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REBUILDING THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE: PAGAN, JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN CONCEPTIONS

1. INTRODUCTION: JERUSALEM AFTER CE 70

The destruction of the Temple by Roman forces under Titus in CE 70 represents a major turning-point in the religious history of the world. It is also one whose consequences are with us still, as the presence of the Dome of the Rock on the site of the Temple forcibly reminds us. With the destruction of the building went the ending of daily sacrificial cult as a central element in Judaism, and with it the role of priests in serving in the Temple, along with the position of High Priest. We may well ask, though we cannot answer, the question of what would have been the consequences for both Judaism and Christianity, and for either pagan or Jewish converts to Christianity, if the Temple had survived, or had been restored¹.

In fact, in spite of Josephus' powerful and detailed account of the last days of the Temple, we cannot be certain whether the destruction was in the first instance accidental, or had always formed part of Vespasian's and Titus' plans. What is surely clear is that both the Temple and the High Priesthood could have been restored if the Flavian regime had so chosen, and that the failure to do so represented deliberate policy. Precisely this is the central theme of Martin Goodman's major new work². Sixty years later, there followed an equally profound and deliberate step, the foundation on the site of Jerusalem of a new pagan city, from which Jews were expelled, the Roman *colonia* of Aelia Capitolina. Symbolically, it is highly significant that this was the last *colonia* in the history of Rome of which it is clearly reported that it involved the replacement of the previous inhabitants by new settlers³.

Like all *coloniae*, Aelia Capitolina will have been officially Latin-speaking. Whether there was any stage at which Latin really was the predominant language spoken within it remains unclear⁴. What is certain is that in the opening decades of the fourth century it was still a pagan city, which (as Jerome reports) the famous Christian hermit,

¹ See M.-Z. Petropoulou, *Animal Sacrifice in Ancient Greek Religion, Judaism and Christianity, 100 BC-AD 200* (Oxford, in press).

² M. Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: a Clash of Civilisations* (2007). See also T. Leoni, 'Against Caesar's Wishes'. Flavius Josephus as a Source for the Burning of the Temple', *Journ. Jew. Stud.* 58 (2007), 39.

³ See F. Millar, 'The Roman *Coloniae* of the Near East: a Study of Cultural Relations', in H. Solin and M. Kajava (eds.), *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies in Roman History* (Helsinki, 1990), 7.

⁴ Even allowing for the possibility of divergence between public writing and current spoken language, the expected publication of the first fascicule of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaearum/Palaestinae*, ed. H.M. Cotton and W. Eck, on Jerusalem, will shed significant new light on this issue.

Hilarion, took care to avoid⁵. Jerome is here recalling the years before Constantine's victory, after which the temple of Venus was destroyed, and the first Church of the Holy Sepulchre was erected on the site, along with major Christian churches on the Mount of Olives and in Bethlehem. Whatever the linguistic and social history of the city and its territory in the previous period, it is quite clear that the Christian community of Jerusalem, which now emerges into the light of day, was officially Greek-speaking, with some members being speakers of Aramaic or Syriac⁶. Whether Jews were officially still debarred from Jerusalem or not, some Christian accounts do imply, as we will see, that there was now at least one synagogue in the city.

The stage was thus set for both a complex social pattern of co-existence (and potential conflict), and for an even more profound collision of beliefs, historical memories, rival claims to the Biblical inheritance, and rival hopes and fears as to what further transformations might take place in the future.

2. THE EMPEROR JULIAN AND THE TEMPLE

This powerful and evocative theme has been discussed many times by modern scholars, and no attempt will be made here to rehearse or review the contributions of all the studies to whom this paper is deeply indebted⁷. Nor will another attempt be made to reconstruct what really happened in 363; instead it will review the vast variety of interpretations and values placed on the idea of the Temple, primarily by Christians. It is typically in Christian writings that we find expositions of values and expectations held by Jews – but for which, as we will see, the archaeological evidence from Late Antique synagogues in Palestine now offers some support. In its emphasis towards the end on Christian texts which were either composed, or are known to have been in circulation, in the sixth century, this paper owes a most profound debt to an as yet unpublished arti-

⁵ *Jerome*, Ep. 58,3, recording that Hilarion went only once to Jerusalem in order that he should seem neither to neglect the holy places in spite of his closeness to them, nor again to seclude God in a (mere) place. For, so Jerome reports, for 180 years, from Hadrian to the reign of Constantine a statue of Jupiter stood on the site of the Resurrection and one of the Venus on the rock of the Cross.

⁶ This is made clear in the account of the Christian pilgrim 'Egeria', dating to the 380's: the bishop always preached in Greek, even if he in fact knew 'the Syrian language', and a translator helped those without Greek, as one did also Latin speakers. See P. Maraval (ed.), *Egérie, Journal de Voyage* (Sources Chrétiennes 296, Paris, 1982), 47, 3–4.

⁷ See for example *J. Vogt*, *Kaiser Iulian und das Judentum* (Leipzig, 1939); *M. Avi-Yonah*, *The Jews of Palestine: a Political History from the Bar Kochba War to the Arab Conquest* (Oxford, 1976); *G.W. Bowersock*, *Julian the Apostate* (London, 1978); *R.L. Wilken*, *The Land called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven, 1992); *M. Parmentier*, 'No Stone upon Another? Reactions of the Church Fathers Against the Emperor Julian's Attempt to Rebuild the Temple', in M. Poorthuis and Ch. Safrai (eds.), *The Centrality of Jerusalem: Historical Perspectives* (Kampen, 1996), 143; *R.J. Penella*, 'Emperor Julian, the temple of Jerusalem and the god of the Jews', *Koinonia* 23 (1999), 15; *G. Stemberger*, *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land: Palestine in the Fourth Century* (Edinburgh, 2000), esp. ch. VII; *S. Schwartz*, *Imperialism and Jewish Society* (Princeton, 2001); *J. Hahn* (ed.), *Zerstörungen des Jerusalemer Tempels: Geschehen-Wahrnehmung – Bewältigung* (Tübingen, 2002), esp. 237f.; *J. Hahn*, 'Kaiser Julian und ein dritter Tempel?'; *J.W. Drijvers*, *Cyril of Jerusalem: Bishop and City* (*Vigiliae Christianae*, Supp. 72, Leiden, 2004); *A.S. Jacobs*, *Remains of the Jews: the Holy Land and Christian Empire in Late Antiquity* (Stanford, 2004); *G.G. Stroumsa*, *La fin du sacrifice: les mutations religieuses de l'Antiquité tardive* (Paris, 2005), esp. ch. III: 'Transformations du rituel'; *Y.Z. Eliav*, *God's Mountain: the Temple Mount in Time, Place, and Memory* (Baltimore, 2005).

cle by Yannis Papadoyannakis on a neglected text from the reign of Justinian⁸. For, as will be seen at a series of separate points below, the fact that the Temple still in the sixth century played a significant part in the outlook of Christians – and perhaps especially among Syriac-speaking Christians – is of considerable significance.

Before we consider Christian conceptions, however, we need to discuss pagan and then Jewish ones. But in fact only one pagan writer, the Emperor Julian himself, a former Christian with a knowledge of the Bible and of Jewish and Christian history, can be found to have any developed conception of the Temple, and its possible role and meaning. One pagan narrative writer, but one only, Ammianus Marcellinus, offers a brief account of the steps taken to restore the Temple in the first part of the year 363⁹: «*Ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolimam templum, quod post multa et interneciva certamina, obsidente Vespasiano, posteaque Tito, aegre est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus cogitabat immodicis, negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiochensi ... Cum itaque rei idem fortiter instaret Alypius, iuvaretque provinciae rector, metuendi globi flammaram prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exustis aliquotiens operantibus inaccessum, hocque modo elemento destinatius repellente, cessavit inceptum*».

The passage is enough to establish that the project really was begun, and then abandoned in the face of outbreaks of fire, without giving any rationale for it beyond the search for glory. Nor does it record, as almost all Christian sources do, any active role on the part of Jews.

Such a rationale, from the pagan perspective, is supplied only by the Emperor himself, first in his *Against the Galileans*, and secondly (perhaps) in a letter ‘To the *koinon* of the Jews’; this has often been thought to be inauthentic, and it has recently been argued that it is a forgery reflecting the situation after CE 429¹⁰. If so, and if it is a Christian forgery, it will belong with the Church Historian discussed below. Julian was aware that in the past, before the destruction of CE 70, Judaism had shared with paganism the practice of animal sacrifice, and also knew that the Biblical rules laid down that such sacrifices could take place only in Jerusalem in the Temple. Even so, in *Against the Galileans*, he adds original and thought-provoking considerations of his own¹¹: «No doubt some sharp-sighted person will answer, “The Jews do not sacrifice”. But I will convict him of being terribly dull-sighted, for in the first place I reply that neither do you [Christians] also observe any one of the other customs observed by the Jews; and secondly, that the Jews do sacrifice in their own houses, and even to this day everything that they eat is consecrated (306A); and they pray before sacrificing, and give the right shoulder to the priests as the first fruits; but since they have been deprived of their temple, or, as they are accustomed to call it, their holy place, they are prevented from

⁸ Y. Papadoyannakis, ‘A Debate about the Rebuilding of the Temple in Sixth-Century Byzantium’, in G. Gardner and K. Osterloh (eds.), *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World* (in press).

⁹ Ammianus XXIII.1.2–3. See the detailed discussion by J.W. Drijvers, ‘Ammianus Marcellinus 23.1.2–3: The Rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem’, in J. den Boeft, D. den Hengst and H.C. Teitler (eds.), *Cognitio Gestorum: the Historiographic Art of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Amsterdam, 1992), 19.

¹⁰ Julian, Ep. 25 Hertlein; /204 Bidez–Cumont/51 Loeb. See M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism II* (Jerusalem, 1980), 559–568, no. 486a. See now the significant arguments for inauthenticity advanced by P. van Nuffelen, ‘Deux fausses lettres de Julien l’Apostat’, *Vigiliae Christianae* 52 (2002), 131.

¹¹ Julian, *Against the Galileans*, 305B–306B, Loeb trans., and see Stern, op.cit., 513–548, no. 481a (on p. 542).

offering the first fruits of the sacrifice of God. But why do you [Christians] not sacrifice, since you have invented your new kind of sacrifice and do not need Jerusalem at all? And yet it was superfluous to ask you this question, since I said the same thing at the beginning, (306B) when I wished to show that the Jews agree with Gentiles, except that they believe in only one God. That is indeed peculiar to them and strange to us, since all the rest we have in a manner in common with them – temples, sanctuaries, altars, purifications, and certain precepts. For as to these we differ from one another either not at all or in trivial matters...»

In the letter ‘To the Koinon of the Jews’, mentioned above, a further dimension is added, namely that the god to whom the Jews, once relieved of oppressive taxation, will be able to pray in peace of mind is the same all-powerful creator god who had given Julian the Imperial power (ἔτι μείζονας εὐφχᾶς ποιήσθε ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμῶν βασιλείας τῷ πάντων κρείττονι καὶ δημιουργῷ θεῷ τῷ καταξιώσαντι στέψαι με τῇ ἀχράντῳ αὐτοῦ δεξίᾳ). Then, at the end, comes a promise that after his prospective victory against Persia he will rebuild Jerusalem. If this letter is indeed genuine, it must have been in a different letter ‘to the Jews’ that Julian made the promise quoted by John Lydus in the sixth century¹²: ‘Ἀνεγείρω μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας τὸν ναὸν Ὑψίστου Θεοῦ. The expression ‘the Highest God’ (Hypsistos Theos) of course reflects the current tendency to monotheistic, or henotheistic, beliefs, well-known from Late Antiquity¹³.

We can thus discern a quite clear rationale by which yet another set of local, or ethnic, sacrifices would be directed (ultimately) to the Highest God who existed behind all local manifestations. Moreover, the range of sacrifices being offered would be expanded, and Julian would have the glory of restoring what Vespasian and Titus had destroyed.

It is extremely significant, however, that these conceptions, apart from the last, find no reflection in any pagan writer. This ‘absence’ is surely most notable in the deeply committed pagan narrative of the reign, written only a couple of years after the Emperor’s death on campaign, the *Oration XVIII* of Libanius, his so-called *Epitaphios* for Julian¹⁴. There is in fact nothing to suggest that Libanius, or any other pagan, shared the Emperor’s vision of a restored Temple, or of a renewed Jewish sacrificial calendar which would be analogous to pagan ones.

Nor, so far as Jewish sources can tell us, did Jews share in these hopes. That the memory of the Temple remained important to Jews, or at the least to some Jews, is beyond doubt, as we will see later. But specific allusions to Julian’s plans are lacking, in spite of many attempts to find them¹⁵. The ‘absence’ of Julian is particularly noticeable in the case of the Midrash on the Book of Lamentations (known also as the *Midrash Threni* or *Midrash Eekah Rabbati*), thought to have been composed in the first half of the fifth century CE in Palestine¹⁶. This work is distinctive in the frequency of its his-

¹² *Ioannes Lydus*, de mens. IV, 53; Stern, op.cit., 568 (no. 486b).

¹³ See above all the major paper by *S. Mitchell*, ‘The Cult of Theos Hypsistos between Pagans, Jews, and Christians’, in P. Athanassiadi and M. Frede (eds.), *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 1999), 81.

¹⁴ See *F. Millar*, ‘Libanius and the Near East’, *Scripta Classica Israelica* 26 (2007), 155.

¹⁵ See for instance, *M. Adler*, ‘The Emperor Julian and the Jews’, *JQR* 5 (1893), 591; *W. Bacher*, ‘Statements of a Contemporary of the Emperor Julian on the Rebuilding of the Temple’, *JQR* 10 (1898), 168, and the valuable survey and analysis by *G. Stemberger*, ‘Reaktionen auf die Tempelzerstörung in der rabbinischen Literatur’, in Hahn (ed.), op.cit. (n. 7 above), 207.

¹⁶ Edited by *S. Buber*, *Midrash Echa Rabbati* (Wilna, 1899, repr. 1967) and translated into English by *A. Cohen* in the *Soncino Midrash*, edited by *H. Freedman* and *M. Simon*, vol. VII.2: *Deuteronomy and Lamentations* (London, 1951).

torical references to the destruction inflicted by Vespasian, Titus and Hadrian – but no allusion to Julian’s abortive restoration appears¹⁷.

The supposed ‘presence’ or involvement of Jews, either in persuading Julian to undertake his project, or in responding to it, which plays no part in Ammianus’s conceptions (and a *fortiori* none in Libanius’), or in Jewish sources, is by contrast a central feature of Christian accounts. For Christians, there was a further theological dimension to the issue, for the destruction of the Temple had been foretold not only in Daniel (9:26–7), but also by Jesus himself, as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, in response to a question from his disciples arising from the massive building-works which were under way in his time¹⁸. I cite the earliest version, that of Mark, though for some reason in contemporary scholarship that of Matthew is normally quoted: «Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ λέγει αὐτῷ εἰς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, Διδάσκαλε, ἴδε ποταποὶ λίθοι καὶ ποταπαὶ οἰκοδομαί. Καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ. Βλέπεις ταύτας τᾶς μεγάλας οἰκοδομάς; οὐ μὴ ἀφελθῇ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῇ».

This saying was of contemporary relevance even under Julian’s Christian predecessor as Emperor, Constantius, and at a time, in the early 350’s, when no-one could have had any reason to expect a project for restoration, whether initiated by an Emperor or anyone else. On the contrary, when Cyril, the bishop of Jerusalem, delivered his tenth *Catechesis* at that time, the expectation was of a final removal of those vestiges of the Temple which still remained, after which the Antichrist would come, followed by the Second Coming¹⁹: «The Antichrist will come when in the Jewish Temple a stone does not remain on a stone, as the Saviour proclaimed. For when their age leads all the stones to collapse or they are knocked down with a view to rebuilding or for some other reasons – I am not referring to the stones of the outer perimeter, but those of the Temple inside, where the cherubim stood – then he is to come amid all his lying signs and portents».

It has recently been argued that the key element in Julian’s conception of the plan for rebuilding was provided by pagan oracles, responding to Christian prophecies of this type. On this interpretation, the essential motivation was neither the glory of rebuilding nor an attempted integration with a revived Judaism, again practising sacrifice, but ever more over hostility to Christianity²⁰.

That Julian’s project was widely known among Christians in the Eastern provinces, and caused consternation among them, is clear from the two immediately contemporary reactions, by Ephraem the Syrian, writing in Nisibis (where he witnessed the return of the defeated Roman army bringing back with it the body of the deceased Emperor), and Gregory of Nazianzus in Cappadocia. Both assume that Jews had a major part in initiating the project. Within the text of Ephraem four (or on one view five) *Hymns against Julian*, preserved on a very early manuscript, of CE 519, it is a passage

¹⁷ Note Proem. XII (Vespasian), and, in the main commentary, I.5, para. 31 (Vespasian); I.14, para. 45 (Vespasian, Hadrian and Trajan); I.17, para. 52 (Vespasian); II.2, para. 4 (Hadrian, R. Akiba, Bar Koziba); III.21, para. 8 (Hadrian); III.45, para. 9 (R. Akiba tried before Tanneius Rufus); III.58–60, para. 9 (Hadrian).

¹⁸ Mark 13:1–2; Matthew 24:2; Luke 21:5–6.

¹⁹ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 10, 11 (Migne, PG XXXIII, cols. 676–677 (see also Cat. 15, 15, PG XXIII, cols. 890), translated by E. Yarnold, Cyril of Jerusalem (London, 2000), 9.

²⁰ See the very suggestive paper by M.B. Simmons, ‘The Emperor Julian’s Order to Rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem: A Connection with Oracles?’, ANES 41 (2006), 68, which is also the fullest review of the material.

in Hymn IV which focuses most precisely on the Temple²¹. Ephraem sees Jews ('the crucifiers') as directly responsible for the threat to rebuild the Temple, which had earlier been destroyed because of their sins, and as believing that 'the builder of altars' (Julian) would achieve this for them. Daniel's prophecy is quoted twice, and the *Hymn* proclaims that the plan had been ended by earthquake and fire. No precise conception of the relations between the Jews and Julian is offered; but there is a clear representation, or allegation, of impious Jewish hopes which then found substance in Julian, the restorer of (pagan) altars, and also a very significant reference (see above) to Julian's reliance on diviners and soothsayers.

Ephraem seems clearly to have been writing in 363, the year of Julian's death, of the retreat of his army, and of the surrender of Nisibis to the Persians. Gregory of Nazianzus' two orations *Against Julian* are also closely contemporary, perhaps belonging to 364 or early 365²². The section devoted to the project for rebuilding the Temple comes in the second oration (V, 3–4). In Gregory's narrative, composed in Cappadocia at some distance from the scene of the events in question, the initiative had been Julian's and it had been he who had aroused against 'us' (the Christians) 'the Jewish tribe' (τὸ Ἰουδαῖον φύλον), exploiting their long-established hatred, and inspiring them with the revelation, based on their 'books and secret (writings?)', that the time had now come for them to return to their *patria*, to rebuild the Temple and renew the operation of their traditional rites, thus 'concealing his intentions under the cover of benevolence' (V, 3).

When Gregory continues his account in V, 4, his narrative is striking in its detail. The Jews are described as responding enthusiastically and in large numbers. Admirers of Jewish customs are described as reporting that Jewish women not only took off their ornaments and contributed them for the work, but laboured physically on construction. But when they were suddenly struck by a storm and earthquake, they fled into one of the nearby churches. Some reported that 'the church' (τὸ ἱερόν) did not receive them, but that a mysterious force caused the doors to shut. All observers agreed that flames shot out from the *hieron* and burned them. The reader is urged to accept the veracity of the story, and its status as evidence of God's will.

In other accounts (see below) the presence of at least one synagogue in Jerusalem is reported. But the word *hieron* here is clearly meant to imply a Christian church, and one of several.

The source of Gregory's picture of events is not known (though Neil McLynn points out to me that the Imperial court will have passed through Nazianzus on its march back late in 363), it may be fantasy. If it is not wholly fantasy, it raises the question of whether there was by now once again a significant Jewish population in Jerusalem; and, if not, of the identity of the 'tribe' of Jews who collaborated with Julian, and from where they had come – or may have written. This question ties in with one raised by Julian's supposed letter to the *koinon* of the Jews. Where was there a substantial Jewish

²¹ Hymn IV.18–23, trans. by J.M. Lieu in S.N.C. Lieu (ed.), *The Emperor Julian: Panegyric and Polemic* (Liverpool, 1986), 91f., on pp. 123–125, and in K. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns* (New York, 1989), 219f. For the Syriac text see E. Beck, *Corp. Scr. Chr. Or. CLXXV–VI* (1957). See esp. S.H. Griffith, 'Ephraem the Syrian's Hymns 'Against Julian': Meditations on History and Imperial Power', *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), 238, esp. 258f.

²² Orations IV–V, ed. and trans. J. Bernardi, Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 4–5 Contre Julien (Sources Chrétiennes 309, Paris, 1983). See A. Kurmana, *Gregor von Nazians, Oratio 4 gegen Julian, Ein Kommentar* (Basel, 1988); L. Lugaresi, *Gregorio di Nazianzo Contro Giuliano l'Apostata, Orazione IV* (Firenze, 1993); *Gregorio di Nazianzo, la morte di Giuliano l'Apostata, Orazione V* (Firenze, 1977).

population, and what, if any, form of organisation represented it? We will return to this question several times later.

The abortive re-building naturally plays a part in the work of all four of the major Church Historians who wrote in the fifth century. Firstly, Socrates, a major religious and political historian who deserves a more prominent place in our conceptions of Graeco-Roman historiography than he generally receives, sees Julian as turning to the Jews because pagans had not generally followed him in his dedication to sacrifices²³. He therefore summoned 'Jews', not further identified, and asked them why, when the Law commanded them to sacrifice, they did not do so; they replied that they could legally sacrifice only in Jerusalem (and by implication in a temple). Julian then ordered work to begin. (Socrates' summary account is thus close to the conceptions found in Julian's own writing, as we saw earlier). Socrates also places at this moment the prediction by Cyril of Jerusalem, on the basis of the prophecy in Daniel and that in the Gospels, that 'not one stone would remain on another'. Earthquake and fire duly followed. Theodoret tells the same story in rather less detail²⁴, while Sozomenus gives a more elaborate version, identifying the leaders of the Jews whom Julian summoned to him as *patriarchai* and *archegoi*, recording the same question and answer, and bringing in the detail of women selling their ornaments and carrying earth. To Sozomenus, furthermore, not only Jews but pagans generally were enthusiastic, in the vain expectation that Jesus' prediction would be proved false. After divine displeasure had been demonstrated, some Jews converted to Christianity, and offered hymns and supplications to Christ, begging forgiveness for their audacity²⁵.

None of these authors offers any conception of any specific Jewish communal structure, or of the geographical origins of the Jews who participated. Their slightly earlier Arian contemporary, Philostorgius, however, does add details which, if veridical, would be very relevant²⁶. In this reconstruction Julian (again) aimed specifically to disprove Jesus' prediction, and also expelled Christians from the city and gave it to the Jews to occupy, sending Alypius to supervise the rebuilding of the Temple (a correct detail, found also in Ammianus, above). But the same natural disasters followed, described in more detail: many other cities in Palestine suffered from the earthquake, including Nicopolis, Neapolis, Eleutheropolis and Gaza; while in Jerusalem, or Aelia, a stoa next to 'the synagogue of the Jews' collapsed, and many Jews also died in a fire.

Before we return to the questions of either an established Jewish presence in Aelia in its early decades as a Christian city, or of any possible body which could have represented 'the Jews' before the Emperor, we need to look first at a variety of Christian writers of the late fourth or early fifth centuries, and their conceptions of the meaning of these events. Between them, they are (to say the least) erratic and varied in their representation of what the Temple meant, or might mean. But what they make clear beyond any doubt is the depth of the impression made by Julian's project, and the profundity of the anxieties felt, whether prompted directly by it, or based on more general conceptions of the place of the Temple. Some Christian reports are mere eccentric fantasies. Rufinus in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, writing in Latin in Italy, tells essentially

²³ Socrates, HE III, 20. See T. Urbainszyk, Socrates of Constantinople, Historian of Church and State (Ann Arbor, 1997). See now W. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (Basingstoke, 2007), 134f.

²⁴ Theodoret, HE III, 20.

²⁵ Sozomenus, HE V, 22.

²⁶ See Philostorgius, HE IX, 9, and (more fully) 9a (from the Artemii Passio); cf. 14. For Philostorgius see E. Argov, 'Giving the Heretic a Voice: Philostorgius of Borissus and Greek Ecclesiastical Historiography', *Athenaeum* 89 (2001), 497.

the same story as would appear in the Greek Church Historians from the reign of Theodosius II, adding the assertion that Jews 'came together from every place and province'²⁷. But Orosius, writing in Spain, contributes the story that what Julian intended to construct in Jerusalem was an amphitheatre, in which Christian bishops, monks and holy men would be thrown to the beasts; nothing is said here of the Temple²⁸.

In the Greek East, it is clear that concern about the Temple was widespread. For instance, Isidore of Pelusium writes to advise a bishop, also named Isidorus, who has been disputing with a Jew over the meaning of the prophecy in Haggai (2:9–10) about the rebuilding of the Temple²⁹. More significantly, John Chrysostom, preaching to Christians in Antioch in the 380's about their duty not to be attracted by the services held, and festivals celebrated, in the synagogues in the city, still feels the need to refer repeatedly to the Temple, and to Julian's project for rebuilding it³⁰. Nothing could show more clearly the concern felt. As he says explicitly, at one point, it was only the fact of continuing Imperial repression which prevented the Jews from being an active threat³¹.

3. CHRISTIAN WRITERS AND THE TEMPLE

Ideas which were even more profound and disturbing could circulate in the fourth and fifth centuries, sometimes in relation to Julian's project, and sometimes not. Thus Theodoret, writing his commentary on Ezekiel in the mid-fifth century, can look back to some prospects aired in the later fourth century by the notoriously heretical Apollinarius (or Apollinaris), bishop of Laodicea in Syria in the mid-fourth century³²: «Apollinarius promises us another building of Jerusalem and a (Christian) observance in accordance with the Jewish Law, with belief in Christ added to respect for the Law. Then once again (there will be) churches at odds with one another, one composed of gentiles outside the Law, and one of Jews conducting itself in accordance with the Law».

Similar, if even more extravagant, ideas are expressed on occasion by Jerome (see below), and it has been argued recently that these conceptions of his derive from Apollinari(u)s' writings³³. Even if that is so, Jerome must be regarded as a witness of exceptional importance for the conceptions which moulded Jewish-Christian relations in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, in that he was not only settled in Bethlehem from the mid 380's to his death in 420, but made major efforts to learn Hebrew, to study the Hebrew Bible, and to interact with Jewish scholars³⁴. Moreover, in his style of writing,

²⁷ Rufinus, HE X, 38–40, see *F. Thélamon*, *Païens et chrétiens au IV^e siècle. L'apport de l'Histoire ecclésiastique de Rufin d'Aquilée* (Paris, 1981), ch. 4.

²⁸ Orosius, *Historia adversus Paganos* VII, 30.

²⁹ Isidorus, Ep. IV, 17 (PG LXXVIII, col. 1064 D).

³⁰ See *R.L. Wilken*, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley, 1983), and note esp. *Contra Iudaeos et Gentiles Demonstratio, Quod Christus sit Deus* (Migne, PG XLVIII, cols. 813f.), 16 (834–835); Homilies I–VII Against the Jews/Judaizing Christians (PG XLVIII, 843f.), esp. IV.6; V. 1–11 (trans. by *P.W. Harkins*, *John Chrysostom, Discourses against Judaizing Christians*, 1997); *Hom. in prodicionem Judae* (XLIX, cols. 373f.), I.5 (379); II.5 (388–389); *De Laudibus S. Pauli* (L, cols. 473f.), IV (489); *Liber in Sanctum Babylam* (L, cols. 533f.); *M.A. Schatkin*, SC 362, 1990; *eadem*, *St John Chrysostom Apologist* (Washington, 1985), 21–23 (L, cols. 565–571); In Matt., Hom. IV.1 (PG LVII/VIII, cols. 40–41).

³¹ In Matt. Hom. XLIII–IV (PG LVII/VIII, cols. 460–461).

³² Theodoret, In Ezechielem 48:35 (PG LXXXI, col. 1248).

³³ See *W. Kinzig*, 'Jewish and 'Judaizing' Eschatologies in Jerome', in *R. Kalmin and S. Schwartz* (eds.), *Jewish Culture and Society under the Christian Roman Empire* (Leuven, 2003), 409.

³⁴ See the masterly biographical treatment of Jerome by *J.N.D. Kelly*, *Jerome, His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London, 1975).

he constantly offers concrete observations on features of the (very mixed) Palestinian society of his time, in which pagans, Christians, Jews and Samaritans co-existed, and to episodes from its earlier history. We shall see later a significant report of his relating to current Jewish views of the Temple and its origins. On other occasions his allusions fit with the conceptions in the Christian narratives discussed above. So, commenting on Daniel 11:34–35, and the ‘little help’ referred to there, he reports³⁵: «Some of the Hebraei understood this as referring to the Emperors Severus and Antoninus [Caracalla], who greatly favoured the Jews. But others (as referring) to the Emperor Julian, because, when they had been oppressed by Gallus Caesar, and had suffered much in the constraints of captivity, he (Julian) arose, claiming to love the Jews and promising that he would sacrifice in their Temple».

There is always uncertainty as to views attributed to Jews by Christian writers, but in the case of Jerome, as we will see again later, there is at least an increased chance that his statements reflect actual contacts. At all events, the report of Julian’s promise is highly significant.

It is quite a different matter when Jerome, deploying his finest rhetorical style, attributes a view of restored Jerusalem to both Jews and Judaising Christians, very probably reflecting the views of Apollinari(u)s. The context is his commentary on Zechariah³⁶: «Exstructionem urbis Hierusalem, et aquarum egressum de medio eius, quae ad utrumque defluant mare, Iudaei et Christiani Iudaizantes, ultimo sibi tempore repromittunt, quando rursum exercenda circumcisio sit, et immolandae victimae, et omnia legis praecepta servanda, ut non Iudaei Christiani, sed Christiani Iudaei fiant. In die, inquit, illa, quando Christus in Hierusalem aurea atque gemmata sederit regnaturus, non erunt idola nec diuinitatis cultura diuersa, sed erit Dominus unus, et revertetur omnis terra usque ad solitudinem, id est in antiquum statum». (The Jews and Judaising Christians promise themselves at the end of time the building-up of Jerusalem, and the pouring forth of waters from its midst, flowing down to both seas. Then circumcision is again to be practised, victims are to be sacrificed and all the precepts of the Law are to be kept, so that it will not be a matter of Jews becoming Christians, but of Christians becoming Jews. On that day, they say, when the *Christus* will take his seat to rule in a golden and jewelled Jerusalem, there will be no more idols nor varieties of worship of the divinity, but there will be one God, and the whole world will revert to solitude, that is, to its ancient state).

Perhaps no passage in Late Antique Christian literature expresses so powerfully the vision of a restoration of Jerusalem as a Jewish city, the renewal of sacrifices (implying the rebuilding of the Temple), and of the practice of circumcision, and in general the re-absorption of Christians into Jewish monotheism. In the real world neither Jews nor Judaising Christians were ever to attain anything like the power to bring about such a revolution; and there would never again be a pagan Emperor to lend his weight to any such plan.

But, firstly, as we will see below, comparable ideas could still be expressed in the sixth century. Moreover, in the fifth and sixth centuries, we can see that several Christian narrative texts were in circulation which presented accounts either of Julian’s project for the Temple or of Jewish aspirations in relation to it. As it happens, all three

³⁵ Jerome, In Daniele 11:34 (Corp. Chr., ser. Lat. LXXVA, 923–924).

³⁶ Jerome, In Zechariam 14:10–11 (Corp. Chr., ser. Lat. LXXVIA, 885). For a thorough review of Jerome’s references to ‘iudaizantes’, arguing that they derive primarily from intra-Christian polemics, and have little claim to represent the conceptions held by contemporary Jews, see H. Newman, ‘Jerome’s Judaizers’, *Journ. Early Chr. St.* 9 (2001), 421.

of the relevant texts, in the form in which we know them, are in Syriac, and two of the three are found in manuscripts which themselves date to the Late Antique period, before the Islamic conquest. Whether they had been composed originally in Greek or in Syriac may remain uncertain. But the manuscripts prove that they were in circulation in Syriac. All these narratives show a strongly fictional character. But that, if anything, increases their historical importance, rather than the opposite. For what concerns us most is not reconstructing precisely ‘what happened’ (which we can know, if at all, only in outline), but what conceptions were held by Christians, or attributed by them to Jews.

The most significant of the relevant texts is the already famous text published by S.P. Brock, which represents itself as a letter from Cyril of Jerusalem describing the failure of Julian’s rebuilding project³⁷. The full text derives from a manuscript written (in the context of the continuous tradition of Syriac hand-written texts) in 1899. But it is extremely important that the opening part of it is found in a manuscript attributed to the sixth century. So the whole can be safely regarded as a Late Antique text. It is hardly likely that, as a whole, the text reproduces an actual letter of Cyril, otherwise unattested, which would have been written originally in Greek. On the contrary, the text begins with a heading which is typical of entries in Syriac chronicles: ‘Concerning the matter (MTL HY) of how many miracles took place when the Jews received the order to build the Temple...’ It then continues with ‘The Letter (‘GRT’) which was sent by the holy Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, concerning the Jews...’, with the address then following. In the body of the supposed letter the name of Julian does not appear, and the narrative concentrates first on events in Jerusalem, and then on a long list of the cities in Palestine which suffered in the earthquake. Julian is named only in the final paragraph recording his death on campaign and summing up his part and God’s punishment of him for it. As it stands, this paragraph can only have been written after the arrival of news of Julian’s death, which took place on June 26, 363. This section is therefore likely to have been an editorial addition, even if (as is far from certain) the body of the text is based on an original letter of Cyril’s. I quote the final paragraph in Sebastian Brock’s translation, with a couple of points added in brackets: «This event [the earthquake] took place on Monday at the third hour, and partly at the ninth hour of the night. There was great loss of life here. (It was) on 19 Iyyar of the year 674 of the kingdom of Alexander the Greek [May 19, 363]. This year the pagan Julian died [June 26, 363], and it was he who especially incited the Jews to rebuild the Temple, since he favoured them because they had crucified Christ. Justice overtook this rebel at his death in enemy territory, and in this the sign of the power of the cross was revealed, because he had denied Him who had been hung upon it for the salvation and life of all».

If we turn to the main narrative, it is clear that, allowing for considerably more detail here, there are features in common with the version found in Philostorgius. The narrative records the earthquake which followed on the digging of the foundations, elaborate Christian demonstrations in response, and then the Jews running to their synagogue [BYT KNWŠT’], finding its doors closed, and then most of them being consumed by flames issuing from it. In response to this miracle Jews and Christians together shout ‘There is but one God, one Christ, who is victorious!’. Pagan idols are torn down and the whole city receives baptism, Jews and pagans also. Like Philostorgius, the text lists cities in Palestine damaged by the earthquake, but gives many more cases.

³⁷ Edited and translated by S.P. Brock, ‘A Letter attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the Rebuilding of the Temple’, *Bull. Sch. Or. Afr. Stud.* 40 (1977), 267 (Syriac text and English translation on pp. 269–276) = *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* (London, 1984), no. x.

Some report comparable to this had certainly been in circulation by the first half of the fifth century, since Philostorgius reflects it. But it must remain very improbable that there was an actual letter of Cyril in existence, but not quoted or referred to by any early sources. It is impossible to disprove the possibility that the text reflects contemporary reports. But it is in any case more important to see it, in its sixth-century embodiment, as an expression of the enduring tension felt by Christians in relation to the Temple.

The same is true of the second Syriac text which is relevant, the so-called 'Julian Romance', which in fact represents two separate Christian narratives, the first concerning an imaginary bishop of Rome, Eusebius, supposedly martyred under Julian, while the second focuses on Julian's Christian successor, Jovian. Following the great Theodor Nöldeke, we may accept that these narratives were composed in Edessa early in the sixth century, and remained in circulation thereafter³⁸. Jews from several places in the Near East – Tiberias, Tarsus, and Edessa – play a quite prominent part in the story, as does the project for the rebuilding of the Temple. But the narrative, focused on Jovian's conduct, under Julian and then as Emperor, never actually describes the attempted rebuilding, or its abandonment.

This strongly novelistic, and pietistic, story has all too much to reveal about Christian attitudes to Jews. But in this context we may concentrate on the specific episodes in which the question of the Temple arises. First, there is an extended episode, covering several pages (Hoffmann, 108f.; Gollancz, pp. 117–125), in which the 'Chief Priests' living in Tiberius (RBY KHN' D'MRYN BṬBRYWS) learn that Julian is coming to Syria and come to him in Tarsus bearing gifts. The Jews of Tarsus itself object that they are compromising themselves. But those from Tiberias reply that their zeal for the rebuilding of the Temple justifies their seeking the favour of a pagan Emperor. Julian himself then tests them to see how far they will go, first by eating unclean food when offered, and then by making public offerings to idols. Finally they address a long sycophantic letter to the Emperor, begging for permission to rebuild: 'Julian permitted them to lay bare what remained of their Temple, that there may be accomplished concerning it that which our Lord had said: «Stone shall not remain upon stone in it», and that further prophecy which says: «Open, open until the foundations thereof»'.

No-one will take this as other than a pious historical novel, designed to represent the leaders of the Jews as compromising their beliefs for the sake of the Temple. But, firstly, Julian did pass through Tarsus on his way to Antioch (Ammianus XXII, 9, 13); and it was normal for local communities in areas to which the Emperor came to send delegations to appear before him bearing gifts. Secondly, a glance at any map showing the distribution of synagogues as revealed by archaeology will show that the majority of known Late Antique synagogues in Palestine were to be found in the area of Tiberias, in north-eastern Galilee and on the Golan heights³⁹. If there were any representative Jewish institutions which were in a position to approach the Emperor, or be summoned

³⁸ The complete text has been edited only once, from a unique ms in the British Museum (now British Library), by *J.G.E. Hoffmann*, *Julianos der Abtruennige, Syrische Erzählungen* (Leiden, 1880); English translation by *H. Gollancz*, *Julian the Apostate* (London, 1928). Note also *R.J.H. Gottheil*, *A Selection from the Syriac Julian Romance* (1906). For the date and context of composition see *Th. Nöldeke*, 'Ueber den Syrischen Roman von Kaiser Julian', *ZDMG* 28 (1874), 263.

³⁹ See the separate maps of churches and of synagogues in the Holy Land in *Y. Tsafirir*, *L. Di Segni* and *J. Green*, *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea/Palaestina: Maps and Gazetteer* (Jerusalem, 1994).

by him, it is precisely from Tiberias, the main centre of the predominantly Jewish area, that they will have come.

The question of the Temple arises again in the narrative after Julian has crossed the Euphrates on his campaign against Persia (Hoffmann, pp. 121f.; Gollancz, pp. 143–6). Again the Jews of Edessa ('WRHY) send a delegation to appear before him, headed by the 'Chief of the Synagogue of the Jews' (RB KNWŠTHWN DYHWD'), and, when reproached by the Emperor for not worshipping the gods, say that they will – but also ask for the restoration of Zion and the Temple. Julian duly promises: «When we return in peace unto our realm, I shall build and fortify your city. It will be called after the name of our realm, and I shall renew the house of your worship which is in ruins. I shall increase its former glory, so that it may be more than the former glory which it had in the days of Solomon, who built it and adorned it».

The so-called 'Julian Romance' would deserve a modern edition, facing translation and commentary, as a prime example of Christian religious writing (and of Syriac narrative prose). The same could be said of the third Syriac text to be considered, the *Life* of Barsauma. The 'real' Barsauma was a well-known archimandrite from the area of Samosata, a Syriac-speaker who took part in the Second Council of Ephesus in 449 at the personal invitation of the Emperor, Theodosius II. His Syriac *Life*, edited and translated by F. Nau only in part, depends on manuscripts of the 11th–13th centuries, and is thought by E. Honigman to have been composed in about 550–650 CE, and to be largely fictional in content⁴⁰. It retails a series of violent conflicts against pagans, Samaritans and especially Jews, as well as confrontations with the Empress Eudocia, now settled in Jerusalem, and with Theodosius II himself, which find no confirmation in sources closer to the time, and should also be regarded as pious romantic fiction. Since the setting is the fifth century, the specific question of rebuilding the Temple does not arise. But a powerful representation is offered of the Jews of Galilee and elsewhere petitioning Eudocia successfully for permission to pray on the ruins of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, and of their writing a letter, which is quoted verbatim, to other Jewish communities to say that 'our rule (MLKWTN) will be re-established there'. Jews assemble at the Temple to pray, only for their prayers to be disrupted by heavenly forces. There is then a violent assault led by Barsauma's followers, which is opposed by soldiers sent by Eudocia, and by local Christians.

These three Syriac narratives, of varying length, which were evidently current in the sixth century, provide ample testimony to the mixture of hostility and apprehension with which Jews were, or could be, regarded by Christians, and to the fears and uncertainties aroused by reflection on the role which Jerusalem, and perhaps the Temple itself, might come to acquire. The prominence of the Temple, and of Solomon as its founder, in the conceptions of sixth-century Christians and Jews, is reflected in an episode from the reign of Justinian, as told by Procopius. First was the recovery of the spoils from the Temple, taken to Rome in CE 71 and in 455 captions by the Vandals under Gaiseric (*Bell.* IV, 9, 5–9, Loeb trans., referring back to III, 5, 3): «And there was also silver weighing many thousands of talents and all the royal treasure amounting to an exceedingly great sum (for Gizeric had despoiled the Palatium in Rome, as has been said in the preceding narrative), and among these were the treasures of the Jews, which Titus, the son of Vespasian, together with certain others, had brought to Rome after the

⁴⁰ See the extracts published by F. Nau in *Rev. Or. Chrét.* 18 (1913), 272; 379; 19 (1914), 113 (the part containing the episodes in Jerusalem discussed here); 278; *Rev. Ét. Juives* 83 (1927), 184. See E. Honigmann, *Le couvent de Barsauma* (CSCO, Subsid. Vol., 1954), ch. 2: 'Le Barsauma historique et la vie syriaque de Barsauma'.

capture of Jerusalem. And one of the Jews, seeing these things, approached one of those known to the emperor and said: “These treasures I think it inexpedient to carry into the palace in Byzantium. Indeed, it is not possible for them to be elsewhere than in the place where Solomon, the king of the Jews, formerly placed them. For it is because of these that Gizeric captured the palace of the Romans, and that now the Roman army has captured that the Vandals”. When this had been brought to the ears of the Emperor, he became afraid and quickly sent everything to the sanctuaries of the Christians in Jerusalem».

The report of overt representation by ‘one of the Jews’ is striking, as is the Emperor’s decision that the concerns raised could be satisfied by sending the treasures to the Christian community of Jerusalem. This evidence is matched however by the clear indications that both the Church of S. Polyeuetus, built by Amicia Juliana, and Hagia Sophia itself were conceived of explicitly as rivalling the Temple. The ambition to rival Solomon is made explicit in the poem in honour of Amicia Juliana preserved in the *Greek Anthology* (I, 10)⁴¹. This material, thus offers a possible background to the unexpected appearance of the question of the Temple, in a remarkable work of Justinian’s time, the *Eratapokriseis*, (or *Questions and Answers*) notionally attributed to Kaisarios, the brother of Gregory of Nazianzus⁴². Even with the background sketched here, the terms in which Question 218 is expressed still seem surprising: Πεύσις Ἐπειδὴ οὖν καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι τοῦτο διίσχυρίζονται καὶ τὸ πολὺ μέρος Χριστιανῶν λέγουσιν, ὅτι πάλιν ἔχει ἡ πόλις αὐτῶν οἰκοδομηθῆναι καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν ἀναστήναι καὶ ὅτι πάλιν τὰ νόμου ἔχουσιν ἑορτάζειν καὶ ὅτι, εἰ μὴ ἐβούλετο ὁ θεὸς δεχέσθαι τὰς θυσίας αὐτῶν οὐκ ἂν τῷ Ἀβραάμ θύειν ἐκέλευσεν, οὐκ ἂν ἡμῖν νόμον θυσίων καὶ πόλιν καὶ ἱερὸν ἔδωκεν, λέγουσιν ὅτι, βίᾳ Ῥωμαῖοι ἡμῶν κρατήσαντες ἔδοξαν τὰς ἑορτάς ἡμῶν παύειν ἀφελόμενοι ἡμῶν τὴν πόλιν καὶ πάντα, ἡμεῖς δὲ τὰ τοῦ νόμου φυλάττοντες πάντα καὶ ἑορτάζομεν καὶ θύομεν πάντως γὰρ ἡμῶν δεῖ ἀναστήναι καὶ τὴν πόλιν καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ ἀποδοθῆναι ἡμῖν. Ἐπειδὴ οὖν, ὡς εἴρηται, τὰντα καυχῶνται ἔχοντες συμφωνοῦντα τὸ πολὺ μέρος τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἡμῶν, δέομεθά σου πλατυτέρως τὰ κατ’ αὐτῶν εἰπεῖν καὶ διὰ πλείονων μαρτυριῶν καταισχύναι αὐτοὺς μηδενὶ τρόπῳ μέχρι σήμερον βουλομένους τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀποστήναι». (Question: So, since Jews maintain this, and the majority of Christians (also) say, that their city is due to be rebuilt and the Temple restored, and that they will once again celebrate the rituals laid down by the Law, and (say) «If God had not wished to accept their sacrifices, He would not have commanded Abraham to sacrifice, and would not have granted us the law of sacrifices and a city and Temple», and say «Having overcome us by force, the Romans decided to put an end to our festivals, removing from us the city and everything; but we keep all the provisions of the Law and observe the festivals and sacrifice. For certain, it is due that our city and Temple should be restored and given back to us». So since, as has been said, they make these claims, with the majority of our church in agreement, we beg you to set out in de-

⁴¹ See M. Harrison, *Excavations at Sarāḡhane in Istanbul I* (Princeton, 1986); A temple for Byzantium: the Discovery and Excavation of *Amicia Juliana’s* Palace-Church in Istanbul (London, 1989); J. Bowdill, ‘A new temple for Byzantium: *Amicia Juliana*, king Solomon and the gilded ceiling in the church of S. Polyeuktos in Constantinople’, in W. Bowden, A. Gutteridge and C. Machado (eds.), *Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 2006), 339.

⁴² *Pseudo-Kaisarios*, *Die Eratapokriseis* (GCS LIX, ed. R. Riedinger, 1989), Question 218 (p. 201). See A. di Berardino (ed.), *Patrology: the Eastern Fathers from the Council of Chalcedon (451) to John of Damascus (+750)* (Oxford, 2006), 99–100. As mentioned above (n. 8), I owe a particular debt to Yannis Papadoyannakis for drawing my attention to this text.

tail the case against them, and through numerous written testimonies to shame them, who until now are in no way willing to abandon their hope).

Perhaps even more remarkable is the long 'Answer' (*Apokrisis*) which follows, occupying some 30 printed pages, and in effect offering a historical analysis of the position of Jews and the Temple, and a demonstration of why the Temple would not, and could not, be rebuilt. In a very significant passage towards the end of his 'Answer' (paras. 555–85), the author rehearses, sometimes with fanciful details, the destruction under Vespasian and Titus, a renewed revolt under Hadrian and the foundation of Aelia, and further disturbances under Constantine, and then comes to the reign of Julian: «For under Julian, who exceeded all others in impiety and renounced the [Imperial] concordat with Christ and attached himself to the madness of idols, summoning them [the Jews] to their native pollution of idolatrous sacrifice, and leading them by flattery to their own destruction, then insincerely and misguidedly recommending the ancient mode of lawful worship, saying to them, 'Offer sacrifices and libations and holocausts; for it was thus that your ancestors worshipped the divine by sacrifice'...».

The passage continues with the allegedly reluctant reply by the Jews, that they could not sacrifice unless the Temple was restored, and then rehearses the events of 363 in some detail, ending with an assemblage of Biblical prophecies, from both Old and New Testaments, deployed to prove that restoration was impossible, as being against the divine will. The entire 'question-and-answer' on this topic, which seems never to have been translated into any modern language, represents yet another testimony to Christian awareness, still in the sixth century, of the history of the Temple, and to concerns raised by the idea of its possible restoration. It remains to ask whether Jews in Late Antiquity felt any corresponding concerns, or hopes.

4. JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND THE MEMORY OF THE TEMPLE

What role did the destroyed Temple play in the outlook of Jews in Late Antiquity, and were Christians right to be apprehensive that Jews might want to rebuild it and restore a sacrificial cult there? The question is far too complex to treat here. But between literary and archaeological evidence there is enough to offer hints that this was indeed so. To follow these hints, we must first note the persistent tradition that 'Moriah', where Solomon's Temple was built, was the same place which had witnessed the Binding of Isaac by Abraham (Genesis 22). The tradition appears first in II *Chronicles* (3:1), and is repeated in *Jubilees* (18:13) and in Josephus' *Antiquities* I, 226: 'the mountain on which David (sic) later established the Temple'. For Late Antiquity our best-informed non-Jewish testimony to this tradition comes, as ever, from Jerome, in his *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, commenting on Genesis 22⁴³: «Therefore the Hebrews say that this is the mountain on which the Temple was later founded on the threshing-floor of Orna the Jebusite, as is also written in *Chronicles*...».

As noted above, in Jerome's case there is at least a serious possibility that a view or interpretation which he attributes to 'the Jews', or to some Jews, might not derive from an earlier Christian writer, but be based on actual contact and discussion. In any case, however, as regards a Jewish tradition which claimed that the Temple had been founded at the very place of the binding of Isaac, we have incontrovertible Jewish testimony, deriving from the Late Antique period. First, to take only one example, this conception is expressed in *Midrash Rabbah*, *Lamentations*, which, as we have seen (see above),

⁴³ Jerome, *Hebraicae Quaestiones in Libro Geneseos* (Corp. Chr., ser. Lat., LXXII, on p. 26); trans by C.R.T. Hayward, Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis (1995), 55.

is thought to date to precisely the period of Jerome, the late fourth or earlier fifth century. The form in which this conception is expressed here is particularly striking⁴⁴: «Abraham spoke before the Holy One, blessed be He, 'Sovereign of the Universe, why hast Thou exiled my children and delivered them over to heathen nations who have put them to all kinds of unnatural death, and destroyed the Temple, the place where I offered my son Isaac as a burnt-offering before Thee?'».

We can go beyond literary testimony, however, and one of the most important developments in current Jewish studies is the growing evidence of artistic representation as a clue to religious conceptions. While it can be argued that in style 'Jewish' art is simply an aspect of a wider Late Antique art⁴⁵, we cannot deny the Jewishness of the content of Biblical scenes represented on the walls or floors of synagogues. As regards Abraham, Isaac and the Temple, the evidence is now, thanks to the remarkably explicit 'programme' of the newly-published mosaic floor of the fifth-century synagogue at Sepphoris, absolutely unambiguous. But the earliest known conjunction of the representation of the Binding of Isaac with the Temple, comes from earlier, and outside Palestine, namely from one of the wall-paintings of the famous third-century synagogue at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates⁴⁶. Here, where there is no verbal labelling of the iconographic elements, a panel above the Torah shrine shows in the centre a monumental pillared building whose entrance faces the viewer; on the viewer's left a large seven-branched candlestick; and on the right Abraham, Isaac already placed on the altar, the ram tethered to a bush, and in the distance a servant waiting in a tent-like structure.

Of much greater and more direct relevance for this theme in Late Antique Palestine is the complex and very explicit 'story' told stage-by-stage in the mosaic floor of the synagogue at Sepphoris⁴⁷. The first panels of the mosaic which the viewer or worshipper encountered on entering the synagogue are badly damaged. But just enough survives to show that the first band, covering the width of the floor, represented in a single panel the visit of the Angels to Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 18:1–18). The next band, divided into two, showed on the left the two servants waiting with the ass, and on the right the Binding of Isaac (Genesis 22:1–19). Then comes, as in some other Late Antique synagogues, a large square panel representing a zodiac, whose interpretation is controversial, and will not be pursued here⁴⁸. The crucial elements for the interpretation of the whole mosaic, however, are those which come in the next two bands, in which the items represented relate to the sacrifices in the Temple, with some of them being explicitly labelled as such in Hebrew. Thus we find, in the band which comes immediately above the zodiac, divided into three panels, the following elements, from left to right:

(1) Components of daily sacrifice: oil (ŠMN); fine flour (SLT); trumpets (HŠOŠRT, sic). In the top left corner of this panel a lamb is shown, accompanied by a Biblical

⁴⁴ Lamentations Rabbah, Proem XXIV, trans. Cohen (p. 44).

⁴⁵ See e.g. *J. Elsner*, 'Archaeologies and Agendas: Reflections on Late Ancient Jewish Art and Early Christian Art', *JRS* 93 (2003), 114.

⁴⁶ C.H. Kraeling (ed.), *The Excavations of Dura-Europos VIII.1. The Synagogue*² (New Haven, 1979), 54f., and Pl. XXIV, LI.

⁴⁷ See *Z. Weiss*, *The Sepphoris Synagogue: Deciphering an Ancient Message through Its Archaeological and Socio-Historical Contexts* (Jerusalem, 2005).

⁴⁸ See most recently *Z. Weiss*, 'The Zodiac in Ancient Synagogue Art: Cyclical Order and Divine Power', in *H. Morlier* (ed.), *La mosaïque gréco-romaine IX* (Rome, 2005), 1119, and *J. Magness*, 'Heaven on Earth: Helios and the Zodiac Cycle in Ancient Palestinian Synagogues', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 59 (2007), 1.

quotation: ‘and the second lamb’ (W’T HKBŠ HŠNY – from Numbers 28:4; see also Exodus 29:39).

(2) The Table of Shewbread (no inscription).

(3) The Basket of First Fruits (no inscription).

In the next band, which is damaged, and may have been divided into two, we find the following elements:

(1) On the left side, a lamb, with the quotation ‘one lamb’ (’T HKBS ’HD (sic) – also from Numbers 28:4, again with a variation in spelling; see also Exodus 29:39); a bull (with no surviving inscription) and the name ‘Aaron’ (’HRN); who will have been represented in the lost part.

(2) Sacrificial Altar.

(3) Water Basin (see Exodus 30:17–21).

In the band above, divided into three panels, we find a pillared gabled building in the centre, with a seven-branched candlestick on either side. In the damaged central panel depicting the building an incense shovel is visible below it. In each of the side panels there are depicted a lulav (palm-branch), myrtle and willow branch, placed in a bowl, and on the right a *shofar* (or ram’s-horn trumpet). None of these is accompanied by any written identification. But the symbolic message is unambiguous. Taking the ‘message’ of the panels below and above the central zodiac together, the mosaic represents in compressed form, the origins of sacrifice, and the institution of the High-Priesthood and regular sacrifices – of course, strictly speaking, in the Pentateuchal context, at the Ark of the Covenant – with the pillared building representing Solomon’s Temple, as the established replacement of the Ark.

That being so, we surely need not hesitate to interpret in the same way the most vivid of all mosaic representations of the Binding of Isaac, separated once again by a centrally-placed zodiac from a representation of a pillared, gabled structure flanked by menorahs and, on the viewer’s left, a *shofar*. This is of course the famous synagogue of Beth-Alpha near Scythopolis/Beth Shean, dated by an Aramaic inscription to the reign of an Emperor called Justin, so either CE 518–27 or 565–78⁴⁹. This portrayal of the Binding, distinguished by its ‘primitivist’, and apparently naïve, artistic style, is characterised also not only by the identifications given in Hebrew to the two main figures, Abraham (’BRHM) and Isaac (YŠHQ), but by actual quotations from Genesis 22: ’L TŠLH (22:12) – ‘do not put forth (your hand)’, as said by the angel; and WHNH ’YYL (sic) – ‘behold a ram’ (22:13, from the unnamed narrator).

We should therefore interpret as representations of the Temple (and not, as sometimes suggested, images of the Torah shrine characteristic of synagogues) the other known cases of mosaic portrayals of gabled structures in Late Antique Palestinian synagogues⁵⁰. Even so, this will not constitute proof of a real hope of recovering Jerusalem as a Jewish city, or of any active steps to that end. But, along with allusions to the Temple in rabbinic writings, it will tend to suggest that Christian unease about a possible restoration was not wholly unfounded. By the sixth century Julian himself was perhaps little remembered, and no-one could have envisaged the possibility that another pagan might become Emperor. Nor could anyone have either feared or hoped for a Jewish re-

⁴⁹ See *E.L. Sukenik*, *The Ancient Synagogue of Beth Alpha* (Jerusalem/London, 1932), and, for an evocative study of the traditions relating to the Binding see *S. Spiegel*, *The Last Trial. On the Legends and Lore of the Command to Abraham to Offer Isaac as a Sacrifice: The Akedah* (New York, 1967, repr. 1993).

⁵⁰ For the latest survey of all the material see now *D. Milson*, *Art and Architecture of the Synagogue in Late Antique Palestine: In the Shadow of the Church* (Leiden, 2007).

bellion effective enough to regain Jerusalem. Pessimists might have wondered what would be the result if Persian invasions were renewed and – unlike those of the sixth century – were carried forward far enough to occupy not only Syria, but much of Anatolia in one direction and Palestine and Egypt on the other. What opportunity might that offer to the Jews, if now liberated from Christian dominance? But no-one could or did anticipate that Christian and Jewish preaching among the Saracens of the steppe and border zones would lead to the conquest of Jerusalem in the name of a new monotheistic religion based on the Bible.

5. THE TEMPLE RESTORED?

This paper will do no more than touch on few reports available as to what happened to the Temple Mount either under the Persian occupation of 614–28, or in the first century of Islamic rule⁵¹. In any case, in a period of intense military and religious conflict, and of violent swings of fortune (the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians, its recapture by the Byzantine Empire under Heraclius in 628, and its definitive conquest seven-eight years later by the forces of Islam), it is only to be expected that the allusions to events by contemporaries will be tendentious and based on theological interpretations or hopes of redemption. None the less, we can perhaps see in one example of the Hebrew synagogal poems known as *piyyutim* the reflection of the conquest by Persia ('Assyria') and of abortive steps, soon crushed, to reinstate Jewish worship and sacrifice on the Temple Mount⁵²:

A brief respite will then be gained by the people of Holiness,
Assyria allowing them to found a temple of holiness;
and they will build there an altar of holiness,
and they will sacrifice offerings of holiness...

But within three months the initiative is stopped, and its leader killed. It should be recalled that the *piyyut* is undated, and that the supposition that it relates to the period of Persian rule depends on circumstantial arguments. None the less, it unquestionably reflects the aspiration for the renewal of the Temple and sacrifice.

Did the Islamic conquest offer any better prospects? The evidence is again tendentious, confused and of varying dates. As with the Persian conquest, some Christian accounts stress the support given to the invaders by the Jews. But, as it seems, only one Christian writer of the seventh century concretely describes an initiative by the Jews to rebuild the Temple. This is the narrative history written in the seventh century in Armenian, and transmitted under the name of Sebeos⁵³: «I shall also speak of the plots of the rebellious Jews, who after gaining help from the Hagarenes for a brief while, decided

⁵¹ See esp. C. Mango, 'The Temple Mount, AD 614–638', in J. Raby and J. Johns (eds.), *Bayt al-Maqdis: 'Abd al-Malik's Jerusalem I* (Oxford, 1992), 1–16; A. Cameron, 'Blaming the Jews: the Seventh-Century Invasions of Palestine in Context', in *Mélanges Gilbert Dagron* (Travaux et Mémoires 14, Paris, 2002), 57–78; H. Sivan, 'From Byzantine to Persian Jerusalem: Jewish Perspectives and Jewish/Christian Polemics', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 14 (2000), 277–306. For the background see C. Foss, 'The Persians in the Roman Near East (602–630 AD)', *JRAS*, Ser. 3, 13 (2003), 149. For suggestive reflections on possible Jewish interpretations of the Persian conquest see W.J. van Beekum, 'Jewish Messianic Expectations in the Age of Heraclius', in G.J. Reinink and B.H. Stolte (eds.), *The Reign of Heraclius (610–641): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven, 2002), 95.

⁵² Trans. Sivan, op. cit., 288–289.

⁵³ Trans. by R.W. Thomson in R.W. Thomson and J. Howard-Johnston, *The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos I–II* (Translated Texts for Historians 31, Liverpool, 1999), ch. 43 (vol. I, 102–103).

to rebuild the temple of Solomon. Finding the spot called the Holy of Holies, they rebuilt it with base and construction as a place for their prayers. But the Ishmaelites, being envious of them, expelled them from that place and called the same house of prayer their own. Then the former built in another spot, right at the base of the temple, another place for their prayers».

Again, we need not try to reconstruct the historical origins or the building-history of either the Haram ash-Sherif (Dome of the Rock) or the Al-Aqsa mosque. All that need be retained from the story is the contemporary Christian conception of Jews seeking to take advantage of Islamic rule to reinstate worship (nothing is said of sacrifice) on the exact site of the Temple.

Remarkably little, indeed, is known of the original context and purpose of the Dome of the Rock, as eventually built in the 690's.⁵⁴ But it is extremely relevant that western pilgrim Arculf, who visited Jerusalem in the 670's, reported as recorded by Adomnanus, that the Saracens had constructed a house of prayer on the site of the Temple⁵⁵. All that is certain, from the long Arabic inscription put up in the interior of the Dome of the Rock, is that it was intended to signal a rebuke to the polytheism attributed to Christian belief in the Trinity, and a return to Biblical monotheism.

Even before the wholly unexpected religious revolution represented by Islam, Christians had continued, in the centuries since Julian's abortive rebuilding, to express concern about possible Jewish – or Judaising Christian – claims to Jerusalem and a restoration of the Temple. It is striking in particular that the theme of Jewish-Christian conflict over Jerusalem is a feature of Christian Syriac literature circulating in the sixth century. But, compared to the much more prominent issues over Christology, and over acceptance or rejection of the Council of Chalcedon of CE 451, this was surely a minor theme among Christian concerns. There would certainly never be another pagan Emperor (and still less one learned enough to perceive the potential compatibility of a restored Jewish sacrificial cult with paganism), and there was never any indication that either Jews or Judaising Christians had, or would ever have, the power to carry through a restoration. In the time of Justinian no-one could have imagined that, a millennium and a half later, Jerusalem would again be a largely Jewish city under Jewish rule, and that an exquisitely beautiful building constructed for the worship of the God of Abraham would still be standing on the site of the Temple⁵⁶.

ВОССТАНОВЛЕНИЕ ИЕРУСАЛИМСКОГО ХРАМА С ЯЗЫЧЕСКОЙ, ИУДЕЙСКОЙ И ХРИСТИАНСКОЙ ТОЧЕК ЗРЕНИЯ

Ф. Миллар

В начале статьи автор описывает исторический контекст IV в. н.э., в котором Иерусалим (в то время римская колония Элия Капитолина) после обращения Константина стал превращаться в христианский город и центр христианского паломничества. Тема статьи связана с неудачной попыткой последнего императора-язычника Юлиана (361–363 г.) восстановить иудейский Храм, разрушенный римлянами в 70 г. Автор задается вопросом: как могло восприниматься это восстановление тогдаш-

⁵⁴ See now *O. Grabar, The Dome of the Rock* (Cambridge, Mass, 2006).

⁵⁵ *Adomnanus, De locis sanctis I*, 1, 14, see *R. Hoyland, Seeing Islam as Others Saw It* (Princeton, 1997), 220–221.

⁵⁶ I am extremely grateful to Neil McLynn and Yannis Papodayannakis for erudite and illuminating comments.

ним язычеством? Однако кроме Юлиана, ни один язычник не дает ответа на этот вопрос. Ни один иудейский источник также не реагирует явно на замысел императора. Зато христианские писатели описывают разнообразные мотивы, которыми якобы руководствовались Юлиан и иудеи, и приписывают инициативу восстановления Храма то первому, то вторым. Обеспокоенность христиан предполагаемыми мотивами (иудейскими или иудео-христианскими) восстановления и чаяниями, связанными с Храмом, дает о себе знать на протяжении всей поздней античности: то в виде фиктивно-исторических повествований на сирийском языке (таких как, например, письмо, приписываемое Кириллу, Иерусалимскому епископу эпохи Юлиана), то в виде сирийского “Романа о Юлиане”, уделяющем много внимания Йовиану, императору-христианину, которого сменил на троне Юлиан. Хотя в действительности ни одна иудейская община не обладала достаточной силой для того, чтобы инициировать восстановление Храма, конкретные свидетельства – изображения Храма на некоторых синагогальных мозаиках – заставляют думать, что обеспокоенность христиан была не совсем беспочвенной. В повествованиях о событиях VII в. можно усмотреть намеки на то, что иудеи пытались восстановить Храм и в период персидского владычества, и после исламского завоевания. Сооружение мечети Harah ash-Sharif прямо на месте прежнего Храма убедительно свидетельствует о том, что память о нем всегда была жива.