In this respect, Josephus attempts to characterize the Samarians as entirely non-Judaeans who were transplanted from Cutha, a Persian region, to Samaria (AJ 9.278–9, 288; 10.184). He recounts the resettlement of Samaria by Shalmaneser thus: 'he [Shalmaneser] utterly demolished the government of Israelites, and transported all its people to Media and Persia' (τὴν τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν ἡγεμονίαν ἀρδῆν ἡφάνισε καὶ πάντα τὸν λαὸν μετέφυκεν εἰς τὴν Αῆδιαν καὶ Περσίδα) (AJ 9.278). He further states: 'after removing other nations out of a certain region called Chuthos (for

29 All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.
30 Pummer, The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus, 76.
there is a river by this name in Persia), he [Shalmaneser] settled them in Samaria and in the country of the Israelites' (καὶ μεταστήσας ἄλλα θνη ἀπὸ Χούθου τόπου τινός ἐστι γὰρ εν τῇ Περσίδι ποταμός τούτ’ ἐχων τοῦνομα κατώκισεν εἰς τὴν Σαμάρειαν καὶ τὴν τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν χώραν) (AJ 9.279). In distinction from AJ 9.278–9, Josephus in AJ 9.288 merely adds the five tribes of the Cutheans in parallel to the five places of 2 Kgs. 17:24. Similarly, in AJ 10.184 he describes at length that besides removing all Israelites, the king of Babylon imported the Cutheans to Samaria. By and large, Josephus pinpoints the fact that all the populations of Samaria after the expatriation of the Israelites by Shalmaneser were emigrants from Persia and Media, with the result that the Samaritans, the new inhabitants of Samaria, were made all the more remote from the Judeans. On the other hand, Josephus also paints the Samaritans as descendants of foreigners by tracing their origin to the Cutheans in his account of Manasseh and Sanballat (AJ 11.302): ‘the Cuthean from whom even the Samaritans are originated’ (Χουθαίος τὸ γένος ἐξ ὧν καὶ οἱ Σαμαρεῖς εἰσόν). Hence, Josephus sets forth the origin of the Samaritans in two different ways: one in relation to the importation of the Cutheans by the Assyrians and the other, more specifically, in relation to the marriage between the Jew Manasseh and the Cuthean Nikaso. In spite of these variations, what is important is that Josephus paints the Samaritans as distinct from the Judeans in ethnic terms by calling them Cutheans. In this process, Josephus clearly labels the Samaritans as alien to the Judeans in origin.

Nonetheless, Josephus also presents the Samaritans as ‘apostates of the Jewish nation’ (τῶν ἀποστατῶν τοῖς Ιουδαίον εἶναν) (AJ 11.340). Despite classifying the Samaritans’ origin as Cutheans foreign to the Judeans, he claims at this point that they had kinship with the Judeans, but that they defected from this kinship. Interestingly enough, Josephus seemingly invents a story that when Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE) settled down at

32 Pummer, The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus, 78. As Pummer notices, one can easily find wrong, or at the very least hyperbolic, such an explanation about the origin of the Samaritans, in contrast to another statement of Josephus that some Israelites fled from the Assyrian captivity in AJ 10.68: ‘After these events, Josiah went also to such other Israelites as had escaped captivity and slavery under the Assyrians’ (Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα οἱ βασιλεῖς Ιωαίας πορευθεὶς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν ὁσοὶ τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν καὶ τὴν δουλείαν τὴν ὑπὸ τῶν Ασσυρίων διέφυγον).

33 The Greek terms such as Σαμαρείται, Σαμαρεῖς, and Χουθαῖοι are used synonymously in Josephan writings.
Jerusalem and honoured the Judaeans, the Samarians determined to profess themselves as Judaeans to solicit the remission of the tribute. When Alexander asked who they were, the Samarians answered that they were 'Hebrews' (Εβραίοι) but were called 'the Sidonians of Shechem' (οί ἐν Σικίμοις Σιδώνιοι) (AJ 11.344). When asked again whether they were 'Judaesans' (Τουδαίοι), presumably in distinction from Hebrews, they replied in the negative. In this passage Josephus eventually shows that the Samarians were not as Judaean as they claimed to be, but he also covertly acknowledges that to some degree the Samarians had affiliation with the Judaeans. Thus, Josephus is at great pains to show that the Samarians were closely related to, but not identical with, the Judaeans.

With this scenario in mind, we will look at another account (AJ 12.257-64) about Jews being persecuted by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 BCE). Here, too, Josephus tacitly implies that the Samarians were, in reality, kindred to the Judaeans: 'When the Samarians saw the Judaeans suffering these (misfortunes), they would no more acknowledge that they were their kinsmen (Ταῦτα βλέποντες οἱ Σαμαρείται πάσχοντας τοὺς Ιουδαίους οὐκέθα ὑμολόγουν αὐτούς εἶναι αὐγγενεῖς αὐτῶν) (AJ 12.257). Conversely, it is implied that the Samarians would have admitted that they were kinsmen to the Judaeans, if it had not been for the persecution of the Judaeans under Antiochus. In the face of these sufferings, the Samarians claimed to be 'colonists from the Medes and Persians' (Λέγοντες αὐτοὺς Μῆδων ἀποίκους καὶ Περσῶν) (AJ 12.257). Furthermore, the Samarians, in an apparently fictitious letter to Antiochus Epiphanes, called themselves 'Sidonians, in Shechem' (τῶν ἐν Σικίμοις Σιδωνίων) (AJ 12.258) and 'Sidonians by origin' (τὸ ἀνέκαθεν Σιδωνίων) (12.260). Later in his reply to Nicanor, Antiochus is also said to have called the Samarians

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34 On the definition of the Greek term γένος, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, Τουδαῖος τὸ γένος and Related Expressions in Josephus', in Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 23-38. Cohen points out that genos along with Ioudaios can be construed in different ways; (1) birth; (2) origin; (3) nation. According to him, 'birth' would be the best translation of γένος, for it is more natural than the others. In comparison to γένος, the Greek term συγγενείς, however, contains all the connotations of birth, origin, and nation in that it more straightforwardly deals with the ethnicity of the Jews and Samaritans.

‘Sidonians in Shechem’ (οἱ ἐν Σικίμοις Σιδώνιοι) (AJ 12.262). Hence, Josephus’ attempt to present the Samarians as adopting the pose of being alien to the Judaeans when being seen as kin means that they too would undergo torments of persecution.

Thus, Josephus tacitly acknowledges that the Samarians were part of the Judaean community in origin. In spite of this, he clearly undertakes to nullify the Samarians’ claim that they had an origin in common with Judaeans in such a way as to depict them as capricious liars. As a result, Josephus probably hints at the ethnic similarity between Judaeans and Samarians, while at the same time strengthening the difference between them. In this respect, then, Josephus establishes Judaean identity by vacillating in his stance towards the Samarians, one of the most similar ethnic groups to the Judaeans. The vacillation is important, not incidental for him, for ‘Josephus was writing at a time and in circumstances where the identification of the true Jewish community was inevitably to be a matter of prime concern’. Consequently, Josephus deploys the ethnic rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion in order to consolidate Judaean communal identity in interaction with the Samarians.

HI. Geography

In association with ethnicity, I will handle the (ethnic-)geographic dimension with special attention to the relation of Judaea to Samaria. Interestingly enough, Judaea, in the writings of Josephus, can be defined either broadly or narrowly. If it denotes a broadly circumscribed space, Judaea involves even the district of Samaria. On the contrary, if it denotes a narrowly circumscribed space, it no longer involves Samaria. Cohen rightly states: ‘The writings of Josephus show that Judaea is the name both of the entire land of Israel, including its districts Idumaea, Judaea,
Samaria, Galilee, and Peraea, and also of a specific district, Judaea, in contrast with the other districts Idumaea, Samaria, Galilee, and Peraea. This suggests that paradoxically, the Judaeo–Samarian geographical boundary is both 'real' and 'fictive' because the boundary was itself constantly misrecognized as fixed, but at the same time, always subject to fluidity. Let us consider the ways in which such a (ethnic-)geographic boundary operates.

To name but a few examples, it is implied in BJ 2.95–6 that Galilee, Peraea, Idumaea, Judaea, and Samaria and so forth were all independent cities in the reign of Augustus Caesar (63 BCE–14 CE), when it came to his distribution of the regions to the sons of Herod the Great, namely, Herod Archelaus, Philip the Tetrarch, and Herod Antipas after his death. To illustrate: Peraea and Galilee were under the rule of Herod Antipas; Batanaea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and certain parts of Zeno's house around Jamnia were under the rule of Philip Tetrach; Idumaea, all Judaea, and Samaria were under the rule of Herod Archelaus. Josephus suggests in BJ 2.96 that the region of Judaea was separated from the region of Samaria as well as of Idumaea: 'Archelaus' ethnarchy included Idumea, all Judaea, and Samaria (τῆς Άρχελάου δ' ἑθναρχίας Ἰδουμαία τε καὶ Ἰουδαία πάσα καὶ Σαμαρεΐτις). With such a Greek indefinite adjective as πάσα— which means all—modifying Judaea alone, the distinction, in particular between Judaea and Samaria, is made all the more clear. In addition, it is once again recounted in BJ 2.247 that Judaea, Samaria, Galilee, and Peraea, of which regions Felix the brother of Pallas was procurator, were all different ones: 'After these [events], he [Caesar] sent Felix, the brother of Pallas, to be procurator of

38 On the relationship between Idumea and Galilee, and Jewish identity, see Seth Schwartz, Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E to 640 C.E (Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World; Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 39. Schwartz makes clear: 'Probably the Judaization of the districts—which was in the long term successful in that Idumaea and Galilee remained Jewish even after the end of Hasmonean rule and were thoroughly incorporated in the Jewish nation—was helped by the profound cultural and religious ties that existed in any case among the non-Greek peoples of Palestine.'
39 Flavius Josephus, Flavius Josephus, Translation and Commentary, trans. Steve Mason and Louis H. Feldman, vol. 1B, Judean War 2 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), p. 63. Mason states: 'Pliny subsumes Idumea, Samaria, and Judaea narrowly defined under Judaea broadly defined (Nat. 5. 70). From this it follows that the geopolitical boundary of Judaea was itself blurry and flexible.
Judaea as well as of Samaria, Galilee, and Peraea' (Μετὰ ταῦτα Ἰουδαίας μὲν ἐπὶ τὸν Πάλλαντος ἀδελφὸν ἐκπέμπει τῆς τῆς Σαμαρείας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Περαιάς). As Mason states, 'This description assumes that Judaea does not include Samaria and Galilee.' In contrast, it is clear in the letter of Demetrius to Jonathan (AJ 13.50) that the following three toparchies, that is, Samaria, and Galilee, and Peraea, were adjoined to Judaea broadly defined: 'of the three toparchies adjoining to Judaea, Samaria, Galilee, and Peraea' (τῶν τριῶν τοις παρχιών τῶν τῆς Ἰουδαίας προσκείμενων Σαμαρείας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Περαιάς). Thus, we have observed that the geographical boundary between Judaea and Samaria, according to Josephus, was drawn in an ambiguous way: sometimes it was portrayed as inclusive once Judaea is broadly defined; other times it was portrayed as exclusive once narrowly defined.

Now it is of premium significance to notice that ethnic identity in ancient times had a closer association with geography. Among others, Lieu goes at length to account for the relation between ethnicity and geography, particularly in the context of diaspora. According to her, ethnic minorities in diaspora would have a malleable geographical connection such that they may create an envisaged geographical space on which to establish their ethnic identity. As noted earlier, it is 'Judaea' in Josephus' works that plays a central role as an imagined elastic territory in either connecting Judeans with other ethnic groups, or disconnecting the former from the latter. As a consequence, in his writings Josephus draws the boundary between Judaea and Samaria by way of the geographical rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion in order that he may construct Judaean identity in interaction with other ethnic groups, say, Samaritans, in the diasporic context.

IV. Politics

As will be seen below, Josephus puzzlingly recounts the political position of the Samarians/Samaritans in relation to the Judeans/
Jews. Related to geography with more political overtones, Josephus sometimes puts emphasis on the inclusion of the province of Samaria in the Judaean state in the time of Alexander. At other times, he tells us that the Samarians/Samaritans constituted an independent state from the Judaeans/Jews and that the former had a political conflict with the latter under Roman imperial rule. The result is that the Samari(t)ans were politically portrayed as detached from the Judaeans/Jews.

In short, Josephus contrasts the Samarians/Samaritans as wicked subjects with the Judaeans/Jews as worthy subjects in the eyes of the Romans, while still adding Samaria to Judaean territory in the Hellenistic period.

In *CAp* 2.43, Josephus cites a passage from Hecataeus which sets forth the political connection between Judaea and Samaria as exemplified in the annexation of the latter to the former in Alexander's time: 'as Hecataeus states concerning us, he [Alexander] honoured our nation in that, for the consideration and fidelity which the Judaeans showed to him, he added to them the district of Samaria free from tribute' (ἐτίμα γάρ ἡμῶν τοῖς ἰδίων ὡς καὶ φησιν Ἥκαταιος περὶ ἡμῶν ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἐπιείκειαν καὶ πίστιν ἡν αὐτῶν παρέσχον θουδαίοι τὴν Σαμαρείτιν χώραν προσέθηκεν ἔχειν αὗτοῖς ἁφορολόγητον). In other words, the Judaeans took governance over the province of Samaria in the Hellenistic period. As Pummer observes, Josephus probably corroborates the claim that the Judaeans were one of the privileged peoples, due to their loyalty to Alexander. It seems no less likely to hint that Samaria was part of the Judaean territory. As a consequence, Josephus makes political connections between Judaea and Samaria, thereby taking an inclusive stance towards the Samarians.

By contrast, Josephus makes it explicit that in the Roman imperial period, in particular under the reign of Pontius Pilate as governor of Judaea (26–36 CE), the Samarians were independent of the Judaeans, given 'the council of the Samarians' (Σαμαρέων ἡ βουλή) at work (*AJ* 18.88). The implication is that the Judaeans politically had little or no connection with the Samari(t)ans, who were suspected of revolting against the Romans (*AJ* 18.85–9). The episode begins with an unfavourable introduction of the anonymous man who 'gathered them [Samarion(t)ans] by using mendacity briefly and catering to the mob in everything with pleasure' (αυτότις γάρ αὐτοὺς ἴθη ἐν ὀλίγῳ τοῖς μαθέοις τιθέμενος καὶ τὴν πλῆθος τεχνάζων τὰ πάντα) (*AJ* 18.85). According to Josephus, the

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man bade them to accompany him to Mount Gerizim, promising that he would show them 'the sacred vessels' (τὰ ἱερὰ σκεύη) buried there (ἡμ. 18.85). 'So they came in arms, viewing the discourse (of the man) as plausible' (οἱ δὲ ἐν ὀπλοῖς τε ἤθαν πιθανῶν ἴγον ημῶν τοῦ λόγου) (ἡμ. 18.86). In anticipation of an uprising against the Roman rule, Pilate ruthlessly suppressed a large mob of the Samari(t)ans on their way to the mountain (ἡμ. 18.87). This historical event shows a conflict between Pilate and the Samari(t)ans, revolving around their religious convictions that the sacred vessels were buried at Mount Gerizim, where Moses had deposited them. Regardless of the intent of the Samari(t)ans, whether it be religious or political, it comes as no surprise that Josephus aims politically to make a stark contrast between Judaeans and Samari(t)ans, a contrast between good and bad subjects, under the Roman Empire. Aware of the harsh rules against the Samari(t)ans by Pilate, Josephus takes an exclusive attitude in an effort to escape any suspicion of political involvement with them.

By the same token, Josephus, in the accounts Ἰ. 2.232–46 and Ἰ. 20.118–36, describes another event in which the Samaritans/Samaritans were perceived as separate from the Judaeans/Jews, with increasingly political rather than religious overtones. Evidently, Josephus presents a picture of the Samaritans/Samaritans in a more politically than religiously nuanced manner to show that the Judaeans/Jews were the less rebellious people of the two in the Roman perception. The two different versions of the same incident touch on a clash between Galileans and Samaritans/Samaritans, and, by extension, that between Judaeans/Jews and Samaritans/Samaritans, in interaction with the Romans. In brief, both stories arise from the murder of the

44 In addition to the differences in length between Ἰ. 2.232–46 and Ἰ. 20.118–36 (the former is briefer than the latter), it should be kept in mind that Josephus is more anti-Samari(t)an polemical in the Ἰ. than in the Ἰ. with the awareness of the Roman rule throughout the two texts. Cf. Feldman, 'Josephus' Attitude toward the Samaritans', p. 125. Feldman analyses Josephus' stance towards the Samari(t)ans in both religious and political terms. He argues that Josephus as a priest sees the Samaritans as distinct from the Jews in religious terms, in that he calls attention to the Temple and opposes the definition of Judaism as a political entity. On the other hand, he also insists that Josephus looks upon the Samari(t)ans as independent from the Jews in political terms, with reference to the Samari(t)an revolts. I am of the opinion that Josephus recounts the Samari(t)ans through a political as well as religious lens. However, the emphasis of this section lies on the political rather than religious dimension of Josephus' works, given his geopolitical position in interaction with the Roman rulers.
Galileans (i.e. those Judeans/Jews who inhabited Galilee) by the Samarian/Samaritans on their way via Samaria to Jerusalem to participate in a Jewish festival. In retribution for this event, ‘the Galileans persuaded the crowd of the Judeans/Jews to resort to arms’ (Galilai o to plēbos tōn Ioudaiōn ἐπειθων ἐφ’ ὅπλα χωρῆσαι) (AJ 20.120). Due to the sack of some villages of the Samaritans by the Judean masses (BJ 2.235; AJ 20.121), the procurator (ἐπίτροπος) ‘Cumanus armed the Samarians/Samaritans fully, and marched out against the Judeans/Jews, and caught them, and killed many of them, and took a great number of them alive’ (τοὺς το Σαμαρείς καθοπλίσας ἐξηλθεν ἐπί τοὺς Ioudaious, καὶ συμβαλὼν πολλοὺς μὲν αὐτῶν ἀπέκτεινεν πλείους δὲ ζώντας ἔλαβεν) (AJ 20.122).

According to Josephus, Ummidius Quadratus, ‘the governor of Syria (τῆς Συρίας προεστηκόταΥ, after hearing Samarians/Samaritans and Judeans/Jews hurling accusations against each other (BJ 2.239–40; AJ 20.125–7), brought both groups to order by punishing their respective leaders and returning Cumanus to Rome (BJ 2.241–4; AJ 20.128–33). In another hearing, the Roman Emperor Claudius (10 BCE–54 CE) finally put an end to these incidents by executing three of the Samaritan leaders and banishing Cumanus (BJ 2.245–6; AJ 20.134–6). Overall, this story indicates that the conflict was extended to being between Judeans/Jews and Samarians/Samaritans. By and large, Josephus is at pains to stress that the Samarians/Samaritans were more rebellious people than the Judeans/Jews, with a view to politically describing the former as outsiders to the latter, given his awareness that Roman governors perceived obedient subjects more favourably.

Up to this point, we have seen that Josephus takes an ambiguous stance in the matter of the political relation between Judeans/Jews and Samarians/Samaritans; in the Hellenistic period, Samaria was portrayed as assimilated into the Judean state. Yet in the Roman imperial period, the Samarians/Samaritans were described as independent of and conflicting with the Judeans/Jews. In the first account, Josephus accepts Samaria as part of Judaea to show the political superiority of the Judeans over the Samarians. On the contrary, in the second and third account, he denies any political link between Judeans/Jews and Samarians/Samaritans, for fear that the rebellious attitude of the latter might be attributed to the former by the Roman rulers. In consequence, Josephus consolidates Judean/Jewish identity in stark contrast to the inferior, recalcitrant, Samarians/Samaritans in the perceptions of colonizers, such as Greeks and Romans, by way of the political rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion.
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V. RELIGION

I shall touch on the religious dimension, predominantly with reference to the matter of the Temple. In religious terms, Josephus adopts the Jewishness of the Samaritans in a very limited sense. For one thing, he sees the Samaritans as Jewish (in religious terms) so long as they are willing to worship the Almighty God, possibly in the temple in Jerusalem. For another, Josephus no longer sees the Samaritans as Jewish to the extent that they are concerned with (the construction of) the temple on Mount Gerizim. The reason for this is that Josephus, as a Jewish priest, views the temple at Jerusalem as central, while at the same time discrediting the temple at Mount Gerizim. In this regard, his shorter description of the devastation of the temple on Mount Gerizim may bring to light the hidden stance he takes towards the Samaritans and their Jewishness. Throughout, we can determine how thin the religious boundary between Jews and Samaritans really is.

To start with the original religious practices of the Samaritans in Josephus' retelling of 2 Kgs. 17:24-41 in AJ 9.288-90, the Samaritans (Σαμαρείται) or Cutheans (Χουθαίοι) in Hebrew and origin became Jewish by worshipping the Most High God. Here Josephus further states that 'the Cutheans in Hebrew were equivalent to the Samaritans in Greek' (οι κατὰ μὲν τὴν Εβραίων γλώτταν Χονθαίοι κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ελλήνων Σαμαρείται) (AJ 9.290) and that in the Assyrian period, the Samaritans were those settlers in Samaria out of Cuthah (Χουθα), a region of Persia. Remarkably, there is a discrepancy between the biblical account and Josephus' account regarding the description of the religious practices of the Samaritans or Cutheans. Contrary to the syncretism of the Samaritan religious practices in the biblical account, Josephus stresses that the Samaritans became Jewish by merely worshiping the Most High God with great zeal. The Septuagint reads that 'they [the people from Babylon, Cutha, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvim] feared the LORD but also worshipped their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away' (καὶ τῶν Κύριον ἐφοβοῦντο καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς αὐτῶν ἐλάτρευον κατὰ τὸ κρίμα τῶν θεών, δὲν ἀπώκισαν αὐτοὺς ἐκείθεν) (2 Kgs. 17:33). By contrast, Josephus states that once 'they learned by the oracle that they ought to worship the Almighty God, as the method for their deliverance' (χρησμῷ θρησκευέων τον μέγιστον θεόν ὡς τούτο σωτήριον αὐτοὺς ὑπὲρ ἔμαθον) (AJ 9.289), 'they [Cutheans], after being instructed in the laws and religion of this God, [continued to] worship Him in a zealous manner' (τα νόμιμα καὶ τὴν
In a similar vein, Josephus looks upon the Samaritans as Jewish, so long as they are eager to worship God in the Jerusalem Temple (AJ 11.84–7). In the Persian period, the Jews reportedly began to rebuild the Temple, after their return from Babylonian captivity, and the Samaritans asked permission to take part in the reconstruction and to have a share in the building. They asserted thus: ‘We worship God no less than they [Jews], and pray to Him and are jealous of the worship, and from the time when Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, bought us out of Cuthia and Media to this place’ (σεβόμεθα γὰρ οὐκ ἔλαττον ἐκείνων τὸν θεόν ἐφασκον καὶ τοῦτον ὑπερευχόμεθα καὶ τῆς θρησκείας ἐσμεν ἐπιθυμηταί έξ εκείνου τοῦ χρόνου ἀφ’ οὗ Σαλμανασάρης ο τῶν Άσσυρίων βασιλεύς ἐκ τῆς Χουθίας ἡμᾶς μετήγαγεν καὶ Μηδίας ἐνθάδε) (AJ 11.85). The Jews, however, had good reason to turn down the offer of the Samaritans by adding that they alone had been permitted to rebuild the Temple. Surprisingly enough, the Samaritans were perceived as Jewish on the grounds that they were allowed, at least, to worship the Temple. It indicates that Josephus accepts the Jewishness of Samaritans, on the condition that they had the same religious beliefs as Jews, while at the same time distancing the former from the latter with respect to the matter of the Temple reconstruction.

On the contrary, Josephus intends to depict the Samaritans, or to be more precise, their ancestors, Cutheans, as non-Jewish, as far as the temple on Mount Gerizim is concerned. With reference to this temple, let us briefly look at the marriage (AJ 11.302–12) between Manasseh, brother of the high priest Jaddua, son of Joannes, and Nikaso, daughter of Sanballat, who was the satrap sent by Darius the last king into Samaria’ (Σαναβαλλετής ο πεμφθείς εἰς Σαμάρειαν ὑπὸ Δαρείου τοῦ τελευταίου βασιλέως σατράπης) (AJ 11.302). Due to his sharing of the high priesthood with his brother, Manasseh was commanded by the elders either to divorce Nikaso or not to approach the altar (AJ 11.308). So Manasseh came to his father-in-law and told him that although he loved his daughter Nikaso, he was not willing to be deprived of his priesthood (AJ 11.309). In turn, Sanballat promised Manasseh the honour of his priesthood, to make him a governor, and to build for him a temple on Mount Gerizim, so long as he would keep his daughter for his wife. Later in AJ 13.256, Josephus thus

45 Feldman, ‘Josephus’ Attitude toward the Samaritans’, p. 131.
recapitulates the permission from Alexander the Great to build the temple on Gerizim: ‘the nation of the Cutheans, which dwelt at the temple similar to the one at Jerusalem, the temple that Alexander permitted Sanballat, the satrap, to build for the sake of his son-in-law Manasseh, the brother of the high priest Juddua, as we have formerly related’ (τό τε Κουθαίων γένος ο περιοικεί τών εἰκασθέντα τώ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμωι ιερῷ ιανόν ὅν Ἀλέξανδρος έπέτρεψεν οἰκοδομήσαι Σαναβαλλέτη τῷ στρατηγῷ διά τοῦ γαμβρὸν Μανασσῆν τοῦ Ἡαδώ οὗ τοῦ ἄρχιερέως ἀδελφοῦ ως πρότερον δεδηλώκαμεν). Josephus’ Manasseh-Nikaso story eventually aims at presenting the building of the temple on Mount Gerizim, in negative terms. This account indicates that the Mount Gerizim temple was merely a copy of the original, authentic temple in Jerusalem. Furthermore, it is also suggested that the temple was made all the more illegitimate in that it was erected with the sanction of Alexander, not by divine order. In so doing, Josephus sets out to paint the Mount Gerizim temple as non-Jewish, with the result that the ancestors of the Samaritans or Cutheans, of course, became non-Jewish, because they were responsible for constructing the inauthentic temple on Mount Gerizim.

Now we can go further by noting how Josephus calls attention to the legitimacy of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem over the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim. In AJ 12.7–10, Josephus relates the dispute between the descendants of the Jews and the Samaritans over the authority of their own temples in Jerusalem and on Mount Gerizim. After his death, one of Alexander’s successors, Ptolemy Soter (304–282 BCE), captured Jerusalem (AJ 12.4) and ‘took many captives, both from the hill country of Judaea, and from the places around Jerusalem and Samaria, and the places near Mount Gerizim, and led them all into Egypt and settled them there’ (ὁ δὲ Πτολεμαίος πολλούς αἰχμαλώτους αἰχμαλώτους λαβὼν ἀπὸ τῆς ὀρεινῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ τῶν περὶ Ἱεροσόλυμα τόπων καὶ τῆς Σαμαρείτιδος καὶ τῶν ἐν Γαριζείν, κατοίκησεν ἀπαντας εἰς Αἰγυπτὸν ἁγαγών) (AJ 12.7). In AJ 12.10, Josephus reports that ‘the descendants of the Jews, who had decided to preserve the ancestral way of life and customs, quarrelled with the Samaritans’ (στάσεις μεντοι γε τοίς εκγόνοις αὐτῶν πρὸς τοὺς Σαμαρείτας τὴν πάτριον ἁγωγὴν τῶν εὐθῶν ἀποσώζειν προαιρετικόν τυφλίνυτο). Central to the controversy were the problems of which temple was holy, the one in Jerusalem or the one in Samaria, and which temple the sacrifices should be sent to (πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐπολέμου τῶν μὲν Ἱεροσολυμιτῶν τὸ παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἱερὸν ἁγιον εἶναι λεγόντων καὶ τὰς θυσίας

46 Pummer, The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus, 118.
From this it follows that Josephus undoubtedly distinguishes between the Jews and the Samaritans, focusing on the discrepancy in the beliefs about the legitimacy of their two different temples.

By the same token, Josephus in \textit{AJ} 13.74–9 demonstrates the greater validity of the temple in Jerusalem over the temple on Mount Gerizim, according to the laws of Moses, by introducing a quarrel between the Jews living in Alexandria and the Samaritans worshipping at the latter in the reign of Ptolemy Philometor (180–145 BCE). Josephus reports that each group contended that its own temple was congruent with Moses' laws. However, in the hearing of the arguments from both sides, Ptolemy reached final judgement that the Jerusalem temple was legitimate according to the laws of Moses. The point here is that in accordance with the laws of Moses, Josephus overemphasizes the authenticity of the temple in Jerusalem, particularly through the eyes of Ptolemy, a foreigner to both Jews and Samaritans. As Pummer notes: 'The aim of the narrative is to show that Ptolemy backed the Jews and their temple over that of their rivals.'\(^47\) As a consequence, Josephus establishes Jewishness on the basis of the Jerusalem temple in marked contrast with the Mount Gerizim temple worshipped by the Samaritans.

In this connection, it comes as a surprise that Josephus very briefly sketches the destruction of the temple on Mount Gerizim in \textit{AJ} 13.254–6 (cf. \textit{BJ} 1.62–3) in comparison to his lengthy description of its construction (cf. \textit{AJ} 11.302–3; 306–12; 321–5).\(^48\) Josephus simply relates that John Hycarnus (135–104 BCE) destroyed the temple on Mount Gerizim during his expedition against the cities of Syria. He simply adds that the temple was demolished two hundred years after its construction with Alexander's permission (\textit{AJ} 13.256). As we have seen, Josephus accepts the Jewishness of the Samaritans, to a degree, in terms of worshipping the Almighty God. With this in mind, he would feel it inappropriate to be delighted with the destruction of the temple on Mount Gerizim, albeit a copy of the only authentic one in Jerusalem.\(^49\) To the best of my knowledge, Josephus presents the Samaritans as Jewish to the extent that they had the same religious belief and practice as the Jews. In this scenario, a detailed

\(^{47}\) Ibid., p. 196.


\(^{49}\) Coggins, 'The Samaritans in Josephus', p. 266.
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explanation of the destruction of the temple might be mistaken for his utter rejection of the Jewishness of the Samaritans.\(^50\)

Ironically, this restraint about the destruction of the Mount Gerizim temple again shows that Josephus acknowledges the Jewishness of the Samaritans, but in a limited way.

In conclusion, it can be said that Josephus recognizes the Jewishness of Samaritans in a minimal sense: he accepts the Samaritans as Jewish, as long as they worship the Almighty God whose temple is in Jerusalem. But at the same time, he draws a divide between Jews and Samaritans by adding that the Samaritans were not allowed to take part in the reconstruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. To take a step further, Josephus no longer depicts the Samaritans as Jewish when it comes to the construction of the temple on Mount Gerizim. The implication is that in Josephus' perception, the Jewish Temple alone is authentic but the Samaritan temple is not. Still, his rather brief description of the destruction of the temple on Mount Gerizim suggests that he does not entirely repudiate the potential for the Jewishness of the Samaritans. Thus, for Josephus, the boundary between Jews and Samaritans could be both fixed and fluid; it is fixed because for Jews, religious criteria, such as worshipping the Almighty God and revering the Temple in Jerusalem, are immutable; it is also fluid because the Samaritans could become Jewish by adopting such criteria. The result is that Josephus employs the religious rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion. More importantly, such rhetoric makes a contribution to the enhancement of Jewish identity centred in the Jerusalem Temple, in stark contrast with Samaritan identity centred in the Gerizim temple.

VI. CULTURE

Last but not least, I shall show Josephus' ambivalent stance towards the Samaritans in connection with culture, which is taken to mean 'distinctive practices' related to religion.\(^51\) In some passages, Josephus implicitly indicates that the Samaritans had

\(^{50}\) Ibid.

\(^{51}\) As Cohen rightly argues, culture can be defined as 'distinctive practices' in relation to religious tenets. He puts emphasis on a close interconnection between religion and culture, particularly in antiquity. For Cohen, the conceptual boundary between religion and culture seems highly likely to be very thin, in that religion is a belief system and its practice could and should be seen as cultural. Thus, a belief system and a way of life are closely interconnected with each other. In this vein, I also see religion as cultural formation. Cf. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, pp. 78-9.
Jewish distinctive practices in common. In other passages, he explicitly characterizes the Samaritans as non-Jewish by breaching or abandoning the Jewish way of life. Josephus proceeds to contrast the Samaritans with the Jews from a point of view of culture, thereby accentuating the Jewish way of life, by implication, in a stark opposition to a non-Jewish, say Hellenized, way of life.

At first glance, Josephus seems likely to consider the Samaritans as Jewish in terms of keeping the Sabbath year in the episode of the meeting between Alexander and the Samaritans (Aj 11.340–5). In this encounter, the Shechemites (Σικιμίται), equivalent here to Samaritans, requested that Alexander ‘remit their tribute in the seventh year because they did not sow in it’ (ἀφβῖναι τὸν φόρον αὐτοῖς τοῦ ἔβδοματος ἐτους οὐδὲ γάρ αὐτοῖς ἐν αὐτῷ σπέιρεν) (Aj 11.343). When he asked who they were, they said that they were Hebrews (Ἐβραῖοι), but had the name of ‘Sidonians in Shechem’ (οἱ ἐν Σικίμοις Σιδώνιοι) (Aj 11.344). Asked again whether they were Jews, they answered in the negative. As we have observed above (§2), it is worthwhile noticing that Josephus portrays the Samaritans as the ‘apostates of the Jewish nation’ (των ἀποστατῶν τον Ιουδαίων έθνους) (Aj 11.345) in a duplicitous and opportunistic manner. This strongly implies that for Josephus, the Samaritans appeared to be Jewish in terms of cultural practice, but they were not quite Judaean in terms of ethnicity, presumably because they were merely willing to gain the benefit of remission of tribute from their religious observance.

To make matters worse, Josephus goes on to present the Samaritans as lesser Jews in the light of the religious practices in the subsequent account (Aj 11.346–7). He asserts that the Samaritan community on Mount Gerizim was appealing to those Jews fleeing from the Jewish community in Jerusalem on the grounds that they violated Jewish laws, for instance, by ‘eating unclean food or breaching the Sabbath or committing any other such sin’ (κοινοφαγίας ή τῆς ἐν σαββάτοις παρανομίας ή τῆς άλλου τοιούτου ἁμαρτήματος) (Aj 11.346). Similarly, Josephus, in the Manasseh–Nikaso story, depicts the Samaritan community as so attractive to those involved with ‘mixed marriage’ that many priests and Israelites with such marriages defected to Mount Gerizim (Aj 11.312). With these accusations, Josephus characterizes the Samaritans as the breakers of Jewish laws who attracted other transgressors from Jerusalem. From this it follows that he puts stress on the Jewish deviance of the Samaritans in terms of religious observance and practice.

In this connection, let us take a close look at Aj 12.258–63 one more time, from a cultural angle. In the petition of the Samaritans
to Antiochus Epiphanes, Josephus recounts that their forefathers had a custom (ἔθος) of observing what the contemporary Jews called the Sabbath in such a way as to follow a certain ancient religion, albeit in the specific context of certain droughts (οἱ ἡμέτεροι πρόγονοι διὰ τινας αὔχμοις τῆς χώρας παρακολουθήσαντες ἀρχαία τινὶ δειπναίμονι ἔθος ἐποίησαν σέβειν τὴν παρὰ τοῖς ιουδαίοις λεγομένῃν σαββάτων ἡμέραν) (AJ 12.259). It is suggested that the Samaritans had sustained the Jewish way of life by observing the so-called Sabbath. In turn, the Samaritans, however, begged Antiochus not to charge them with what the Jews were accused of, thus emphasizing that they were aliens from the Jews, either by race (γένει) and or customs (ἔθεια) (AJ 12.261). Moreover, the Samaritans claimed that they would 'let the anonymous temple be called the temple of Jupiter Hellenios' (προσαγορέυθηναι δὲ τὸ ἀνώνυμον ίερὸν Αἰος Ἐλληνίου) (AJ 12.261). As implied in Antiochus' reply to Nicanor, this means that the Samaritans 'chose to live in accordance with Greek customs' (τοῖς Ἐλληνικοῖς ἔθειαν αἴρονται) (AJ 12.263). Hence, Josephus demonstrates that the Samaritans abandoned the Jewish way of life and chose to take on the Greek way of life under the harsh rule of Antiochus Epiphanes.

By and large, Josephus acknowledges the Jewishness of the Samaritans to the extent that they conformed to the Jewish way of life. But he no longer regards them as Jewish on the grounds that they were tolerant towards those Jews violating Jewish laws, or deserted the Jewish way of life and simultaneously adopted a non-Jewish, namely Greek, way of life. In terms of cultural or religious practice, Josephus draws a divide between Jews and Samaritans in both a fixed and a fluid fashion: it is fixed because Jewish cultural or religious criteria, say, observance of the Sabbath (year), are themselves unchangeable; however, it is also fluid because the Samaritans could become Jewish by practising what is expected of such criteria. As a consequence, Josephus could perceive the Samaritans as both Jewish and non-Jewish by deploying the rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion. Even more striking is the fact that he puts more emphasis on the non-Jewishness of the Samaritans than their Jewishness. Undoubtedly, Josephus aims to espouse a Jewish identity, which is deeply rooted in the Jewish way of life, in stark distinction to a non-Jewish, say Greek, way of life.

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

So far I have delved into Josephus' works as a case study to explore the ways in which he perceived the Samari(t)ans, apart
from the New Testament. In so doing, I have deployed such analytical devices as ethnicity, geography, politics, religion, and culture, along the lines of Cohen. Briefly, my inferences from Josephus’ works are as follows. For Josephus, the Samarians had common kinship with the Judaeans, unless they denied it. While related to ethnicity, the geographic boundary between Judaea and Samaria was constructed as malleable in interaction with the other proximate ethnic group, Samarians, in the diasporic context. Despite the historiographical indication that Samaria was included in the Judaean territory, the Samari(t)ans were described as non-Judaean, especially when perceived as inferior or rebellious in relationship with such colonizers as Greeks and Romans. What is interesting is that the Samaritans were accepted, to some degree, as Jewish so long as they revered the Almighty God and the Temple in Jerusalem alone. Yet on the contrary, the Samaritans were no longer Jewish when they forsook the Jewish way of life. It follows from all these observations that Josephus employs both the rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion in terms of ethnicity, geography, politics, religion, and culture. This is to say that he takes an ambivalent position towards the Samari(t)ans in such a way as to recognize them both as part of the Jewish community and as standing outside it. With this in mind, the time has come for us to highlight the purpose of a dual dynamics of Josephus’ discourses of inclusion and exclusion. In my judgement, Josephus makes the most of the Samari(t)ans as a foil against which the Jewish people may establish a strategic construction of their identity. Therefore, Josephus’ attitudes towards the Samari(t)ans could be inclusive at some times and exclusive at

52 Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 282; Feldman, ‘Josephus’ Attitude toward the Samaritans’, p. 136. Contra the interpretation of Pummer and Feldman, see Coggins, ‘The Samaritans in Josephus’, p. 269. Coggins states: ‘The account in *Antiquities* emphasizes the Jewish hostility to Roman rule, while that in the *War* gives rather prominence to Jewish-Samaritan antagonism, but there are no intolerable discrepancies between two accounts’ (p. 269). In my judgement, Coggins may have good reason to insist that Josephus’ work *AJ* sometimes reveals the Jewish animosity against imperial rule, given the fact that its alleged readership is more Jewish than Roman. But I am not of the opinion of Coggins that Josephus’ work *BJ* is more antagonistic to the Samaritans. In spite of Josephus’ ambivalent attitudes towards the Samaritans, it is clear that his work *AJ* contains still more hostile descriptions about them than any other works. As Pummer and Feldman rightly note, *AJ* is, I argue, more antagonistic towards the Samaritans than *BJ*.

53 Cf. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*. Pummer contends that Josephus ‘uses the Samaritans as a foil against which the Jews appear as reasonable and reliable subjects of the Romans’ (p. 282).
others, depending on a specific context. He thus constructs Judaean/Jewish identity in a way that is unceasingly fluid and dynamic. As Schwartz likewise remarks, 'Jewish identity in antiquity was anything but unambiguous'.

Josephus' shifting Judaeanness/Jewishness of the Samari(t)ans strikingly brings Schwartz's observation to the fore.

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