

# THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF JUDAISM

VOLUME THREE

THE EARLY ROMAN PERIOD

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## PREFACE

This volume introduces themes and material of importance for the study of Judaism in the early Roman period of Jewish history. Special attention is given to Jewish institutions and schools of thought, and to the consideration of archaeological finds and inscriptions from the homeland and the diaspora. The main focus is on the years from Pompey's intervention in Judaea (63 BCE) to Vespasian's principate (CE 69–79), but attention is given throughout to antecedents and to later developments. The time-span of the volume includes the end of Jewish independence in Judaea and the last years of the Hasmonaean kingdom, the Herodian age and the rise of Christianity, Jewish war with Rome and the fall of Jerusalem, Jewish presence throughout the Roman empire, and developing rabbinic influence at home which would lead, beyond the scope of this volume, to the compilation of the Mishnah and associated rabbinic writings from the beginning of the third century onwards, and eventually to the formation of the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds. The contributions to this volume collectively reflect continuity and innovation in ancient Judaism from the Hasmonaean age to the second century CE.

An outline of political and economic history (chapters 5–6) in the homeland (E. Gabba) and the diaspora (E. Mary Smallwood) covers the years from Pompey's Judaeian campaign (63 BCE) and the end of the Hasmonaean monarchy (37 BCE), through the period of the Augustan empire and the Herodian dynasty, to the accession of Vespasian (CE 69) and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (CE 70). Aspects of the second century CE are treated in chapters 29–30, on the rabbi in the context of Jewish society in the homeland (S. J. D. Cohen), and on the archaeological evidence for the Hellenistic–Roman diaspora (L. I. Levine). A number of other chapters present their themes with reference to times well before Pompey or after Vespasian, and throw light on the continuous development of Judaism in the Greek and Roman periods. Many literary and non-literary sources for the study of ancient Judaism are surveyed. In the sphere of literature, chapters are devoted to apocalypses, the Qumran texts, Philo, and Josephus; but readers are referred elsewhere for systematic introduction to apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, the New

Testament, the Mishnah and other early rabbinic literature, and the Targums and other ancient versions of the Hebrew Bible.

Special notice, however, is given to newly-discovered material, which is known from finds in the modern period rather than from the continuous literary tradition of the Jewish and the Christian communities, and is therefore rather less readily accessible through works of general introduction and evaluation. This aspect of the volume is met especially in the chapters on archaeology (1, 3, 30), epigraphy (4), the temple and the synagogue (2, 9–12), the Qumran texts (24–6), and gnosticism and magic (32). Although the constantly increasing body of newly-found inscribed and written documents and archaeological material requires constant re-assessment, especially as regards its relation to the existing literary sources for ancient Judaism, it is hoped that surveys such as are presented here will open avenues into the study of Judaism through archaeology and epigraphy.

The four opening surveys of this kind cover Palestinian archaeological evidence (M. Broshi and D. Bahat), the achievements and goals of recent Palestinian archaeology (E. M. Meyers), and the contribution of Jewish inscriptions, from the diaspora as well as the homeland, to the study of Judaism (Margaret Williams). After the two chapters of historical outline which were noted above, the consideration of subjects and themes in Judaism proceeds in this volume from Jewish-gentile relations and the accompanying ideology (chapters 7–8), to the temple and the synagogue (chapters 9–12; see also chapters 1–4 and 29–31), and then (in chapters 13–22) to various schools of thought – Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, baptist sects, the ‘fourth philosophy’ and similar groups, Samaritans, and the Christian movement. Then the chapters on literature (23–8) are followed by those on the rabbi in second-century society and on the archaeology of the Roman diaspora (29–30). Finally, Judaism is discussed in connection with Egyptian religion and with gnostic and magical traditions (chapters 31–2).

This arrangement of the chapters brings with it a progression from the life, thought, and institutions of the Jewish community as a whole (chapters 7–12) to the particular emphases of various schools and movements (chapters 13–22). Unity and diversity in Judaism are therefore both represented. This feature of the volume may recall Josephus’s presentation of the Jews as one community embracing various schools of thought, as well as modern discussion of unity and diversity in ancient Judaism (reflected here especially in chapters 4, 10, 17, 19, 23, and 25).

The Judaism of the whole community is evoked here first of all through presentation of problems surrounding ethnicity and identity (chapters 7–8). Morton Smith considers the part played in national life by people of

non-Jewish descent, and he indicates diversities of origin and background, together with inclusive and expansive tendencies, in the Jewish community and the Judaism of Judaea before the outbreak of war with Rome.<sup>1</sup> His study is complemented by Raphael Loewe's survey of views on gentiles from the period after this war, with special reference to rabbinic and liturgical sources which have been abidingly influential in Judaism.

These chapters lead to a group of studies of the synagogue and the temple (chapters 9–12). The history, archaeology, and disposition of the Herodian temple buildings were surveyed by D. Bahat in chapter 2. The complex question of the relationship of temple and synagogue in ancient Jewish opinion and custom is now discussed in chapter 10. S. J. D. Cohen judges that the synagogue was deemed inferior to the temple, even though prayer and Torah study were often taken to be the equivalent of the sacrifices, and perhaps even superior to them. The extensive yet often patchy literary and archaeological evidence for synagogue origins, constitutions, buildings, furnishings and functions is summarized in chapter 9 by H. Bloedhorn and G. Hüttenmeister. Early rabbinic evidence on the synagogue is also discussed by S. J. D. Cohen (chapter 29); relevant inscriptions are considered further in chapters 4 and 12, Palestinian synagogue archaeology is discussed by M. Broshi in chapter 1 and by E. M. Meyers in chapter 3, archaeological evidence for diaspora synagogues is presented with special fulness by L. I. Levine (chapter 30), and the role of Egypt in synagogue origins is discussed by J. G. Griffiths (chapter 31). The widely-debated early history of public Torah-reading and prayer is reviewed not only in chapter 9 but also and especially by S. C. Reif on 'The Early Liturgy of the Synagogue' (chapter 11); it receives further discussion in chapter 12, on 'Women in the Synagogue', with special reference to the participation of women in prayer, and in D. Falk's study of 'Prayer in the Qumran Texts' (chapter 26), with regard to a fund of early source-material. Women's place in the synagogue is considered not only in chapter 12, with regard to sabbath and festal assemblies and synagogue office, but also, again in connection with office-holding, by Margaret Williams in chapter 4. These chapters on the temple and the synagogue together draw attention to customs which are of central importance for the study of ancient Judaism: communal sacrifice, Torah-reading, and prayer.

<sup>1</sup> To set this chapter and chapter 17 against the background of Smith's general approach to ancient Judaism, see the work by Smith reprinted in M. Smith, ed. S. J. D. Cohen, *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh* (2 vols., Leiden, 1996), with S. J. D. Cohen's concluding assessment 'In Memoriam Morton Smith'.

Study of these public institutions and common traditions now gives way, in chapters 13–22, to consideration of particular movements, regions, and schools of thought. This begins with the three schools picked out by Josephus as time-honoured interpretations of Judaism, the Pharisees (J. Schaper), Sadducees (G. Stemberger), and Essenes (O. Betz, also discussing the Therapeutae found among the Jews of Egypt and described by Philo). Second-century Christian writers, unlike Josephus, name ‘baptists’ when describing Jewish sects and opinions. In ‘The Baptist Sects’ (chapter 16) K. Rudolph discusses various groups, Jewish and Christian, for which baptisms were central in practice and belief, including Essenes, John the Baptist and his followers, Ebionites, the second-century Elkesai and his followers, Manichees and Mandaeans; he also treats Jewish literary texts, such as the Fourth Sibylline book or the Life of Adam and Eve, for which water rites are of great significance. This chapter has links with those on the Pharisees, the Essenes, Jesus and Jewish Christianity, and it implicitly draws attention to the importance of water rites in ancient Judaism as a whole at the end of the Second Temple period.

Josephus classed Judas the Galilaeen and his followers, who in revolt against Rome in CE 6 would acknowledge no rule save that of heaven, as a ‘fourth philosophy’, an illegitimate yet increasingly influential addition to the three established schools of thought. ‘The Troublemakers’ considered by Morton Smith (chapter 17) include this ‘philosophy’, and the Sicarii and Zealots also mentioned by Josephus, together with prophetic leaders (including Jesus) and their followers, and others. Smith carefully distinguishes a number of groups which contributed in different ways, during the sixty years after Judas the Galilaeen, to the unrest which culminated in a great war with Rome. This analysis is presented by Smith in opposition to the more inclusive view which Josephus’s account suggests and which is developed in modern study above all by M. Hengel, who depicts a manifold yet ideologically coherent Zealot movement, inspired by biblical zeal for Israelite liberty and the kingship of God. The ‘fourth philosophy’ is discussed from the latter standpoint by E. Gabba in chapter 5, and it is considered also in chapter 19, on Galilaeen opinion, and in chapter 21, on Paul’s Pharisaic education and the opposition which he evoked.

The Samaritans were strongly differentiated from the Jews by Josephus; but they are none the less closely associated with the Jews in Josephus’s narrative and other ancient sources, and in their own practice and beliefs. The Samaritans and their sects under Roman rule are treated by S. J. Isser (chapter 18) with reference to the very wide range of relevant ancient literature; this chapter can be read in conjunction with the survey of



literary and archaeological evidence for Samaritan synagogues which concludes chapter 9 (and compare also chapter 30, on the Samaritans of Delos). To the north of Samaria the Galileans, although unlike the Samaritans they revered Jerusalem and shared the customs of the Judean Jews, were regarded in rabbinic comment as following some distinctive practices. In 'Galilaean Judaism and Judean Judaism' (chapter 19) M. Goodman, underlining the limitations of the evidence, allows that there could have been a distinctive Galilaean Judaism in the first century CE, but holds that its nature is likely to remain unknown; he judges that some pietistic, revolutionary and messianic attitudes picked out by modern scholars as Galilaean were also found elsewhere. Finally the early Christian movement, connected with Galilee and Judea as well the diaspora, is studied with regard to its inception as a new school of thought in Judaism (chapters 20–22). W. D. Davies and E. P. Sanders on Jesus illuminatingly combine historical reconstruction with clear guidance on trends in the exceptionally complex secondary literature. In chapter 21 W. D. Davies brings out Paul's profound identification and preoccupation with the people of Israel, and presents the former Pharisee as a figure in the history of Judaism. Then in chapter 22 J. Carleton Paget reviews Jewish Christianity and the problems of its definition and study, showing the significance for Judaism of the movements which can be considered under this heading.

The six chapters on literature (23–8) open with Christopher Rowland's discussion of the nature of apocalyptic writing; he characterizes it as above all a disclosure of heavenly knowledge, and his wide-ranging study indicates, like chapters 16, 22, and 31–2, the importance for the study of Judaism of texts usually classified as gnostic. Then three chapters are devoted to the the Dead Sea Scrolls, the deposits of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek manuscripts found in the vicinity of Khirbet Qumran. A survey by Jonathan Campbell of the various categories of text discovered shows how the finds together reflect the breadth and variety of Judaism in the period of the Second Temple, and leads to discussion of the many Qumran texts which certainly or probably attest teachings of a sectarian group. Reviewing the history of discovery and study, Dr Campbell presents a case for the widely accepted identification of this group as an Essene community who occupied the site of the Qumran ruins and caves nearby. The discoveries are then considered from a different angle by Norman Golb, who represents the view that the manuscripts are remnants of literature removed from Jerusalem before or during the Roman siege; rejecting arguments for a link with the Essenes, he judges that none of the texts should be associated with any of the schools of thought described by Josephus, but he emphasizes that collectively they reflect the

wide variety of practice and belief which characterized the Judaism of this period. Daniel Falk then considers, as already noted, an aspect of the texts which is of particular importance for the history of Judaism, their witness to Jewish prayer. Finally, the works of Philo of Alexandria and Josephus, the two great bodies of Greek Jewish literature which form major sources for the student of Judaism in the Augustan empire and the Flavian period, are discussed respectively by C. Mondésert and L. H. Feldman (chapters 27–8).

Then in a many-sided study (chapter 29) Shaye J. D. Cohen treats the place of the rabbi in Judaeo and Galilaean society in the second century, illustrating the slow beginnings of what was eventually to be the momentous social and intellectual influence of the rabbinic movement; his remarks on the failure of the rabbi to gain prominence in the synagogue context as reflected in rabbinic literature can be compared with similar comments arising from inscriptions in chapter 4. Diaspora archaeological evidence, mainly from the second century and later but including important earlier material, especially from Egypt and Cyrene, is then considered by Lee I. Levine; among the finds he selects for attention are the Dura Europos wall paintings, examples of figurative synagogue art which have done much to change the study of ancient Judaism. In chapter 31 J. Gwyn Griffiths considers ‘The legacy of Egypt in Judaism’ from the point of view of an Egyptologist with strong interests in the Greek and Roman world as well as ancient Judaism. His discussion embraces not only synagogue origins, as mentioned above, but also art, ritual and magic, wisdom literature, eschatology and the afterlife, and views of the divine nature. This chapter forms a stimulating companion especially to chapter 23, on apocalyptic literature, and chapter 27, on Philo. Its comments on magic are complemented, finally, by Philip Alexander’s substantial study of ‘Jewish Elements in Gnosticism and Magic’. He considers the extent and origins of Jewish elements in gnostic literature, which often seem close to the ancient Jewish mystical tradition, and then reviews evidence for early Jewish magic and the Jewish contribution to magic in general. The volume therefore closes with attention to the interaction of Jewish and non-Jewish practices and beliefs.

Contributions, including my own, were originally planned and edited by Professor W. D. Davies. Assistance was given by Professor D. C. Allison and Ms. Sara Freedman. John Sturdy was executive editor until his lamented death on 6th July 1996. I took on editorial responsibility from September 1996. Contributions were then reviewed and bibliographically updated by authors and editors, and some further contributions were obtained to take account of developments in study. Editorial assistance was given by David Chapman (chapters 5, 7, and 17), Lawrence

Lahey (chapter 6), and Jutta Leonhardt (chapter 27); John Lierman assisted with the registration of place-names (chapter 29). At the University Press, a series of editors have guided work, and particular mention should be made of Robert Williams, Ruth Parr, and Caroline Bundy.

WILLIAM HORBURY

## ABBREVIATIONS

For further details of works cited by author and short title, see the Bibliographies. Abbreviated titles are listed below.

<i>AA</i>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<i>AAH</i>	<i>Acta Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>AASOR</i>	<i>Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
<i>AB</i>	Anchor Bible
<i>AcOr</i>	<i>Acta orientalia</i> (Copenhagen)
<i>AfO</i>	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
<i>AGG</i>	Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, philologisch-historische Klasse, Göttingen
<i>AGJU</i>	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
<i>AGSU</i>	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums
<i>AHHI</i>	<i>Alon ba-hevra ba-numisma'ith l'Yisra'el</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AJP</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>AJSR</i>	<i>Association for Jewish Studies Reviews</i>
<i>AJT</i>	<i>American Journal of Theology</i>
<i>ALBO</i>	Analecta lovaniensia biblica et orientalia
<i>ALGHJ</i>	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
<i>ALUOS</i>	<i>Annual of the Leeds University Oriental Society</i>
<i>AnBib</i>	Analecta Biblica
<i>ANET</i>	J. B. Pritchard (ed.) <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
<i>APAT</i>	E. Kautzsch (ed.) <i>Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments</i> , 2 vols. (Tübingen 1900)
<i>APOT</i>	R. H. Charles (ed.) <i>The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English</i> , 2 vols. (Oxford 1913)
<i>ARW</i>	<i>Archiv für Religionswissenschaft</i>
<i>ASOR</i>	American Schools of Oriental Research

<i>ASTI</i>	<i>Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute</i>
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
<i>ATR</i>	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
<i>AusBR</i>	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
<i>Bab.</i>	<i>Talmud Babli</i>
<i>BAR</i>	<i>British Archaeological Reports</i>
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BHT	Beträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BIDR	<i>Bullettino dell'Istituto di Divitto Romano</i>
<i>BIFAO</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i>
<i>BiOr</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
BJ	Bible de Jerusalem
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
<i>BLE</i>	<i>Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentary
BPC	L. Pirot and A. Clamer, <i>La Sainte Bible</i> (Paris 1951)
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CAH</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
CAT	Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CCHS</i>	<i>Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture</i> , 1953 (2nd edn 1969)
CD	Cairo Genizah text of the Damascus Document
CGTC	Cambridge Greek Testament Commentaries
<i>ChE</i>	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i>
<i>CHJ</i>	<i>The Cambridge History of Judaism</i>
<i>CIG</i>	<i>Corpus inscriptionum graecarum</i>
<i>CIJ</i>	J. B. Frey (ed.), <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum</i>
CIRB	Corpus Inscriptionum Regni Bosporani
<i>C.Jud</i>	<i>Conservative Judaism</i>
<i>CJZC</i>	<i>Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika</i>
<i>CPJ</i>	V. Tcherikover and A. Fuks (eds.), <i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>

<i>CRAIBL</i>	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>
<i>CRINT</i>	<i>Compendia Rerum Judaicarum ad Novum Testamentum</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
<i>CTM</i>	<i>Concordia Theological Monthly</i>
<i>DACL</i>	<i>Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</i>
<i>DBSup</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplément</i>
<i>DCA</i>	<i>Dictionary of Christian Antiquities</i>
<i>DF</i>	B. Lifschitz, <i>Donateurs et fondateurs dans les synagogues juives</i> (1967)
DJD	P. Benoit <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan</i>
<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
<i>DTC</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</i>
EB	Echter Bibel
EBib	Etudes bibliques
<i>Ej</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>
EKKNT	Evangelische-Katholische Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>EncJud</i>	C. Roth and J. Wigoder (eds.), <i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i> (Jerusalem 1971)
<i>EnšMiq</i>	<i>Enšiklopedia Miqra'it</i> (Jerusalem 1950)
<i>Erls</i>	<i>Eretz Israel</i>
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudios biblicos</i>
ET	English translation
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
ETS	Erfurter theologische Studien
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>ExT</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>FGrHist</i>	<i>Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , ed. F. Jacoby (Leiden 1923ff)
FS	Festschrift
<i>FZPhTb</i>	<i>Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie</i>
<i>GaR</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderten
<i>GL</i>	W. D. Davies, <i>The Gospel and the Land</i> (Berkeley 1974)
<i>GLAJJ</i>	M. Stern, <i>Greek and Latin Authors on the Jews and Judaism</i> I–III (1974–84)
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HAW	Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft
<i>HDB</i>	<i>Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible</i>

<i>HJPAJC</i>	E. Schürer, <i>History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ</i>
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HSAT	Die heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments, ed. F. Feldmann and H. Herkenne (Bonn 1923ff)
<i>HSCP</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IB	Interpreter's Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IDBSup</i>	Supplementary volume to the <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> , ed. K. Crim
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> , ed. Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin 1873ff)
IGLS	<i>Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IOSPE	I. Latyshev, <i>Inscriptiones Antiquae Graecae Septentrionalis Ponti Euxini Graecae et Latinae</i>
<i>JA</i>	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBC</i>	R. E. Brown, J. Fitzmyer and R. E. Murphy (eds.), <i>The Jerome Biblical Commentary</i> (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1968)
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBLMS	Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
<i>JE</i>	<i>Jewish Encyclopaedia</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JIGRE</i>	W. Horbury and D. Noy, <i>Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt, with an index of the Jewish Inscriptions of Egypt and Cyrenaica</i> (Cambridge 1992)
<i>JIWE</i>	D. Noy, <i>The Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe: volume 1, Italy (excluding Rome), Spain and Gaul; volume 2, The City of Rome</i> (Cambridge 1993, 1995)
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>

<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JPFC</i>	S. Safrai and M. Stern (eds.), <i>The Jewish People in the First Century I-II</i> (1974–6)
<i>JPS</i>	W. D. Davies, <i>Jewish and Pauline Studies</i> (Philadelphia 1984)
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSHRZ</i>	Jüdische Schriften der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSS</i>	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTC</i>	<i>Journal for Theology and the Church</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JWSTP</i>	M. E. Stone (ed.), <i>Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period</i> (1984)
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>KD</i>	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>
<i>KS</i>	<i>Kleine Schriften</i>
<i>Leš</i>	<i>Lešonénu</i>
LD	Lectio divina
<i>MAMA</i>	<i>Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua</i>
MBPAR	Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte
MeyerK	H. A. W. Meyer, <i>Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament</i>
<i>MGWJ</i>	<i>Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
<i>Mish.</i>	<i>Mishnah</i>
MNTC	Moffatt New Testament Commentary
<i>MPAT</i>	J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, <i>A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts</i> (Rome 1978)
NEAEHL	<i>New Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</i>
NEB	New English Bible
NJV	New Jewish Version
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
<i>NRT</i>	<i>Nouvelle revue théologique</i>
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>



OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OGIS	<i>Oriens Graecae Inscriptiones Selectae</i> , ed. W. Dittenberger, (Leipzig 1903–5, repr. Hildesheim 1970)
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
PAAJR	<i>Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research</i>
Pap. Giss.	<i>Griechische Papyri zu Giessen</i> , ed. O. Eger, E. Kornemann and P. M. Meyer
PCZ	C. C. Edgar (ed.), <i>Zenon Papyri</i> , 4 vols. (Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée de Caire, Cairo 1925–31)
PEFA	<i>Palestine Exploration Fund Annual</i>
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PER	Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer
PG	J. P. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca</i> (Paris 1875ff)
PJ	<i>Palästina-Jahrbuch des deutschen Evangelischen Instituts</i>
PL	J. P. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina</i> (Paris 1844ff)
P. Lond.	F. G. Kenyon <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>Greek Papyri in the British Museum</i> (London 1893ff)
P. Petrie	J. P. Mahaffy and J. G. Smyly (eds.) <i>The Flinders Petrie Papyri</i> (Dublin 1891ff)
PRJ	W. D. Davies, <i>Paul and Rabbinic Judaism</i> (London and Philadelphia 1948, 4th edn 1980)
PSI	<i>Pubblicazioni della Società italiana per la Ricerca dei Papiri greci e latini in Egitto: Papiri greci e latini</i> , ed. G. Vitelli <i>et al.</i> (Florence 1912ff)
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti graece
PW	Pauly-Wissowa (eds.), <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Stuttgart 1894ff)
PWSup	Supplement to Pauly-Wissowa, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Stuttgart 1903ff)
QDAP	<i>Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine</i>
1QH	<i>Hodayot (Thanksgiving Hymns)</i> from Qumran Cave 1
1QM	<i>Milḥāmāh (War Scroll)</i>
1QS	<i>Serek ha-yahad (Rule of the Community, Manual of Discipline)</i>
RAC	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> (Stuttgart 1950ff)
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
REG	<i>Revue des études grecques</i>
RechBib	<i>Recherches bibliques</i>
REJ	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
RevQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
RevSR	<i>Review of Science and Religion</i>

<i>RGG</i>	<i>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>
<i>RGVV</i>	<i>Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RHR</i>	<i>Revue de l'histoire des religions</i>
<i>RIDA</i>	<i>Revue internationale des droits de l'Antiquité</i>
<i>RivAC</i>	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i>
<i>RPh</i>	<i>Revue de philologie, d'histoire et de littérature anciennes</i>
<i>RQ</i>	<i>Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte</i>
<i>RSI</i>	<i>Rivista storica italiana</i>
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
SAH	Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse
SAW	Sitzungsberichte, Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, philosophisch-historische Klasse
SB	Sources bibliques
<i>SB</i>	<i>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten</i> , ed. F. Preisigke <i>et al.</i> (Strasburg etc. 1913ff)
<i>SBLASP</i>	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Abstracts and Seminar Papers</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SC	Sources chrétiennes
<i>SCI</i>	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
<i>SCO</i>	<i>Studi classici e orientali</i>
ScrHic	Scripta Hierosolymitana
SD	Studies and Documents
<i>SE</i>	<i>Studia Evangelica</i>
<i>SEÅ</i>	<i>Svensk exegetisk årsbok</i>
<i>SEG</i>	J. J. E. Hondius <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
<i>Sem.</i>	<i>Semaboth</i>
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SPB	Studia postbiblica
<i>SSM</i>	W. D. Davies, <i>The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount</i> (Cambridge 1964)
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia theologica</i>
<i>St Li</i>	<i>Studia Liturgica</i>

<i>Str-B</i>	H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i>
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i>
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha H. Kreissig, <i>Die sozialen Zusammenhänge des jüdischen Krieges</i> (Berlin 1970)
<i>TAM</i>	<i>Tituli Asiae Minoris</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>Tarb.</i>	<i>Tarbiz</i>
TB	Theologische Bücherei
<i>TBei</i>	<i>Theologische Beiträge</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (Grand Rapids 1964ff); ET of <i>TWNT</i>
TextsS	Texts and Studies
<i>Textus</i>	<i>Textus, Annual of the Hebrew University Bible Project</i>
<i>TF</i>	<i>Theologische Forschung</i>
<i>TbViat</i>	<i>Theologia Viatorum</i>
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>Tos.</i>	<i>Tosefta</i>
<i>TRE</i>	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>
<i>TRev</i>	<i>Theologische Revue</i>
<i>TRu</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
<i>TSAJ</i>	<i>Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum</i>
<i>TSK</i>	<i>Theologische Studien und Kritiken</i>
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
<i>TWNT</i>	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> (Stuttgart 1933ff)
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UNT	Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
UUÅ	Uppsala universitetsårsskrift
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VS	Verbum salutis
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WF	Wege der Forschung
WHJP	World History of the Jewish People
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>Yer.</i>	<i>Talmud Yerushalmi</i>

<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZDMG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
<i>ZDPV</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
<i>ZKG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>
<i>ZWT</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Rome and Italy	Provinces and Client-Kingdoms except Palestine	Palestine
<p>BCE</p> <p>63 Consulship of Cicero. Caesar elected Pontifex Maximus.</p> <p>63/62 Second conspiracy of Catiline.</p> <p>60 First Triumvirate: Pompey, Caesar, Crassus.</p> <p>59 Consulship of Caesar.</p>	<p>BCE</p> <p>64/63 Pompey captures Syria: end of Seleucid monarchy.</p> <p>63 Suicide of Mithridates.</p> <p>62 Annexation of Crete. Bithynia, Cilicia and Syria become provinces.</p> <p>59 Senate recognizes Ptolemy Auletes as King of Egypt.</p> <p>58 Annexation of Cyprus.</p> <p>58–51 Gallic war.</p>	<p>BCE</p> <p>63 Pompey captures the Jerusalem temple from supporters of Aristobulus II, and enters the Holy of Holies.</p> <p>63–40 Hyrcanus II, high priest, advised 63–43 by Antipater.</p> <p>61 Aristobulus and his sons brought to Rome as prisoners. Alexander escapes to Jerusalem and gains influence.</p>

		57	Civil war in Parthia. A. Gabinius, governor of Syria.	57	The area belonging to the cult of Jerusalem is divided into five independent districts under the power of the governor of Syria.
		55–54	Caesar's expeditions to Britain.		
		55–53	Crassus, governor of Syria.		
		53	Parthians defeat Crassus at Carrhae.		
		53–51	C. Cassius Longinus administer Syria as proquaestor.		
52	Pompey consul sine collega.	51	Parthian invasion of Syria. Bibulus sent as governor to Syria and Cicero to Cilicia.		
		51	Death of Ptolemy Auletes.		
		51–30	Cleopatra VII, queen of Egypt.		
49	Caesar crosses the Rubicon. Break between Caesar and Pompey. Caesar declared dictator.	49	Caesar defeats Pompey's army at Ilerda (Spain).	49	Aristobulus II poisoned by friends of Pompey.
49–45	2nd Civil War.				
		48	Battle of Pharsalus. Assassination of Pompey in Egypt.	48	Hyrchanus and Antipater turn to Caesar.
		48–47	Alexandrine War.	48–47	Antipater and Hyrcanus try to win Caesar's favour.
		47	Caesar in Syria, Egypt, and Asia. Victory over Pharnaces at Zela. End of kingdom of Pontus.	47	Hyrchanus confirmed as high-priest and declared Ethnarch. Antipater, procurator of Judaea.
46	Julian calendar introduced. Caesar declared imperator and dictator, parens patriae, Juppiter Julius.	46	Caesar's campaign in Africa. Victory at Thapsus, Roman province of Africa Nova.	46	Antipater makes his sons, Phasael and Herod, commanders of Judaea and Galilee.

Rome and Italy	Provinces and Client-Kingdoms except Palestine	Palestine
BCE	BCE	BCE
44	45 Caesar's Spanish campaign. Caesar's victory over Pompeians at Munda. 44 Antony's command in Gaul.	44 At death of Caesar, Herod turns to Cassius.
43	43–42 C. Cassius Longinus, governor of Syria.	43 Assassination of Antipater.
42	42 Battle of Philippi. 42–31 Antony, ruler of East. 40 Parthians invade Syria. Roman war against Parthia.	42 Herod turns to Antony. Antony declares Phasael and Herod tetrarchs. 40 Parthians invade Palestine and conquer Jerusalem. Phasael commits suicide. Herod flees to Rome and is formally made King of Judaea by Roman Senate.
	39 Antony defeated in Parthian venture. 38 Renewed Parthian invasion.	40–37 Antigonus (son of Aristobulus II), King and high-priest. 39 Herod captures Joppa. 38 Herod defeats Antigonus' commander at Isana, north of Jerusalem. 37 Herod and Sosius capture Jerusalem. 37 Purge of the nobility. Antigonus executed.
36	Lepidus retires. Octavian, ruler of the West.	37–4 Herod the Great. 37–36 Ananelus, high-priest. 35 Aristobulus III, high-priest killed by Herod. Building of Antonia.

33	Complete break between Antony and Octavian. Second consulship of Octavian.	34	Caesarion becomes Antony's co-regent.	34	Ananelus again high-priest. Palestinian coastal towns and Jericho ceded to Cleopatra.
31	Third consulship of Octavian (and thereafter until 23).	31	Battle of Actium.	32	Herod's war with Nabataean Arabs.
30	Tribunician power for life bestowed on Octavian.	30	Octavian enters Egypt. Suicide of Antony and Cleopatra. Egypt becomes Roman province. Herod visits Augustus at Rhodes and later in Egypt.	31	Earthquake in Judaea. Herod turns to Octavian.
28	Census held.			30	Jericho, Gadara, Samaria and Gaza added to Herod's kingdom. Execution of Hyrcanus II.
27	Restoration of the Republic. Octavian becomes Augustus.	27/5	Augustus in Gaul and Spain.	c. 30 BC–AD 10	Hillel and Shammai.
		25	Annexation of Galatia on the death of Amyntas. Tarraconensis organized as a province.	27	Herod rebuilds Samaria (Sebaste).
23	Augustus resigns consulship and receives proconsulare imperium maius and tribunicia potestas.	22/19	Augustus in Greece and Asia.	24	Herod builds palace in the upper city of Jerusalem.
		22	Herod visits Agrippa in Mytilene.	22	Building of Caesarea begun.
		20	Augustus in Syria.	20/19	Herod begins reconstruction of Jerusalem temple.
		c. 20 BCE–CE 50	Philo.		
18	Agrippa co-regent.	19	Pacification of Spain by Agrippa.		



Rome and Italy	Provinces and Client-Kingdoms except Palestine	Palestine
BCE	BCE	BCE
	16/15 Kingdom of Noricum incorporated.	
	16/13 Augustus in Gaul.	
	14 Agrippa gives the Bosporan kingdom to Polemo.	15 Agrippa visits Jerusalem.
13 Consulship of Tiberius.		
12 Augustus becomes Pontifex Maximus.		
Death of Agrippa.		
	12–9 2nd German War.	
	9 BCE–CE 39 Aretas IV, King of Nabataeans.	10 Sanctuary of Jerusalem temple completed. Herod's inauguration of Caesarea Maritima.
		9 Herod invades Nabataea losing Augustus' favour.
8 Census held.	8 Execution of Polemo.	
	8–6 Tiberius in Germany.	

6 Tribunician power granted to Tiberius for five years. He retires to Rhodes.

5 Twelfth consulship of Augustus.

2 Augustus, *pater patriae*; thirteenth consulship.

6 Paphlagonia added to Galatia.

6–4 P. Quinctilius Varus, governor of Syria.

7 Alexander and Aristobulus executed.  
c. 7/6 Birth of Jesus.

4 Revolt of the people led by Judas and Matthias. Execution of Antipater. Death of Herod. Jewish rebellions suppressed by Varus. Herod's kingdom divided among his sons:  
Antipas: Galilee and Peraea  
(4 BCE–CE 39)  
Archelaus: Judaea, Idumaea, Samaria  
(4 BCE–CE 6)  
Philip: Batanaea, Trachonitis Auranitis  
(4 BCE–CE 34)

Rome and Italy	Provinces and Client-Kingdoms except Palestine	Palestine
CE	CE	CE
2		<i>c.</i> 1–70 Houses of Shammai and Hillel.
4		
	4–5 L. Volusius, governor of Syria.	
	4–16 3rd German War.	
	6–7 P. Sulpicius Quirinius, governor of Syria.	6 Archelaus deposed. Judaea, Samaria and Idumaea become a Roman province.
		6–7 Census held by P. Sulpicius Quirinius. Rise of zealotism: Revolt under Judas the Galilean.
		6–9 Coponius, prefect.
		6–15 Annas, high-priest.
	9 Defeat of Varus' legions by Arminius in Germany.	9–12 M. Ambibulus, prefect.
	10/11 Aspurgus in control of Bosporan kingdom.	<i>c.</i> 10–40 Gamaliel I.
	12–17 Q. Caecilius Metellus Creticus Silanus, governor of Syria.	
13		
14		<i>c.</i> 14 Annius Rufus, prefect.
14–37	14–16 Germanicus invades Germany.	

		15	Achaea and Macedonia transferred from the Senate to the Princeps and attached to Moesia.	<i>c.</i> 15–26	Valerius Gratus, prefect.
		17	Cappadocia and Commagene organized as imperial provinces.		
18	Consulship of Tiberius (III) and Germanicus.	17–19	Cn. Calpurnius Piso, governor of Syria.		
		18	Germanicus in Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt. Artaxias becomes king of Armenia.		
19	Expulsion of Jews from Rome.	19	Death of Germanicus and Arminius.	18–37	Caiaphas, high-priest.
21	Consulship of Tiberius (IV) and Drusus.	20–5	Numidian Revolt.		
22	Tribunicia potestas conferred on Drusus.	21–6	Disturbances in Thrace.		
23	Death of Drusus.				<i>c.</i> 26 (?) John the Baptist's ministry.
27	Tiberius retires to Capreae.				26–36 Pontius Pilate, prefect.
		28	Revolt of the Frisii.		<i>c.</i> 27–30 (?) Jesus' ministry.
					<i>c.</i> 28 (29?) Execution of John the Baptist.
					<i>c.</i> 30 (33?) Crucifixion of Jesus.
					<i>c.</i> 30–66 Simeon ben Gamaliel I.
31	Consulship of Tiberius (V) and Sejanus. Sejanus put to death.	32–5	L. Pomponius Flaccus, governor of Syria.		<i>c.</i> 33 (35?) Stephen martyred. Conversion of Paul.

Rome and Italy	Provinces and Client-Kingdoms except Palestine	Palestine
CE	CE	CE
	34 Death of Philip, the tetrarch. His territory is incorporated into the province of Syria. Death of Artaxias in Armenia.	
	36 L. Vitellius, governor of Syria.	36 Pontius Pilate sent to Rome on charge of maladministration.
37 Death of Tiberius. Accession of Gaius (Caligula) and consulship with Claudius.	37 Commagene reestablished as a client-kingdom. Agrippa I given the tetrarchy of Philip and the title of a king.	c. 36–7 Marcellus, prefect. 37 Caiaphas deposed.
37–41 Caligula, emperor.		37–41 Marullus, prefect. 37–c. 100 Josephus.
	38 Persecution of Jews in Alexandria under Avillius Flaccus. Deposition of Avillius Flaccus. Kingdom of Pontus given to Polemo II.	
	39–42 P. Petronius, governor of Syria.	39 Altar to emperor in Jamnia destroyed by Jews. Herod Antipas exiled. Agrippa I receives his tetrarchy.
40 Jewish embassy from Alexandria to Rome, led by Philo.		
41 Caligula killed. Claudius made emperor.	41 Claudius settles Greek and Jewish disputes in Alexandria. Cilician kingdom given to Polemo II. Kingdom of Chalcis given to Herod.	41 Agrippa I becomes King of Judaea and Samaria and is now king over the former realm of Herod the Great.
41–54 Claudius, emperor.		c. 41–54 Simon Magus.

		42	Mauretania organized into two provinces, Caesariensis and Tingitana, under procurators.		
		42–4	C. Vibius Marsus, governor of Syria.		
		43	Lycia made Roman province.		
		43–51	Conquest of Britain.		
		45/6	Thrace becomes Roman province.		
		46	Bosporan kingdom becomes Roman client-state.		
		50	Agrippa II gets Kingdom of Chalcis.		
51	Consulship of Vespasian.	51–2	L. Iunius Gallio Annaeanus, proconsul of Achaia.		
		52–62	Campaign leading to the annexation of Armenia.		
54–68	Nero, emperor.				
55	Consulship of Nero and L. Antistius Vetus.	56–8	C. Ummidius Durmius Quadratus, governor of Syria.		
				44	Death of Agrippa I. His territory becomes Roman province. Revolt of Theudas. Cuspius Fadius, procurator.
				45/46–8	Tib. Iulius Alexander, procurator.
				c. 46–58	Paul's missionary journeys.
				48–52	Ventidius Cumanus, procurator.
				52–5 (60?)	M. Antonius Felix, procurator Rise of the Sicarii.
				53	Agrippa II gives up Chalcis but receives the old tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias.
				55 (60?)–	Porcius Festus, procurator.

Rome and Italy		Provinces and Client-Kingdoms except Palestine	Palestine
CE		CE	CE
58	Nero refuses perpetual consulship.		
59	Nero introduces Greek games in Rome.	60–3 Cn. Domitius Corbulo, governor of Syria.	
		61 Revolt of the Iceni and the Trinovantes.	62 High-priest Jonathan murdered.
			62–4 Lucceius Albinus, procurator.
64	Great Fire in Rome.	63–6 C. Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria.	64 Josephus' journey to Rome.
	Persecution of Christians under Nero.	64 Exploratory mission to Ethiopia.	
		64/5 Kingdom of Pontus incorporated with the province of Galatia.	64(65?)–6 Gessius Florus, procurator.
65	Conspiracy of Piso fails.		66 Cessation of the temple offering for the emperor. Emergence of the party of the Zealots. Revolt against Rome. Pro-Roman address of Agrippa II. Victory of the Jews over Cestius Gallus near Beth-Horon. Preparations for the war.
		66/7 Sardinia made a senatorial province.	66–73/4 Jewish War.

		<p>67 Vespasian appointed with the rank of legatus to carry on the war in Judaea. He captures Jotapata, defended by Josephus. Josephus surrenders to Vespasian. Vespasian conquers Galilee and Samaria. John of Gischala arrives in Jerusalem. Execution of the former war leaders.</p>
<p>68 Suicide of Nero.</p>		<p>68 Conquest of Idumaea, Peraea and Gadara by Romans. High-priest Ananias deposed. Vespasian begins to attack Jerusalem but suspends operation on hearing of the death of Nero.</p>
<p>68–9 Year of the four emperors: Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian.</p>	<p>68–9 C. Licinius Mucianus, governor of Syria.</p>	
<p>69–79 Vespasian, emperor.</p>	<p>68–70 Batavian Revolt.</p>	
		<p>69 (June) Vespasian master of all Palestine except Jerusalem and three fortresses. Simon bar Giora, leader of Idumaeen rebels, enters Jerusalem. (July) Vespasian acclaimed emperor. Titus takes over the command.</p>
		<p>70 (April) Titus and four legions lay siege to Jerusalem, defended by John of Gischala and Simon bar Giora. (July) Fall of fortress Antonia. Cessation of daily temple sacrifices. Titus attacks temple area. (August) Destruction of the temple. (September) Romans occupy the lower city and storm the upper city of Jerusalem.</p>



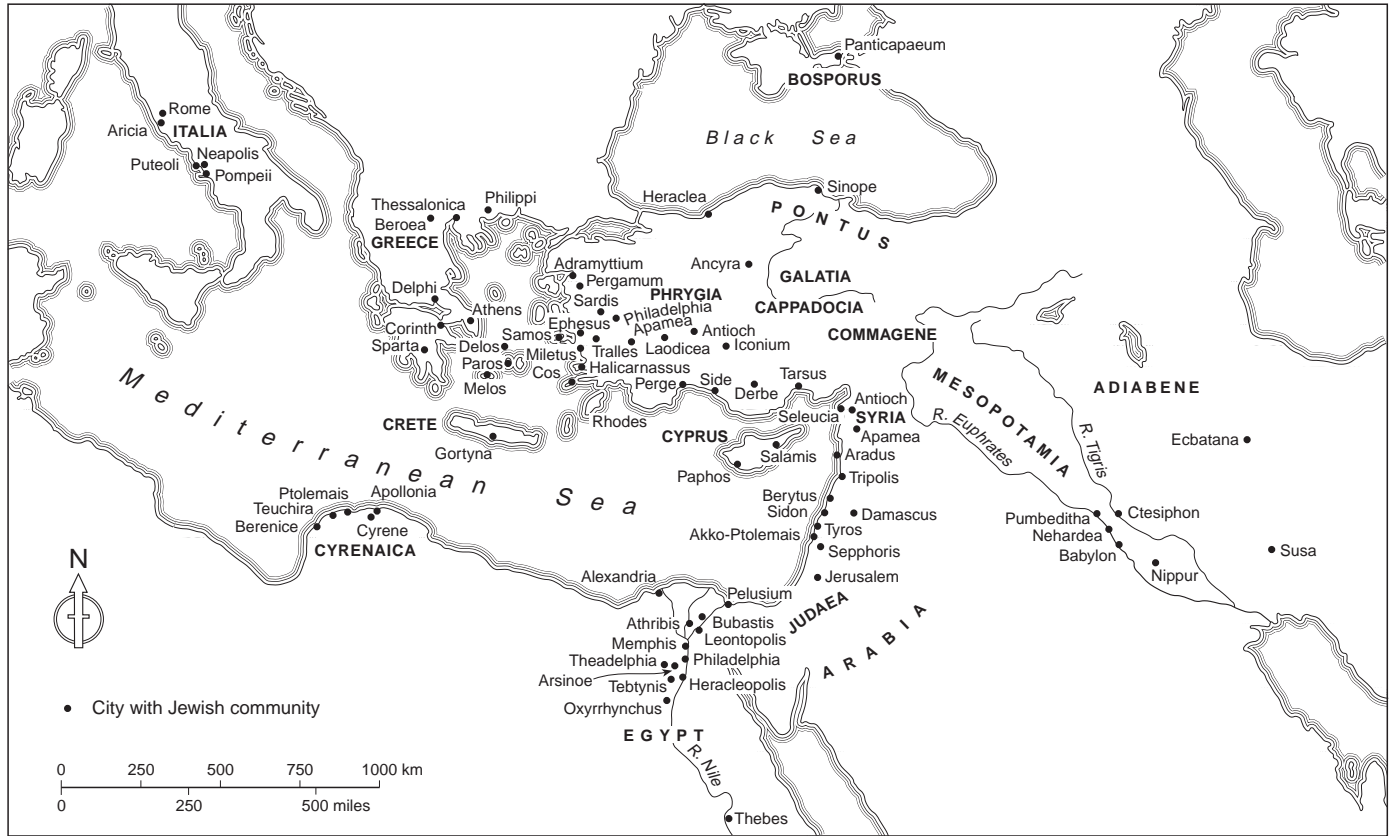
Rome and Italy	Foreign affairs	Jewish affairs
CE	CE	CE
71 Titus receives proconsular imperium and shares tribunician power with Vespasian.	70–84 Conquest of S. Scotland.	71 Vespasian and Titus celebrate their triumph in Rome. Execution of Simon bar Giora. Josephus in Rome.
73–4 Consulship of Vespasian and Titus.	72 Armenia Minor added to Cappadocia. 73–4 Roman operations in Upper Germany.	c. 71 Imposition of Fiscus Judaicus. 73/4 Fall of Masada, last fortress in Judaea, defended by Eleazar. Jewish uprisings in Alexandria and Cyrene. Closing of the Onias Temple in Leontopolis.
79 Eruption of Vesuvius destroys Pompeii and Herculaneum.	75 Alani invade Media and Armenia.	c. 75–9 Publication of Josephus' <i>Jewish War</i> .
79–81 Titus, emperor.	77(78?)–84(85?) Agricola, governor in Britain.	c. 80 Gamaliel II has a leading position in the rabbinical movement.
80 Fire at Rome.		
81–96 Domitian, emperor.	83–5 Campaign against the Chatti. Building of the Limes. 85(86?) Revolt of the Nasamones in Africa. 85/6 1st Dacian War.	

<i>c.</i> 90	Philosophers and astrologers banished from Rome.	88/90	Installation of the provinces of Germania superior and inferior.	
93	Death of Agricola.			<i>c.</i> 90–135 Akiba.
95	Philosophers expelled from Italy.			<i>c.</i> 93 Publication of Josephus' 'Jewish Antiquities'.
96	Assassination of Domitian.			
96–8	Nerva, emperor.			
98–117	Trajan, emperor.			
		100	Foundation of Thamugadi.	100
		100/1	2nd Dacian War.	Death of Agrippa II. His kingdom made part of Syrian province.
		105/6		
		106	Dacia becomes Roman province. Victory over Nabataeans. 'Arabia' annexed as Roman province.	
		<i>c.</i> 111–13	Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia.	
		<i>c.</i> 114/15	Annexation of Armenia and Mesopotamia. Capture of Ctesiphon.	
		114–17	War against Parthia. Roman empire reaches maximum extent.	
		117	Death of Trajan in Cilicia (?). Mesopotamia and Armenia again independent.	115–17 Jewish uprisings in Cyprus, Egypt, Cyrene, Mesopotamia and Palestine.

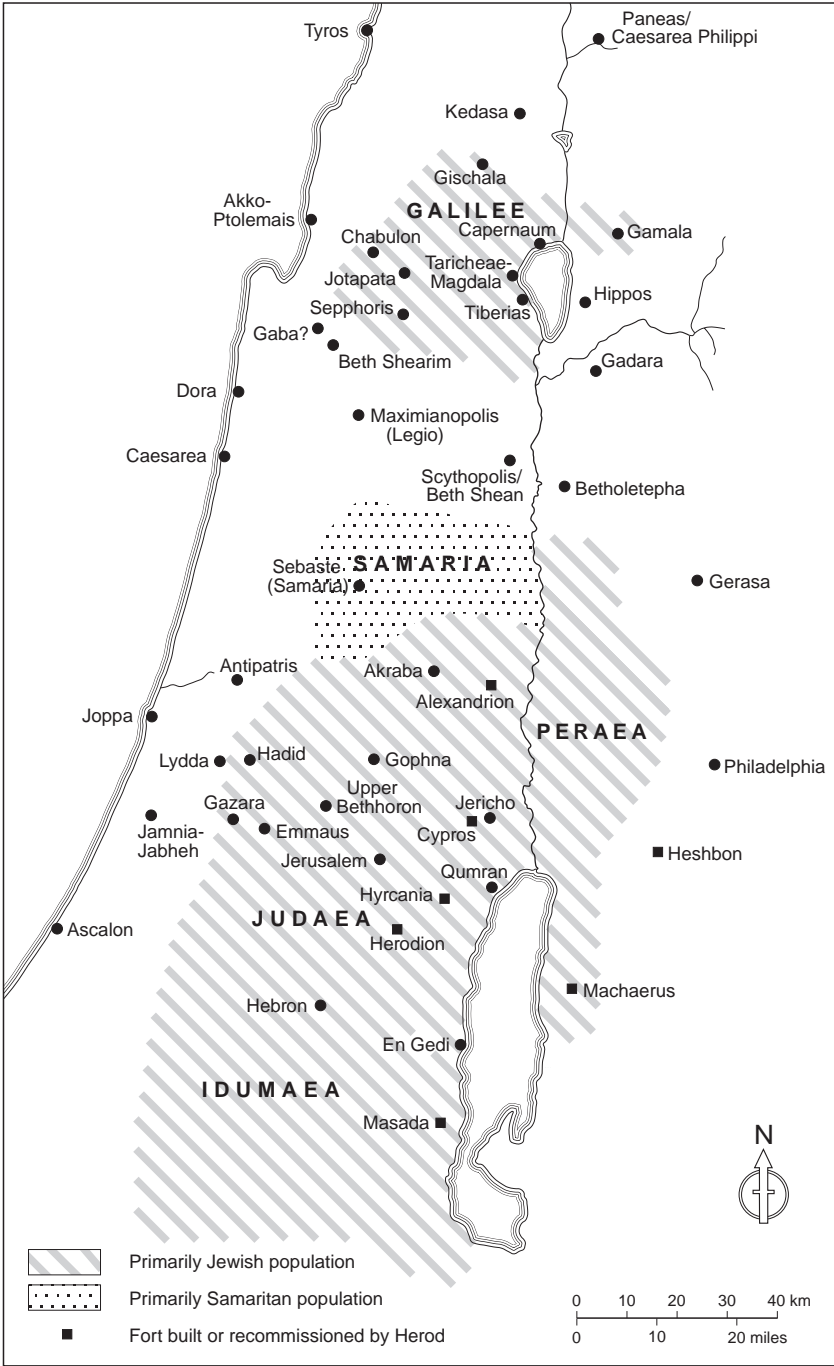
Rome and Italy	Foreign affairs	Jewish affairs
CE	CE	CE
117–38 Hadrian, emperor.		
120 Consulship of Antoninus.		
<i>c.</i> 122–6 Hadrian’s Wall completed.	122 Hadrian visits Britain. Moorish revolt.	
	130 Antinoopolis founded by Hadrian.	132–5 Bar Kokhba War.
	134 Alani invade Parthia.	
	134–5 Antoninus, proconsul of Asia.	135 Capture of Beth-Ter. Bar Kokhba killed. Beginning of Roman reorganization of Syria- Palestine.
138–61 Antoninus Pius, emperor.	138–9 Victory over the Brigantes.	
140 First consulship of Marcus Aurelius.	152–3 Revolt in Egypt.	
	157–8 Campaign against Dacian tribes.	
	159 Dacia divided into three parts.	
160 M. Aurelius and L. Verus appointed consuls designate.	160 Rebellions in Africa suppressed.	
161 L. Verus given the title Augustus.		
161–80 M. Aurelius, emperor.	162–4 War with Parthia.	
	165–6 Plague spreads from Mesopotamia to eastern provinces, Italy and the Rhine.	
	166 Roman success in Media.	
	167 War in Upper Pannonia. Invasion of N. Italy.	

169	Death of L. Verus.	168–80	Pressure by Germanic groups on the Danube frontier.	c. 170–210	Dominance of Judah the Patriarch (Judah ha-Nasi, ‘Rabbi’).
177	Consulship of Commodus, who is named Augustus.	172	Revolt in Egypt.		
180–92	Commodus, emperor.	175	Revolt of Syrian governor Avidius Cassius.		
182	Conspiracy of Lucilla.	177	Victory of Mauretanians.		
190	Fall of Cleander.	188	Revolt in Germany suppressed.		
192	Assassination of Commodus. Pertinax proclaimed emperor.	190	Disorders in Africa suppressed.		
193	(March) Assassination of Pertinax. Julianus, emperor. (June) Assassination of Julianus. Severus proclaimed emperor.	193	D. Clodius Albinus, governor of Britain, given the position of a Caesar. Niger proclaimed emperor by the Syrian legions.		
193–211	Septimius Severus, emperor.	193–6	Siege of Byzantium.		
196	Caracalla proclaimed Caesar.	194	Defeat of Niger.		
197–8	Caracalla proclaimed joint Augustus with Severus.	197	Defeat and suicide of Albinus near Lyons. Britain divided into two provinces.		

Rome and Italy	Foreign affairs	Jewish affairs
CE	CE 199–201 Severus' Parthian campaign.	CE <i>c.</i> 200 Promulgation of the Mishna of Rabbi Judah, 'Rabbi'. 202 Severus issues rescript against Jewish and Christian conversions.
203 Consulship of C. Fulvius Plautianus and P. Septimius Geta.		
	203–4 Severus in Africa. 208–11 Severus' campaign in Scotland. 208–41 Ardashir, King of Persia. 208(9?) Accession of Vologeses V in Parthia.	
211–17 Caracalla, emperor.		
212 Geta murdered. Caracalla becomes sole emperor.		
212 Constitutio Antoniana published.		
217–18 Macrinus, emperor.		
218–22 Elagabalus, emperor.		
222–35 Severus Alexander, emperor.		



Map A Centres of Jewish population in the Herodian period.



Map B Palestine in the first century CE.





## CHAPTER I

## THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF PALESTINE

63 BCE–CE 70

The period under discussion coincides roughly with what is usually called the Early Roman or Herodian period.<sup>1</sup> While the former term is quite accurate and somewhat neutral, the latter is rather more appropriate. Our period bears the sharp imprint of Herod and his dynastic successors, who ruled the country from 37 BCE onward. Unlike many periods bearing the names of a monarch, but actually owing very little to him (e.g. ‘Edwardian’), many of the features of the Herodian period were indeed shaped by Herod himself – the greatest builder in the history of Palestine and one of the outstanding builders of all antiquity. Herod introduced new styles and building methods into the country and built on a monumental scale and to an unparalleled extent: cities, fortresses, palaces, a large harbour and the most magnificent building ever to be built in Palestine, the Jerusalem temple complex. Many of these monuments which were preserved because of their size or sacred character (e.g. the Temple Mount, the Cave of Machpelah) or because of their location in desert areas, where the remoteness and climate ensured their survival (e.g. Masada) have given us a better knowledge of the Herodian period than of any other period in the history of the country.

The beginning of modern research into this period was ushered in by the explorations of the American scholar Edward Robinson who, as early as 1838, noted in Jerusalem the skewback of an Herodian arch, now bearing his name, and correctly identified remains of the ‘Third Wall’ as well as the sites of Masada, Herodion and others. The Frenchman F. de Saulcy was the first to excavate in Jerusalem, clearing the so-called Tombs of the Kings in 1854, and in 1864 the British Charles Wilson began his series of soundings around the Temple Mount, thus initiating the modern scientific approach. Archaeological activity has hardly stopped ever since.

Archaeological research on this period owes much to the wealth of contemporaneous literary sources, especially the writings of Flavius

<sup>1</sup> For a comparison of various chronological systems see P. W. Lapp, *Palestinian Ceramic Chronology 200 BC–AD 70* (1961), p. 4, n. 20; J. F. Strange, ‘The Capernaum and Herodion Publications’, *BASOR* 226 (1977), 66.



Fig. 1.1 Building projects within Herod's kingdom.

Josephus. Josephus meticulously described the monuments of his time (e.g. Jerusalem on the eve of Titus' siege) and particularly the Herodian building projects (thirty-one in all, including nine outside his kingdom),<sup>2</sup> in many cases giving detailed and exact descriptions. Research has confirmed much of the data provided by Josephus; these descriptions did not consist simply of materials derived from the author's memory, but were to a large extent based on written sources, sketches and plans. The description of Jerusalem or of the fortress of Masada could not have been written by a man who had been away from his country for many years unless he had had recourse to written documents. It is highly probable that Josephus, owing to his status in the imperial court, had free access to the archives of the Roman army. One glaring exception to Josephus' accuracy almost invariably emerges when he cites population numbers, his gross exaggeration being typical of most classical authors.<sup>3</sup> To a lesser extent, though the material is still of great value, much can be drawn from Talmudic literature, e.g. on the Jerusalem Temple (see chap. 2). Further data are found in contemporary Greek and Latin authors.<sup>4</sup>

## I JERUSALEM

Jerusalem was a spacious city already at the beginning of our period, and by its end it had more than doubled in size. The 'First Wall', probably begun by Jonathan in c. 144 BCE and completed by his brother Simeon in 141 BCE, encompassed an area of 65 hectares (160 acres). By CE 70 the city's area, including the new suburbs enclosed by the 'Third Wall', had reached 170 hectares (425 acres). The population on the eve of the siege numbered about 80,000.<sup>5</sup> During this period the city underwent far-reaching changes. The Temple was rebuilt upon a huge new platform, which expanded the sacred area to 14.4 hectares (36 acres), the largest single temple complex in the the Classical World. It formed the dominant feature of the townscape, and not merely by its sheer size (about a sixth of the city during most of the period).<sup>6</sup> Two fortresses were raised: the

<sup>2</sup> E. Netzer *et al.*, 'Herod's Building Projects: State Necessity or Personal Need?' in *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 1 (1981), 48–80; H. v. Hesberg, 'The Significance of the Cities in the Kingdom of Herod' in K. Fittchen and G. Foerster (eds.) *Judaea in the Greco-Roman World in the Time of Herod in the Light of Archaeological Evidence* (Göttingen 1996), pp. 9–25; E. Netzer, 'The Palaces Built by Herod, a Research Update', *ibid.* 27–54.

<sup>3</sup> M. Broshi, 'Estimating the Population of Ancient Jerusalem', *Biblical Archeology Review* 4 (1978), 10–15. On the use made by Josephus of the Roman military archives cf. *idem*, 'The Credibility of Josephus', *JJS* 33 (1982), 379–84.

<sup>4</sup> M. Stern, *GLAJJ* 1 (Jerusalem 1974). <sup>5</sup> Broshi, 'Population' (above note 3).

<sup>6</sup> See D. Bahat, chap. 2, this volume.



Fig. 1.2 Temple Mount, the largest temple complex in the classical world.

*Antonia* on the north-east side of the city and a three-tower citadel on the north-west, adjacent to and protecting the palace, which Herod built upon an extensive platform. The city came to be filled with numerous magnificent buildings, both public and private.

The splendour of the city is revealed in both the literary sources and the archaeological discoveries. But Jerusalem is one of the rare instances where the literary evidence still contributes more than the archaeological data, despite almost a century and a half of intensive field work. Jerusalem was the first site in Palestine to be excavated by archaeologists, but most of the work was carried out beyond the walls of the Old City. Two factors prevented extensive excavations within the Old City: the density of building and religious sensitivities concerning many of the areas there. Some of these constraints have been overcome since the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967, especially in the area south and south-west of the Temple Mount (excavated by B. Mazar) and in the Jewish Quarter, which was largely destroyed in 1948 and has been rebuilt since the unification of the city in 1967 (excavated by N. Avigad).

*A The city walls* Of the three walls described by Josephus, we are now quite well acquainted with the 'First' and the 'Third'; of the 'Second Wall', only the literary evidence exists. The course of the 'Second Wall' ran entirely within what is now the built-up area of the Old City, and no excavations have been possible. The other two walls, the 'First' and 'Third', run partly or mostly through unbuilt areas. The 'First Wall', as we noted, was of Hasmonaean construction. Josephus' statement that this wall was founded by 'David and Solomon and the following kings' can now be understood in the light of the discovery by Avigad of a segment at the northern line of this wall which incorporated a tower of the Israelite period. The entire circuit of the 'First Wall' can now be reconstructed. Broshi's excavations along the western line of this wall (which also served here as the outer wall of Herod's palace) have revealed that the Hasmonaean construction (5.5 m thick) was bolstered by an additional wall abutting on it and bringing it to a total thickness of between 8 and 10 metres. The Hasmonaean towers here were also enlarged. This additional fortification process should be ascribed to Herod, who sought to ensure the security of his palace. Such thickening of walls was quite common in Hellenistic military architecture, and was known as *proteichisma* in Greek and *agger* in Latin.<sup>7</sup> Walls like these were generally built some

<sup>7</sup> Cf. M. Broshi and S. Gibson, 'Excavations Along the Western and Southern Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem' in H. Geva (ed.) *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed* (Jerusalem 1994), 147–55. For parallels cf. F. E. Winter, *Greek Fortifications* (London 1971), index, s.v. *proteichismata*.

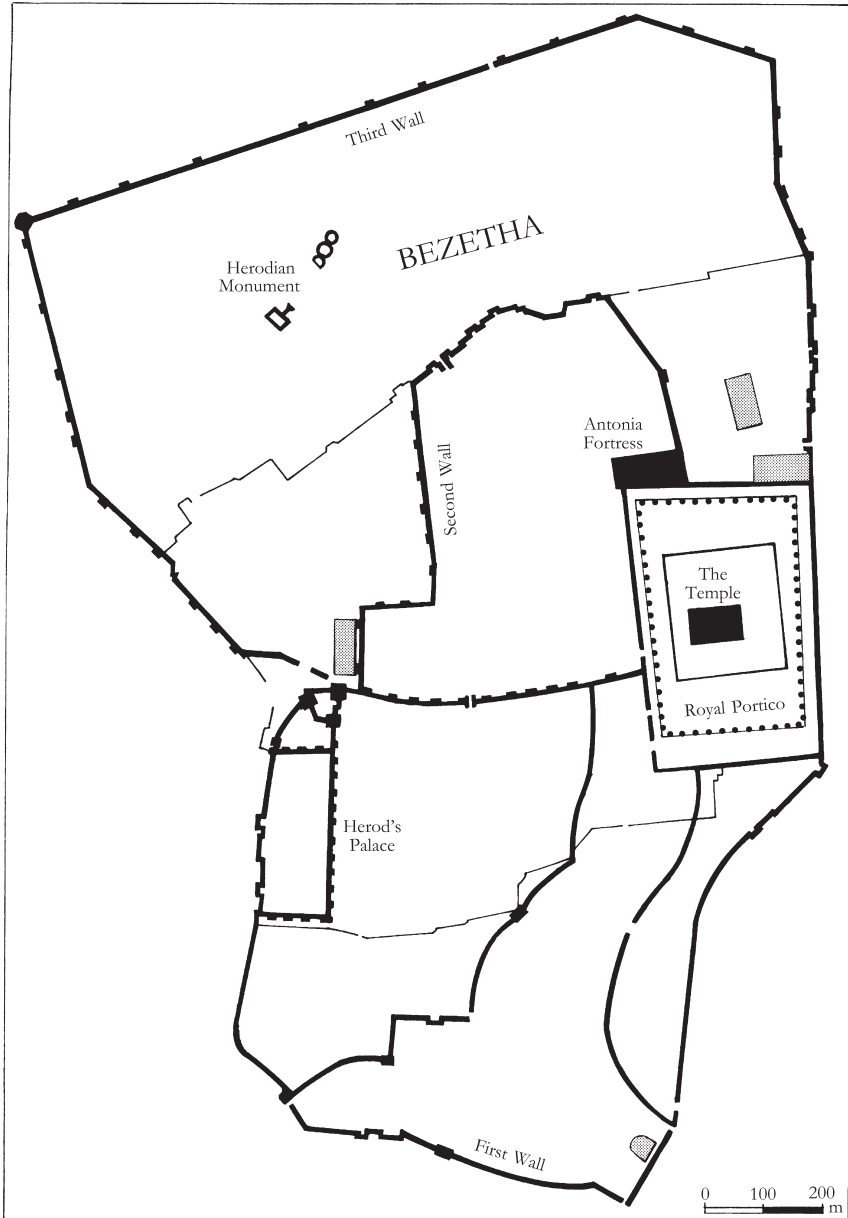


Fig. 1.3 The three walls of Jerusalem.



distance away from the the main line, but here topographical considerations led to the abutting of the two walls. This feature has not been noted otherwise in Palestine, but Josephus mentions an outer wall below the Antonia fortress.<sup>8</sup> Several other segments of the ‘First Wall’ were uncovered during the last century, by H. Maudsley, F. J. Bliss and A. C. Dickie on the slopes of Mount Zion; and in the twentieth century by C. N. Johns, R. Amiran and A. Eitan at the citadel; and by K. M. Kenyon and Y. Shiloh on the eastern ridge. The ‘First Wall’ ran along an optimal line of defence, with steep slopes on three of its flanks; only on the north was the terrain less favourable. This led to the utilization of this same course in later periods. In the Byzantine period, most of the city wall was built upon this line.

The ‘Second Wall’ was the shortest of the three, and all knowledge of it stems from Josephus.<sup>9</sup> The reconstruction given in the plan follows that of Avi-Yonah; he based his reconstruction *inter alia* on remains discovered beneath the present-day Damascus Gate.<sup>10</sup> But it is not only the course of this wall that is obscure, but also the date of its construction. It is either late Hasmonaean or Herodian, but Josephus’ enigmatic passage still awaits the discovery of actual archaeological remains which may shed light on the wall’s date.<sup>11</sup> The ‘Third Wall’ was begun by Agrippa I, who broke off the work by order of the Romans; it was completed hastily after the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt.<sup>12</sup> Substantial segments of this wall were traced and partly exposed for some 700 metres of its length by E. L. Sukenik and L. A. Mayer in 1925–6 and 1940. The identification of this has been the most controversial and heated issue in Palestinian archaeology, and scientific logic has not always reigned in the argumentation. In 1972–4, further segments were unearthed by S. Ben-Arieh and E. Netzer, whose results provided further stratigraphic confirmation for this identification.<sup>13</sup> This wall enlarged the defended area of the city from 90 hectares (225 acres) to 170 hectares (425 acres), but the added quarters were sparsely built up.<sup>14</sup> In comparison with the ‘First Wall’, the ‘Third Wall’ ran along a topographically much less

<sup>8</sup> *Bell.* v.240. <sup>9</sup> *Bell.* v.146, 260.

<sup>10</sup> M. Avi-Yonah, ‘The Third and the Second Wall of Jerusalem’, *IEJ* 18 (1968), 122–5.

<sup>11</sup> *Ant.* xiv.476. <sup>12</sup> *Bell.* v.147–55.

<sup>13</sup> M. Avi-Yonah, above n. 10, pp. 98–122, provides a comprehensive discussion and a good bibliography. See also S. Ben-Arieh and E. Netzer, ‘Excavations along the “Third Wall” of Jerusalem, 1972–1974’, *IEJ* 24 (1974), 97–107.

<sup>14</sup> The best summary, though the conclusions are to my mind erroneous, is E. W. Hamrick, ‘The Northern Barrier Wall in Site T’ in A. D. Tushingham, *Excavations in Jerusalem 1961–1967*, 1 (Toronto 1985), pp. 215–32. On the controversy concerning the Third Wall see M. Broshi, ‘Religion, Ideology and Politics and their Impact on Palestinian Archaeology’, *Israel Museum Journal* 6 (1987), 23–4.

favourable line (the ‘Second Wall’, the topography of which is even less favourable, was now enclosed by the ‘Third Wall’) – and indeed it was this northern flank that Titus breached.

*B The fortresses* At the north-western corner of the Temple Mount, Herod erected a fortress, naming it Antonia after his benefactor, Mark Antony. This was built on the site of an earlier fortress, the ‘Baris’, which had stood here in the Hasmonaean period and perhaps even earlier. The Antonia was intended to protect the northern flank of the city in general, and the Temple Mount in particular. Until recently scholars accepted the archaeological reconstruction by L. H. Vincent, but more recently P. Benoit has challenged this. He demonstrated that much of the evidence cited by Vincent is actually of a later date, and suggests a reconstruction of more modest proportions.<sup>15</sup> At the north-western corner of the city Herod erected three mighty towers, protecting this flank as well as his adjacent palace. The three towers were named after Phasaël (his older brother), Hippicus (a friend, ‘of the cavalry’), and Mariamne (one of his wives, the granddaughter of the Hasmonaean king Hyrcanus II). They are described in detail by Josephus.<sup>16</sup> Only one of these towers survives; it has been known since the Middle Ages as ‘The Tower of David’. This structure is built of solid masonry throughout and at present measures 21.4 × 17.2 metres at the top and rises some 20 metres above its base.<sup>17</sup> Some scholars identify this tower with Phasaël (for its dimensions approximate those given by Josephus), while others regard it as Hippicus (for topographical reasons).

*C The palace* The largest and most luxurious of Herod’s secular constructions in Jerusalem was his palace. Our knowledge of this building is based almost exclusively on Josephus’ enthusiastic description. The palace complex comprised two spacious buildings, and included banqueting halls, bed-chambers, porticoes, pools and other features – all ornately decorated.<sup>18</sup> Excavations conducted in the palace area (Kenyon and Tushingham,

<sup>15</sup> P. Benoit, ‘L’Antonia d’Hérode le Grand et le Forum d’Aelia Capitolina’, *HTR* 64 (1971), 135–67.

<sup>16</sup> *Bell.* v.161–71.

<sup>17</sup> C. N. Johns, ‘The Citadel, Jerusalem: A Summary of Work since 1934’, *QDAP* 14 (1950), 121–90, and especially 140ff. On later works: H. Geva, ‘Excavations at the Citadel of Jerusalem 1976–1980’ in Geva (above, note 7), 156–67; R. Sivan and G. Solar, ‘Excavations in the Jerusalem Citadel’, *ibid.* 168–76.

<sup>18</sup> *Bell.* v.176–83 *et passim*; R. Amiran and A. Eitan, ‘Excavations in the Jerusalem Citadel’ in Y. Yadin (ed.) *Jerusalem Revealed* (Jerusalem and New Haven 1976), p. 54; D. Bahat and M. Broshi, ‘Excavations in the Armenian Garden’, *ibid.*, pp. 55–6.



Amiran and Eitan, Bahat and Broshi) have not revealed anything of these buildings themselves. The only actual remains of the palace that have been found are a series of retaining walls. In building this palace Herod's engineers resorted to methods similar to those employed in the construction, for instance, of the Temple complex, and of Caesarea, Samaria and Jericho: the raising and levelling of the area and the stabilization of the immense quantities of fill by means of supporting walls. There were other splendid buildings in Jerusalem such as the Hasmonaean palace (which continued to be used throughout our period, even under the later Herodian rulers), or the palace of Queen Helena of Adiabene in the Lower City, but no part of them has been located so far.

*D Other public structures* Of other monumental buildings in Jerusalem of this period we have only literary evidence. Josephus related that Herod built both a theatre and an amphitheatre.<sup>19</sup> The latter apparently served also as a hippodrome.<sup>20</sup> The intensive building activity initiated by Herod must have brought about considerable changes in the layout of Jerusalem and in the network of its streets.<sup>21</sup>

A street uncovered by Avigad was built in the latter part of Herod's reign and Mazar found several finely paved Herodian streets, running at a tangent to and out from the Temple Mount around its south-western corner.<sup>22</sup> Herod's projects were continued under his successors, up to the very eve of the First Jewish Revolt. Josephus relates that in the days of the Roman procurator Albinus, the construction of the Temple compound was completed. This led to the laying-off of some eighteen thousand labourers (certainly an inflated figure). Agrippa II had them employed in paving the city's streets.<sup>23</sup>

*E The water supply* At this time both the growth in the population of Jerusalem and the rise in the standard of living demanded a reliable and abundant supply of water. The only spring in Jerusalem, the Gihon, even when augmented by the storage of rain-water was no longer sufficient to provide for the increased population, swelled by myriads of pilgrims

<sup>19</sup> *Ant.* xv.268f. C. Schick believed he had found Herod's theatre in Abu Tor (Givat Hananiah), the hill across the Hinnom Valley, south of the city. *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 1887, 161–6. Schick, 'Herod's Amphitheatre – Jerusalem'. Trial digs conducted by A. Kloner (as yet unpublished) proved Schick was wrong.

<sup>20</sup> *Bell.* II.44; *Ant.* xvii.255.

<sup>21</sup> On the Herodian city cf. N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (Nashville 1987), pp. 81–203.

<sup>22</sup> M. Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple* (New York 1982).

<sup>23</sup> *Ant.* xx.219–22. Apparently Josephus used here, as elsewhere, the term 'white stone', sometimes translated marble, to denote fine, hard limestone.

three times a year. Supply was assured through the hewing of cisterns<sup>24</sup> and the building of pools and aqueducts. Private cisterns attached to every house have been found in excavations.

Many of the public cisterns of this period are still extant – such as the thirty-four known cisterns on the Temple Mount, with a total capacity of 40,000 cubic metres (about 10,000,000 gallons). Six huge pools are also known, five of them mentioned by Josephus: the Pool of the Towers (*Amygdalon*), the Strouthion Pool, the Sheep's Pool (*Bethesda*), the Serpents' Pool,<sup>25</sup> and Solomon's Pool (the Pool of Siloam). The sixth pool is the Pool of Israel (*Birket Israel*), abutting on the north-eastern corner of the Temple Mount. This is the largest reservoir in Jerusalem (measuring 38 × 110 metres, with a maximum depth of 26 metres). Outside the city to the west was the Mamilla Pool, which fed the Pool of the Towers. Several of the pools collected the winter run-off (e.g. Bethesda and the Pool of Israel), while others were fed by aqueduct or tunnel (e.g. Strouthion, Siloam). In our period (or possibly already in the Hasmonaean period) an aqueduct was constructed to bring water from the springs of Arrub some 25 km to the south.<sup>26</sup> It had no siphons or bridges, and this necessitated a very long course (68 km), more than two and one-half times the distance as the crow flies. A very small gradient was employed (about one in one thousand), and there are several lengthy tunnels.

*F Domestic architecture* Recent excavations in Jerusalem, especially those of Avigad in the Jewish Quarter, have afforded a glimpse of the domestic architecture of the Herodian period.<sup>27</sup> Prior to these discoveries our knowledge was confined to monumental Herodian architecture. The houses found in the Jewish Quarter are notable for their spaciousness (ground plans as much as 600 square metres in size) and for their luxurious decoration (e.g. wall paintings, mosaics). Until future work brings to light further residential quarters, it will remain unclear whether this quality of architecture was confined to the Upper City or was widespread. The usual plan is of a series of rooms arranged around a central courtyard. Each house has several cisterns, reservoirs and ritual baths; steam-baths

<sup>24</sup> On the gigantic Temple Mount cisterns cf. Sh. Gibson and D. M. Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, a Sourcebook on the Cisterns, Subterranean Chambers and Conduits of the Haram al-Sharif* (Oxford 1996), pp. 225–33 and *passim*.

<sup>25</sup> The Serpents' Pool is commonly identified with the Sultan's Pool in the Hinnom Valley, but excavations of a monument north of Damascus Gate done by E. Netzer and S. Ben Arieh makes this identification unlikely. Cf. M. Broshi, 'The Serpents' Pool and Herod's Monument', *Maarav* 8 (1992), 213–22.

<sup>26</sup> A. Mazar, 'A Survey of the Aqueducts Leading to Jerusalem' in D. Amit *et al.* (eds.) *The Aqueducts of Ancient Palestine, Collected Essays* (Jerusalem 1989), pp. 169–95 (Hebrew).

<sup>27</sup> N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (above, note 21).

are also found. Mosaic pavements of fine quality are not rare, and wall paintings often in fresco technique, are quite common. The conventional mural divided the wall into rectangular panels, painted mostly in warm colours. There were always painted panels running along the lower part of the wall (dados). The panels are often painted in imitation of marble, or of architectural elements, seeking to convey an illusionistic effect. Floral motifs are also commonly used to achieve the effect of landscape. On Mount Zion a unique wall painting of birds was found – a rare instance in the art of this period of a violation of the prohibition against graven images.<sup>28</sup>

*G The Necropolis* The Necropolis that surrounded Jerusalem like a belt was founded in the Hellenistic period (see vol. 1, chap. 20) but developed greatly in the Herodian period. The tombs of the poor, who were probably interred in plain graves dug in the ground, have not been preserved. The 800 ‘middle class’ to ‘aristocratic’ family tombs, chambers hewn in the rocks, range from the very simple to the very ornate and expensive; from small chambers to a big complex like the ‘Tomb of the Kings’ which necessitated quarrying 20,000 cubic metres of rock. Hundreds of inscriptions (in Aramaic, Greek and to a lesser extent, Hebrew) only give us meagre information about those buried, seldom more than the name of the deceased and a patronymic, and on rare occasion an indication of origin (e.g. Beth Shean (Scythopolis) or Cyrenaica) or the profession of the deceased (e.g. builder, teacher). In a few cases we can identify the tombs with historical figures, as with the tombs of ‘Bene Hezir’, Nicanor, and Helena of Adiabene. The tomb of the family of Hezir, which dates to the Hasmonaean period (and see vol. 1, ch. 10) belonged to a priestly family known from the Bible (1 Chr. 24:15). The tomb of the family of Nicanor on Mount Scopus has an inscription in Greek which mentions ‘Nicanor of Alexandria who made the gates’.<sup>29</sup> This Nicanor donated the doors of one of the gates of the Temple, and the Talmud tells of a miracle that befell the doors on their voyage from Alexandria.<sup>30</sup>

The largest and one of the most impressive of the tombs is known by its popular name as the ‘Tomb of the Kings’. This is the only sepulchral monument mentioned by the ancient authors (Josephus, Pausanias, Eusebius and Jerome) which can be identified with certainty.<sup>31</sup> The tomb was constructed about CE 50 by Queen Helena of Adiabene (an Hellenistic

<sup>28</sup> M. Broshi, ‘Excavations on Mount Zion 1971–1972’, *IEJ* 26 (1976), 83–5; Broshi, in Y. Yadin (ed.) *Jerusalem Revealed*, pl. III (op. p. 56).

<sup>29</sup> N. Avigad, ‘Jewish Burial Caves in Jerusalem and the Judaean Mountains’, *Erls* 8 (Sukenik Volume 1967), 119–25. Cf. also the articles in H. Geva (ed., above, n. 7), 191–243.

<sup>30</sup> b. Yoma 38a. <sup>31</sup> M. Kon, *The Tomb of the Kings* (Tel Aviv 1947, in Hebrew).

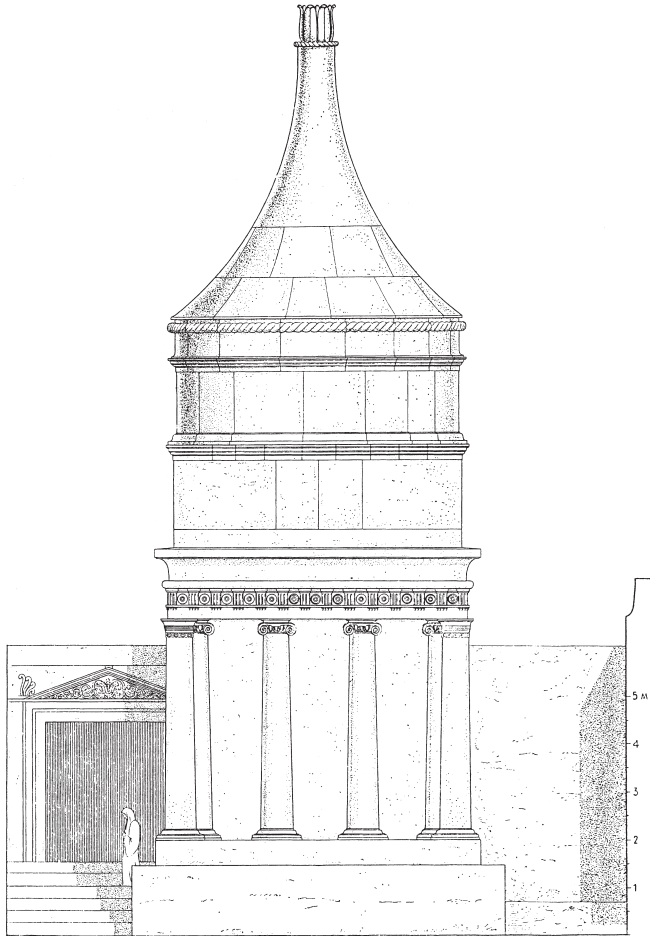


Fig. 1.4 The 'Tomb of Absalom'.

petty kingdom in northern Mesopotamia) who was a convert to Judaism and had settled in Jerusalem. The three pyramids that crowned the tomb have disappeared, but the rest of the compound is fairly well preserved – a sizeable, sunken courtyard, a majestic facade and a huge hypogeum (underground series of chambers) that were likened by Pausanias to the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus.<sup>32</sup> Almost all the other monumental tombs in Jerusalem carry apocryphal names (e.g. 'Tombs of the Judges', alias

<sup>32</sup> Pausanias 8.xvi.4.

‘Tombs of the Sanhedrin’). One of the tombs with apocryphal names, the ‘tomb of Absalom’, the most magnificent of the four Kidron Valley monuments, is the tallest (20 m) as well as the most complete sepulchral monument in western Palestine.<sup>33</sup> It consists of two parts – the substructure is mostly a rock-cut monolith which contains a small burial chamber with arcosolia. The superstructure served as a funerary monument (*nephesb*) to the tomb below and perhaps also for the adjacent ‘Tomb of Jehoshaphat’. The ‘Tomb of Absalom’ was built in a unique mixture of styles: the Ionic columns bear a Doric frieze crowned by an Egyptian cavetto cornice and the round roof is made in the Hellenistic-Roman style. Here we find the most eloquent example of the eclectic nature of the art that existed in Palestine in this period. Behind it, the ‘Tomb of Jehoshaphat’ is a complex of eight subterranean rooms with a large facade adorned with an ornate pediment. It seems that the two monuments were planned as a unit in the first century CE.<sup>34</sup> The ‘Tomb of Zachariah’ is a monolithic cube (each side of which is 5 m long) crowned by a pyramid. The monument also served as a *nephesb* for a tomb.<sup>35</sup>

The importance of the monumental tombs lies in the fact that they constitute the chief source for the architectural art of the period, because most of the other monuments have disappeared.

In addition to the tomb facades much can be learnt from the burial containers found in the tombs: sarcophagi and ossuaries. The sarcophagi, full-sized stone coffins, are costly. They are found only in the tombs of the very rich, as in the ‘Tombs of Kings’ and the so called ‘Tomb of the House of Herod’.<sup>36</sup> Ossuaries, on the other hand, are caskets carved from quite soft stone, that were intended for secondary burial (that is for collecting the bones after the flesh had decayed).<sup>37</sup> The ossuaries, being inexpensive, could be afforded even by the common people, and many score have been found. The sarcophagi are ornamented in relief with floral designs such as garlands and rosettes, while the ossuaries are decorated by chip-carving, a technique common in woodwork. Most of the patterns were executed by means of compass, stylus and ruler. There are also ossuaries that bear architectural motifs. In a tomb excavated at Giv’at Hamivtar, in the new suburbs of northern Jerusalem, several ossuaries

<sup>33</sup> See 2 Samuel 18:18.

<sup>34</sup> N. Avigad, *Ancient Monuments in the Kidron Valley* (Jerusalem 1954), pp. 91–138 (in Hebrew).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79–90. H. E. Stutchbury, ‘Excavations in the Kidron Valley’, *PEQ* 93 (1961), 101–13.

<sup>36</sup> On the identification of this tomb cf. Broshi, *The Serpents’ Pool* (above, n. 25).

<sup>37</sup> E. M. Meyers, *Jewish Ossuaries, Reburial and Rebirth* (Rome 1971); L. Y. Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries* (Jerusalem 1994).

of exceptional interest were discovered. One of them, ‘Simon builder of the Sanctuary’, was apparently someone connected with the building of the Temple, perhaps in a significant post. Another ossuary contained the skeletal remains of a person who had been crucified – the first actual evidence of crucifixion unearthed by archaeologists.<sup>38</sup>

The existence of an Essene community in or near Jerusalem was proven lately by the discovery of a large cemetery whose tombs are very similar to those of Qumran. In this graveyard, almost 5 km south-west of Herodian Jerusalem, are over forty shaft graves totally different from the regular Second Commonwealth tombs but of great kinship to those dug at the Essene settlement near the shores of the Dead Sea.<sup>39</sup>

## II THE OTHER CITIES

Josephus relates that Herod founded five cities: Caesarea, Samaria (Sebaste), Antipatris, Gaba-Hippeum and Anthedon-Agrrippias. The first four have been excavated, but of the fifth we have no archaeological data and even its location has not definitely been established. Two cities were developed by Herod’s sons: Tiberias was founded by Herod Antipas, and Paneas was expanded by Philip and renamed Caesarea Philippi.

*A Caesarea* Both Caesarea and Sebaste were named in honour of the emperor Augustus: Caesarea is derived from ‘Caesar’ and Sebaste from the Greek equivalent of ‘Augustus’. These two cities were built over earlier settlements: Caesarea arose on the site of the old Phoenician colony of Strato’s Tower, whereas Sebaste was built on the site of Samaria, the ancient capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. These were new creations, however; their size and ‘modern’ character obliterated their modest predecessors.

<sup>38</sup> V. Taferis, ‘Jewish Tombs at Givat Hamivtar’, *IEJ* 20 (1970), 18–32; J. Naveh, ‘The Ossuary Inscriptions from Givat Ha-Mivtar’, *IEJ* 20 (1970), 33–7; N. Haas, ‘Anthropological Observations on the Skeletal Remains from Givat Hamivtar’, *IEJ* 20 (1970), 38–59; Y. Yadin, ‘Epigraphy and Crucifixion’, *IEJ* 23 (1973), 18–32; V. Moller-Christensen, ‘Skeletal Remains from Givat Ha-Mivtar’, *IEJ* 26 (1976), 35–8; see also M. Hengel, ‘Mors turpissima crucis: Die Kreuzigung in der antiken Welt und die “Torheit” des “Wortes vom Kreuz”’ in *Rechtfertigung Fs Kasemann*, ed. J. Friedrich, W. Pohlmann and P. Stuhlmacher (Tübingen, Göttingen 1976); ET *Crucifixion*, with later additions (Philadelphia 1977); J. Zias and E. Sekeles, ‘The Crucified Man from Givat Ha-Mivtar, A Reappraisal’, *IEJ* 35 (1985), 22–7.

<sup>39</sup> B. Zissu, ‘“Qumran-type” Graves in Jerusalem: Archaeological Evidence of an Essene Community’, *DSD* 5 (1998), 158–71.

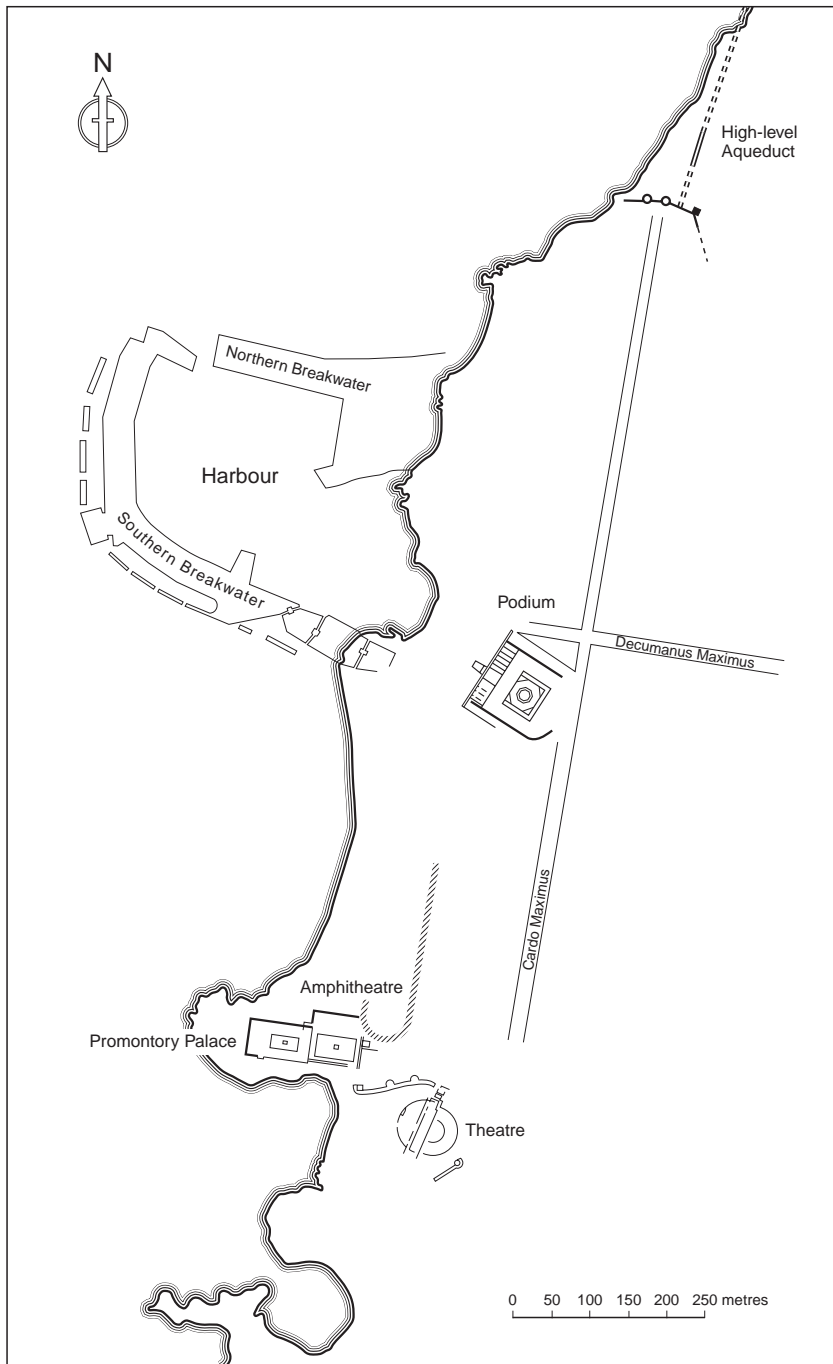


Fig. 1.5 Caesarea, main features of the Herodian city.

After Jerusalem, Herod's biggest building projects were carried out in Caesarea.<sup>40</sup> Its primary feature was its huge harbour, but it also possessed all the attributes of a classical Roman city: a fortification system, a major temple, a royal palace, markets, a theatre, an amphitheatre (which served mainly as a hippodrome), a rectangular street network, an efficient system of water supply and a sewage network flushed by the sea. Our picture of ancient Caesarea, like that of Jerusalem, is based on literary sources (primarily Josephus) as well as on data from several archaeological expeditions, Israeli, Italian and American.

The harbour of Caesarea was Herod's biggest and most ambitious civil project. The port area was first surveyed underwater by the Link expedition in the 1960s, and since 1975, annually, by expeditions led by A. Raban, mostly under the auspices of the Center for Maritime Studies at the University of Haifa. The investigation was hampered by the fact that the western part of the port had sunk some 5 to 7 metres over the centuries. The Herodian harbour was composed of three basins one inside the other. The outer basin, the largest of the three, was created by constructing two breakwaters to enclose a vast area of open sea, an engineering operation that was the first of its kind in history. It is also the first harbour known to us to apply the techniques recommended by Vitruvius, the noted Roman architect, a contemporary of Herod. Thus it was one of the most advanced artificial ports of its times and the only all-weather Palestinian port on its Mediterranean coast. Two huge breakwaters enclosed an area of 10 hectares (25 acres). Near the entrance to the harbour were found what seems to be the foundations of what Josephus describes as the most prominent feature here – the tower named 'Drusion', named after Augustus' stepson. This tower probably served as a lighthouse. The middle basin (200 × 200 m) lies to the east of the outer harbour. To its north were found ashlar buildings which might have served as shipyards. Near the inner basin remains of warehouses were unearthed.

East of the harbour area, the remains of a platform – partly natural and partly artificial – were found, elevated some 12 metres above its surroundings. This was most probably the podium of the temple of Augustus. Such platforms were a common feature in Herodian construction (e.g. the Temple Mount and the palace in Jerusalem, the Caesareum at Samaria-Sebaste, the winter palaces at Jericho). This gigantic platform could accommodate much more than a temple and it is quite possible that the marketplace was also built on top of it. Remains of a palace-like building

<sup>40</sup> For a general survey cf. NEAEHL 1, 270–91. A fuller treatment will be found in A. Raban and K. G. Holum (eds.) *Caesarea Maritima* (Leiden, New York and Cologne 1996).





Fig. 1.6 The theatre at Caesarea.

were unearthed in 1976 on a promontory jutting 100 metres into the sea west of the theatre. At the centre of the structure was a large pool (18 × 35 m), which had been surrounded by a peristyle. This was probably Herod's palace, which, like those found at Herodion, Jericho and Masada, was provided with a swimming-pool. There is a possibility though, that the palace was built somewhat later and that it was used as the praetorium, the seat of the Roman governors. Much of the promontory was eroded by the waves, but three rooms with elegant mosaic floors are a further proof of the palatial nature of this complex. Two entertainment facilities described by Josephus – a theatre and amphitheatre – have been excavated.<sup>41</sup> The theatre was excavated by an Italian expedition in 1959–64. This is one of the earliest theatres in the Syrian provinces. Though it was remodelled often over the centuries of its use, some of its original Herodian elements could still be discerned, such as the orchestra, whose plaster floor was painted with floral, geometrical and fish-scale designs. The wall-paintings of the orchestra are in imitation of marble panelling. The theatre seated an audience of some 4,000. Recent excavations have

<sup>41</sup> *Bell.* 1.414–15; *Ant.* xv.341.

unearthed Herod's amphitheatre (so called by Josephus, but in fact a hippodrome and stadium). The monumental U-shaped structure lies to the south of the harbour and close to the sea. It is 64 metres wide, and of its length 235 metres have been excavated so far. This entertainment facility, which was used for horse and chariot races, could accommodate 7,500–9,000 spectators. Another amphitheatre which has been identified on the basis of aerial photographs in the north-eastern part of the city, and of which only the imprint of the oval arena is visible, seems to belong to a later period and not to the Herodian, as was thought until recently. Josephus' description of Caesarea as a well-planned city<sup>42</sup> of what we would call today the rectangular or Hippodamian plan has been confirmed by aerial photographs, as well as by recent excavations of residential quarters. So far one *cardo* (main street running north–south) and four *decumani* (main streets running east–west), 90 metres apart, have been detected.

Caesarea enjoyed what was probably the best water supply of any city in the country. A network of terracotta and lead pipes supplied the city with an abundant supply of excellent water. In the 'palimpsest' of Caesarea's aqueducts, a channel in the eastern high-level aqueduct ought most probably to be ascribed to Herod.<sup>43</sup> It drew its waters from the Shumi Springs, some 7 km in a straight line to the northeast. The gradient of this aqueduct was only 0.16 per cent – one of the lowest in Roman aqueducts. The capacity of the aqueduct was 150 cubic metres per hour. Caesarea, a city c. 40 hectares in area and of about 15,000–20,000 inhabitants, was an elegant city which enjoyed almost all the amenities possible in that period.

*B Samaria (Sebaste)* Since Palestinian archaeology has always had a predilection for Hebrew Bible sites, Samaria (Sebaste) has been until the last quarter of the twentieth century the subject of more archaeological activity than Caesarea. Two major expeditions have explored the site: the Harvard Expedition, led by G. A. Reisner and C. S. Fisher (1908–10) and a joint expedition led by J. W. Crowfoot, Grace Crowfoot, Kathleen Kenyon and E. L. Sukenik (1931–5). As at Caesarea, there were all the attributes of a Roman city: fortifications, a colonnaded main street, temples, a stadium, a forum and an aqueduct system. The area of the Herodian city was 64 hectares (160 acres), spreading a kilometre (six-tenths of a mile) from west to east. The circumference of its walls reaches 3.5 km (2.2 miles), which would agree with the data given by Josephus. The

<sup>42</sup> *Bell. ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> D. Barag, 'Herod's Royal Castle at Samaria-Sebaste', *EI* 23 (1991), 293–304 (Hebrew, English abstract 155\*–6\*).

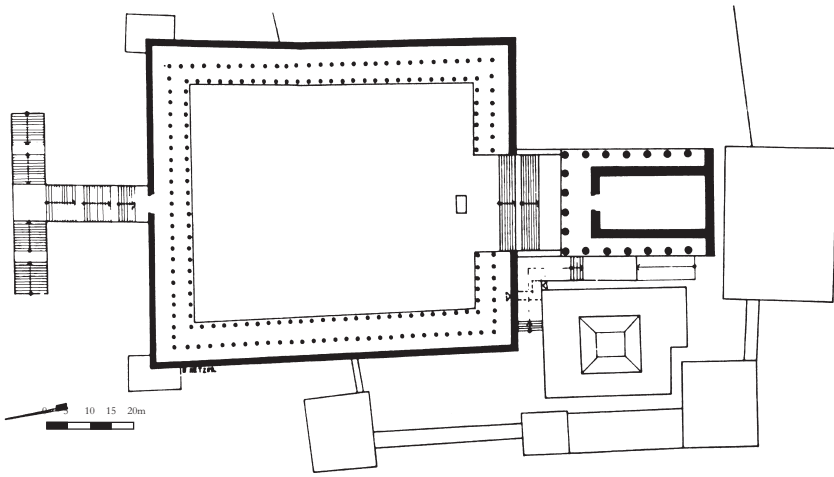


Fig. 1.7 Augusteum ground plan, Sebaste (Samaria).

western city gate is flanked by two round towers, each 14 metres in diameter. These are preserved to a height of 8–11 metres and are built on square bases dating from the Hellenistic period. Similar round towers have been found at the northern gate of Caesarea and the southern gate of Tiberias. The largest temple (24 × 35 m), apparently the ‘Augusteum’, included a high peristyle *temenos*. This *temenos* was built upon an artificial platform (72 × 83 m and 15 m high; cf. e.g. the Temple Mount, the palace in Jerusalem and the temple at Caesarea). The temple has a broad nave flanked by narrow aisles, with a portico of apparently eight columns on the front. The high standard of construction is attested also in the fine foundation laid directly upon the bedrock, some 9 metres below floor-level. West of the temple stood a royal villa or small palace and to its south an apsidal building. The stadium, the only one known in Palestine, seems also to have been built by Herod. It measured 60 × 230 metres and was surrounded by porticoes with Doric columns, the walls of which bore plaster painted in the masonry style. Remains of the spacious forum and an adjacent basilica are of the second century CE, but various associated discoveries point to an earlier phase, which could be ascribed to Herod or even Gabinius. The colonnaded main street may well have been founded by Herod. Two aqueducts bringing water to the city have long been known; recently, a third aqueduct was found, leading in from several abundant springs in the vicinity of Shechem-Neapolis to the south. This latter aqueduct called for great engineering skill, for the course necessitated the erection of a bridge some 55 metres high. So far it has not been possible

to date this project, but it could probably be ascribed to the Herodian period.<sup>44</sup>

*C Antipatris (Tel Aphek)* This city, half-way between Jerusalem and Caesarea, was named by Herod after his father. Between 1972 and 1985 the site was excavated by an expedition headed by M. Kochavi. Part of the main street has been uncovered, some 8 metres wide and running on a north–south axis. Shops and workshops line the street, bordered by raised pavements.<sup>45</sup>

*D Gaba Hippeon* In the Valley of Jezreel a settlement of cavalry veterans was accorded by Herod the status of a *polis*. Recent excavations at Tell Shusha near Kibbutz Mishmar ha-Emek, some 25 km southeast of Haifa, point to the identification of this site with Gaba.<sup>46</sup>

*E Tiberias* The ancient city, founded by Herod Antipas in CE 18 or shortly thereafter, lies south of the modern town, stretching some 1,200 metres along the shore of the Sea of Galilee and reaching some 250 metres inland on average. The literary evidence concerning Herodian Tiberias far exceeds the archaeological data, which are still scanty despite sporadic excavations there since 1950, and despite the expeditions headed by G. Foerster in 1973–4 and Y. Hirschfeld since 1989. Josephus tells of palaces, a stadium and a large synagogue. Foerster's excavations have revealed the southern city gate and the main street (*cardo*) leading north from an *agora*. The gate is flanked by two round towers, some 7 metres in diameter.<sup>47</sup>

*F Paneas* This centre of trade and of the cult dedicated to Pan was renamed Caesarea by Herod the Great's son the tetrarch Herod Philip. To differentiate between it and its maritime namesake the epithet Philippi was added. The city was 'founded' in 2/1 BCE and served as the capital of his kingdom until his death in CE 34 and for a very short time also under Agrippa I. Several expeditions have worked here since 1977, the principal ones being directed by E. Netzer, V. Tzaferis and Z. Maoz. Near the Paneion, the sacred grotto dedicated to Pan, were unearthed the remains of the temple built by Herod in honour of Augustus. Its walls, part of

<sup>44</sup> A. Frumkin, 'The Water Supply System of Sebastia' in Amit (above, note 26), 157–67, (in Hebrew).

<sup>45</sup> NEAEHL 1, 70–1.

<sup>46</sup> B. Mazar (ed.) *Geva, Archaeological Discoveries at Tell Abu Shusha, Mishmar Ha-emeq* (Jerusalem 1988) (in Hebrew).

<sup>47</sup> NEAAHL 3, 1464–73.

which were preserved to the height of 4 metres, were made in the *opus quadratum* technique. This, and the semicircular and rectangular niches that alternate along its walls, made probably to house statues, are typical of the architecture of Herod the Great. On a terrace to the west the remains of Herod's palace were found. Here the walls were built in the *opus reticulatum* (net-like) technique also employed exclusively by Herod (in his palace in Jericho and in a tomb in Jerusalem). It is wellnigh certain that these two monumental buildings were built under the supervision of Italian architects, like other of the king's constructions. Several first-century Jewish graves were dug around the city.<sup>48</sup>

### III HEBRON, THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH

The *temenos* built over the Cave of Machpelah (the tombs of the Patriarchs) is ascribed by most scholars to Herod, though neither Josephus nor any other ancient source makes any mention of its builder. The style of the stone masonry bears great resemblance to that of the outer walls of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, and the sheer monumentality of the structure lends probability to this ascription. The *temenos* is a rectangle (32 × 60 m) surrounded by walls preserved to their full original height (18 m on the average). The lower part of the walls (to the height of 10 m) presents a flat surface, whereas the part above is adorned by a series of pilasters; the level of the base of the pilasters is also that of the floor within. Adequate investigation of the subterranean parts of the structure, the caves and passages, has been prevented by religious sensitivities. Recent studies suggest that the rock-hill on which the *temenos* is built contains several caves, natural and artificial, interconnected by hewn passages.<sup>49</sup>

### IV JERICHO

The classical authors (Diodorus, Strabo, Pliny the Elder, Josephus and others) gave more attention to Jericho than any other place in Palestine except Jerusalem. The importance and fame of Jericho and its oasis stemmed from three factors: an abundance of water, a temperate winter climate and its strategic location. The two former factors combined to produce high yields of exotic crops, including medicinal herbs and spices, particularly the much sought after and expensive balsam. Indeed, the lower Jordan Valley and the En Gedi oasis on the Dead Sea were the only

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 136–43.

<sup>49</sup> L. H. Vincent and H. J. H. Mackay, *Hebron, le Haram El-Halil* (Paris 1923); Z. Yeivin, *The Machpela Cave Subterranean Complex, Israel – People and Land* 2–3 (1985–6), pp. 53–62 (Hebrew, English abstract pp. 9\*–10\*).

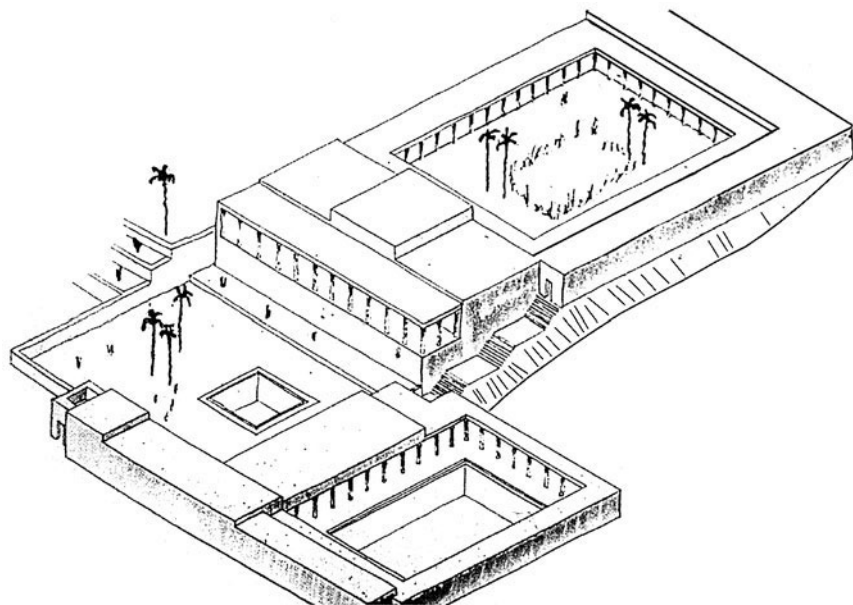


Fig. 1.8 Restored isometric view of eastern wing of Herod's second palace, Jericho.

places within the Roman Empire where balsam could be grown; otherwise it was imported from southern Arabia. Guarding the eastern approaches to Jerusalem, Jericho and its vicinity had several fortresses (e.g. Doq and Cypros; see section v). The mild winter climate made the town a favourite winter resort. Little is known of the city itself, the remains of which lie under the modern town. It seems to have been relatively small. Various ruins and an elaborate network of aqueducts show that Herodian Jericho resembled modern Jericho in character, but was on a much larger scale, a vast village of gardens.

The winter palaces at Jericho lie at Tulul Abu el-Alayiq, spreading over both banks of Wadi-Qilt, 2 km south-west of the modern town.<sup>50</sup> Two American expeditions, led by J. H. Kelso and D. C. Baramki in 1950, and by J. B. Pritchard in 1951, and an Israeli expedition directed by E. Netzer between 1973 and 1986 unearthed extensive remains of the Hasmonaean and Herodian palaces. Aided by data from the palaces of Masada and Herodion, Netzer was able to identify and date the remains correctly. The Hasmonaean buildings (see vol. 1, chapter 20) were taken over and expanded

<sup>50</sup> NEAEHL 2, 681–95.



considerably by Herod. His earliest palace was built on the southern bank of the Wadi (identified by Pritchard as a ‘Gymnasium’). His second palace was built, probably after the fierce earthquake of 31 BCE, over the Hasmonaean palace north of the wadi. On the ruins of the earlier palace an 8 m high mound was piled, and on it the second palace was erected. The Herodian complex comprised four wings – three south of the Wadi and one on the north. Part of the earlier palace may well have continued in use but most of it was covered by new constructions.

The northern, unearthed mostly by Netzer, has two peristyle courtyards, two large reception halls and a magnificent Roman bath. The larger of the two halls (19 × 29 m) was the main unit here, with rows of columns on three sides and a broad entrance on the fourth side, facing the majestic landscape of the ‘sunken garden’. This hall was paved in *opus sectile*, the stones being partly of imported marble and partly of local coloured stone. The two large halls of this palace bring to mind the two halls mentioned by Josephus in Herod’s palace in Jerusalem, and they, too, may have been named after Augustus and Agrippa. The bathhouse has five rooms, the most splendid of which was the round room, apparently *laconicum*, an equivalent of a sauna. The two swimming pools (probably in one of which Aristobulus, Herod’s brother-in-law, was drowned) were united. The new large pool (32 × 18 m) was surrounded by Roman-style gardens.

On the southern bank of the wadi, a ‘sunken garden’ came to light, the main feature of which is a grand façade, some 130 metres wide, with porticoes flanking it. The excavations revealed flower-pots still *in situ*. South of the garden is an artificial mound (mound no. 1) with a monumental stairway leading to its summit. On the top are the remains of a square structure containing a large round hall similar to the frigidarium of the northern wing but twice the diameter (16 m). A huge swimming pool has been excavated to the east of this (42 × 90 m).

In the construction of the expanded palace, two building techniques were used concurrently and integrally: Roman cement with an outer layer of *opus reticulatum* and *opus quadratum* and mud brick laid over rubble foundations. The former is an imported technique, whereas the latter is local. Undoubtedly much of the work here was produced or supervised by Roman architects and artisans.<sup>51</sup> The palace walls were plastered over throughout, and painted in the ‘masonry style’ and ornamented in stucco relief. The enlarged palace seems to have been used primarily for entertainment and reception.

<sup>51</sup> S. Rozenberg, ‘The Wall Paintings of the Herodian Palace at Jericho’ in K. Fittchen and G. Foerster (eds., above note 2), 121–38.

The overall area of the three palaces is *c.* 12 hectares (30 acres). It is not clear when the palace complex was abandoned, but it was most probably maintained even after Herod's death, perhaps as late as mid-first century CE.

The hippodrome at Jericho, south of Tell Samarat, mentioned by Josephus, was explored by E. Netzer in 1976. The complex consists of three units – a race-track, a theatre and an elevated construction standing upon a platform (10–13 m high). The racetrack area is 315 metres long (*c.* 1000 Herodian feet) and 84 metres wide. No seats were found around the track, and the adjacent theatre may have served for the spectators here as well. The theatre rose to about 13 metres above the level of the track and had a diameter of 70 metres, with a seating capacity of 3,000–4,000. Of the third element, the elevated building (70 × 70 m), only the mud-brick foundations remain. Various finds here, however, including ashlar and fragments of painted plaster, point to the building's former splendour. It may have been a gymnasium with a *palaestra* at its centre.

## V FORTRESSES

Of the seven desert forts of Judaea, six were constructed in the Hasmonaean period and only one, Herodion, was founded by Herod.<sup>52</sup> Another two, Cypros and Masada, were rebuilt by Herod in such a thoroughgoing manner that they may be regarded as virtually new creations. In the following only the latter three forts will be discussed in detail, but in the introduction we deal with the whole system. The forts were much more than mere military outposts. In addition to their various defensive functions, of defending the Jewish territories (Alexandriion and Machaerus), guarding the main roads (Alexandriion and Cypros) or secondary roads (Hyrcania), they served also as administrative centres (Herodion and Machaerus), dungeons (Hyrcania) and burial places (Alexandriion, Hyrcania and Herodion). They were at the same time magnificent palaces, luxurious and comfortable, designed to be used by the kings, both for pleasure and for havens of safety. Above all this, in what was probably their primary role, they were meant to serve as shelters after the hope of overcoming the enemy in the open field had been lost.<sup>53</sup> The most amazing element in these forts was the excellent water supply and

<sup>52</sup> The other four were Alexandriion (Sartaba), Doq (Qarantal), Hyrcania (Khirbet Mird) and Machaerus. Another two Hasmonaean forts, Thrax and Taurus, were destroyed by Pompey, but apparently were not reconstructed in our period. See also vol. II, pp. 10, 341–2.

<sup>53</sup> The above analysis follows Y. Tsafir, 'The Desert Fortresses of Judaea in the Second Temple Period', *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 2 (1982), 120–45 (with good bibliography).

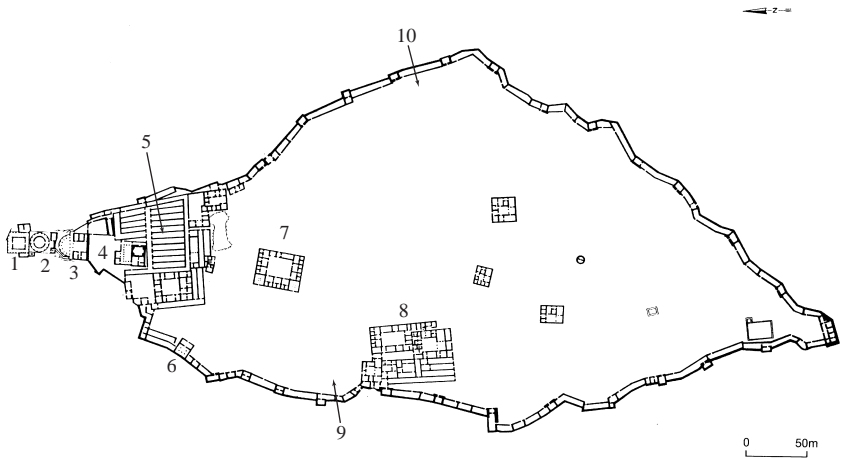


magnificent cisterns, all the more amazing for being in an arid zone, with an annual rainfall as low as 25 mm (1 inch). Only two of the forts, Cypros and Herodion, received their waters from permanent sources; all the others obtained their supply from run-off water and floods. In Masada the twelve cisterns hewn on the northern slope (and there were other cisterns at Masada), have a total capacity of 40,000 cubic metres (10,000,000 gallons). Though the least conspicuous, they were not only the most vital element of the fortress but also one of the largest and most difficult elements of the whole complex to build. The least expected features of a desert fortress such as Masada and its like are the bathhouses and swimming pools.

*A Masada* Masada is the southernmost of the desert forts and the most studied – it is almost the only Palestinian site that has been practically completely excavated.<sup>54</sup> In two seasons lasting eleven months in the years 1963–5, an expedition led by Y. Yadin uncovered almost all the built-up area and carried out a sounding in Camp F. In 1997 excavations were resumed under E. Netzer.

Masada, an isolated rock-cliff, is a natural stronghold, and it was already fortified by one of the Hasmonaean kings, probably Alexander Jannaeus. On this we have only literary evidence; so far no archaeological remains from this period have been unearthed. Herod built around the whole circumference, even above sheer unscalable cliffs, a casemate wall 1,400 metres long. The buildings on the plateau (an area of 8 hectares (20 acres), somewhat resembling a boat) can be divided roughly into two categories: palace and pleasure buildings, and buildings and other constructions belonging to the fortress. To the fortress belong the casemate wall, the storehouses and the cistern system. (Storehouses and cisterns are indeed necessary also for a palace, but their extraordinary dimensions point clearly to their military nature. They were made to enable the fortress to withstand a siege almost indefinitely.) The great complex of storehouses is located at the northern end of Masada, but there are other storehouses, quite big, attached to other units. There are two complexes of palaces, the northern and the western. The northern palace is situated on three terraces, on the very edge of the abyss. The lowest terrace is 35 metres below the upper one, which is on the level of the plateau. This

<sup>54</sup> NEAEHL 3, 975–85; further to the bibliography quoted there cf. D. Barag *et al.*, *Masada Final Report 4: Lamps, Textiles, Basketry, Wood Remains, Ballista Balls* (Jerusalem 1994); G. Foerster, *Masada Final Report 5* (Jerusalem 1995); Foerster, 'Hellenistic and Roman Trends in the Herodian Architecture of Masada' in Fitchett and Foerster (above, note 2), 55–72.



- 1. Northern Palace, lower terrace
- 2. Northern Palace, middle terrace
- 3. Northern Palace, upper terrace
- 4. Large Bathhouse
- 5. Storerooms

- 6. Synagogue
- 7. Building IX (a hostel?)
- 8. Western Palace
- 9. Western Gate
- 10. Southern Gate

ingenious construction called for both daring skill and imagination: the rock-terraces were extended by means of supporting walls, built on to the sheer cliff-face.

A small villa was built on the upper terrace to serve as living quarters, while the two lower terraces were equipped for leisure. The middle terrace, a *tholos*, has niches in its walls which could have been used for a library. The lower one is a triclinium which must have served for banqueting. On all three levels the buildings were richly ornamented with wall paintings (in floral and geometric patterns), moulded stucco and mosaics. A small bathhouse was attached to the lower terrace. Just south of the northern palace lies the largest bathhouse at Masada (the other bathhouses on the site are all within palace complexes). This spacious building has all the required components of the Roman bath: an entrance and dressing room; warm, cold and hot rooms; and an elegant courtyard. It was lavishly decorated with wall paintings, and originally it had been paved with mosaics, and it was again later repaved in *opus sectile* (mosaic). The architecture of the northern palace is a fusion of late Hellenistic architecture, perhaps of Alexandrian origin, with strong Italian elements. There is good reason to believe that Roman artisans were employed, as for other Herodian palaces, in its building and decoration.

The western palace, the largest residential building at Masada, has a total area of almost 4,000 square metres (an acre). It is most probably the oldest of the two palaces, built before 31 BCE when the Roman influence – conspicuously missing here – starts showing its mark. Four main units comprise the building: the royal apartments including reception and banqueting halls, the service wing and workshops, the storerooms (one 70 m long) and administrative wing, and the residence of the courtiers. As befits the main palace, its status is evident not only from its size but also from its splendid ornamentation – wall paintings and finely executed, coloured mosaic floors. There was also a bathhouse and a swimming pool, the latter adjacent to the palace, a spectacular feature in this bleak landscape, and perhaps typifying more than anything else the luxurious nature of the complex. The effort needed to fill the pool with water must have been enormous. In several places, including the synagogue (see below section VI), the remains of fourteen scrolls were found – biblical, apocryphal and sectarian books. Apart from their intrinsic value, these fragmentary manuscripts have the added importance of having been found in a clear archaeological context. Particularly significant is the Qumranic

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Fig. 1.9 (Above) Aerial view of Masada; (below) Plan of Masada.

'Songs of the Sabbath Offerings', a composition relating to the calendar used by the Qumran Community (identified by most scholars with the Essenes; see chap. 24). This, and perhaps two other fragmentary scrolls are the only Qumranic manuscripts found outside Qumran, and their clear context confirms the accepted dating of the Qumran library. The 700 ostraca found at Masada are mainly in Hebrew and Aramaic, but some are in Greek and Latin. The bulk of this epigraphic discovery, the largest group of ostraca ever found in Israel, come from the Zealots who occupied Masada during the First Revolt, and they are very informative about the defenders of Masada. Of special interest are Latin papyri written a short time before the siege and left in one of the wall casemates by the Roman garrison. Among those papyri were found a fragment of Virgil's *Aeneid*, military pay records and medical care documents and two manuscripts mentioning balsam, the lucrative product of the environs of the Dead Sea.<sup>55</sup>

The Roman siege of Masada, in CE 73 (or 74)<sup>56</sup> has left some of the most impressive and best-preserved Roman military constructions known – the assault ramp, the circumvallation (siege-wall) and the eight camps. The ramp, a huge earthwork 200 metres long and rising 60 metres, and based on a wooden foundation (the tips of the logs can still be seen), was constructed to enable the use of a siege-tower with a battering ram. The camps, six minor and two major (135 × 170 m, 125 × 150 m), in conjunction with the circumvallation guarded the paths leading to and from Masada, and effectively prevented the escape of the besieged as well as providing defence against sudden sorties. Though the camps have been studied by several scholars (A. Schulten, C. Hawkes, I. A. Richmond, S. Guttman and Y. Yadin), it is only in 1995 that a small-scale excavation (directed by G. Foerster, J. Magness, B. Arubas and H. Goldfuss) has been carried out.

*B Herodion* Like Masada, Herodion combines fortress and palace, but here the palatial nature of the site overshadows the fortress. This huge complex spreads over 20 hectares (50 acres), with the actual built-up area comprising about a third. This is the third largest palace complex in the Roman world, after Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli and Nero's *Domus Aurea* in Rome, both built later than Herodion. This seems to have been Herod's

<sup>55</sup> H. M. Cotton and J. Geiger, *Masada Final Report 2: The Latin and Greek Documents* (Jerusalem 1989).

<sup>56</sup> W. Eck, 'Die Eroberung von Masada und eine neue Inschrift des L. Flavius Silva Nonius Bassus', *ZNW* 60 (1969), 282–9; H. M. Cotton, 'The Date of the Fall of Masada – The Evidence of the Masada Papyri', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 78 (1989), 157–62.

main summer palace, its winter counterpart being at Jericho. Herodion, some 12 km south of Jerusalem and a conspicuous feature visible from afar, has been studied by numerous scholars. Excavations were undertaken by V. Corbo in 1962–7 and G. Foerster in 1967 and 1970 – both on the fortress-hill – and by E. Netzer since 1972, mostly in the lower areas. After a decade of inactivity, Netzer has resumed in 1997 his excavations in the lower area.

The hill, a truncated cone resembling a volcano, rises 60 metres above its surroundings. The fortified palace which Herod built at the top can be divided into seven elements: (1) the outer shell, which consists of two concentric walls (the diameter of the outer wall is 63 m); (2) the circular interior with the palace quarters; (3) the eastern round tower (diameter 18 m); (4) the three semi-circular towers (diameter of each: 14.5 m); (5) the entry stairs; (6) the cisterns on the slopes; (7) the earthen and stone fill which gives the mountain its shape.

The two concentric walls are preserved up to a height of 15 metres. The space between the walls, 3.5 metres wide, had been divided into several storeys by means of wooden floors. These were probably utilized for dwelling, storage and so on. The interior palace served as a private, intimate royal villa, for the main palace was in Lower Herodion; and functionally this private mansion is analogous to the northern palace of Masada. The interior is divided into two halves: the western part included dwelling quarters and service rooms, while the eastern part was occupied almost entirely by a garden courtyard. The western part had three elements – *triclinium* (dining room), on the south, living rooms in the middle, and an elaborate bathhouse decorated with wall paintings and mosaics (similar to those in the baths found at Masada, Jericho and Cypros) on the north. The monumental stairway, 120 metres long, was described by Josephus as having 200 marble stairs. Three huge cisterns have been found, hewn deep into the rock together with other smaller cisterns on the summit; they must have been filled primarily with water brought on pack animals and human backs from the pool at the foot of the hill (see below). After the palace-fortress had been completed, a fill was deposited on the surrounding slopes, building them up to create the artificial mound as it now stands, some 10–15 metres higher than the original hill and considerably increasing the angle of its slopes. Like Masada, Herodion was occupied by the Jewish insurgents during the First Revolt against Rome, and also served as a Jewish stronghold during the Second (Bar Kokhba) Revolt. The literary sources mentioning this are confirmed by the excavations. Much evidence was found for the insurgents' occupation, for they made changes within the palace to accommodate a large population of squatters. The changes included the conversion of the *triclinium* into a

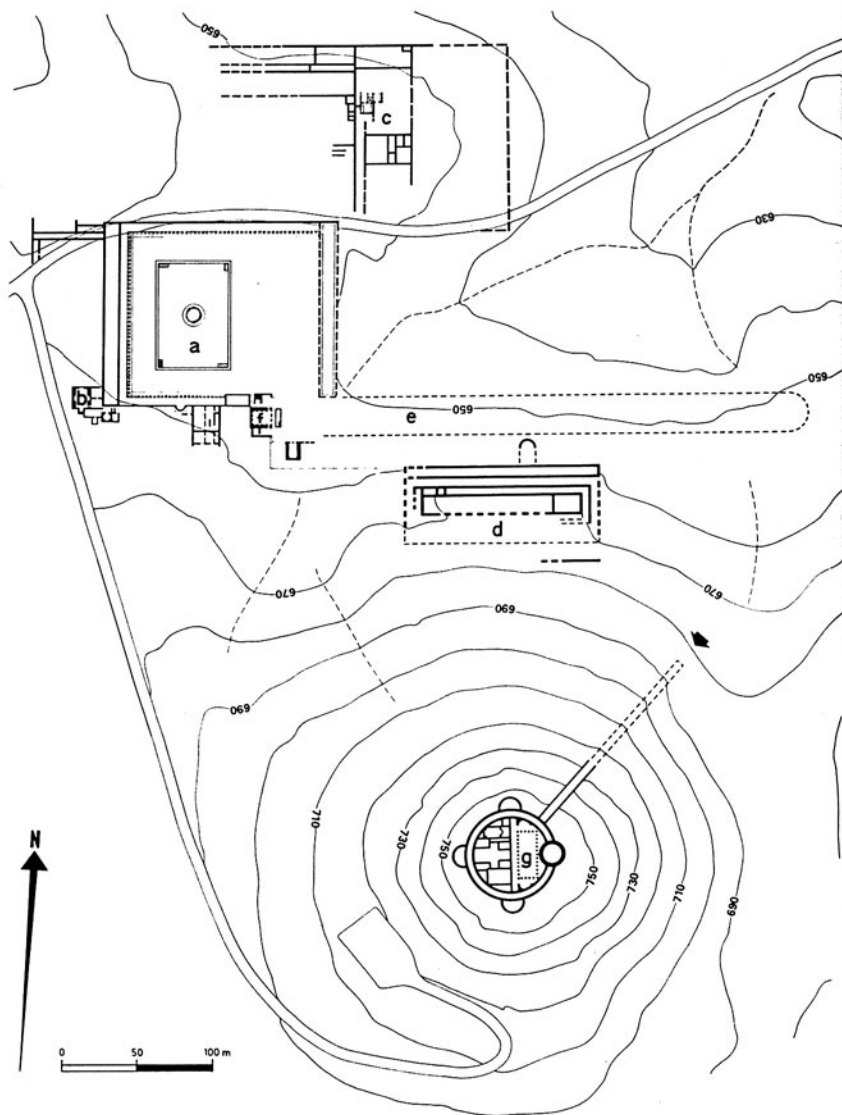




Fig. 1.10 (Left) Aerial view of Herodion; (right) Plan of Herodion.  
 © From H. Shanks, *Judaism in Stone*, 1979; W. Braun, after E. Netzer.

synagogue (see below section vi). Josephus relates that Herod was buried at Herodion but the tomb has not been found.<sup>57</sup> Lower Herodion, lying north of the hill-fortress, comprises at least four units (more may be unearthed in the future): the great palace, the race-track, the pool and the northern area. This is a well-planned complex, covering an area of  $350 \times 500$  metres, in which all the buildings are arranged in a unified alignment and in symmetry with those on the hill-fortress. The great palace ( $55 \times 130$  m) is exactly north of the hill fortress and on the same axis of symmetry. Most of the stones of the palace are missing now, but the artificial terrace on which it was erected is well preserved. This kind

<sup>57</sup> NEAEHL 2, 618–26.



- a. Pool Complex
- b. Central Bathhouse
- c. Northern Area
- d. Large Palace

- e. The Race-Track
- f. Monumental Building
- g. Mountain Palace-Fortress

of terrace is known from almost every Herodian site, and here also it was constructed by levelling the ground on one side and raising it by means of vaults on the other. Netzer suggested that this palace was used for receptions, while the palace-villa on the fortress hill served the king and his entourage. The race-track (25 × 300 m) is also built upon an artificial terrace. It is too narrow to have served as a hippodrome. This, and a monumental building nearby, might have been intended for the funeral procession and for the funerary ceremony.

The big pool (40 × 70 m) stands in the midst of a spacious complex (110 × 160–220 m) of gardens, porticoes etc. The pool, with a capacity of some 10,000 cubic metres (2,500,000 gallons), probably had the double purpose of serving as a reservoir storing the waters brought by the aqueduct from springs in the west and as a pleasure-pool for swimming and possibly also boating. In the northern area remains of many luxurious buildings can be discerned as well as a small bathhouse and a long storehouse.

*Cypros* Of this site Josephus relates: 'Above Jericho he built the walls of a fortress, remarkable alike for solidarity and beauty, which he dedicated to his mother under the name of *Cypros*.<sup>58</sup> The site of *Cypros* was identified as Tell el-*ʿAqabah*, 1,200 m west of Jericho's winter palaces. In 1974 E. Netzer and E. Damati excavated there and discovered some Hasmonaean remains (possibly one of the two fortresses *Thrax* and *Tauros*) and extensive Herodian palace remains.<sup>59</sup>

The site consists of two parts: a hill (the 'acropolis') and an area below, c. 30 metres lower than the former. The top of the hill, originally 0.1 hectares (1/4 of an acre) large, was enlarged to 0.18 hectares by means of walls retaining huge fills. The site has suffered from violent earthquakes that have ruined much of the 'acropolis'. The best-preserved building is a bathhouse in which was found a unique monolith bathtub made of local alabaster weighing 1.5 tons. The lower area, excavated only partially, is better preserved. Here also a Roman-type bathhouse was unearthed, bigger and more elaborate than the one on the 'acropolis'. Remains of a luxurious building decorated with wall paintings seem to belong to a palace.

## VI SYNAGOGUES

There are many literary references to synagogues that have existed in Palestine in our period, but before the excavations of Masada and Herodion,

<sup>58</sup> *Bell.* 1.417. <sup>59</sup> *NEAEHL* 1, 315–17.



the only material evidence for the existence of synagogues was the inscription of Theodotus. In this inscription found by R. Weill in the City of David, Theodotos, son of Vettenos ‘a priest and *archisynagogos*, son and grandson to *archisynagogos*’, relates that he has founded the synagogue for the reading of the law and the studying of the laws, as well as the hospice, the rooms and the water installations for the accommodation of the needy from abroad.

The synagogues of Masada and Herodion are audience halls which are almost identical in size (12 × 15 m and 10.5 × 15 m), with rows of benches along the walls and columns supporting the ceilings. Both are simple halls devoid of any ornament. Adjacent to both were found ritual immersion baths (*miqwaot*). The Masada synagogue was constructed during Herod’s reign and after some 70 years of neglect (during the time that Masada was occupied by a Roman garrison), it was again put to use by the Zealots, who made some changes in the original plan. Its identification as a synagogue has been strengthened by the findings of several biblical fragments that had been buried deliberately under the floor of a small room in this building. Similar halls have been found also at Gamala in the Golan, at Magdala on the shores of the Sea of Galilee and possibly also at Chorazim. Another feature common to four of these buildings (Masada, Herodion, Magdala and Chorazim) is that their main entrance was in the eastern wall, as in the Jerusalem Temple.<sup>60</sup>

## VII QUMRAN

Here we shall limit our discussion to the excavations at Qumran, the community centre of the Dead Sea Sect (for the Dead Sea Scrolls, see chs 24–5) and its vicinity. The site was excavated in 1951–6 by R. de Vaux.<sup>61</sup> It was found that the members of the community lived in caves, mostly artificial, which were dug in the soft marl. Recent excavations found evidence also of habitation in tents. Apparently the centre was used primarily for communal gatherings, common meals of a ritual nature, the

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 1421–4. F. Huttenmeister and G. Reeg, *Die antiken Synagogen in Israel* (Wiesbaden 1997); I. L. Levine (ed.) *Ancient Synagogues Revealed* (Jerusalem 1981).

<sup>61</sup> The best introduction is still R. de Vaux, *Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London 1973). Cf. a critical review, M. Broshi, ‘The Archaeology of Qumran – A Reconsideration’ in D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (eds.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls, Forty Years Later* (Leiden–Jerusalem 1992), pp. 103–15. On recent theories cf. J. Magness, ‘A Villa at Qumran?’, *Revue de Qumran* 63 (1994), 397–419; ‘The Chronology of the Settlement at Qumran in the Herodian Period’, *Dead Sea Discoveries* 2 (1995), 58–65; M. Broshi, ‘Was Qumran Indeed a Monastery? The Consensus and its Challengers’ in J. H. Charlesworth (ed.) *Caves of Enlightenment* (North Richland Hills, Texas 1998), 19–37.



Fig. 1.11 (Above) Aerial view of Qumran; (below) the artificial caves in the marl terrace at Qumran; cave 4 is below the figure.

copying of manuscripts, workshops, storage and the like. The favourable conditions of this arid region and its remoteness account for the good preservation of the remains and have enabled identification of most of the components on the site. The Dead Sea Sect occupied Qumran for 150–200 years from about 100 BCE (Period IA). The community centre took on its definitive form in its second phase (Period IB). The beginning of this phase is not clear, but it must have occurred some time in the first half of the first century BCE. The end of this phase is not much clearer, for it seems that the site was destroyed violently in 9/8 BCE and that it was subsequently abandoned, apparently for a very brief time. The third phase (Period II) was put to an end by Vespasian's troops in the year CE 68. The most conspicuous feature of Qumran is its water system. Its cisterns were fed by an aqueduct bringing winter rain-waters from Wadi Qumran. Of the sixteen cisterns ten were *miqwaot* (ritual baths) characterized by flights of steps with miniature partition walls leading down into them. The *miqwaot* are the most important feature of this site to testify to its religious nature. The largest hall at Qumran (4 × 22.5 m) seems to have served as both assembly hall and refectory. The latter use is indicated by the fact that in an adjacent room some thousand pottery dishes were found – mostly plates and bowls. In another room a long table made of mud bricks and plastered over might have been used by scribes sitting in the second floor as a shelf. Three inkwells found in the same context are the main evidence to the existence of the scriptorium, the room in which the sect's scribes wrote – composed and copied their manuscripts. Several workshops have been found and some, such as the potters' shop, the flour mill and the laundry could be identified; though others, such as one with a large furnace could not. About 3 km (2 miles) southeast of Khirbet Qumran flow the waters of the mighty springs of En Feshkha. Here, a large building with an enclosure wall came to light together with pools and the remains of a shed. This site, contemporaneous with Qumran, seems to have served as a farm, utilising the brackish waters of Ein Feshkha for growing specific, salt-tolerant crops, mostly date palms. This farm had some workshops, one of which was probably a tannery.

At Ein el-Ghuweir (Enot Qaneh), an oasis some 15 km (c. 10 miles) to the south of Qumran were found remains of a structure and cemetery which resemble Qumran. It is highly probable that a Qumran-like community occupied this site.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> P. Bar-Adon, 'Another Settlement of the Judaean Desert Sect at En el-Ghuweir on the Shores of the Dead Sea', *BASOR* 237 (1977), 1–25.

The overall picture stemming from the excavations at Qumran is of a community existing here for a period of about a century and a half preceding the destruction of the Second Temple. The community at Qumran, a monastic and communitarian society, numbered some 200 members at most. The archaeological conclusions regarding Qumran are in remarkable agreement with the information concerning the community found in the scrolls. One of archaeology's ancillary disciplines, palaeography, has been a major beneficiary from the literary discoveries at Qumran. Remains of over 800 manuscripts (over 600 from Cave 4 alone) have provided a rich corpus of palaeographical material, ranging from the third century BCE, down to the first century CE. Radiocarbon tests have confirmed the palaeographical framework.<sup>63</sup>

### VIII CONCLUSION

We have reviewed above the archaeological remains of western Palestine from 63 BCE to CE 70, somewhat to the neglect of Jewish eastern Palestine, the Peraea, concerning which very little information is available for this period. Our knowledge of this time period is based largely on monumental remains, both royal and public. Archaeologists do tend to prefer the investigation of monuments to that of plain domestic remains. But even more significantly, the Herodian period excelled in its monuments and held several contemporaneous architectural records: for the largest artificial platform (the Temple Mount), the largest building (the Royal Portico on the Temple Mount, 279 metres (= 900 Herodian feet) long)<sup>64</sup> and the largest palace complex (at Herodion) and perhaps the most advanced harbour (at Caesarea).

The picture of this period is thus to some extent distorted, the monumental being brightly lit, while the domestic is but dim. An example of a major lacuna in our knowledge of this period is that of town planning in Palestine.

The extant monuments together with the archaeological finds provide a wealth of material reflecting the art and architecture of this period. Palestine being at the meeting point of East and West, it is quite natural that the major feature of this art is the blend of Oriental and Graeco-Roman tradition.<sup>65</sup> An instructive example is the 'Tomb of Absalom' in Jerusalem (above II, g), a fusion of Ionic, Doric, Egyptian and Hellenistic-

<sup>63</sup> G. Bonani *et al.*, 'Radiocarbon Dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls', *Atiqot* 20 (1991), 27–32; A. J. Timothy Jull *et al.*, 'Radiocarbon Dating of Scrolls and Linen Fragments from the Judaean Desert', *Atiqot* 28 (1966), 1–7.

<sup>64</sup> R. Grafman, 'Herod's Foot and Robinson's Arch', *IEJ* 20 (1970), 60–6.

<sup>65</sup> M. Avi-Yonah, *Oriental Art in Roman Palestine*, *Studi Semitici* 5 (Rome 1961).

Roman styles. The Herodian period is characterized by the advent of Roman elements in Palestinian architecture, technological, stylistic and institutional. In technology we now find the use of Roman concrete, or arches and barrel-vaulting for aqueducts, bridges and platforms, as well as for roofing – e.g. the *caldaria* (hot rooms) in the bathhouses at Masada and Herodion. In architectural style, we see *opus reticulatum* wall facings and the erection of temples upon podia. In institutions we observe the bathhouses and amphitheatres (Jerusalem and Caesarea).

Often the application of a new technique appears in conjunction with the employment of a new style or a new institution (e.g. concrete used in the dome of a bathhouse, or concrete with *opus reticulatum*). These new Roman elements brought with them also, long-standing Greek and Hellenistic features, which thus emerge late in Palestine (e.g. wall paintings, both fresco and secco, and moulded stucco). The principal patron of the introduction of these western innovations was Herod himself, who, for instance, built the first theatre in the land, a revered Greek institution. Most of those new features survived into subsequent periods, though some, like *opus reticulatum*, seem to have gone out of use here after Herod's reign.

As in most other periods in its history, so at this time there is little in the material culture which can be called typical Palestinian (one exception is the stone ossuaries used by the Jews for secondary burials, mostly in the vicinity of Jerusalem). A salient local characteristic is the Jewish prohibition of human or animal representations. Even Herod, a rabid philhellene and zealous adherent of things Roman, generally observed the second commandment, even in the privacy of his own chambers. A notorious exception was the golden eagle which he placed over the gate of the temple in Jerusalem, which resulted in a violent public reaction.<sup>66</sup> The defeat of the Jews in the First Revolt against Rome, and the destruction of the Second Temple which symbolized it, shattered the Herodian splendour and brought to an end the most prosperous period that Palestine had known up to that time.

<sup>66</sup> *Bell.* 1.650.

The author wishes to thank his colleagues and friends (usually they are both) for their advice, generously given: Dr H. Eshel, Dr S. Gibson, Professor E. Netzer, Dr Y. Porath, Mr G. Stiebel, Professor V. Tzaferis.



## CHAPTER 2

## THE HERODIAN TEMPLE

## I THE SOURCES

Any attempt at a theoretical reconstruction of Herod's Temple must be based on the available literary sources as well as the evidence produced by archaeology. The two main literary sources which we have are Flavius Josephus' descriptions of the Temple as given in *Ant.* xv.380–425 and *Bell.* v.184–227 as well as several additional references to its history given by Josephus and, secondly, the various descriptions recorded in the Mishnah, especially that given in *m. Mid.* which contains a general description of the Temple and *m. Tamid*, 1:1–3. In addition, several New Testament passages mention the beauty of Herod's building (Mark 13:1; Luke 21:5), while 'Solomon's Portico' is mentioned in John 10:23.

Research in the vicinity of the Temple itself, especially the work of the last hundred years, has been limited to the outer walls of the Temple Mount. Owing to the existence of Muslim shrines on the Mount, no excavations were ever carried out there. Sir Charles Warren pioneered scientific investigation of the Temple area, and his publication, describing work carried out during the years 1867–70, is still considered a prime source, a 'text-book' on the subject.<sup>1</sup> More recent studies, however, have added to Warren's architectural discoveries and have yielded many new finds which help us to gain a clearer conception of daily life in the Temple.

## II THE HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE

The building of the Temple began either in Herod's eighteenth regnal year (*Ant.* xv.380ff) or in the fifteenth (*Bell.* 1.401), with the former date seemingly the more probable, that is, 20/19 BCE. The work continued for nine and a half years (*Ant.* xv.420–1), with the construction of the outer walls and porticoes taking eight years and the building of the Temple itself a year and a half. The Gospel of John's figure of forty-six years (John 2:20) may refer to the time when the last additions to the Temple

<sup>1</sup> C. Warren and C. Conder, *The Survey of Western Palestine: Jerusalem* (London 1884).

were added (cf. *Ant.* xx.219, which refers to the work carried out during the office of the procurator Albinus, that is, CE 62–4). In the recent excavations carried out along the Western Wall, it was discovered that in spite of the long duration of works, Herod left it unfinished. No further works to finish it were carried out after his death.

The plan of the Temple was basically that of a vast rectangular piazza surrounded by porticoes on all four sides with the Temple standing alone at the centre. This type of plan, conceived by Herod, recalls the *Caesareum*, the Hellenistic-Roman concept of temple building<sup>2</sup> (figure 2.1).

Herod took pains not to offend the religious sensibilities of his people, as can be seen both from his exhortation to them as recorded in Josephus *Ant.* xv.382–7, and his maintenance of the daily cult while work on the reconstruction was in progress. Moreover, we have a record of temporary partitions being erected out of modesty (*m. Ed.* 8:6) to prevent workmen observing Temple rituals. Ten thousand trained workmen and masons were selected for the reconstruction work, along with one thousand priests who were also trained to work on the project. The older sanctuary was dismantled only after all building materials had been assembled at the site. The Talmud records that the population was pleased with Herod for rebuilding the Temple in such a splendid fashion. Many considered him to have been pardoned for all his past sins as a result of this pious act (*b. B. Bat.* 3b).

After Herod's death in 4 BCE, the newly enthroned Archelaus came to the Temple to bless the people and to receive their blessing in return. However, the many people who had gathered there to celebrate the Passover were displeased with his behaviour and provoked disturbances which were cruelly put down by the Roman legions (*Ant.* xvii.200–18; *Bell.* ii.10–13). On the following feast of Pentecost, the Romans stationed

<sup>2</sup> G. Förster, 'Art and Architecture in Palestine' in S. Safrai and M. Stern (eds.) *JPFC*, ed. *CRINT* 1 ii (Assen 1976), p. 980; cf. Y. Magen, 'The Gates of the Temple Mount according to Josephus and the Mishnah', *Cathedra* 14 (1980), 41–55. But specially noteworthy is B. Mazar, 'The Temple Mount', in *Biblical Archeology Today* (Proceedings of the International Congress on Biblical Archeology, April 1984) (Jerusalem 1985), pp. 463–8. There a reconstruction of Herod's additions to the previous temple, the Hasmonaean Temple, is described. According to Mazar, to the Hasmonaean Temple which is the one described in *Middot* as measuring 500 by 500 cubits, Herod added from south, west and north a larger area to the Temple Mount. Thus the Temple Mount which remains today was created. This was done in order to adjust the Temple Mount to the Caesareum style which required porticoes, basilica, and other spacious structures (see B. Mazar 'The Royal Stoa in the South of the Temple Mount' in B. Mazar, *Excavations and Discoveries* (Jerusalem 1986), pp. 65–72 (Hebrew)). At present, it seems more probable that it was the pre-Herodian Temple that served as a source for inspiration to Herod and not the 'Gentile' caesareum. This assumption is based on the fact that the pre-Herodian Temple was square, had porticoes ('Solomon's Portico' as example) etc.

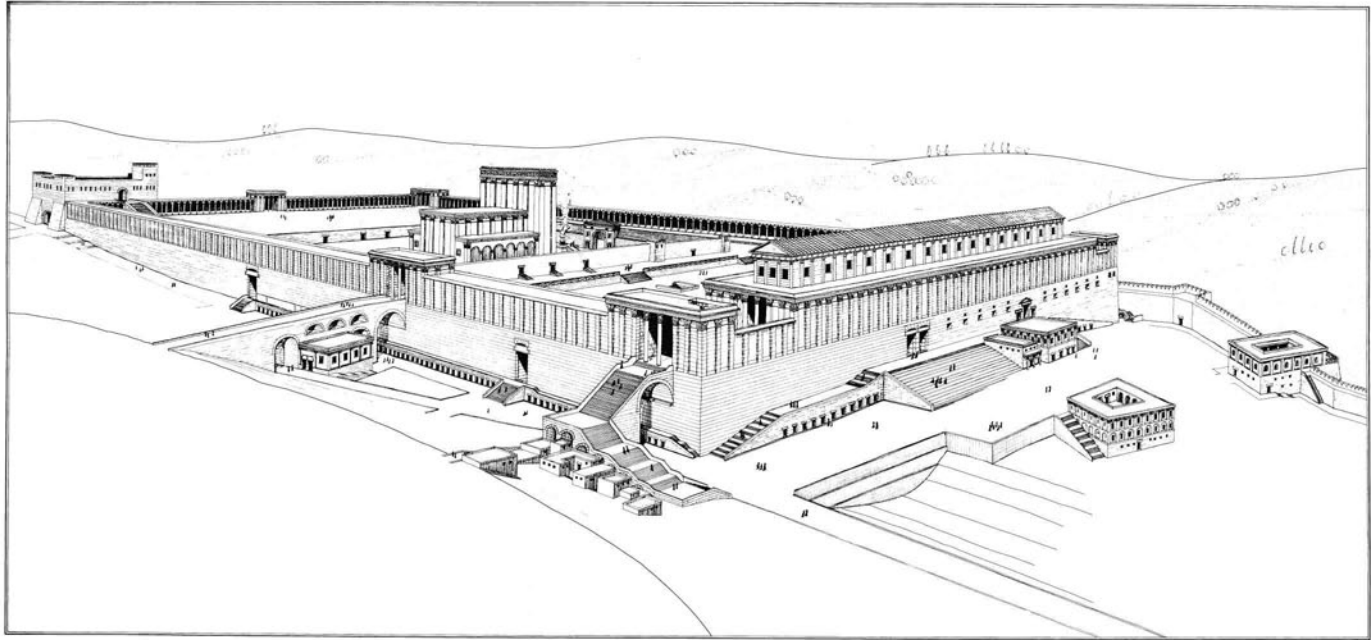


Fig. 2.1 The Temple Mount in the Herodian period.



in Jerusalem under Sabinus were attacked by the Jews in retaliation for the previous repressive measures. During this encounter, parts of the Temple courtyards were set on fire and the treasury robbed (*Ant.* xvii.258–64; *Bell.* ii.45–54). In the years CE 26–36 the Temple's treasury was again looted by Pontius Pilate. This caused demonstrations and bloodshed even though Pilate used the money to build aqueducts from Etam to Jerusalem (*Ant.* xviii.60–2; *Bell.* ii.175), which were vital for the hygienic maintenance of the Temple area. (These aqueducts served as a source of water for Jerusalem until recently.)

The emperor Caligula (CE 37–41) provocatively ordered his statue to be installed in the Temple (*Ant.* xviii.261–8, *Bell.* ii.184–7), but through Agrippa's intercession this action was cancelled (*Ant.* xviii.300–1). During the reign of Agrippa II (CE 50–93), a screening wall was added to the western portico of the Temple in order to prevent the monarch from gazing into the Temple from his palace in the Upper City (*Ant.* xx.189–96). At the same time eighteen thousand workmen who had been employed in the building of the Temple now became redundant, and Agrippa agreed to employ them in the reconstruction of the eastern portico (*Ant.* xx.219–23) attributed to King Solomon and named 'Solomon's Portico'. This recommendation, however, proved too costly and the unemployed were set the task of paving the streets of Jerusalem instead. Some of the foundations of the Temple were damaged and repaired during the reign of Nero (CE 54–68, *Ant.* xv.391).

Gessius Florus was the last Roman procurator before the revolt. He bears much of the direct responsibility for the events of CE 66–70, for it was he who broke into the Temple treasury and stole seventeen talents of silver (*Bell.* ii.293–7). In response, open hostility seemed inevitable. The priests, however, assembled the population on the Temple Mount and persuaded them to receive peacefully the Roman army, which was advancing on Jerusalem in anticipation of insurrectionist activities. The Romans, nonetheless, attacked the city, and the Jews, fearing that the Romans would invade the Temple Mount, destroyed the northern portico connecting the Mount to the Antonia fortress, which was already in Roman hands (*Bell.* ii.330–2). At this juncture an investigator was sent by Cestius Gallus, the Roman governor of Syria, to report on events in Jerusalem. He summoned the Jews to the Temple and praised them for their patience and obedience to the Romans, while the Jews insisted that a mission be sent to Nero in Rome to complain about Florus. Agrippa, meanwhile, anticipating further acts of rebellion, successfully appealed to the Jews (*Bell.* ii.345–404) to repair the damaged portico as well as to desist from all further hostile action against Rome. Radical leaders, however, soon gained control of the situation in Jerusalem and persuaded the

priests to stop the daily sacrifice in honour of the emperor, an action clearly understood as an act of rebellion (*Bell.* II.409–10).

The Roman army, led by Cestius Gallus, entered Jerusalem intending to enter the Temple through the northern portico, but for no apparent reason once again withdrew (*Bell.* II.535–41). Meanwhile the Jews of Jerusalem were divided into two camps: one that of the Zealots led by John of Gischala, and the second that of the more conciliatory leadership, many of whom came from priestly families. At this point the Zealots conquered the Temple Mount and nominated a new High Priest, a peasant from a remote village (*Bell.* IV.147–57). In response, the former High Priest, Hannan Ben-Hannan (Ananus Son of Ananus), roused his followers to try and reconquer the Temple Mount. They entered the outer court, refrained from entering the inner, and besieged the Zealots by placing armed guards around the porticoes (*Bell.* IV.196–207). This action failed, however, because during a stormy night Idumaean warriors called in by the Zealots succeeded in obtaining their release (*Bell.* IV.300–5).

After this series of events the situation in Jerusalem deteriorated rapidly. The moderates, faced with no alternative, ordered Simeon bar Giora, a Zealot leader, noted for his cruelty, to capture and depose John of Gischala. Meanwhile, John and his followers had barricaded themselves on the Temple Mount, which they had fortified by building four huge towers on to the walls of the Mount. These they used to direct their artillery more accurately (*Bell.* IV.577–84).

Externally, Jerusalem was now besieged by the army of Titus, who, through Josephus Flavius, tried to persuade the Zealots on the Mount to surrender. They refused, and the war around the Temple Mount continued (*Bell.* VI.118–23). On the seventeenth day of the month of Tammuz, the daily offering ceased, since no priest remained on the Mount to perform the ceremony (*Bell.* VI.93–110). When a further attempt at conciliation by Titus failed (*Bell.* VI.124–8), he attacked the Temple at four points: at the north-western corner of the inner court; at the northern portico between two gates; at the western portico; and to the north of the western portico (*Bell.* VI.149–50). In reaction, the Jews set fire to the northern and western porticoes because they adjoined the Antonia fortress which was already in Roman hands. Two days later the other porticoes were set on fire by the Romans (*Bell.* VI.164–8).

On the eighth day of the month of Av, the Romans invaded the outer court. According to Josephus, Titus, after consulting with his officers, decided to spare the Temple (*Bell.* VI.237–43). A Roman soldier, however, unaware of the decision, threw a burning timber into the northern chamber. This set the Temple ablaze, causing the destruction of the whole of the Temple aisles (*Bell.* VI.254–9). Some of the more devoted priests,

horror-stricken by the sight of the Temple burning, threw themselves into the flames, while others later sought refuge in the ruins. The Romans then set the remaining porticoes and gates aflame (*Bell.* VI.280–2). When victory was complete and the Temple was in ruins, they installed their standards up against the eastern gate (*Bell.* VI.316–22). Thus the magnificent structure erected by Herod ninety years earlier came to an end.

### III ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE

Topographically the natural Temple Mount (= Mount Moriah) consists of an oblong-shaped mountain crest which is about 740 metres above sea level and whose highest point is on the site of the supposed location of the Temple. It is bordered on the east by the deep Kidron valley and on the west by what was once the Tyropoeon valley, now almost completely obliterated by the debris of buildings which have accumulated during the ages and mostly through large building works in the Herodian period. The dimensions of the Temple Mount are 488 metres long on the west, 470 metres long on the east, 315 metres long on the north and 280 metres long on the south, giving a total area of approximately 144 dunams (i.e. 35.5 acres).<sup>3</sup> A steep-sided tributary of the Kidron valley, known also as St Anne's valley, confined the Mount to the north-east till Herod's works filled it in. Strategically the north-west part of the Mount was the most vulnerable, because the hill outside the Temple precinct in this area was higher than the Mount inside. The northern continuation of the Mount may be named the 'Antonia Hill'.

Herod's work destroyed or covered all previous buildings, and no archaeological information remains regarding the Solomonic Temple or its successors. Ancient tradition, however, clearly states that Herod's Temple was built on the same site as the Solomonic Temple (*b. Zebah.* 62a). Due to analysis of the archaeological elements on the Temple Mount done recently, some remains can be attributed to an age earlier than Herod's, with some reasonable probability.<sup>4</sup> They are, foremost, a deep, broad trench cut in the rock in the depression between the Antonia Hill and the Temple's site.<sup>5</sup> This trench may have been a moat defending the Temple from the north. However, its date cannot be precisely determined. The well-dressed courses, seen north of the 'seam' (see below), are also, highly probably, of earlier date, being the eastern wall of the pre-

<sup>3</sup> Förster, *ibid.* p. 977: a dunam is 0.247 of an acre.

<sup>4</sup> See Mazar, above n. 2. See also: D. Bahat, 'The Western Wall Tunnels' in H. Geva (ed.) *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed* (Jerusalem 1994), pp. 177–90, esp. pp. 188–90.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. Warren, *Plans, Elevations, Sections*, etc. (London 1884), plate iv.

Herodian Temple Mount or any of its dependencies. To these, should be added some cisterns severed through the Herodian works, and also some foundation trenches of walls also severed by Herod's works, and above all the great aqueduct dated probably to the Hashmonaean period.<sup>6</sup>

The topographical features were manipulated so as to fit into the foundations of the flat, rectangular platform which Herod built around the earlier Temple Mount. The southern section of St Anne's valley and the central section of the Tyropoeon valley were filled in to obtain a level on which to build. In both places huge dams were constructed to store flash-floods of the adjacent valleys and so pools were formed: in the north-east a pool known today by its Arabic name Birket Israil (= The Pool of Israel) was created, while in the south-west another dam was built to divert by an underground conduit flash-floods from the Tyropoeon valley from reaching the Temple walls.<sup>7</sup> The southern part of the Antonia Hill was reduced by quarrying to the level of the Temple Mount<sup>8</sup> while it is highly probable that a vaulted substructure was constructed in the south-eastern section of the Mount for the purpose of obtaining a flat platform on which to build the Temple. Today, its mediaeval successor substructure is known as 'Solomon's Stables'. The present masonry is of mediaeval origins (probably eleventh century) while there are no clear Herodian remains. This substructure did not serve, as it was under the Herodian platform which was not considered holy enough to be 'protected' by such means as the hollows ('kippin'), to preserve the purity of the Mount and the objects kept on it, by leaving a hollow space between the bedrock and the Temple's foundations (*m. Para.* 3.3)<sup>9</sup> (figure 2.2).

The retaining walls for the Temple precinct are the best preserved of all the remains. Their upper part was also used as a free-standing defence wall and must have been a formidable structure.<sup>10</sup> In some places the walls reached a height of over 45 metres and were recessed by approximately 1 inch in every course. They reached in some cases about 4.6 metres thick. Some of their stones weighed as much as 120 tons (in the

<sup>6</sup> See Bahat, 'Western Wall Tunnels.'

<sup>7</sup> C. W. Wilson, and C. Warren, *The Recovery of Jerusalem* (London 1871), pp. 12, 11a. Also R. W. Hamilton, 'Street Levels in the Tyropoeon Valley II', *QDAP* 2 (1933), 34-40.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13. In 1987 a large quarry was discovered in the tunnel bored along the western wall of the Temple Mount. Quarrying works were discovered everywhere, and it is clear that the works there were done in order to adjust the Herodian Temple Mount to the earlier Temple Mount.

<sup>9</sup> For 'Solomon's Stables' see J. Simons, *Jerusalem*, pp. 347 and 411, n. 2. His dates cannot be accepted today any more.

<sup>10</sup> For details, see Warren and Conder, *Survey of Western Palestine: Jerusalem*, pp. 122-216; also B. Mazar, 'The Archaeological Excavations near the Temple Mount', in *Jerusalem Revealed*, ed. Y. Yadin (Jerusalem 1975; New Haven 1976), pp. 25-40.

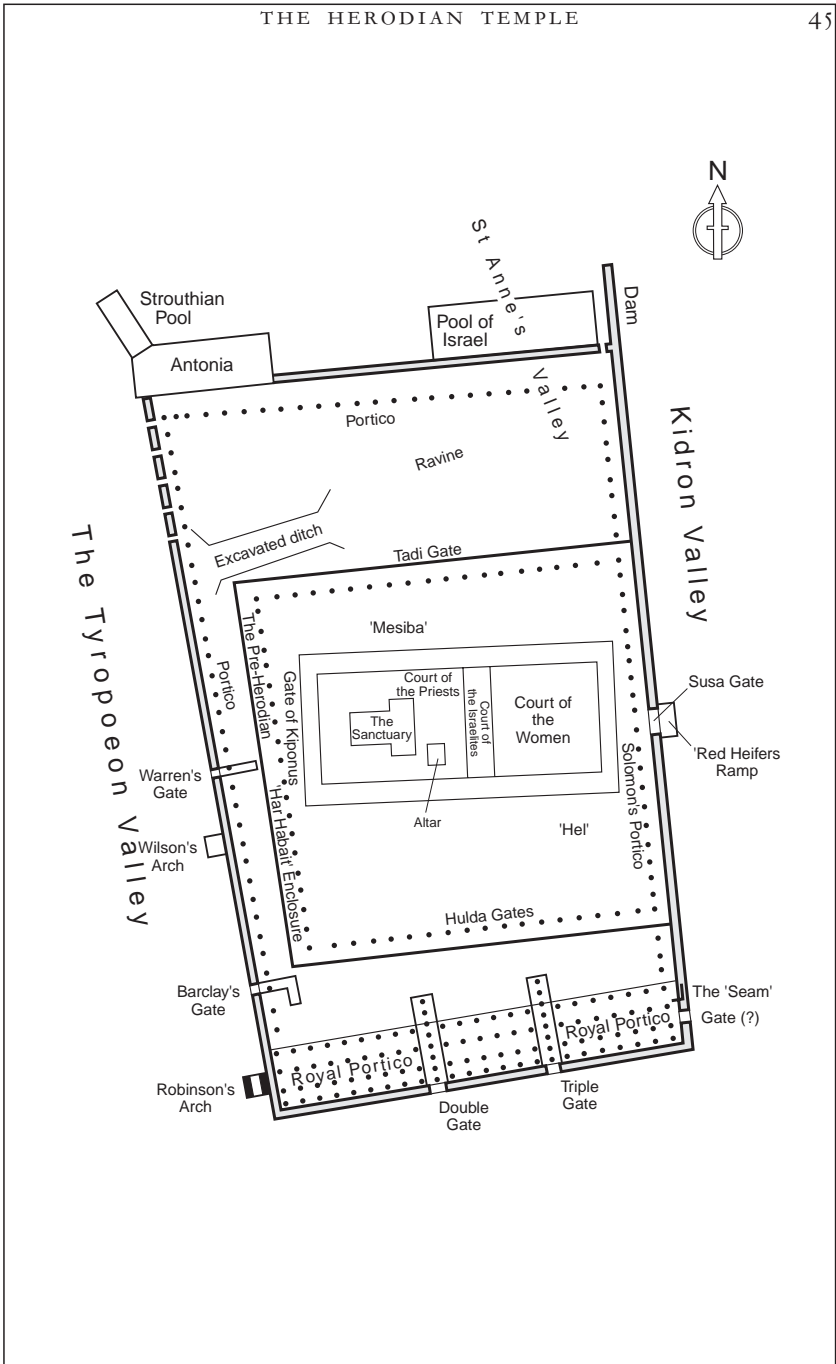


Fig. 2.2 General view of the Temple Mount.

Western Wall tunnels four stones of enormous dimensions were found – one of which weighs about 600 tons). The builders used ‘dry masonry’ techniques. Most of the heavier stones were probably quarried from the area south of the Antonia Hill which Herod levelled. The average length of the stones is 1–3 metres but one (out of the four just mentioned) is as long as 14 metres; their height varies between 1.5 and 1.85 metres (the large stone just mentioned is 3.5 metres high).<sup>11</sup>

The lower courses served as foundation and were invisible in Herod’s time, penetrating down through earlier levels to bedrock. They were mostly margin-drafted, with the boss roughly cut and sometimes projecting from the margins in an exaggerated manner. Sometimes they are beautifully cut, even though never seen. The courses standing on these comprised the main part of the walls and served to retain the fill used in levelling the Mount. The stones are well drafted. They all have margins, mostly even double margins (one frame within the other) and the bosses are also well executed. One can still see this part of the wall today, for example, the western (‘Wailing’) wall, the southern wall, etc. The uppermost courses served as a free-standing defence wall, which was decorated with projecting pilasters. The wall appeared as recesses between engaged pilasters. This type of masonry can still be seen on the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, which is also attributed to Herod.<sup>12</sup> The walls on the north-eastern corner reached a height of about 50 metres and were thicker than usual, being 4 metres at the top. This is probably the only section where the upper part of the walls still remains. This retaining wall at this location, however, being very thick, was undecorated by the pilasters. Altogether, there is scant information regarding the upper courses of the wall, our information being limited, in fact, to one stone which was discovered in the excavations carried out along the southern wall by Mazar.<sup>13</sup> This indicates that the uppermost stones were recessed on their

<sup>11</sup> On the ‘master-course’, see N. Avigad, ‘The Architecture of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period’ in Yadin, *Jerusalem Revealed*, p. 16. This term is also used by Simons (p. 357) but it is not clear where it was mentioned for the first time. It will be also suitable for the four large stones (see above in the text).

<sup>12</sup> A casual discovery of two *in situ* engaged pilasters by C. Conder in the northwest section of the wall helped in the theoretical reconstruction of the architectural components of the wall. See Warren and Conder, *Western Palestine Jerusalem*, pp. 212–15. Today Conder’s pilasters are incorporated in a private building abutting the western wall. An additional pilaster in the northern wall of the Temple Mount was found during the Mamluk survey of Jerusalem, see: M. H. Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem* (Buckhurst Hill 1987), p. 373 (v) and pl. 33:18.

<sup>13</sup> See Mazar, ‘*The Royal Stoa*’, p. 27. In 1996 the excavations on the south-western corner of the Temple Mount were resumed and some more of the coping stones were uncovered.

inner side to provide room for standing. The single stone, found fallen on the Herodian street below, at the south-west corner, bears the inscription: 'To the place of trumpeting to declare . . .' The most likely interpretation of this inscription is that this stone marked the spot at which the priest blew the trumpet every Friday to usher in the sabbath (*Bell.* iv.582). We also have evidence that sundials were constructed on the walls, though their exact location is still unknown. Only the eastern wall and the portico above it is earlier than Herod's works on the Temple Mount. Therefore, the name 'Solomon's Portico' was given to it (*Bell.* v.185; John 10:23). This part, being the oldest part of the Temple, sank during the reign of Agrippa II, and the Jewish appeal for help from that king was refused (*Ant.* xx.219–22). The time was that of the procurator Albinus (CE 62–4).

A street 12.5 metres wide abutted the Temple walls to the west. According to the last seasons of excavations carried out there, it seems that the street is slightly later than Herod and should be attributed to Agrippa II (see p. 41, above). It was paved with huge slabs and flanked on its west by several public buildings and in the section discovered by Mazar also by one of the pillars of Robinson's arch (see below).<sup>14</sup> An extensive drainage system consisting of a canal, with manholes, which was probably intended to divert the floods in the Tyropoeon valley southwards, ran below it (see above). A second similar street has been found running along the south Temple wall. This slab-paved street, which was much narrower (6.4 metres), ascended eastwards by means of flights of steps resting on certain substructures. It was bordered to the south by a thick wall which adjoined a vast piazza 13 metres wide running along the southern street. The street was drained by canals which emptied into the drainage system mentioned above. It is also very likely that some of the hydraulic installations west of the Temple Mount were ritual baths, intended to enforce the laws of purity demanded of those on the Mount.

According to Josephus (*Ant.* xv.410) (see again figure 2.1) four gates led into the Temple Mount from the west: one crossed the Tyropoeon valley westwards to the royal palace (i.e. the gate which crowned Wilson's arch); two led to the lower city (or the 'suburbs' as Josephus called it) and are known today as Warren and Barclay's Gates, while the fourth led down into the valley by a flight of steps and up to the upper city by another flight. This last gate was installed above Robinson's Arch. All the gates are named after their discoverers. Josephus' description has been verified by the archaeological excavations. The first gate was no doubt

<sup>14</sup> Recently the northern end of that street has been uncovered in the Western Wall Tunnels (See Bahat, 'Western Wall Tunnels', p. 188.) Its construction was halted by the immense bedrock which Herod never managed to remove before the quarrying works were suspended.



constructed above the bridge connecting the Temple to the upper city. The easternmost arch of the bridge, known today as Wilson's Arch, again after its first explorer, was later also explored by Sir Charles Warren.<sup>15</sup> No remains of the gate itself, however, have ever been discovered, though the bridge and the connecting aqueduct leave no doubt that a gate did once stand here. The gates which led to the lower city have been well preserved because of their later use as water cisterns for the Temple Mount. These gates are tunnels beginning at their lowest point at the western street and finishing at their highest point on the Mount. They were probably horizontal all the way, and at the inner part – a flight of steps led to the Mount's platform. Warren's Gate is cistern no. 30 (or Schick's List no. 12). Its outer features of lintel, sill and door jambs were destroyed in antiquity probably in the earthquake of AD 1033 (and an arched opening is there today), but Warren explored the tunnel itself,<sup>16</sup> measuring it to be 25.60 metres long and 5.50 metres wide. Barclay's Gate is much longer owing to the descent of the western street. It is easily distinguishable from the western ('Wailing') wall where its huge lintel rests on the northern door-jamb. It is 8.78 metres high and 5.74 metres wide and the passage enters the mountain and makes a 90 degree turn to the right. In width it is similar to Warren's Gate. Today, its westernmost section, which is 21 metres long, runs in an east–west direction with its western part serving as a mosque, while its eastern part serves as a cistern (no. 19 or no. 11 in Schick's List). From here the gate turns south and runs parallel to the wall of the Temple Mount for 13.10 metres, suggesting that the bend in the tunnel was made in order to prevent impurities entering directly into the inner Temple court (see above p. 44). The fourth gate was located at the southernmost point of the western wall and formed part of the large architectural complex known today as Robinson's Arch. The arch, however, is not a part of a bridge, as is Wilson's Arch, but rather supported a formidable flight of steps<sup>17</sup> leading from the streets south and west of the Temple mount to the Temple precinct. No remains, however, of a continuation of a street with a flight of steps leading to the upper city have been discovered, though some trial pits were sunk in the appropriate alignment.<sup>18</sup> Though Josephus' description of the four western gates has been generally verified by archaeological

<sup>15</sup> Warren and Conder, *Survey of Western Palestine: Jerusalem*, pp. 195–7. The present arch may have been constructed in the early Muslim period.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224, and see now Gibson-Jacobson, pp. 80–4.

<sup>17</sup> See Mazar, 'The Royal Stoa', pp. 25–6; cf. Bahat, 'Western Wall Tunnels', p. 58. The recent excavations under the arch have revealed fragments of the steps, balustrade and other architectural fragments.

<sup>18</sup> Warren and Conder, *Survey of Western Palestine: Jerusalem*, pp. 182–6.



evidence, none of the above-mentioned gates can be identified with the Kiponus Gate mentioned in *m. Mid.* 1.3, but not mentioned by Josephus, as the only western gate of the Temple. This is another proof of the fact that *m. Mid.* refers to the pre-Herodian Temple and not to the Herodian Temple which is described by Josephus.

In the south, two Hulda Gates are mentioned in the Mishnah (*Mid.* 1.3). They were named after the famous prophetess Huldah, whose tomb was believed to be in the vicinity. Today the two southern gates are known as the Double Gate and the Triple Gate, the latter because of a third opening added to it in mediaeval times. These gates should not be identified with the Mishnaic Hulda Gates. Their original date was, of course, Herodian. Both gates are today, although not necessarily so in the Herodian period, oblique tunnels, as are those of Warren and Barclay, ascending from the southern street to the Temple Precinct. Each gate is divided into two lanes by a row of pillars, a feature which has been preserved from Herod's time only in the western gate. Both gates were about 6.5 metres wide, built of well-dressed stones, with decorated jambs, to judge from small fragments of the gate which have been preserved. The southern street adjoined the piazza mentioned above and both street and piazza were situated in front of these gates. Formidable flights of steps leading to the gates have been uncovered. The western flight, which is the best preserved, consists of thirty steps about 64 metres broad (see figure 2.3). A fragment of an inscription on stone was found by the eastern gate which mentions the 'Elders' and probably refers to the passage in *t. Sanh.* 2.6, which asserts that 'R. Gamaliel and the Elders . . . were standing at the top of the steps at the Temple Mount'.<sup>19</sup> An extensive drainage system was also uncovered beneath these gates, streets and piazza. This was probably used to drain the water mixed with blood of the sacrifices which came out of the Temple Mount which was used for irrigating the fields around the town.<sup>20</sup>

The only gate to the north mentioned in *m. Mid.* 1.3 is the Gate of Tadi, though this gate was not in use when the Temple existed, and no remains of it have been found, nor of any of the ancient Temple Mount's gates. Nevertheless, the Mishnah (*Mid.* 2.3) reports that its lintel was made of three stones laid in a triangular manner. One of the cisterns on the Temple Mount No. 1 (or Schick's No. 31) may have been the Mesiba (*m. Tamid* 1:1 and *m. Middot* 1:9) which led a contaminated priest to the outside of northern end of the (ancient) Temple Mount. The northern

<sup>19</sup> See Mazar, 'The Royal Stoa', p. 30, and see also Acts 21:40. Raban Gamaliel lived in the first half of the first century CE.

<sup>20</sup> See *m. Mid.* 3.2; *m. Meil.* 3.3; *m. Yoma* 5.6; D. Bahat, 'Western Wall Tunnels, p. 61, and Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount*, pp. 198–208.

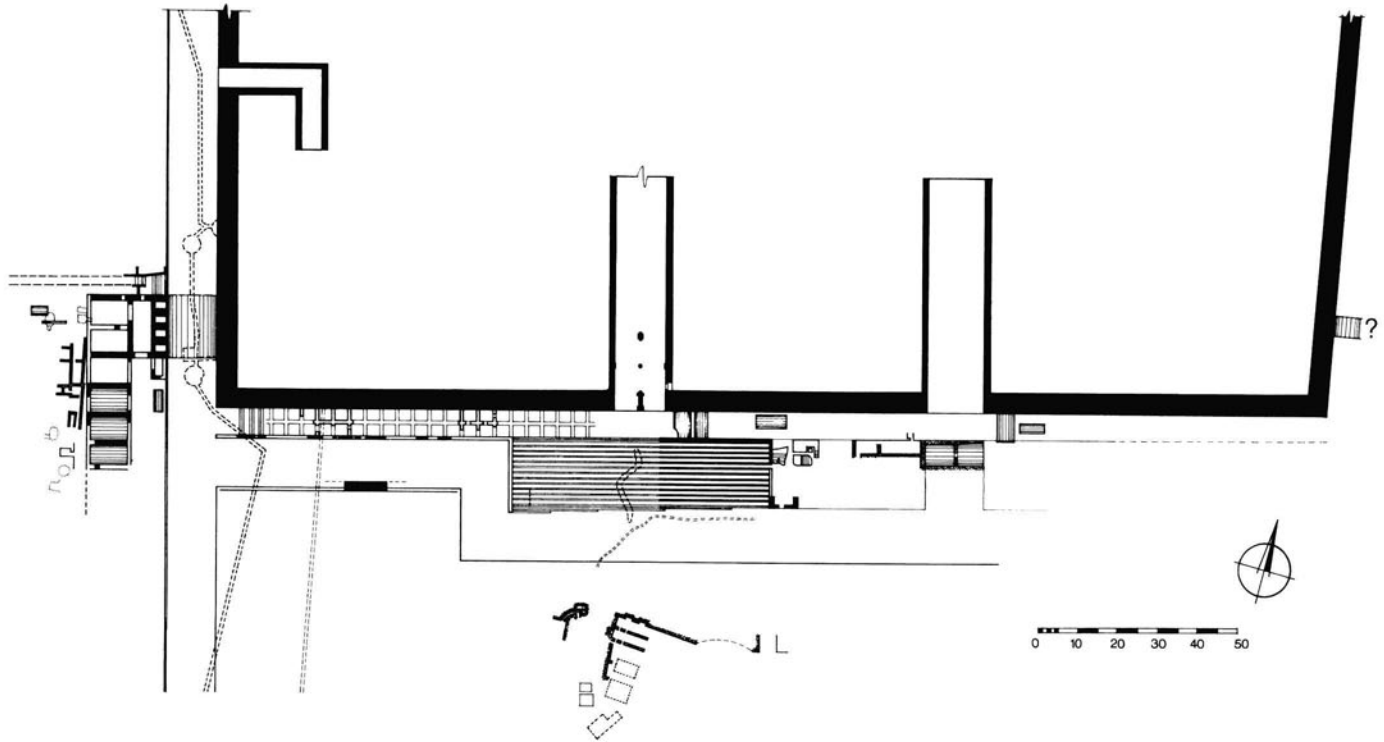


Fig. 2.3 Plan of area at southern wall, Herodian period.

end of this cistern may indicate the site of Tadi Gate. The eastern gate was named the Susa Gate because the town of Susa was depicted on it. It was from this gate that the procession of the 'Red Heifer' passed on its way to the Mount of Olives (*m. Mid.* 1.3), though, from the records in *m. Para.* 3.6 and *m. Šeqal.* 4.2, it is unclear whether or not this was the only gate leading to that Mount. No remains of this gate have been discovered. There has also been a casual find of a huge arch under the mediaeval Golden Gate, which may indicate the existence of an early gate in the eastern wall.<sup>21</sup> At a distance of 32 metres north of the south-east corner of the Temple Mount a 'seam' in the eastern wall is easily distinguishable where two different 'Herodian' stone courses meet (see figure 2.2).<sup>22</sup> South of this seam a springing of an arch, above which the sill of a double gate is still visible, may indicate the presence of another gate in the eastern wall<sup>23</sup> (figure 2.2).

The Temple Mount was divided by Josephus (*Bell.* v.192–3) into outer and inner courts with a stone screen serving as a divider. No doubt the division is a result of the Herodian addition to the Hasmonaean original Mount (and see below). The Mishnah, however, does not mention the outer court and refers only to the inner court, calling it the Temple Mount ('*Har ha-Bayit*' in *m. Mid.* 2.1).

According to the Mishnah the size of the Temple Mount was 500 × 500 cubits (approx. 250 × 250 metres), a cubit being slightly less than half a metre.<sup>24</sup> Knowing the site of the Temple, and laying these dimensions super on a plan of the Hasmonaean Temple Mount it will leave the largest open space to the south of the Temple itself, the next largest to the east, the third largest to the north, and the smallest open space to the west. This seems to be all that is implied in the Mishnah about the inner court.<sup>25</sup> The outer court is described by Josephus as paved in 'all manner of stones' (*Bell.* v.192) and as surrounded on three sides by porticoes 13 metres high and 16 metres wide containing two rows of columns. The columns we are told 'presented a striking spectacle' (*Bell.* v.191) with the most exciting

<sup>21</sup> See in *BAR* 9 (1983), photos by James Fleming on p. 26.

<sup>22</sup> Compare J. Simons, *Jerusalem in the Old Testament* (Leiden 1952), p. 370 for a possible explanation of the seam (see above n. 2).

<sup>23</sup> M. Avi-Yonah (ed.) *The Book of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem 1956), p. 41; J. Simons, *ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Cf. A. Schalit, *King Herod, Portrait of a Ruler* (Jerusalem 1964, Hebrew), p. 197; *König Herodes. Der Mann und Sein Werk*; *SJ* 4 (Berlin 1969), p. 377, where an explanation of these measurements is given, i.e. that they repeat the measurements given in Ezekiel 42:16–20 which are merely the prophet's own creation, having no basis in fact.

<sup>25</sup> But see the different opinion of S. Safrai, 'The Temple', in *JFCS*, *CRINT* 1 ii, p. 865, where the 500 by 500 cubits are suggested for a pre-Herodian Temple Mount and where the problem of the seam mentioned above is given an unsatisfactory explanation.

feature being the southern portico, named the Royal Portico because of its beauty and magnificence: 'a structure more noteworthy than any under the sun' (*Ant.* xv.412). The Royal Portico contained two lower aisles and a central higher nave. Its decoration consisted of huge carved columns crowned with Corinthian capitals. The porticoes served as a gathering place for those making their way to and from rituals in the Temple.

A wall of 'exquisite workmanship' divided the inner court from the spacious outer court. Greek and Latin inscriptions respectively were installed on it at regular intervals warning the Gentile, on penalty of death, against passing into the inner court where the laws of purification were rigorously and zealously kept (*Ant.* xv.417; *Bell.* v.193–4 and cf. *m. Kelim* 1.8). Two of these inscriptions have been found in the vicinity of the Temple Mount, confirming Josephus' information.<sup>26</sup> Passing through the wall, not to be identified with the *Soreg* in the Mishnah, a flight of steps (fourteen steps are mentioned by Josephus in *Bell.* v.195, and twelve in the Mishnah, *Mid.* 2.3) lead upwards.

An area named the rampart (*Hel*), ten cubits (about five metres) wide, separated the top of the steps from the Temple's own wall. Josephus' description adds extra steps, from the open area to the wall (*Bell.* v.198). These are not mentioned in the Mishnah. The wall around the Temple (that is, the innermost wall) was very thick and it took the Romans six days to dismantle it during the conquest of the Temple Mount (*Bell.* vi.221–2).<sup>27</sup> The wall was forty cubits (about 20 metres) high except for the eastern side, which was lower, while from within the Temple it was only twenty-five cubits (about twelve and a half metres) high as the steps mentioned above leaned against it, and its lower outer part was hidden behind these steps. Josephus and the Mishnah do not agree on the number of gates in the innermost wall: Josephus mentions ten gates (and in another context seven gates) while the Mishnah gives the name of seven gates (and in another context thirteen). Josephus describes four gates in the north wall, four in the south wall, one in the east and a final one, opposite it, near the Women's Court, which had two additional gates, one in the north and one in the south (*Bell.* v.198–200). In *Jewish Antiquities* (xv.418) Josephus mentions seven gates: three in the north, and, between the two accounts, three in the south and one in the east

<sup>26</sup> See for the one (e.g.) J. H. Iliffe, 'The *Thanatos* Inscription from Herod's Temple', *QDAP* 6 (1938), 1–3, and for the other, note 2 there. See for the precise site of discovery: Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, *Archeological Researches in Palestine*, 1 (London 1899), pp. 173–4 (note). There is still no general agreement as to where exactly these inscriptions were installed – on the *Hel*, or on the line dividing the old and new Temple Mount; but Gentiles were not allowed within the limits of the *Hel*.

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that discrepancies exist between several of the critical editions of Josephus' work at this point.

wall. It is possible that the discrepancy arises because in the *Antiquities* Josephus omitted the gates in the Women's Court, that is, the gates which connected the Women's Court to the Israelites' Court. The Mishnaic account (*Mid.* 2.6) mentions seven gates: three in the north (the Gate of the Flame, the Gate of the Offering, and the Gate of the Chamber of the Hearth), three in the south (the Kindling Gate, the Gate of the Firstlings, and the Water Gate); and one in the east (The Nicanor Gate). However, in another description the Mishnah names thirteen gates: four in the south (the Upper Gate, the Kindling Gate, the Gate of the Firstlings, the Water Gate); four in the north (the Gate of Jeconiah, the Gate of the Offering, the Gate of the Women, and the Gate of Singing); one in the east (the triple Nicanor Gate); and two in the west which are cited without names (*m. Mid.* 2.6) and, identically, *m. Šegal.* (6.3). There is no satisfactory explanation for these additional gates,<sup>28</sup> though one solution would be to assume that the more likely number of nine gates can be attributed to Herod's Temple, while the other version which had thirteen or seven gates refers to a pre-Herodian structure.

Within the innermost wall the Temple was divided into three main parts: the Court of the Women, the Court of the Priests, which included the Court of the Israelites, and the Sanctuary. The Court of the Women, which was 135 cubits by 135 cubits (or about sixty seven and a half by sixty seven and a half metres) was entered through the eastern gate.<sup>29</sup> The court's name derives from the fact that women were also allowed to enter it; all communal cult functions were conducted there.<sup>30</sup> In each of the four corners of the court an unroofed chamber 40 cubits by 40 cubits was built. These chambers were known as the Chamber of Lepers, where a ritual bath was installed for the service of those approaching the inner court; the Chamber of the Wood-shed; the Chamber of the Nazirites; and the Chamber of the House of Oil (*m. Mid.* 2.5). On its western side, the Nicanor Gate, named after its benefactor, an Alexandrian Jew who donated the bronze doors, formed the main feature.<sup>31</sup> The gate, flanked by two small doors, led upwards by way of 15 semi-circular stairs, to the inner court, that is, the Court of the Israelites and the priests (*m. Mid.* 2.5). The musical instruments needed in the Temple rites were kept in two chambers under the stairs (*m. Mid.* 2.6).

The narrow dimensions of the Court of the Israelites were 135 cubits (about sixty-seven and a half metres) long and 11 cubits (about five and

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Avi-Yonah, *Book of Jerusalem*, pp. 408–9, where Josephus' version is accepted.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Simons, *Jerusalem*, p. 371, n. 3 where the name of the gate is discussed. See also *Bell.* II.411, note a in LCL (pp. 484f), *Bell.* v.201. See also: D. M. Jacobson and J. S. McKenzie, 'Transmutation of Base Metals into Gold', *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 17, (1992), No. 4, pp. 326–31. About the gate under discussion see esp. pp. 328–9.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Safrai, p. 866. <sup>31</sup> Cf. Avi-Yonah, *Book of Jerusalem*, p. 332.

a half metres) wide. It ran along the eastern side of the inner court. It was here that the male congregation and those bringing sacrifices could stand and watch the rites being performed in the Court of the Priests, and probably in the Temple itself. Two chambers flanked the Nicanor gate inside the Court of the Israelites: the first of these was known as the 'Chamber of Phineas', the keeper of vestments, where the priestly vestments were kept, while the second was called the 'Chamber of the Makers of the Baked Cakes' (*m. Mid.* 1.4). Josephus and the Mishnah have different descriptions of the partition dividing the Court of the Israelites from the innermost Court of the Priests: according to Josephus (*Bell.* v.226), it consisted of a low well-worked stone parapet about one cubit (about half a metre) high, while the Mishnah (*Mid.* 2.6) describes it as a series of low beams. The meaning of this description, however, is unclear, as the same tractate mentions that the Court of the Priests was 2.5 cubits (about one and a quarter metres) higher than the court of the Israelites and that the three stairs leading up from the one to the other served as a partition.<sup>32</sup> Most of the ritual functions of the Temple were carried out in the Court of the Priests, which was 187 by 135 cubits (about ninety-three and a half by sixty-seven and a half metres) in size. The gates in the wall surrounding the Priests' Court were of uniform dimensions, 20 cubits (about ten metres) high by 10 cubits (about five metres) wide, and were made of marble. The doors were plated in gold and silver (cf. *Bell.* v.201): a flight of twelve stairs led up to each door, each stair being half a cubit (about 25 cm) high (*m. Mid.* 2:3). A colonnade with beautiful lofty columns stood against the walls (*Bell.* v.200). These colonnades housed six chambers as well as the Chamber of the Hearth, which protruded into the court and outside the wall, and the House of Abtinas, which was not considered a chamber. The chambers had various functions. The Rinsing Chamber was used by the workers in the slaughterhouse. The Chamber of the Hewn Stone was the seat of the Sanhedrin where the priests were judged.<sup>33</sup> The priests used the Chamber of the Hearth as their centre during services in the Temple, while the House of Abtinas was used for preparing the incense for the Temple. The two most important structures, the altar and the slaughterhouse, stood in front of the Temple. Both the altar and the ramp in its southern side were constructed of stones quarried in the Beth-Kerem Valley and were a conglomeration of lime and tar mixed with stones. No iron tools were used in building the altar: 'Because iron was created to shorten man's day and the altar was built to lengthen man's days' (*m. Mid.* 3.4). The altar and the ramp were

<sup>32</sup> Cf. F. J. Hollis, *The Archaeology of the Temple* (London 1934), p. 295.

<sup>33</sup> *m. Mid.* 5:3-4; Avi-Yonah, *Book of Jerusalem*, p. 410.

whitewashed twice a year to maintain their appearance. The altar was about 30 cubits (about fifteen metres) square with its base slightly larger, though its surface was enlarged by several additions, while the ramp was 30 cubits long and 16 cubits wide. Because there were no stairs on it, salt was spread over the length of the ramp to prevent slipping (*m. Erb.* 10.14). Josephus gives its height as 15 cubits (about seven and a half metres), but since four ‘horns’ of unknown size protruded upwards from the altar, Josephus’ dimensions do not help us in establishing the altar’s height.<sup>34</sup>

A sewer at the south-west corner of the altar carried the blood and rinsing water to the Kidron valley. Other installations around the altar and the ramp were meant to dampen the refuse from the sacrifices,<sup>35</sup> while between the altar and the Temple a copper laver was installed. No source mentions its dimensions, but as it is probably equivalent to King Solomon’s ‘Great Sea’, one can deduce its size (1 Kgs 7:23–6: 30 cubits (about 15 metres) in circumference and 5 cubits (about two and a half metres) in height). We do know that twelve faucets and a drainage system were installed in it (*m. Yoma* 3.10). In the vicinity of the altar and eight cubits (about four metres) north of it the slaughterhouse occupied the space in front of the Temple. It was most probably an open space with an awning provided for the priests against the hot sun and winter rain. The slaughterhouse was divided into three sections: marble tables, low pillars and the rings. According to the sources there was a distance of four cubits (about two metres) between the tables and the rings and between the tables and the pillars.<sup>36</sup> The pillars which stood between the tables were of stone, with a cedar beam suspended horizontally between them from which hooks were hung. The number of rings is uncertain. Some accounts give the number as four rings to six rows and some say that there were four rows of rings with six rings in each. The area between the slaughter house and the altar was empty to enable easy access to the Temple (see figure 2.4).

The Temple was the most prominent as well as the tallest structure on the Temple Mount. Upon completion it stood 120 cubits high (*Ant.* xv.391). Because it had sunk 20 cubits (*sit*), it was rebuilt during the reigns of Nero and Agrippa to its previous height (*Ant.* xv.391, *Bell.* v.36). The dimensions of the Herodian Temple were 100 by 100 cubits as compared with 100 by 70 cubits for Solomon’s Temple. Herod’s Temple was 100 cubits wide along its eastern side and 70 cubits wide most of its length: ‘The Sanctuary was narrow behind and wide in the front, and

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 407.   <sup>35</sup> *m. Yoma* 5.5–6; *m. Tamid* 5.5; *m. Mid.* 3.2–3.

<sup>36</sup> *m. Mid.* 5.2 and *m. Tamid* 3.5.

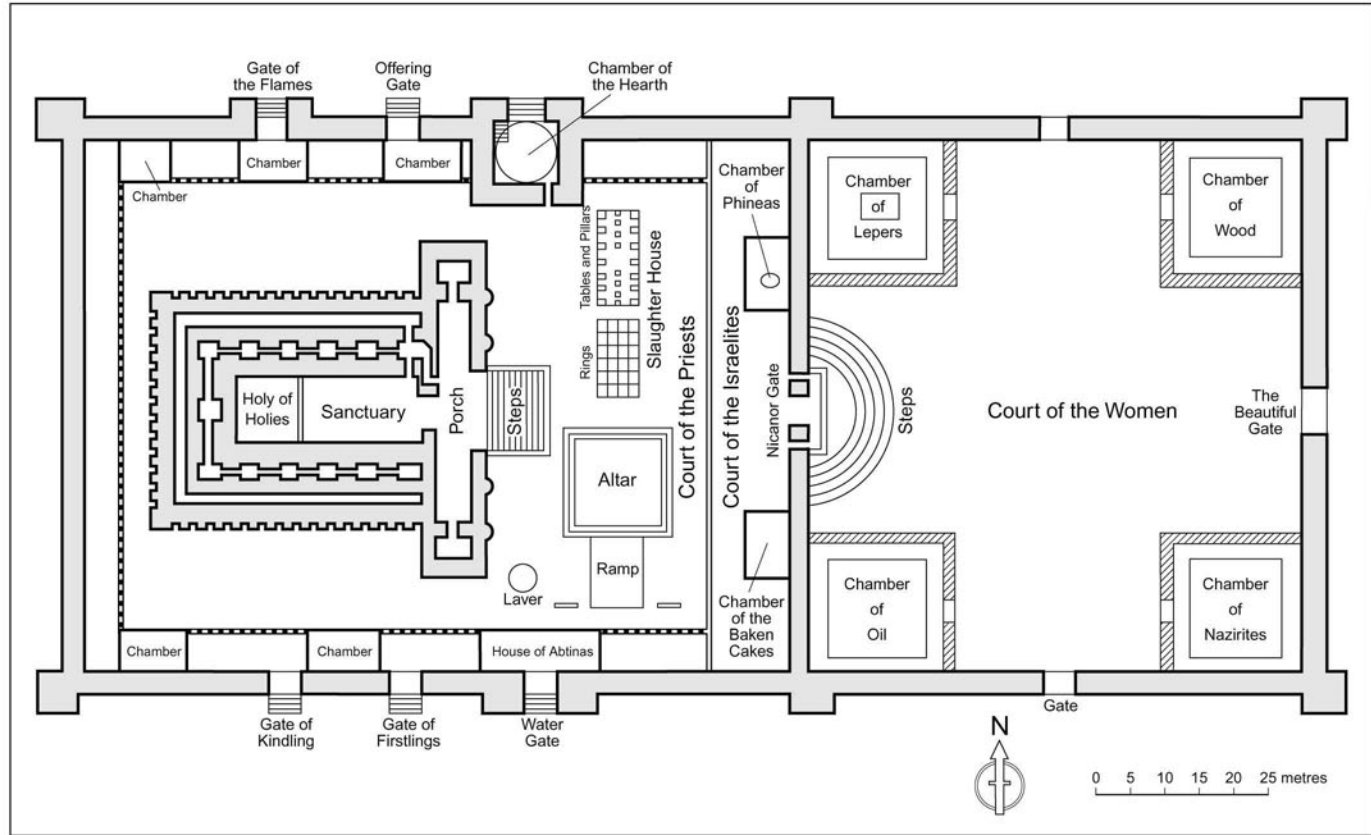


Fig. 2.4 Plan of the Second Temple.



it was like to a lion . . . as a lion is narrow behind and wide in front . . .’ (*m. Mid.* 4.7, *Bell.* v.207).

Two pairs of engaged columns flanked the gate to the Temple as can be seen from coins and drawings,<sup>37</sup> while a golden eagle hung above the door. It is said that two ‘sages’ removed it in broad daylight and paid for the deed with their lives (*Bell.* 1.650–6 and *Ant.* xvii.149–64). A large curtain was hung in the doorway and twelve stairs led up to the Temple. The distance between the altar and the temple was 22 cubits (*m. Mid.* 3.6, cf.). A porch, 11 cubits wide, was situated behind the doorway and was flanked by two rooms each 15 cubits wide. The knives used in the sacrifices were stored in the southern room (*m. Mid.* 4.7). The western wall of the porch, that is, the eastern wall of the sanctuary, was covered with gold foil while a gold candlestick stood above the door to the sanctuary, which was decorated in gold with a vine trailing over cedar posts.<sup>38</sup> Access from the porch to the sanctuary was obtained through two outer and two inner doors (*m. Mid.* 4.1). The sanctuary itself was 40 cubits long and 20 cubits wide; its walls were covered with gold foil. The gold vessels used in the Temple were housed here, for example, the menorah (the seven-branched candelabrum), the table for the shewbread, the altar for burning incense, and two stands used on the day of Atonement. The position of these vessels in the sanctuary is a matter of dispute. One source describes them as standing along the sanctuary from west to east, while another says they stood from north to south.<sup>39</sup> The Holy of Holies which measured 20 cubits by 20 cubits was west of the sanctuary and was entered by way of two curtains, the first of which was suspended across the sanctuary from the southern wall, while the second parallel curtain was suspended from the northern, with a one-cubit space between them. It was impossible to see into the Holy of Holies from the sanctuary (*m. Yoma* 5:1) and no objects were housed there (*Bell.* v.219). Its walls were probably covered with gold foil (*m. Šeqal.* 4.4) while part of the bedrock (called ‘Shetiyah’, that is, foundation) protruded three fingerbreadths above the floor. During the period of the first Temple the holy ark was housed in the Holy of Holies. The sanctuary and the Holy of Holies were surrounded by 38 cells. These were built into the walls of the Temple and were only for the use of the priests. On the south and north there were five cells on each of four levels, whereas on the west there were two levels with three cells on each and one level with two cells. The cells on the lowest level measured 7 by 7 by 7 cubits, those on the middle level

<sup>37</sup> Avi-Yonah, *Book of Jerusalem*, p. 405.   <sup>38</sup> *m. Yoma* 3.10; *m. Mid.* 3.8; *Bell.* v.211.

<sup>39</sup> For the former view see *m. Menab.* 11.6, cf. *Bell.* v.216–17; for the latter north–south view, see *b. Yoma*, 51b–52a.

measured 6 by 6 by 6, while the cells on the highest level measured 5 by 5 by 5 cubits. Each cell had three openings: one to its neighbouring cell on the right, one for the cell on the left and one to the cell above it. The Temple treasures were kept in several of the cells. Access to the cells and to the upper rooms was from a passage entered from the north-east corner and ascending around the Temple on the north, west and south sides (*m. Mid.* 4.3–5, *Bell.* v.220–1). This passage also enabled repairs to be carried out when necessary on the roof.<sup>40</sup>

From the above description it is obvious that Herod's Temple was a very impressive building. According to the Talmud: 'He who has not seen the Temple of Herod, has never seen in his life a beautiful structure' (*b. B. Bat.* 4a). While the architects of the building remained anonymous, many sources including writings of the New Testament and Josephus, have dwelt on the beauty and grandeur of what must have one of the architectural wonders of the ancient world. A three-dimensional reconstruction of the building reinforces the impression received upon reading the sources.

<sup>40</sup> The reconstruction of the manner by which the cells were installed was discussed again by J. Patrich (Patrick), 'The *Mesibbah* of the Temple according to the Tractate *Middot*', *IJEJ* 36 (1986), 215–33; 'The *Mesibah* of the Temple according to the Mishna, *Middot*', *Catbedra* 42 (1987), (Heb.), 39–52. Although the mishnaic description refers to the earlier Temple, no doubt the same manner was also used in the Herodian Temple.

## CHAPTER 3

RECENT ARCHAEOLOGY IN  
PALESTINE: ACHIEVEMENTS  
AND FUTURE GOALS

There has been a veritable explosion of archaeological activity in Israel since the 1967 war. With the temporary acquisition of new lands major new surveys were conducted in Sinai, the Golan Heights, and in Judaea and Samaria. Most of the results of these activities have been published internally within the structure of the Israel Antiquities Authority and informally in Hebrew, though several surveys have been published in English.<sup>1</sup> The serious student of Palestinian archaeology can make much of this material providing she or he has access to the original files of the Antiquities Authority, where all reports are deposited and recorded.

The Israel Antiquities Authority and its museums publish a schedule of archaeological sites in its gazetteer, *Yalqut Ha-pirsumim*. The schedule is a legal document used by the Authority to declare archaeological sites subject to protection against destruction by such things as vandalism or building or agricultural projects.

The present list, published on 18 May 1964, is mainly the Hebrew translation of 'The Provisional Schedule of Historical Sites and Monuments' first published in The Palestine Official Gazette on 15 June 1929, and then updated on 24 November 1944, by the British Mandatary government. Containing only the names of sites within the so-called

<sup>1</sup> The main survey to be published was the survey edited by M. Kochavi, *Judaea, Samaria and the Golan Archaeological Survey 1967–1968* (Jerusalem 1972). For the first survey of the Golan, see D. Urman, *The Golan* (BAR International Series 296) (Oxford 1985). Since the original draft of this was prepared the Israel Antiquities Authority has become a publisher of all sorts of material. However, since 1964 the Association for the Archaeological Survey of Israel has had responsibility for promoting and disseminating new information uncovered in survey. For a summary of these findings and an up-to-date bibliography on this new material see 'Survey of Israel', by R. Cohen in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*, vol. 5, pp. 104–6, E. M. Meyers, ed., New York and Oxford 1997, hereinafter referred to as *OEANE*. With the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1992 much of the West Bank has been returned and a new archaeological infrastructure imposed. For thoroughness students and scholars are urged to consult the Palestinian Archaeological Authority where appropriate.

Green Line – that is, within the pre-1967 borders of Israel – the list has been corrected and repeatedly updated since its original publication and is now available on computer as a database at the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Because it records the history of site names since the survey of the Palestine Exploration Fund in the nineteenth century, this publication can be very helpful for site identification. All coordinate references are based on the 'Israel Grid', which continues the 1:100,000-scale map of the Mandatary government. The sites are presented geographically by sheets (there are twenty-six sheets subdivided into 267 paragraphs) from north to south. Whenever there is a Modern Hebrew name, the site is listed by that name, followed by the Arabic name and by other unofficial local names, all transcribed into English. After this, a map reference and a short description of the remains are given. Since the schedule serves as a legal document, the more recent corrections include, wherever possible, block and plot numbers as recorded in the official land registry books. There are also indexes in Hebrew and English that make it possible to locate sites and their registrations.

Also available on computer database is a list of all excavations carried out in Eretz Israel from the middle of the nineteenth century until the present. With this reference source, one may identify work done by any archaeologist who was officially registered or known to have worked in this region.<sup>2</sup>

Supplementing this material now is the very ambitious publication of The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, *Tabula Imperii Romani, IUDAEA. PALAESTINA: Eretz Israel in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods*, which appeared in 1994.<sup>3</sup> The database of the Israel Antiquities Authority in contrast to *TIR* contains chronological listings of all periods including the later ones. The overall map in *TIR* is at a scale of 1:1,000,000, though Palestine North and South are each 1:250,000. A comprehensive map of ancient synagogues is published at 1:400,000; churches of Palestine are published at the same scale. Anyone contemplating work on sites in ancient Palestine must now consult this work. A comprehensive new mapping of the classical world including the Near East is under preparation

<sup>2</sup> In the United States, *Yalqut Hapirsumim* is available at the Library of Congress and at the law libraries of Columbia Universities and Cornell University (however, these are noncirculating materials, so they need to be examined on site). More information about it and the computerized lists can be obtained from Dr Ronni Reich, the archivist of the Department of Antiquities and Museums (Rockefeller Museum, PO Box 586, Jerusalem 91004, Israel).

<sup>3</sup> Edited by Y. Tsafirir, L. DiSegni and J. Green, Jerusalem, maps and Gazetteer, herein-after referred to as *TIR*.

at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill under the supervision of R. J. A. Talbert.<sup>4</sup>

The Gazetteer portion of *TIR* contains a comprehensive listing of sites from the Survey and those noted in only ancient literary sources. All entries include both a listing of ancient sources and secondary literature, with a fairly useful cross-referencing system. The spellings are rather idiosyncratic, most often listing the classical name first. Where firm identification between classical sources and local name tradition has been confirmed, however, one has no difficulties locating a site.

There is at least one archival project that is attempting to coordinate and publish all recent as well as older findings in the area of Jewish art,<sup>5</sup> an undertaking which will be a most welcome addition and supplement to the monumental work of E. R. Goodenough.<sup>6</sup>

New materials if they are not discovered or uncovered in survey can be found in reports of small soundings or rescue excavations carried out by a great variety of archaeologists in Hadashot.<sup>7</sup> More systematic reports of a preliminary nature, though often final reports of a more interpretative nature too, appear in the *Israel Exploration Journal*<sup>8</sup> or in a publication of one of the national schools.<sup>9</sup> It certainly can be said that the field of Palestinian archaeology, especially in the so-called later periods, is one that is difficult to grasp and comprehend because of the lag in publication and welter of informal publications in which no common standard of reporting seems to dominate. The publication of *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land (NEAHL)* by

<sup>4</sup> See Talbert's 'Mapping the Classical World: Major Atlases and Map Series 1872–1990', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 5 (1992), 5–38. Talbert's project is scheduled for completion around 2000. Inquiries may be directed to him c/o The Classical Atlas Project, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, CB no. 8110, 208 N. Columbia St Chapel Hill, NC 27599–8110, USA or by e-mail: talbert @ email.unc.edu. Talbert's project was able to utilize the maps in the *TIR*; the author prepared the map of 'Palestine, North'.

<sup>5</sup> To date only several small exemplars are available but inquiries may be directed to Professor B. Narkiss, Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University, Mt Scopus, Jerusalem, Israel. The title of the first exemplar is *Archives of Ancient Jewish Art* (Jerusalem 1984), by Ruth Jacoby and the late Y. Yadin. The entire project has been transferred to computer database.

<sup>6</sup> *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 13 vols. (New York 1953–68).

<sup>7</sup> *Hadasot Arkeologiyot* ('Archaeological News') is available in Hebrew through the Israel Department of Antiquities only, PO Box 586, Jerusalem 91004, Israel, but is available in English through the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, PO Box 19096 Jerusalem, or at Eisenbraun's in the USA.

<sup>8</sup> Its 'Notes and News' section.

<sup>9</sup> For the American reports see *BASOR* or *BASOR SUPP*, for the Italian work see *Liber Annuus*; and for the French work and other reports see *Revue biblique*.

the Israel Exploration Society in 1993, however, goes a long way in filling the gap.<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps it is because of this bibliographical problem that so many of the recent discoveries in the material culture of Palestine have not had a significant impact on the major disciplines that could benefit most from these new data, i.e. the study of the history of ancient rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity. The field of the New Testament has of late been very open to using archaeology in its work on Christian origins.<sup>11</sup> But perhaps it is also the result of the lack of synthetic scholarship in the field of archaeology that would enable 'outsiders' to grasp the main corpora of data relevant to their own particular interests and utilize them in their own interpretative work. A large gap thus presently exists between those who use archaeological material and those who do not. Unfortunately, the majority of scholars who study early Judaism still ignore the findings of archaeology; but they are in the main literary scholars. Scholars of Second Temple Judaism, however, are much more attuned to archaeological materials because of the necessity to consult a more limited corpus of written sources and many have grown accustomed to utilizing the Qumran materials.<sup>12</sup> In the main, most scholars of the New Testament are still ill at ease with archaeological materials; however, a new generation of students emphasizing the social world of early Christianity is slowly changing this state of affairs.

A few words must be said about the greatest problem facing the discipline of archaeology today: the issue of timely publication of discoveries. I began this article with reference to surveys and to places to look for results of activities carried out decades ago. Many of us travel to Israel regularly and know how to do this. The reality of the matter is that most of the important results are yet to be reported in any way at all or in a

<sup>10</sup> The *OEANE* hoped to fill this lack in its article 'Periodical Literature', vol. 4, pp. 262–7 by V. H. Matthews and J. C. Moyer. For surveys of new materials one is also referred to overview articles in 'History of the Field', vol. 3, pp. 37–81.

<sup>11</sup> Notable among these are Richard Horsley, *Galilee: History, Politics, People* (Valley Forge, PA 1995) and *Archaeology, History and Society in Galilee: The Social Context of Jesus and the Rabbis* (Valley Forge, PA 1996) and S. Freyne, 'Galilee, Hellenistic through Byzantine Periods' in *OEANE*, vol. 2, pp. 370–6 and bibliography there. For my disagreements with Horsley and others see 'An Archaeological Response to a New Testament Scholar', *BASOR* 297 (1995), 17–26. See also my 'Jesus and His Galilean Context' (see Bibliography). See also the comprehensive article, 'Galilee: Hellenistic to Byzantine Periods', by M. Aviam, *NEAEHL*, vol. 2, pp. 453–8.

<sup>12</sup> See my essay on this subject, 'Judaic Studies and Archaeology: The Legacy of M. Avi-Yonah', *Festschrift for M. Avi Yonah, Eretz Israel* 19 (1987), 21–7. Qumran scholars have become extremely interested in the archaeology of the site lately and have made great strides in re-evaluating the data. For a brief summary of some of this material see R. Donceel, 'Qumran' in *OEANE*, vol. 4, pp. 392–6.

way that is useful to the scholarly world. N. Avigad's Jewish Quarter excavation is a notable exception and provides a model for all to emulate.<sup>13</sup> The first full report on the great synagogue of Hammath Tiberias excavated twenty years before its publication,<sup>14</sup> which no longer seems so tardy, contrasts with the limited material that has appeared on the excavations of the city of Tiberias except its churches.<sup>15</sup> A full generation after the Masada excavations, we have learned from the final reports that the original views of the excavator, Y. Yadin,<sup>16</sup> have not been maintained and that large groups of data were totally ignored in the interim reports.<sup>17</sup> The record of the Americans is hardly better, noting the examples of Schechem/Tel er-Ras, Taanach, Gezer, Tel el-Hesi, to mention only a few sites. Certainly in the basic sciences after an experiment is concluded and data are collected the scientific community expects to see the results of that work presented. Nothing better could happen to the field of Palestinian archaeology than to have such an expectation for publication become operational if not enforced, since it is already in the Antiquities Law of the State of Israel.

With the above demurrers and cautions in mind let me attempt an overview of recent developments in the field in light of both published, partially published, and unpublished but widely known results, and attempt to organize them in a way that both reflects what has been accomplished and what might be accomplished in the decades ahead.

## I 'NEW ARCHAEOLOGY' AND NEW METHODS

The field of biblical archaeology in general has been preoccupied in recent decades with the challenge of the so-called 'new archaeology', a term derived from anthropological circles and which embraces a broad perspective on human processes and emphasizes the integration of information derived from disparate but interconnected field enterprises.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Discovering Jerusalem* (Nashville 1980), though a comprehensive full report is still to be published.

<sup>14</sup> M. Dothan, *Hammath Tiberias: Early Synagogues and the Hellenistic and Roman Remains* (Jerusalem 1983).

<sup>15</sup> G. Foerster, 'Tiberias', *NEAEHL*, vol. 4, 1176–80; see also Dothan, *Hammath Tiberias*, nn. 53–60; see also Y. Hirschfeld, 'Tiberias' in *OEANE*, vol. 5, pp. 203–6.

<sup>16</sup> *Masada* (London, 1971).

<sup>17</sup> See for example G. W. Friend and S. Fine, 'Masada' in *OEANE*, vol. 3, pp. 428–30 or N. A. Silberman, 'The Masada Myth', *The Quarterly Journal of Military History* 2 (1989), pp. 8–19 and his *Between Past and Present* (New York 1989).

<sup>18</sup> W. G. Dever, 'Retrospects and Prospects in biblical and Syro-Palestinian Archaeology', *BA* 45 (1982), 103–9; E. M. Meyers, 'The Bible and Archaeology', *BA* 47 (1984), 36–40; and most recent A. Joffe, 'New Archaeology' in *OEANE*, vol. 4, pp. 134–8.



In general, the impact has been on the 'early periods', i.e. prior to the classical period. Many scholars have called for the end of the nomenclature 'biblical' archaeology so that the field could be cleansed of abuses of the past, during which time many biblical scholars utilized archaeological information to strengthen or 'prove' the truth of the Bible.<sup>19</sup> In such presentations there was a preoccupation with the events of political history rather than with the characterization of eras such as the Iron Age in which Israel's beginnings took definitive shape.<sup>20</sup>

The debate though heated has been a healthy one, for it has enabled the field to progress in new ways and to utilize methods and data that have contributed to a new understanding of the Israelite settlement period, the era of the formation of the monarchy, and the succeeding era of state formation and administrative structuring of Judah.<sup>21</sup> All of these developments can now be followed in material culture as a result of the incorporation of the 'new archaeology' both in the field and out of the field as a basic tool of interpretation.

For the archaeology of late antiquity, however, it has in the main been business as usual. Few if any of the excavations have been able to adapt the broader research agenda of the more anthropologically oriented archaeology to the realities of excavating in thin-layer sites, often amid classical ruins. Most excavations today employ full-time staff with computers to facilitate data processing and information retrieval. Most excavations examine their faunal and floral remains carefully. Many undertake neutron activation analysis of ceramics and other artifacts for provenience study but few succeed in bringing this information together in a way that is helpful to both the archaeologist and to the historian who must interpret the data.

One exceedingly helpful direction of research has been the collaboration among archaeologist, ceramist, talmudic historian and neutron activation specialist.<sup>22</sup> As a result of establishing a large research design from the outset it is now possible to identify manufacture centres of certain pottery

<sup>19</sup> H. D. Lance, 'American Biblical Archeology in Perspective', *BA* 45 (1982), 97–101, especially p. 99. See also Dever, 'Biblical Archaeology' in *OEANE*, vol. 1, pp. 315–19.

<sup>20</sup> Political preoccupation can still be detected in debate over Israelite origins. Proponents of a late date for Israelite beginnings include: Israel Finkelstein, 'Ethnicity and Origin of the Iron I Settlers in the Highlands of Canaan: Can the Real Israel Stand Up?' *BA* 59 (1996), 198–212; K. W. Whitelam, *The Invention of Ancient Israel* (London 1996).

<sup>21</sup> The Social World of Biblical Antiquity Series published by Almond Press, now affiliated with Sheffield Academic Press, UK, has attempted to publish synthetic studies on these topics, as is the case with P. S. Frick, *The Formation of the State in Ancient Israel* (Sheffield 1985).

<sup>22</sup> As is the case with David Adan-Bayewitz, *Common Pottery in Roman Galilee: A Study of Local Trade* (Ramat-Gan 1993).



types and to follow the utilization of those vessels in certain locations and understand better how and through what means they were traded or purchased.<sup>23</sup> A much more vivid and nuanced picture of commerce, communication, and the overall economy, is therefore emerging for the rabbinic period.

Much of this sort of work can occur in the form of doctoral dissertations or articles or books yet to be written. But surely the historians of late antiquity who will turn to the majority of excavation reports of Palestine for certain kinds of data and interpreted results will come up empty-handed. The challenge, therefore, lies very much ahead in recording, research design and interpreting results in timely publications. Biblical archaeology for the older periods has certainly come of age. For the classical periods, however, maturity is still a long way off.

## II THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL

Until the late 1960s the field of 'Jewish Archaeology', i.e. the archaeology of the classical periods in Palestine, had been dominated entirely by Jewish immigrants to Palestine and Israelis after 1948. Those who dominated the field were individuals like E. L. Sukenik, M. Avi-Yonah, B. Mazar and N. Avigad.<sup>24</sup> It has been their students who have propelled that field into the main stream of Israeli archaeology today, at least in terms of the university curriculum.<sup>25</sup> In America it was ironically G. Ernest Wright who encouraged research activity in a field he called 'the archaeology of early Judaism'.<sup>26</sup> Wright's concerns were uniquely American: he wanted very much to refine the ceramic typology for the later periods, i.e. the Hellenistic through Islamic, through carefully controlled excavation and to create a new generation of scholars who would be able to add a new dimension to the study of ancient Judaism and early Christianity, and ultimately Islam.

The inauguration of two main research projects in 1970 and 1971 signalled the beginning of a new era in American archaeological work in

<sup>23</sup> I have dealt with the methodological aspects of such study in 'Stratigraphic and Ceramic Observations from Khirbet Shema, Israel: Assessment of the Value of Scientific Analysis,' *BASOR* 260 (1985), 61–8 and also in my essay, 'Jesus and His Galilean Context' in D. R. Edwards and C. T. McCullough (eds.), *Archaeology and the Galilee* (Atlanta 1997), pp. 57–66.

<sup>24</sup> It is noteworthy to mention, however, that at the seventieth anniversary meeting of the Israel Exploration Society held in Jerusalem in 1985 there was no attempt to deal with the subject at all. Qumran studies were treated as a discrete unit unto themselves.

<sup>25</sup> See above n. 12.

<sup>26</sup> E. M. Meyers and A. T. Kraabel, 'Archaeology, Iconography, and Non-Literary Remains', in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, R. Kraft and E. W. E. Nickelsburg, eds. (Atlanta 1986), pp. 175–6.

Israel. In 1970 the Joint Expedition to Khirbet Shema<sup>c</sup> was launched under the direction of the author<sup>27</sup> and in 1971 the Caesarea Maritima Project was begun under the directorship of Robert J. Bull.<sup>28</sup> The presence of both teams and their successor projects in Israel these past decades has led to a lively debate between Americans and Israelis over the field strategies and recording methods utilized in excavation today and to a continuing debate over the accuracy and reliability of ceramic dating as the essential tool in establishing chronology.<sup>29</sup> It has also provided an important training ground for younger scholars in both the history of Judaism and history of Christianity.

The Caesarea project coordinated a massive land excavation with an American–Israeli underwater excavation, combining forces on a scale that is unparalleled except for Jerusalem. Both excavations supplemented prior work at the site and intermittent Israeli land excavation.<sup>30</sup> One ASOR ancient synagogue project, which originally focused its work on villages in the Upper Galilee region, through 1981 at Khirbet Shema<sup>c</sup> Meron, Gush Halav and Nabratein<sup>31</sup> continued its work first as a Joint American–Israeli project at Sepphoris, and presently as the all-American Sepphoris Regional Project there, where an American spinoff of the original ASOR Khirbet Shema<sup>c</sup>–Meron team is also at work.<sup>32</sup>

The American Caesarea project cut new ground in yielding a large team of inter-disciplinary scholars who were dedicated to recovering the complex history of a great urban cultural centre. Classicists, New Testament scholars, Church historians and a few scholars in the history of Judaism, with technicians and scientific specialists of all sorts combined

<sup>27</sup> E. M. Meyers, A. T. Kraabel and J. F. Strange, *Ancient Synagogue Excavations at Khirbet Shema* (Durham, NC 1976).

<sup>28</sup> Many of the results of that project and its successor projects may be studied in *Caesarea Maritima: A Retrospective after Two Millennia* by A. Raban and K. G. Holum (Leiden 1996).

<sup>29</sup> W. G. Dever, 'Two Approaches to Archaeological Method – The Architectural and the Stratigraphic', *Eretz Israel* 11 (1973), 1–8.

<sup>30</sup> Raban and Holum, *Caesarea Maritima*, summarize all recent work in their introduction, 'Caesarea and Recent Scholarship', pp. xxvii–xliv.

<sup>31</sup> Final reports of each of these sites except Nabratein have been published in 1976 (*Khirbet Shema*, Durham, NC), 1981 (*Meron*, Cambridge, MA), and 1991 (Gush Halav, Winona Lake). A convenient summary of this material and its significance may be found in the entry 'Synagogues' by the author and S. Fine in *OEANE*, vol. 5, pp. 118–23.

<sup>32</sup> E. M. Meyers, E. Netzer, C. L. Meyers, 'Sepphoris – Ornament of all Galilee', *BA* 49 (1986), 4–19; 'Artistry in Stone: The Mosaics of Ancient Sepphoris', *BA* 50 (1987), 223–31. See also L. I. Levine (ed.) *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York, 1992); J. F. Strange and T. R. W. Longstaff, 'Sepphoris (Šippori)' in *IEJ* 'Notes and News', 1984, 1985, 1986. See also now the entry by the author and C. L. Meyers in *OEANE*, vol. 4, pp. 527–36; and *Sepphoris of Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture* (Raleigh, NC 1996), R. Martin Nagy, E. M. Meyers, C. L. Meyers, and Z. Weiss, eds.

in a great scientific, modern undertaking. The Upper Galilee team by focusing on a small area in a single geographical region was able to develop after a decade of work a theory of culture that has been a helpful framework in which to consider the spread of Jewish life after the two wars with Rome. That theory may be briefly summarized as follows: (1) that the Upper Galilee constitutes a homogeneous cultural region in which Hebrew–Aramaic language dominates; (2) that this region includes synagogues of all varieties but with a rather limited decorative vocabulary; (3) that a common ceramic repertoire unites this region and suggests close links to the Golan; (4) that the area is dominated by Jewish communities in close proximity to one another until the Byzantine era when there seems to be a modest decline in the number and quality of Jewish sites, and when new Christian sites arise in western Galilee and in the Golan Heights.<sup>33</sup>

The great increase of interest and work of the American national school in the classical periods came at a time when the activity of other national schools such as the British, German and French declined and the younger generation of Israeli archaeologists came into positions of academic and field leadership.<sup>34</sup> Though Mazar and Avigad maintained their activities until the eighties, the torch had been passed. Despite the healthy state of the field in Israel, the separation of the discipline of archaeology from literary studies and Jewish history studies has been unfortunate. Integration of field data into historical reconstruction seems still very much an American preoccupation.<sup>35</sup>

### III THE STUDY OF ANCIENT SYNAGOGUES

With the involvement of American scholars in a rather specialized area within Graeco-Roman archaeology of Palestine, i.e. synagogue studies, a renewed interest in the subject has been generated in Israel. The recent symposium on this subject sponsored by the Jewish Theological Seminary and published by the American Schools of Oriental Research<sup>36</sup> revealed both the state of the field and the future direction in which it might go.

<sup>33</sup> E. M. Meyers, 'Galilean Regionalism: A Reappraisal' in Wm. S. Green (ed.), *Brown Judaic Studies* 32 (Chico 1985), pp. 115–31.

<sup>34</sup> The late Y. Shiloh, A. Mazar, Y. Tsafrir, E. Stern, to mention but a few at Hebrew University. At Tel Aviv there would be M. Kochavi, D. Ussishkin, I. Finkelstein and others.

<sup>35</sup> See C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, 'Expanding the Frontiers of Biblical Archaeology', *Eretz Israel* 20 (1989), 140–7.

<sup>36</sup> *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity*, L. I. Levine, ed., Philadelphia 1987.

As the most central element of Jewish life after the fall of Jerusalem in CE 70 the synagogue provides a rare opportunity to view the microcosm of the Jewish people as they set out to forge a new religious way that was destined to be the cornerstone of its future. As the place in which study and prayer took place, its adornment, internal ordering and structure reflect on the most significant aspects of Jewish intellectual and spiritual concerns.

It is not surprising, then, that great variety exists in both the architectural forms and artistic motifs that adorn the walls and halls of ancient synagogues.<sup>37</sup> Even within a specific region multiple architectural types of synagogues exist alongside contemporary types of another kind.<sup>38</sup> This situation has led to speculation that despite the fact that specific aspects of culture cluster by region and provide an almost uniform sense of that culture, the great divergence in synagogue types as well as in decoration suggests variety within talmudic Judaism even though each divergence still belongs very much to a common culture.

The main types of synagogues are: the basilica, the broadhouse, and the apsidal.<sup>39</sup> Prior to the recent work enumerated above it was believed that the basilica was the earliest type and the apsidal the latest, with the broadhouse type falling in between in the transitional period in the fourth century CE. Today we may observe that the basilica and the broadhouse type co-existed in Roman times and that the apsidal seems truly to be a Byzantine phenomenon, possibly emerging in response to the emergence of the Church in post-Constantinian Christianity.

The synagogue attests also to the primacy of Scripture in Jewish worship with the clarification of the place of the Ark of the Law and *bema* in it.<sup>40</sup> The contents of some of the synagogue mosaics even suggest that Jewish art played an integral part in the composition of the new poetry recited in the synagogues.<sup>41</sup> And from the point of view of both the

<sup>37</sup> E. M. Meyers, 'Ancient Synagogues in Galilee: Their Religious and Cultural Setting', *BA* 43 (1980), 97–108. See also S. Fine, *Sacred Realm* (New York and Oxford 1996), especially my article, 'Ancient Synagogues: An Archaeological Introduction', pp. 3–21.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, and Meyers and Kraabel, 'Archaeology, Iconography', pp. 177–81.

<sup>39</sup> See E. M. Meyers, 'Ancient Synagogues in Galilee', pp. 99–102.

<sup>40</sup> For discussion of ark see E. M. Meyers and C. L. Meyers, 'The Ark in Art: A Ceramic Rendering of the Torah Shrine from Nabratein', *Eretz Israel* 16 (1982), 176–85; E. M. Meyers, 'The Ark of Nabratein', *Qadmoniot* 15 (1982), 77–81 (in Hebrew); E. M. Meyers, J. F. Strange and C. L. Meyers, 'The Ark at Nabratein – A First Glance', *BA* 44 (1981), 237–43. For discussion of *bema* see *ibid.*, and E. M. Meyers, J. F. Strange and C. L. Meyers, 'Second Preliminary Report on the Excavations at en-Nabratein', *BASOR* 246 (1982), 35–54. See also my article in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, 'The Torah Shrine the Ancient Synagogue: Another Look at the Evidence'.

<sup>41</sup> Y. Yahalom, 'Piyut at Poetry' in L. Levine (ed.) *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity*, p. 120.

literary sources and material culture it seems quite certain that women participated fully in the life of the ancient synagogue.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, survey and excavation of numerous synagogue sites in the Golan Heights have revealed an astonishingly lively and vigorous Jewish community in Palestine in Byzantine and early Islamic times.<sup>43</sup> In fact one of the surprises of recent synagogue studies in general is the generally high level of Jewish culture at the end of the Roman period (third and fourth centuries CE) and the continued though sporadic flourishing of synagogue sites in the Byzantine period.<sup>44</sup> All of the evidence when viewed together presents a picture of a surprisingly vibrant Judaism in Palestine that is very much alive until the dawn of the mediaeval period. Further studies are sure to refine further the extent of Jewish settlement in the Byzantine period and its supposed eclipse at the hands of early Christendom, which after the conversion of Constantine, sought to restrict Jewish activity in the Holy Land.<sup>45</sup> (see below section VI).

#### IV THE STUDY OF TOWNS AND CITIES

The recent decades have seen a number of important cities undergo major excavation: Jerusalem, Beth Shean (Scythopolis), Caesarea Maritima, Sepphoris, and to a lesser extent Tiberias, Akko-Ptolemais, and Antipatris. Of these urban centres Jerusalem is clearly the best published and Tiberias the least published site. What emerges, however, is a clearer picture of the rather sophisticated lifestyle that characterized much of the urban centres. It was the Roman cities, heirs to the old Greek poleis established centuries before, that provided the administrative infrastructure through which the Romans maintained their control over Palestine. They became the vehicles by which Graeco-Roman culture in the form of art, especially mosaics, technology, building styles, popular entertainment in the form of mimes, games and spectacles were introduced in theatres at Sepphoris, Beth Shean (Scythopolis), Caesarea, and elsewhere,

<sup>42</sup> S. Safrai, 'Was there a Woman's Gallery in the Synagogue', *Tarbiz* 32 (1963), 329–38 (in Hebrew); B. Broton, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* (Chico 1982), pp. 103–38.

<sup>43</sup> T. Maoz, 'Ancient Qaşrin: Synagogue and Village', *BA* 51 (1988), the first of two articles on the Golan Heights.

<sup>44</sup> L. I. Levine, *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity*, especially the article by Y. Tzafrir, 'The Byzantine Setting and its Influence on Ancient Synagogues', pp. 147–58.

<sup>45</sup> B. Geller-Nathanson, 'Jews, Christians, and the Gallus Revolt in Fourth Century Palestine', *BA* 49 (1986), 26–36; E. M. Meyers, 'Byzantine Towns of the Galilee', in *City, Town and Countryside in the Early Byzantine Era*, R. L. Hohlfelder, ed. (New York 1982), pp. 115–33; a slightly altered version of this paper appeared in Hebrew in the *Vilnay Festschrift* (Jerusalem, 1984). See also most recently, R. C. Gregg and D. Urman, *Jews, Pagans, and Christians in the Golan Heights* (Atlanta 1996).

and in a myriad of other ways also. The road system that was constructed to connect these municipal areas proved to be true paths along which Jewish civilization in and around these areas grew and increasingly accommodated to hellenistic culture.

It should be stressed that although the urban polis dominated all of Palestine except the Upper Galilee and Golan regions, city life existed mainly at the core or centre of the Roman municipalities, which often stretched tens of miles across in any direction.<sup>46</sup> In the satellite areas surrounding these cities and yet within the same municipality, the older agrarian lifestyle was still very much dominant.

This leads us to the equally important observation that recent excavations in towns, e.g. at Capernaum, Qatsrein, Meron, Gush Halav, Khirbet Shema, etc. reveal a strikingly similar form of culture but one that is more closely allied to the satellite areas of cities, the adjacent towns and settlements that fall within the purview of the larger municipalities. Nonetheless, one can conclude from recent findings that the further away a town is from an urban centre or major roadway the less likely it is to reveal a high level of building or decorative style, and the inhabitants would tend to be more rural and agrarian in their way of life.<sup>47</sup> Despite our better sense of difference between city and town today, however, it must be stressed that it was the town more than the city that ultimately encompassed most of Jewish life in Palestine. It should be noted in this connection too that it was in the urban centre of Sepphoris that the Mishnah was compiled c. 200 CE under the leadership of Rabbi Judah the Prince.<sup>48</sup>

## V THE HELLENIZATION PROCESS

It is not surprising that the more hellenized centres of Jewish life fall in the regions dominated by the Roman cities and mostly located along major roadways, the Lower Galilee, the Rift Valley, the Coastal Plain. These areas contained the most significant pagan or Roman populations who spoke mainly Greek but who also communicated to a lesser extent in Latin.<sup>49</sup> Many of this population group were associated with the Roman

<sup>46</sup> M. Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land* (Grand Rapids 1966), pp. 127ff.

<sup>47</sup> The best single treatment of this subject is Z. Safrai's *The Economy of Roman Palestine* (London 1994).

<sup>48</sup> See above n. 32 and S. Miller, *Studies in the History and Tradition of Sepphoris* (Leiden 1984), especially p. 4 and n. 20.

<sup>49</sup> E. M. Meyers and J. F. Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity* (Nashville 1981), pp. 62ff. See also D. F. Graf, 'Palestine: Palestine in the Persian through Roman Periods' in *OEANE*, vol. 4, pp. 222–8 and D. E. Groh, 'Palestine: Palestine in the Byzantine Period' in *OEANE* vol. 4, pp. 228–32.

military presence and the elaborate support structures that grew up around it. The surrounding Jewish population that served them accommodated this reality by quickly learning Greek for trade and day-to-day discourse. In time Greek came to eclipse Hebrew as the everyday language<sup>50</sup> and many of Israel's most important sages buried their loved ones or themselves were buried in containers or sarcophagi that bore Greek epigraphs or Graeco-Roman decorations.<sup>51</sup> In striking contrast, virtually no Greek is found in the Upper Galilee or the Golan.

The Jewish catacombs of the sages in Beth Shearim were excavated in the late 1920s. Articles have appeared on their contents on a regular basis for a half century now, attesting to the high level of Greek spoken by the sages and the fact that they were comfortable with a style of decoration in their tombs that was normally thought to be incompatible with Jewish sensibilities and law *vis-à-vis* the Second Commandment.<sup>52</sup> With the discovery in 1987 of the extraordinary Dionysos mosaic at Sepphoris, the heartland of the Jewish sages, a new perspective was provided on the question of hellenization in Roman Palestine.<sup>53</sup>

Though it is not yet clear who commissioned the colourful mosaic carpet – being near the theatre and homes and buildings that are Jewish – the ramifications of the discovery are most significant. The central panel features Herakles and Dionysos in a drinking contest, in symposium. Fifteen panels surround this scene and depict aspects of the life and times of Dionysos, god of wine, afterlife, revelry, fertility and theatre.<sup>54</sup> What is so amazing is that they are all labelled in Greek, either to clarify the contents for those who didn't know Greek mythology, or were added merely to jog the memory of those who ate in the triclinium or banquet-hall in which the carpet is located.

The explicit link to Greek mythology and possible connection to the cult of Dionysos or theatrical guild of Dionysos, raises numerous questions about the make-up of the population of Sepphoris in the time of Rabbi Judah, reputed to be a close friend of the Roman emperor, Caracalla.<sup>55</sup> Though at the time of writing it would seem that the banquet hall of this

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, especially note 56. <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 152–3.

<sup>52</sup> B. Cohen, 'Art in Jewish Law', *Judaism* 3 (1954), 165–76; E. E. Urbach, 'The Rabbinical Laws of Idolatry', *IEJ* 9 (1959), 149–65; 229–45.

<sup>53</sup> See Meyers, Netzer, Meyers, 'Artistry in Stone'; see also Meyers, Netzer, Meyers, *Sepphoris* (Winona Lake 1992).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 227–8. The unique role of Dionysos in Roman religion in Palestine is explored by M. Smith in 'On the Wine God in Palestine', Salo W. Baron Jubilee volume (Jerusalem 1975), pp. 815–29.

<sup>55</sup> Y. Meshorer, 'Sepphoris and Rome' in *Greek Numismatics and Archaeological Essays in Honor of Margaret Thompson*, O. Morkholm and N. M. Waggoner, eds. (1979), pp. 159–71; see also his remarks in *Sepphoris in Galilee* (1996), pp. 195–200.



elegant Roman-period mansion belongs to a prominent resident of Sepphoris, the high level of artistry of the mosaic and its explicit mythological content set it apart and above anything yet discovered in Graeco-Roman Palestine. In the eastern Mediterranean region only perhaps at Antioch in Syria or Jerash in Jordan or at Paphos in Cyprus do we find any mosaic art that might compare in beauty and technique of execution.

The implications of this discovery are many but the most important may be summarized as follows: (1) the extent of hellenization in Palestine by the third century CE is greater than heretofore believed; (2) the acceptability and accessibility of Jews in and to great hellenistic (pagan) centres is more than was previously believed; (3) Jewish familiarity with hellenistic culture in urban centres such as Sepphoris was a positive force affecting Jewish creativity. If some day it might be demonstrated that the building which housed the Dionysos mosaic was Jewish or was a public room shared by the Jewish and pagan leadership we would want to go even further in our conclusions.

## VI THE RISE OF CHRISTENDOM AND ITS IMPACT ON JEWISH LIFE IN PALESTINE

Several important new issues have arisen in recent decades as a result of greater attention given to the archaeological remains of Christianity in Palestine. The first issue focuses on the rather elusive community of Judaeo-Christians, who according to sources, survived into early Byzantine times.<sup>56</sup> Italian Franciscan scholars have for some time maintained their continued presence in Palestine after the fall of Jerusalem in CE 70. Indeed, one of their supposed centres was at Sepphoris near Nazareth.<sup>57</sup> Because of the nature of the artifactual evidence the extent of the Judaeo-Christian community in Palestine remains difficult to assay. It seems certain, however, that further excavation at sites where they were active will shed further light on the matter. For the time being, the literary and archaeological evidence, such as it is, is sufficiently convincing to assure their existence. In this connection the Capernaum evidence is of crucial importance.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>56</sup> E. M. Meyers, 'Early Judaism and Christianity in Light of Archaeology', *BA* 51 (1988); Ernest W. Saunders, 'Christian Synagogues and Jewish Christianity in Galilee', *Explor* 3 (1977), 70–7. See also chapter 22 below.

<sup>57</sup> Frederic Manns, 'An Important Jewish Christian Center: Sepphoris' in *Essais sur le Judéo-Christianisme*, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Analecta 12 (Jerusalem 1977), pp. 165–90.

<sup>58</sup> See S. Loffreda, 'Capernaum' in *OEANE*, vol. 1, pp. 416–19.



The reclamation of the land of Palestine as Holy Land by the post-Constantinian Christians and pilgrims did not have the immediate impact on Jewish life that might usually be assumed. Neither Christian church building at holy sites of the biblical past or restrictive legislation could contain a last outburst of Jewish, Palestinian creative response to new circumstances. In some urban centres Jewish and Christian communities lived alongside one another without difficulties for centuries (e.g. Caesarea, Sepphoris, Beth Shean (Scythopolis)), often in close dialogue and with strong trade relations with their pagan, even Samaritan neighbours. At Capernaum Jew and Christian, and perhaps Judaeo-Christian, lived peacefully alongside one another until the Arab-Persian conquest.<sup>59</sup>

Another pattern of constructive, symbiotic pluralism obtained in the Golan/Gaulanitis Heights in the Byzantine era.<sup>60</sup> The communities of Jews and Christians there are virtually unknown except for archaeological remains. Their settlement patterns of towns reveal a cooperative yet distinctly separate sphere of life, interacting perhaps only on a business or trade basis, and living in their own communities with their own synagogues and churches. The Christians of the Golan are Greek-speakers, while the Golan Jews are still very much dominated by Semitic (Hebrew and Aramaic). In the Golan we thus have an alternative form of pluralism to the kind of urban 'millet' system we observed in Sepphoris or Capernaum.

The rise of Byzantine Christendom does not bring about the eclipse of Palestinian Jewry as perhaps is expected. Rather, each community giving way to local tradition and custom, accommodates to the existence of the other in novel and positive ways. Except for archaeology this last epoch of late antiquity might be viewed in an entirely negative light. The archaeology of Palestine in this period, however, provides for an alternative reconstruction of history, which is just beginning to be rewritten, a process that will doubtless continue for a long time to come. It was the Islamic conquest of Palestine that sent Palestinian Jewry into eclipse. We have already indicated that it was not instant or total but the onset of a process whereby Jewish settlements were gradually terminated one after the other. For Palestinian Jewry at least, this is the beginning of the 'Dark Ages'.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, but also consult his essay on 'Capernaum', in *NEAEHL*, vol. 1, pp. 291–5 and V. Tzaferis, 'Capernaum' in *NEAEHL*, vol. 1, pp. 295–7.

<sup>60</sup> See Gregg and Urman, *Jews, Pagans and Christians*, pp. 289–319 and T. Maoz, 'Golan', in *NEAEHL*, vol. 2, pp. 525–46.

<sup>61</sup> R. L. Wilken discusses aspects of these dynamics in *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven 1992).

## VII CAN JEWISH SCHOLARSHIP AFFORD TO LEAVE ARCHAEOLOGY TO THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS?

In light of the above observations and anticipating more and more archaeological discoveries of central importance to the history of Judaism, it is lamentable that more Jewish scholars and scholars of ancient Judaism do not take archaeology seriously. In Israel, we have already alluded to the fact that archaeology is still largely perceived as a separate discipline to itself, one that is divorced from the study of classical Jewish sources or even from the Classics.<sup>62</sup> One explanation that is often given for this state of affairs is that Jewish scholars are more book- or text-oriented, and since Israel has such fine archaeologists there is no need for text scholars to do anything but read the results of archaeological field work, and vice-versa.

The problem with this is that the people who do archaeology only ask of the data the questions they believe to be of major importance. Most often, however, these questions are not the same ones as might be asked by an historian or literary scholar. What needs to occur is a dialogue between them to be opened so that cross-fertilization can occur. Where no literary sources exist, the historian is truly dependent on the archaeologist. Where rich literary sources exist, as in the case of the Talmud, the literary historian or talmudist is apt to go off on his or her own, often to the exclusion of important data.

Occasionally, the concerns of archaeology and literary scholarship can intersect in a fortuitous way. Such was the case at the synagogue of Rehov in the Beth Shean (Scythopolis) Valley where the largest inscription in ancient Palestine was uncovered. Not only does this inscription provide hitherto unknown geographical details about cities and towns of Eretz Israel but it also provides a portion of a text that is also extant in the rabbinic literature.<sup>63</sup> Such a circumstance is rare but the fortuitous collaboration between archaeologist and talmudist which has resulted from the discovery of the inscription at Rehov can serve as a model for the future.

<sup>62</sup> However, there are some notable exceptions to this trend, notably at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where Professor Lee Levine is situated in both Jewish History and Archaeology, and at Bar Ilan University where the Land of Israel Department truly bridges this gap with people like Zev Safrai, Daniel Sperber and David Adan-Bayewitz.

<sup>63</sup> See p. 282 below, and S. Fine, 'Synagogue Inscriptions', *OEANE*, vol. 5, pp. 114–18. See also S. Fine (ed.), *Sacred Realm*, his essay 'From Meeting House to Sacred Realm: Holiness and the Ancient Synagogue', pp. 21–47 and that of A. Shinan, 'Synagogues in the Land of Israel: The Literature and Synagogue Archaeology', pp. 130–52, especially p. 150. Collaboration between textual and archaeological scholars is reflected in this volume as in L. Levine's *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, which published the proceedings of the First International Conference on Galilee. The Second Conference, held at Duke University in January 1997, will publish the proceedings of that conference in the near future.

## CHAPTER 4

THE CONTRIBUTION OF JEWISH  
INSCRIPTIONS TO THE STUDY OF  
JUDAISM

An important resource for the study of Judaism from the time of Alexander the Great down to the Byzantine period is the large and ever-growing body of Jewish inscriptions. To date, over two thousand texts, the majority from the third century CE or later, have come to light. Of these, roughly one third are from Judaea/Palestine, the rest mainly from the Mediterranean provinces of the Roman Empire, Italy and, above all, Rome itself. Access to the Diasporan evidence has been greatly improved within the last fifteen years: through the efforts of scholars based mainly at Tübingen and Cambridge, England, we now have up-to-date editions of the Jewish inscriptions of Cyrene, Aphrodisias, Egypt, Rome and western Europe.<sup>1</sup> And once J. H. Kroll's edition of the Sardis synagogue inscriptions and H. Bloedhorn's *Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse in Griechenland, Kleinasien und Syrien* become available,<sup>2</sup> we shall be able largely to dispense with the Diasporan sections of J. B. Frey's *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum*.<sup>3</sup> More problematic is the Judaeon/Palestinian material. Many texts, particularly ossuary inscriptions from the last hundred years of the Second

<sup>1</sup> G. Lüderitz, *Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika* (Wiesbaden 1983); J. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (Cambridge 1987); W. Horbury and D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Cambridge 1992); D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe* (2 vols. Cambridge 1993 and 1995). For inscriptions from Roman Africa, Mauretania and the Danubian provinces, the following must be consulted: Y. le Bohec, 'Inscriptions Juives et Judaisantes de l'Afrique Romaine', *Antiquités Africaines* 17 (1981), 165–207 and A. Scheiber, *Jewish Inscriptions in Hungary: From the 3rd Century to 1686* (Budapest 1983), pp. 1–72.

<sup>2</sup> The former, edited twenty years ago but still unpublished, is scheduled to appear in A. R. Seager, A. T. Kraabel and J. H. Kroll, *The Synagogue at Sardis* (Cambridge, Mass.). The latter will constitute vol. B 92 of the *Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients*.

<sup>3</sup> I.e. the whole of vol. I (Rome 1936, reprinted, with a Prolegomenon by B. Lifshitz, New York 1975) and large parts of vol. II (Rome 1952). Frey's photographs of the inscriptions from the Jewish catacombs at Rome, however, remain invaluable (vol. I *passim*). As does the conspectus of Diasporan material in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, revised by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman (Edinburgh 1986), vol. III, 1, ch. 1, with the update by H. Bloedhorn in *JSS* 35 (1990), 64–72.

Temple period, remain scattered and/or unedited.<sup>4</sup> Such thematic assemblages as have been made (e.g. of synagogue inscriptions) are not only partial<sup>5</sup> but difficult of access for the Hebrewless reader.<sup>6</sup> Of many texts (e.g. the epitaphs from Jaffa), *CIJ* II, with all its imperfections, still provides the only easily accessible version. Only of the inscriptions from Beth Shearim and Masada do comprehensive modern editions exist.<sup>7</sup>

Of the texts so far edited and published, the vast majority (over 1,600) are epitaphs.<sup>8</sup> Inscriptions from synagogues and storage jars, the latter almost exclusively from Masada, constitute the only other sizeable categories of evidence.<sup>9</sup> Other types of inscriptions do exist – e.g. synagogal decrees, transactions and dedications at pagan shrines, ephebic lists containing the names of Jews, curse tablets and graffiti, but in each case the number of documents is very small. Most of the inscriptions, whatever

<sup>4</sup> Considerable numbers of edited texts are to be found in the following: *CIJ* II, nos. 1210–1387; B. Bagatti and J. T. Milik, *Gli scavi del Dominus Flevit* (Jerusalem 1958), vol. 1, nos. 1–43; N. Avigad, ‘A Depository of Inscribed Ossuaries in the Kidron Valley’, *IEJ* 12 (1962), 1–12; J. Naveh, ‘Ossuary Inscriptions from Giv’at ha-Mivtar’, *IEJ* 20 (1970), 33–7; N. Avigad, ‘The Burial-Vault of a Nazirite Family on Mount Scopus’, *IEJ* 21 (1971), 185–200; R. Hachlili, ‘The Goliath Family in Jericho: Funerary Inscriptions from a First Century AD Jewish Monumental Tomb’, *BASOR* 235 (1979), 31–66; E. Puech, ‘Inscriptions funéraires Palestiniennes: Tombeau de Jason et ossuaires’, *RB* 90 (1983), 499–533; L. Y. Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries in the Collections of the State of Israel* (Jerusalem 1994).

<sup>5</sup> J. Naveh, *On Mosaic and Stone* (Tel Aviv 1978) (Hebrew) contains only Hebrew and Aramaic synagogal texts. A few of these have recently been re-published in J. Naveh, *On Sberd and Papyrus* (Jerusalem 1992) (Hebrew). For the Greek donor inscriptions from Palestine, see B. Lifshitz, *Donateurs et Fondateurs dans les synagogues juives* (Paris 1967), nos. 64–81 and L. Roth Gerson, *The Greek Inscriptions from the Synagogues in Eretz-Israel* (Jerusalem 1987) (Hebrew).

<sup>6</sup> Generous selections of the Aramaic texts, accompanied by translation and commentary, are to be found in the Appendix to J. A. Fitzmyer and D. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome 1978) and in K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen 1986).

<sup>7</sup> For the Greek texts from Beth Shearim, see M. Schwabe and B. Lifshitz, *Beth She'arim II – The Greek Inscriptions* (English version: New Brunswick, NJ 1974); for the Hebrew and Aramaic, N. Avigad, *Beth She'arim III – Catacombs* 12–23 (English version: New Brunswick, NJ 1976), ch. iv. For the Masada material, see J. Aviram, G. Foerster and E. Netzer (eds.) *Masada: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965* (2 vols. Jerusalem 1989). Vol. 1, edited by Y. Yadin and J. Naveh, contains the Aramaic and Hebrew ostraca and jar inscriptions, vol. II, edited by H. M. Cotton and J. Geiger, the Greek and Latin documents.

<sup>8</sup> For a brief survey of these, see P. W. van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs* (Kampen 1991).

<sup>9</sup> For the bibliography of both, see nn. 5–7 above. Although magic texts exist in considerable numbers, their Jewish authorship is often far from certain. For a collection, see J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls* (Jerusalem and Leiden 1985).

their provenance, are written in Greek. Hebrew and Aramaic texts, though found in fair numbers in Judaea/Palestine and especially Jerusalem, occur but rarely in the Diaspora. Such Jewish inscriptions in Latin as have survived come mainly from Rome, Italy and northwest Africa.<sup>10</sup> It is only fair to say that many of the items in this body of evidence, though informative about Jews, are not relevant to their religious beliefs and practices. In consequence they will be ignored in the survey that now follows and the concluding assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of epigraphic evidence for the study of Judaism. The survey is divided into two parts, the first dealing with inscriptions related to Diasporan Judaism and the second with epigraphic material from Judaea/Palestine.

## I INSCRIPTIONS RELATING TO DIASPORAN JUDAISM

Inscriptions reveal more clearly than any other type of source material the early emergence of the synagogue as the most characteristic feature of the established Diasporan community and its development from simple prayer-hall into multi-purpose community centre. The first synagogues to be securely attested anywhere are mentioned in two Egyptian inscriptions from the reign of Ptolemy III (246–221 BCE).<sup>11</sup> From the word used for them in those texts – *proseuche* (lit. ‘prayer’), the prime function of the synagogue at this early period can confidently be deduced – it must have served as a community prayer-hall. In later Diasporan inscriptions (from the first century CE onwards), a new term for synagogue is to be noticed: in addition to *proseuche*, which never fell totally out of use, *synagoge* (lit. ‘a bringing together’, ‘assembly’ or ‘place of assembly’) appears with increasing frequency.<sup>12</sup> The change reflects a major development in the synagogue’s role: from serving primarily as a prayer-house, it has become the place where people gather together for a variety of purposes, religious, educational, administrative, juridical and social.<sup>13</sup> Epigraphy illustrates these different functions very precisely: while an inscription from the floor of the Sardis synagogue is generally thought to mark the very spot where Samoe, the *sophodidaskalos* (lit. ‘teacher of wisdom’) gave

<sup>10</sup> For further details, see van der Horst (n. 8 above), pp. 22–4. Jewish texts written in Palmyrene and Nabataean also exist but only in minute numbers. For the former, see, for instance, *CIJ* II 1024 and 1114; for the latter, *CIJ* II 1421–3.

<sup>11</sup> *CPJ* 1440 and 1532a = *JIGRE* 22 and 117.

<sup>12</sup> One of the earliest datable examples is *CJZC* 72 – a donor inscription of the year 55/6 CE from Berenice in Cyrenaica. In this text, *synagoge* is used in two ways: to denote (a) the congregation and (b) its premises.

<sup>13</sup> For a general analysis of the various terms for synagogue, M. Hengel, ‘Proseuche und Synagoge’ in G. Jeremias, H.-W. Kuhn and H. Stegemann (eds.) *Festschrift K. G. Kuhn. Tradition und Glaube* (Göttingen 1971), pp. 157–84 is fundamental.

instruction in the Torah,<sup>14</sup> a decree from Berenice (*CJZC* 71) makes specific mention of a business meeting that took place at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (*skenopegia*).<sup>15</sup> And while references to *triclinia* (i.e. dining-rooms) in inscriptions from Stobi in Macedonia (*CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 694 = *DF* 10) and Antioch in Syria (*IGLS* III 770) point to the social function of the synagogue (feasting regularly took place there, especially at festival time), manumission documents from the Bosphorus (e.g. *CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 683 and 690 = *CIRB* 70 and 1123) demonstrate that it frequently served as a locus for legal transactions.<sup>16</sup>

Inscriptions also illustrate with more immediacy and in greater detail than any other source the synagogue's importance to individual Jews. In benefactor texts from all over the Diaspora we see the richer members of Jewish communities proudly recording for posterity the considerable sums of money they had laid out on the construction, refurbishment and general embellishment of their local synagogues (*DF passim*). Archaeology has revealed only two Diasporan synagogues of any opulence – Doura-Europos with its magnificent figural wall paintings and Sardis with its marble-clad walls, intricate mosaic floor, ornate *bema* and grand Torah shrines. But widespread references in synagogal inscriptions to payment for marble and mosaic decorations, as well as to the donation of candelabra, ritual basins and receptacles for the scrolls of the Law,<sup>17</sup> show that such richly appointed edifices were not rare. Epitaphs, too, reveal the centrality of the synagogue in the life of Diasporan Jews. Recording on their tombstones the synagogal office(s) or honours they had held was the principal (and often sole) means by which Jews expressed their sense of self-identity and self-worth. This is particularly noticeable in the inscriptions from the Roman catacombs. While only three people define themselves through their jobs (a butcher, a merchant and a *zogographos* or painter of living things),<sup>18</sup> scores record the fact that they had been a Father/Mother of the Synagogue, a *gerousiarch*, an *archon* or an *archisynagogos*. (See *JJWE* II, Index v b.)

Despite this plethora of official titles, inscriptions are, however, wholly uninformative about the running of the synagogue and the organization

<sup>14</sup> For discussion, see P. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1991), p. 50.

<sup>15</sup> On the problems of dating this document, see M. W. Baldwin Bowsky, 'M. Tittius Sex. F. Aem. and the Jews of Berenice (Cyrenaica)', *AJP* 108 (1987), 495–510.

<sup>16</sup> Evidence for the synagogue's liturgical function will be discussed below in connection with psalmody.

<sup>17</sup> In addition to the texts in *DF*, note *JJWE* I 13 (Ostia) for the donation of *ten keiboton* . . . *nomo hagio* (the ark for the Holy Law).

<sup>18</sup> *CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 210 = *JJWE* II 343; *JJWE* II 360; *CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 109 = *JJWE* II 277 (discussed below, p. 171).

of matters central to the observation of the Law and commandments – e.g. the collection of the half-shekel Temple-tax and distribution of charity. From the titles met with in inscriptions, we can see that synagogues everywhere tended to have broadly the same types of officers – *archisynagogoi*, for instance, are attested epigraphically all over the Diaspora.<sup>19</sup> But what these men did in that official, ‘ruling’ capacity, as opposed to being public benefactors, the inscriptions do not divulge.

For the roles played by women and rabbis within the synagogue and for the influence exerted upon it by the Palestinian Patriarch and his rabbinical representatives, the epigraphical evidence is somewhat more helpful. With regard to the first, inscriptions confirm the impression given by Josephus and the author of Acts that Gentile women were attracted to Judaism and enjoyed a preponderance among the converts to it:<sup>20</sup> grand Gentile ladies are conspicuous among benefactors to the synagogue in inscriptions from Asia Minor (*DF* 30 and 33), and among epigraphically attested proselytes (admittedly, a small number), women feature prominently.<sup>21</sup> Inscriptions further show that, on occasion, the standing of women within the community was very high. Tation of Phocaea is the best example of this: for her generous benefactions to the synagogue, she was awarded by the synagogal council not only a gold crown but even the privilege of *proedria* in the prayer-house itself (*DF* 13). What epigraphy does not do, however, is substantiate the claims made by Brooten and others<sup>22</sup> that women, no less than men, held executive office in the Diasporan synagogue.<sup>23</sup> While it cannot be denied that inscriptions reveal small numbers of rich and socially prominent Jewish women of the third century and later bearing titles such as *archisynagogissa*, *archegissa*,

<sup>19</sup> Schürer, *HJPAJC* III. 1, pp. 100–1. For a comprehensive list, see T. Rajak and D. Noy, ‘Archisynagogoi: Office, Title and Social Status in the Greco-Jewish Synagogue’, *JRS* 83 (1993), 89–92. For local variations in titlature, however, see M. H. Williams, ‘The Structure of Roman Jewry Re-considered – were the Synagogues of Rome Entirely Homogeneous?’, *ZPE* 104 (1994), 129–41.

<sup>20</sup> Note, *inter alia*, Josephus, *Bell.* II.560 (women at Damascus); *Ant.* XVIII.82 (Fulvia at Rome); *Ant.* XX.35 (Helena of Adiabene) and XX.195 (the Empress, Poppaea) and Acts 13:50; 17:4; 17:12 (women at Pisidian Antioch, Thessalonica and Beroea respectively). Nineteen inscriptions mentioning proselytes were counted by W. Horbury, ‘A Proselyte’s *Heis Theos* Inscription near Caesarea’, *PEQ* 129 (1997), 133–7.

<sup>21</sup> *CJZC* 12 (Cyrene); *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 21; 222; 462 and 523 = *JJWE* II 489; 224; 62 and 577 (Rome). cf. Bagatti-Milik, 31 (Jerusalem).

<sup>22</sup> B. Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogues* (Brown Judaic Studies 36, Chico California 1982); van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, pp. 105–9.

<sup>23</sup> Among the rare pieces of evidence of any kind for actions of an executive nature by male synagogal officials, note *CPJ* II 432 (*archons* at Arsinoe in Egypt paying for the synagogal water-supply) and Acts 13:14–15 (*archisynagogoi* at Pisidian Antioch in charge of synagogal proceedings on the Sabbath).



*pateressa*,<sup>24</sup> neither the texts themselves nor any other type of source material provide hard evidence for the performance by them of actions of an executive nature. That these women sometimes used their wealth to adorn the synagogue is clear,<sup>25</sup> but that their titles (and these include *hierisa*)<sup>26</sup> were anything other than honorific has yet to be proved, and it is surely of significance that very young Jewish children bearing a variety of official titles, including that of *archisynagogos*, are also attested epigraphically.<sup>27</sup>

Inscriptions also provide some clarification of the role played by rabbis in the Diasporan synagogue. That in general they did not stand at its head during the Patriarchate (i.e. from the late second to the early fifth century CE) emerges clearly from the epigraphic record. In the hundreds of Jewish epitaphs from Rome, the word *rabbi* does not appear, despite the fact that they contain vast numbers of references to synagogal offices and date, for the most part, from the acme of the Patriarchate – i.e. the third to fourth centuries CE. Further, where the term does occur in Diasporan inscriptions (fewer than ten times),<sup>28</sup> it is not certain that it is any more than a polite form of address (lit. ‘My Master’).<sup>29</sup> But while epigraphy

<sup>24</sup> In conjunction with the cases collected and discussed by Brooten, the following need to be considered: a female *presbytera* on Malta, for whom see R. Kraemer, ‘A New Inscription from Malta and the Question of Women Elders in the Diaspora Jewish Communities’, *HTR* 78 (1985), 431–8, and Jael, the *prostates*, listed in the Aphrodisias donor text. The gender of this person is hotly disputed, Reynolds and Tannenbaum, p. 101 arguing that Jael was male, others, female. For further bibliography and full discussion of the name, see G. Mussies, ‘Jewish Personal Names in Non-Literary Sources’ in J. W. van Henten and P. W. van der Horst (eds.) *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy* (Leiden 1994), pp. 261–9.

<sup>25</sup> Theopempte, *archisynagogos* at Myndos is the only certain case, however. For her joint benefaction with her son, Eusebios, see *DF* 29.

<sup>26</sup> Brooten’s contention that the title *hierisa*, attested epigraphically at Leontopolis, Rome and Beth She’arim, did not necessarily mean *kohenet* (i.e. wife or daughter of a priest) but may have indicated that its bearers had an active cultic role is disproved by the recently published epitaph from pre-70 CE Jerusalem of Megiste, *hierise*. It is out of the question that she can have officiated in the Temple cult there. For text and discussion, see T. Ilan, ‘New Ossuary Inscriptions from Jerusalem’, *SCI* (1991/2), 157–9.

<sup>27</sup> For a three-year-old *archisynagogos* at fifth cent. CE Venosa, see *CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 587 = *JJWE* 1 53. For the phenomenon in general, see van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, pp. 89–90 and 96, n. 46.

<sup>28</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, ‘Epigraphical Rabbis’, *JQR* 72 (1981/2), 2–3 and P. W. van der Horst, ‘“Lord, help the Rabbi.” The Interpretation of *SEG* xxxi 1578b’, *JJS* 38 (1987), 102–6.

<sup>29</sup> On the ambiguity of the term, see Cohen ‘Epigraphical Rabbis’, 9–10, who points out that it is not necessarily an indicator of either profession (being an ordained teacher of the Torah) or office (being head of the synagogue). The only inscription in which it may be carrying those meanings is from a later period – viz. the sixth cent. In that text (*CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 611 = *JJWE* 1 86), an epitaph from Venosa, we meet *duo rebbitas* who, along with two *apostuli*, are recorded as having ‘chanted the dirges’ at the funeral of a fourteen-year-old girl.



demonstrates this much about the official position of rabbis within the synagogue (i.e. that they do not appear to have had one), it does not enable us to determine how much influence they and the Patriarchs exerted over Diasporan affairs. Talmudic sources, whose historicity is notoriously difficult to evaluate, suggest that it was considerable, but epigraphy has provided no certain corroboration. To date, only one inscription has come to light which seems to point directly to Patriarchal influence over the Diaspora<sup>30</sup> – the late third-century donor text from the synagogue at Stobi in Macedonia (*CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 694 = *DF* 10), in which we read that a large fine must be paid ‘to the patriarch’ (*to patriarche*) if the legal arrangements set out in the document are disturbed. Some scholars, however, do not accept that the Palestinian Patriarch is indicated by these words but see in them a reference to some minor local official.<sup>31</sup> Attempts to detect rabbinical and Patriarchal influence in other inscriptions have met with little success. The hypothesis, for instance, that we should see in the Aphrodisias donor text the foundation of a synagogal soup kitchen on the advice of a Patriarchal representative such as Rabbi Meir is not compelling.<sup>32</sup> However, it would be unwise to conclude from this dearth of evidence that rabbinical and Patriarchal influence on the Diasporan synagogue must have been negligible, for the kinds of activities in which Talmudic sources show Palestinian rabbis engaged – i.e. paying diplomatic visits to Diasporan synagogues and there giving halakhic advice – leave no mark on donor inscriptions and epitaphs.

While the contribution of epigraphy with regard to women, rabbis and Patriarchs proves to be limited, in other areas it has been considerable. Three will be noticed here: the language of synagogal worship, the practice of psalmody and the structure of the synagogal community. With regard to the first, epitaphs from Rome indicate that, in the third century CE at any rate, the language of worship in the city’s many synagogues almost certainly was Greek: all the quotations from the Bible found in the catacomb texts are derived from either the LXX or Aquila’s translation<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Powerfully argued by M. Hengel in ‘Die Synagogenschrift von Stobi’, *ZNTW* 57 (1966), 152–9.

<sup>31</sup> See, for instance, Frey, *CIJ* and S. J. D. Cohen, ‘Pagan and Christian Evidence on the Ancient Synagogue’ in L. I. Levine (ed.) *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia 1987), pp. 172–3. For powerful arguments against the existence of minor patriarchs, however, see A. Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (Michigan 1987), p. 203.

<sup>32</sup> Proposed and elaborated by Reynolds and Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers*, p. 27 and pp. 80–2. Challenged by M. H. Williams, ‘The Jews and Godfearers Inscription from Aphrodisias – a case of Patriarchal interference in early 3rd century Caria?’, *Historia* 41 (1992), 297–310.

<sup>33</sup> *CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 86; 201 and 370 = *JJWE* II 276; 307 and 112. For other possible quotations, see *JJWE* II, Index v f.

and the only Hebrew met with consists of *Amen* (once) and the conventional blessings, Peace (*shalom*) and Peace over Israel (*shalom al Yisrael*). (And generally these round off texts otherwise written in Greek.)<sup>34</sup> As far as psalmody is concerned, the appearance of the terms *psalmoidos* and *psalmo* (*logos?*) in (respectively) a Roman synagogal functionary's epitaph and the Aphrodisias synagogal donor list, both of them generally dated to around the third century CE,<sup>35</sup> makes it clear that psalmody must have been a well-established feature of the synagogal liturgy long before the Byzantine era – the period to which some scholars once assigned it.<sup>36</sup> As for the structure of synagogal communities, here too the Aphrodisias text provides information of critical importance. Previously we had known that Gentiles were to be found on the periphery of many Jewish communities but the inexact language of the literary sources, as well as the difficulty of interpreting certain key epigraphic texts,<sup>37</sup> meant that their precise relationship to the synagogue was not clear. Some scholars even denied the existence of such fringe-worshippers, commonly called Godfearers, altogether.<sup>38</sup> The Aphrodisias inscription puts it beyond doubt that such people did exist and in considerable numbers (over fifty are listed in the text). Further it shows that, in the third century at least, they had an official title, *Theosebeis*, and enjoyed a formal relationship with the synagogue, as, of course, did proselytes.<sup>39</sup>

Besides settling such synagogally related matters as these, inscriptions also illustrate the varied character of Diasporan Judaism. For a start, they reveal to us the kinds of compromises with Graeco-Roman culture that some Diasporan Jews were prepared to make. Six are of especial note: (i) the widespread adoption of pagan theophoric names. In a single inscription from Berenice (*DF* 100 = *CJZC* 72), the appearance of the following is to be noted: Isidora/os, Zenion, Zenodoros, Ammonios, Herakleides (*bis*) and Serapion. (ii) The use in Greek-style metrical epitaphs of pagan imagery – e.g. being snatched by Hades (*JIGRE* 31). Language of this type is found on several of the tombstones generally associated with the Jews of Leontopolis in Egypt (e.g. *JIGRE* 34; 38 and 39). (iii) The adoption

<sup>34</sup> As, for instance, in *CIJ* 1<sup>2</sup> 283; 296; 397 and 732 = *JIWE* II 535; 183; 193 and 596.

<sup>35</sup> *JIWE* II 502 for the Roman text; Reynolds and Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers*, pp. 19–24 for Aphrodisias.

<sup>36</sup> See Reynolds and Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers*, p. 46.

<sup>37</sup> The Miletus theatre inscription, *topos Eioudeon ton kai theosebion*, is a case in point (*CIJ* II 748). For a summary of the various interpretations of this text, see now Reynolds and Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers*, p. 54.

<sup>38</sup> A. T. Kraabel, "The Disappearance of the "God-Fearers"", *Numen* 28 (1981), 113–26.

<sup>39</sup> Deduced, *inter alia*, from the presence of both *Theosebeis* and proselytes in the organization of which Jael (n. 24 above) was the president (*prostates*). Reynolds and Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers*, p. 5.

of Graeco-Roman funerary customs, such as decking the tomb with flowers and wreaths and holding annual banquets in memory of the deceased. In a third-century CE epitaph from Hierapolis in Phrygia (*CIJ* II 777), the occasions specified for the latter are the Passover and Pentecost.<sup>40</sup> (iv) Attendance at the theatre and hippodrome. The first is demonstrated by the Jews and Godfearers inscription from the theatre at Miletus (*CIJ* II 748 and n. 37 above), the second by graffiti found in the odeon at Aphrodisias and the hippodrome at Tyre.<sup>41</sup> (v) Undergoing a gymnasium (and thus wholly pagan) education. This emerges from, *inter alia*, ephebic lists found at Cyrene (*CJZC* 7a and 7c), Iasos in Asia Minor (*REJ* 101 (1937) 85–86) and Corone in Greece (*CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> no. 721c). (vi) Visitation of pagan shrines and temples either to render thanks to God (= Yahweh?) or to perform pagan rituals, such as incubation. Of these, the first is illustrated by two Jewish graffiti, probably of Ptolemaic date, from the temple of Pan at Edfu in Egypt (*JIGRE* 121 and 122), the second by the inscribed stele set up in the first half of the third century BCE by the Jew, Moschos, son of Moschion, in the Amphiareion at Oropos in central Greece.<sup>42</sup>

Nor is it just about dubious (from an ‘orthodox’ Jewish viewpoint) practices such as these that inscriptions provide information. They have much to contribute also about the attitudes and activities of more traditionally minded Diasporan Jews. The centrality of the Law to such people is something about which the epigraphic record leaves us in no doubt. This emerges from not only the frequent depiction on tombstones of the Torah shrine,<sup>43</sup> but also the inclusion in epitaphs of such status-indicators as *mathetes sophon* (a student of the Sages)<sup>44</sup> and *didaskalos nomomathes* (a teacher (and) scholar of the Torah).<sup>45</sup> The fashioning of the funerary epithets *philonomos* (lover of the Law) and *philentolos* (lover of the commandments)

<sup>40</sup> For an analogous case from Akmonia, see Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, pp. 78–81.

<sup>41</sup> *SEG* 37 (1987), 846 and J. P. Rey-Coquais, *RA* (1979), 167. Together these texts confirm the claim, made by John Malalas (*Excerpta de insidiis*, 166–7), but doubted by A. Cameron in *Porphyrius the Charioteer* (Oxford 1973), p. 276 and elsewhere, that the Jews were supporters of the Blue circus faction.

<sup>42</sup> For text, see *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 711b; for discussion, D. M. Lewis, ‘The First Greek Jew’ in *JSS* 2 (1957), 264–6.

<sup>43</sup> Only on those of the Roman Jews, though. For examples, see illustrations at *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 315; 327 (= *JIWE* II, plate VII); 337; 343; 460 and U. Fasola, ‘Le due catacombe ebraiche di Villa Torlonia’, *RivAC* 52 (1976), figs. 7, 10 and 11.

<sup>44</sup> *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 508 = *JIWE* II 544. Probably the equivalent of *Talmid Hakam*, a term applied to scholars of the Law, who were held in special honour. See H. J. Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome* (Philadelphia 1960), p. 193.

<sup>45</sup> See, for instance, *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 333 = *JIWE* II 68. cf. Samoe, the *sophodidaskalos* in the synagogue at Sardis (above n. 14).

by the Jews of Rome further illustrates the point,<sup>46</sup> as does the coining in other Diasporan centres of names such as Philonomios and Entolios.<sup>47</sup> Inscriptions also reveal the attachment of Diasporan Jews to both the Temple and the 'Holy Land'. Texts from Jerusalem record lavish donations to the former – e.g. the gates given by Nicanor of Alexandria.<sup>48</sup> And epitaphs have also been found there not only of Diasporan proselytes, who had elected to be buried in the holy city,<sup>49</sup> but also of Jews from overseas who had died probably while on pilgrimage to the Temple.<sup>50</sup> Long after its destruction in 70 CE, the link between Diaspora and homeland remained strong. In the third century in particular, burial in the 'Holy Land' became, largely for eschatological reasons, a desideratum of Diasporan Jews. Among the epitaphs of that date found in catacombs at Beth Shearim are many belonging to rich and pious Jews from Palmyra, Arabia, Antioch and the principal cities of the Phoenician coast (e.g. *BS* II 11; 12; 92; 100; 110–11; 137; 147; 171–3 and 221). Several of them, most notably Aidesios, a *gerousiarch* from Antioch and Eusebios, an *archisynagogos* from Beirut, had held high synagogal office during their lifetimes (*BS* II 141–3 and 164). Esteem for the priesthood too is widely attested by Diasporan inscriptions. We learn from them that even in Byzantine times, when all hope of restoring the Temple surely must have vanished, some Jews still thought it worthwhile to stress their Aaronic descent.<sup>51</sup>

## II INSCRIPTIONS FROM JUDAEA/PALESTINE RELATING TO JUDAISM

'Theodotos, son of Vettenos, priest and *archisynagogos*, son of an *archisynagogos*, grandson of an *archisynagogos*, has built the synagogue (*synagoge*) for the

<sup>46</sup> Complete list to be found in *JJWE* II, p. 536 (Index III f). For an example of *philonomios* from Malta, see Kraemer ('A New Inscription', n. 24), 431.

<sup>47</sup> For the former, see *MAMA* III 751 (Corycus) and M. H. Williams, 'The Jewish Community of Corycus – Two More Inscriptions', *ZPE* 92 (1992), 249–250; for the latter, *DF* 91 = *JIGRE* 15 (Alexandria) and *DF* 84 (Lapethos, Cyprus).

<sup>48</sup> According to the commonest interpretation of *CIJ* II 1175 = *JIGRE* 153. For a benefaction by a Rhodian Jew or Godfearer, see B. Isaac, 'A Donation for Herod's Temple', *IEJ* 33 (1983), 86–92.

<sup>49</sup> The most famous is Queen Helena of Adiabene, whose burial and tomb in Jerusalem are mentioned by Josephus in numerous passages – e.g. *Ant.* L. xx.95 and *Bell.* v.119. For the epitaph from the Tomb of the Kings which is believed to be hers, see *CIJ* II 1388 = *MPAT* 132. For the recently discovered ossuary of Ariston of Apamea, also known as Judah the proselyte, see Ilan ('New Ossuary Inscriptions', n. 26), 150–3.

<sup>50</sup> Maria, wife of Alexander, from Capua, may be a case in point (*CIJ* II 1284). For others, see S. Safrai, 'Relations between the Diaspora and the Land of Israel' in S. Safrai and M. Stern (eds.) *The Jewish People in the First Century* (Assen 1974), I, p. 194.

<sup>51</sup> See, for instance, *CIJ* II 785 (Corycus) and Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, p. 50 (Sardis).



Fig. 4.1 The Theodotus inscription from pre-70 CE Jerusalem.

reading of the Law and the teaching of the commandments, and the guest-house and the rooms and water facilities, (to provide) lodging for those from foreign countries who need it. His fathers and the Elders and Simonides laid the foundations' (*CIJ* II 1404 = *DF* 79). This crucial text from Mount Ophel in Jerusalem constitutes the earliest inscriptional evidence for the synagogue in Judaea, its generally accepted date being some time in the first century CE before the destruction of the Temple.<sup>52</sup> Both language and content reveal that Jerusalem synagogues at this time (for those elsewhere in the homeland there is no epigraphic evidence before the third century CE) had a rather different purpose from that of those in Diasporan communities. There is no suggestion that Theodotos' foundation was to function as a forum for communal prayer. Presumably that need was met by the Temple. The Jerusalem synagogue's main purpose was to facilitate Torah study, and its subsidiary purpose was to act as a rooming house for pilgrims. After CE 70, there was a change: once the Temple was destroyed, many of its functions and something of its aura too devolved upon the only alternative institution available – the synagogue.

<sup>52</sup> See, for instance, L. I. Levine, 'The Second Temple Synagogue' in L. I. Levine (ed.) *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity*, pp. 10 and 17 and D. Falk, 'Jewish Prayer Literature and the Jerusalem Church' in R. Bauckham (ed.) *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting* (Grand Rapids, Michigan 1995), vol. 4, p. 281, n. 50.

Terminology reflects these developments: the standard epigraphic term for the homeland synagogue now becomes ‘holy place’.<sup>53</sup> *Synagoge* and its Hebrew equivalent, *ḵ<sup>c</sup>neset*, though occurring in Palestinian inscriptions, do so only occasionally (e.g. *CIJ* II 867 (*synagoge*); *CIJ* II 1195 = *MPAT* A12 (*ḵ<sup>c</sup>neset*)).

Palestinian Jews of the third century and later, no less than their Diasporan counterparts at that time, took great pride in their synagogues and expressed it in very much the same way: they bestowed upon them such gifts as marble columns, precinct gates, ablution basins and tessellated floors, and recorded those acts of generosity in inscriptional form. Mostly in Aramaic and often themselves composed of tesserae, these texts have been recovered in large numbers from the synagogues of Galilee and other parts of Palestine (nn. 5–6 above). But although the basic form of expressing pride is the same as that found in the Diasporan synagogue, whence the practice is generally presumed to have been derived, these homeland texts reveal subtly different social and religious attitudes. Diasporan Jews, heavily influenced by Graeco-Roman ideas about the status-enhancing functions of evergetism and public office, used the commemorative inscription as a means of advertising their wealth and elevated social position. Thus we find benefactors of the Sardis synagogue placing enormous emphasis on their possession of local citizenship and membership of the curial class,<sup>54</sup> and donors at other Diasporan synagogues sometimes mentioning not only their own current synagogal office but sometimes even those once held by their forefathers (*DF* 12 (Smyrna) and 37 (Side)). Palestinian Jews, on the other hand, upon whom the impact of Graeco-Roman ideology was less strong, adhered more closely to ancestral values: to be remembered for (their own) good by God in the hereafter mattered more to them than being admired in life by their fellow Jews. Hence the regular appearance of the words *d<sup>c</sup>ḵbir l<sup>c</sup>tav* (may he be remembered for good) at the start of their donor inscriptions – a phrase hardly ever found in the Diaspora.<sup>55</sup> Hence also in Palestine the general absence of reference to public office and even the construction of benefactor texts in which the donors’ names themselves were deliberately omitted. The following text from the mosaic floor of the Noarah synagogue is a case in point: ‘Remembered for good

<sup>53</sup> e.g. *CIJ* II 980; 1199; 1203–05 = *MPAT* A35; A3; A5; A7–8. Significantly this term also appears (in the form, *ho bagios topos*) in the only Diasporan inscription thought to yield clear evidence of Patriarchal control over the Diaspora – *DF* 10 from Stobi. See p. 81 above.

<sup>54</sup> Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, pp. 43–9.

<sup>55</sup> Numerous examples are to be found in the Appendix to *MPAT*. For a rare Diasporan example, see *CIJ* II 845 (Dura-Europos), cf. *DF* 59 and 61 (Dura and Dmeir – *mnesthe* only).



be everyone who gathers his resources and contributes or who has contributed for this holy place, either gold or silver, or any object whatsoever, and have brought their share into this holy place. Amen! (*CIJ* II 1203 = *MPAT* A5).<sup>56</sup>

Given the tendency of benefactors rarely to supply any more information about themselves than their name and patronymic, synagogal inscriptions in Palestine contribute little to our knowledge about who ran the local synagogues and what they did. Although in rare cases male donors mention their current synagogal offices<sup>57</sup> (female title-holders are not attested at all), they tell us nothing about the duties they performed as such officers. Nor do inscriptions help us to settle the difficult question when the Palestinian synagogue began to be ruled by ordained teachers of the Torah (rabbis) instead of laymen. Although the title *rabbi* is met with far more often in Palestinian than Diasporan inscriptions (mainly in the epitaphs from Beth Shearim),<sup>58</sup> its meaning remains just as elusive. In the synagogal inscriptions in which it does occur,<sup>59</sup> the men so designated feature merely as donors. Attempts have on occasion been made to equate some of these 'epigraphical rabbis' with Talmudic scholars who figure in the literary sources but they have not commanded universal acceptance.<sup>60</sup>

If the contribution of epigraphy is disappointing in the sphere of synagogal management, in other areas it has much to offer. For a start, it adds to our knowledge of the impact of Graeco-Roman culture upon Palestinian Judaism. Among the Beth Shearim inscriptions, for instance, there is one extended metrical epitaph (*BS* II 127) that makes clear use of both Homeric language and concepts – e.g. *Moirā kratāie* (Powerful Fate). And in the naves of several Galilean synagogues, most notably that at Hammath Tiberias, we find complex mosaic pavements, the iconography of which is purely pagan in origin. In the centre of each pavement is depicted a male radiate figure looking suspiciously like the Greek sun-god, Apollo, around whom circle the Signs of the Zodiac and the Four Seasons, personified, in the normal Graeco-Roman fashion, as young women. For each figure, except the Apollo-lookalike, a neat label in Hebrew is supplied, the assumption being, presumably, that not everybody in the congregation would be able to identify these alien figures.<sup>61</sup> While

<sup>56</sup> The contrast with the Berenice donor inscription (*CJZC* 72) could not be greater: there donors record not only their synagogal offices but even the exact amount of their financial contributions (down to 5 drachmas!).

<sup>57</sup> See, for instance, *CIJ* II 855 = *MPAT* A23 for a *hazzan* (= Greek, *hyperetes*) and *CIJ* II 1202 = *MPAT* A4 for a *parnas* (administrator).

<sup>58</sup> Cohen, 'Epigraphical Rabbis', 3–7 lists over fifty.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 lists just eleven, two of whom are doubtful. <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 10–11.

<sup>61</sup> For superb illustrations and exhaustive analysis, see M. Dothan, *Hammath Tiberias* (Jerusalem 1983).

these compositions must surely have been regarded as entirely compatible with Judaism,<sup>62</sup> their presence in these synagogues is astonishing. That figural representation was tolerated by Diasporan Jews is shown by, *inter alia*, the reference to *zographia* in one of the donor inscriptions in the Sardis synagogue (*DF* 20) and the Roman epitaph, mentioned above, of the *zographos*, Eudoxios (*CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 109 = *JJWE* II 277). Nothing, however, in the literary sources for Palestinian Judaism prepares us for the appearance in the homeland's 'holy places' of these rich arrays of captioned pagan figures.<sup>63</sup>

That inscriptions have also been found which illustrate the Jews' high regard for the Temple, priesthood, Law and commandments, is not surprising. Among texts relating to the Temple, of special interest are the warning notices from the Temple precinct itself. Described more than once by Josephus (*Bell.* v.194 and *Ant.* xv.417), these inscriptions, originally written both in Greek and Latin (the surviving examples are all in Greek), threatened with death any Gentile who dared penetrate the Temple's inner courts and violate their sanctity.<sup>64</sup> Also of note are the epitaphs (*sic*) of 'Simon, Builder of the Sanctuary'. Published by Naveh in 1970,<sup>65</sup> they come from the ossuary probably of one of the thousand priestly masons and carpenters specially trained by Herod for his reconstruction of the Temple (Josephus, *Ant.* xv.390 and 420–1). Given that this type of text normally consists of no more than a name and patronymic, the additional information supplied here is highly significant – it illustrates well the prestige that attached to close association with the Temple. Worth noting too are three epitaphs from the fourth to the sixth centuries, in which the Destruction of the Temple is used as the basis for dating, and some inscriptions of the same period or later, for example from Caesarea, which record the twenty-four priestly courses.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>62</sup> B. Narkiss, for instance, in 'Pagan, Christian and Jewish Elements in the Art of Ancient Synagogues' in L. I. Levine (ed.) *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity*, p. 186, suggests that they 'may have represented for the Jews the eternal movement of the sun, moon, and heavenly bodies, instigated by the power of the one and only God of the universe. . .'. Others have sought a calendrical explanation – e.g. M. Dothan, *Hammath Tiberias*, pp. 48–9.

<sup>63</sup> For rabbinical disapproval of use of the zodiac – *Enc. Ind.* s.v. Zodiac.

<sup>64</sup> For the only complete surviving example, see *CIJ* II 1400. For details of the fragmentary cases, see Schürer, *HJPJC* II, p. 285, n. 57.

<sup>65</sup> J. Naveh, 'Ossuary Inscriptions from Giv'at ha-Mivtar', *IEJ* 20 (1970), 33–4; Rahmani 200 and Plate 27.

<sup>66</sup> For the epitaphs see *CIJ* II 1208 = *MPAT* A50; *MPAT* A51–2. On course-inscriptions see for example M. Avi-Yonah, 'The Caesarea Inscription of the Twenty-four Priestly Courses', in E. J. Vardaman & J. L. Garrett, Jr, with J. B. Adair (eds.), *The Teacher's Yoke: Studies in Memory of Henry Trantham* (Waco, 1964), 46–57.



For the importance of the priesthood in particular to Palestinian Jews there is good epigraphic evidence. Among the rare personal epithets found in the pre-70 CE ossuary inscriptions from Jerusalem, priest (*koben*) occurs more often than any other.<sup>67</sup> And evidence from Beth Shearim shows that, long after of the fall of the Temple, Aaronic descent continued to confer high status and set those who enjoyed it apart: not only do we find among the deceased several individuals characterised as *koben* or *hierens* (*BS* II 148; 180–1), but, in Catacomb I, even a special burial hall for priests (*BS* II 49). It was not just men, however, whose status was felt to be enhanced by connection with the priesthood. Inscriptions bring out more clearly than any other form of evidence the prestige that accrued to women from membership, either through birth or marriage, of a priestly family. On a recently discovered ossuary from pre-70 CE Jerusalem (see n. 26 above), the occupant, Megiste, is characterized by one word only: *hierise* – i.e. daughter or wife of a priest (*kobenet*). Even more striking is the epitaph from Beth Shearim (*BS* II 66) in which the deceased, who was neither a priest's wife nor daughter herself, is described as being the mother of a *koben's* wife! But if the prestige derived from being connected to a priestly family was great, that which came from being in the direct line of descent from men who had held the High Priesthood was much greater, as emerges from the recently published epitaph of a woman hitherto unknown to history – ‘Yehohanah, daughter of Yehohanah, son of Theophilus, the High Priest’.<sup>68</sup> Of the many ossuary texts that have come to light this is one of the longest.

With regard to the Law and commandments, important evidence, further to the Mount Ophel synagogue text quoted above, is provided by (a) ossuary inscriptions from Jerusalem containing the title *didaskalos* (teacher – i.e. of the Law);<sup>69</sup> (b) storage jar graffiti from Masada of the time of the First Jewish War (CE 66–73/4) referring in various ways to priestly dues<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup> *CIJ* II 1221; 1317 and 1411. Bagatti-Milik 22, with further examples in commentary. For its nearest rival, *didaskalos* (teacher, presumably of the Law), see n. 69 below.

<sup>68</sup> D. Barag and D. Flusser, ‘The Ossuary of Yehohanah Granddaughter of the High Priest Theophilus’, *IEJ* 36 (1986), 39–44; Rahmani 871 and Plate 132. For Theophilus’ appointment to the High Priesthood by Vitellius, the Roman legate of Syria, see Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII.123–4. He is not the only first century CE High Priest to be attested epigraphically – Ananias, son of Nedebaeus, holder of the office from c. 47–59 CE has recently been attested at Masada (Yadin and Naveh 461). But attempts to see in a recently discovered ossuary text from the Jerusalem area the epitaph of the High Priest, Joseph Caiaphas have been successfully challenged. See, for instance, W. Horbury, ‘The “Caiaphas” Ossuaries and Joseph Caiaphas’, *PEQ* 126 (1994), 32–48.

<sup>69</sup> See *CIJ* II 1266; 1268 and 1269. It occurs also once at Beth Shearim (*BS* II 124).

<sup>70</sup> See Yadin and Naveh 441 for the inscription, *maaser koben* (priest's tithe), and 442–4 for pots bearing the letter *tav*. Probably this was an abbreviation for *ʿrumah* (priestly due).

and (c) a second- to third-century building text from Dabbura in the Golan/Gaulanitis which runs: 'Eli'ezer ha-Qappar / This is the *Beth-Midrash* / of the Rabbi.<sup>71</sup> With regard to (a), it is noteworthy that *didaskalos* appears more frequently in ossuary texts from pre-70 CE Jerusalem than any other title apart from *koben* (above n. 67). From (b) it has been inferred that, even *in extremis*, the rebels under Eleazar, son of Jair, tried to adhere strictly to the commandments, including those on tithing.<sup>72</sup> As for (c), this inscription provides the only surviving epigraphic reference to one of the most important institutions of Palestine after CE 70 – the school for the advanced study of both the oral and the written Torah. In this period it was academies, such as Rabbi Eli'ezer's, that played a key role in the underpinning of Jewish society.<sup>73</sup> Finally, an important later text is a long mosaic inscription on tithes and the sabbatical year from Rehob near Scythopolis.<sup>74</sup>

So far nothing specific has been said in this survey about religious beliefs. The reason is that Diasporan texts are disappointing in this regard. Apart from Egyptian epitaphs reflecting various views on afterlife (such as *JIGRE* 31, 33–4, 36, 38–9),<sup>75</sup> one text from Corycus in Cilicia which refers explicitly to astral immortality (*CIJ* II 788) and a few, mainly from Asia Minor, which clearly reflect a belief in the Final Judgement,<sup>76</sup> the rest provide little or no hard information.<sup>77</sup> Most welcome, then, is the contribution of Judaeon/Palestinian texts. Inscriptions from Jerusalem and Beth Shearim combine to illuminate the range of eschatological beliefs prevalent among Jews in the first three centuries CE. Sadducees believed that after death there was nothing. This minority view is thought to be reflected in the unusual first-century ossuary inscription from Mount Scopus which runs: 'No man can go up (from the grave), nor (can) El'azar or Sappirah.'<sup>78</sup> Belief in some kind of afterlife was, however, far

<sup>71</sup> D. Urman, 'Jewish Inscriptions from Dabbura in the Golan', *IEJ* 22 (1972), 21–3.

<sup>72</sup> Yadin and Naveh, p. 39.

<sup>73</sup> For an assessment of the significance of this unique text, see F. Millar, *The Roman Near East: 31 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1993), pp. 382–3.

<sup>74</sup> Y. Sussmann, 'The Inscription in the Synagogue at Rehob', in L. I. Levine (ed.), *Ancient Synagogues Revealed* (Jerusalem 1981), 146–53; see also pp. 74, above, and 282, below.

<sup>75</sup> W. Horbury, 'Jewish Inscriptions and Jewish Literature in Egypt, with special reference to Ecclesiasticus', in J. W. van Henten & P. W. van der Horst (eds.), *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy* (Leiden, 1994), 11–43.

<sup>76</sup> See, for instance, *TAM* IV.1. 375, an epitaph from Nicomedia in Bithynia, in which tomb-violators are threatened with judgement before God. For further examples from Asia Minor and elsewhere, see Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, p. 125.

<sup>77</sup> An exception is the Pannonian epitaph, *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 675 = Scheiber 2, with its rare (for a Jew) affirmation of monotheism: *heis theos*.

<sup>78</sup> F. M. Cross, 'A Note on a Burial Inscription from Mount Scopus', *IEJ* 33 (1983), 245–6. For text and further discussion, see Rahmani 455 and plate 66.

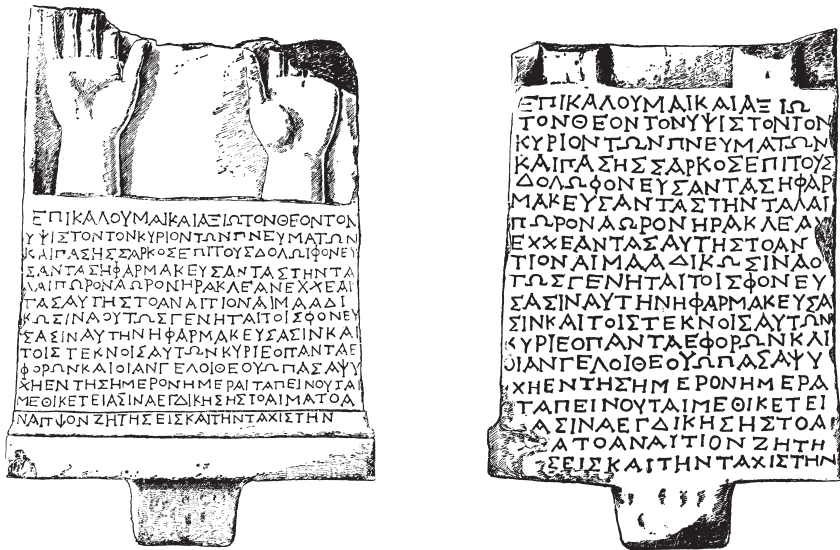


Fig. 4.2 Rheneia stele, inscribed with prayer for vengeance.

more prevalent, and inscriptions provide clear corroboration of this. Large numbers of the texts from Beth Shearim contain formulae, the commonest being *eumoirei* (may your lot be good), that are generally interpreted as indicating a belief in existence after death.<sup>79</sup> A few demonstrate clearly how that might be envisaged. For the author of *BS* II 162, it meant the resurrection of the body. Hence his threat – ‘Anyone who removes this woman, He who promised to revive the dead (*zoopoiesai*) will Himself judge him.’ By contrast, the prayer with which *BS* II 130 ends – ‘May your soul cling to immortal life’ – shows that there were those who conceived of life after death entirely in non-corporeal terms.

### III GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The contribution made by epigraphy to the study of Judaism is, then, rather mixed. Some problems, most notably the relationship of Godfearers to the Diasporan synagogue and the significance of the title *hierisa*, it has substantially solved. And for some subjects – e.g. Jewish attitudes towards

<sup>79</sup> The rarer, *tharsei, oudeis atbanatos* (‘Be of good courage. No one is immortal.’) is believed by some to have a similar import. See Lifschitz, comm. on *BS* II 2 and Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, pp. 120–2.

the Temple, priesthood and Law, it provides exceptionally rich and varied documentation. But to the resolution of other difficulties inscriptions have not proved very helpful. Although numerous epigraphical rabbis are attested, the extent of rabbinical influence over the Diasporan synagogue remains unknown. And we remain almost totally ignorant about synagogal management, despite the large number of synagogal titles contained in inscriptions. Nor does the list of pluses and minuses stop there. On the deficit side, we may note the limited contribution epigraphy makes to our understanding of the beliefs and practices of non-affluent Jews. Our sources, by consisting predominantly of bene-factor texts and epitaphs from stone ossuaries and marble slabs, reflect mainly the values of the better off.<sup>80</sup> On marginal groups and practices too, the help given by inscriptions is limited. Epigraphy sheds no new light, for instance, on the membership and activities of any of the Desert Sects, Judean or Diasporan. And while it does, uniquely, inform us of the existence in Cilicia and the Bosphorus respectively of the Jewish-inspired cults of the god Sabbatistes (*OGIS* II 573) and the Most High God (see, for instance, *IOSPE* II 446 and 450 = *CIRB* 1278 and 1285), it tells us nothing about the extent of Jewish participation in them. With popular religious practices the story is the same: magic texts, for example, regularly come to light that contain indisputably Jewish elements (e.g. affirmations of monotheism, belief in the power of angels and use of the divine names, Iao and Sabaoth),<sup>81</sup> but the extent to which the authors and users of those texts were Jews, the inscriptions themselves usually do not make clear.<sup>82</sup>

Notwithstanding those limitations, epigraphy does make at least one most significant contribution to the study of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman world. Through the information it provides, we are made aware of the variety within Jewish religious beliefs and practices. Some of the more conspicuous differences have already been noted – e.g. the much deeper involvement of Diasporan Jews in Graeco-Roman cultural activities<sup>83</sup> and the more pronounced eschatological element in Palestinian evergetism. But subtle differences also existed even between one area of

<sup>80</sup> Only at Rome do we come across the burials of poor Jews. Their epitaphs, when they had them at all, often consisted of no more than their names, painted or scratched on the stuccoed closures of their burial niches. See Leon, *Jews of Rome*, p. 235.

<sup>81</sup> Many examples are to be found in L. Di Segni, 'Εἰς Θεός in Palestinian Inscriptions', *SCI* 13 (1994), 94–115.

<sup>82</sup> Texts which probably are Jewish are to be found at *CIJ* I<sup>2</sup> 725, two curse tablets from Rheneia on Delos in which appeal is made to the Angels of God and there is clear allusion to Yom Kippur (Fig. 4.2), and in R. Kotansky, 'Two Inscribed Jewish Aramaic Amulets from Syria', *IEJ* 41 (1991), 267–81.

<sup>83</sup> At its most extreme, this involved apostasy, for which see *IGRR* IV 1431 = *CIJ* II 742.

the Diaspora and another and it is almost entirely through epigraphy that we can discern them. Two examples must suffice: through inscriptions we are able to detect considerable variations in Diasporan naming practices. While the Jews of third-century Aphrodisias, for instance, display a marked preference for Hebrew names, especially in their LXX form,<sup>84</sup> those at first-century Berenice hardly use them at all – its onomastikon is overwhelmingly Greek.<sup>85</sup> As for the ‘bridging’ names, Dositheos (= Mattathiah) and Theodotos (= Yehonatan), these, while very popular in Cyrene and Egypt,<sup>86</sup> hardly occur in other parts of the Diaspora.<sup>87</sup> No less various is Diasporan practice in the use of the divine name. While references to God are wholly absent from the synagogal inscriptions of Apamea in Syria (*DF* 38–56), in those from Egypt they are found quite frequently (*JIGRE*, Index va). Texts from Sardis reveal yet another variation: while the use of the Jewish divine name itself is avoided, a term for the divine greatly favoured by pagan Sardians is pressed into use instead. Consistently in the inscriptions from the Sardis synagogue, *Pronoia* (Providence) is used as a substitute for God.<sup>88</sup> Literary sources both Jewish and Graeco-Roman tend to give the impression that Judaism in classical antiquity was homogeneous. Inscriptions give the lie to that. Better than any other type of evidence they reveal to us something of its extraordinary diversity.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>84</sup> See, for instance, the list at Reynolds and Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers*, p. 5, with discussion at pp. 97–105.

<sup>85</sup> Particularly noticeable in *CJZC* 72 – a list of donors comparable in size to that cited for Aphrodisias in the previous note.

<sup>86</sup> See indices to *CJZC* and *JIGRE*. cf. *CPJ* III, pp. 173–4 and 177–8.

<sup>87</sup> See M. H. Williams, ‘Palestinian Jewish Personal Names in Acts’ in R. Bauckham (ed.) *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting* (Grand Rapids, Michigan 1995), vol. 4, pp. 88; 91–2 and 99–100.

<sup>88</sup> Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, pp. 49–50 and 210, n. 43.

<sup>89</sup> A large selection of inscriptions are translated side by side with literary evidence in M. H. Williams, *The Jews among the Greeks and Romans: A Diasporan Sourcebook* (London 1998).

## CHAPTER 5

THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND  
POLITICAL HISTORY OF PALESTINE

63 BCE–CE 70

I PALESTINE UNDER POMPEY AND CAESAR:  
JOHN HYRCANUS II, HIGH PRIEST

The end of the Seleucid dynasty and the reduction of Syria to a Roman province were among the consequences of Pompey's victory over Tigranes of Armenia (66 BCE). The political and territorial reorganization of the whole region (all the more necessary as the Roman power was now coming into direct contact with the Parthian empire) was bound to involve the Hasmonaean kingdom too. Here, after the death of Queen Alexandra Salome (67 BCE), a dynastic struggle had broken out openly between her two sons, Hyrcanus (II) and Aristobulus (II), and this also drew in, in various ways, the different Jewish politico-religious groups and regional interests. The intervention on Hyrcanus' side of the Nabataean King Aretas, procured by Antipater governor of Idumaea with the promise of territorial compensation, had brought about the expulsion of Aristobulus in 65 BCE. Roman interference in the affairs of the kingdom, undertaken at first by Pompey's Quaestor M. Aemilius Scaurus (65–64 BCE) and the legate A. Gabinius, then by Pompey himself in 63 BCE, was accepted more or less willingly by the two contenders, who vied for the favour and support of their new masters, with alternating results, by means which included valuable gifts.<sup>1</sup> Before Pompey at Damascus the

<sup>1</sup> Jos. *Bell.* 1.127–32; *Ant.* xiv.29–45. Aristobulus may have already prejudiced the case against himself by complaining against the general's confidant Gabinius; cf. A. Schalit, 'The Fall of the Hasmonaean Dynasty and the Roman Conquest' in *WHJP* 1.7, ed. M. Avi-Yonah (London 1975), p. 31. For extensive bibliography of secondary literature on the entire period under review see: E. Schürer, *HJP/AC*, 1 (Edinburgh 1973), pp. 3–16; 243–4, etc.; L. L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis 1992). Also note the University of Haifa HEROD bibliography project and its publications: U. Rappaport, 'Bibliography of Works on Jewish History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, 1946–1970', *Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel* 2 (1972), 247–321; U. Rappaport and M. Mor, *Bibliography of Works on Jewish History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, 1971–1975* (Jerusalem 1976); M. Mor and U. Rappaport, *Bibliography of Works on Jewish History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, 1976–1980* (Jerusalem 1982);

two rivals argued their cases: Hyrcanus, supported by Antipater and numerous prominent personages, relied on the rights of dynastic legality and accused Aristobulus of fomenting piracy and attacks on neighbouring peoples.<sup>2</sup> Aristobulus maintained that his brother was incapable of governing. In the face of the two adversaries fighting for the throne, a group of more than two hundred leading citizens sharply recalled the situation of a century earlier, when the Jews had applied to the Roman Senate, where they obtained recognition of the High Priest's government, and thus recognition of their freedom and autonomy; the monarchy had then acted illegally and wickedly to the disadvantage of the people.<sup>3</sup>

The postponement of a decision, because of Pompey's desire to settle his unsolved problems with the Nabataeans first, caused Aristobulus to start a series of confused and hesitant anti-Roman initiatives, which drove Pompey to move against him. In the end, Aristobulus was arrested. Hyrcanus' followers favoured Pompey's entry into Jerusalem, but Aristobulus' party tried to defend the Temple to the utmost, and managed to hold out for three months. The Temple was eventually captured with great carnage in the autumn of 63 BCE.<sup>4</sup> Pompey refrained from plundering the Temple treasure, worth 2,000 talents, although he did enter the Holy of Holies.<sup>5</sup> But the walls of the city were demolished.

D. Dimant, M. Mor and U. Rappaport, *Bibliography of Works on Jewish History in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Periods, 1980–1985* (Jerusalem 1987). For Rabbinic references to the period under review see: S. Krauss, *Griechen und Römer Monumenta Talmudica* 5.1 (Vienna/Leipzig 1914; repr. Darmstadt 1972).

<sup>2</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xiv.42–3. Aristobulus was accused of attacking the same cities Pompey wished to foster and protect (cf. Schalit, *WHJP* 1.7, pp. 31–2).

<sup>3</sup> Diod. xl.2; cf. M. Stern, *GLAJJ*, I, p. 185 with his comment; T. Fischer, 'Zum jüdischen Verfassungsstreit vor Pompeius (Diod. 40,2)', *ZDPV* 91 (1975), 46–9; Jos. *Ant.* xiv.41; cf. D. Piattelli, 'Ricerche intorno alle relazioni politiche tra Roma e l'*ethnos tōn Ioudaiōn* dal 161 a.C. al 4 a.C.', *BIDR* 74 (1971), 288–9. The Jewish delegation admitted to Pompey's presence must have had some kind of official standing (as did later the opponents of Herod before Antony: Jos. *Bell.* i.242–3; 245–6; *Ant.* xiv.302; 324; 327): it was no doubt a delegation of the Sanhedrin, obviously with an enlarged membership; the point of view put forward seems to have been that of the Pharisees: G. Allon, 'The Attitude of the Pharisees to the Roman Government and the House of Herod', *ScrHe* 7 (1961), 62–3; repr. in *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World* (Jerusalem 1977), 27–9; F. Parente, 'Escatologia e politica nel Giudaismo del primo secolo avanti e dopo Cristo e nel Cristianesimo primitivo', *RSI* 80 (1968), 240. For the composition of the Sanhedrin, which was at that time predominantly Pharisaic, S. Safrai, 'Jewish Self-Government' in *JJFC* 1 (Assen 1974), p. 384. See also p. 415 and n. 79 below.

<sup>4</sup> E. Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 239, n. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Jos. *Bell.* i.152–5; *Ant.* xiv.71–3; Cic. *Pro Flacco* xxviii.67 (Stern, *GLAJJ* I, pp. 196–201); a different account in Dio Cass. xxxvii.16.4 (Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 349–53). The well-known coin of the aedile A. Plautius in 55 BCE with the inscription *Bacchius Iudaeus*



Sorrow over the capture of Jerusalem and indignation against Pompey are reflected in the *Psalms of Solomon*, which also contain a vehement denunciation of those (meaning Hyrcanus, almost certainly the ‘wicked priest’ of the Qumran texts, and his followers) who had brought the Romans into the city.<sup>6</sup> Josephus too insists that Hyrcanus and Aristobulus and their rivalries were responsible for the tragic fate of the Jewish state, and he advances the hypothesis that it would at that time have been possible to withstand the Romans.<sup>7</sup>

In fact, however, the Romans could not under any circumstances have left to its own devices an area which was torn by internal wrangling and bordered on the new province of Syria, with the danger of possible Parthian interventions. They also had to put an end to raids into Syria, and to piracy, which had grown remarkably in the first half of the first century BCE.<sup>8</sup> It is also possible that the policies of the Jewish kingdom under Alexander Jannaeus and Queen Alexandra had moved away, through force of circumstances, from the traditional friendship with Rome: friendly relations with Tigranes in Syria, with the Parthians, and even with Mithridates, seem well attested and may explain Pompey’s bitter

(M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, I (Cambridge 1974), pp. 454–5; K. Kraft, ‘Taten des Pompeius auf den Münzen’, *JNG* 18 (1968), 16–19) seems to allude to the surrender of an Eastern leader, perhaps of the Jewish High Priest, indicated by a title drawn from the name of his god. That the divinity worshipped in the temple in Jerusalem was sometimes identified with Bacchus is known from Tac. *Hist.* v.5 and Plut. *Quaest. Conviv.* 6.1–2 (Stern, *GLAJJ* I, pp. 553ff, esp. p. 560); see also Jos. *Ant.* xiv.34–6 (from Strabo: Stern, *GLAJJ* I, pp. 274–5). In 139 BCE the God of the Jews was identified at Rome with Jupiter Sabazius: Val. Max. 1.3.3, cf. E. J. Bickerman, ‘The Altars of Gentiles’, *RIDA*, ser.3,5 (1958), 144–51, repr. in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* 2, Leiden 1980, pp. 324–46, here 329–35.

<sup>6</sup> viii.16–24; cf. J. Viteau, *Les Psaumes de Salomon* (Paris 1911), p. 296; A.-M. Denis, *Introduction aux Pseudépigraphes grecs d’Ancien Testament*, SVTP I (Leiden 1970), p. 64; Schürer, *HJPJC*, 3.1, pp. 192–7. On how Jewish literature of the period betrays various attitudes to Rome see N. R. M. de Lange, ‘Jewish Attitudes to the Roman Empire’ in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, ed. P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (Cambridge 1978), pp. 255–81; G. Stemberger, *Die römische Herrschaft im Urteil der Juden* (Darmstadt 1983); M. Hadas-Lebel, ‘L’évolution de l’image de Rome auprès des Juifs en deux siècles de relations judéo-romaines – 164 à +70’ in *ANRW* II.20.2, ed. W. Haase (Berlin/New York 1987), pp. 715–856 (with bibliography, pp. 847–56).

<sup>7</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.356–7; *Ant.* xiv.77–8. Josephus’ assertions have primarily a polemical value in reference to the situation in his time. For assessments of Josephus’ motives see note 274 below.

<sup>8</sup> Cass. Dio xxxvii.15.2; Iust. xl.2.24; Diod. xl.2 (cf. Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 349–53); U. Rappaport, ‘La Judée et Rome pendant le règne d’Alexandre Jannée’, *REJ* 127 (1968), 340–2; cf. A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Foreign Policy in the East, 168 BC to AD 1* (London 1984), 216–18.



accusations at the meeting in Damascus,<sup>9</sup> and most importantly the punitive character of his reordering of the Jewish state.<sup>10</sup>

Hyrcanus II was recognized as High Priest, and as such as leader of his people.<sup>11</sup> The abolition of the monarchy was certainly not due to any consideration for the wishes expressed at Damascus by the anti-Hasmonaean group, nor to the scant enthusiasm for the institution of monarchy displayed in certain quarters. The re-establishment of the traditional aristocratic-religious government was a consequence of the reduction in territory of the Jewish state, which was now deprived of (a) the whole coastal zone, and thus its outlet to the sea and the possibility of engaging in piracy, together with the Hellenized cities (but also losing the Jewish-populated Joppa and Jamnia), (b) western Idumaea with Marisa, (c) the city of Samaria, (d) the town of Gaba and the royal possessions in the plain of Esdraelon, (e) the Samaritan toparchies (although there is no consensus on this point), (f) the five non-Jewish cities in the northern Transjordanian region, which together with another five towns came to form the so-called Decapolis.<sup>12</sup>

Pompey, and Gabinius after him, restored many of the liberated cities which the Hasmonaean kings had destroyed: this should be understood in the sense of a reconstruction of the inhabited centres in the Greek manner and an attempt to progress beyond the non-urbanized phase. The Greek cities, although autonomous, became subordinate to the governor of Syria, who also exercised a measure of control over the Jewish state itself. Its condition of subjection to Rome was demonstrated by the tribute payable, which was collected by the *publicani*.<sup>13</sup> The Jewish state

<sup>9</sup> Rappaport, 'La Judée et Rome', *REJ* 127 (1968), 329–45. If the Commentary on Habakkuk in the Qumran texts, which is rich in hostile remarks about the military expansionism of the Romans (Kittim), does indeed reflect a situation prior to the capture of Jerusalem in 63 (so e.g. G. Vermes; summary of the problem in Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 241, n. 30; the text is later than 63 according to A. Dupont-Sommer, 'Pompée le Grand et les Romains dans les manuscrits de la mer morte', *Mélanges Ecole Française de Rome, Antiquité* 84 (1972), 879–901, with bibliography), we would have confirmation of the changed Jewish attitude to Rome in respect of the second century BCE.

<sup>10</sup> E. Bammel, 'Die Neuordnung des Pompeius und das römisch-jüdische Bündnis', *ZDPV* 75 (1959), 76–82; repr. in *Judaica* (Tübingen 1986), pp. 10–16.

<sup>11</sup> *Jos. Ant.* II.244.

<sup>12</sup> H. Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land* (Grand Rapids 1966), pp. 79–82; for maps and gazetteer (including extensive archaeological bibliography) see Y. Tsafirir *et al.*, *Tabula Imperii Romani: Iudaea, Palaestina* (Jerusalem 1994). On the social significance for the cities of this realignment: F. Millar, *Roman Near East, 31 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass. 1993), pp. 353–4; A. Kasher, *Jews in Hellenistic Cities in Eretz-Israel* (Tübingen 1990), pp. 175–82.

<sup>13</sup> *Cic. Pro Flacco* xxviii.69; *De Prov. Consul.* v.10 (cf. Stern, *GLAJJ* 1, pp. 196–204, esp. 201); *Jos. Bell.* 1.154; *Ant.* xiv.74; A. Momigliano, 'Ricerche sull'organizzazione della Giudea sotto il dominio romano (63 a.c.–70 d.c.)', 201. Isaac however raises doubts

was thus reduced to two separated remnants, Galilee in the north, and Judaea with part of Idumaea and Peraea in the south. As it no longer contained any non-Jewish subjects it could very well govern itself under the old theocratic system and without a king.

Comparisons with the large and powerful kingdom of Alexander Jannaeus and of Alexandra<sup>14</sup> must have seemed humiliating and have caused resentment against the men in power, Hyrcanus and Antipater, who naturally leaned on Roman support. In 57 BCE, while A. Gabinius was governor of Syria, Alexander, the son of Aristobulus, who had managed to escape in 63 BCE while being brought to Rome, attempted a revolt which attracted a large following and put Hyrcanus in an awkward position until Gabinius intervened and defeated him with the aid of loyalist Jewish troops. To Gabinius, the situation must indeed have seemed very dangerous and difficult to control with its weak central power. Hoping perhaps to encourage separatist tendencies and to capitalize on regional differences, he restructured the Jewish state by breaking it into five autonomous districts (which probably corresponded to earlier and later administrative divisions), each governed by its own Sanhedrin and magistrates and with its own centre: Jerusalem and Jericho in Judaea, Sepphoris in Galilee, Amathus in Peraea and Adora (apparently) in Idumaea.<sup>15</sup> There may be some validity in a comparison with the partition of Macedonia into four republics after the defeat of King Perseus in 167 BCE, inasmuch as Gabinius, in this case, also relied on the upper classes: Josephus speaks with approval of aristocratic regimes. Hyrcanus' power was limited to his post as High Priest; his position *vis-à-vis* the new Sanhedrin of Jerusalem is unclear.<sup>16</sup> But against this, Gabinius entrusted to the Jews themselves the collection of the tribute to be paid to Rome.<sup>17</sup>

The arrangement imposed by Gabinius was ineffective, and must have lasted quite a short time. In 56 BCE Aristobulus himself, having escaped

concerning the 'reconstruction' of these cities; see B. Isaac, *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East*, rev. edn (Oxford 1992/1993), pp. 336–40.

<sup>14</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIII.395–7.

<sup>15</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.169–70; *Ant.* XIV.90–1; B. Kanael, 'The Partition of Judaea by Gabinius', *IEJ* 7 (1957), 98–106; Schürer, *HJPAC* I, p. 268 and n. 5. For Galilee see A. Alt, 'Die Vorstufung zur Eingliederung Galiläas in das römische Reich', *PJ* 36 (1940), 78–92, repr. in *KS* II (Munich, 1953), pp. 423–35; S. Freyne, *Galilee From Alexander the Great to Hadrian, 323 BCE to 135 CE* (Notre Dame 1980), pp. 57–63.

<sup>16</sup> A. Momigliano, *ASNSP*, ser. II, 3 (1934), pp. 190–1; E. Bammel, 'The Organisation of Palestine by Gabinius', *JJS* 12 (1961), 159–62, repr. in *Judaica* (Tübingen 1986), pp. 17–20; E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, *SJLA* 20 (Leiden 1976), p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> Cic. *De Prov. Cons.* V.10 (Stern, *GLAJJ* I, 202–4); Cass. Dio XXXIX.56 (Stern, *GLAJJ* II, 354–5); a view to the contrary in D. C. Braund, 'Gabinius, Caesar, and the *publicani* of Judaea', *Klio* 65 (1983), 241–4.

from Rome, gathered many followers and tried yet another revolt, once again crushed by Gabinius. The latter, on the occasion of his Egyptian expedition of 55 BCE to restore Ptolemy XI Auletes to the throne, was amply assisted by Hyrcanus and Antipater, who obviously controlled the army.<sup>18</sup> The absence of Gabinius encouraged an attempt by Alexander to seize power, especially in Galilee and Samaria,<sup>19</sup> but once again he was defeated. The wide support generated by these movements, led by members of the fallen dynasty, seems to have been inspired mainly by loyalty to the memory of a strong Jewish kingdom, personified by Aristobulus and his followers, and expressed therefore in hostility towards the Romans and those under their protection. After the latest campaign of repression, Gabinius came to Jerusalem and ‘reorganized the government according to the suggestions of Antipater’.<sup>20</sup> The rather unclear statements in Flavius Josephus seem to allude to a restoration of power to Hyrcanus, beside whom Antipater now assumed a dominant role. Whether the Jewish state was reunified on this occasion cannot be said.<sup>21</sup>

In the year 54 BCE, M. Licinius Crassus, successor to Gabinius in the governorship of Syria, robbed the Jerusalem Temple of its treasures in order to finance his Parthian expedition.<sup>22</sup> Nothing was more natural, then, than the fresh revolutionary disturbances called forth in the Jewish state by the Roman defeat at Carrhae in 53 BCE and the Parthian advance into Syria. The leader this time was Peitholaus, who had been involved in Aristobulus’ earlier attempt. The Quaestor C. Cassius Longinus, a survivor from the defeat of Crassus, who had stabilized the situation in Syria, intervened to crush the disturbances, once again centred in Galilee.<sup>23</sup>

After 49 BCE, the political situation of the Jewish state was caught up in the more general movements of the Roman civil wars. Attempts by Caesar to use Aristobulus and Alexander against Pompey came to nothing when the two men were killed. Once the possibility of support by Pompey had ended with the battle of Pharsalus and his death, Hyrcanus and Antipater were skilful in re-establishing close relations with Caesar. The interests of both parties coincided: before the end of 48 BCE Caesar

<sup>18</sup> Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, p. 34, n. 45.

<sup>19</sup> Alt, *KS II*, pp. 428–9.

<sup>20</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.178; *Ant.* XIV.103.

<sup>21</sup> Thus Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, p. 35; a different view is taken by Momigliano, ‘Ricerche’, 189–91, who limits the reform to the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem; the division of the country would have lasted until 47 BCE. Certainly Antipater appears in 48 BCE with the title *epimelētēs* of the Jews (Jos. *Ant.* XIV.127 and 139), that is, in an official position in respect of the entire state; cf. also A. Schalit, *König Herodes. Der Mann und sein Werk* (Berlin 1969), pp. 750–3, and for various interpretations Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 270, n. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.179; *Ant.* XIV.105–9. <sup>23</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.180; *Ant.* XIV.119–20.

recognized Hyrcanus and his descendants as rightfully holding the office of High Priest.<sup>24</sup> Hyrcanus and Antipater gave valuable assistance with soldiers and other contributions in 48–47 BCE, during Caesar's Egyptian campaign. Their reward was not long in coming.<sup>25</sup> The high priesthood was re-confirmed to Hyrcanus and his heirs with all the privileges attached to it according to the Mosaic Laws, and he was also awarded the office of ethnarch of the Jews, and thus re-established with a precise title in the position which he had received from Pompey. All this meant the end of Gabinus' partition, if indeed it had not already been undone. Hyrcanus was also recognized as a friend and ally of the Romans; winter encampments and requisitions in Judaea were forbidden. Antipater, having been made a Roman citizen with various personal immunities and privileges, was nominated Hyrcanus' procurator (*epitropos*) which placed him at the head of the financial administration of the state, including responsibility for the economic interests of the Roman state.<sup>26</sup> Shortly afterwards, still in 47 BCE, and following a Jewish embassy to Rome<sup>27</sup> and the demonstration of the state's capacity to govern itself, the Romans gave Hyrcanus back Joppa (in exchange for the payment of a special tribute from the customs duties of the port), and also the rich plain of Esdraelon, Lydda and other smaller territories.<sup>28</sup>

In consequence of all these changes, the fiscal system was also reorganized, with the recognition of the sabbatical year. While the traditional tithes for the priestly class remained unchanged, a yearly tax was now introduced, undoubtedly a *tributum soli*, 'for the city of Jerusalem', of which, however, one eighth had to be paid to the Romans, with the payment made at Sidon.<sup>29</sup> The weight of taxation must have been very oppressive; in the last months of his life, January–February 44 BCE, Caesar granted a reduction (possibly of the amount payable to Rome), which seems however to have been connected with the authorization given to Hyrcanus to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xiv.199. The chronology and the interpretation of the documents reproduced by Josephus in the context of Book xiv proposed by Momigliano, *ASNSP*, ser.ii,3 (1934), pp. 193ff are here accepted.

<sup>25</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xiv.192–5.

<sup>26</sup> Jos. *Bell.* i.194; A. Gilboa, 'L'octroi de la citoyenneté romaine et d'immunité à Antipater, père d'Hérode,' *RHDF* 50 (1972), 609–14. In Josephus' account, under the influence of the pre-Herodian tradition of Nicolaus of Damascus, Antipater is systematically raised to the status of a protagonist in the events, at the expense of Hyrcanus, who is always depicted as following in the wake of Antipater: R. B. Motzo, 'Ircano II nella tradizione storica', *Studi Cagliaritari di Storia e Filologia* 1 (1927), 1–18.

<sup>27</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xiv.185; 196–8. <sup>28</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xiv.205–10; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, pp. 274–5.

<sup>29</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xiv.202–3; A. Schalit, *König Herodes*, pp. 777–81.

<sup>30</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xiv.200–1.

Antipater was undoubtedly in a strong position, not least through the connections which he had outside the Jewish state with local chiefs and notables.<sup>31</sup> Within the state he had got two of his sons nominated to very important posts: Phasael was *strategos* in Jerusalem and Judaea, Herod in Galilee – an unsettled area, as we have seen.<sup>32</sup> The rise of the Idumaeen Antipater and his family, and their military and economic power,<sup>33</sup> aroused hostility in the Jewish upper classes; Herod's abrupt manner caused fresh problems. In 47 BCE the capture and execution of the Galilean Ezekias (Hezekiah), a ringleader of bandits operating on the Syrian border, was hailed with jubilation in Syria but caused serious repercussions, on the other hand, in Jerusalem: Herod was accused before the Sanhedrin of killing Jews without trial. The intervention of Sextus Caesar, governor of Syria, and Hyrcanus' approval saved Herod from serious consequences.<sup>34</sup>

## II REBELS AND 'POLITICAL BANDITS'

What exactly Ezekias had done in Galilee is not clear;<sup>35</sup> it is probable that his raids on Syrian villages provided Herod with a pretext for getting rid of someone who must have been a dangerous rival of his father's and of himself. Certainly Ezekias must have had important allies in Jerusalem, as well as a solid base in Galilee, as evidenced not only by Herod's subsequent operations against 'bandits' in this area, especially at Arbela,<sup>36</sup> but also, and more importantly, by the very continuity over time of Ezekias' movement. In other words, on to the traditional endemic activities of bandits operating on the Syrian borders,<sup>37</sup> especially from Trachonitis – a way of life and the only hope of survival for desperately poor nomadic populations<sup>38</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.181; 188. <sup>32</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.203; *Ant.* XIV.158; 161. <sup>33</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIV.163ff.

<sup>34</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.204–11; *Ant.* XIV.159–84. See A. Gilboa, 'The Intervention of Sextus Julius Caesar, Governor of Syria, in the Affair of Herod's Trial', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 5 (1979/80), 185–94.

<sup>35</sup> The best analysis is by M. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, edn 2 (Leiden 1976), pp. 319–24; ET *The Zealots* (Edinburgh 1989), pp. 313–17; see also S. Applebaum, 'The Zealots: the Case for Reevaluation', *JRS* 61 (1971), 159; H. Kreissig, *SZJK* (Berlin 1970), pp. 111–12; S. Mazzarino, *L'impero romano*, edn 2 (Bari 1973), III, pp. 879–81, suggests links between Ezekias and the sect of the Rule of Damascus.

<sup>36</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.304–7; 309–16; 399; *Ant.* XIV.420–33; XVII.26.

<sup>37</sup> Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 28–31; ET *The Zealots*, pp. 27–30.

<sup>38</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XV.343–8 (with reference to brigandry in Trachonitis). Poverty, and the opposition to unjust rulers it engenders, is emphasized as the central motive for 'social banditry' in R. A. Horsley, 'Josephus and the Bandits', *JfJ* 10 (1979), pp. 37–63; more popularly in R. A. Horsley and J. S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus* (Minneapolis 1985), pp. 48–76, 85. S. Schwartz stresses the importance of the breakdown of the patronage system for the increase in banditry in Galilee before the revolt; see 'Josephus in Galilee: Rural Patronage and Social Breakdown',

– there were now being grafted more definite political and religious motives, although these are unclear to us.<sup>39</sup>

In the Syrian-Palestinian region from time immemorial banditry had appeared with a variety of complex environmental, political and social causes – causes which were, however, significantly related to those of later times – and it had always flourished on a considerable scale.<sup>40</sup> The various political powers of the area had often made use of exiles organized into groups fleeing from other states, but they were then given to making agreements for the joint suppression of a phenomenon which had become too dangerous, even making regulations for the extradition of each other's fugitive subjects.<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps in the course of the first century BCE this practice had taken on a partly new aspect. A passage in Strabo XVI.3.37, which seems to derive from an anti-Hasmonaean Jewish source,<sup>42</sup> attributes blame to the 'tyrants' – meaning precisely the Hasmonaean kings, and implying therefore a date before 63 BCE – for the emergence of banditry.<sup>43</sup> With sharp perspicacity two elements are ascribed to the same political framework: one, caused probably by social factors, being the 'rebels' who pillage the countryside of the Jews and of their neighbours, the other, more strictly political, being the 'bandits' who collaborate with those in power and take over a good deal of Syria and Phoenicia (with a critical reference to the Hasmonaean wars of conquest, especially those of Alexander Jannaeus). Thus governmental oppression, which drives the subjects to violent action, is distinguished from the collusion of violent elements with those

in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period*, ed. F. Parente and J. Sievers (Leiden 1994), pp. 290–306.

<sup>39</sup> The exploitation for political purposes of traditional banditry is attested for example by Zenodorus: *Jos. Bell.* I.398–400; *Ant.* XIV.344–5, and later by Josephus himself, *Vita*, 104–11. Freyne argues that Ezekias was a Hasmonaean noble of Galilee who opposed Roman and Herodian domination (see S. Freyne, *Galilee From Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 63–4; *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels* (Dublin 1988) 163–7); on the other hand, Horsley contends these brigands were not aristocrats but leaders of the disenfranchised lower classes (R. A. Horsley, *Galilee: History, Politics, People* (Valley Forge 1995), pp. 54–5, 260–3, esp. 300–1, n. 16).

<sup>40</sup> M. Liverani, 'Il fuoruscitismo in Siria nella tarda età del bronzo', *RSI* 77 (1965), 315–36; B. Isaac, 'Bandits in Judaea and Arabia', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 88 (1984), pp. 171–203 (esp. 175–81).

<sup>41</sup> Perhaps it is in this sense that we should interpret the right of extradition from foreign cities (in Syria?) granted by Augustus to Herod for political exiles from his kingdom: *Jos. Bell.* I.474; cf. also *Ant.* XVI.281.

<sup>42</sup> Probably from the pre-Herodian period; some connection might be seen with the Commentary on Habakkuk in the Qumran texts.

<sup>43</sup> For the introduction of the term *lēstai*, perhaps as early as the Ptolemaic or Seleucid era, see Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. 47; ET p. 45.

in power, who carry on a similar but more widespread form of violence, rapaciously seizing the property and lands of others.<sup>44</sup> The cause is the same for both, being identified in the rise to power of unjust and impious men: in other words, the cause is political. Here, then, we see the roots of the political 'banditry' which will develop later. It will be difficult to distinguish then the traditional forms of the phenomenon, with their complex causes and with their degeneration into common banditry, from those movements of rebellion and resistance and armed extremism which will be described, especially by the ruling powers, in terms of common banditry. Political extremism will tend to become confused with banditry, too, because its exponents frequently come from the same places, and because of its modes of action.<sup>45</sup>

However, a strong and responsible government was capable of organizing the necessary political and military means of containment. For exactly this reason Augustus later entrusted to King Herod the regions of Trachonitis, Batanaea and Gaulanitis, traditional bases of bandits. On the other hand, and most importantly, the same King Herod's widespread policy of colonization and agrarian reconstruction was able to tackle and contain the failure of small properties and of the peasant class which was at the base of banditry, and would later continue to be so.<sup>46</sup>

### III THE RISE OF HEROD

In any case, after the Ezekias affair, Herod had to flee to Damascus (it is not clear whether he left the command in Galilee). Because of his proven ability, however, the governor of Syria appointed him, a Roman citizen, to an official position in the same Roman province: he was made a *praefectus*, probably of the Decapolis and Samaria.<sup>47</sup> His attempts at vengeance against his enemies were prevented by Antipater and Phasaël. But

<sup>44</sup> For the violent social conflicts presupposed by the Book of Enoch, see V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (Philadelphia 1959), pp. 258–9; for the date, A.-M. Denis, *Introduction aux pseudépigraphes grecs d'Ancien Testament*, pp. 26–7; for introduction and bibliography, Schürer, *HJPJC* 3.1, pp. 250–68; text and notes in M. Black, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch*, SVTP 7 (Leiden 1985).

<sup>45</sup> For the oath of the Essenes to abstain from banditry see *Jos. Bell.* II.142; I. Hahn, 'Zwei dunkle Stellen in Josephus (Bell. Iud. VII 311 und II 142)', *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 14 (1962), pp. 135–8.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. with caution H. Kreissig, *SZJK* (Berlin 1970), pp. 112–13. For an analysis of the power structures involved in Herod's policy of containment see B. D. Shaw, 'Tyrants, Bandits and Kings: Personal Power in Josephus', *JJS* 44 (1993), pp. 176–204.

<sup>47</sup> *Jos. Bell.* I.212–13; *Ant.* XIV.180; Momigliano, 'Ricerche', 218–19; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, p. 45; I. Hahn, 'Herodes als Procurator', in *Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der Alten Welt*, II, ed. by E. C. Welskopf (Berlin 1965), pp. 25–32.



Caesar's rule in Syria was uncertain. There were outbreaks of civil war already in 46–44 BCE. Finally in 44, the already mentioned C. Cassius Longinus, one of the principal assassins of Caesar, took over the government of the province. The need for money for the new civil war forced him into acts of harsh extortion, which also involved the Jewish state. It was quite obvious that the Jewish leaders had to cooperate with whoever was in power in Syria. Hyrcanus, Antipater and his sons were forced to collect the 700 talents imposed by Cassius; Herod distinguished himself in this in Galilee. His services were rewarded with the confirmation of his position as *praefectus*, and in Judaea he was also given charge of the arsenals.<sup>48</sup>

Internal hostility to the dominant faction of Antipater was by no means appeased: Antipater himself fell victim to it. Discord turned to open warfare when Cassius left Syria in 42 BCE. Antigonus, the other son of Aristobulus, reappeared on the scene, supported by the ruler of Chalcis in Lebanon and by the tyrant of Tyre. After some initial successes by his opponents, Herod managed to drive them back. Hyrcanus resolutely supported Herod and promised him his granddaughter Mariamne (whose parents were Alexandra, daughter of Hyrcanus, and Alexander, son of Aristobulus) in marriage, thus attaching him to his own family.

The victory of the Caesarian party at Philippi forced the Jewish leaders into a new alignment. But at the meetings in Bithynia and Antioch in 41 BCE with M. Antonius (Mark Antony), the triumvir in charge of reorganizing the Eastern provinces, the Jewish delegations hostile to Herod's faction obtained nothing despite their large numbers. This was partly because of Hyrcanus' continued support, but most of all because of the favour shown by Antonius to Antipater's son, which dated back to their time at Gabinus' Syrian headquarters in 57–55 BCE. Those delegations show, however, the wide extent of dissension surrounding Herod, which was to continue later. Perhaps with the precise intention of strengthening the internal position of the sons of Antipater, Antonius named Herod and Phasael as tetrarchs, while Hyrcanus' superior position remained intact.<sup>49</sup>

The extreme precariousness of the situation is shown by the Parthian invasion of Syria in the year 40 BCE. The Parthians naturally backed all forces hostile to the Romans and the Roman order: and in Palestine this

<sup>48</sup> Jos. *Bell.* 1.220–4; *Ant.* XIV.271–8.

<sup>49</sup> Jos. *Bell.* 1.242–4; *Ant.* XIV.301–5; 324–9. An embassy from Hyrcanus negotiated with Antony at Ephesus the liberation of the Jews enslaved by Cassius: Jos. *Ant.* XIV.304–5; H. Buchheim, *Die Orientpolitik des Triumvirn M. Antonius* (Heidelberg 1960), pp. 60ff.



meant Antigonus. The latter had little difficulty, even with minimal Parthian aid, in reaching Jerusalem,<sup>50</sup> where there were several clashes with the forces of Herod and Phasael. On the arrival of Parthian troops, through a pretended attempt at mediation, Hyrcanus and Phasael were taken prisoner by treachery. The former had his ears cut off, in order to make him ineligible, through mutilation, for the High Priesthood;<sup>51</sup> the latter committed suicide. Herod managed by good fortune to escape to Alexandria, thence to Rhodes and afterwards to Rome; but he left in the fortress of Masada his fiancée, groups of his supporters, and his treasures. Antigonus assumed the High Priesthood and the royal title.

In Rome, the treaty of Brundisium between Antony and Octavian had ended the serious discord which had led to the Perusine War. The Triumviri realized that it would be useful for security against the Parthians and for peace in the province of Syria to have an efficient government in Palestine, with a strong personality to oppose Antigonus. At the end of 40 BCE the Roman Senate, at the request of the Triumviri, recognized Herod as King of Judaea, and as friend and ally of the Roman people.<sup>52</sup> In 39 BCE Herod landed at Ptolemais. In Syria, P. Ventidius Bassus had thrown back the Parthians, and was seeking to calm down the internal disorders of the towns. In Palestine he had recognized Antigonus for practical purposes, and had imposed monetary contributions on him; his legate Poppaedius Silo had stayed in the area. The Romans must have realized, too, what a large following Antigonus had in the country, especially compared with the new king, an Idumaeen, half-Jewish and not of noble birth.<sup>53</sup> Because of this their support for Herod in the reconquest of the kingdom was lukewarm, in spite of Antony's encouragement. However, Herod managed to take some positions in Idumaea and Samaria; and his principal aim was to conquer Galilee, the main base of his adversary, but this proved extremely difficult.<sup>54</sup> The decisive Roman victory over the Parthians in 38 BCE allowed the commitment of a greater number of

<sup>50</sup> On the role of the Parthians: A. Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs* (Tübingen 1988), pp. 121–5. Galilee was in revolt: *Jos. Bell.* 1.256; *Ant.* xiv.342. See S. Freyne, *Galilee From Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, pp. 65–8.

<sup>51</sup> S. Mazzarino, *L'impero romano*, edn 2 (Bari 1973), III, pp. 872–3.

<sup>52</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.282–5; *Ant.* xiv.381–5. According to an obscure statement in Appian, *Bella Civilia* v.319, Antony made Herod king of Idumaea and Samaritis in 39. If the text is not in fact corrupt, this may allude to an increase in the territory assigned to him in the preceding year: Buchheim, *Die Orientpolitik des Triumvirn M. Antonius*, p. 66; cf. Momigliano, *ASNSP* ser. II, 3 (1934), pp. 348–50. It can be deduced from the passage that Antony received extraordinary contributions from the kings nominated on that occasion.

<sup>53</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xiv.403; see p. 232 below, and Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty*, pp. 92–3, 96, n. 41, 343.

<sup>54</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.290–1; 303–7; 309–29; *Ant.* xiv.413–18; 421–30; 431–3; 450.

Roman troops on Herod's side; but the war dragged on with changing fortunes. Only after a meeting of Herod with Antony at Samosata did the new governor of Syria, C. Sosius, send substantial aid. In the year 37 BCE, in the course of a military campaign which gives a clear idea of the capable and courageous resistance put up by Antigonos without foreign aid, Herod<sup>55</sup> was victorious at Jericho and laid siege to Jerusalem, which was bravely defended for five months.<sup>56</sup> The city was sacked by Romans and Jews. The Herodian faction tried to exterminate its enemies. Herod succeeded in preventing the desecration of the Temple. Antigonos, having surrendered to the Romans, was later killed on Antony's orders.

King Herod was now confronted with the severe task of reorganizing and rebuilding the country, in the face of widespread hostility. The difficulties in winning power were matched by the harshness of his repression, which struck at Herod's most bitter enemies among the rich families of the Sadducean aristocracy.<sup>57</sup> The country was exhausted by years of warfare and by the contributions of all sorts imposed by native and foreign combatants. In order to understand King Herod's action it is necessary first to consider the social and economic structure of the area in a general survey, which must inevitably extend also to the era of Roman domination and until the great revolt.

#### IV SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

According to Marc Bloch's fundamental observation, we must avoid forming too favourable an idea of the lands described by the ancients as fertile; on the contrary, it took much more land than in modern times to feed someone. Therefore the information on the condition of the soil and on the agriculture of the Palestinian area given in the 'Letter of Aristaeas' and in Josephus<sup>58</sup> must be assessed with great caution on account of the high degree of idealization in them.<sup>59</sup> Although Josephus

<sup>55</sup> In *Jos. Bell.* 1.336 the greater part of the supporters of Herod are described as 'driven by a blind desire for novelty'. For a convincing evaluation of Antigonos, see M. Stern, 'The Reign of Herod and the Herodian Dynasty' in *JPF*, 1, ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern (Assen 1974), pp. 226–7.

<sup>56</sup> Schürer, *HJPJC* 1, pp. 284–5.

<sup>57</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.358; *Ant.* xv.5–6. See M. Stern, 'Social and Political Realignments in Herodian Judaea' in *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 2, ed. L. I. Levine (Jerusalem/Detroit 1982), 40–62.

<sup>58</sup> *Ep. Arist.* 112–18; *Jos. Bell.* III.35–8.

<sup>59</sup> For the area of Jerusalem see the realistic description of Strabo, XVI.2.36; Stern, *GLAJJ* 1, pp. 294ff. Klausner however is cautiously optimistic about the information from Aristaeas; cf. J. Klausner, 'The Economy of Judaea', in *WHJP* 1.7, ed. M. Avi-Yonah (London 1975), pp. 180–1, 361, n. 4.

does identify clearly enough the various distinctive characteristics of the different regions, and the complementary nature of their economy.<sup>60</sup> Besides, the description is consistent by and large with the facts, if one takes it in the sense that human labour had striven to cultivate to the utmost every single patch of earth, as has been established by modern archaeological research.<sup>61</sup> Hence the easy assumption of great fertility of the soil. Thus, the scattered pattern of settlement could convey the impression of dense population. In fact, however, from the condition of the soil, from the structures of agrarian property and also from the reviews of production in individual places (which can be compiled with diligence on the basis of classical and rabbinical sources)<sup>62</sup> we deduce that the Palestinian area had a rather simple economy, agrarian and pastoral, with production mainly destined for local consumption or the markets of small neighbouring centres. Only in the case of Jerusalem and later of Caesarea (and also Tyre and Sidon) can we speak of cities sustained by the output of relatively distant areas. Of course this was based on certain main crops (cereals, olives, vineyards) which yielded large exportable harvests. In any case intensive farming normally allowed in the course of six years a sufficient accumulation of reserves for the sabbatical year.

The traditional socio-economic structure of Palestine was represented by smallholdings, which traced their origins from post-Exilic times, and which most likely underwent further development under the Hasmonaean dynasty as a result of Jewish settlements and the allocation of lands in the occupied areas to the Greek or Hellenized cities. The Jewish occupation had undermined the tenor and institutions of Greek town life, even materially,<sup>63</sup> and had enhanced the value of the countryside. Although the Palestinian area was long contained within the political and economic system of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid monarchies, it probably remained on the edges of the Hellenistic system as regards the relationships of

<sup>60</sup> Y. Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible. A Historical Geography* (London 1967); M. Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land*, pp. 188–211; S. Applebaum, 'Economic Life in Palestine', in *JPFC* 2, ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern (Assen 1976), pp. 638–41.

<sup>61</sup> E.g. Z. Ron, 'Agricultural Terraces in the Judaeon Mountains', *IEJ* 16 (1966), 33–49, 111–22; D. H. K. Amiran, 'Sites of Settlements in the Mountains of Lower Galilee', *IEJ* 6 (1956), 69–77; B. Golomb and Y. Kedar, 'Ancient Agriculture in the Galilee Mountains', *IEJ* 21 (1971), 136–40.

<sup>62</sup> F. M. Heichelheim, 'Roman Syria', in T. Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, 4, ed. T. Frank (Baltimore 1938), pp. 126–57 (in the context of the entire Syro-Palestinian area); S. Applebaum, in *JPFC*, 2, pp. 646–56; for the period just after that covered here see Z. Safrai, *The Economy of Roman Palestine* (London 1994).

<sup>63</sup> Cf. the abandoned and ruined cities in *Jos. Ant.* xiv.87–8. In general cf. V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, pp. 122–3; 245–9.

agrarian property,<sup>64</sup> partly because the traditional arrangements were widely respected,<sup>65</sup> partly because the Maccabean uprising rescued the area from deeper socio-economic changes in a Hellenizing direction.

Alongside the smallholders, there was also of course a well-developed system of large property holdings, represented above all by the royal estates, whose establishment dated from the second millennium, and which had survived into the Ptolemaic and Seleucid periods, finally coming under the Hasmonaean dynasty. The greater part of the royal properties was probably situated in the fertile area of Galilee. Moreover, the great Hasmonaean conquests had extended the agrarian property of the dynasty, and through grants to officials and royal followers they had boosted the growth of large private properties.

The coexistence and juxtaposition of small and large holdings in relatively restricted areas could not, for various reasons, be without difficulties. The large properties doubtless followed a natural tendency to expand; there is good evidence of the usurpation of lands of smallholders, and, indeed, generally of strife between rich and poor.<sup>66</sup> The considerably reduced slave population<sup>67</sup> engaged in agricultural labour forced the great landowner (or his lessee) to rely on exploiting day-labourers, who in many cases must have been smallholders driven by necessity to provide their labour, and who must often have been forced in the end, through famine or debt, to give up their own patch of land to the bigger property-owner and sink to the level of wage-earners depending on casual employment.

One modern theory supposes that the rural proletariat grew up after 63 BCE, following the loss of the fertile coastal plains and Transjordan, and subsequent to the expulsion of the peasants from those areas, which were given back to the newly restored Greek cities.<sup>68</sup> These events, accentuat-

<sup>64</sup> H. Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 26–7; a different interpretation in Applebaum, in *JPFC* 2, pp. 633–6.

<sup>65</sup> The coexistence in the Ptolemaic period of cleruchs and of large properties in the hold of families of long local pre-eminence is well demonstrated by the story of the Tobiads in Transjordan which is known from the papyri of Zeno and from Josephus: V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, pp. 64–73; V. A. Tcherikover and A. Fuks, *CPJ* 1 (Cambridge 1957), pp. 115ff.

<sup>66</sup> Strabo XVI.2.37; Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, pp. 258–9. Cf. a similar analysis for the Herodian period with geographic details of the large holdings in D. A. Fiensy, *The Social History of Palestine in the Herodian Period* (Lewiston 1991), pp. 1–117, 155–79.

<sup>67</sup> H. Kreissig, *SZJK*, p. 34; J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, edn 3 (Göttingen 1962), pp. 125–7; ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (London 1969), pp. 110–11.

<sup>68</sup> S. Applebaum, in *JPFC* 2, pp. 637, 656, 660; and 'Judaea as a Roman Province; The Countryside as a Political and Economic Factor' in *ANRW* 11.8, ed. by H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin/New York 1977), pp. 367–8, 379–85.

ing or perhaps rather causing a situation of serious social decline, are then seen as conditioning all Jewish history down to CE 66. The foundations of this theory, which locates the origins of social conflict in Judaea in the struggle between Jews and Gentiles for the most fertile lands, do not seem very solid: if we accept the analogy with Scythopolis (another city 'restored' by Pompey and Gabinius) here, on the 'return' of the old inhabitants into the city (though many had previously accepted their forced assimilation to Judaism) there does not appear to have been any long-distance expulsion of the Jews, whom we find in the local villages.<sup>69</sup> The same argument holds for the Jewish colony of Gerasa, which lasted from the time of Alexander Jannaeus until CE 66.<sup>70</sup>

So the origin of these conflicts is older, and inherent in the very structure of Jewish society in the first century BCE. These tensions were considerably eased during Herod's reign. The great confiscations of aristocratic property increased still further the royal patrimony of lands; but the exploitation of the king's agrarian properties would certainly have developed along different lines from those of the rich private landowners. The king, moreover, will surely not have allowed an increase in the economic capabilities of the class which was opposed to him, whereas he did pursue a policy of large-scale redistribution of land and internal colonization which worked in favour of the lower classes, sometimes including a tax exemption for settlers. Herod seems to fit into the tradition of the Hellenistic monarchs, with their total control over the territory of their states.

The sale of much of Archelaus' property in 6 CE was certainly very advantageous to the upper classes, and re-established the large estates, at least in Judaea, with all their drawbacks.<sup>71</sup> From the point of view of property relationships and rural social and economic life, the new situation was in many ways worse than what had gone before Herod's reign. And it is in this state of affairs, too, that discontents are nourished which later lead to rebellion. This is the background against which we must consider the complex socio-economic conditions referred to in the

<sup>69</sup> Jos. *Bell.* 11.466–7; M. Avi-Yonah, 'Scythopolis', *IEJ* 12 (1962), 123–34; a different view by G. Fuks, 'The Jews of Hellenistic and Roman Scythopolis', *JJS* 33 (1982), 408.

<sup>70</sup> C. H. Kraeling, 'The History of Gerasa' in *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis* (New Haven 1938), pp. 33–4. But A. H. M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, edn 2 (Oxford 1971), p. 255 and n. 39, doubts whether Jannaeus was able to hold on to this conquest. At Strato's Tower too, another city restored by Pompey and Gabinius, there does not appear to have been any expulsion of the Jewish element, which is later seen again in Caesarea, even if without citizenship rights: cf. Jos. *Bell.* 11.266; *Ant.* xx.266.

<sup>71</sup> The most profitable properties like Engedi were however taken into the ownership of the exchequer. For the property of Queen Berenice in the plain of Esdraelon cf. Jos. *Vita* 119.

Gospels, especially in the parables of Jesus,<sup>72</sup> and in which, alongside the most widespread poverty which often affected the peasant smallholders, a prominent place is taken by the great estates, particularly in Galilee, normally administered and run on the tenancy system.<sup>73</sup> Obviously, the tenant had every reason and tendency to exploit his subordinate labourers to the utmost, and to enrich himself even at the expense of the absent landlord.

The political and economic attraction of the large estates must have increased not only because of the greater opportunities for commercializing production,<sup>74</sup> but also because of the indebtedness in comparison with them of the small landowners, who frequently found themselves in precarious circumstances due to years of bad harvests, food shortages, and a tax system which weighed proportionately more heavily on small family concerns, and was frequently enough to ruin them.<sup>75</sup> The substantial overlap between at least some of the large-scale landowners and the upper priestly class allows one to surmise that the latter managed to gain advantages from their situation of power in Jerusalem. The analysis of the archaeological data, even with the difficulties in precise dating, combined with the study of Mishnaic terminology for officers held in the country, confirms the wide scale of the expansionary process in large property holdings: villages seem ever more frequently to be absorbed within great estates, becoming their focal points; individual farms grow to become villages.<sup>76</sup>

It is easy to see how the socio-economic context favoured the radicalization of conflicts within Jewish society. Even the tension between city and country (which in any case is basically confined to Jerusalem) may be explained by the hostility of the oppressed peasant class towards the dominant urban class, which, for all the complexities of its stratification, is identified with the large property-owners.<sup>77</sup>

The agrarian character of the towns does not allow any other explanation. Commercial activity was on a small scale, mainly limited to local dimensions; the existence of long-distance trade – especially transit business – was no doubt controlled by the central government in Herod's

<sup>72</sup> J. Herz, 'Grossgrundbesitz in Palästina im Zeitalter Jesu', *PJ* 24 (1928), 98–113, with all the passages and with an attempt to identify the geographical limits within which the different forms of property probably predominated.

<sup>73</sup> S. Applebaum in *JPFC* 2, p. 659; in general F. M. Heichelheim, 'Roman Syria', pp. 146–52.

<sup>74</sup> Acts 12:20; Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 36–51; S. Applebaum in *JPFC* 2, p. 662.

<sup>75</sup> On causes of poverty see G. Hamel, *Poverty and Charity in Roman Palestine, First Three Centuries CE* (Berkeley, 1990), 94–163. For payment in kind, Jos. *Vita* 71ff; *Ant.* xiv.202–3, from the time of Caesar.

<sup>76</sup> S. Applebaum, *JPFC* 2, pp. 641ff. <sup>77</sup> Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 82–3.

day. In this context should be placed the construction of the great port of Caesarea, which quickly rose to remarkable prosperity. Episodes such as John of Gischala's cornering oil in Galilee and selling it in Syria,<sup>78</sup> seem to be exceptional and do not allow us to identify a separate merchant class.

Jerusalem is undoubtedly a special case. The presence of the Temple with its treasures, the presence of the court in the Herodian period, the periodic influx of pilgrims and foreigners, the concentration of the greater part of the national wealth, and the luxurious life of the nobility had all encouraged the growth of craft industry and services, mainly connected with the constant requirements of the liturgy, which had given rise to a rich flexibility in the middle classes as well. The numerous specialized trades involved in the construction of sacred and official buildings, and later in the maintenance of these buildings, represented a social category which must have given a special atmosphere to the city. However, even here part of the population was directly or indirectly concerned in agricultural activities; and there also existed here a numerous proletariat which lived 'on the religious importance of the city'.<sup>79</sup> The relatively large size of the population of the city and the many problems of food supply exposed Jerusalem, in time of famine, to dangerous situations of political and social tension, which public, religious and private charity tried to alleviate.

## V POPULATION

Directly linked to the development of agriculture, and therefore to the fertility of the soil, is the problem of calculating the population of the Palestinian area. The relationship already posited by Josephus between population and soil fertility,<sup>80</sup> and often repeated, must be accepted with reservations, as also the figures for inhabitants, war casualties, prisoners and pilgrims which he has handed down, and which have often served as the basis for modern calculations.<sup>81</sup> The latter are no less unreliable when based on comparisons with modern times, or when they are based on the

<sup>78</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.591–2; *Vita* 73–6.

<sup>79</sup> J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, p. 134, ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, p. 118.

<sup>80</sup> E.g. Jos. *Bell.* II.42–3 and 50.

<sup>81</sup> E.g. A. Byatt, 'Josephus and Population Numbers in First Century Palestine', *PEQ* 105 (1973), 51–60 (c. 2,265,000); more realistic are C. C. McCown, 'The Density of Population in Ancient Palestine', *JBL* 66 (1947), 425–36 (less than 1,000,000); G. Hamel, *Poverty and Charity in Roman Palestine, First Three Centuries CE*, pp. 137–40; M. Broshi, 'Methodology of Population Estimates: The Roman-Byzantine Period as a Case Study' in *Biblical Archaeology Today, 1990: Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology* (Jerusalem 1993), 420–5.



area of the towns, possible types of housing and proportional relations of inhabitants. Given the difficulty or impossibility of furnishing even at all probable data, it is better to follow reductionist tendencies.

Human settlements linked to agriculture were basically scattered, even though the inhabitants often grouped themselves in villages or small agricultural towns (typical of all Mediterranean countries), sometimes quite populous (although it seems useless to speculate about this), but with no autonomy and controlled by other centres or frequently, as remarked above, linked to some large estate. When the ancient sources refer with ambiguous terminology to 'cities',<sup>82</sup> the allusion is often to settlements of this type, i.e. villages which have become the centres of administrative districts. Real cities, in the Hellenistic sense, were extremely few.

The process of urbanization,<sup>83</sup> in the sense of an evolution from a central bureaucratic organization to a system of autonomous city-states, began in the age of Herod but developed slowly, hampered by the need both to avoid pushing Hellenization too far, and to avoid losing control of territories which provided revenue. Therefore pagan cities already in existence were beautified or refounded, while the new Jewish foundations were given no autonomy – or, in the few cases where they were autonomous, did not control the surrounding territory.

If, then, there was no basic change in political and administrative conditions, the fundamentally agricultural character maintained by towns new and old (with very few exceptions) did not change the traditional social and economic structure of the country either. Such major administrative centres as Tiberias and Sepphoris must have known a more crowded atmosphere, and there is evidence of urban structures on the Hellenistic model apart from the presence of walls.<sup>84</sup> In any case the

<sup>82</sup> A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Oxford 1963), pp. 127–33.

<sup>83</sup> A. H. M. Jones, 'The Urbanization of Palestine', *JRS* 21 (1931), 78–85, and *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, edn 2 (Oxford 1971), pp. 269–77.

<sup>84</sup> *Jos. Bell.* III.34; *Vita* 38, 123, 346. For Tiberias: M. Avi-Yonah, 'The Foundation-of Tiberias', *IEJ* 1 (1950–1), 160–9; T. Rajak, 'Justus of Tiberias', *CQ* 23 (1973), 346–50; and R. A. Horsley, *Archaeology, History and Society in Galilee* (Valley Forge 1996), 43–60. For Sepphoris: E. M. Meyers, 'Roman Sepphoris in Light of New Archeological Evidence and Recent Research' in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine (London 1992), pp. 321–38; Z. Weiss and E. Netzer, 'Hellenistic and Roman Sepphoris: The Archaeological Evidence' in *Sepphoris in Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture*, ed. R. M. Nagy, C. L. Meyers, E. M. Meyers, Z. Weiss (Raleigh, NC 1996), pp. 29–31. For Taricheae: A. H. M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, edn 2, p. 274. For Gabara: A. Schalit, *König Herodes*, p. 203, n. 214; and Benzinger, *PW* 7.1 (Stuttgart 1910), col. 417. For all these cities see the respective articles in E. Stern, *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, 4 vols. (New York/London 1993).



problems (which are not just typical of the ancient world) of getting in regular supplies overland for overcrowded agglomerations, further dissuade us from imagining these urban settlements as of great size; and these problems tie them closely to quite small rural catchment areas. The production from royal properties flowed into Tyre and Sidon, but these two ports probably survived mainly on trade and sea transport. For the same reason it is hard to credit Jerusalem with all that large a permanent population;<sup>85</sup> the great crowds for certain special occasions such as Passover, although exaggerated in our sources, represent exceptions which rarely gave rise to serious difficulties.<sup>86</sup>

The distribution of population over the various regions which made up the country was very uneven (as emerges, indeed, from Josephus' description) in relation to the condition of the land, to the climate, to the presence of water: Galilee was by far the richest and most populous zone, Peraea the most arid and least inhabited. The composition of the population, from the end of the Hasmonaean era, seems to have become stable enough, with a large preponderance of Jewish elements compared to strictly localized Greek centres. Neither the Herodian funding of non-Jewish elements (Caesarea being the typical case) nor the theoretical possibility of greater mobility offered by Roman rule, modified this situation until the war.<sup>87</sup>

## VI THE REIGN OF KING HEROD THE GREAT 37–4 BCE

Herod's reign lasted from 37 to 4 BCE. Internally it was characterized by alternating phases of relative calm and bitter conflict, externally by its awkward position as a Roman vassal state. At the beginning the king was faced with the renewed importance and the pretensions of the Egyptian kingdom of Cleopatra. The queen, who was scheming besides with Hasmonaean elements at the court of Herod, about 36 BCE obtained from Antony, in addition to some territories of the Roman state, the

<sup>85</sup> I would prefer to accept the figures proposed by J. Jeremias, 'Die Einwohnerzahl Jerusalems zur Zeit Jesu', *ZDPV* 66 (1943), 24–31; reprinted in *Abba. Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte* (Göttingen 1966), pp. 335–41; *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, pp. 89–97, ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 77–84, although they are often criticized. See also: J. Wilkinson, 'Ancient Jerusalem: Its Water Supply and Population', *PEQ* 106 (1974), 33–51; M. Broshi, 'La Population De L'Ancienne Jérusalem', *Revue Biblique* 82 (1975), 5–14; good review in W. Reinhardt, 'The Population Size of Jerusalem and the Numerical Growth of the Jerusalem Church', in *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting*, ed. by R. Bauckham (Grand Rapids 1995), 237–65.

<sup>86</sup> D. Sperber, 'Social Legislation in Jerusalem during the latter part of the Second Temple Period', *JSJ* 6 (1975), 86–95. <sup>87</sup> H. Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land*, pp. 212–15.

principality of Chalcis after the killing of Lysanias, the Decapolis and the towns of the Syrian and Palestinian coast from the River Eleutheros to Egypt, with the exception of Tyre and Sidon, thus apparently depriving the Jewish state once again of its outlet to the sea. Two years later she also received the rich area of Jericho, which Herod then rented back, paying Cleopatra a considerable annual sum.<sup>88</sup> The defeat of Antony at Actium in 31 BCE freed Herod, who was involved *inter alia* in a war against the Nabataean kingdom, from the Egyptian threat. It was not hard for the king to take Octavian's side: Cleopatra's hostility was an extra reason for gaining the favour of the new master of Rome, who for his part was well aware of the services that Herod could render him.<sup>89</sup>

But it is symptomatic of the time of uncertainty the king was going through about the solidity of his power, that he undertook the killing of the aged Hyrcanus II, and that great precautions were taken when Herod left the kingdom to go to Rhodes.<sup>90</sup> The king's marriage to the Hasmonaean Mariamne, Hyrcanus' granddaughter, in 37 BCE, which was supposed to mean a strengthening of Herod's position, had resulted instead in the importation into the court and even the royal family (where the king's sister Salome enjoyed considerable prestige) of the Hasmonaean legitimist opposition to the 'half-Jewish' king. And it was precisely in the murky intrigues of the court and in the dynastic struggles (dwelt upon with satisfaction by the tradition), at the beginning of the reign and again in the final years, when the problem of the succession was in prospect, that the resolution finally came of the political conflict and of the inexorable and ineradicable opposition that crept through the country. In the year 29 Herod had his wife put to death, and his mother-in-law Alexandra perhaps in 28; and earlier in 35 Mariamne's young brother Aristobulus, whom Herod had made High Priest to please his wife, had been killed on account of the king's suspicions.

In 30 BCE the favour of Octavian, who was on his way back from Egypt, restored to Herod Jericho and also Gadara, Hippos and Samaria, and on the coast, Gaza, Anthedon, Joppa and Strato's Tower.<sup>91</sup> The town of Samaria was consequently refounded with the name Sebaste in honour of Augustus<sup>92</sup> with 6,000 non-Jewish settlers, from whom the king drew his most faithful troops – besides the mercenaries, according to the

<sup>88</sup> Jos. Bell. 1.360–2; Ant. xv.79, 95–6, 106–7; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 288, n. 5; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, pp. 61–2.

<sup>89</sup> Jos. Ant. xv.187–95. On the events of this period see A. Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, pp. 133–51.

<sup>90</sup> Jos. Bell. 1.431–4; Ant. xv.161–86. <sup>91</sup> Jos. Bell. 1.396; Ant. xv.217.

<sup>92</sup> Jos. Bell. 1.403; Ant. xv.292–8.

system of the Hasmonaean kings, and the Jewish troops.<sup>93</sup> In the year 22 Strato's Tower was refounded too, with the name Caesarea, and in the course of twelve years' work it was transformed into a great port. Herod received further territorial increases from Augustus in 23 with the territories of Trachonitis, Batanaea and Auranitis.<sup>94</sup> Later, in 20 BCE, on the occasion of a visit to Syria by the Emperor, he was assigned the tetrarchy of Zenodoros, between Trachonitis and Galilee, where Ulatha and Paneas were:<sup>95</sup> the Roman government preferred to entrust to the capable native king areas which were hard to control directly. In Batanaea Herod later (perhaps between 9 and 6 BCE) established a cleruchy of Babylonian Jews for defence against the bandits and Nabataeans of the border areas.<sup>96</sup>

Although tradition emphasizes the friendly relations existing between Herod, the Emperor Augustus and above all Agrippa, and their exchanges of visits, the king belonged to the category of *reges socii et amici populi Romani*, whose relationship to the Roman state was one of strict dependence.<sup>97</sup> However, Herod's status as a Roman citizen and his personal financial relations with the Empire placed him in a special position. In any case the royal title was based on Roman recognition, all the more important in the case of a new dynasty like Herod's – even though the 'alliance' was perhaps linked, as already it was for Hyrcanus II, to the original treaty of 161 BCE. The eventual possibility of passing on the royal title, therefore, came under the jurisdiction of the Emperor's decision, and although Herod had received certain guarantees of a measure of autonomy in deciding his own succession,<sup>98</sup> it seems clear that all problems relating to this decision were in fact controlled by Rome, even

<sup>93</sup> On Herod's army: A. Schalit, *König Herodes*, pp. 167–83; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, pp. 85–6; I. Shatzman, *The Armies of the Hasmonaeans and Herod* (Tübingen 1991), 170–216.

<sup>94</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.398–400; *Ant.* xv.343–8.

<sup>95</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.399; *Ant.* xv.354; Cass. Dio LIV.9.3 (Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 362–3). There seems to be a relationship between the enlargement of the Kingdom and the nomination of King Pheroras' brother as Tetrarch of Peraea: *Jos. Bell.* 1.483; *Ant.* xv.362.

<sup>96</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xvii.23–31; G. M. Cohen, 'The Hellenistic Military Colony. A Herodian Example', *TAPA* 103 (1972), 83–95; S. Applebaum, 'The Troopers of Zamaris' in *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times*, *SJLA* 40 (Leiden 1989), pp. 47–65. The existence of a Herodian defensive system in Idumaea against the bandits in the desert is maintained by H. Gichon, 'Idumaea and the Herodian Limes', *IEJ* 17 (1967), 27–42; and by S. Applebaum, 'The Beginnings of the Limes Palaestinae', in *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times*, *SJLA* 40 (Leiden 1989), 132–42; but such a system is denied by G. W. Bowersock, 'Old and New in the History of Judaea', *JRS* 65 (1975), 183.

<sup>97</sup> Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, pp. 315–17; E. Bammel, 'Die Rechtstellung des Herodes', *ZDPV* 84 (1968), 73–9, repr. in *Judaica* (Tübingen 1986), pp. 3–9; M. R. Cimma, *Reges Socii et Amici Populi Romani* (Milan 1976), pp. 291ff.

<sup>98</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.458; *Ant.* xv.243.

before the king's death. Suffice it to remember the interventions by the Emperor or by the *consilia* of Roman magistrates in the complicated disputes between Herod and his sons, and in the judgements delivered against the latter.

Although within the confines of the kingdom the exercise of sovereignty was not subject to limitation or interference,<sup>99</sup> nevertheless the Roman government kept itself fully informed of the king's economic and military capabilities, not least because he might be called upon to supply Rome with contingents of troops; on the other hand, he was not obliged to pay tribute (although, as we shall see, he had other obligations). The oath of loyalty to the Emperor imposed on the Jewish state<sup>100</sup> symbolized its vassalage very well; further manifestations of this condition were the limitations on the right to strike coins, and the prohibition against military expeditions outside the borders of the state. Towards the end of his reign Herod's initiative in repelling Nabataean attacks by invading their territory, although this action had the approval of the governor of Syria, still placed a strain for some time on the relations between Augustus and the king.<sup>101</sup> The practice, dating back to Republican days, of allied kings sending their sons and heirs apparent to Rome, was largely followed by Herod, and this undoubtedly served to strengthen the ties between his dynasty and the Imperial court and Roman nobility.

If Herod always managed to arrive at essentially favourable arrangements in his relations with Rome, his policy of internal pacification was more complicated and on the whole disastrous. The persecutions directed against the aristocracy are proof of the hostility towards the king on the part of the old ruling classes, which had been deprived of authority and partly replaced by a new ruling class, bureaucratic and military. Another aristocracy was now emerging, linked to the new dynasty and centred on the house of Boethus, from which by preference the king chose the High Priests. Indeed, while the Sanhedrin, which had formerly

<sup>99</sup> The Roman government had even recognized the capital jurisdiction of the Jews over anyone, including Roman citizens, who had penetrated inside the temple precinct: *OGIS* 598 = E. Gabba, *Iscrizioni greche e latine per lo studio della Bibbia* (Turin 1958), pp. 83–6; *Jos. Bell.* vi.125–6; *Ant.* xv.417; A. M. Rabello, 'La lex de Templo Hierosolymitano sul divieto ai gentili di penetrare nel Santuario di Gerusalemme', *Miscellanea di studi*, Fs D. Disegni (Turin 1969), pp. 198–208.

<sup>100</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xvii.42; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 314. In the non-Jewish areas of the kingdom the imperial cult was widespread; in the Temple at Jerusalem a daily sacrifice for the emperor was introduced: Momigliano, 'Ricerche', pp. 361–2. The emperor in his turn had taken on the expense of the daily sacrifices: Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 157; *Jos. Bell.* ii.197.

<sup>101</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xvi.282–299, 335–55. Cf. M. Stern, 'The Reign of Herod' in *WHJP* 1.7, edn M. Avi-Yonah (London 1975), 87–9.

been the expression of aristocratic power, survived with its competence limited to purely religious questions, the position of High Priest, hereditary in the Hasmonaeon family, was now conferred and withdrawn by the king for political reasons, obviously losing a good deal of its power and prestige. The hostility of the Pharisees, by no means appeased, although they enjoyed a certain influence at court, was shown by such tokens as their refusal to take the oath of loyalty to the king. Herod may, on the other hand, have shown some liking for the Essenes.<sup>102</sup>

But hostile feelings were also widespread throughout the common people, largely through the influence of the Pharisees, and the king was forced to undertake repressive action in order to contain them,<sup>103</sup> although he always tried to avoid offending the religious feelings and traditional customs of his subjects. The close relationship between dynastic struggles and popular opposition movements is clearly shown by the serious disturbances among the masses, but also among the army and officialdom, which were brought about by the tragic fate of Mariamne's two sons.<sup>104</sup> Among the complex reasons for this widespread hostility were the king's lack of dynastic legitimacy, his non-Jewish origin, and the need to organize on the Hellenistic model a composite state in which the pagan subjects – which is to say the already existing cities, new cities and refounded cities – might appear as privileged in their relations with the non-urbanized Jewish areas (although Hellenized cities and Jewish countryside alike were under royal governors).<sup>105</sup> Hence the oft-repeated accusation that Herod promoted the interests of the Hellenic element; there is a good deal of truth in this, inasmuch as the king had to take into account the position of his state within the framework of the Roman Empire, and within its political movements. For this reason the cultural tone of the court was Greek. Because of this, and also because of his lack of faith in the Jewish element, he preferred to use Greek elements in the administration of the state, and above all to employ Greek intellectuals as capable diplomats in his dealings with the Roman authorities – the prime example being Nicholas of Damascus, who later became in his historical writings the king's most capable defender.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xv.370–9; xvii.41–5.

<sup>103</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xv.365–9. Cf. M. Stern, 'The Reign of Herod', 112–13.

<sup>104</sup> Jos. *Bell.* i.544–50; *Ant.* xvi.373–93.

<sup>105</sup> Momigliano, 'Ricerche', pp. 365–9. Goodman, citing Cohen on matrilineal descent, notes that Herod's non-Jewish mother may have rendered him ineligible for Jewish citizenship in the eyes of some Jews; see M. Goodman, 'Judaea', in *CAH* 10, 2nd edn (Cambridge 1996), p. 747; S. J. D. Cohen, 'The origins of the matrilineal principle in rabbinic law', *AJS Review* 10 (1985), 19–53; a different view in A. Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, pp. 126–30.

<sup>106</sup> Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, pp. 310–11.

Herod's actual exercise of power must certainly have displayed greater severity and coherence than had previously been known. This was, however, precisely how Herod partly succeeded in changing the condition of his kingdom, as we can clearly discern by an analysis of his financial and economic policy.

## VII THE FISCAL SITUATION UNDER HEROD THE GREAT

The total annual fiscal yield extracted by Herod from his kingdom was about 1,050 talents.<sup>107</sup> The tithes paid to the priestly class were naturally excluded from this sum. It has been very well shown that the king 'did not change, or changed only slightly, the tax yield as it was established in Judaea at the death of Caesar'. Certainly the collection of taxes would have been based on a recasting of the earlier, complex fiscal system, and it would have been carried out with the usual brutal methods: this is enough to explain the vociferous complaints that were made to Jerusalem and Rome after the king's death.<sup>108</sup> However, the charges of excessive exploitation of the kingdom, leading to general destitution, which are often accepted by modern historiography, seem to be unfounded.<sup>109</sup> Taxes were levied directly on the produce of the soil, through payment of a proportional or a fixed quota<sup>110</sup> (there does not appear to have been a capitation tax, although the Romans later introduced one), and indirectly on sales and certain trades, in particular the transit trade, through excise

<sup>107</sup> This conclusion is reached through a complex argument based primarily on *Jos. Bell.* 11.94–8 and *Ant.* xvii.318–20, for which I follow Momigliano, 'Ricerche', 352–7. The passages refer to the partition of Herod's kingdom among his sons. For each of the new territories the fiscal yield which each petty king could command is given; these are official figures, well known to Augustus (*Suet. Div. Aug.* 28,1; *Tac. Ann.* 1.11; *Jos. Bell.* 11.669), though we do not need to envisage an imperial audit of the collection of taxes and the use made of them. Much of the following material also appears in E. Gabba, 'The finances of King Herod' in *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel: Collected Essays*, ed. A. Kasher, U. Rappaport and G. Fuks, 160–8 (Jerusalem 1990).

<sup>108</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 11.4.86; *Ant.* xvii.204–5, 308.

<sup>109</sup> On at least two occasions the king remitted once a third and once a quarter of the taxes due: *Jos. Ant.* xv.365; xvi.64. The colonists stationed in Batanaea were granted a total tax-exemption: *Jos. Ant.* xvii.25. Cf. a different interpretation of this in S. Applebaum, 'Josephus and the Economic Causes of the Jewish War' in *Josephus, the Bible, and History*, ed. L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1989), pp. 241–2. Charges of excessive Herodian and Roman economic exploitation are frequent; e.g. H. Jagersma, *A History of Israel to Bar Kochba*, Part II, trans. J. Bowden (London 1985), pp. 109–11; R. A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (Minneapolis 1993), p. 29.

<sup>110</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xv.303.

duties and tolls on various commercial activities. Nor can we exclude the possibility that the Roman system of tax collection continued, at least in part, the system in force under King Herod.

Along with, but distinct from, the revenues of the state, we must consider the income from Herod's private patrimony.<sup>111</sup> There is no doubt that the king and the royal house were the largest landowners in the state, and they must often have held the most fertile lands in all areas of the kingdom.<sup>112</sup> In a good many cases the large non-urban royal domains, which continued to remain in the hands of the dynasty even after the end of the monarchy, had already belonged to the Hasmonaean kings,<sup>113</sup> and it is possible that they may have been remnants of larger royal estates dating back to the Ptolemaic and Seleucid periods.<sup>114</sup> This situation, in turn, was very probably continuous with earlier analogous structures, well attested in the second millennium, thus indicating the continuity, if not indeed static nature, of agrarian and social conditions.<sup>115</sup> The royal gardens of Jericho and En Gedi yielded high revenues from the harvesting of balsam. They formed part of the Jewish areas granted by Antony to Cleopatra, which Herod had rented back at 200 talents a year,<sup>116</sup> and which later, as we have seen, had been restored to him by Octavian.<sup>117</sup> Herod built himself a palace at Jericho, not only for residential purposes.<sup>118</sup> Apart from these possessions and the properties that came to him from his father, Herod's patrimony was augmented by the heavy confiscations carried out against his enemies;<sup>119</sup> and finally through

<sup>111</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.16–18.41; *Ant.* XVII.221–2, 253.

<sup>112</sup> It has been conjectured that half or two-thirds of the kingdom was his property. H. Otto, *PW Sup.* 2, Stuttgart 1913, 'Herodes', cols. 69, 89. For property outside the kingdom, Jos. *Bell.* I.423 and *Ant.* XVI.291.

<sup>113</sup> E.g. in the plain of Esdraclon, Jos. *Ant.* XVI.207; *Vita* 119.

<sup>114</sup> A. Alt, 'Hellenistische Städte und Domänen in Galiläa', *PJ* 35 (1939), 68–82, repr. in *KS II* (Munich 1953), pp. 388–95; S. Applebaum in *JPF C* 2, pp. 633–5. The king's grants of lands both to private persons and for the foundation or refoundation of cities, or the establishment of colonies, should apparently be understood not as the distribution of lands in royal ownership, but in relation to the full availability to the king of the land in the state: J. Herz, 'Grossgrundbesitz in Palästina im Zeitalter Jesu', *PJ* 24 (1928), 110–11. In the case of new or refounded cities and of colonies, it was rather a question of complete reorganization of agrarian structures between the previous inhabitants and the new colonists.

<sup>115</sup> M. Liverani, 'Communautés de village et Palais Royal dans la Syrie du IIème Millé', *JESHO* 18, pp. 146–64.

<sup>116</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.361–2; *Ant.* XV.96, 106, 132. <sup>117</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.396.

<sup>118</sup> E. Netzer, 'The Hasmonaean and Herodian Winter Palaces at Jericho', *IEJ* 25 (1975), 89–100; P. Baldacci, 'Patrimonium e ager publicus al tempo dei Flavi', *PP* 24 (1969), 349–67. The fundamental passage is Pliny *NH* XII.112–13; Stern, *GLAJJ* I, pp. 485–90.

<sup>119</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XV.5; XVII.305 and 307.



a vast series of speculative activities, especially in leasing out tax-farming – a field in which his father Antipater had set the example. To the instance already mentioned of the areas granted to Cleopatra we may add the leasing out of the tributes payable by the king of the Nabataeans to the same Cleopatra.<sup>120</sup>

Far more significant are the contracts for domanial revenues which Herod obtained from the Roman government itself. Augustus had entrusted to the king, in return for a payment, apparently once for all, of 300 talents, the exploitation of the copper-mines of Cyprus, reserving him half of the income.<sup>121</sup> Singular, and so far not well evaluated, is the passage (Jos. *Bell.* 1.428) where Josephus says that it would take too long to record the remissions of debt and of tribute-payments conceded by Herod, as e.g. to Phaselis (in Lycia) and to Balanea (in Syria), and the alleviations of annual taxes conceded to the small towns of Cilicia. This account should be understood to mean that Herod held the contract from the Roman state in these areas for the domanial revenues (*vectigalia*) and/or the taxes both direct (*stipendium*) and indirect (*vectigalia*), and that he could afford the generosity of giving up part of his collection rights.<sup>122</sup> Perhaps the cases here recorded, and above all that of Balanea in Syria, may not have been unique. The suspicion arises that this activity of Herod's should be linked to the information<sup>123</sup> that in the year 20 BCE. Augustus designated Herod *epitropos* (*procurator*) of 'all Syria', or rather, as stated in *Ant.* xv.360, that he associated him with the procurators of Syria: it has been suggested that these unclear statements may refer to some sort of financial participation (specifically a tax-collecting contract) by Herod in Syria.<sup>124</sup>

It is clear, therefore, that Herod's financial resources must have been considerable, and they did not derive solely from the tax impost of the kingdom itself. Whether the revenues were actually sufficient to meet the similarly large expenditure that the king was pleased, or was forced, to

<sup>120</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xv.107.

<sup>121</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvi.128 to be interpreted in conjunction with J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, Handbuch der römischer Alterthümer 2 (Leipzig 1876), p. 253, n. 4; edn 2 (Leipzig 1884) and reprs., p. 261, n. 1; and T. R. S. Broughton, 'Roman Asia Minor' in T. Frank, *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* IV (Baltimore 1938), pp. 651–2 and 694. A different view in Otto, *PW Sup.* 2, Stuttgart 1913, col. 90. For the presence of Jews in Cyprus, G. Hill, *History of Cyprus* I (Cambridge 1949), p. 241, n. 4.

<sup>122</sup> The passage is not well understood by Otto, *PW Sup.* 2, col. 73 and Schalit, *König Herodes*, p. 417, according to whom Herod gave money to pay levies and arrears, as in the case of the Chians (Jos. *Ant.* xvi.26), but the *epexekeuphisen* can leave no doubt.

<sup>123</sup> Jos. *Bell.* 1.399.

<sup>124</sup> Momigliano, 'Ricerche', 360–1; a different view in I. Hahn, 'Herodes als Procurator', pp. 25–43.



take on, it is hard to say with certainty; but the king's shrewdness and skill make it improbable that his budget would have shown a deficit, except occasionally.<sup>125</sup> The often painted picture of a kingdom tragically oppressed by the double weight of taxes due to the king and the tribute paid to Rome, is tendentious in both of its elements.<sup>126</sup> There is no evidence that Herod, after 30 BCE, or his heirs after him, paid any tribute to Rome, and this state of affairs coincides perfectly with what we know of the condition of the *reges socii et amici populi Romani*.<sup>127</sup>

The oppression of Herod's subjects is held to be more particularly highlighted by the sums generously lavished by the king on building expenses outside the kingdom, and by his various acts of munificence towards foreign cities. This generosity, directed above all towards the cities of Syria, Asia Minor and Greece, had already met with opposing appraisals in the judgement of ancient writers.<sup>128</sup> But in the first place, one may suppose that outside the kingdom the king spent mainly the money which he had amassed through his activities as speculator and contractor – money, that is, which did not derive from his subjects' taxes. Furthermore, it is likely that he often favoured those cities with the closest economic and political links with his kingdom, from which consequently he could hope for advantages. Nor can we rule out the possibility that his interest was based on the existence of Jewish communities in these cities, especially in those in Syria and Asia Minor.<sup>129</sup> And above all, we must appraise and understand Herod's munificence, or rather his public benefaction towards foreign cities in the context of the Roman Empire. This was not so much an expression of the king's desire to become ever more strongly assimilated to the cultural world of Greece and Rome, in order to win respect and renown, as, rather, an aspect of his more general orientation in economic policy. In the context of the city and of the state, the public benefaction of the rich and powerful citizen supplements, and more frequently replaces, the efforts of the local or central government, whether through voluntary initiative, or polite

<sup>125</sup> In 25 BCE. In Jos. *Ant.* xv.303; in *Ant.* xvi.153–5 we have reflections by Josephus.

<sup>126</sup> E.g. Applebaum, in *JPFC* 2, pp. 661–2; and in *ANRW* II.8, 375–7.

<sup>127</sup> Thus T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, v, edn 6, p. 501, n. 1; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 416, n. 85. The problem has emerged above all in relation to the account of Appian, *Bell. civ.* v.319, for which see above. The payment of a *tributum* has been argued for by Stern and Applebaum, in *JPFC* 1, pp. 238–9 and II, p. 661 and n. 8.

<sup>128</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.422–8, in the wider context of Herod's public works: 401–28 is enthusiastically laudatory and certainly derived from Nicolaus of Damascus. *Ant.* xvi.146–9, too, is substantially favourable (see xvi.18–19 and 24); in 150–9 Josephus offers an interesting attempt at a more psychological than political interpretation of the king's actions. The argument in *Ant.* xix.329 is polemically negative and false.

<sup>129</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvi.29 and 63–5.

suggestion by the government,<sup>130</sup> or psychological pressure from society and the general mind of the people. In the end, public benefaction becomes a natural and necessary fact of life, responding at once to the needs of the community and to the individual's sense of duty. In the case of a *rex socius et amicus populi Romani* it is to be expected that his public benefaction should unfold over a wider scale: his projects for monumental building and his acts of generosity outside his kingdom ultimately appear as substitutes for a tribute not paid (because not legally payable) by the king to the government of the Roman Empire.<sup>131</sup>

On the other hand the proceeds of the fiscal take were employed mainly within the kingdom itself. In the framework of Herod's expenses the principal headings must have been the maintenance of the court, army expenses, and funds for the grandiose public works<sup>132</sup> which concerned Jerusalem and the whole country. It is certainly possible to understand the building of fortress-palaces (for example the fortress of Antonia in Jerusalem), and the foundation or refoundation of towns, purely as facets of a policy of repression against the hostility of the entire nation;<sup>133</sup> equally, one could discern in the public works policy the 'tyrannical' objective of keeping the people always hard at work;<sup>134</sup> or the productivity of this kind of expenditure can be completely denied. But all of these are weakly based polemical interpretations. Not only did the Palestinian proletariat and the skilled workforce find secure employment, while social disturbances (with the related phenomenon of banditry) were allayed during Herod's reign,<sup>135</sup> but the beginning of the urbanization process also brought about the reorganization of the various rural structures and indisputable improvements in agriculture. The creation of the great port

<sup>130</sup> Suet. *Div. Aug.* 29.7: G. Bodei Gigliani, *Lavori pubblici e occupazione nell'antichità classica*, *Il Mondo Antico* 4 (Bologna 1974), pp. 137–51.

<sup>131</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xv.330. An analogous argument no doubt holds for certain of Herod's descendants, and especially for King Juba of Mauritania, and in their small way, for the sons of the Alpine prince Cottius.

<sup>132</sup> A list in G. Foerster, 'Art and Architecture in Palestine' in *JPFC* 2, ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern (Assen/Amsterdam 1976), pp. 976ff; bibliography in R. Marcus *Josephus* 8, LCL (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1969), Appendix D, pp. 579–89; see especially T. A. Busink, *Der Tempel von Jerusalem von Salomo bis Herodes*, vol. 2 (Leiden 1980), pp. 1017–251.

<sup>133</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xv.292–9.

<sup>134</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xv.366; cf. *Arist. Pol.* 1313b.

<sup>135</sup> Momigliano, 'Ricerche', p. 352. It is possible that the great plan of public works, which began towards 24–23 BCE, bears some relation to the pestilence and famine of 25–24: *Jos. Ant.* xv.299–316; E. J. Vardaman, 'Herodion: A Brief Assessment of Recent Suggestions', *IEJ* 25 (1975), 45–6. Also note the symposium of E. Netzer, L. I. Levine, M. Broshi and Y. Tsafir on Herod's motives for his building projects in L. I. Levine (ed.), *The Jerusalem Catbedra* 1 (Jerusalem 1981), pp. 48–80.

of Caesarea and the refounding of the city (22–9 BCE) with a political and administrative system on the Hellenistic model, with a mixed population of numerically superior pagans and of Jews – these factors were not so much a response to vague projects of assimilation with Graeco-Roman civilization or to a simple pursuit of internal prestige in the Imperial context;<sup>136</sup> rather, they corresponded to the kingdom's need to develop economically and commercially.

The political objectives of the reconstruction of the Temple, which began in 20–19 BCE and lasted officially for nine and a half years, are obvious, and Herod himself did not fail to emphasize them,<sup>137</sup> but this initiative set in motion a series of activities which gave work for decades to thousands of labourers,<sup>138</sup> thus representing the main source of sustenance for the capital city. This massive internal reinvestment of the admittedly large fiscal take was, therefore, principally channelled into monumental and official construction; however, it gave an impetus to the entire economic life of the kingdom and cannot but have created a general situation of reasonable well-being, even in comparison with many Roman provinces. According to the statement by Flavius Josephus,<sup>139</sup> Herod undertook the building of the Temple at his own expense. It is difficult to doubt this statement, which tallies with the political and religious significance which the king intended to give to the gigantic enterprise – a significance transcending the confines of the kingdom and appealing to the whole Jewish Diaspora, of which the king had several times assumed the role of defender. But it seems equally certain that (perhaps after the death of the king) the continuance of the building works, which were only concluded in CE 62–4,<sup>140</sup> weighed heavily on the

<sup>136</sup> L. I. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Rule* (Leiden 1975), pp. 11ff. See also K. G. Holum, *et al.*, *King Herod's Dream. Caesarea on the Sea* (New York 1989), p. 73. For the archaeological analysis of the site see: B. Lifshitz, 'Césarée de Palestine, son histoire et ses institutions' in *ANRW* 11.8, ed. by H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin/New York 1977), pp. 490–518; A. Raban and K. Holum (eds.) *Caesarea Maritima: A Retrospective After Two Millennia* (Leiden 1996) with bibliography.

<sup>137</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xv.382–7. On possible socio-political objectives for the Herodian construction of the Temple see W. Horbury, 'Herod's Temple and "Herod's Days"' in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple presented to Ernst Bammel*, ed. W. Horbury (Sheffield 1991), pp. 103–49. For bibliography on the archaeology of the temple see R. P. Goldschmidt-Lehman, 'The Second (Herodian) Temple: Selected Bibliography' in *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 1, ed. L. I. Levine (Jerusalem 1981), pp. 339–48.

<sup>138</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xv.390; xx.219–22; Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, pp. 23–9, *ET Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 21–7; G. Bodei Giglioli, *Lavori pubblici e occupazione nell'antichità*, pp. 172–4.

<sup>139</sup> *Ant.* xv.380 and xvii.162.

<sup>140</sup> R. Marcus (ed.) *Josephus*, VIII, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA 1963), pp. 206–7.

finances of the Temple, as can be gleaned fairly distinctly from Jos. *Ant.* xx.219–23.

The great financial resources of the Temple represent an extremely important factor for an overall evaluation of the economic situation of the Herodian kingdom, and later of the Roman province. Leaving aside the tithes on land produce which were due to the priestly class, the Temple gathered in the payments of the so-called *aurum Iudaicum*, the annual tax of a half shekel (*didrachma*) which every Jew over the age of twenty had to pay.<sup>141</sup> The sums sent by the Jewish communities of the Diaspora must have been very large.<sup>142</sup> The Roman government, perhaps on account of the fact that these contributions came partly from areas and communities outside the Empire, such as Egypt and Babylon,<sup>143</sup> respected and guaranteed this privilege, which was not infrequently a source of violent conflict as, for example, with the Greek cities of Asia Minor which, especially in times of economic difficulty, could not be expected to view with favour the huge drain of money to Jerusalem.<sup>144</sup> The data we have on the subject of the Temple treasury give a clear idea of its imposing scale.<sup>145</sup> In CE 66 its resources, even after the continuous expenditure on building work, were enormous, and this was still the case in 70 at the time of the fire.<sup>146</sup>

The Temple held no land (the tithes on land produce were a substitute for this), nor did it undertake banking or commercial operations, although

<sup>141</sup> J. Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain. Leur condition juridique, économique et sociale*, vol. 1 (Paris 1914), pp. 377–85; J. Liver, 'The Half-Shekel Offering in Biblical and Post-Biblical Literature', *HTR* 56 (1963), 173–98; E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (London 1990), pp. 283–308, esp. 292–9. There is some debate as to whether the *didrachma* was accepted by all Jews; see W. Horbury, 'The Temple Tax', in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day*, ed. E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge 1984), pp. 277–82; E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 66 BCE–66 CE* (London 1992), pp. 156, 153 n. 16.

<sup>142</sup> Philo, *De spec. leg.* 1.76–8; see the considerations in Jos. *Ant.* xiv.110–18 (based on Strabo), and *Bell.* v.417.

<sup>143</sup> For Babylonia: Jos. *Ant.* xviii.310–14; L. Jacobs, 'The Economic Conditions of the Jews in Babylon in Talmudic Times compared with Palestine', *JSS* 2 (1957), 349–59.

<sup>144</sup> Cic. *Pro Flacco* xxviii.66–9 (from 62 BCE: Stern, *GLAJJ*, 1, pp. 198ff); A. J. Marshall, 'Flaccus and the Jews of Asia (Cic. *Pro Flacco* 28.67–9)', *The Phoenix*, 29 (1975), 139–54.

<sup>145</sup> In 63 and in 54, about 2,000 talents: Jos. *Bell.* 1.152; *Ant.* xiv.72, 105.

<sup>146</sup> Jos. *Bell.* vi.282; *Ant.* xx.219–22. It is difficult to reach judgement on the real or imaginary character and the dating of the impressive list of hidden treasures contained in the 'Copper Scroll': M. Baillet, J. T. Milik and R. de Vaux, *Les 'petites grottes' de Qumran*, DJD 3 (Oxford 1962), pp. 201–302; G. Moraldi, *I manoscritti di Qumrān* (Turin 1974), pp. 707–22. In any case it must refer to the treasures of the Jerusalem temple, not to those of the Essene community.

it did serve as a deposit for the moveable assets of rich families.<sup>147</sup> The sums deposited in its treasury therefore represented, in a certain sense, unproductive capital. All the same they did help to meet the various and complex costs of the liturgy and of the priestly class, which, directly or indirectly, affected in the end a wide cross-section of the population of Jerusalem (quite apart from the economic inflow from pilgrims).<sup>148</sup> The surplus was, however, always considerable. Already in the Hellenistic age, when the costs of the liturgy were met from state subsidies, the surplus represented a problem, as it could not be used for any but institutional purposes and the royal government could demand its repayment; nevertheless the great building works undertaken in the Temple and the city by the High Priest Simon (after 200 BCE) were probably financed by these means.<sup>149</sup> King Demetrius, in about 152 BCE, authorized the investment of the surplus for Temple works.<sup>150</sup> The surplus must have grown still greater when, probably starting in the Hasmonaean period, the custom became once again established of making an annual obligatory payment first of a third, then of a half-shekel, and the offerings gathered from the Diaspora started to flow into Jerusalem. These offerings, as we have seen, were partly used for the building works to complete the Temple. It can easily be imagined how the Romans must later have been amazed by the locking up, or at least the minimal use, of such considerable sums. This should be taken as the explanation of Pontius Pilate's action in employing the sacred treasure for the building of an aqueduct.<sup>151</sup> But nothing shows better the significance of this invisible resource than the initiative of Jerusalem's leading citizens in using the sacred treasures to give new employment to the 18,000 workers unemployed after the completion of the Temple and to avoid the treasures possibly falling into Roman hands (an initiative welcomed in part by King Agrippa II).<sup>152</sup> The Temple supplies an extraneous and often overlooked, but still highly favourable factor in the social and economic life of Jerusalem and Judaea, especially in the period when it is coupled with Herod's great projects for public works.

<sup>147</sup> E. J. Bickerman, 'Héliodore au Temple de Jérusalem', *AIPh* 7 (1939–44), 5–40; repr. in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* 2 (Leiden 1980), pp. 159–91. For the year 70: *Jos. Bell.* vi.282.

<sup>148</sup> Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, pp. 150–4, ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 134–8; M. Broshi, 'The Role of the Temple in the Herodian Economy', *JJS* 38 (1987), pp. 34–6.

<sup>149</sup> *Sir.* 50:1–4. <sup>150</sup> *1 Macc.* 10:41.

<sup>151</sup> *Jos. Bell.* ii.175; *Ant.* xviii.60; J. Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain*, vol. 1, p. 384, n. 5.

<sup>152</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xx.219–22.

## VIII THE DIVISION OF HEROD THE GREAT'S KINGDOM

Perhaps towards 17 BCE, on the occasion of a visit to Rome, Herod brought back with him the two sons Mariamne had borne him: Alexander and Aristobulus,<sup>153</sup> who had received their education in the capital, living probably in the house of Asinius Pollio.<sup>154</sup> In a court already dominated by hostility and intrigue, they quickly became the centre of discontent and opposition to the king, in the name of the Hasmonaean tradition. To reduce their influence Herod recalled to the court his son Antipater whom he had had by his first wife, Doris, before becoming king. Antipater soon gained in power at the expense of his half-brothers.<sup>155</sup> From 12 to 7 BCE there was a constant stream of accusations of conspiracy against the king, arrests, and reconciliations between Herod and his two sons, firstly, through the intervention of the emperor himself (at Aquileia in 12 BCE) and, later, through Archelaus of Cappadocia, Alexander's father-in-law, until at last in the face of new, and evidently well-substantiated, charges Augustus authorized Herod to act against his sons, referring them to the judgement of a *consilium* of magistrates and Roman officials. The *consilium* was held at Berytus and in the presence of the governor of Syria. Alexander and Aristobulus were found guilty and executed.<sup>156</sup> Antipater, who was largely responsible for this sinister scenario, now devoted himself to intrigues in favour of his own succession and against the king, both in Judaea and in Rome. Discovered and brought to judgement, once again in the presence of Quintilius Varus governor of Syria, he was found guilty and arrested. Yet once more the emperor, informed of the situation, left the king to take the final decision: Antipater was killed.<sup>157</sup> The dynastic drama was aggravated by the deteriorating health of the king. Among those who took advantage of the situation were two scribes, Judas and Matthias, who had gained a large following to lead an uprising which led to the destruction of the golden eagle on the gate of the Temple.<sup>158</sup> The king, who by now was dying, easily managed to crush this attempt at rebellion. All the same a large number of prominent people were arrested and held as hostages in Jericho to forestall disturbances at

<sup>153</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XVI.6.

<sup>154</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XV.352; L. H. Feldman, 'Asinius Pollio and his Jewish Interest', *TAPA* 84 (1953), 73–80; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 321, n. 132.

<sup>155</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.445–51; *Ant.* XVI.66–86. <sup>156</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.452ff; *Ant.* XVI.87ff.

<sup>157</sup> Nic. Dam. *FGH* 90 F 136; Jos. *Bell.* I.552ff; *Ant.* XVII.1ff.

<sup>158</sup> Jos. *Bell.* I.648–58; *Ant.* XVII.149–67.

the moment of succession.<sup>159</sup> Money was distributed to the troops. Five days after the killing of Antipater, Herod died at Jericho (March–April, 4 BCE), aged about seventy.<sup>160</sup>

The dynastic struggles had forced the king in the final years to make successive changes in his will, which stipulated among other things, through the authority granted by Augustus, to whom he would leave the kingdom.<sup>161</sup> To the original heirs, Alexander and Aristobulus, was added the name of Antipater, who remained sole heir after the execution of his two half-brothers. Yet Antipater was joined, in an unclear capacity, by Herod Philip, the king's son by another wife named Mariamne. The conspiracy of Antipater, who apparently had links with the Pharisees, implicated Herod Philip too and lost him all his rights. Finally, towards the end of 5 BCE, King Herod named as his sole heir the youngest of his sons, born of the Samaritan woman Malthace, Herod Antipas (the Herod of the Gospels who imprisoned and executed John the Baptist). Nevertheless even in the very last days of his life, some codicils further modified this decision: Antipas was appointed Tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea; his elder brother Archelaus was to be king of the whole kingdom of Judaea, Idumaea and Samaria; the king's other son (by his wife Cleopatra), Philip, was named as Tetrarch of Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, Batanaea and Paneas. These final dispositions were proclaimed to the people and the army. Archelaus, although acclaimed as king and bearing himself as such, refrained from the exercise of power and the royal title while awaiting the decision of Augustus.<sup>162</sup> Even so, he was forced first to make concessions, then to use force against rebellious disturbances which had broken out on the occasion of the Passover.

The imperial ratification called for a complicated series of consultations at Rome, not least because of the contradictions which Herod's

<sup>159</sup> A. Momigliano, 'Herod of Judaea' in *CAH* 10, 1st edn; ed. S. A. Cook, F. E. Adcock and M. P. Charlesworth (Cambridge 1934; repr. with corrections 1966), p. 337.

<sup>160</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.665; *Ant.* xvii.188–92. Cf. J. Van Bruggen, 'The Year of the Death of Herod the Great' in *Miscellanea Neotestamentica* 2, ed. T. Baarda, A. F. J. Klijn and W. C. van Unnik (Leiden 1978), pp. 1–15; P. M. Bernegger, 'Affirmation of Herod's Death in 4 BC', *JTS* n.s. 34 (1983), pp. 526–31; D. Schwartz, 'Joseph ben Illem and the Date of Herod's Death' in *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity*, WUNT 60 (Tübingen 1992), pp. 157–66; but reservations in W. E. Filmer, 'The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great', *JTS* n.s. 17 (1966), pp. 283–98; O. Edwards, 'Herodian Chronology', *PEQ* 114 (1982), pp. 29–42.

<sup>161</sup> The complicated history of Herod's wills is clarified by H. W. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas* (Cambridge 1972; repr. with corrections Grand Rapids 1980), pp. 269–76.

<sup>162</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 1.669–70; ii.1–13; *Ant.* xvii.194–18.



final modifications introduced into his will.<sup>163</sup> The members of the royal family came to Rome to plead their causes with the aid of orators. For the imperial government the problem was obviously not confined to the judicial aspects, but concerned in the first place the guarantees of stability and security for the kingdom, which had already been compromised in recent years by King Herod, and were now even more uncertain because of the revolt which had broken out on his death. None of the heirs could, for various reasons, inspire much confidence: the governor of Syria, Varus, had even authorized a delegation of prominent Jews to come to Rome and ask for the abolition of the kingdom and the placing of the kingdom under direct Roman rule.<sup>164</sup> Representatives of the Greek cities of the kingdom also came to Rome.<sup>165</sup> Augustus' final decision recognized the inevitability of a partition of the country.

Archelaus received, along with the title of Ethnarch and with the future promise of the royal title, Judaea, with Jerusalem, Samaria, Idumaea, Caesarea, Sebaste and Joppa; Antipas and Philip, as tetrarchs, had the territories that their father had intended for them.<sup>166</sup> The Greek cities of Gaza, Gadara and Hippos were added to the province of Syria. The other clauses in Herod's will were respected, and among these were the transfer to Salome, the king's sister, of the royal properties of Jamnia, Azotus and Phasaelis, which were part of the ethnarchy of Archelaus.<sup>167</sup>

IX ARCHELAUS, ETHNARCH; PHILIP; HEROD ANTIPAS;  
KING HEROD AGRIPPA I (CE 41-44).  
'THE FOURTH PHILOSOPHY'

The passing of the king had left the country in a state of total uncertainty about its future, and without an authority strong enough to contain the stresses and forces that were fermenting within the social structure. And this sudden, disorderly and spontaneous eruption of discontent and insurrection is another indication of the importance of Herod's work as king. The Roman intervention in the person of the governor of Syria, characterized by arrogance and arbitrariness, may have helped to increase people's excitement.<sup>168</sup> The procurator Sabinus, as usual in disagreement

<sup>163</sup> Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, pp. 18-39.

<sup>164</sup> *Jos. Bell.* II.80-92; *Ant.* XVII.300-14. <sup>165</sup> Nic. Dam. *FGH* 90 F 136.

<sup>166</sup> Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land*, pp. 102-4; for the territory of Antipas, Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, pp. 43-51.

<sup>167</sup> *Jos. Bell.* II.93-100; *Ant.* XVII.318-23.

<sup>168</sup> *Jos. Ant.* XVII.277; but the passage is rather indicative of Josephus' general interpretation according to which the disturbances in Judaea are due to the madness of the masses and the arrogance of the representatives of the Roman power.



with the *legatus* of Syria,<sup>169</sup> had come immediately to Caesarea and then to Jerusalem to place the royal patrimony under precautionary protection, obviously foreseeing the complicated problems caused by the succession and by the presence of Augustus among the heirs in the king's testament.<sup>170</sup> The various insurrections which broke out here and there throughout the kingdom, in Galilee, Peraea, Judaea, Idumaea, exhibited as unifying factors their common hostility towards the Greek element,<sup>171</sup> and their predominantly rural base, even though Jerusalem too was seriously affected.<sup>172</sup> They also had an undercurrent of messianic expectations, as shown by the aspirations to 'kingship' of many rebel leaders. Clear social motives, although very much present later on, are not attested at this stage. The attacks on the royal residences of Sepphoris, on Jericho, and on Betharamphtha are explained by the need to capture arms and take some booty.<sup>173</sup> Equally important was the discontent of disbanded Jewish troops.<sup>174</sup> Led by a relation of the dead king, these fought against the most loyal Herodian troops, especially the Sebastenians, who immediately took the Roman side.<sup>175</sup> There seems no sign at this stage of any pressure for independence against Rome. Beside the rebel leaders of slave origin and those connected with the royal family, a conspicuous presence is that of Judas, the son of that Ezekias who was killed by Herod in 47 BCE, who was active at Sepphoris in Galilee.<sup>176</sup> Judas' aspiration to kingship may also clarify the reasons that lay behind his father's struggle.

Certainly the given facts of the situation after Herod were not very encouraging. The consequences were quickly seen. The brief rule of Archelaus was unpopular right from the start. The ethnarch was faced with difficulties far greater than those of his brothers, because he had against him the opposition of that same Jerusalem aristocracy which had asked Augustus in vain for the abolition of the monarchy, and also those popular disturbances of which the episode of Judas, the son of Ezekias, was among the most conspicuous. Archelaus reacted harshly, and hostile tradition describes his government as tyrannical and cruel: High Priests were appointed and deposed.<sup>177</sup> That he laboured under the illusion of having some autonomy in government may be inferred from the fact that he named his only urban foundation after himself, calling it Archelais.

<sup>169</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvii.221 and 294.

<sup>170</sup> Jos. *Bell.* i.646; *Ant.* xvii.190, 322–3; F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London 1977), p. 153.

<sup>171</sup> Nic. Dam. *FGH* 90 F 136.

<sup>172</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvii.293. For Jerusalem: Jos. *Bell.* ii.1–54; *Ant.* xvii.213–18, 250–68.

<sup>173</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvii.271 and 274. <sup>174</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvii.270.

<sup>175</sup> For the commander Gratus: *PIR* edn 2 Pt. 4 (Berlin 1966), pp. 42f, G 222.

<sup>176</sup> Jos. *Bell.* ii.56; *Ant.* xvii.271–2. <sup>177</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvii.339–42.

The internal conflicts must have given increasing cause for concern to the Romans. When in the year CE 6 the united protests of prominent Jews and Samaritans (perhaps also renewing the petitions of 4 BCE) were brought to Rome (and apparently supported by Archelaus' brothers, the tetrarchs), the ethnarch was summoned to the capital to explain his actions and then deposed and exiled to Vienna, in Gallia Lugdunensis.<sup>178</sup> His ethnarchy was transformed into a Roman province of the equestrian rank; Archelais was added to the properties of Salome.<sup>179</sup>

The tetrarch Philip, on the other hand, left in ancient tradition<sup>180</sup> an excellent memory of his patriarchal and peaceful government in areas mainly inhabited by non-Jews. It was perhaps at the beginning of his reign that he refounded Paneas with the name of Caesarea (Philippi, to distinguish it from the other, more famous Caesarea), and Bethsaida with the name of Julias.<sup>181</sup> When he died in CE 33/4, his dominion was annexed to Syria by Tiberius, but with a separate administration of the tribute; Caligula, however, as early as CE 37 assigned it to Agrippa (I) with the title of king.<sup>182</sup>

But of Herod's three heirs the most considerable personality was undoubtedly Herod Antipas, who had been given Galilee and Peraea.<sup>183</sup> Since he dominated Galilee, he controlled the richest region of his father's kingdom. Following the example of Herod's urbanization policy, in Galilee he rebuilt and fortified Sepphoris, now named Autocratis, while in Peraea he refounded Betharamphtha with the name Livias (later changed to Julias);<sup>184</sup> towards CE 23 he further built himself a new capital, which he called Tiberias, after the Roman emperor. The population, of mixed but predominantly Jewish origin, numbered freed slaves too among its elements, and had been attracted into the new city by various special concessions, but also had to accept certain limitations on mobility. As the

<sup>178</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.111; *Ant.* XVII.342–4; Cass. Dio LV,27,6 (Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 364–5); from Strabo XVI.2.46 it would appear that the two brothers were also implicated in the accusations and managed to clear themselves; Stern, *GLAJJ* I, p. 311. Goodman also lists other possible contributing causes to Archelaus' deposition: Rome's financial benefit from the transfer to the imperial fiscus of Herodian royal property, the strategic importance of the Judaeian hill country, and Augustus' preference for the imposition of direct rule (see M. Goodman, 'Judaea' in *CAH* 10, 2nd edn, pp. 750–1).

<sup>179</sup> On the death of Salome, towards CE 9–12, all her properties passed over to the Empress Livia, and as possessions belonging to the imperial *patrimonium* they were administered by a special procurator with headquarters in Jamnia.

<sup>180</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XVIII.106–7.

<sup>181</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.168; *Ant.* XVIII.28 (L. H. Feldman (ed.), *Josephus*, vol. 9, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA 1965), p. 25).

<sup>182</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.181; *Ant.* XVIII.237. <sup>183</sup> H. W. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*.

<sup>184</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.168; *Ant.* XVIII.27; for the dates Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, p. 350.

first case of its kind, the city had a civic and administrative structure of a Hellenistic type, and quickly grew to considerable prosperity<sup>185</sup> just because it was the capital of the domains of Herod Antipas. He must have followed his father's example also in donations outside his own territories, as is shown for example by an inscription at Delos.<sup>186</sup> At home he was faced with the popular movement aroused by the preaching of John the Baptist which was religious, but also undoubtedly politically based. For fear of complications, and also perhaps on account of the accusations made against him because of his marriage to his sister-in-law Herodias, Herod had John the Baptist arrested and killed in the fortress of Machaerus.<sup>187</sup> The preaching of Jesus also was largely carried on in the territory of the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas.

It is illustrative of the role that Antipas, and with him the tradition of the Herodian monarchy, was assuming that he participated, with other Herodian princes and with Jewish notables, in the initiative of appealing to the Emperor Tiberius against the governor of Judaea, Pontius Pilate, after the failure of protests over the introduction into the ancient royal palace of Jerusalem (or into the fortress of Antonia) of gold shields in honour of Tiberius, with inscriptions which probably contained references to the divinity of the emperor.<sup>188</sup> Tiberius disapproved of this innovation by Pontius Pilate: naturally this gave rise to hostility between the governor and the tetrarch which was later to be resolved precisely on the occasion of the arrest of Jesus. But the prestige of Antipas also grew in the Roman province, and it is about this time that we hear express mention of the 'Herodians' who can apparently be identified with a group of pro-Herodian aristocracy. This name for them may lead us to suppose the existence of a tendency favourable to the restoration of the kingdom under Herod Antipas.<sup>189</sup> Tiberius' favour towards Antipas is attested by two further episodes: when in CE 36 the tetrarch was defeated by the Nabataean king, Aretas, the Emperor ordered the governor of Syria, A.

<sup>185</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xviii.36–8; A. H. M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, edn 2, p. 275; M. Avi-Yonah, 'The Foundation of Tiberias', *IEJ* 1 (1950–1), 160–9; T. Rajak, 'Justus of Tiberias', *CQ* 23 (1973), 346–51; A. Alt, *KS* II, pp. 432–5.

<sup>186</sup> P. Roussel and M. Launay, *Inscriptions de Delos. Décrets postérieurs à 166 av. Jésus-Christ*, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres Fondation du Duc de Loutal (Paris 1937), no. 1586, pp. 60–1; also in Gabba, *Iscrizioni greche e latine per lo studio della Bibbia* (Turin 1958), pp. 45–6.

<sup>187</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xviii.117–19; Matt 14:3ff; Mark 6:17ff; Luke 3:19ff; Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, pp. 136ff.

<sup>188</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 299–305; Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, pp. 176–80, who dates the incident towards CE 32; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 361, n. 38.

<sup>189</sup> Mark 3:6; 12:13; Matt 22:16; Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, pp. 331–42; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, pp. 163–4.

Vitellius, to march on Petra. The death of Tiberius (March CE 37), which Vitellius heard of in Jerusalem, interrupted this punitive expedition.<sup>190</sup> Also of great importance was the role, if not of mediator then at least of active collaborator of the Romans (most certainly at the Emperor's wish), which Antipas played on the occasion of the meeting on the Euphrates between the Parthian king Artabanus and Vitellius, which also seems to be datable to CE 36.<sup>191</sup>

It is fully understandable that Antipas nourished hopes of which he felt himself, and was recognized as being worthy. But the death of Tiberius must have jeopardized his plans. The young Agrippa, brother of Herodias and thus brother-in-law of the tetrarch, by whom indeed he had been assisted, immediately enjoyed high favour with the new emperor, and in 37 received together with Philip's tetrarchy the title of king. The blow to Antipas must have been severe. In CE 39, on the occasion of a visit to Rome to ask, at the instigation of Herodias, for the title of king for himself too, Herod Antipas was accused by his brother-in-law of having conspired with Sejanus against Tiberius, and with the king of Parthia against Rome, and above all of having accumulated an excessive amount of arms, perhaps with a view to rebellion. This latter accusation was based on undeniable fact, and must have been given some credibility by the tetrarch's personality, which was more than merely astute, and by his position of prestige. To eliminate all possible danger, Herod Antipas was deposed and exiled, so it seems, to Lugdunum in Gaul.<sup>192</sup> Soon afterwards the tetrarchy also was given to Agrippa.

The deposition of Archelaus and the reduction of Judaea to a Roman province in CE 6 were the occasion of rebellious disturbances which seem to have been particularly serious. P. Sulpicius Quirinus, the governor of Syria, was sent into Judaea to liquidate the possessions of Archelaus and to organize a census of the inhabitants of the new province, and of their property.<sup>193</sup> This was a normal procedure for the Roman administration,

<sup>190</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XVIII.113–15.

<sup>191</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XVIII.96–115; the date is uncertain, as other sources place the event back in the reign of Gaius.

<sup>192</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XVIII.240–54; *Bell.* II.181–3 speaks of Spain, and it has been suggested therefore that the exile took place at Lugdunum Convenarum near the Pyrenees. According to Cassius Dio LIX.8.2 (in Stern, *GLAJJ* II, p. 366) Antipas was later killed.

<sup>193</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.111 and 117; *Ant.* XVII.355; XVIII.1–2 and 26; P. Baldacci, 'Patrimonium e ager publicus al tempo dei Flavi', pp. 348–67. For the supposed reference to this census in the one mentioned in Luke 2:1–3 in relation to the birth of Jesus, and for the problems arising from this: Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, pp. 399–427; R. Syme, 'The Titulus Tibertinus' in *Akten des VII. Internationalen Kongresses für griechische und lateinische Epigraphik* (Munich, 1973), pp. 585–601; J. Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20, Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 35a (Dallas 1989), pp. 99–102 (with extensive bibliography pp. 94–6).

and a necessary precondition for the imposition of the capitation tax. The census ordered by the Romans aroused great emotion in the former ethnarchy, which could only partially be contained. There were outbreaks of revolt. The specifically religious motive, which seems to have been predominant and long-lived, of the illegality of the census,<sup>194</sup> was closely associated with a second motive of a more political nature. The census and the consequent capitation tax were seen as proofs of the loss of independence and enslavement to the foreigner.

A movement or sect was now in process of formation, with a measure of organization, animated by a deep religious and libertarian spirit, for it recognized the kingship of God alone.<sup>195</sup> This movement – called by Josephus the ‘fourth philosophy’ of Judaism – was of Pharisaic origins, and led by one Judas the Galilean,<sup>196</sup> a man of learning (who may be the son of Ezekias of the same name, who had already been involved in the attempted insurrection of 4 BCE),<sup>197</sup> and by a Pharisee, Saddok. The movement won widespread popular support, expressed in fully fledged outbreaks of revolution and above all in punitive attacks on those Jews who acquiesced in Roman rule.<sup>198</sup> Though these outbreaks were limited to Judaea, they were nonetheless serious for that, even though they must have been swiftly suppressed at the time.<sup>199</sup> But they left behind a legacy and a continuity of aims and actions (partly due to a distinctive tradition and to the charismatic leadership of a family) whereby descendants of Judas the Galilean; were to continue to be at the head of pro-independence

<sup>194</sup> Luke 20:21–6; Matt. 12:15–22; Mark 12:13–17; F. Parente, ‘Escatologia e politica nel Giudaismo del primo secolo avanti e dopo Cristo e nel Cristianesimo primitivo’, *RSI* 80 (1968), 291–4; a different view in Applebaum, ‘The Zealots: the Case for Reevaluation’, *JRS* 61 (1971), 162. According to Heichelheim, ‘Roman Syria’, pp. 161–2 there had already been earlier censuses in the time of Herod.

<sup>195</sup> *Jos. Bell.* II.118, 433; XVII.253–62; *Ant.* XVIII.4–10, 23–5. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 85–9, ET *The Zealots*, pp. 82–6.

<sup>196</sup> Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 336–40, ET *The Zealots* pp. 330–4; D. M. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution: 6–74 CE* (Philadelphia 1976), pp. 47–60; S. Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian, 323 BCE to 135 CE*, pp. 216–19.

<sup>197</sup> On the problem over identity, with different solutions: Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. 337 and n. 4; ET *The Zealots*, p. 331 and n. 101; Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 113–17; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, pp. 381–2; M. Black, ‘Judas of Galilee and Josephus’s “Fourth Philosophy”’ in *Josephus-Studien*, ed. O. Betz, K. Haacker, and M. Hengel (Göttingen 1974), pp. 45–54.

<sup>198</sup> *Jos. Bell.* VII.253–5.

<sup>199</sup> For the Jewish setting: M. Smith, ‘Zealots and Sicarii, their Origin and Relation’, *HTR* 64 (1971), 15; it is difficult therefore to assert on this occasion a close connection with Galilee: G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (Glasgow 1976), pp. 46ff; cf. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 57–8, ET *The Zealots* 56f; see U. Rappaport, ‘How Anti-Roman Was the Galilee?’ in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine (London 1992), p. 98. For the repression: Acts 5:37 (the value of this passage and the importance of the outbreak are obviously minimized by Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 117–18).

groups.<sup>200</sup> It is thus quite understandable how Josephus<sup>201</sup> saw at the roots of all the later anti-Roman independence movement, and even of the war, this ‘fourth philosophy’ of Judas the Galilean, which was the latest addition, as a highly political movement, to the traditional framework of the Jewish sects, with a vigorous and unbending consistency of doctrine and action within a Messianic expectation.

## X JUDAEA AN IMPERIAL PROVINCE

The territory which had belonged to the ethnarchy of Archelaus was organized as an imperial province, Judaea, with a governor of equestrian rank who had the title of *praefectus*; probably after CE 44, this title changed to that of *procurator*:<sup>202</sup> he was to some degree subordinate to the governor (*legatus Augusti pro praetore*) of the imperial province of Syria. Within the province of Judaea the prefect held the military command with wide civil powers, although with respect for local administrative and judicial autonomy. He also held the *ius gladii*, i.e. the right to inflict capital punishment in the light of his superior judicial powers.<sup>203</sup> The governor’s position was not easy in various ways, and certainly anomalous compared with that of governors of comparable imperial provinces. On the one hand the *praefectus* had succeeded to the powers of the former dynasty (and had visibly inherited their residences), while on the other the powers and prerogatives of the local ruling class not only took on new vitality, but were increased by the privileges traditionally granted to the Jewish communities of the Diaspora: Josephus is correct when he affirms that after the end of the monarchy the country’s government became ‘aristocratic’ and that the High Priests were entrusted with the leadership of the nation.<sup>204</sup> In fact the problem was to find the elusive common ground between the Roman government’s own needs for security and peacefulness

<sup>200</sup> Jos. *Bell.* VII. 253ff. The influence of Judas is cautiously de-emphasized in D. M. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution: 6–74 CE*, pp. 52–60.

<sup>201</sup> *Ant.* XVIII.25; M. Smith, ‘Zealots and Sicarii chap. 17 below.

<sup>202</sup> M. Stern, ‘The Status of Provincia Judaea and its Governors in the Roman Empire under the Julio-Claudian dynasty’, *Erlsr* 10 (1971), 274–82. The hypothesis put forward by O. Hirschfeld and A. H. M. Jones that the governor originally had the title of *praefectus* has been confirmed by the inscription of Pontius Pilate found at Caesarea: A. Frova, ‘L’iscrizione di Pontio Pilato a Cesarea’, *RIL* 95 (1961), 419–34; *Année épigraphique*, 1964, p. 18, no. 39; J.-P. Lémonon, *Pilate et le gouvernement de la Judée: textes et monuments* (Paris 1981), 23–32. Photograph and introductory discussion in Holum *et al.*, *King Herod’s Dream. Caesarea on the Sea*, pp. 109–11. The best commentary is by Degraffi, ‘Sull’iscrizione di Pontio Pilato’ in A. Degraffi *Scritti vari di Antichità*, 3 (Rome 1967), pp. 269–75; a precise dating of the inscription seems impossible.

<sup>203</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.117. <sup>204</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.251.

(which lay behind the decision to abolish the monarchy), the far livelier exigencies of respect for the religious traditions of the Jewish people with their spirit of independence, and the desire of the upper classes for political autonomy and social stability. The exceptional political and religious situation clearly called for a special sensitivity, which was very often lacking in the Roman governors, accustomed as they were to an exercise of power which was much more expeditious and not conditioned by considerations of form, which in this case were rich in dramatic implications. On the other hand, it was not always understood on the Jewish side that local autonomies had to be placed within the superior imperial reality of Rome.

Direct Roman rule was widely favourable to the upper classes, not least on the economic plane with the liquidation of Archelaus' possessions: these as a rule co-operated with the Romans not only on the general political level, but also in the practice of local administration. Conversely, the gap grew ever wider between them and the popular masses, who were increasingly permeated by political and religious propaganda in favour of independence. The Sanhedrin, under the presidency of the High Priest, regained a central position in the country's self-government, and its competence in matters of religion and Jewish law probably extended to the power to condemn to death those guilty of transgression in these fields.<sup>205</sup> Naturally everything that concerned public order in the province came under the exclusive decision of the Roman governor, with whom in any case the local administrations and police forces collaborated closely. Apart from this, the ill-defined limits of their respective powers will have been frequently subject to change in many different contingencies. We may note, however, that the Sanhedrin could apparently be summoned to meet only with the Roman governor's permission,<sup>206</sup> and he would thus have been informed in advance of the subjects for discussion.

Again the Roman governor, inheriting the situation of the monarchic period, kept the High Priest's robes in the Antonian fortress, only handing them over to him on the occasion of great feasts.<sup>207</sup> In CE 36 Tiberius conceded at Vitellius' request that the vestments might be kept by the High Priest himself. Even nomination of the High Priests had passed from the Herodian rulers to the Roman governors, and this must have

<sup>205</sup> This problem, which is notoriously controversial, has often been distorted by being linked to the questions relative to the arrest and trial of Jesus. In general, S. Safrai in *JJFC* 1, pp. 398–400; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, pp. 149–50; P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, edn 2 (Berlin 1974), pp. 12ff; contrary view in Schürer, *HJPAJC* 2, pp. 219–23; J.-P. Lémonon, *Pilate et le gouvernement de la Judée: textes et monuments*, 74–97.

<sup>206</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xx.200–3.      <sup>207</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xv.403–8; xviii.92–5.



represented for Rome the fundamental instrument for controlling the whole political life of the country (provided it was used with discretion).<sup>208</sup>

The governor normally resided at Caesarea, and the choice of this city with its non-Jewish majority may be seen as an act of respect, through the desire to avoid placing Jerusalem in contact with those exterior aspects of the Roman political and military apparatus which would have offended Jewish religious sensibilities. The governor moved to Jerusalem on the occasion of the major festivals, when the influx of large crowds required his direct oversight.<sup>209</sup> Naturally any manifestation of the imperial cult was avoided, although some were indeed present in the non-Jewish areas of the province; but twice a day in the Temple sacrifices were offered for the emperor.

The continuity in the Roman succession to the Herodian government clearly appears in the military forces at the disposal of the governor: five cohorts of infantry (the Sebastenians) and a squadron of cavalry (the Kaisareis), which must have corresponded substantially to the royal forces. That means that the practice was continued of recruiting these auxiliary troops in the non-Jewish areas of the province.<sup>210</sup> The troops were mainly stationed in Caesarea. Apart from minor garrisons in places of particular strategic importance, one cohort was permanently in Jerusalem under the command of a tribune and occupied the Antonia, thus dominating the surroundings of the Temple. Its standards did not bear the emperor's likeness, i.e. this cohort probably kept the standards it had under the kings.

One area, on the other hand, where it appeared clearly from the start of Roman rule that a change for the worse was taking place by comparison with the previous royal regime, was the field of taxation. For as well as the *tributum soli*, which continued the Herodian tax on land produce and which was probably for the most part collected in kind,<sup>211</sup> and the various duties on transport and shipping (farmed out to native publicans),<sup>212</sup>

<sup>208</sup> E. M. Smallwood, 'High Priests and Politics in Roman Palestine', *JTS* n.s. 13 (1962), 14–34.

<sup>209</sup> E. Lohse, 'Die römischen Staathalter in Jerusalem', *ZDPV* 74 (1958), 69–78.

<sup>210</sup> Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, pp. 362ff. The account refers chiefly to the period after CE 44, but it is to be presumed that it holds good also for the period 6–41. For the *speira Italikē* of Acts 10:1 see Gabba, *Iscrizioni greche e latine per lo studio della Bibbia*, pp. 87–9; M. P. Speidel, 'The Roman Army in Judaea Under the Procurators', *Ancient Society* 13/14 (1982/3), pp. 233–40.

<sup>211</sup> Cf. the *frumentum Caesaris* stored in the villages of Upper Galilee: Jos. *Vita* 71; Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. 140, n. 5, ET *The Zealots*, p. 135, n. 309.

<sup>212</sup> Luke 19:1. For the presence of publicans in the tetrarchy of Antipas, Mark 2:14; Matt. 9:9; Luke 5:27; Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, pp. 77–9.



and the local taxes,<sup>213</sup> there was now added a heavy new capitation tax (*tributum capitis*), which on a probable hypothesis would have amounted to one *denarius* a year per head.<sup>214</sup> The overall burden of taxation must have been very oppressive, especially since the capitation tax tended to weigh more heavily on the lower classes. After just ten years of Roman rule Judaea (like the much richer Syria) was exhausted,<sup>215</sup> even though a considerable part of the fiscal yield would have remained, as usual, in the province,<sup>216</sup> and been used for paying the troops' wages, meeting the expenses of administrations and for indispensable public works. The Roman governor, in this too the heir of the Herodian kings, must have had until CE 41 a power of supervision over the Temple treasures and their employment; but when Pilate used some of this money to build an aqueduct for Jerusalem, a rebellion followed.<sup>217</sup>

A situation based on such instabilities and such finely judged checks and balances was doomed to progressive deterioration, all the more so as the foreign domination, while favouring the upper classes, accentuated the opposition of the masses. There was no lack of points of conflict and friction both in Jerusalem and in the countryside, and between Jews and Samaritans,<sup>218</sup> and these points were intensified by ham-fisted initiatives on the part of governors who were insensitive towards, or ignorant of the peculiarities of the Jewish situation.

The most characteristic example is that of Pontius Pilate who ruled the province from CE 26 to 36.<sup>219</sup> At the beginning of his governorship it seemed an obvious move to introduce into Jerusalem troops with the normal insignia bearing the effigy of the emperor. The consternation and half-rebellion that followed this initiative forced him to give up this

<sup>213</sup> On sale and purchase agreements, *Jos. Ant.* xvii.205. On agricultural products being brought into Jerusalem, *Ant.* xviii.90; on houses in Jerusalem, *Ant.* xix.299; Heichelheim, 'Roman Syria', p. 236 and n. 33.

<sup>214</sup> Mark 12:13–17; Matt. 12:15–22; Luke 20:21–6.

<sup>215</sup> Tac. *Ann.* ii.42 (CE 17).

<sup>216</sup> Cf. A. Garzetti, *Athenaeum* n.s. 41 (1953), p. 315.

<sup>217</sup> *Jos. Bell.* ii.175; *Ant.* xviii.60; Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire romain*, I, p. 384, n. 5; J.-P. Lémonon, *Pilate et le gouvernement de la Judée: textes et monuments*, pp. 159–71.

<sup>218</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xviii.29–30.

<sup>219</sup> On the governors of Judaea: Schürer, *HJPJJC* 1, pp. 382ff; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, pp. 156ff. Pilate is depicted in negative terms by Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 299–306 and by Josephus, while the gospel tradition and the later Christian tradition (E. Fascher, *PW* 20, cols. 1322–3) are more favourable to him. For the long duration of his governorship, W. Orth, *Die Provinzialpolitik des Tiberius*, Diss. (Munich 1970), pp. 71ff; a different chronology in the two articles in D. R. Schwartz *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (Tübingen 1992), pp. 182–217.

pointless and offensive formality.<sup>220</sup> We cannot say with certainty to which period of his governorship the similar attempt (mentioned already) to introduce to his Jerusalem residence some shields with inscriptions in honour of the emperor is to be attributed,<sup>221</sup> but we may suppose that this initiative, rather than corresponding, as has been suggested, to the anti-Jewish policies of Sejanus, was in fact intended to reaffirm Roman power decisively in the face of a deteriorating situation. The effect was of course quite the opposite. There is evidence of seditious movements.<sup>222</sup> An obscure episode involving Galileans whom Pilate had killed<sup>223</sup> may be interpreted to mean that elements coming from this traditionally turbulent area (at the time belonging to Antipas) had caused disturbances of public order in Jerusalem.

The arrest and condemnation of Jesus also reflect an atmosphere of disturbances and insecurity, in which Jesus' messianic preaching both in the territories of Antipas and in the Roman province could easily, like that of John the Baptist, arouse the suspicion of being a revolutionary movement and thus give grounds for a charge of sedition. This does not mean that Jesus was a 'zealot' or a revolutionary agitator: on the contrary, he distinguished himself from those who used violence to bring in the kingdom.<sup>224</sup> Jesus was arrested by the Jewish authorities, brought before

<sup>220</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.169–74; *Ant.* XVIII.55–9; C. H. Kraeling, 'The Episode of the Roman Standards at Jerusalem', *HTR* 35 (1942), 263–89. Another episode sometimes credited to Pilate's harshness involves the minting of coins with pagan symbols (cf. M. Stern, 'The Herodian Dynasty and the Province of Judaea at the End of the Period of the Second Temple' in *WHJP* 1.7, ed. M. Avi-Yonah (London 1975), pp. 129–30); but see H. K. Bond, 'The Coins of Pontius Pilate: Part of an Attempt to Provoke the People or to Integrate them into the Empire?', *JStJ* 27 (1996), 241–62.

<sup>221</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 299–306; P. L. Maier, 'The Episode of the Golden Roman Shields at Jerusalem', *HTR* 62 (1969), 109–21. D. R. Schwartz, however, restates the thesis that this episode is merely a variant account of the Roman standards controversy mentioned above; see 'Josephus and Philo on Pontius Pilate' in *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 3, ed. by L. I. Levine (Jerusalem/Detroit 1983), pp. 26–45. Fuks finds the offensiveness of this act to rest in an appellation of Imperial divinity in the inscriptions, Lémonon believes the offensiveness to involve an image of Caesar customarily painted on such shields (here merely implied but nonetheless resented), while Davies conceives it to result from the dedication ceremony as memorialized through the inscriptions. See G. Fuks, 'Again on the Episode of the Gilded Roman Shields at Jerusalem', *HTR* 75 (1982), 503–7; J.-P. Lémonon, *Pilate et le gouvernement de la Judée: textes et monuments*, pp. 205–30, esp. 214–17; P. S. Davies, 'The Meaning of Philo's Text about the Gilded Shields', *JTS* n.s. 37 (1986), 109–14.

<sup>222</sup> Mark 15:7.

<sup>223</sup> Luke 13:1; G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, p. 46; J. Blinzler, 'Die Niedermetzlung von Galiläern durch Pilatus', *NovT* 2 (1957), 24–49.

<sup>224</sup> On the subject of Matt. 11:12–15 see F. Parente, 'Escatologia e politica nel Giudaismo del primo secolo avanti e dopo Cristo e nel Cristianesimo primitivo', *RSI* 80 (1968),

the Sanhedrin or perhaps before a Jewish official, who, having ascertained the evidence of a crime that carried the death penalty, passed the accused on to the Roman tribunal of Pilate: here the trial was held according to the procedure of *cognitio extra ordinem*. Pilate, perhaps as a gesture of courtesy, also called in Herod Antipas on this occasion in Jerusalem. The trial ended with the sentence of death by crucifixion. Two 'bandits' were executed with Jesus.<sup>225</sup> The event is probably to be dated to CE 33.<sup>226</sup>

A few years later, perhaps in CE 35, a great meeting of Samaritans at Mount Gerizim, excited by false religious promises, was interpreted by Pilate as a seditious outbreak and dispersed by force: some people were killed, while other Samaritans were captured and executed.<sup>227</sup> According to Josephus, following an official Samaritan protest, the governor of Syria, A. Vitellius, who had received special powers over all the East, sent Pilate off to Rome to provide an explanation of his conduct, thus in effect removing him from his post.<sup>228</sup> It is probable that this and other already mentioned pro-Jewish initiatives by Vitellius should be understood in the larger context of Rome's Eastern policy, which required a renewed effort at pacification in Judaea and therefore the employment of less repressive methods: comparisons between the situation in Judaea and in the dominion of Antipas must have had some effect.

258–61. On the charge of Jesus as 'zealot' see the essays by E. Bammel and J. P. M. Sweet, among others, in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day*, ed. E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge 1984); on the related charge of Jesus as a bandit see W. Horbury, 'Christ as brigand in ancient anti-Christian polemic', pp. 183–95 in that volume.

<sup>225</sup> H. Lietzmann, 'Der Prozess Jesu', *SPAW*, phil.-hist. Kl. 1931, 14 (1934), 313–22 = *KS* 11 (Berlin 1958), pp. 251–63 (see also pp. 269–76); E. Bickerman(n), 'Utilitas crucis. Observations sur les récits du procès de Jésus dans les Evangiles canoniques', *RHR* 112 (1935), 169–241; repr. in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* 3 (Leiden 1986), pp. 82–138. P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, edn 2 (Berlin 1974); A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Oxford 1963), pp. 24–47; E. Bammel (ed.), *The Trial of Jesus* (London 1970); R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, 2 vols. (New York 1994); bibliography in C. A. Evans, *Life of Jesus Research: An Annotated Bibliography*, rev. edn (Leiden 1996), pp. 219–34, 280–4. For the *testimonium Flavianum* (Jos. *Ant.* xviii.63–4), Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, pp. 428–41.

<sup>226</sup> Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, pp. 180–3. The episode of the Galileans, Luke 13:1, would have occurred in the year before.

<sup>227</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xviii.85–7. J.-P. Lémonon, *Pilate et le gouvernement de la Judée: textes et monuments*, pp. 231–9.

<sup>228</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xviii.88–9; Tac. *Ann.* vi.32.5; E. M. Smallwood, 'The Date of the Dismissal of Pontius Pilate from Judaea', *JJS* 5 (1954), 12–21. On the problems associated with Josephus' account see also J.-P. Lémonon, *Pilate et le gouvernement de la Judée: textes et monuments*, pp. 241–5; D. R. Schwartz, 'Pontius Pilate's Suspension from Office: Chronology and Sources', *Tarbiz* 51 (1981/2), 383–98 (in Hebrew); ET in D. R. Schwartz, *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (Tübingen 1992), pp. 202–17.

Roman policy in the province underwent a sudden though short-lived change with the successor of Tiberius, the Emperor Gaius (Caligula: CE 37–41). The autocratic tendencies of the new emperor and the consequent insistence on the manifestations of the imperial cult are responsible for the renewed explosion of anti-Jewish hostility in Egypt, at Alexandria in CE 38 and the following years. This is also the origin of Caligula's demand that a statue of himself should be placed in the Temple at Jerusalem; the local and immediate cause of this first interference by central government with the whole policy of respect by Rome towards Jewish religious laws and tradition had been a dispute that broke out at Jamnia between Jews and Gentiles over an altar to the emperor that the non-Jewish inhabitants of the town had raised and the Jews had destroyed.<sup>229</sup> The governor of Syria, P. Petronius, was then instructed to carry out the emperor's wishes, if necessary by force (end of CE 39).<sup>230</sup> While indignation and widespread protest grew about this profanation, Petronius, a cultured and sensible person, tried to gain time, and received Jewish delegations first at Ptolemais, then in CE 40 at Tiberias; he finally decided to ask Caligula to revoke the order. In Rome the same request had already been presented to the emperor by King Agrippa and had received, strangely enough, a positive reception, but limited to the Jerusalem Temple alone.<sup>231</sup> Finally the timely assassination of Caligula in January 41 averted any further danger.

The difficulties and troubles of direct administration from Rome had manifested themselves clearly from CE 6 to 41. The lack of mutual understanding, even with the support received in large measure from the upper classes, the mounting social tensions, the demands of the provincial administration and of Roman imperial policy, which were not easily reconcilable with the distinctive character of the Jewish situation, must have shattered many of the illusions and hopes that had accompanied

<sup>229</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 198ff. See P. Bilde, 'The Roman Emperor Gaius (Caligula)'s Attempt to Erect his Statue in the Temple of Jerusalem', *Studia Theologica* 32 (1978), 70–6. Gaius' whole treatment of Judaea has been framed within his broader political policy in E. Paltiel, *Vassals and Rebels in the Roman Empire: Julio-Claudian Policies in Judaea and the Kingdoms of the East* (Brussels 1991), 172–86. On Philo's account see also C. Kraus Reggiani, 'I rapporti tra l'impero romano e il mondo ebraico al tempo di Caligola secondo la 'Legatio ad Gaium' di Filone Alessandrino' in *ANRW* II.21.1, ed. W. Haase (Berlin 1984), 554–86.

<sup>230</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xviii.262ff.

<sup>231</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 330–7. See P. Bilde, 'The Roman Emperor Gaius (Caligula)'s Attempt to Erect his Statue in the Temple of Jerusalem', pp. 83–9. For an integration of the Philo and Josephus accounts of this episode see E. M. Smallwood, 'Philo and Josephus as Historians of the Same Events' in *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity*, ed. by L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1987), pp. 120–5.

the fall of the Herodian dynasty in CE 6. Conversely the prestige of the dynastic tradition had enjoyed a renaissance even in Judaea, and especially through the influence of Antipas. Both on the Jewish and on the Roman side (one thinks of Tiberius' liking for Antipas) there had been a reevaluation of the merits and advantages of the monarchical solution.

Just one Herodian prince had been on the scene for some time and seemed to give sufficient assurance to the Roman government: Agrippa, son of Aristobulus, (who had been executed in 7 BCE) and the grandson of Herod.<sup>232</sup> Born in 10 BCE, brought up in Rome with the imperial family, and involved at first in the capital and later in Judaea, Syria and Egypt in a series of adventures (largely dominated by uncontrolled expenditure, by constant lack of money, and by debts in all directions), he had landed again in Italy in CE 36. But at Capri in the final year of Tiberius' reign (though the Emperor had some liking for him) Agrippa had been caught up in accusations of indiscretions in favour of Caligula about the coming imperial succession. Jailed for six months, he had been set free with honours by his friend Caligula, who had assigned to him in CE 37 the tetrarchy of Philip and that of Lysanias with the title of king, and then in CE 39 he had received the far more important tetrarchy of Herod Antipas. In the year CE 40, as we have seen, he had managed to persuade Caligula to give up his plans for the Jerusalem Temple. Whether or not it was true that he had helped Claudius in 41 to obtain the succession to the imperial throne, the decision to abolish the procuratorial province of Judaea and place Agrippa over Judaea and Samaria was certainly much more than a gesture of gratitude, and represented the conscious espousal of a new policy. King Agrippa received the consular standards; and the Senate and people of Rome made a solemn treaty of alliance with him. The kingdom of Herod was thus restored.<sup>233</sup> Agrippa's brother, Herod, received dominion over Chalcis, together with the title of king.

The reign of Agrippa I is recorded with great eulogies by Josephus and by the Rabbinical tradition. His deep respect for the religious traditions of his people and adherence to the Pharisaic model earned the king considerable popularity: his sincerity or lack of it has no historical significance. The right of nominating High Priests returned to Agrippa; his nominations would seem to indicate a situation of discord with the aristocracy of Jerusalem. Towards his non-Jewish subjects he behaved shrewdly, but was unable to win the favour of the inhabitants of Caesarea and

<sup>232</sup> Schürer, *HJPJC* 1, pp. 442ff; D. R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea* (Tübingen 1990).

<sup>233</sup> For the territorial differences when compared with the kingdom of Herod: Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land*, pp. 105–6.

Sebaste;<sup>234</sup> he was naturally hostile to the Christian sect. The king pursued popular policies, reducing, for example, certain local taxes,<sup>235</sup> and also spending a great deal on public works; more than he could afford, as he had not the great resources of King Herod.<sup>236</sup> As usual it was not easy to reconcile the internal interests of the monarchy with the duties of a satellite king towards the empire.

In this field Agrippa suffered two reverses. His initiatives in strengthening the fortifications of the capital, and in calling a conference at Tiberias between Eastern kings who were Roman vassals, were sharply suspended by the intervention of the governor of Syria. But that Agrippa was well aware of his duties towards Rome is proved by his conspicuous donations to Berytus.<sup>237</sup> His patronage of the Jewish communities of the Diaspora obtained positive results.

Unfortunately for Judaea this renewed and positive monarchical experiment was brief: in CE 44 King Agrippa I died suddenly. Once again the problem of the succession arose. Claudius would have liked to entrust the kingdom to the dead king's sixteen-year-old son and namesake, but he was dissuaded by his advisers.<sup>238</sup> Inevitably there was a restoration of the province, which had as its governor a *procurator* on the same conditions as the earlier prefects. The province was larger than the one previous to CE 41, in that it now comprised Judaea, Samaria, Idumaea, Galilee and Peraea. The nomination of the High Priests and the superintendence of the Temple remained, however, as prerogatives of the Herodian royal family, and for the moment specifically of King Herod of Chalcis.<sup>239</sup> This return to direct Roman rule could appear as an interim solution, until the young Agrippa grew up. And perhaps this was in the plans of the Roman government: when King Herod of Chalcis died in CE 40, the kingdom was assigned almost immediately to the young Agrippa.<sup>240</sup>

But after the hopes born with the reign of Agrippa I the disappearance of the native monarchy must have reawakened all the earlier conflicts; for the Roman government too, after the unhappy results of the previous provincial administration, this must have given rise to great concern.

<sup>234</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.356–9, 361.   <sup>235</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.299.

<sup>236</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.352; Acts 12:20 shows not only that Tyre and Sidon were economically dependent on the royal lands, but also the prestige of the king.

<sup>237</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.335–7.

<sup>238</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.362–4. Agrippa's death is dated to September/October CE 43 by D. R. Schwartz, "Caesarea" and its "Isactium": Epigraphy, Numismatics and Herodian Chronology' in *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity*, WUNT 60 (Tübingen 1992), pp. 174–6.

<sup>239</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.15–16. Cf. R. D. Sullivan, 'The Dynasty of Judaea in the First Century', in *ANRW* II.8, ed. by H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin/New York 1977), 310.

<sup>240</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.104.

Although Josephus affirms that the first two procurators Cuspius Fadus (CE *c.* 44–6) and Ti. Julius Alexander (46–8?) managed to keep the country in a state of peace,<sup>241</sup> it is known that Cuspius, in addition to pursuing the normal political and administrative measures,<sup>242</sup> also tried to have the priestly vestments restored to Roman control: this was certainly not a frivolous move. Claudius, in a letter to the Sanhedrin full of praise for the Herodian dynasty, accepted the Jewish request that he should not depart from the arrangement made by Vitellius.<sup>243</sup> More significant are the explicit attestations of ‘bandit’ activity in Idumaea and in the whole province, which is said to have been suppressed.<sup>244</sup> Obviously it is almost impossible to distinguish common banditry from the actions of false prophets who managed to draw the masses with them: Cuspius forcibly crushed the movement of Theudas (which won him approval from Josephus),<sup>245</sup> and Theudas was captured and killed.

Cuspius’ successor, Tiberius Julius Alexander, was a renegade Jew from an extremely rich Alexandrian family, connected by multiple ties to the dynasty of Herod, completely integrated into the imperial system and as such destined for a very brilliant career. He had been chosen for the post of *procurator* doubtless on account of his competence in Jewish questions:<sup>246</sup> it is naturally doubtful whether his was a happy choice. Josephus, who had many excellent reasons for speaking well of him (not least because his family continued to enjoy political prominence), records in passing the execution ordered by the governor of the two sons, John and Simon, of the famous Judas the Galilean, who had stirred up the revolts of 4 BCE and CE 6 – clear evidence of the recrudescence of armed opposition to foreign domination. The underlying motives were probably the same: they were both political and religious, spurred on by their father and by the ‘fourth philosophy’.<sup>247</sup>

From then on, the situation went on deteriorating irretrievably. The governorship of Ventidius Cumanus (*c.* 48–52)<sup>248</sup> saw serious disturbances

<sup>241</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.220. <sup>242</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.2–4. <sup>243</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.6–14. <sup>244</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.5.

<sup>245</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.97–9; Acts 5:36, with a mistaken chronology; Schürer, *HJPJC* I, p. 456, n. 6; a different opinion in C. J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, WUNT 49 (Tübingen 1989), pp. 162–3, 224–5. For analyses of Theudas’ uprising see P. W. Barnett, ‘The Jewish Sign Prophets – AD 40–70: Their Intention and Origin’, *NTS* 27 (1981), pp. 680–1; R. A. Horsley and J. S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 164–7; R. Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: The Evidence from Josephus* (Oxford 1993), pp. 114–16.

<sup>246</sup> E. G. Turner, ‘Ti. Julius Alexander’, *JRS* 44 (1954), 54–64; V. Burr, *Tiberius Iulius Alexander* (Bonn 1955).

<sup>247</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.102; Applebaum, ‘The Zealots: the Case for Revaluation’, *JRS* 61 (1971), 160–1.

<sup>248</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.223–46; *Ant.* XX.105–36; Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 353–5, ET *The Zealots*, pp. 346–8.



in Jerusalem caused by the behaviour of the Roman soldiers, rebel attacks on the public highways and indiscriminate reprisals. In addition there were bloody clashes between Galileans and Samaritans: armed bands of Jews including some from Jerusalem led by Eleazar son of Deinaeus (a rebel who had been carrying arms for years in the mountains) marched for vengeance on the Samaritans; Ventidius intervened with his troops and killed many of the rebels. Partly through the intervention of Jerusalem public figures, the rebel bands dispersed for the moment, but the phenomenon of political 'banditry' continued to grow.<sup>249</sup> The situation had got out of the procurator's control: Samaritans and Jews had recourse to the governor of Syria, C. Ummidius Quadratus, who intervened personally. It seems that Samaria was now temporarily separated from the rest of the province and entrusted to Antonius Felix, who is thought to have held a military command in the Syrian army.<sup>250</sup> Quadratus conducted a rigorous inquiry and used the iron fist against the Jewish rebels. The leaders of the two contending peoples (on the Jewish side two ex-High Priests, Ananias and Jonathan) were sent to Rome, as was Cumanus, to render an account of his conduct. Claudius, partly under the influence of Agrippa II, found the Samaritans primarily responsible; Cumanus was exiled.

Partly on Jonathan's recommendation, Antonius Felix was nominated *procurator* of Judaea (CE c. 52–60).<sup>251</sup> He was a brother of Claudius' all-powerful freedman Antonius Pallas. By marrying soon afterwards (in CE 53?) Drusilla, a sister of Agrippa II, he became connected with the Jewish royal family and indirectly with the imperial family itself. About the same time, Agrippa had ceded the territory of Chalcis in exchange for Philip's former tetrarchy, which had belonged to his father, enlarged by the tetrarchies of Lysanias (Abilene) and of Varus. In CE 54 the new emperor,

<sup>249</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.238; *Ant.* XX.124.

<sup>250</sup> Tac. *Ann.* XII.54; cf. M. Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 76–82 with his comments. The best analysis of the passage is in Momigliano, 'Ricerche', pp. 388–91; see also E. M. Smallwood, 'Some Comments on Tacitus, *Annals* XVII.54', *Latomus* 18 (1959), pp. 560–7.

<sup>251</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.162. For the dates of Felix (and those of Festus) see Schürer, *HJPAJC* I, pp. 160 n. 17; 465, n. 42; a different chronology in D. R. Schwartz, 'Ishmael ben Phiabi and the Chronology of Provincia Judaea' in *Tarbiz* 52 (1982/3), pp. 177–200 (in Hebrew); ET in D. R. Schwartz, *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (Tübingen 1992), pp. 218–42. The gentile tradition too is hostile to him and emphasizes his position as imperial freedman: F. Millar, 'Some Evidence on the Meaning of Tacitus *Annals* XII.60', *Hist* 13 (1964), p. 182; Suet. *Claud.* 28.1; Tac. *Hist.* v.9 (discussion in Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 51–3, 117–18); a freedman of the Emperor Claudius according to N. Kokkinos, 'A Fresh Look at the *gentilicium* of Felix Procurator of Judaea', *Latomus* 49 (1990), pp. 126–41. But it has been pointed out that he had probably obtained already the status of knight; see P. R. C. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris. A Social Study of the Emperor's Freedmen and Slaves* (Cambridge 1972), p. 279.



Nero, granted him part of northern Galilee with Tiberias and Tarichaeae and the toparchy of Julias in Peraea:<sup>252</sup> was he perhaps considering him for a complete, if gradual, restoration of the kingdom? Josephus, although it is in his interests to saddle the Roman governors with much of the blame for the insurrection of CE 66, recognizes that Felix found himself faced with an extremely difficult situation.<sup>253</sup> The rebellion (or, as the Roman government and Josephus call it, 'banditry') was now general: the procurator succeeded in capturing Eleazar and sent him off to Rome; a large number of rebels were arrested and executed. Guerilla warfare extended to Jerusalem itself with the so-called *sicarii* and Jonathan himself fell victim to their attacks. The allegation that it was Felix who ordered this assassination is ridiculous.<sup>254</sup> Religious and political fanaticism was winning over the masses; there was a great proliferation of false prophets, and the governor took action against them also. The most famous case, partly because the apostle Paul was indirectly involved in it,<sup>255</sup> was that of the Egyptian who gathered a great crowd of followers in the desert to march on Jerusalem: Felix dispersed them. In any event the situation in which Paul found himself involved in Jerusalem when he was charged with having brought a Gentile into the Temple, his arrest, the behaviour of the tribune commanding the cohort, the taking of Paul to Felix at Caesarea, and the rest of the account in the Acts – all this offers a realistic illustration both of conditions in Judaea during the governorship of Antonius Felix, and of the procurator himself. The latter was finally forced to face a violent conflict in Caesarea itself between the Jewish and non-Jewish inhabitants (Hellenized Syrians) over parity in rights of citizenship. The Roman troops intervened against the Jews; Felix submitted the resolution of the conflict to the emperor, but towards the year CE 60 he was himself recalled,<sup>256</sup> before the arrival of the emperor's decision which favoured the Greek side.<sup>257</sup>

The new governor, Porcius Festus (c. CE 60–2), receives on balance, a favourable verdict from Josephus, in that he tried to combat the guerilla campaign both in the countryside and in the city, capturing and executing many rebels. He also crushed the movement of a false prophet who

<sup>252</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.247 and 252; *Ant.* xx.137 and 159.

<sup>253</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.252–65; *Ant.* xx.160–72. <sup>254</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xx.162–4.

<sup>255</sup> Acts 21:38. For the incident see P. W. Barnett, 'The Jewish Sign Prophets – AD 40–70: Their Intention and Origin', pp. 681–3. R. A. Horsley and J. S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 167–70; R. Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: The Evidence from Josephus*, pp. 112–44, esp. 116–18.

<sup>256</sup> Schürer, *HJPJC* I, p. 465, n. 42; towards 58–9 according to Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, p. 269.

<sup>257</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xx.182–4.

wanted to gather his followers in the desert with promises of salvation.<sup>258</sup> In Jerusalem a controversy pitted King Agrippa, whom Festus supported, against the priests, on account of a wall which blocked the view from the royal palace into the interior of the Temple:<sup>259</sup> the Jewish embassy, which included the High Priest Ishmael, sent with the consent of the procurator to Nero, saw its arguments prevail. But the attitude of the High Priest must have seemed rather hostile to Rome, and he was replaced. The frequent changes of High Priest in this period, sometimes after only a few months in office, indicate a state of unease and conflict even at the highest levels.<sup>260</sup> Festus died during his term as governor. Before the arrival of the new procurator, the High Priest Ananus, a rigid adherent of the Sadducees, tried to disperse the Christian sect and had James, the brother of Jesus, put to death: but this action was judged illegal and he too was deposed.<sup>261</sup>

The governor Albinus (perhaps Lucceius Albinus, CE 62–4)<sup>262</sup> on the one hand fought against terrorism, and on the other hand sought to carry out a policy of strict administration, especially in the fiscal field: Josephus's charges of abuse and extortion are therefore only to be expected. Faced with political kidnappings of prominent people, he committed what was perhaps a weakness of engaging in exchanges for them of *sicarii* who were already in custody: hence the other accusation that he was acting hand in glove with the terrorists and receiving money for releasing them from jail. Josephus' accounts in the *Bellum Judaicum* in fact imply new developments of considerable importance: among the terrorists there were elements no longer purely from the lower classes, for now armed gangs for offensive and defensive purposes were emerging,<sup>263</sup> and the country in general was taking sides either with the forces of order and the Romans, or else with the rebels.

The situation was already quite desperate when the new procurator, Gessius Florus (CE 64–6) arrived. As it was under him that open revolt broke out, Josephus, who holds the Roman governors responsible for this tragic event, paints this man in sombre colours.<sup>264</sup> But Florus would

<sup>258</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.271; *Ant.* XX.185–8. See P. W. Barnett, 'The Jewish Sign Prophets – AD 40–70: Their Intention and Origin', pp. 684–5; R. Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: The Evidence from Josephus*, pp. 122–3.

<sup>259</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.189–96. <sup>260</sup> Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, pp. 277–81.

<sup>261</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.197–203.

<sup>262</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.272–6 (hostile in tone); *Ant.* XX.204–10, 215.

<sup>263</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.214 is important for the participation of members of Herod's family. The procurator Florus was to have some Jews who were Roman citizens of equestrian rank crucified: Jos. *Bell.* II.308.

<sup>264</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.277; *Ant.* XX.252–8. The mention in Tac. *Hist.* V.10.1 is of chronological value only (Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 29, 53).

naturally have accentuated the policy of repression in the face of the growing revolutionary movement, and just as naturally achieved the opposite result of making the situation even worse. The difficulties in ordinary administration are attested by incomplete collection of the tribute.<sup>265</sup> At Passover, perhaps in CE 65,<sup>266</sup> the legate of Syria, C. Sestius Gallus, felt it desirable to come to Jerusalem in person. It is possible that he received complaints against Florus, but he must have approved of the procurator's policy, as it does not appear that he took any corrective measures.

Among the immediate causes of the outbreak of revolt one factor is recalled with extreme emphasis: the conflict in Caesarea, renewed on flimsy pretexts, between the Greek inhabitants, strong in the imperial rescript granting them the government of the city, and the small group of Jews there.<sup>267</sup> It was hard to claim that Florus should have taken the Jewish side, although the troops that intervened to quell the rioting behaved even-handedly. Public opinion in Jerusalem was deeply disturbed. The procurator's request to withdraw seventeen talents (a very small amount) from the Temple treasury increased the general commotion. Not long before, perhaps in CE 64, Agrippa II and the leading figures of the city had decided to spend part of those reserves to maintain employment among labourers after the completion of the Temple, fearing precisely this sort of Roman demand.<sup>268</sup> It seems that Florus gave as the reason for this money withdrawal the needs of the imperial administration,<sup>269</sup> perhaps on account of the financial difficulties caused by the failure to collect all the tribute.

The popular agitation prompted Florus to go to Jerusalem with military reinforcements. He was given an unenthusiastic reception, while the priests, leading figures and respectable folk tried to excuse the hostile attitude of their fellow citizens. The riots continued and were harshly put down by the troops.<sup>270</sup> Not even the intervention of Queen Berenice, sister of Agrippa II, who was in the city at the time, could placate the

<sup>265</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.403, 405.

<sup>266</sup> In 66 according to F.-M. Abel, *Histoire de la Palestine* I (Paris 1952), p. 478; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, p. 285, n. 95.

<sup>267</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.284–92. Cf. the analysis in A. Kasher, *Jews in Hellenistic Cities in Eretz-Israel*, pp. 252–68. Adversative Jewish-Pagan relations are emphasized as the primary cause of the revolt in U. Rappaport, 'Jewish-Pagan Relations and the Revolt against Rome in 66–70 CE' in *The Jerusalem Cathedral* I, ed. L. I. Levine (Jerusalem 1981), pp. 81–95.

<sup>268</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XX.219–23. <sup>269</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.293.

<sup>270</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.296–308. M. Goodman emphasizes the participation of the upper class in these events in 'A Bad Joke in Josephus,' *JJS* 36 (1985), 195–9; but cf. the review by E. Bammel (in *JTS* n.s. 40 (1989), 213–17) of Goodman's *The Ruling Class of Judaea*.

Romans (this was in the month of Artemisius: April–May CE 66).<sup>271</sup> Florus had two more cohorts brought in from Caesarea: the priests succeeded, by urgent entreaties, in having the troops given their usual festive welcome. Mainly through the fault of the Romans, according to Josephus, things worked out differently, and there were violent clashes in the streets, which induced the procurator to decide to retire to Caesarea, leaving a single cohort in Jerusalem and charging the High Priests and leading citizens with the maintenance of order.<sup>272</sup> An attempt by King Agrippa II, returning hastily from Alexandria, to calm the people down seemed at the time to be successful: the king was insistent on showing the unreasonableness of a war against Rome. But when he tried to persuade the people to be obedient to Florus also, his popularity fell away and the king was forced to leave the city in the midst of insults.

Two events sanctioned a complete break with Rome: the occupation by rebels of the fortress of Masada and the suspension of the daily sacrifice for the emperor in the Temple.<sup>273</sup> This is how the revolt started, but the events in Caesarea and Jerusalem under the governorship of Florus, which figure so prominently in the tradition, were only the latest manifestations of a far more complex situation. The various positions taken up, which began immediately to be defined, can only be understood against the background of the more complex and remote causes of this dramatic final result.

## XI THE REVOLT OF CE 66 AND ITS INTERPRETATION

Our most important source for the revolt of 66, Josephus, offers an interpretation of the event which is strictly related to his own motives and experiences as a participant in the war, and to the attitude of the social groups of which he is representative, but which is also tied to the historiographical conventions within which he operates. In this interpretation a central position is occupied by the speech attributed to King Agrippa II, which is in a certain sense a compendium of ideas and assessments that are found, with variations, in the entire work.<sup>274</sup> Some of

<sup>271</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.309–14: it seems that the Herodian royal family had the right to be accompanied to Jerusalem by their own troops. A different account in Jos. *Bell.* II.421. On Queen Berenice in general see: R. D. Sullivan, 'The Dynasty of Judaea in the First Century' in *ANRW* II.8, 310–13; K.-S. Krieger, 'Berenike, die Schwester König Agrippas II., bei Flavius Josephus', *JStJ* 28 (1997), 1–11.

<sup>272</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.332.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.* 408–10.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.* 345–401; E. Gabba, 'L'impero romano nel discorso di Agrippa II (Ioseph, B.I., II,345–401)', *RSI* 6–7 (1976/7), 189–94. Josephus had reasons for favouring the lineage of Agrippa II; see S. Schwartz, *Josephus and Judaeon Politics* (Leiden 1990), pp. 110–69. For works on Josephus, and specifically his interpretation of the war, see the

his beliefs represent fixed points from which important consequences derive.

The military superiority of Rome seems unquestionable, and it is attested by the passive subjection of so many provinces to the conqueror. Only an inadequate knowledge of the actual situation could suggest the possibility of emerging victorious from a struggle with Rome. This was indeed a fatal illusion which arose from the defeat of Cestius Gallus.<sup>275</sup> The description, eulogistic and rather Polybian in tone, of the military institutions of Rome is another argument to show the unreasonableness and futility of the war.<sup>276</sup>

But Roman rule is not seen merely as a legitimate consequence of their power; another basic belief is that God has abandoned his people and taken the Roman side: only thus is it possible to understand how they have succeeded in conquering the world.<sup>277</sup> This conclusion is based on the vision of a cyclical succession of world dominions, in which apocalyptic theological conceptions (Daniel) merge with themes from Hellenistic historiography (Polybius). This vision also leads to a reconsideration of earlier Jewish history in an 'anti-zealot' vein, and it seems certain that Agrippa's speech, and even more so the other two, by Josephus himself and by Eleazar,<sup>278</sup> are intended to propose an interpretation of the events of the war in polemic against a contrary 'zealot' interpretation of a Messianic and eschatological character.<sup>279</sup> Thus there emerge, indirectly and precisely

helpful annotated essay by L. H. Feldman, 'A Selective Critical Bibliography of Josephus' in *Josephus, the Bible and History*, ed. by L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1989), pp. 330–448; esp. 385–93. More complete bibliography in L. H. Feldman, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship* (Berlin 1984); with corrigenda in *ANRW* II.20.2, ed. W. Haase (Berlin 1987), pp. 1297–1304. For the complexity of Josephus' portrayal of the war see P. Bilde 'The Causes of the Jewish War According to Josephus', *JJS* 10 (1979), 179–202; neatly summarized in Bilde, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, his Works, and their Importance*, *JSPSupp.* 2 (Sheffield 1988), pp. 73–5. Also P. Villalba I Varneda, *The Historical Method of Flavius Josephus* (Leiden 1986), pp. 12–19.

<sup>275</sup> *Jos. Vita* 24.

<sup>276</sup> *Jos. Bell.* III.70–109, and earlier II.577. Cf. M. Stern 'Josephus and the Roman Empire as Reflected in *The Jewish War*' in *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity*, ed. by L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1987), pp. 75–8.

<sup>277</sup> *Jos. Bell.* II.360, 373, 390; v.367–8, 396. Cf. T. Rajak, *Josephus: the Historian and His Society* (London 1983), 78–103; H. W. Attridge, 'Josephus and His Works' in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, *CRINT* II.2, ed. M. E. Stone (Assen/Philadelphia 1984), pp. 203–6.

<sup>278</sup> *Jos. Bell.* v.362–419; VII.323–6, 341–88.

<sup>279</sup> H. Lindner, *Die Geschichtsauffassung des Flavius Josephus im Bellum Judaicum* (Leiden 1972), pp. 21–48; M. de Jonge, 'Josephus und die Zukunftserwartungen seines Volkes' in *Josephus-Studien*, ed. O. Betz, K. Haacker and M. Hengel (Göttingen 1974), pp. 205–19. On the analysis of the speeches in general see O. Michel, 'Die Rettung Israels und die Rolle Roms nach den Reden im "Bellum Judaicum"'. *Analysen und Perspektiven* in *ANRW* II.21.2, ed. W. Haase (Berlin/New York 1984), pp. 945–76 (with bibliography).

cutting across this polemical counter-statement, the fundamental religious motives for the revolt,<sup>280</sup> which are also at the root of the political reasons, as shown by the aspirations of the ‘fourth philosophy’. Josephus had usually suppressed or minimized all reference to these motivations,<sup>281</sup> even when describing the growth of discontent between 6 and 66 CE, concentrating instead on a mainly political and social interpretation. That interpretation could be more convincingly taken up by the Roman political establishment<sup>282</sup> and would also be more easily understandable to the readers of the *Bellum Iudaicum*; at the same time it appeared more satisfactory for the Jewish upper classes who were compromised with Rome.

The futility of the war, deduced from strictly political and military considerations, and the impossibility of a compromise peace given the predictable Roman insistence on repression,<sup>283</sup> lead especially in the *Bellum Iudaicum* to the identification of the various extremist groups as the main culprits of the revolt and of the country’s downfall, and justify the extremely hostile descriptions of these groups. These groups and their leaders displayed only madness and unreason.<sup>284</sup> On the Roman side a contributing, although less damaging, factor is found in the ill-considered and foolish actions of the governors of Judaea with their abuses of power and oppressive policies which gave excuses to fanaticism. Josephus draws a clear distinction between the governors, who are frequently incompetent and corrupt, and Roman rule, which is fully accepted for the reasons often set forth; consequently he finds no validity in the rebels’ aspirations to freedom and to political independence, which are in any case dead or have lost significance among all the other subject peoples of the empire. Both extremists and governors fed the spiral of violence and discontent which would ultimately lead to war. It was a war which was clearly avoidable, if only they had paid attention to sensible people like Ananus,

<sup>280</sup> C. Thoma, ‘Die Weltanschauung des Josephus Flavius, dargestellt anhand seiner Schilderung des jüdischen Aufstandes gegen Rom (66–73 n. Chr.)’, *Kairos* 11 (1969), 39–52; V. Nikiprowetzki, ‘La mort d’Eléazar fils de Jaïre et les courants apologétiques dans le *De Bello Judaico* de Flavius Josèphe’, *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (Paris 1971), pp. 461–90; Nikiprowetzki, ‘Josephus and the Revolutionary Parties’ in *Josephus, the Bible, and History*, ed. L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1989), pp. 216–36; M. Hengel, ‘Zeloten und Sikarien’ in *Josephus-Studien*, ed. O. Betz, K. Haacker, and M. Hengel (Göttingen 1974), pp. 175–96.

<sup>281</sup> Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 88–92, 125, and generally throughout his work, argues in the same sense.

<sup>282</sup> For the difficulty of the Romans in grasping the true meaning of the Jewish situation, cf. *Jos. Bell.* 11.352–3.

<sup>283</sup> *Jos. Bell.* 11.397.

<sup>284</sup> Polybius’ argument directed towards his Achaean compatriots, who rebelled against Rome in the *Bellum Achaicum*, is similar.

Agrippa, or Josephus himself, who knew the situation and could see how it would all end up.<sup>285</sup>

This evaluation of events is of great importance for understanding the conduct of Josephus in his Galilee command, as this emerges from the *Vita*, with the purpose, that is, of containing and curbing the revolt and the extremists as much as possible, trying whatever happened to be at the head of the movement so as not to be overwhelmed by it.<sup>286</sup> Josephus' conduct, and later his historiographic intent, reflect the dramatic dilemma of a large part of the Jewish upper classes (though not of the priestly elements, who were participants from the beginning in, and initiators of, the revolt).<sup>287</sup> They did not want to sever their own roots in the religious and cultural tradition of their people, which on this occasion was defended mainly by the lower classes, but at the same time they could not detach themselves from the political power which guaranteed, as well as peace, their survival and their social and political predominance.<sup>288</sup> They had supported Roman rule in the belief, or in the hope, that the foreigner, unlike the native monarchy, would concern himself solely with the secular aspects of power and would not interfere in the religious and spiritual sphere, where the educational work of the Pharisees would enjoy complete freedom of action. The Roman attitude towards the Jewish communities of the Diaspora probably supplied the model which they thought could be repeated at home. It is this strongly held perspective that explains the attempt to distinguish between Roman Empire and governors, the respect for the Emperor and yet the denunciation of bad emperors, and the support for a policy of pacification which would guarantee respect for religious and cultural traditions. And since from the Roman side (apart from sporadic and marginal episodes arising from the misplaced zeal of officials or the madness of a tyrant) there was never any attempt to undermine the people's cultural and religious identity or to Romanize the upper classes, the latter could in the main feel satisfied with their new foreign masters, even if the country had lost its independence,

<sup>285</sup> Jos. *Bell.* IV.151 (Ananus); Z. Yavetz, 'Reflections on Titus and Josephus', *GRBS* 16 (1975), p. 422.

<sup>286</sup> Yavetz, *GRBS* 16 (1975), pp. 420–3; Rajak, 'Justus of Tiberias', *CQ* 23 (1973), pp. 353–8: of exceptional importance in this context are the considerations and purposes behind the dispatch of Josephus into Galilee in Jos. *Vita* 28–29; significantly different from *Bell.* II.569–70; on the differences see the articles by G. Jossa and U. Rappaport in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period*, ed. F. Parente and J. Sievers (Leiden 1994), pp. 265–89.

<sup>287</sup> Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 367ff, ET *The Zealots*, pp. 360ff; V. Nikiprowetsky, 'Sicares et Zélots', *Sem.* 23 (1973), 51–64; reservations in Smith, 'Zealots and Sicarii. Their Origin and Relation', *HTR* 64 (1971), pp. 15–17 and Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 130f.

<sup>288</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.338.



which had not been particularly useful anyway in the days of Herod's monarchy.

The argument was quite the opposite for the rural masses, who knew little or nothing of the Roman empire, which they identified with the governors and their attacks on the Temple, with the census and taxation, and who had been disturbed for some time by messianic and eschatological expectations. Josephus' own interpretation only makes clearer the gap between the upper classes, largely accepting Roman rule, and the lower classes who were opposed to it,<sup>289</sup> a gap which is cultural and spiritual even more than social. This gap must inevitably have led to a further far-reaching loss of the prestige of the upper and priestly classes in the eyes of the masses; and the same effect would have been produced by the hostility and repugnance felt by the upper classes towards the independence movements, their ideals, and their struggle (as is clear from Josephus). The conflict, too, between High Priests and rural clergy, unthinkable in the time of Herod, must have had more than a merely social character.<sup>290</sup>

The drive towards independence and revolution had grown among the masses from 4 BCE onwards, and especially after CE 6. The messianic expectations and the mirage of independence and freedom were perhaps fuelled also by the still vivid memories of the Maccabean uprising, which would furthermore have created dangerous delusions about military victory with the comparison between the Seleucid and Roman empires. The constant and growing presence of extremist guerrillas who, partly on account of their origins, found most of their backing in the countryside<sup>291</sup> (although they also had their supporters in the towns),<sup>292</sup> is the main feature of the popular opposition to the Romans and those who agreed with them. The final result was a progressive religious and political move towards fanaticism among the popular masses,<sup>293</sup> among whom (though

<sup>289</sup> For a situation analogous to that of Tiberias, Rajak, 'Justus of Tiberias', *CQ* 23 (1973), 351–3.

<sup>290</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xx.179–81, 206–7. Goodman traces the very origins of the revolt back to the social instabilities resulting from the artificial creation of a ruling class of non-Jewish structure installed by Roman fiat in CE 6 (see M. Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt Against Rome AD 66–70* (Cambridge 1987), 29–133; Goodman, 'The Origins of the Great Revolt: A Conflict of Status Criteria' in *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel*, ed. A. Kasher, U. Rappaport and G. Fuks (Jerusalem 1990), pp. 39–53); but also note the response in E. Bammel's review in *JTS* n.s. 40 (1989), 213–17.

<sup>291</sup> E.g. Jos. *Bell.* II.253.

<sup>292</sup> Jos. *Vita* 104–11. It is not possible to generalize and consider the 'bandits' as belonging only to the lower and disinherited strata of society: Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 85–6; Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. 46, ET *The Zealots*, pp. 44f.

<sup>293</sup> Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 101–10, tries to reduce the significance of the messianic and eschatological motivations and thus also of the false prophets and claimants to messiahship.



also among the ‘wise’) ambiguous eschatological prophecies could find easy acceptance and ultimately incite to revolution.<sup>294</sup>

Josephus intentionally minimizes the independence movement after CE 6 in his account,<sup>295</sup> and above all he neglects its ideological motivations, which, precisely because they went back a considerable time, would ultimately have undermined the plausibility of the ideas which he had evolved on the origins of the revolt and of the war, and which are reflected in his historiography. He is both unwilling and unable to find common ground with the independence movement before CE 66. For this reason he tries to detach the war of 66 CE from its revolutionary antecedents. In the end Josephus contradicts himself with the cultural and political colouring that he gives to the ‘fourth philosophy’, which he recognizes moreover as the ideological matrix of the revolt, when he describes the anti-Roman revolutionary outbreaks after CE 6 according to the Roman government’s own point of view, that is, as disturbances of the established order: in describing them he uses the political and juridical terminology of Rome (as of any dominant power) and classifies as ‘bandits’ (*latrones, lēstai*) the members of these revolutionary groups, who traditionally operated in rural areas, spontaneously and with little coordination. In telling how at the beginning of the fifties<sup>296</sup> the phenomenon of ‘banditry’ spread to an urban setting, in Jerusalem, Josephus once again takes up the Roman connotation of this new aspect of ‘banditry’ and calls the members of these revolutionary groups *sicarii*,<sup>297</sup> attempting to discredit them both by presenting them at times as tools of the Roman government itself,<sup>298</sup> and

<sup>294</sup> Jos. *Bell.* vi.3.12–13; Tac. *Hist.* v.13; Suet. *Vesp.* 4:5–6 (Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 31, 60–2, 119–22); as is known Josephus interpreted the prophecy as of Vespasian: A. Schalit, ‘Die Erhebung Vespasians nach Flavius Josephus, Talmud und Midrasch. Zur Geschichte einer messianischen Prophetie’, *ANRW* II.2 (Berlin 1975), pp. 208–327. Although in Josephus the connection between the prophecy that the ruler of the world would come from Judaea and the beginning of the revolt is explicit, attempts have been made to bring the prophecy forward, dating it to the 30s of the first century CE, and to situate it among the Essene group of Qumran, thus detaching it from the rebel movement: I. Hahn, ‘Josephus und die Eschatologie von Qumrān’, in *Qumran-Probleme*, ed. H. Bardtke (Berlin 1963), pp. 167–91; Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 127ff.

<sup>295</sup> Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. viii, ET *The Zealots*, p. ix.

<sup>296</sup> Under the procurator Felix (CE 52–60) according to Jos. *Bell.* II.2.54ff, supported by Acts 21:38; or under Festus (60–2) according to Jos. *Ant.* xx.185–8.

<sup>297</sup> The precise meaning of the term is excellently clarified by J. D. Cloud, ‘The primary purpose of the Lex Cornelia de sicariis’, *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Romanische Abteilung* 86 (1969), pp. 258–86, esp. 280–2. Emphasizing continuity with previous ideology see M. Stern, ‘Sicarii and Zealots’ in *WHJP* I.8, ed. M. Avi-Yonah and Z. Baras (London 1977), pp. 272–3; more reserved on this issue is R. A. Horsley and J. S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, pp. 200–7.

<sup>298</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xx.163–5 (cf. *Bell.* II.256), drawn on by Kreissig, *SZJK*, pp. 126–7.

by labelling them as murderers (as the Romans would have considered them).

The revolutionary movement of CE 66 implicated wider and more diverse strata of Jewish society, starting with groups among the priestly class itself, including those in positions of leadership. The upper classes, of whom Josephus presents himself as the champion, must have joined in reluctantly, if we accept his account. Among all these new supporters there must have been intentions and points of view which differed not only among themselves, but also from previous revolutionary groups and movements; and above all a diversity of ideas on how the revolution itself should be conducted, even though they all shared a common motivation. The lack of unity in the anti-Roman rising, which Josephus deliberately emphasizes along with the disagreements among the insurgents, had its primary roots in this conglomeration of groups that differed in origin, if not in ultimate aims.

In the rebellion of CE 66 by far the most definite grouping, and one with a certain degree of organization, seems to have been that of the Zealots: for all Josephus' hostility towards them, he cannot avoid calling these insurgents by the name that they had given themselves – Zealots<sup>299</sup> – and which eventually came to denote rebels of different provenance, whether priests (who kept the leadership for a long time), or city-dwellers, or countrymen, but all united by their pietistic and messianic attitudes. We cannot say with certainty exactly when this name was first used,<sup>300</sup> not least because the term was pregnant with religious and political significance the roots of which went back a long time. It is certainly worth reiterating that the revolt of CE 66 is grafted on to a background of anti-Roman feeling that had characterized the rebellious outbreaks of CE 6. In this sense the Zealot movement represents the continuation and development of the actions of the 'bandits' and the *sicarii*.<sup>301</sup> The discontinuity and fragmentary nature of the connection do not invalidate their ideological unity of inspiration.<sup>302</sup>

<sup>299</sup> Jos. *Bell.* IV.161; VII.270.

<sup>300</sup> It was already used by Josephus in *Bell.* II.444, 564, 651; see IV.160.

<sup>301</sup> M. Hengel, 'Zeloten und Sikarier' in *Josephus-Studien*, pp. 175–96, seems to me to reply well to the sharp criticisms of M. Smith, 'Zealots and Sicarii. Their Origin and Relation', *HTR* 64 (1971), 1–19; see also S. Applebaum, 'The Zealots. A Case for Reevaluation', *JRS* 61 (1971), pp. 155–70; and R. A. Horsley's opposition to Hengel's thesis in 'Ancient Jewish Banditry and the Revolt against Rome, AD 66–70', *CBQ* 43 (1981), pp. 409–32; *idem* 'The Zealots: Their Origin, Relationships and Importance in the Jewish Revolt', *Novum Testamentum* 28 (1986), pp. 159–92; Horsley's thesis is qualified by T. L. Donaldson, 'Rural Bandits, City Mobs and the Zealots', *JSJ* 21 (1990), 19–40.

<sup>302</sup> When Josephus in *Bell.* VII.253–74 presents the succession of the various anti-Roman factions from CE 6 onwards, he not only follows a chronological criterion but also an

In the various attitudes adopted towards Roman rule, other regional and social factors were also certainly influential. The need of the propertied classes<sup>303</sup> to lean on Rome certainly increased even the more strictly social tensions which had been present in Palestine since the late Hasmonaean era. Herod's royal power, paradoxically, while it eclipsed the political predominance of the traditional upper classes, had also guaranteed the social position of the propertied classes, not so much by simple repression of the lower orders, as, on the contrary, by containing social conflicts through a policy of internal colonization, agrarian restructuring, public works, and maintaining native troops. This overriding national interest, typical of a native monarchy, could not continue with the establishment of the Roman provincial government, which, although it did not pursue a policy of pure exploitation, nevertheless could not take too lively an interest in the economic and social development of the region. If the propertied classes favoured Roman rule, for the reasons stated above, partly for the purposes of defending their privileged position, it is doubtful whether they got a very good bargain. The Roman government, and particularly Claudius, was later to display a good deal more wisdom in attempting to restore the unitary kingdom, and in working to retain local potentates. Social tension was particularly strong in the countryside, and more limited in the towns, especially in Jerusalem where in about CE 64, as previously mentioned, the upper classes grew fearful of a coming crisis if the tradesmen should become redundant after the completion of the Temple works, and also of the Romans getting their hands on the sacred treasury, and persuaded King Agrippa to pursue a programme of public works.<sup>304</sup>

It is possible that in the countryside the situation of the smallholders and tenants worsened, not only in comparison with the great landowners but also through the more onerous pressure of taxation – in the areas of the Roman province, that is to say.<sup>305</sup> There may have been an increase in

ever-growing progression towards extremism and savagery. This progression in evil is seen from the point of view first of those who were disposed to accept the Romans (254–5), then of those who, like Josephus, had fought the war, but without extremism (258).

<sup>303</sup> Their undoubtedly complex and stratified composition is matched by a substantial homogeneity in political positions, even if this fell short of true unity.

<sup>304</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xx.219–22. The city–country conflict (Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. 371, ET *The Zealots*, p. 364), given the rural character of the cities, with the exception of Jerusalem, must be seen mainly as the peasant class resenting the city-dwelling class of landowners.

<sup>305</sup> Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 341–2, ET *The Zealots*, pp. 335f; a strong indebtedness is attested by Jos. *Bell.* 11.427. Cf. a different account of the cause of debt and its central role in fomenting rebellion in M. Goodman, 'The First Jewish Revolt: Social Conflict and the Problem of Debt', *JJS* 33 (1982), pp. 417–27. Economic motives for revolt are stressed in S. Applebaum, 'Josephus and the Economic Causes of the Jewish War', 237–64.

the big estates after the sale of Archelaus' royal lands, though a considerable portion was taken by the provincial revenue collection, but it is unlikely that these changes would have meant a major revolution in agrarian relations. There is however no evidence that the socio-economic situation of the countryside was any worse in Judaea than in other Roman provinces, which did not experience rebellion.<sup>306</sup> This situation of social conflict is presented insistently by Josephus in his account of the revolt and even more so in the course of the war, and attains undoubted prominence among the characteristics of the revolt itself,<sup>307</sup> most of all with the egalitarian tendencies of Simon bar Jonah.

Josephus' testimony should however be evaluated in relation to his historiographical schema and to the public which he wishes to address, and especially in relation to his wish to avoid highlighting the deeper religious motivations, which however, as we have seen, emerge indirectly in the end from his own work. In other words, Josephus, while he offers a description of a situation which is socially radicalized, indicates rather a factual situation which derives from more complex causes and motivations upon which, for various reasons, he is concerned to touch very lightly indeed. This factual reality was important in the form the rebellion took, and influenced its course at times, but did not represent in itself the fundamental reason for the revolt. The various insurgent movements, disorganized and spontaneous and never finding a real unity of direction, were not therefore primarily aimed against the propertied class as such, but against the foreigners and their lackeys, and in support of freedom, independence, the establishment of a new kingdom.

## XII EVENTS LEADING TO THE FALL OF JERUSALEM AND MASADA: MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS

In May of CE 66, in Jerusalem, the situation was not yet completely out of the control of peace-minded groups, although they were frightened by the turn events were taking. They called for help from the procurator and

<sup>306</sup> In a comparison with other native revolts in Roman provinces, this Jewish one is seen as atypical: S. L. Dyson, 'Native Revolts in the Roman Empire', *Hist.* 20 (1971), 239–74; Dyson 'Native Revolt Patterns in the Roman Empire', in *ANRW* 11.3, ed. by H. Temporini (Berlin 1975), pp. 138–75; for a different evaluation of Dyson's evidence see S. J. D. Cohen, 'The Political and Social History of the Jews in Greco-Roman Antiquity: The State of the Question' in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. by R. A. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg (Philadelphia 1986), p. 44.

<sup>307</sup> P. A. Brunt, 'Josephus on Social Conflicts in Roman Judaea', *Klio* 59 (1977), 149–53; repr. in *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford 1990), pp. 282–7.

King Agrippa, so that the rebellion might be nipped in the bud. Agrippa, certainly with Roman approval, sent a force of three thousand men: too few, even when joined with the two auxiliary cohorts remaining in the city, to quell the uprising. The upper city, the Antonia fortress, and the palace of Herod were taken in turn by the rebels, and later even the three large fortified towers. In the fires, which destroyed many palaces, the archives containing documentation on loans and debts were also destroyed.<sup>308</sup> While Agrippa's troops were allowed to leave the city, the rest of the Roman cohorts, who had surrendered with the promise of their lives, were slaughtered.

But the rebels had already fallen out among themselves by this stage. Groups had arrived from Masada with Menachem, son of Judas the Galilean, driven like his father by messianic pretensions and an extreme ideal of freedom.<sup>309</sup> These were the most committed rebels: even the ex-High Priest Ananias, head of the peace faction, was killed by them. But Ananias' son, Eleazar, had been among the initiators of the insurrection. After his father was killed he managed to reassert his authority, and to eliminate Menachem, whose followers returned to Masada. Under the lead of Eleazar son of Jair, a relation of Menachem's, Masada later resisted the Romans to the bitter end.<sup>310</sup>

The triumph in Jerusalem of the rebels' party provoked brutal anti-Jewish reactions in Caesarea, and had violent repercussions in every area where Jews and Gentiles lived together in varying proportions; the mutual conflicts and massacres spread to Syria and then to Alexandria too. It is not clear why it was only in the autumn of CE 66 that the Syrian legate, Cestius Gallus, decided to intervene with the twelfth legion, legionary *vexillationes*, auxiliary troops and contingents provided by allied kings – principally Agrippa II, who had taken sides decisively with Rome – against Jerusalem, where the real rebellion was still localized. There were also rebel groupings in Galilee, but these were quickly eliminated and the Roman army arrived in the vicinity of Jerusalem. Attempts were made to occupy the city, but apparently without much conviction. At a certain point the Romans decided to retreat. Josephus insists that in Jerusalem the 'people' were willing to welcome the Romans and that the 'rebels' were planning to retreat.<sup>311</sup> But Cestius Gallus must have had

<sup>308</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.427.

<sup>309</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.433; Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. 338, ET *The Zealots*, pp. 331f; reservations in R. A. Horsley, 'Menahem in Jerusalem: A Brief Messianic Episode Among the Sicarii – not "Zealot Messianism"', *Novum Testamentum* 27 (1985), pp. 334–48.

<sup>310</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.447.

<sup>311</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.538–9. On the whole campaign see M. Gichon, 'Cestius Gallus's Campaign in Judaea', *PEQ* 113 (1981), 39–62.

good reason not to feel safe, especially when faced with the courage and capability demonstrated by the insurgents in their conquest of the city's fortifications. Josephus is unable to explain the reasons for the Roman retreat (which was later nearly transformed into a headlong rout), but he sees in this episode and in the failure to capture Jerusalem the last chance to put an end to the rebellion and stave off war. His uncertainty bears witness to the immense psychological and political significance that the Roman defeat had in strengthening the will to war and in forcing the undecided to cast in their lot with the rebels.

Up to this point, with the exception of the Menachem episode, the leadership of the revolt had remained in the hands of members of the upper classes: it was therefore relatively easy for the victors of Cestius Gallus to persuade the pro-Roman elements who had social affinities with them to join the movement,<sup>312</sup> which was then led until CE 67 by members of the priestly class. Even without the explicit assertions of Josephus,<sup>313</sup> which cannot be dictated purely by hindsight, the sincerity and depth of these conversions are more than dubious. In general it is significant that the leadership of the war was substantially moderate. This reflects the ambiguity of a situation which was widespread too in the rest of the country, whereby the decidedly warlike tendencies of the masses (from whom the Zealots mainly sprang) were counterbalanced by the respectable property-owning classes, naturally favourable to Rome, among whom however there were also numerous supporters, for one reason or another, of the insurrection.<sup>314</sup>

The participation of the moderates in the revolt was, if not exactly caused by fear, certainly caused in part by the need to stop the insurrection, which could no longer be prevented, from passing into the hands of extremists and radicals. Theirs was a very ambiguous and difficult position, of being impelled, on the one hand, to inevitable clashes with the die-hard elements, or those who believed most sincerely in the fight, and, on the other hand, of having almost no prospects of winning any concessions from Rome, unless by betraying their own country's cause. One of the immediate consequences of the prevalence of the moderate and priestly class was that, in the political and military organization of the rebel movement, the choice of leaders was made on political criteria and not by criteria of competence. Thus the people who had previously led the anti-

<sup>312</sup> *Jos. Bell.* II.562; naturally the people most compromised left the city: *Jos. Bell.* II.556–8. According to Cohen, Josephus benefits personally from his stylized account of the period of moderate leadership in the war. See S. J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as a Historian* (Leiden 1979), pp. 98–100.

<sup>313</sup> *Jos. Vita* 175–6.

<sup>314</sup> For Tiberias: *Jos. Vita* 32–43; Rajak, 'Justus of Tiberias', *CQ* 23 (1973), 351ff.

Roman resistance or played a brilliant part in the first fight against Cestius were not officially given, at least at first, any prominent posts in the leadership.<sup>315</sup>

A sort of popular assembly, possibly supplementing the Sanhedrin, elected to the control of Jerusalem (and hence in practice to the leadership of the struggle) Joseph son of Gorion, and the ex-High Priest Ananus, who was the dominant personality; they also had the job of strengthening the walls of the capital. The rest of the country controlled by the rebels, whether Roman province or Agrippa's kingdom, was divided into six zones founded on the existing administrative divisions, with their own commanders flanked by local councils of seventy members and by judges in the individual towns;<sup>316</sup> these zones were Idumaea, Jericho, Peraea, Western Judaea, Northern Judaea, and the two Galilees (including the town of Gamala in Gaulanitis). This latter command was entrusted, along with two colleagues, to Joseph son of Matthias, who was later to be the historian of what happened. Samaria did not take part in the revolt, although later there may have been attempts to join in, or at least some Samaritan moves were interpreted by the Romans in this light.<sup>317</sup>

The election of a governing body over the rebel movement does not mean that there was any general strategic plan for the struggle. Apart from the political objective of not letting the initiative go to the extremist factions, the elected heads probably tried to coordinate the various spontaneous actions that had materialized more or less everywhere. This was above all a political coordination, as the duties of the commanders of the six zones must have been more political than military. For even if they did mobilize and arm men,<sup>318</sup> they must or should have easily imagined that the war would in the end, at any rate, be narrowed down and won or lost at Jerusalem, as had always happened in the past, for political and military reasons and for reasons of principle. There was no question now of a simple fight between two or more indigenous factions trying to gain control of certain areas or bases. Of course, they did fortify the towns, and the captured fortresses were put in better defensive condition. But

<sup>315</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.564–5. Cf. G. Jossa, 'Josephus' Action in Galilee during the Jewish War' in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period*, ed. F. Parente and J. Sievers (Leiden 1994), pp. 268–72. On the role of the moderates in the war see D. M. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution: 6–74 CE*, pp. 150–9.

<sup>316</sup> This is at least the situation described for Galilee: Jos. *Bell.* II.570–71 and *Vita* 79. According to Price, there is reason to question whether these organizational efforts were completed outside Judaea and Galilee (see J. J. Price, *Jerusalem under Siege: The Collapse of the Jewish State 66–70 CE* (Leiden 1992), pp. 75–6).

<sup>317</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.307–15.

<sup>318</sup> Josephus is supposed to have recruited 100,000 men and tried to train them in the Roman manner: Jos. *Bell.* II.576–84.



even more than hindering any possible Roman advances, these defences helped to give psychological assurance to the inhabitants, and to create places of concentration and refuge. These defensive preparations afterwards helped, indirectly, the Roman reconquest, which was able to eliminate the rebels who had barricaded themselves inside, though the sieges were sometimes far from easy. A broader guerrilla action – though this was indeed present in the early stages<sup>319</sup> – might have done more damage to the invader.

The fact is that the situations in the various regions of the country were even more complicated and intricate than in Jerusalem. From the admittedly tendentious account in Josephus it clearly emerges that in the regions under his command there was no basic agreement and that many localities remained fundamentally pro-Roman, as for example Sepphoris (although here there was some dissent and yet a Roman garrison was installed), and as also Gamala, at least for a time. Uncertainty continued at Tiberias. In the areas belonging to the kingdom of Agrippa strong sentiments, or protestations, of loyalty to the king prevailed. Josephus himself obviously tried to avoid any open breaks with the king, with whose ideas he substantially agreed and who probably appeared to the moderate elements, although they supported the insurrection with reservations, as a possible means of future deliverance *vis-à-vis* the Romans. In the midst of arguments, hostility and outrages of various origin, Josephus found himself in conflict with those who truly believed in the war, like John of Gischala, who from an initial position against the war (at least according to Josephus)<sup>320</sup> had changed over to the extreme opposite. As can indeed be gleaned from the hostile tone of the historian,<sup>321</sup> this man was a daring and skilful leader, intolerant of taking orders from a cautious politician, ambiguous and militarily inept, like Josephus. John of Gischala tried in vain to have Josephus deposed as commander through the intervention of the leaders in Jerusalem. In Northern Judaea too there were serious internal disagreements. Simon Bar Giora was carrying on a sort of personal war there, with attacks on the rich, who were certainly against the war,<sup>322</sup> thus stamping his own efforts right from the start with a strong social colouring. The commanders in Jerusalem took action against him and forced him to take refuge in Masada. From here he continued to lead raids into Idumaea.

<sup>319</sup> Jos. *Bell.* iv.406–9.      <sup>320</sup> Jos. *Vita* 43–5.

<sup>321</sup> Jos. *Bell.* ii.585ff; *Vita* 70ff. Cf. the analyses by U. Rappaport, 'John of Gischala in Galilee' in *The Jerusalem Cathedral* 3, ed. by L. I. Levine (Jerusalem/Detroit 1983), pp. 46–57; Levine, 'John of Gischala: from Galilee to Jerusalem', *JJS* 33 (1982), pp. 479–93.

<sup>322</sup> Jos. *Bell.* ii.652–4.



At any rate, while the rebels were making preparations in the winter of CE 66–7 to withstand the foreseeable Roman counterattack, Nero's imperial government gave T. Flavius Vespasianus the task of putting the rebellion down. With three legions from Syria and Egypt, with auxiliary troops and allied contingents making up a total force of about 60,000 men, Vespasian launched his attack in the spring of CE 67, driving towards Galilee from his base at Akko-Ptolemais. Josephus' scratch troops were unable to offer any resistance and dispersed. Some of the Jewish militia with Josephus barricaded themselves in the fortress of Jotapata, which was conquered after a siege. Josephus survived by chance the decision to commit mass suicide taken by a group of his followers, and was captured. Afterwards the subjection of Galilee was completed in CE 67 with the capture of Tiberias, Tarichaeae, Mount Tabor, Gischala, from where John fled to Jerusalem, and Gamala in Gaulanitis.

The epicentre of the insurrection and the war was now inevitably moving towards Jerusalem, where refugees were converging from the areas overrun by the Romans.<sup>323</sup> It was not just a question of finding refuge behind the massive walls of the capital: Jerusalem and the Temple were traditionally at the centre of the nationalist sentiment of the Jewish people. Nothing was more natural, then, than this convergence there for the final stand against the foreigner, even though serious problems of supplies were thereby being created.

On the other hand, the unfavourable outcome of events was being blamed on the priestly leadership of the war, now exposed to the virulent criticisms of the extremist groups, the Zealots, led by Eleazar son of Gion (who came of priestly stock), and exposed also to charges of indecisiveness and of betrayal. The rebels coming in from the countryside,<sup>324</sup> especially the young enthusiasts, among whom John of Gischala and his followers stood out, immediately came into conflict with the moderate ruling group, whose principal representative was Ananus;<sup>325</sup> and, in alliance with the Zealots, they soon gained the upper hand through violence although, according to Josephus, the majority of the 'people' were against them. While the new leadership was partly expressed in imprisonment of the opposition and in killings (which explain the accusations of grim tyranny made by Josephus) the Messianic and eschatological perspective of the Zealots, who had now occupied the Temple, appears in such factors as their move to reform the High Priesthood itself through a new procedure of nomination by drawing lots,<sup>326</sup> which meant in practice the

<sup>323</sup> *Jos. Bell.* II.123–7.    <sup>324</sup> *Jos. Bell.* II.129, 135–7, 138.    <sup>325</sup> *Jos. Bell.* IV.151.

<sup>326</sup> *Jos. Bell.* IV.151–7; Parente, 'Escatologia e politica nel Giudaismo del primo secolo avanti e dopo Cristo e nel Cristianesimo primitivo', *RSI* 80 (1968), pp. 252–8.

political eclipse of the traditional priestly class. For some time, however, the moderates succeeded in containing the Zealots and in confining them to within the Temple; but the arrival in Jerusalem of sizeable groups of Idumaeans, called in by the Zealots themselves, gave the latter undisputed control of the city, which was accompanied by a new wave of killings, notably that of Ananus. When the Idumaeans partially retired, the Zealots were left as total masters of the city.

Josephus has an interest, from his perspective on events, in emphasizing the Zealots' elimination of their political adversaries and the inexorable onset of a situation of fratricidal fury; but there is no doubt as to the reality of the facts. These must be understood from the extremist perspective of Zealotry, which could no longer tolerate uncertainty, compromise, or hopes of reconciliation with Rome. The moderate leadership of the war was finished, although from a military point of view the Zealots had no alternative, nor could they have, to the way in which the war had been directed up to that time. A profound transformation came in the degree of resolution and commitment, through a sincere and profound consciousness of the idealistic motives for the struggle.<sup>327</sup> Not only this, but the central position of the Temple and the inspiration of Jewish history could give rise to the hope that precisely in Jerusalem the miracle might come again of a divine intervention to free the city, as had happened with Sennacherib, and as the recent example of Cestius Gallus seemed to confirm.<sup>328</sup> This interpretation of the war dramatically conditioned the conduct of it, concentrating it in the capital, whereas it would have been a good deal more useful to carry on a guerrilla campaign against the Romans.

While these internal struggles were raging in Jerusalem, Vespasian did not intervene and in the spring and summer of 68 CE proceeded, through expeditions of military columns and through the installation of garrisons, with the subjection of Peraea, Western Judaea, Idumaea and the territory of Jericho. The siege of Jerusalem was planned for the immediate future when the death of Nero in June CE 68 forced a delay which lasted for about a year.

This period saw the campaign of Simon bar Giora<sup>329</sup> the former commander of the rebels in the toparchy of Acrabatene, where, as already mentioned, his decisive and extremist conduct of the war had brought

<sup>327</sup> W. R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots and Josephus* (New York 1956), p. 65.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84ff.

<sup>329</sup> O. Michel, 'Simon bar Giora', *Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Papers I* (Jerusalem 1967), pp. 77–80.

him into conflict with the central command in Jerusalem. Taking refuge in Masada, he had launched a guerrilla campaign made up of short forays, but did not manage to involve those who had previously taken refuge in the fortress. His raids struck all over Idumaea, naturally provoking hostility and conflict among the inhabitants and apprehension in the Zealot groups. Simon bar Giora succeeded in gaining control of Hebron for a time. His bands were swollen by the liberation of the slaves and the influx of free rebels, not only from the lower classes. Messianic aspirations and designs on kingship lent a certain nobility to his deeds and justified their extremist character. They were directed rather against the moderate and propertied elements than against the Romans, whose forces, meanwhile, were coming to reduce Idumaea to obedience. In the end Simon, too, was unable to resist the ideological and religious significance of Jerusalem and he went into the capital.

At the beginning of summer CE 69 Vespasian had resumed military operations in Western Judaea and in Idumaea. Soon the Jews, apart from Jerusalem, held only the fortresses of Herodion, Masada and Machaerus. On the first of July CE 69 Vespasian was acclaimed Emperor in Egypt, then by the legions of Syria and Palestine, and finally by the entire East. Josephus, who, after his capture, had predicted to Vespasian his accession as emperor, was set free. Once again, operations were suspended in Judaea. Vespasian went to Alexandria whence in the second half of 70 he made his way to Rome. The prosecution of the war was entrusted to his son Titus, who had already served under his father in the general staff of the army in Judaea.

During this new pause in the war, the internal conflicts within Jerusalem between the faction leaders had become still worse, because inevitably each of them aspired to a position of pre-eminence. The agreement between the group led by John of Gischala and the Zealots had come apart, and the Zealots, under the guidance of Eleazar son of Simon, had retired into the inner courts of the Temple. John of Gischala dominated the Temple hill and part of the lower city. The strongest grouping was that of Simon bar Giora, the last of the leaders to enter Jerusalem; he controlled the upper city and a great part of the lower.<sup>330</sup> The daily fights between the three factions led to the destruction of huge deposits of provisions, weakening the possibilities of any future resistance. If the life of the population, apparently extraneous to the struggle, was subjected to the tragedy of civil war, normal religious activity was not hindered in the Temple, to which pilgrims even from abroad continued to flock. On the

<sup>330</sup> *Jos. Bell.* v.2–38.

very occasion of Passover in CE 70, taking advantage of the opening of the Temple doors, John of Gischala succeeded in penetrating into the interior and overcoming the Zealot faction of Eleazar: during those same days the Roman troops had begun to lay siege to the city.

The army controlled by Titus had been reinforced by a fourth legion; in the general staff the predominant role was now held by Tib. Julius Alexander, whom a papyrus text designates directly as *praefectus praetorio*.<sup>331</sup> His presence bears witness to the recognition of the importance of political factors in this final phase of the war. The siege operations were complex because of the nature of the terrain, the powerful fortifications of the city, and the determination of the defenders. Faced with the ultimate danger, the two remaining warring factions united their efforts. In the beginning the Romans even suffered some reverses, and later too the delicate siege works were often interrupted and ruined by daring sorties.

The attack was launched from the north side of the city, the most accessible in point of terrain, but naturally the one that had always been best protected by various defensive layers. The first, outer wall fell into Roman hands about the month of May; soon afterwards the second, too, was taken. The Romans then came up against the walls protecting the upper city, defended by Simon bar Giora, and on the east they were faced with the Antonia fortress, where John of Gischala was in control, and the powerful independent defence system of the Temple. The attack was conducted according to the usual method of the *aggeres* (camp surrounded by a mound), four, one for each legion. The defenders interfered vigorously with the works and the *aggeres* were built with great difficulty; on them were placed the batteries that were to destroy the walls. Josephus, who was a member of Titus' entourage, urged the defenders in vain to surrender. The Romans then resorted to a complete blockage of the city by means of a circumvallation, which put the populace and the defenders in conditions of increasing shortage. At last, towards June, the Antonia fell and was destroyed. Next the Romans besieged the mighty and well-fortified Herodian complex at the Temple, where the daily sacrifice had had to be suspended. The defence presented a weak point in the gates, which were set on fire. On the Jewish 9th of Ab, which falls in the month of August, a war council was probably held in the Roman camp in order to decide whether or not to destroy the Holy of Holies: it is likely that they decided on destruction, although Josephus affirms the contrary and attributes the fire which destroyed the Temple on the following day to

<sup>331</sup> Jos. *Bell.* v.45–6; vi.237; *OGIS* 586 = *IGLS*, 4011; *P. Hibeh* 215; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 1, p. 502, n. 85.

the casual action of one soldier.<sup>332</sup> The Romans were in time, however, to take possession of precious furnishings which later adorned the triumph in Rome.<sup>333</sup>

It is symptomatic that once the Temple, ideological and political centre of the struggle, had fallen, the Jewish defenders declared themselves willing to negotiate, asking to be allowed to retreat into the desert and abandon the city.<sup>334</sup> After this was refused by the Romans, the struggle resumed. Titus captured the lower city and attacked the higher part, whose defence was centred on Herod's palace in the north-west corner. The conquest was completed, amid unspeakable massacres and fires and pillage, on the 8th day of the month of Gorpiaeus (August–September CE 70) after a siege of five months. Of the two leaders of the defenders who were brought to Rome for the triumph, John of Gischala was condemned to life imprisonment, but Simon bar Giora was put to death: thus the Romans recognized his pre-eminence and greater potential danger.

There still remained three nuclei of resistance in Judaea: the fortresses of Herodion, immediately south of Jerusalem, Machaerus in Peraea, and Masada by the Dead Sea south of En Gedi. The former two fell into Roman hands, apparently between CE 71 and 72 during the governorship of Lucilius Bassus, a legate of pretorian rank, who died soon afterwards. A more complex problem was presented in capturing Masada, on account of its very strong natural position and the defensive provisions prepared by King Herod. The fortress had been taken in a sudden coup at the beginning of the revolt in CE 66, and later there had been an influx from Jerusalem, after the killing of Menachem son of Judas the Galilean, of groups of Menachem's followers, described by Josephus as '*sicarii*', led by Eleazar son of Jair. The attitude of these insurgents during the Roman

<sup>332</sup> Jos. *Bell.* vi.236–43; a statement to the contrary in Sulpicius Severus, *Chronic.* ii.30, 6–7 (cf. Stern with comments in *GLAJJ* ii, 64–7), which is perhaps dependent on Tacitus: J. Bernays, 'Über die Chronik des Sulpicius Severus' in J. Bernays, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* 2 (Berlin 1885), pp. 159–81. See also H. W. Montefiore, 'Sulpicius Severus and Titus' Council of War', *Hist.* 11 (1962), pp. 156–70; I. Weiler 'Titus und die Zerstörung des Tempels von Jerusalem – Absicht oder Zufall?' *Klio* 50 (1968), 139–58; G. Alon, 'The Burning of the Temple' in *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World* (Jerusalem 1977), pp. 252–68. On the presentation of Titus in Josephus: Z. Yavetz, 'Reflections on Titus and Josephus', *GRBS* 16 (1975) 411–32. A view favoring Josephus' account is defended in T. Rajak, *Josephus: the Historian and His Society*, pp. 206–11.

<sup>333</sup> Jos. *Bell.* vii.148–9; cf. vi.387–91. Both Vespasian and Titus benefited from the victory as is celebrated in the famous Arch of Titus (photograph and brief description in U. Rappaport, 'Titus, Arch of' in *EncJud* 15, p. 1168), in its lost predecessor (inscription preserved in the Einsiedeln Itinerary, see *CIL* 6.944), and in statuary and coins of the period; see H. St. J. Hart, 'Judaea and Rome: the Official Commentary', *JTS* n.s. 3 (1952), pp. 172–98.

<sup>334</sup> Jos. *Bell.* vi.323–51.

siege of Jerusalem had been one of inertia, perhaps because they had decided, after the slaughter of their chief, deliberately to distance themselves from those rebels who held the Temple as their political and ideological point of reference.<sup>335</sup> They had confined themselves to short-range plundering raids in the vicinity, as far as En Gedi, and had refused to join in the larger-scale undertakings of Simon bar Giora.<sup>336</sup> Sustained by the strongest self-discipline and the deepest devotion to the doctrine of the 'fourth philosophy' that there is no other master but God, they were able to hold out for a long time against the Roman siege directed by the new legate, L. Flavius Silva Nonius Bassus.<sup>337</sup> When resistance appeared no longer possible, Eleazar and his people, to avoid falling into enemy hands and to reaffirm their faith in an eternal freedom, gave the most striking example, though not the only one in the war, of collective religious suicide. It was the 15 of Xanthikos (about April), CE 73.<sup>338</sup> For all that his own political choice lay in the opposite direction, and although he describes the '*sicarii*' in the worst possible terms, Josephus nevertheless admits the heroism of this decision to commit collective suicide, and gives to Eleazar one of the three great speeches included in his work;<sup>339</sup>

<sup>335</sup> Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, p. 372; ET *The Zealots*, p. 365.

<sup>336</sup> *Jos. Bell.* iv.399–405; 505–7.

<sup>337</sup> Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, pp. 546–47. For an analysis of the excavations at Masada see Y. Yadin, 'The Excavation of Masada – 1963/64: Preliminary Report', *IEJ* 15, 1–2 (1965), 1–120; and the collection *Masada I–V: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965, Final Reports*, 5 vols. (Jerusalem 1989–95).

<sup>338</sup> The attempt by W. Eck, 'Die Eroberung von Masada und eine neue Inschrift des L. Flavius Silva Nonius Bassus', *ZNW* 66 (1969), 282–9 and also Eck, *Senatoren von Vespasian bis Hadrian*, Vestigia 13 (Munich 1970), pp. 93–111 to move this incident to 74 seems rather unlikely: G. W. Bowersock, 'Old and New in the History of Judaea', *JRS* 65 (1975), pp. 183–4. Josephus records that 960 men, women and children participated in the group suicide (*Bell.* vii. 400, with some textual variation); however, the discovery of only 25 skeletons from the period and difficulties in Josephus' account have suggested to some a much lower figure later embellished by Josephus (see S. J. D. Cohen, 'Masada: Literary Tradition, Archaeological Remains, and the Credibility of Josephus', *JJS* 33 (1982), 385–405; J. Zias, D. Segal and I. Carmi, 'The Human Skeletal Remains from the Northern Cave at Masada – A Second Look' in *Masada IV: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965, Final Reports* (Jerusalem 1994), pp. 366–7); but cf. more optimistic assessments in L. H. Feldman, 'Masada: A Critique of Recent Scholarship' in *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults*, vol. 3, ed. by J. Neusner (Leiden 1975), pp. 218–48; T. Rajak, *Josephus: the Historian and His Society*, pp. 219–22; R. R. Newell, 'The Forms and Historical Value of Josephus' Suicide Accounts' in *Josephus, the Bible, and History*, ed. L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1989), pp. 288–91.

<sup>339</sup> *Jos. Bell.* vii.323–36, 341–88. A similar heroic assessment in e.g. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, pp. 268–71; ET *The Zealots*, pp. 262–5; Cohen, 'Masada: Literary Tradition, Archaeological Remains, and the Credibility of Josephus', pp. 386–93; a different view is taken by D. J. Ladouceur, who argues that Josephus presents the suicide as a

in this speech he recognizes the ‘philosophy’ and the followers of Judas the Galilean as the first instigators of anti-Roman opposition and the last champions of resistance to Rome, so that the fall of Masada seems to mark, at least for a time (and not only from the Roman political and administrative point of view) the close of a cycle which had begun in CE 6.

With the ending of the insurrection, conditions in Judaea were profoundly changed, including the disappearance of all forms of self-government. It remained an imperial province in the Roman administrative system, but now with senatorial governors (legates) of praetorian rank, flanked as was customary by equestrian procurators. The legate was at the same time commander of the Legio X Fretensis which was left, with other auxiliary troops, to control the region, and stationed close to Jerusalem. The legal status of the land also changed, becoming the Emperor’s private property and considered as being held on a leasehold basis. Grants of land were made to soldiers at Emmaus;<sup>340</sup> supporters of Rome, including Josephus himself, were rewarded with lands.<sup>341</sup> It remained for the historian, a protagonist and spectator of the tragic events of the insurrection and the war, a friend of Rome but firmly committed to his own traditional culture (whose apologist he later became), to face the harrowing task of investigating the causes and charting the course of the dramatic destiny of his people.

daimonically impelled act which ultimately serves divine retribution on the *sicarii* (‘Masada: A Consideration of the Literary Evidence’, *GRBS* 21 (1980), 245–60; *idem* ‘Josephus and Masada’ in *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity*, ed. L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1987), pp. 95–113). For analyses of Eleazar’s speech see M. Bünker, ‘Die rhetorische Disposition der Eleazarreden’, *Kairos* 23 (1981), 100–7; M. Luz, ‘Eleazar’s Second Speech on Masada and Its Literary Precedents’, *Rheinisches Museum* 126 (1983), 25–43.

<sup>340</sup> Jos. *Bell.* VII.216–17.

<sup>341</sup> Jos. *Vita* 422, 425. See the analysis of Vespasian’s leasings in S. Applebaum, ‘Judaea as a Roman Province’ in *ANRW* II.8, pp. 385–95.



## CHAPTER 6

THE DIASPORA IN THE ROMAN  
PERIOD BEFORE CE 70

Rome's acquisition of a territorial empire in the eastern Mediterranean between the mid second and the mid first century BCE put all the numerous Diaspora communities of Greece, the Aegean islands, Crete, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Syria, and Cyrenaica under her rule. The annexation of Egypt in 30 BCE, closing the only gap in the ring of provinces bordering the Mediterranean, brought into the empire what was probably the largest of all Diaspora communities at the time, that of Alexandria, as well as many smaller Jewish settlements up-country in Egypt. In the west the Jewish community in Rome, apparently dating back at least to the mid second century, was dramatically enlarged in 62 BCE when Pompey returned from eastern campaigns which had included the capture of Jerusalem with thousands of Jewish prisoners-of-war, who were sold into slavery after walking in his triumphal procession and later, on regaining their freedom by manumission, settled permanently in the city.

With the annexation of the province of Judaea in CE 6, all Jews except the Babylonian Diaspora were under Roman rule. The *pax Romana* and the improvements in communications which followed the expansion of Roman power throughout the Mediterranean world facilitated movement and the development of Diaspora communities in Italy and the western provinces. No date or origin can be assigned to the numerous settlements eventually known in the west, and some may have been founded as a result of the dispersal of Palestinian Jews after the revolts of CE 66–70 and 132–5, but it is reasonable to conjecture that many, such as the settlement in Puteoli attested in 4 BCE,<sup>1</sup> went back to the late republic or early empire and originated in voluntary emigration and the lure of trade and commerce. No accurate estimate can be made of the numerical size of the Diaspora in the Roman period, but it is clear that in the eastern provinces at least, Jews formed a significant portion of Rome's subjects.

<sup>1</sup> Jos., *Ant.* xvii.328 and *Bell.* ii.104 (Dicaearchia = Puteoli); see M. H. Williams, *The Jews among the Greeks and Romans*, passages 1.28 (and n. 18), 1.74, vi.20. Sources translated with comment in this book are relevant throughout chapter 6.



The ability of the Diaspora Jews to resist assimilation into the gentile environment, except in the superficial matter of language assimilation for everyday contacts, and their refusal to compromise their religion by making modifications in their own practices or concessions to paganism, produced closely knit, exclusive groups. Exclusiveness bred unpopularity, which in its turn bred antisemitism. In taking over the administration of countries with Diaspora communities, Rome automatically took over the problem of antisemitism and with it the necessity of formulating a Jewish policy. In handling a religious minority which would countenance neither compromise nor assimilation and which, moreover, was liable to be at odds with its gentile neighbours, the alternatives facing Rome were suppression on the one hand and on the other toleration reinforced by active measures of protection against gentile molestation. There was no call for the suppression of Judaism, since as a cult it fulfilled the Roman criteria for permitted survival: it was morally unobjectionable and, among the Diaspora, politically innocuous. It was therefore accorded toleration in the late republican period, followed by positive protection when a charter of Jewish religious liberty was formulated by Julius Caesar and reaffirmed, with some extensions, by Augustus.<sup>2</sup> The legislation of Caesar and Augustus established Judaism as a *religio licita*,<sup>3</sup> an authorized cult, throughout the empire, the status which it was to retain for over three centuries apart from a brief period of restriction under Hadrian.

Toleration involved granting the Jews *ad hoc* exemptions from specific Roman requirements which caused them religious embarrassment. The earliest concerned the Temple-tax, first heard of in a Roman context in 88 BCE, when a large sum collected in Asia Minor and awaiting shipment to Jerusalem was looted by Mithridates.<sup>4</sup> When, some time before 63 BCE, Rome prohibited the export of precious metals from the empire, an exception was evidently made in favour of the Diaspora to enable them to pay their Temple-tax. For one of the counts against Lucius Valerius Flaccus, proconsul of Asia in 62 BCE, at his trial for maladministration was that he had illegally rescinded the Jews' privilege in his province and confiscated the Temple-tax collected in four cities.<sup>5</sup> But he enjoys an almost unique position as a Roman official who flouted a Jewish right.<sup>6</sup> Normally Rome's representatives stood as the Jews' defenders.

A second exemption was granted in 49 BCE and extended in 43, when recruiting was in progress in the east during the Roman civil wars. Though

<sup>2</sup> For discussion see T. Rajak, 'Was There a Roman Charter for the Jews?'; J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, pp. 277–8.

<sup>3</sup> Tertullian's phrase in *Apologeticus* XXI.1; it is not found in any contemporary document.

<sup>4</sup> *Jos. Ant.* XIV.112–13. <sup>5</sup> Cicero, *Pro Flacco* XXVIII.66–9.

<sup>6</sup> See below, p. 181 for A. Avillius Flaccus in Egypt.

conscription into the Roman army had by then largely been replaced by voluntary enlistment, it could still be applied in times of crisis. Since dietary laws and Sabbath observance inevitably made military service in gentile units difficult or impossible for Jews, the Roman official in charge of recruiting in Asia Minor in 49 responded to an appeal by exempting practising Jews who held Roman citizenship from call-up into the legions. The numbers involved will surely have been too small to have made any appreciable difference, but the Roman action is significant as evidence that it was considered worthwhile to conciliate the Diaspora in the area by a gesture of sympathy towards their religion. When the question recurred in 43, the exemption was extended to non-citizen Jews who might otherwise have been called upon for non-legionary service.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, shortly before his death in 44 BCE, Julius Caesar had replaced isolated exemptions by comprehensive legislation giving the Jews positive rights and putting the practice of Judaism in all its aspects on a legal footing. This had been necessitated by a problem which had arisen in the capital itself. For convenience Rome classified the separate synagogues into which a Jewish community of any size, such as that in Rome had recently become, divided itself as *collegia*, artisans' social and mutual benefit clubs, though in fact the resemblance was confined to the possession of funds and the holding of meetings open to members only; synagogues had wider functions (administrative, educational and judicial) in relation to their members than *collegia*, and though individually autonomous like *collegia*, they jointly comprised the wider whole of the Jewish community in the city and formed a part of worldwide Jewry; and membership was both automatic for and exclusive to Jews and proselytes without question of admission on application. The *collegia* had for some years been misused for subversive political purposes and had developed into such a public nuisance that Caesar had them all disbanded except those of reputable antiquity and social respectability.<sup>8</sup> The latter included the synagogues, and the Jews' rights were then explicitly spelled out: they were authorized to build 'prayer-houses', to assemble for Sabbath services and festivals, and to collect and transmit the Temple-tax; their Scriptures and Temple-tax were declared sacrosanct, theft or damage by Gentiles being punishable as sacrilege; and their freedom of conscience as individuals was protected by exemption from summonses to law on the Sabbath, when they would lose their cases by default. This legislation, called for by the situation in Rome, was made of universal validity, since the basic identity of the position and needs of all Diaspora communities

<sup>7</sup> Jos., *Ant.* xiv.223–34.

<sup>8</sup> Suetonius, *Divus Iulius* xlii.3. For discussion see Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, p. 135, n. 52 and (against the view that synagogues were classified as *collegia*) Williams, 'The Structure of the Jewish Community in Rome', 216–21.

gave no grounds for discrimination between one group and another in the empire, and Josephus quotes a number of documents from the time of Caesar laying down Jewish privileges in various cities in the province of Asia.<sup>9</sup> Small wonder that Jews were conspicuous among the international crowd of mourners round Caesar's funeral pyre in the forum.

During the political chaos which followed the murder of Caesar his ban on *collegia* lapsed. When the emperor Augustus found it advisable to re-impose it and to disband illegally re-established *collegia*, the synagogues, as old and legally authorized associations, received continued exemption on the same terms as before.<sup>10</sup> But Augustus also made additions to the Jewish charter of religious liberty. By that time the descendants of Pompey's war captives were acquiring Roman citizenship and so becoming eligible for the monthly 'corn-doles' to the poorer citizens which were a feature of the Roman social scene. Augustus enacted that if the distribution fell on a Sabbath, the share due to Jewish citizens should be held over until the next day.<sup>11</sup> Two exemptions then completed Jewish privileges: the temporary exemption from military service granted in the east during the civil wars was made both universal and permanent;<sup>12</sup> and the Jews were excused participation in the imperial cult which was in process of being established throughout the empire. Any attempt to force emperor-worship on a protected, monotheistic cult would have been a contradiction in terms, and just as the new cult was not introduced into the province of Judaea in CE 6, so for the Diaspora exemption was so automatic and integral an item in their religious freedom that the privilege, though implicit at every turn, is nowhere explicitly laid down.

The legislation of Caesar and Augustus putting Judaism in a position of privilege did not kill antisemitic feeling but may even have exacerbated it by adding jealousy to existing gentile emotions towards the Jews. The latter part of Augustus' principate saw a crop of appeals by Jewish delegations to Roman officials in the east, and on one occasion to the emperor himself, against local attacks on their position in the provinces of Asia and Cyrenaica. Friction over the civic status which Jewish settlers had attained in Greek cities before the Roman period<sup>13</sup> may have lain behind the hostility which the Greeks now manifested in infringements of Jewish rights, but where religious privileges were called in question the chief bone of contention between the Jews and the local municipal authorities was the Temple-tax, which was repeatedly confiscated on various pretexts,

<sup>9</sup> Jos., *Ant.* xiv.213–16; 241–6; 256–64. For analysis of Roman documents quoted in *Antiquities* books 14 and 16, see Rajak, 'Charter' and Barclay, *Diaspora*, pp. 262–4, 275–9.

<sup>10</sup> Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* xxxii.1; Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 156–7; 311–16.

<sup>11</sup> Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 158.

<sup>12</sup> This is implied by the complaint against compulsory military service in Jos. *Ant.* xvi.28.

<sup>13</sup> To be discussed below, p. 177.

while the emissaries carrying the actual cash to Jerusalem were an obvious prey for freebooters despite Roman declarations that they should be allowed to travel unmolested. In every case Rome answered the appeal with decrees reasserting Jewish rights, and her determination to enforce her own rulings on the position of the Diaspora seems eventually to have come home to the Greeks.<sup>14</sup> The latest extant Roman decree dates from CE 2/3, and after that the silence of history witnesses, albeit not conclusively, to the establishment of at least a *modus vivendi*, even if not of racial harmony, between Jew and gentile in the two provinces.

## I JEWS IN ROME

The Roman Diaspora, living under the eye of the central government, escaped the problem of the hostility of jealous gentile cities; but they present a different, and at first sight surprising, picture, occasionally suffering repressive action from the very authorities who were pledged to the protection of their religious liberty. Trouble had first occurred almost a century before Caesar's legislation, when in 139 BCE the Jewish community in Rome, which must then have been very small, is said to have been expelled for activities which seem to have involved or consisted of attempts to proselytize among the Romans.<sup>15</sup> The close coincidence of date between this event and the embassy from Simon Maccabaeus seeking a renewal of the alliance between Rome and the Jews suggests some connection between them,<sup>16</sup> and the explanation of the expulsion may be that Rome's favourable reception of the embassy suggested approval of the Jewish religion and encouraged the local residents to undertake some propaganda on behalf of their religion, but that Rome, though ready to support Judaea politically as a diplomatic move against Syria, had no wish to see an oriental cult getting a foothold among Italians. If so, this early attack on proselytism set a precedent which was to be followed for centuries.

From the second half of the first century BCE until at least the late first century CE the main area of Jewish residence in Rome was the north bank of the Tiber (modern Trastevere), which Philo describes as being 'owned and inhabited by Jews, the majority of them Roman freedmen'.<sup>17</sup> The oldest and largest of the Jewish catacombs so far discovered in Rome, at

<sup>14</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XVI.27–60; 160–78.

<sup>15</sup> Valerius Maximus I.iii.3 (surviving only in the fourth- or fifth-century CE epitomes of Julius Paris and Nepotianus discussed by Goodman, *Mission*, 82–3; Carleton Paget, 'Jewish Proselytism', 87).

<sup>16</sup> The embassy appears to be dated 139 BCE in I Maccabees, but may be put back to 142 BCE on prosopographical grounds; see T. R. S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* (New York 1951), I, p. 476, n. 1, cf. p. 491, n. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 155.

Monteverde in Trastevere, was in use from the first century BCE until the time of Diocletian. It was only from the Flavian period onwards, when prisoners taken in the two Palestinian revolts swelled Jewish numbers, that settlements of any size were established on the left bank of the river and that catacombs were dug there for their convenience. The average social and economic level of Roman Jews seems to have remained consistently low. Literary allusions to them may be biased and selective, but the poor quality of most of the epitaphs from the Jewish catacombs, in material, style, spelling and syntax alike, point to a lack of both money and education, and only a small proportion of the burials rise to epitaphs even of this standard. (It is of interest to note in passing that a mere quarter of the epitaphs are in Latin, while the rest, except for a negligible number in Hebrew or Aramaic, are in Greek; the *koiné* of the emigrés' homeland was evidently kept alive for this purpose, though it can hardly have been in everyday use.) The prosperous Jew, envied for his wealth, was a figure of the mediaeval world, not of the Roman.

The catacomb inscriptions preserve the names of eleven synagogues in Rome. Some simply designate localities, but others are the names of patrons, and of these the most significant is the 'synagogue of the Augustans'. What, if anything, the imperial patronage amounted to in practice is unknown, but the choice of the name clearly recorded the Jews' gratitude for Augustus' protection of their rights. The patron of the 'synagogue of the Agrippans' is most likely to have been Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa who, as a friend of Herod the Great and Augustus' viceregent in the east in 14 BCE, had answered one of the appeals of the Diaspora against gentile molestation discussed above (though the Jewish king Agrippa I is also a possibility). The Jews in Rome gave spontaneous testimony to their contentment and sense of security there when in 4 BCE eight thousand of them (evidence, incidentally, for the size of the community)<sup>18</sup> supported a delegation from Judaea requesting direct rule for the country after Herod's death.

This harmony, however, was to be broken before long. In CE 19, under Augustus' successor Tiberius, a decree was passed by the senate conscripting four thousand Jews and proselytes in Rome for military service against brigands in Sardinia, and expelling the rest of the community, under pain of reduction to slavery without the possibility of subsequent manumission, unless they gave up their 'outlandish rites' by a certain date.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Jos. *Ant.* xvii.300. On the size of the community, cf. Barclay, *Diaspora*, p. 295.

<sup>19</sup> Tacitus, *Annals* ii.lxxxv, 5; Suetonius, *Tiberius* xxxvi.1. The phrase 'of the freedman class' by which Tacitus describes the conscripts presumably covers the descendants of freedmen, since four thousand actual manumitted slaves would presuppose an impossibly large Jewish community in Rome.

The inclusion of proselytes in the order together with the offer of immunity from expulsion to apostates (likely to appeal more to proselytes than to Jews) shows that the Roman objection to Judaism at this point was religious, not racial. (It will therefore be clear that we have used the term antisemitism in this chapter without racial connotation: anti-Judaism might be more appropriate. ‘The basic cause of Greco-Roman anti-Semitism lay in Jewish separatism. This means, in the last analysis, that it lay in their religion, since the religion produced the separatism. Any racist element was entirely lacking.’)<sup>20</sup>

The community at large can have been guilty of no indictable offence, if last-minute apostasy could save them; and the simultaneous expulsion of the devotees of the Egyptian cult of Isis marks the decree as a measure towards the religious purification of the city. The only reason given for it is a large-scale Jewish proselytizing campaign, and the immediate episode said to have provoked it was a confidence trick played on a wealthy proselyte from the Roman nobility by four scoundrels from Judaea, who extracted expensive gifts for the Temple from her and then absconded with their loot.<sup>21</sup> At this period Gentiles who were finding formal state religious cults inadequate for their emotional and spiritual needs were in search of more satisfying substitutes, and while some turned to philosophy or eastern mystery religions, others turned to Judaism, though loose adherence to the synagogue by the adoption of monotheism, Sabbath-observance, food laws, and the main requirements of the moral code was probably commoner than full commitment to Judaism by circumcision. The conversion of Greeks or Syrians to Judaism probably mattered little in Roman eyes, and as long as proselytism in Italy had been largely confined to the lower strata of society, to which most Jews belonged, it had apparently been ignored of late. But now it had penetrated the Roman upper classes, and the conversion of a lady of rank was both conspicuous and disturbing to a conservative emperor; in itself it set an undesirable precedent, while the swindle revealed the risks run by wealthy converts. Steps were therefore taken to discourage proselytism by removing potential preachers of the faith from Rome, to encourage recantation by the offer of a free pardon, and to deter would-be converts by the sight of the punishment of obdurate proselytes along with Jews.

An expulsion order could be served only on aliens, who technically lacked the right of residence. Jews and proselytes with Roman citizenship could not be summarily ejected, and it was to circumvent this difficulty

<sup>20</sup> M. Simon, *Verus Israel* (Paris 1964, ET Oxford 1986), p. 202.

<sup>21</sup> Dio Cassius LVII.xviii.5a; Jos., *Ant.* xviii.65–84; see Carleton Paget, ‘Jewish Proselytism’, 88–90.

that the Jewish privilege of exemption from military service was withdrawn locally and temporarily and that conscription, a rare measure now, was applied to them. But despite the use of the double-edged sword of conscription combined with expulsion, a considerable number of Jews must have fallen outside the scope of the decree – all Jewesses with Roman citizenship, any male citizens who were above or below military age, and Jewish slaves under their owners' control.

Philo credits Tiberius' potent minister Sejanus with an antisemitic policy and a barely credible scheme for the extermination of all Jews in the empire, a scheme foiled in the nick of time by his downfall and death in CE 31.<sup>22</sup> The measures against the Roman Diaspora just related were not a part of this, since Sejanus was not the power behind the throne as early as CE 19, and the nature of the 'upheaval' in Italy which Sejanus' threat created is not recorded. But the danger passed and the security of the Jews' position was restored when Tiberius reacted to Sejanus' death with a reaffirmation of their religious liberty and the issue of orders to provincial governors to protect them. There is no inherent contradiction between this action and the measure of twelve years earlier. Rather, two complementary facets of the Roman attitude towards the Jews are here displayed: their universal right to practise their religion was recognized, but Roman protection was implicitly conditional on their conforming to normal standards of social behaviour, and if they traded on their privileges locally to contravene Roman law or to endanger public order or morality, they came under the penalties of the law; any resultant loss of privilege, however, was purely local and temporary, without effect on the overall rights and position of the Jews and Judaism elsewhere.

The duration of the Jews' military service and exclusion from Rome is not recorded, but it is possible that Tiberius' repudiation of Sejanus' antisemitic policy was the signal for their return to Rome. They were certainly back in large numbers by CE 41, when they again came under restrictions. In the first year of his reign the emperor Claudius deprived them of their right of assembly.<sup>23</sup> Their offence is not stated, but a gratuitous attack by an emperor who, however eccentric, was just and humane, is unlikely, and the link made by Dio Cassius, our sole authority for the episode, between this measure and a further ban on the perennial troublemakers, the *collegia*, suggests police action in the face of some kind of disorder.<sup>24</sup> Claudius' reason for choosing the temporary closure of the

<sup>22</sup> Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 159–61.

<sup>23</sup> Some scholars conflate this episode with that of 49 (below), some accepting 41 as the date and others 49. Others posit two episodes. The problem is addressed concisely by Barclay, *Diaspora*, pp. 303–6; see also H. Botermann, *Das Judenedikt des Kaisers Claudius*.

<sup>24</sup> Dio Cassius LX.vi.6.



synagogues instead of expulsion as his method of combating it may well have been, not an increase in Jewish numbers as such in Rome (as alleged by Dio), but an increase since CE 19 in the number of Jews with Roman citizenship, which carried immunity from expulsion. In the same year, as will be shown below, Claudius was reaffirming Jewish rights in the eastern provinces, but here again, as in the case of Tiberius, there was no fundamental incompatibility between a general defence of the rights of the Diaspora and the temporary withdrawal of a single right from a single community which had so abused it as to form a threat to public security.

A few years later disorder recurred in Rome, and in CE 49 Claudius expelled 'Jews who were continually rioting at the instigation of Chrestus'.<sup>25</sup> There can be no reasonable doubt that, despite Suetonius' misspelling of the name, the reference is to Christianity, and that the trouble was disturbances in the reopened synagogues caused by the advent of Christian missionaries – disturbances such as had resulted from Paul's attempts to evangelize in the synagogues. The offence, in Roman eyes, lay not in Christian doctrines in themselves but in the breaches of the peace to which their preaching led. Luke, mentioning the expulsion to explain the arrival of a Christian couple from Italy in Corinth, says that Claudius had expelled 'all the Jews' from Rome.<sup>26</sup> But apart from the fact that some, or many, of them were immune from expulsion, there is no need to take Suetonius' sentence to mean more than that the actual disturbers of the peace were ejected (after due trial and conviction, if citizens), whether they were Jews resisting the introduction of heretical doctrines or Christian missionaries of Jewish race. The number involved need not have been large; Tacitus' silence about the episode suggests an operation on a much smaller scale than that of CE 19.

One of the most notorious events of Nero's reign was the great fire which devastated the greater part of Rome in CE 64 and his subsequent attack on the Christians in the city who, according to Tacitus (but to no other ancient author), fell victim to a charge of arson fabricated against them to deflect the blame for starting the fire away from the emperor himself. The intricacies of the problems raised by this 'persecution' lie outside the scope of this work, but it is relevant from a negative point of view. There is no suggestion anywhere that the Jews were under any threat at the time, which would seem to be evidence that even at this early date Rome already recognized Christianity as a sect distinct from and hostile to its parent Judaism, even if not yet as a fully independent religion. And it is possible that if, as writers other than Tacitus imply, the

<sup>25</sup> Suetonius, *Divus Claudius* xxv.4. Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos* vii.vi.15, gives the date.

<sup>26</sup> Acts 18:2.



persecution of the Christians was unconnected with the fire, it was instigated by the Jews in an attempt to enlist the might of their protector against the threat posed to their religion by the successes of the break-away sect.<sup>27</sup>

## II JEWS IN THE GREEK CITIES OF THE EASTERN PROVINCES

In Rome questions of public order brought the Jews into occasional conflict with the government. In the Greek cities of the eastern provinces, however, a different situation obtained. When friction arose there during the Roman period between the Jews and the local municipal authorities, flaring up at times into active hostility and mob violence, the basic cause seems to have been tension over questions concerning the civic status of the resident Diaspora communities *vis-à-vis* the Greek citizen bodies of the host cities. A large Jewish community in a Greek city not only formed synagogues but was organized as a unit known as a *politeuma*, a quasi-autonomous civic corporation with its own council of officials, exercising administrative and judicial power over its own members independently of the municipal authorities of the city in which it was established, and forming in effect a city within a city.<sup>28</sup> This type of self-government, attested in such major cities as Alexandria, Antioch, Sardis, Ephesus, Cyrene and Berenice, was probably standard for Jewish communities of any size in the east, and some *politeumata* dated well back into the Hellenistic period. The members of a Jewish *politeuma* could describe themselves as ‘citizens’ (*politai*)<sup>29</sup> of that corporation, but the evidence of Alexandria, where conditions are known in the greatest detail, indicates that most such Jews did not possess dual citizenship: as individuals they could gain admission to the Greek citizen body while probably still retaining their membership of the *politeuma* (a few cases, such as Philo’s brother in Alexandria, are known), but the *politeuma* as a corporation stood apart from it and did not share the franchise of the city with the Greeks. Technically, therefore, the majority of the members of a Jewish *politeuma* were not integrated into the body politic of the city in which

<sup>27</sup> The view that Nero’s wife was an adherent of Judaism and as such likely to have protected the Jews is questioned by E. M. Smallwood, ‘The alleged Jewish tendencies of Poppaea Sabina’, *JTS* NS 10 (1959), 329–35. Poppaea is judged a sympathizer, not a close adherent, by Williams, ‘θεοσεβής’.

<sup>28</sup> For discussion of *politeuma* see A. Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, G. Lüderitz, ‘What is the Politeuma?’, and Barclay, *Diaspora*, pp. 25 n. 18, 43–4 n. 73, 60–71.

<sup>29</sup> For the view that *politai* designates citizens of a city, not members of a *politeuma*, see Lüderitz, ‘Politeuma?’, pp. 194–5, and Barclay, *Diaspora*, p. 65 and n. 40.

they lived but were metics (*metoeci*), aliens with the right of residence. Herein, apparently, lay the root of the friction in the Roman period: by that time in at any rate some cities the Jewish community, or a section of it, coveted admission to Greek citizenship and were engaged in agitation to have it thrown open to their *politeuma* as a body, while the Greeks, annoyed at their importunity and jealous in addition of the privileged position in which their religion stood under Roman protection, gave vent to their feelings by attacks on Jewish civic rights. The rights of the parallel Greek and Jewish civic organizations may have been roughly equivalent overall, even though not identical, but in prestige Greek citizenship will undoubtedly have ranked higher than membership of a Jewish *politeuma*, and as such have been desirable in the eyes of some Jews. But Greek citizenship involved its holder in pagan civic life, including religious ceremonial, and for this reason it cannot have been coveted by the 'orthodox'. It was presumably the Hellenized, 'modernist' section of a Jewish community, less strict in its observance of the Law than the 'orthodox' and ready to make some sacrifice of religious principle on the altar of political and social advantage, that aspired to Greek citizenship. But even they will hardly have envisaged the complete abandonment of their religion; rather they will have hoped, selfishly, to have the best of both worlds and to enjoy concessions over features of municipal life that were in total conflict with Judaism.<sup>30</sup>

The first recorded quarrel referred to Rome for settlement was at Sardis, where in 49 BCE the Greeks seem to have called into question the Jews' independent internal administration and jurisdiction as a means of undermining their civic position, and the Jews appealed to a Roman official in the province for redress. He responded by informing the city authorities that the status of the Jewish corporation was to remain unaltered, and a few years later, when Caesar's legislation on Jewish religious liberty was being implemented in the eastern provinces in the form of local enactments on the same lines, Sardis uniquely confirmed the civic as well as the religious rights of her Jewish community.<sup>31</sup>

Unprovoked Greek aggression is suggested here, but a clearer picture of the situation in the province of Asia emerges with the appeal made by the Jews of Ionia as a whole in 14 BCE against gentile infringements of their religious rights. One of their grievances was that they were 'forced to take part in civic duties and spend their sacred money on them' despite official exemption,<sup>32</sup> the nub of the complaint presumably being that the

<sup>30</sup> For the question of Diaspora 'orthodoxy', see L. H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, pp. 45–83, and Barclay, *Diaspora*, pp. 83–91.

<sup>31</sup> *Jos. Ant.* XIV.235; 259–61. <sup>32</sup> *Jos. Ant.* XVI.28.

civic duties in question conflicted with their religion. The Greeks countered with a claim that the citizenship of their cities should be restricted to Greeks, since the Jews 'should worship the Ionians' gods, if they were to be their fellows'.<sup>33</sup> In other words, some at least of the Jews in a number of cities were claiming admission to Greek citizenship, while the Greeks, not unreasonably, felt that such admission should entail integration into pagan civic life and that the Jews could not expect to temper the privilege of citizenship with exemption from its uncongenial features, and had accordingly tried to bring the full implications of their claim home to Jewish aspirants to citizenship by imposing financially burdensome liturgies on them. The Roman answer to this item in the Jewish appeal is given vaguely as the maintenance of the *status quo*; to judge from the much more fully documented situation in Alexandria, this will have consisted of confirming the legal existence of the *politeuma* while supporting the Greeks in refusing the Jews wholesale admission to their citizens body.

### III JEWS IN EGYPT

By the time of the Roman annexation of Egypt Jews formed a high proportion of the population of the capital. Of the five districts into which Alexandria was divided, not only the one allotted to the original Jewish settlers but a second also had a preponderance of Jewish inhabitants, while smaller numbers of Jews lived in the other three also. The Greeks of Alexandria bitterly resented the humiliation of annexation, with the prefect of the province resident in their city as an ever-present reminder of it and the army of occupation stationed nearby. The Jews on the other hand, who had played a part in bringing the rule of Rome to Egypt by co-operating with her invading armies in 55 and 48/7 BCE, now benefited by coming under the protection of her law, and the divergent attitudes of the two races towards Roman domination was a factor in the deterioration of relations between them: the Greeks could give direct expression to their feelings towards Rome only by petty acts of discourtesy and insubordination aimed at the visible symbol of her power, the prefect, but they could make indirect attacks on her via her protégés, the Jews. The early principate saw the development of a Greek nationalist, anti-Roman party, from which emanated an unpleasant but entertaining minor literary genre, *The Acts of the Alexandrian Martyrs*, of which scraps survive on papyrus. Most of the fragments recount hearings of Alexandrian embassies or trials of nationalist leaders before various emperors in Rome,

<sup>33</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XII.125–6, in a briefer account of the same episode.

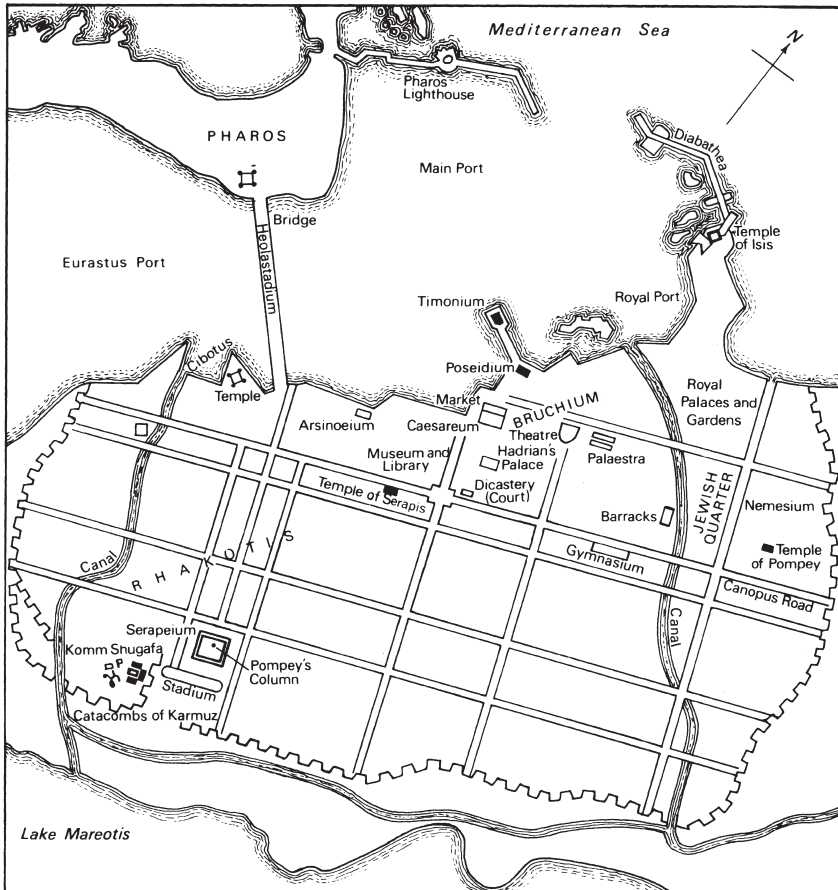


Fig. 6.1 Alexandria in the first century CE.

in all probability basically historical events, though the accounts have been coloured up for the propaganda purpose of representing the Greeks as the fearless opponents and innocent victims of the bias and cruelty of the emperors. The strong antisemitic tone of some of the *Acts* is subsidiary to their primarily anti-Roman tenor.

In organizing the new province of Egypt Augustus took steps to stabilize the civic position which the Jews in Alexandria had enjoyed for over a century by having the rights of their *politeuma* officially set out on an inscription in the city, and he continued to keep the situation under review, intervening in the internal affairs of the *politeuma* in CE 11/12 to

abolish the post of ethnarch (previously its administrative and judicial head) and put the community under the possibly more democratic control of the *gerousia*, the council of seventy-one elders.<sup>34</sup> But while the Jews had their existing political and religious rights maintained by Augustus, in one important matter they received no privilege: they apparently did not share with the Greeks of Alexandria exemption from the *laographia*, the capitation tax which he imposed on the adult male population of the province, or even enjoy the concession of paying at a reduced rate granted to the Greeks of the capitals of the nomes (administrative divisions of Ptolemaic Egypt). Equation with illiterate Egyptian peasants in this matter provided the wealthy, Hellenized Jews of Alexandria with both social and financial incentives for working towards the goal, already desirable on grounds of political prestige, of admission to Greek citizenship, to which the gateway was education in the gymnasium, the Greek cultural centre, as a member of the ephebate. During the early decades of the first century CE the peaceful coexistence of the two parallel civic bodies broke down when some of the Jews, going beyond mere agitation for Greek citizenship such as seems to have occurred in Asia, managed to acquire it by dubious means or began to usurp its rights in advance and to try to insinuate themselves or their sons into the ephebate.

The smouldering friction of a generation or more blazed up into open conflict in CE 38, with the personal problems of Aulus Avillius Flaccus, prefect of Egypt since 32, playing a subsidiary role in the story as told by Philo.<sup>35</sup> The accession of Gaius as emperor in CE 37 made Flaccus' position precarious because of his close association with enemies of Gaius' family in earlier intrigues at the imperial court, and when his preoccupation with his private anxieties led to a deterioration in his hitherto admirable administration. Two of the Greek nationalist leaders, Isidorus and Lampo, conceived the cunning idea of using his fears for their own ends. The former had previously had a passage at arms with Flaccus and had been exiled for instigating hooliganism, but now, with that quarrel ostensibly forgotten, he and Lampo posed as his friends with an offer to protect him from Gaius' vengeance (by what means Philo does not say), if in return he would hand the Jews over to their mercy. Flaccus was tempted and fell, but the appalling sequel of riot and destruction is not wholly to be laid at his door. At this point physical violence and religious persecution were not necessarily in the minds of the nationalists, who apparently merely wanted from Flaccus an enactment which would rule out any possibility of the Jews' advancement as a

<sup>34</sup> Philo, *In Flaccum* 74; cf. V. A. Tcherikover, *CPJ* I, p. 57, n. 22.

<sup>35</sup> *In Flaccum; Legatio ad Gaium* 120–37; Méléze Modrzejewski, *Jews of Egypt*, 161–73.

community to Greek citizenship and perhaps also curtail the rights of the *politeuma*.

Flaccus, prudently, did not court Jewish opposition by an immediate attack on their position, but tried to accustom them to a reduction in privilege by showing bias against them in lawsuits. All hopes, however, that this could be quietly followed by more drastic measures in the nationalists' interest were shattered when in August, CE 38, Agrippa I called at Alexandria en route from Rome to his kingdom. The Jews, bewildered by the unexplained change in Flaccus' treatment of them, asked him, as a close friend of the emperor, to appeal to Rome on their behalf by letter. Unfortunately the king, Agrippa I, was then so misguided as to make a flashy parade through the city with his bodyguard, which nullified any good that his intervention with Gaius might have done by underlining the Greeks' loss of their independent dynasty and thus goading them into an anti-Jewish demonstration. After subjecting Agrippa to verbal abuse, they staged a parody of his parade, using a well-known local idiot to act as king in mock court ceremonial.

Flaccus' failure to stop or punish this insult to Gaius' friend put him more firmly than before in the nationalists' clutches and gave them a free hand for the next few weeks, and at the same time encouraged the Greek mob to make a vicious assault on the Jews by attacking the synagogues despite their sacrosanctity under Roman law. In the parts of Alexandria where Jewish residents were sparse, synagogues were burnt or demolished regardless of the fact that this entailed the destruction of dedications to the emperors in them, while in the two predominantly Jewish districts, where attempts at destruction were more likely to be resisted, they were desecrated by the introduction of portraits of the emperor. But this may have been a mere sideline in the eyes of the Greeks, whose real purpose was the overthrow of Jewish civic ambitions. To satisfy them on that score Flaccus then issued a proclamation degrading the Jews from the position of legal settlers, metics, on which the existence of their *politeuma* depended, to that of aliens without the right of residence. But since the expulsion of such a large community was not a practical possibility, the Jews were deprived of the privilege, without legal basis, of residing in all parts of the city and were confined to the one district allotted to the original settlers, which thus became the first known ghetto in the ancient world. The implementation of this enactment led to serious rioting, as the Greeks hounded the Jews into the ghetto, torturing and massacring those whom they caught outside, and looting Jewish shops and houses. Overcrowding in the ghetto caused the outbreak of an epidemic, while the impossibility of continuing with normal trades and professions led to severe economic hardship. The Jews may have retaliated

with violence, though a search for arms in their houses is said to have produced nothing; for after a vain attempt to find a way out of the anarchy by negotiation, Flaccus arrested over half the members of the *gerousia* and a number of other Jews. Their punishment illustrated the Jewish loss of privilege: the elders were subjected to scourging, from which Jews had previously been exempt; and this was inflicted publicly in the theatre, where the other prisoners were tortured and hanged for the entertainment of the Greeks on the emperor's birthday.

After that climax an uneasy peace seems to have returned, and in October the Jews were partly compensated for their inability to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles properly by the satisfaction of seeing Flaccus arrested and haled off to face trial in Rome (whether for maladministration or on some other charge is not known), where his erstwhile friends Isidorus and Lampo appeared among his accusers. Under his successor the situation improved further, to at least superficial normality, but it remained basically unstable until after the murder of Gaius and the accession of Claudius early in CE 41.

Meanwhile, during the winter of CE 39–40,<sup>36</sup> the two sides dispatched delegations to Rome, the Jews to seek redress for their losses and the Greeks to exculpate themselves for the recent disturbances and to request the emperor to endorse Flaccus' relegation of the Jews to an inferior status in the city. The Greek team of five included Isidorus and the anti-Jewish writer Apion, while the Jews were led by Philo, who describes their experiences vividly.<sup>37</sup> Thanks to Gaius' occupation with other matters, the two delegations did not receive a detailed hearing until the autumn of CE 40, and little heed seems to have been paid to the memorandum which the Jews presented in the meantime setting out the wrongs they had suffered and their claims for redress – the latter perhaps going beyond a request for the reaffirmation of their religious liberty and the reinstatement of their *politeuma* and raising the question of the admission of their whole community to Greek citizenship as a safeguard against further attacks on their position in the city.<sup>38</sup> Philo represents the interview as a farce, conducted in a mansion undergoing renovation for Gaius' use and punctuated by tours of inspection and discussions with the building contractors. But even his tendentious account reveals that Gaius did give some consideration to the Alexandrian problems as well as complaining about the Jews' repudiation of the imperial cult (a complaint

<sup>36</sup> Or 38–9. For arguments in favour of the later year, see E. M. Smallwood, edition of Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* (Leiden 1961), pp. 47–50.

<sup>37</sup> *Legatio ad Gaium* 172–96; 349–73.

<sup>38</sup> For a review of opinion on the citizenship sought by this and the later Jewish delegations, see Barclay, *Diaspora*, pp. 63–71.



inspired by the events of recent months in Judaea) and dragging in the irrelevancy of their abstention from pork. No answer, however, was evidently given on any of the questions submitted, for they were still open when Claudius came to the throne.

The new emperor tackled them almost at once, before word can have reached him of the fresh outbreak of violence in Alexandria which had greeted the news of Gaius' death, violence in which the Jews had this time been the aggressors.<sup>39</sup> In March, CE 41, after giving each delegation a hearing, he addressed an edict to Alexandria reaffirming the Jews' religious liberty and their civic rights as legal settlers in the city, and thus reinstating them in the position which they had held there before August, CE 38.<sup>40</sup> This was an immediate and perhaps only provisional measure to restore stability, going no further than a return to the *status quo ante* and containing no word on the subject of Jewish admission to Greek citizenship. Shortly after that Claudius sought to forestall the possibility that other cities would follow Alexandria's lamentable example by issuing a general edict confirming all Jews throughout the empire in the same privileges as he had just re-established in Alexandria, but reminding them that toleration must be repaid by toleration and that privilege depended on their treating gentile cults with reciprocal respect – a point which he made to the Alexandrian Jews by sending a copy of the edict there also.<sup>41</sup> That Claudius' fear of outbreaks of trouble on the Alexandrian pattern elsewhere was no idle one became clear within a few months, when in the Greek city of Dora, on the Syrian coast, a synagogue was desecrated, apparently gratuitously, by the introduction of a portrait of Claudius; the perpetrators were roundly rebuked by the provincial legate with a citation of the imperial edict.<sup>42</sup>

Claudius' edicts provided the basis for the prefect's restoration of law and order in Alexandria, but tension remained high. In a papyrus letter dated August, CE 41, a Greek warns a friend in financial straits to 'steer clear of the Jews, as everyone does'.<sup>43</sup> The reference is obviously to Jewish money-lenders to whom Greeks normally had recourse but who were now unpopular; but there may be the further implication that Gentiles were at risk if they entered areas of Jewish residence.

Meanwhile the Greeks had sent another delegation to Rome, to congratulate Claudius on his accession, to refer certain municipal problems to him, and to re-open the Jewish question by complaining about the

<sup>39</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.278–9. News will have taken at least a month to travel between Rome and Alexandria in winter.

<sup>40</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.281–5. Cf. V. A. Tcherikover, *CPJ* 153, line 88 (II, p. 41), for the hearing of the delegations.

<sup>41</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.286–92. <sup>42</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XIX.300–12. <sup>43</sup> *CPJ* 152 (II, pp. 33ff).

recent attack. The Jews replied with two delegations – a puzzling duplication, but perhaps representing the internal cleavage between the ‘modernist’ party which aspired to Greek citizenship and the ‘orthodox’ section of the community which was content with the *status quo*. Claudius’ answer to the letters laid before him was given in a lengthy letter, published in Alexandria in November, CE 41, and preserved on a papyrus.<sup>44</sup> The tone of the last section, giving his final and considered verdict on the racial problems in the city, is noticeably sharper than that of the edict penned some six months earlier. Both sides are rebuked impartially for the recent ‘war’ and warned that any recurrence of violence will bring the imperial wrath down heavily on their heads; the Greeks are admonished to treat the Jews, as residents of long standing, with courtesy and consideration, and to respect their religious liberty as recently reaffirmed; the Jews, on the other hand, are told to rest content with their present civic status in a city in which they are strictly speaking foreigners, and not to irritate the Greeks by usurping privileges which are not legally theirs. This statement on the Jewish question goes further than the edict, not merely safeguarding the Jews’ religious liberty and the existence of the *politeuma* but trying also to remove the underlying bone of contention between the two races by a definite rejection of Jewish aspirations to Greek citizenship. With a firm and impartial hand Claudius thus pacifies the Greeks while maintaining Rome’s traditional Jewish policy. But the final thrust in which he threatens the Jews alone with dire consequences if they disobey his injunctions and accuses them of being an empire-wide nuisance may betray exasperation at having had to deal in a single year with trouble from the Jews in Rome as well as in Alexandria and also with a coda to the Alexandrian commotions played out at his own court.<sup>45</sup>

Isidorus and Lampo met their end after a trial before Claudius’ privy council, probably in May, CE 41, known only from *The Acts of the Alexandrian Martyrs*.<sup>46</sup> The dilapidated state of the papyri leaves many details obscure, but it appears that the nationalists were attempting to prosecute Agrippa I for supporting the Alexandrian Jews in subversive activities not confined to their own city. In some way, however, the attack recoiled on their own heads, perhaps because their allegations against the king laid

<sup>44</sup> *CPJ* 153 (II, pp. 36ff).

<sup>45</sup> On Claudius’ conclusion to the matter, cf. Méléze Modrzejewski, *Jews of Egypt*, 173–83; Barclay, *Diaspora*, pp. 59–60; Botermann, *Das Judenedikt*.

<sup>46</sup> The month survives but not the year. Internal evidence points, though shakily, to 53 (and therefore to Agrippa II), and this date is accepted by most scholars. But in this type of literature details are unreliable, and general historical probability, together with the lack of any indication of renewed trouble in 53, points to 41; see V. A. Tcherikover’s commentary in *CPJ* II, pp. 65–9.

them under the serious charge of *calumnia* (false accusation), and they were condemned to death (after Isidorus had hurled some choice abuse at Claudius), to become heroes and martyrs of the Greek nationalist tradition in Alexandria. However little truth there may be in the lively picture of the actual trial, the execution of the two men can be accepted as fact, and with the chief troublemakers eliminated, acute racial tension subsided in Alexandria for twenty-five years.

Though quiescent temporarily, however, the volcano was still active, and the ever-simmering antagonism could erupt at any moment on slight provocation. In the summer of CE 66 a series of clashes (the origin of which is not recorded) occurred, and the efforts of the prefect, Philo's apostate nephew, Tiberius Julius Alexander, to quell them by punishment rather than by mediation only aggravated the situation. The climax came when a large crowd of Jews invaded the Greek assembly on the occasion of a debate about the dispatch of an embassy to Nero, and were correctly, if summarily, ejected. Three of them, however, were dragged off by the Greeks to be burnt alive, whereupon the Jews in revenge made for the amphitheatre, where the assembly was still in session, with firebrands. The prefect, having failed to deter them from arson by an appeal to reason, had to carry out his threat of force and send the army in under orders to disperse the rioters, with bloodshed if necessary, and to ransack the Jewish residential quarters. In this they had the enthusiastic co-operation of the Greeks, and Jewish casualties were put, no doubt with exaggeration, at fifty thousand.<sup>47</sup> In this incident the Jews appear to have been entirely in the wrong, but possibly they had reason to suspect that the purpose of an embassy to the notoriously phil-Hellenic emperor was to re-open the question of their civic position, to their detriment, and wanted to stage a protest.

Whatever its precise genesis, this first clash between the Alexandrian Jews and Roman authority was the unintentional outcome of their perennial feud with the Greeks, and it had no detectable effect on Rome's policy towards them or on their position in the city. Not did Rome's great clash with militant Jewish nationalism in Judaea, when shortly after the end of that war the question of the Jews' civic status in Alexandria was raised again, though this time without violence. In the spring of CE 71 Titus stopped in Alexandria en route from Judaea to Rome, and the Greeks, playing on the hostility which they assumed him to feel towards all Jews after a long and hard-fought war, seized the opportunity to ask him to restrict or abolish the Jewish *politeuma*. Their request may have been made in ignorance of the fact that Titus had just refused an identical

<sup>47</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.487–98.

one in Antioch, where there had recently been racial friction also. Titus naturally gave the same answer in Alexandria<sup>48</sup> as in Antioch, and his action in both cities strikingly typifies the lack of vindictiveness which characterized the Roman attitude towards the Jews after 70.<sup>49</sup>

#### IV JEWS IN ANTIOCH

Antioch produced no Philo, and in consequence information about the large Jewish community there, dating back to the foundation of the city by Seleucus I and organized as a *politeuma* from the mid second century BCE, is much scantier than it is for Alexandria. But it is known that there were three areas of intensive Jewish settlement, the chief one being the suburb of Daphne, and the city was sufficiently attractive in Jewish eyes that in the late first century BCE a company of five hundred Babylonian Jews, apparently under no local pressure, emigrated to Antioch.<sup>50</sup> The annexation of Syria as a province in 63 BCE gave the Jews throughout that country the benefit of Roman protection in the exercise of their religion, and, as in Alexandria, so in Antioch and in other cities with conspicuous Jewish minorities racial tension developed, though its origin and course cannot be traced in equal detail. The evidence all comes from the period of the first Jewish revolt, apart from an isolated reference in the sixth-century chronicler John Malalas to a conflict between circus-factions in Antioch in CE 39–40 which turned into an anti-Jewish riot.<sup>51</sup> Malalas' general unreliability and the absence of the story from Josephus render it suspect, but the date is significant in suggesting some sort of connection, either with the civic disturbances in Alexandria in CE 38–41 or, more probably, with the geographically closer crisis of Gaius' attack on the Temple in CE 38–40. If the riot is historical, it would help to account for Claudius' general edict of CE 41 confirming Jewish rights throughout the empire.

Strangely, Antioch then escaped the epidemic of antisemitic violence which swept Syria hard on the heels of the outbreak of the Jewish revolt in CE 66. In the autumn of that year the expulsion of the Jewish residents from Caesarea, the administrative capital of Roman Judaea, by the Greek majority there provoked other Jews in the province to retaliate by raiding a number of cities on the coast of Syria and in the Decapolis beyond their inland frontier, and in revenge for this Greeks throughout Syria fell on

<sup>48</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XII.121.

<sup>49</sup> The political expediency of Roman policy toward the Jews of Alexandria after the Judaean war is underlined by Barclay, *Diaspora*, pp. 75–8; see also pp. 257–8, for the aftermath of the war in Antioch.

<sup>50</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XVII.24–5. <sup>51</sup> *Chron.* 10.315.

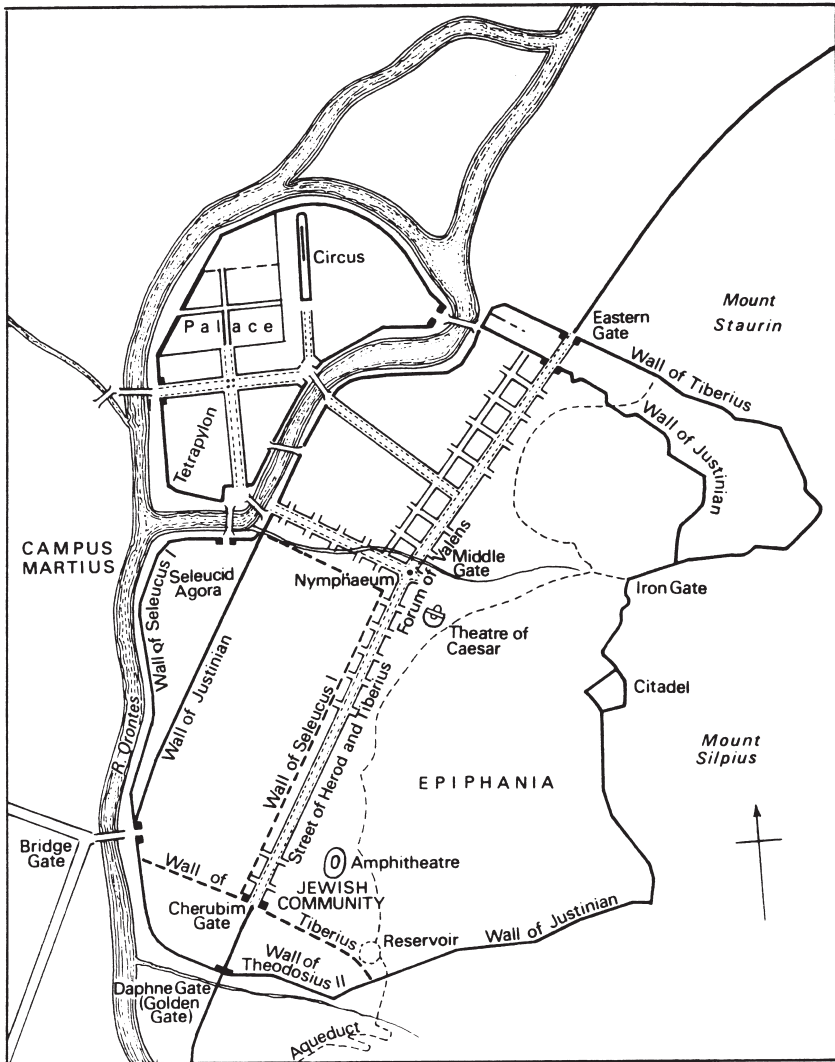


Fig. 6.2 Plan of ancient Antioch.

the Jewish minorities in their cities, including proselytes in their massacres. The ferocity shown on both sides witnesses to long-standing mutual suspicion and hatred. Three cities stood aside from the general movement, Antioch, Sidon and Apamea, but Josephus' opinion that they did so out of 'pity' for people who were causing no disturbance seems naive.<sup>52</sup>

Trouble did occur, however, in Antioch within a few months, though it followed a quite different pattern. In the spring of CE 67 a renegade Jew named Antiochus, who had acquired Greek citizenship and was holding office in the Greek municipal government, denounced his father, an official in the Jewish *politeuma*, together with other Jews for intended arson. This triggered off a general attack on the whole Jewish community, consisting first of a demand for pagan sacrifice and then of a prohibition of Sabbath-observance. To enforce the latter Antiochus used Roman troops of which he had somehow got command – perhaps an indication that the Jews had offered some unrecorded provocation and were not innocent and passive victims of oppression. But the Greeks may simply have been using the current Roman preoccupation with preparations for full-scale war in Judaea to abrogate a Jewish privilege with impunity.<sup>53</sup> For when they tried a year or two later to harass the Jews further by revoking a concession attested only in Antioch, that of having the oil-tax refunded to enable them to buy their own oil instead of using the forbidden 'gentile oil' issued by the city authorities, the legate of Syria stepped in to confirm it; and when he vindicated this comparatively minor Jewish right, he may, though it is not recorded, have simultaneously restored the major right of Sabbath-observance.<sup>54</sup>

Arson was the charge said to have been levelled against the Christians in Rome three years earlier. There had been a strong Christian church in Antioch for twenty years, of Jewish origin and general character despite its now numerous gentile members, and the choice of the same charge in Antioch suggests that the section of the Jewish community which Antiochus accused may have been the church and that his attack may have been motivated by resentment at his father's conversion to a schismatic sect.<sup>55</sup> But if so, it was nationality rather than doctrine that impressed the Greeks; for when a serious fire actually occurred in the winter of CE 70–1, they readily heeded Antiochus who, in increased apostate fervour, now widened the scope of his charge and accused the Jews at large of responsibility. The Roman legate had difficulty in restraining the Greeks, panic-stricken and eager for a scapegoat, from wholesale reprisals on the Jews,

<sup>52</sup> Jos. *Bell.* II.458–80; 559–61. <sup>53</sup> Jos. *Bell.* VII.46–53. <sup>54</sup> Jos. *Ant.* XII.120.

<sup>55</sup> Barclay, *Diaspora*, p. 256 and n. 61, expresses scepticism over the involvement of Christians.

but his subsequent inquiry cleared them by revealing that the fire-raisers had been gentile debtors out to destroy the records of their liabilities in the public archives.<sup>56</sup>

Despite the vindication of Jewish innocence, feeling was still running sufficiently high when Titus visited Antioch early in CE 71 that the Greeks proposed a drastic solution to the problem of racial tension by asking him to expel all the Jews from the city. After due deliberation Titus refused, whereupon the Greeks countered with a seemingly milder request, for the liquidation of the *politeuma* and the cancellation of the Jews' political rights. This would have provided an indirect means to the same end, by degrading the Jews from metics to aliens who could be summarily ejected. Titus again refused.<sup>57</sup> The Diaspora was not to suffer for the sins of Judaea, but a distinction was drawn between Jewish nationalism, which had to be crushed, and the civic rights and religious principles of the Diaspora, which there was no call to reduce or remove. For the Jews of the Diaspora had rendered little or no practical assistance to the rebels in Judaea, whether through lack of interest in the affairs of the homeland, which was to most of them no more than a name, or through fear of jeopardizing the favourable position which they enjoyed under Roman rule.

## V CONCLUSION: THE DIASPORA IN THE WAKE OF THE JUDAEAN WAR

When, however, Jewish nationalism was carried across to North Africa as part of the aftermath of the Palestinian revolt, the Diaspora got involved in Roman measures against it. In CE 72 some *sicarii* escaped from the final Roman campaigns to Egypt and Cyrenaica, where they began disseminating anti-Roman propaganda. In Alexandria the bulk of the Jewish community, perhaps influenced more by the Roman massacre five years earlier than by Titus' recent defence of their political position, were initially disposed to receive them sympathetically. But their authorities had no great difficulty in making them listen to reason and surrender their belligerent visitors to the Romans, and only minor military operations were needed to round up those who escaped southwards. But even this abortive show of anti-Roman feeling was alarming in the wake of the Judaeen War, of 66–70 and during CE 73; when the episode was reported to the emperor Vespasian, he ordered the closure of the 'temple of Onias' at the tip of the Nile delta. That sanctuary seems to have been of purely local importance and not to have formed a religious focus for Jews throughout

<sup>56</sup> Jos. *Bell.* VII.54–62.    <sup>57</sup> Jos. *Bell.* VII.100–11.



Egypt. But it may have been used by the *sicarii*, or Vespasian may have feared the possibility, however remote, that with its tradition of sacrificial worship it might now become a dangerous rallying-point for Jewish nationalism.<sup>58</sup>

In Cyrenaica, where no attacks on Jewish rights in the various cities are recorded at this time, the fortunes of the *sicarii* followed somewhat different lines, with an attempt to further their cause by the exploitation of an unsatisfactory economic situation embroiling local Jews with Rome. In CE 72 the leader of the *sicarii* collected a following of impoverished Jews from the capital, Cyrene, for an apparently pseudo-messianic rising, promising 'signs and wonders'. The Jewish authorities, aware of both the folly and the futility of opposition to Rome, reported the matter to the provincial governor, who broke up the gathering by military force. The captured leader then took his revenge on the Jewish authorities by accusing them and the wealthy class in general of secret complicity in his movement, and numerous executions ensued. But the fact that, when the complex web of subsequent intrigue was taken to Rome, the governor was not charged with maladministration suggests that the executions were not an atrocity but the punishment, even if over-severe, for some offence.<sup>59</sup>

Cyrenaica was thus the only place where the Judaeen revolt is known to have caused serious trouble between a Diaspora community and Rome. The silence of history about the Cyrenaica Jews over the preceding eighty years makes the episode difficult to interpret, but is in itself an indication that any friction which did develop during that time was only minor. But the great revolt of the Diaspora under Trajan began in Cyrenaica, and it is possible that the clash between Rome and the Jews there in CE 72 initiated a period of tension of which that revolt was to be the culmination.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Jos. *Bell.* vii.409–21; 433–5.    <sup>59</sup> Jos. *Bell.* vii.437–41; *Vita* 424–5.

<sup>60</sup> For further discussion see Goodman, 'Diaspora Reactions to the Destruction of the Temple'.

## CHAPTER 7

## THE GENTILES IN JUDAISM

125 BCE–CE 66

## I 'JEWS' AND 'GENTILES': TERMINOLOGY

By Hasmonaean times the people of Palestine had survived and been increased by two thousand years of invasions.<sup>1</sup> The Israelite invasion had been only one in a long series. The series had produced a stock of untraceable complexity, diversified by many small groups with recognizable local characteristics. Such groups were more conspicuous than the population's general uniformity, hence classical Hebrew had no word equivalent to our 'Palestinian'; *Pelishtim* means 'Philistines', another peculiar group of invaders. 'Canaanite' was sometimes pressed into service for the whole non-Israelite population, but properly speaking the Canaanites were only one of the many little peoples whom the Israelites had found living in the land. According to the stories of the Israelite invasion they had shared possession with Perizzites, Hivites, Amorites, Jebusites, etc.<sup>2</sup>

Such peoples the Israelites called 'the *goyyim*'. *Goy* (the singular) refers to 'an ethnic group considered as a political rather than a biological entity';<sup>3</sup> it was therefore rendered by the King James translators as 'nation'. In this sense it was occasionally used for 'Israel' (the Israelites considered as a single group). More frequently, however, *goy* and *goyyim* were used of non-Israelite groups, often by antithesis to Israel, and pejoratively.<sup>4</sup> Both singular and plural referred to 'nations' only;<sup>5</sup> the classical Hebrew terms for a single alien, qua alien, were *nokbri* and *zar*. There was no term whatever for an individual who worshipped gods other than Yahweh,

<sup>1</sup> R. de Vaux, 'Palestine in the Early Bronze Age', *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 3 edn (Cambridge 1971), 1.2.235ff.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 13:7; Exod. 23:28; 33:2; 34:11; Num. 13:29; etc.

<sup>3</sup> I owe this definition to Professor H. L. Ginsberg.

<sup>4</sup> Used of Israel: Gen. 12:2; Exod. 19:6; 33:13; Deut. 4:6; etc. Used of non-Israelite groups: Exod. 34:24; Num. 24:8; Deut. 9:4f; 19:1; etc.

<sup>5</sup> The possible use of *goy* to refer to a single individual, in Gen. 20:4, is a textual corruption, produced by dittography from the following *gam*; this comment also is due to Professor Ginsberg.

much less for all such persons.<sup>6</sup> It was taken for granted that other nations worshipped their own gods<sup>7</sup> (though individuals among them might also worship Yahweh),<sup>8</sup> but until the end of the monarchy the Israelites thought of aliens primarily as strangers and as members of other nations, not as worshippers of other gods; there was no term for, nor concept of, ‘the heathen’ as such. Conversely, there is no indication that other peoples, before the Babylonian exile, saw any great peculiarity in Israelite worship. They are sometimes represented as acknowledging the peculiar power of Yahweh,<sup>9</sup> but almost never as thinking the Israelites religiously peculiar.<sup>10</sup>

When, after the Assyrian conquest, ‘Judaean’ gradually came to replace ‘Israelite’, because it designated the people’s most important survivors, and when, in the Babylonian and Persian periods, the term ‘Judaean’ added to its former tribal and territorial meanings, the new religious one of ‘Jew’, the meaning of *goyyim* also changed accordingly – it came to refer not only to nations, but also to groups of non-Jews, ‘Gentiles’,<sup>11</sup> conceived as pluralities of individuals. The change was slow and obscure. Many later biblical passages are ambiguous, especially because the earlier meanings were not lost but lived on alongside the new one. Finally, by the Roman period, the singular *goy* came to mean an individual non-Jew, a sense it probably had for the author of Matt. 18:17, where it is reflected by the Greek *ethnikos*. By parallel developments, the terms for ‘alien’, *nokhri* and *zar*, now came to mean also ‘non-Jewish’ or ‘a non-Jew’. Moreover, this development of generic terms for non-Jews was paralleled by an increasing realization among other peoples that Jews were religiously a peculiar group. In gentile usage the term *Ioudaios* acquired specific religious connotations unlike, and more important than, those of ordinary ethnic adjectives (*Syros*, *Nabataios*, *Phoinix*, etc.).

<sup>6</sup> ‘The uncircumcised’ (1 Sam. 31:4; 2 Sam. 1:20; etc.) refers to a difference of practice, not of belief, and would not serve to describe the peoples to the south and east of the Israelites who, although they worshipped other gods, were circumcized.

<sup>7</sup> Judg. 11:24; Deut. 4:19; etc. <sup>8</sup> 2 Kgs 5:17ff; etc.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Sam. 4:8; 5:7,10; 6:5f (with Deuteronomic expansion); etc.

<sup>10</sup> The peculiarity of Israel as a people because of its worship of Yahweh was a favourite theme of the later Deuteronomic school (exilic) and their postexilic imitators: Deut. 4:7,34; 33:29; Exod. 33:16; 34:10; 2 Sam. 7:23; 1 Kgs 8:53; Pss. 147:20 – all these are represented as utterances of Yahweh, Israelites, or the authors. So far as I know the only OT occurrence of the theme in the mouth of a gentile is in Baalam’s prophecies (Num. 23:9–23) which were certainly inspired, if not by Yahweh, at least by Israelite propaganda.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Gentile’ results from the early Christian attempt to translate the Bible literally: *Goy* (‘nation’) = Greek *ethnos* = Latin *gens*, whence the adjective, *gentilis/es*, commonly used as a noun. The equivalences were not perfect – in translating, they almost never are – but the translators seem to have thought them the best to be had.

## II CONQUESTS, 'CONVERSIONS' AND CONSEQUENCES, TO 76 BCE

These changes accompanied and were partially caused by the great extension of the Judaeans' contacts with the peoples around them. Many historians have chronicled the Hasmonaeans' territorial acquisitions. In sum, it took them twenty-five years (167–141 BCE) to win control of the tiny territory of Judaea<sup>12</sup> and get rid of the Seleucid colony of royalist Jews (with, presumably, gentile officials and garrison) in Jerusalem. That this colony – 'the citadel', as our pro-Hasmonaeon sources call it – was able to hold out so long, implies that it had friends in the countryside who provided food and materials. However, in the last years before its fall, the Hasmonaeans were already strong enough to acquire, partly by negotiation, partly by conquest, a little territory north and south of Judaea and a corridor on the west to the coast at Jaffa/Joppa. This was briefly taken from them by Antiochus Sidetes, but soon regained, and in the half century from Sidetes' death in 129 to Alexander Jannaeus' death in 76 they overran most of Palestine and much of western and northern Transjordan. First John Hyrcanus took over the hills of southern and central Palestine (Idumaea and the territories of Shechem, Samaria and Scythopolis) in 128–104; then his son, Aristobulus I, took Galilee in 104–103, and Aristobulus' brother and successor, Jannaeus, in about eighteen years of warfare (103–96, 86–76) conquered and reconquered the coastal plain, the northern Negev, and western edge of Transjordan.

All these conquests, and the ninety years of intermittent warfare by which they were achieved, profoundly changed the relations of Jews and Gentiles.

First, they increased their hostility. Those Jews who supported the Hasmonaeans emerged as the greatest threat to their neighbours' peace, property and lives. Their many victims – first the hellenized Jews of Judaea and those associated with the Seleucid government, then the former populations of the pagan cities – fled to the surrounding territories and filled them with accounts of Jewish aggression and of the atrocities incident to conquests.<sup>13</sup> Understandably, Jannaeus had to go for his mercenaries to Asia Minor, 'for he did not accept "Syrian"' (the term

<sup>12</sup> I shall argue elsewhere that the stories of Judas' conquests in Transjordan are fictitious. Anyhow they had no reported consequences and the territories had to be conquered again by Jannaeus. In *Ant.* XIII.125 the words 'and Galilee' are probably a gloss; Galilee is not mentioned in the following royal letter.

<sup>13</sup> Official complaints to Seleucid and Egyptian authorities are often reported (1 Macc. 6:22–7; 7:6; 10:61; 11:4f; 11:21; etc.; *Ant.* XIII.328, 334). The private complaints may reasonably be inferred.

includes Palestinian) ‘mercenaries because of their deep-rooted hostility to “the people”’ (i.e. the Jews) (*Jos. Bell.* 1.88; *Ant.* XIII.374). It can reasonably be supposed that there had always been some trouble between the Judaeans and their neighbours – the little cities and peoples of the ancient Mediterranean were constantly bickering – but it cannot reasonably be doubted that the Hasmonaean conquests greatly exacerbated the relations, made the Hasmonaean supporters the most notorious body of Jews – ‘the Jews’ *par excellence* – and thus did much to promote the wider hostility towards Jews in general that grew up in the ancient world.

Second, the conquests greatly increased the Judaeans’ acquaintance with Gentiles and their culture, and this not only by contacts in fighting and seizure of property, but also by enslavement, employment of mercenaries, and conversions. Each of these requires comment.

As to contacts, even before the Hasmonaean revolt the Judaeans had considerable knowledge of Gentiles and their culture. The hellenizing movement in Jerusalem that led to the revolt is proof of such knowledge, but even prior to it Judaea had been deeply penetrated by elements of Greek culture; this is well known.<sup>14</sup> However, many of the cities conquered under Hyrcanus and Jannaeus<sup>15</sup> had been more hellenized than Jerusalem, and the conquests acquainted the Judaeans not only with these, but also with the mass of gentile Palestinian peasants who still held, as did most Palestinian Jews, to old Semitic ways.

How many of the conquered Gentiles were brought back to Judaea as slaves, we do not know. 1 Maccabees and Josephus speak of some populations’ being exterminated,<sup>16</sup> some driven out,<sup>17</sup> and some permitted to remain if they accepted Jewish practices.<sup>18</sup> Those of Samaria, Gaza, Raphia and Anthedon, are said to have been enslaved.<sup>19</sup> The biblical law on these matters reads as follows:

When you go to make war against a city you are to make [an offer of] peace to it. Then if it accepts peace and surrenders to you, you shall use all the people

<sup>14</sup> See M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (Philadelphia 1974), 2 vols. (henceforth ‘Hengel, *Judaism*’), with extensions and corrections in *Jews, Greeks, Barbarians* (Philadelphia 1980), henceforth ‘Hengel, *Jews*’.

<sup>15</sup> Marisa, Adora, Samaria, and those of the Decapolis and the coastal plain.

<sup>16</sup> The *bene baeon*, 1 Macc. 5:5; the males of Bozrah, Alema, and Ephron (presumably the females were enslaved, 1 Macc. 5:28, 35, 51); all in Carnaim (5:44); 8,000 in the temple of Dagon at Azotus (10:84; cf. 14:34); according to *Antiquities*, most of the males in Gaza, who themselves killed their wives and children to prevent their being enslaved, *Ant.* XIII.362–4; cf. *Bell.* 1.87f.

<sup>17</sup> The populations of Beth Zur, 1 Macc. 11:65f; Gazara, 13:43; the citadel of Jerusalem, 13:50; Joppa (? 14:34).

<sup>18</sup> The Idumaeans, *Ant.* XIII.257; the Ituraeans (?) *Ant.* XIII.318 (see below).

<sup>19</sup> *Bell.* 1.65, 87f.

found in it as forced labour, and they shall be your slaves /serfs. But if it will not make peace with you, and makes war against you, you are to besiege it, and when Yahweh your god gives it to you, you are to kill by the sword every male in it. Only the women and the children and the animals and whatever [else] may be in the city . . . you are to take as plunder . . . Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far off from you, which are not of the cities of these peoples [who live in the promised territory]. However, from the cities of these peoples [the cities] which Yahweh your god is giving you as a possession, you shall not let any human being survive. For you shall completely exterminate the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as Yahweh your god has commanded you.<sup>20</sup>

However, the Hasmonaeans could interpret the Law to suit themselves and slaves were worth more than corpses, so enslavement, even of the resistant and of people from the territory biblically assigned to Israel, is indicated not only by Josephus' reports, but also by the fact that the Romans were later able to restore many of the gentile towns to (the descendants of) their former inhabitants (*Ant.* xiv.75f; cf 88). (Such restorations of enslaved populations were familiar in antiquity.)<sup>21</sup> Accordingly enslavement, being usual, should usually be supposed when nothing else is specified.

Much has been written about the hellenized slaves of Campania as educators of the Romans;<sup>22</sup> slaves from the hellenized cities of the coast and the Decapolis will have played the same role for the tough hill people of Judaea. Conversely, a considerable number of Judaeans must have been captured and enslaved during the frequent Seleucid, Ptolemaic and Nabataean<sup>a</sup> invasions of Palestine. As slaves they will have learned gentile ways, and some will have been ransomed and have brought home their learning.

The conquests increased both the wealth of the Hasmonaeans<sup>23</sup> and their need for manpower. Therefore they used some of the wealth to pay

<sup>20</sup> Deut. 20:10–17. The Hebrew expression refers to both, or either, slaves and/or serfs; presumably both were intended, in effect, though the difference of ancient and modern societies is such that our terms are not precise equivalents. The Bible in this instance declares genocide a religious duty, in Jewish terms, 'a positive commandment'.

<sup>21</sup> Most famous was the restoration to Thebes of the descendants of those whom Alexander had enslaved, cf. Diodorus xix.54; Pausanias ix.7.1. Aristes 12–27 made Ptolemy II liberate the descendants of the Jews enslaved by Ptolemy I.

<sup>22</sup> E.g. in a standard text book, M. Carey and H. Scullard, *A History of Rome*, 3 edn (New York, 1975), p. 192.

<sup>a</sup> (In his revision of the manuscript Smith changed 'Nabataean' to 'Idumaeen'.)

<sup>23</sup> Even a Seleucid courtier admired Simon's gold and silver plate, 1 Macc. 15:32. On Hyrcanus' wealth, *Ant.* xiii.249, 273; *Bell.* 1.61. It began with his opening a tomb so rich that he was able to hire mercenaries who made possible the conquests which increased the wealth, and so on.

mercenaries, employed first by Hyrcanus<sup>24</sup> and continually thereafter. As to the number and nature of Hyrcanus' mercenaries, nothing is said, but the customary Greek term used for their employment (*xenotrophein*) implies that they were alien, and they seem to have stood by Hyrcanus against Jewish opponents when he had to put down a Jewish revolt.<sup>25</sup>

Mercenaries were normally aliens because their employers reckoned on domestic resistance.<sup>26</sup> Jannaeus' mercenaries are said to have been Cilicians and Pisidians.<sup>27</sup> Josephus' reports of their numbers vary from 6,200 to 9,000;<sup>28</sup> he conjectures that without their help Jannaeus could not have stayed in power.<sup>29</sup> Jannaeus' opponents, too, did not avoid Gentiles. They called in the Seleucid, Demetrius III, who came with a large army.<sup>30</sup> He tried to win over Jannaeus' mercenaries, 'since they were Greeks',<sup>31</sup> but they remained faithful, while 6,000 Jews went over to Jannaeus.<sup>32</sup> This so disgusted Demetrius that he gave up the war. So the legend.

Such brief invasions, frequent throughout this period, touched many parts of the country and brought many Jews and Gentiles into contact, but their cultural influence was probably less important than that of the permanent mercenary corps. This large body of muscular, male Gentiles, employed by the High Priests, privileged, well paid, handsomely uniformed, and usually stationed in Jerusalem, doubtless did much to

<sup>24</sup> *Bell.* 1.61; *Ant.* XIII.249. <sup>25</sup> *Bell.* 1.67; *Ant.* XIII.299.

<sup>26</sup> Josephus' report that Hyrcanus introduced mercenaries follows almost immediately his report of the refusal to accept a Seleucid garrison in Jerusalem 'because (the Jews' principle of) keeping themselves apart did not permit them to associate with aliens', *Ant.* XIII.247, cf. 249. Mercenaries hired by rulers of small states were commonly stationed in the capital, and Hyrcanus' subsequent success in putting down his Jewish opponents suggests that his mercenaries were at hand in Jerusalem. However, as High Priest, he could interpret the law to suit the occasion. The need often to do so may have decided him to leave the tradition-bound Pharisees and go over to the Sadducees who reportedly held that nothing was binding save the letter of the text.

<sup>27</sup> *Bell.* 1.88; *Ant.* XIII.374.

<sup>28</sup> *Bell.* 1.93 versus. *Ant.* XIII.377; cf. 337. Their numbers also varied from time to time.

<sup>29</sup> *Bell.* 1.88.

<sup>30</sup> How large, is uncertain. Josephus' figures (17,000 in *Bell.* 1.93; 43,000 in *Ant.* XIII.377!) include his Jewish allies. That Pharisees, let alone members of the Qumran sect, should have called in unclean Gentiles for help, seems unlikely. Josephus reported without comment in *Bell.*, but later, in *Ant.*, was scandalized, not by the introduction of uncleanness, but by the resort to Gentiles against a Jewish king, especially since it entailed the loss of territory that the Jews had recently conquered (13.381f).

<sup>31</sup> *Ant.* XIII.378, a good example of the common near-eastern use of 'Greeks' for all speakers of non-Near-Eastern languages, since communication with them had to be in Greek, the *lingua franca*. See P. Tebtunis #5, line 169 and the comment of the editors, p. 48; H. Windisch, 'Hellen,' ThWB, s.v., c.1.

<sup>32</sup> *Bell.* 1.95; *Ant.* XIII.379.



acquaint young Jews and Jewesses with the uncircumcised.<sup>33</sup> Whether the mercenaries were at this time concentrated in one or more barracks, or individually billeted in houses of the citizens, we are not told. No barracks are mentioned. Billeting was a common practice<sup>34</sup> and commonly resulted in close contacts with civilians.

### III UNITE AND CONQUER

The mercenaries, however, cannot wholly account for the large conquests of Hyrcanus, Aristobulus I, and Jannaeus – the corps was too small. Even the fighting men of Judaea and of the territories acquired by Simon would hardly have sufficed.<sup>35</sup> And not only the size, but the speed of the conquests, requires explanation. Aristobulus I reigned ‘no more than (one) year’,<sup>36</sup> of which the first part was occupied by troubles attending his succession,<sup>37</sup> the last, by a long sickness.<sup>38</sup> Yet his reign saw the annexation of much of Galilee, a difficult country for military operations.<sup>39</sup>

The speed of Hyrcanus’ and Aristobulus’ conquests might be explained by Josephus’ report that they permitted the conquered populations ‘to remain in the country if they would practise circumcision and consent to observe the laws of the Jews’.<sup>40</sup> Nothing of this sort had been done before, and nothing similar is reported later in Jannaeus’ reign. Jannaeus seems usually to have destroyed the cities he captured and to have enslaved

<sup>33</sup> In the next century, when Jesus’ opponents wanted to abuse him, they found ready to hand the charge that his father had been a Roman soldier, M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (Harper and Row 1981), 26ff, 46ff, 58f. The accusation was doubtless a familiar one, often made because often justified.

<sup>34</sup> M. Launey, *Recherches sur les armées hellénistiques*, 2 vols. (Paris 1949–50), pp. 690–700. For many further aspects of military penetration see M. Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics* (London, SCM 1987), the chapter entitled ‘Hellenization’.

<sup>35</sup> Josephus’ reports of the populousness of Jewish territories are often grossly exaggerated, as has been shown by A. Byatt’s attempt to defend them, ‘Josephus and Population Numbers,’ *PEQ* 105 (1973), 51ff; cp. S. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome* (Leiden 1979), pp. 202f. The soil of the Judaeian hills is poor, even by comparison with that of Samaria. Moreover, Josephus reports that the conquests began after a long internecine war, a foreign invasion, conquest of the country, and a siege of Jerusalem. These must have cut the population down a bit.

<sup>36</sup> *Bell.* 1.84; *Ant.* XIII.318 ‘a year.’

<sup>37</sup> He had to imprison three brothers and starve his mother to death; no doubt this took some time. *Bell.* 1.71, 85; *Ant.* XIII.302, 320.

<sup>38</sup> Perhaps long enough to put him out of touch with events; his enemies could persuade him his favourite brother was plotting to kill him. *Bell.* 1.74–82; *Ant.* XIII.303–18. (But was he?)

<sup>39</sup> That the country taken over must have been Galilee is generally recognized, e.g. Schürer-Vermes, 1.218.

<sup>40</sup> *Ant.* XIII.257, paralleled in 318.

their inhabitants.<sup>41</sup> If so, both his predecessors' peculiar treatment of the Idumaeans and Ituraeans (and, probably, Galileans),<sup>42</sup> and his failure to follow this successful example, require explanation.

This requirement has commonly been overlooked. The 'accepted authorities'<sup>43</sup> have read Josephus as reporting that the Idumaeans and Ituraeans

<sup>41</sup> *Bell.* 1.86–9 and 104; *Ant.* XIII.356f, 364, 374, 382, 393, furnish the following list of gentile cities taken by Jannaeus and their fates (? = fate not reported): *Gadara* ?; *Amathous* (first time) ?; *Gazza*: *Ant.* XIII.361–364 says it was surrendered to him but the inhabitants were slaughtered and the city destroyed, while *Bell.* 1.87 says the inhabitants were enslaved; *Raphia* and *Antbedon*: *Bell.* 1.87ff enslaved, *Ant.* XIII.357 ?; *Amathous*, (second time) destroyed; either *Pella* (*Bell.* 1.104) or *Dion* (*Ant.* XIII.393) or both, ?; *Heshbon*: *Ant. ibid.*; *Essa* ?, *Bell. ibid.*; *Gerasa* (probably an error for *Essabon*) destroyed; *Gaulana*, *Seleucia*, *Antiochus' Guleb*, *Bell. ibid.* destroyed, *Ant.* ?; *Gamala* ?; *Gileaditis* and *Moabititis*, probably the villages, were made tributary (*Bell.* 1.184; *Ant.* XIII.374) and later traded off to the Nabataeans (*Ant.* XIII.382). *Ant.* XIII.395–7 gives a list of 'cities of the Syrians and Idumaeans (!) and Phoenicians' which 'the Jews had at this time' – i.e. to judge from Josephus' placement of the list, at the end of Jannaeus' victories. It adds to the above *Strato's Tower*, *Apollonia*, *Azotus*, *Rbinokoroura*, *Mt. Carmel* (a fortress?), *Mt. Itabyrion* (a fortress and city), *Syrbopolis*, *Madaba*, *Lemba*, *Oronaim*, *Aglain*, *Thona*, *Zoar*, and The Cilicians' Hollow. (I omit places taken by earlier Hasmonaeans.) The list is rounded off with the words, 'and other leading cities of Syria which were destroyed', but the list contains many destroyed places, so this concluding remark cannot be taken as evidence against destruction, even of places of which the fate is otherwise unknown. Destruction or expropriation is presumable for those that later had to be rebuilt or restored to their original inhabitants; lists of these in *Bell.* 1.155f and *Ant.* XIV.75f, and in *Bell.* 1.166 and *Ant.* XIV.88 include, of those listed above, *Azotus*, *Antbedon*, *Apollonia*, *Gadara* (?), *Syrbopolis*, *Pella*, *Dion*, *Gazza* and *Raphia*, and they add *Arethusa*, *Dora*, and *Hippos*. Syncellus' list of cities Jannaeus destroyed (ed. Dindorf 1.558–9) includes, of those listed above, Heshbon, Pella, Dion, Gadara (and also Moabititis; instead of Gileaditis it has Ammonitis); and it has a number of items peculiar to itself: *Abila*, *Philoteria*, 'the country places of the Macedonians', 'Malleas of Samaria', and *Gabae*. Of the above those italicized were towns or military centres. Also *Gamala*, though not said to have been destroyed, appears from now on as a centre of Jewish settlement (as do Amathous and Gaulana, which were said to have been destroyed). In all these reports of destructions, the only one indicating a concern for conversion is a note that interrupts the list in *Ant.* XIII.395–7, of cities held by the Jews. It reads: 'Pella – this they (the Jews) destroyed because the inhabitants would not undertake to go over to the ancestral customs of the Jews.' The implication – that if they had gone over the city would not have been destroyed – seems hardly compatible with Jannaeus' policy as indicated in other cases, and the syntax, which attributes the destruction not to Jannaeus but to 'the Jews', and finally the note's incoherence with its context, prevent any use of it as evidence that Jannaeus carried on his predecessors' policy.

<sup>42</sup> Josephus' failure to report a conversion of the Galileans is puzzling. My guess is that he expected his readers to understand it as a consequence of the conversion of their rulers, the Ituraeans. *Cuius regio, eius religio*.

<sup>43</sup> E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, 3–4 edn (Leipzig 1901–9), 3 vols. (henceforth 'Schürer'), 1.264, 275, the same view repeated in the new edition, ed. F. Millar and G. Vermes (Edinburgh 1973–87) (henceforth, Schürer-Vermes), 1.207, 217; H. Graetz,

were converted to Judaism by conquest,<sup>44</sup> and have paid little attention to the questions indicated above: How did the Hasmonaeans get enough men to conquer, hold down, and impose circumcision on territories more than three times the size of their own? Why were the conquests of Hyrcanus and Aristobulus so rapid? Why did the compulsory converts not relapse as soon as the power of the Hasmonaeans was broken by Rome, i.e. within 65 years of the ‘conversion’ of Idumaea and 40 of the ‘conversion’ of Galilee?

These problems were recognized by Uriel Rappaport in his doctoral dissertation.<sup>45</sup> He tried to answer them by supposing the conversions were the results of Jewish religious propaganda which had so far won over these populations that they welcomed conversion.<sup>46</sup> However, for the prior success of the Jewish propaganda the only data that might be thought substantial evidence are the reports of Jewish settlements in Jaffa and Jabneh Jamnia (2 Macc. 12:3ff, 8), Beth Shan (*ibid.* 3of), and Galilee and northern Transjordan (1 Macc. 5:9–54; 2 Macc. 12:10–31).<sup>47</sup> Nothing indicates that these were settlements of missionaries or converts; they may have been merely emigrés from Judaea – there had been many reasons to emigrate. If missionaries, they would seem to have made more enemies than converts; the feelings of their new neighbours were such that the Jaffa settlement was destroyed, Jamnia threatened, those in Galilee and Transjordan had to be saved by evacuation. Incidentally, the neighbours’ hostility does not prove the settlers’ missionary zeal; perhaps the neighbours merely wanted to loot. Finally, Rappaport supposes that the missionary message was that of the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha of this period and the contemporary Jewish writers of bogus Greek literature.<sup>48</sup> But the abysmal intellectual level of most of these works practically

*Geschichte der Juden*, 5th edn (Leipzig 1905–8), 11 vols. (henceforth ‘Graetz’) III.1.72, 119; J. Wellhausen, *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte*, 8th edn (Berlin 1921) (henceforth ‘Wellhausen, *Geschichte*’), 261, 263; E. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums* (Stuttgart 1921), 3 vols. (henceforth ‘Meyer, *Ursprung*’), II.273, 277; G. F. Moore, *Judaism* (Cambridge Mass. 1927–30), 3 vols. (henceforth ‘Moore, *Judaism*’), 1.56, 336, ‘forcible and skin-deep conversions’; F. Abel, *Histoire de la Palestine* (Paris 1952), 2 vols. (henceforth ‘Abel, *Histoire*’), I.211, 216, 225; M. Noth, *Geschichte Israels*, 4th edn (Göttingen 1959) (henceforth ‘Noth’) 346f. W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*, 3rd edn (Tübingen 1926) (*HNT* 21; henceforth ‘Bousset, *Religion*’) and S. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 2nd edn (New York 1952ff) (henceforth ‘Baron, *History*’) say little about the Hasmonaean conquests.

<sup>44</sup> *Ant.* XIII.257f, 318f. *Bell.* speaks only of conquest of Idumaean territory and never mentions the Ituraeans.

<sup>45</sup> *Jewish Religious Propaganda and Proselytism in the Period of the Second Commonwealth* (Jerusalem, The Hebrew University 1965) (in Hebrew); henceforth *JRP*.

<sup>46</sup> *JRP* 81f. <sup>47</sup> Cf. *JRP* 66. <sup>48</sup> *JRP* 86–98, 105–149.

proves that their authors were preaching to believers. Moreover, the cost of books in antiquity, and the relative rarity of literacy, make it unlikely that books did much for the conversion of the average man. The missionary theory fails.

Rappaport did better when he built on the observations of Rostovtzeff and Tcherikover concerning the general hostility of the Semitic country people to the hellenized city folk.<sup>49</sup> He conjectured that the persecutions of Jews all over Palestine, said to have followed closely the first Maccabean successes (and hitherto not well explained),<sup>50</sup> were caused by the fear of the hellenized ruling class, which saw in Judaea the beginning of a revolt of the Semitic natives. This makes sense in the main, though it does not fit all details.<sup>51</sup> Additional motives must be reckoned with, especially avarice, which led to looting as soon as men thought that offences against the Jews would not be punished by the government.

Further, Rappaport conjectured that after the Hasmonaeans had driven out the Seleucid government and the Hellenizing high priests of Jerusalem, and had conquered the Hellenized coastal cities of Jamnia and Joppa, they would be seen as the leaders of the most successful example of rural Semitic resistance to urban rule and to Greek ways. Hyrcanus and Aristobulus I could therefore represent themselves as allies and protectors of the country people throughout the rest of the Palestinian hills.

<sup>49</sup> *JRP* 68, 72ff and references there.

<sup>50</sup> Unsatisfactory explanations: Wellhausen, *Geschichte*, 246f, 'the old hatred of the Jews' (in northern Transjordan, almost 500 years after the Assyrian deportations – why?); Meyer, *Ursprung*, 224, they now saw clearly their danger from the Jews (this was clear to them in N. Transjordan on account of some Jewish successes in Judaea?); Schürer, 211, no explanation; Schürer-Vermes, 164, no explanation; Noth, *Geschichte*, 333, Antiochus IV had forbidden all practice of Judaism, so the officers of all Seleucid territories had to destroy all Jews (an unlikely conjecture supported by no other evidence – what happened in Antioch and why didn't we hear of it?); J. Dancy, *A Commentary on I Maccabees* (Oxford 1954), pp. 102f, Judas' cleansing of the temple put Jews outside Judaea in the position of 'owing allegiance to a foreign power', hence, 'the attitude of the Gentiles becomes understandable' (because everybody in the Seleucid empire knew that all foreign subjects ought to be exterminated); also the local Seleucid commanders had to repress Judas' outbreaks (in Galilee and Transjordan, since he was outbreaking in Judaea); J. Bartlett, *The First and Second Books of the Maccabees* (Cambridge 1973), p. 67, 'They do not seem to have been popular' (not really our set, if you know what I mean; therefore they ought to be massacred); J. Goldstein, *I Maccabees* (New York 1976), p. 293, the Gentiles knew the Old Testament promises that the Jews would possess all the Holy Land; they feared fulfilment and saw Judas 'as a second Joshua' (this was what came of their going to Sabbath School).

<sup>51</sup> Not all the Hasmonaeans' opponents were Hellenistic; Rappaport's attempts to make them so, *JRP* 68ff, are sometimes absurd. (Dagon and Ashtoreth become Hellenistic deities! *JRP* 68ff.) In general his use of 'Hellenistic' is naive; cf. E. Bickerman and M. Smith, *The Ancient History of Western Civilization* (New York 1976), 142ff.

This Rappaport believes they did,<sup>52</sup> and hence following Baron, he explains the rapidity of the ‘conversions’.

He also observes that these hill peoples, the Idumaeans, Shechemites, and Ituraeans, all practised circumcision,<sup>53</sup> and that this will have facilitated their conversion to Judaism. No doubt it did in the long run, but there seems little likelihood that they were immediately converted. We have already seen that Josephus’ reports of the ‘conquests’ which precipitated the conversions were problematic; we must now consider his reports of the ‘conversions’ themselves.

*Bell.* 1.63 is brief: Hyrcanus ‘captures Shechem and Hargarizim, near which are the people of the Chutheoi who dwell around the temple modelled on that in Jerusalem. And he also captures not a few (towns) of Idumaea, and (particularly) Adora and Marisa.’ Nothing is said of circumcision of the Idumaeans and there is no mention of the Ituraeans. We are not told how the ‘Chutheoi’ – the Canaanite–Israelite–Mesopotamian natives of the Samaritan territory – were treated. Both silence and historical probability suggest that they were already circumcised and mostly worshippers of Yahweh (with or without other gods) and observant, in their own ways, of the laws of the Pentateuch; they had accepted it.<sup>54</sup> Therefore they would all have been classed as *Ioudaioi*,<sup>55</sup> ordered to make their pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and enlisted to strengthen the Hasmonaean troops – a function they probably performed willingly when Hyrcanus later destroyed their great enemy, Macedonian Samaria, and then turned them loose to loot the territory of Beth Shean (Scythopolis). However, Shechem was destroyed about this time.<sup>56</sup> It may have been a centre of local resistance, or a centre of Hellenization, like Marisa, resented by the country people (as the reports in *Ant.* XII.257–64 and 2 Macc. 6:2 suggest that it was).

<sup>52</sup> *JRP* 75, citing n. 4 of p. 246 of the Hebrew translation of Baron, *History*. This observation led him to see all the Hasmonaeans’ fights with their neighbours as parts of one great project to drive out Hellenism and purge the Holy Land of idolatry. Hence he attempts to conceal the Hellenistic elements on the Hasmonaean side (alliance with Rome, gentile mercenaries, etc.) and the important Semitic elements that survived in the culture of what he calls the ‘Greek’ cities (see previous note).

<sup>53</sup> *JRP* 80, citing Jer. 9:24f; Ezek. 32:29. For Ituraeans he might have cited many authors who speak of the Arabs as circumcised and probably include the Ituraeans among them, e.g. *Ant.* 1.214, cf. Gen. 17:23. (For the Arabs, *Ant.* XVI.225, but *engraphēnai iōis ton Ioudaiōn ethesi* may refer to other things as well.) Evidence for the practice of circumcision by the Itureans is probably to be found in the fact that Josephus expresses no regret at the marriage of Ptolemy Menneus with Alexandra, daughter of Aristobulus II.

<sup>54</sup> Smith, *Parties*, ch. 7, end.

<sup>55</sup> For references to the Samaritans (Shechemites) as *Ioudaioi* (‘Jews’), see Smith, *Parties* 144f.

<sup>56</sup> L. Toombs and G. Wright, ‘The Third Campaign at Balatah,’ *BASOR* 161 (1961), 47.

*Ant.* XIII.255–8 tells, in almost the same words as *Bell.*, of Hyrcanus' capture of Shechem and Garizim (and) the Chutheoi, adding a bit about the origin of their temple and its destruction (which may have come sometime after the takeover of the territory). Josephus then continues: 'And of Idumaea Hyrcanus takes the cities Adora and Marisa. And having subjected all the Idumaeans, he permitted them to remain in the land if they would be circumcised and consent to use the laws of the Jews. And they, from desire of their ancestral land, undertook to make the circumcision and the other way of life the same as the Jews. And that time was a beginning for them so as to be Jews for the rest.' I have translated literally to show the ambiguities of the passage. It can be read in two ways: (1) 'To make their circumcision' (which they already practised) 'and the rest of their way of life the same as the Jews'.<sup>57</sup> Hence 'a beginning so as' (eventually) 'to become Jews in all other respects'. Alternatively, (2) 'To practise circumcision' (which they had not heretofore practised) 'and to make the rest of their way of life the same as the Jews'. Hence 'a beginning, so that they were from then on Jews'.

The second is the common interpretation, but the first is supported by a parallel in Strabo (xvi.2.34) who says that the Idumaeans, having been driven out of Transjordan, 'came into contact with the Jews and came to share with them some of their laws'.<sup>58</sup> The notion of gradual assimilation avoids the difficulties of the reported conquest, and the report can be explained by Josephus' desire to represent the Jews as a great military power (cf. *Bell.* 1.2–16) and/or, perhaps, by Nicholas of Damascus' desire to represent the Hasmonaeans as tyrants who overran their neighbours' lands. Finally, it is unlikely that the Idumaeans should have begun at once to observe all Jewish laws, without having taken the time to learn them. Hillel's later summary of the Law, 'Don't do to your neighbour what you would dislike' (b. Shabbat 31a), was not compatible with Hasmonaean foreign policy.

<sup>57</sup> Professor Richard Steiner, citing (Jonckheere, 'La circoncision des anciens Egyptiens'), *Centaurus* 1, 3 (1951), 212–34 (*non vidi*), tells me that there were various methods of circumcision. The Egyptians did not remove the foreskin, but slit it and let it hang loose. Nevertheless, the Greeks spoke of the practice as *peritomē*.

<sup>58</sup> The tractate, *De adfinium vocabulorum differentia*, attributed to an Ammonius whom Christ-Schmid-Stählin placed in the late fourth century (*Geschichte der gr. Litteratur*, 6th edn, II.2.1080) quotes, in its section headed *Idoumaioi*, from a work *Concerning King Herod*, by an unidentified Ptolemy, a statement that, 'The Idumaeans and the Jews differ . . . For the Jews are those who were so from the beginning, by nature, but the Idumaeans, who at first were not Jews but Phoenicians and Syrians, having been conquered by the Jews and compelled to be circumcised and to participate in the *ethnos* and hold to the same laws, came to be called Jews.' This has been thought (Stern, *GLAJJ* 1.355f) a copy of the source used by Josephus; more likely Josephus was its source. Either the excerptor or one of the copyists added the *Verschlimmbesserungen*.



All these things considered, it seems likely that ‘the conquest and conversion of Idumaea’ went something like this: Hyrcanus, perhaps with some show of military power, made a religious, political and military alliance with the sheiks who controlled most of the Idumaeon countryside. Of the cities, the one we know best, Marisa, seems to have been destroyed by Hyrcanus and rebuilt by Gabinius, though the published evidence is not conclusive.<sup>59</sup>

The basis of the alliance would have been family relationships. The Edomite takeover of southern Palestine had been accompanied by much intermarriage with the southern Israelites, whence much of the Edomite material in the Old Testament.<sup>60</sup> The in-laws in fact were brothers in legend, descendants of Abraham and Isaac and of the brothers Jacob (whence Israel) and Esau (whence Edom, whence the Idumaeans).<sup>61</sup> Indeed they were brothers even in Jewish law; Deuteronomy had ruled, ‘You are not to detest an Edomite, for he is your brother’ (23:8). The Edomites presumably worshipped Yahweh as well as their own god, Qos, and Apollo, and Resheph; perhaps all four had been identified, as had Yahweh, El and Shaddai in Israel. Yahweh was probably worshipped as ‘the god of our fathers’, a cult popular in this period, particularly among peoples on the fringe of the desert.<sup>62</sup> The alliance – to judge from its results – apparently, like many ancient alliances, gave the contracting parties the rights to intermarry, make contracts binding in the courts of both, acquire property in each other’s territories, etc.; but it also maintained each as a distinct people, though committed to come to the other’s aid in war and to fight under the command of a common (in this case, Judean) leader.

The continued separateness of the people is often expressed clearly. When in CE 67/8 the Idumaeans came in force to Jerusalem to support the revolt, and found themselves locked out, they complained (according

<sup>59</sup> The account by M. Avi-Yonah, ‘Mareshah’, in *Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem 1977), III.782–90, gives unlikely conclusions instead of the evidence on which any conclusions should be based. How is it known, for instance, that ‘inscriptions’ (graffiti?) in tombs could not have been written after the city’s destruction? A. Kloner, ‘Later Excavations’, pp. 790–1, reports that economical ‘burials’ in the columbarium continued to the mid-first century BCE. It is interesting that two highly Hellenized groups emigrated from the city to Egypt and established settlements there, one in Memphis, about 120 BCE, another in Hermoupolis Magna, a generation later; U. Rappaport, ‘Les Iduméens en Egypte’, *Revue de Philologie* 43 (1969), 73–82. However, P. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972), II.438, n. 751, would move both dates down to the mid first century BCE.

<sup>60</sup> Smith, *Parties*, p. 90 and n. 88. <sup>61</sup> Gen. 36:1–19.

<sup>62</sup> A. Alt, ‘The God of the Fathers,’ reprinted in *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion*, tr. R. Wilson (New York 1968), pp. 3–100.



to Josephus) that they were the *ethnos* ‘most closely related to’ (but not identical with) ‘the Jews’, and were shut out from their ‘ancestral cult’.<sup>63</sup> Their claim of Jerusalem as an ancestral shrine derived perhaps from the legend that made it the place where Abraham had tried to sacrifice Isaac (*Ant.* 1.226, end). With the alliance they presumably were recognized as brothers and given access to the Jerusalem temple. In return they will have given the Judaeans access to the ancestral shrines in their own territory – the oak of Abraham at Mamre, the burial cave of the patriarchs at Hebron, the well of Abraham at Beer Sheba.<sup>64</sup>

Besides these familial, legendary and liturgical bonds, the alliance was based on common practices, above all, as we have seen, ‘the covenant of circumcision’. Other such practices may have been the rejection of idolatry<sup>65</sup> and the observance of the Sabbath; many purity rules were probably common, and so on. The proximity of the languages and the common use of Aramaic as a *lingua franca* also helped.

Few things help an alliance so much as common enemies. The Hasmonaeans had profited by driving the Hellenizers out of Jerusalem, Jamnia and Joppa; the rural Idumaeans had their eyes on the wealth of Marisa and Adora, so they needed help. To get it, they were prepared to make some concessions – Paris was worth a mass. The Judaeans also had practical interests. Their most dangerous immediate neighbours were the Nabataeans, whose profitable trade route south of Idumaea to the port of Gaza<sup>66</sup> brought business to the Idumaeian cities and encouraged Hellenization (fashionable at the Nabataean court). A Nabataean takeover of at least southern Idumaea might be in the offing. Both the Judaeans and the rural Idumaeans had reason to beware. Consequently the alliance probably contained a string of curses: on the uncircumcised, on idolaters, on those who wear Greek clothes and practise abominations (2 Macc. 4:12), etc. More important will have been the provisions for mutual assistance against enemies; they meant practically that the Hasmonaeans would help the Idumaeans loot Marisa and Adora, and that the Idumaeans would join the Hasmonaeian forces in the hope of more loot elsewhere.

<sup>63</sup> *Bell.* iv.278f, *patrimon hieron*, Thackeray mistranslates by ‘national’.

<sup>64</sup> The attack on Hebron by Judas Maccabaeus (1 Macc. 5:65f) was probably a mere raid for booty and seems to have had no territorial consequences.

<sup>65</sup> A few statuettes have been found in pre-Hellenistic Edomite remains, as in Judaeian sites of the same period. In both areas the prohibition of images would have been facilitated by the quality of the sculpture, but this does not prove it was universally observed and the preserved material suggests considerable variation from one shrine to another.

<sup>66</sup> See M. Stern, ‘Judaea and her Neighbors in the Days of Alexander Jannaeus’, *The Jerusalem Cathedral*, ed. L. Levine, 1 (1981), 26.

Implementation of these military clauses will have rapidly acquainted the Idumaeans with Jewish ways; acquaintance will have led to adoption. Thus, from political alliance, the Idumaeans moved gradually, but not very slowly, towards *de facto* conversion, which for the circumcised, at that time, was probably the only sort of conversion available.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, the assimilation of the two peoples was not complete by CE 70. Apart from his dubious conversion story (*Ant.* XIII.255–8) Josephus never directly refers to the Idumaeans as ‘Jews’,<sup>68</sup> and he says that during the war they were almost exterminated by Simon bar Giora because of his ‘hatred of the breed’ (*Bell.* IV.535). However, this is probably propaganda. He later repeatedly refers to Idumaeans as important among Simon’s forces in Jerusalem (*Bell.* V.249, 358; VI.92, 148, etc.).

This explanation of events in Idumaea is supported by the case of the Ituraeans. Of these Josephus said nothing in *Bell.*, because by the time of the great revolt they were out of the picture, but in *Ant.* XIII.318 he praised Aristobulus for ‘having made war on them and acquired much of their land for the Jewish territory, compelling the inhabitants, if they wished to remain in it, to be circumcised and live according to the laws of the Jews’. This echoes his report about the Idumaeans in *Ant.* XIII.257 (see above). ‘However’, he goes on, ‘as Strabo testifies . . . quoting Timagenes . . . Aristobulus “was an equitable man and very useful to the Jews, for he acquired territory for them and won over a part of the Ituraean people, binding them (to the Jews) by the bond of circumcision”’ (XIII.319).

This quotation from Timagenes (via Strabo) apparently contradicts Josephus’ preceding reports about Aristobulus I – that he (inequitably) starved his mother to death, imprisoned all his brothers but one, accidentally murdered the one unimprisoned brother because he falsely suspected him of treason, made war on the Ituraeans and compelled them to accept Judaism. These look like Nicholas of Damascus’ anti-Hasmonaean propaganda. Moreover, the contrast here is the same as the one above concerning the Idumaeans: Josephus claimed that they were conquered and forced to choose between exile and circumcision, but a passage from Strabo indicated that the so-called ‘conversion’ was actually an alliance. Strabo’s words, ‘binding them to the Jews by the bond of circumcision’,

<sup>67</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, ‘Conversion to Judaism in Historical Perspective’, *Conservative Judaism* 36 (1983), 31–45, pp. 36f. No provisions for the already circumcised are known from this period.

<sup>68</sup> His nearest approach is to list some Idumaeans, in *Bell.* VI.92 and 148, among ‘the Jews’ who distinguished themselves in battle against ‘the Romans’. This is schematization. ‘The Romans’ include all Titus’ forces – Arabs, Syrians, etc. and ‘the Jews’ – all opponents. See further below.

do not mean ‘by making them begin to practise circumcision’ but ‘by using the practise of circumcision (common to Jews and Ituraeans) as a bond (with which to hold together an alliance against the Hellenizers)’. Apparently Strabo held similar opinions about both these extensions of ‘Judaism’, and in both instances his opinions are more plausible than Josephus’ (or Nicholas?) conquest stories.

In defence of them we cannot place much weight on Rappaport’s arguments for extensive conversion in Galilee before Aristobulus’ time – the evidence is too slight.<sup>69</sup> Important evidence, however, has been pointed out by S. Cohen (in a recent study), ‘Neither in *Bell.* nor in *Ant.* does Josephus describe “conversion” as a religious experience or say explicitly that “conversion” entails the rejection of the pagan gods.’<sup>70</sup> Cohen adds: ‘Rabbinic law provides a curious parallel, cf. b. Yeb 47a–b. The . . . conversion ritual . . . omits the requirement of the exclusive recognition of God.’ He goes on, ‘Neither . . . *Bell.* nor . . . *Ant.* states that a “convert” is equal to the native born or somehow joins the larger Jewish community.’ To these points he returns several times, and gives as examples the monarchs of Adiabene, Emesa and Cilicia, who were converted to Judaism (i.e. circumcised) but kept their thrones and therefore were not incorporated into Jewish society.<sup>71</sup>

Since they continued to function as kings of pagan peoples, they presumably – though Cohen does not notice this – continued to perform the religious functions required of them in the state worship of its native gods and other state ceremonies.<sup>72</sup> For this they had good biblical precedent: a Syrian general cured by Elisha had promised that he would thenceforth sacrifice only to Yahweh, except when he had to accompany the king to the temple of the state god and participate in worship there; Elisha had replied with a blessing, ‘Go in peace’ (2 Kgs 5:1–28). Similarly, after Nehemiah’s time, the priests who wanted to permit gentile participation in Jewish rites introduced into the Pentateuch a minimal requirement, Exod. 12:48–9, ‘If an alien should dwell among you and would make the passover sacrifice to Yahweh, let every man of his household be circumcised and then he may come near [the sanctuary] to make it, as if he were

<sup>69</sup> *JRP* 71f, 80f.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Respect for Judaism by Gentiles according to Josephus’, *HTR* 80 (1987), 409–30, at 411.

<sup>71</sup> Cohen 411, n. 7, 412, 421.

<sup>72</sup> Josephus knows of subversion in Adiabene when the king’s relatives began to give up the practice of the ancestral religion (*Ant.* xx.73), but he says nothing of the king’s doing so. He overcame his opponents, died in peace, and was succeeded by a brother, also a convert, who held the throne at least through Nero’s time, presumably performing his royal religious duties. Nothing is reported of any trouble in Emesa and Cilicia.

a native of the land. But no uncircumcised [man] shall eat of it; [in this matter] the native born and the alien dwelling among you shall follow one [same] rule.' This rule was that circumcision by itself gave access to the ethnic rite.

Cohen, neglecting this background, explained Josephus' silence about converts, conversion, and its requirements and consequences as a matter of tact, not fact – Josephus did not wish to annoy his Roman readers, who were frightened (?) by the many (?) conversions to Judaism and thought the ancient Roman way of life was endangered (?). This comes of taking satirists seriously (Juvenal XIV.96–102, and Tacitus, who was also a satirist). Satire, admittedly, has some basis in fact; so does this argument. But we may also suppose that both Josephus and the 'curious' rabbinic rule report the primitive law which could readily be obeyed and enforced, whereas abandonment of alien gods, acceptance of all (!) Jewish laws, and the like, could neither be performed nor demonstrated promptly. Besides, in the Hasmonaeen case, the minimal requirement had the further advantage that most Idumaeans and Ituraeans, and probably many Galileans, had already met it. This was a considerable convenience for rulers who wanted to build a powerful military alliance at once.

The Ituraean–Galilean alliance (with the Judaeans) was less firmly based than the Idumaeen. Genesis 25:15 had made the Ituraean Arabs descendants of Abraham through Ishmael, but did they care? Not unless the putative paternity seemed likely to produce tangible consequences. One such consequence might have been better relations with their relatively new Galilean subjects; the Ituraeans had overrun the country only in the past twenty-five or fifty years, and many of the Galileans had some Israelite blood and knew a bit of biblical legend. A more tangible benefit of the pact with the Judaeans was the promise of their help against Ptolemais, Tyre and Sidon, the rich cities of the nearby coast. (Admittedly Aristobulus was using the title 'Philhellene' – *Ant.* XIII.318 – but that could be dismissed as diplomatic double talk.) Also they wanted help against the cities of the interior (especially Damascus) and above all against the Nabataeans who were pressing north and might make common cause with the coastal cities they wanted as ports. The Ituraeans, seated mainly in southern Lebanon, may have decided to secure their southern frontier by turning Galilee over to the *Ioudaioi* in return for assurance of military support as needed. The alliance will have been recommended to their Galilean subjects as to the Jews, by talk of the 'common covenant of circumcision' and other shared Semitic practices, Abrahamic ancestry, etc. Holding down the Galileans had been a charge on their forces; the Jews might take over the task with better success because of their closer ethnic connection.

The existence of such an understanding, at least at the top level, seems indicated by the course of events. The Ituraeans as a whole did not become Jews; they continue to appear in Roman documents as an independent people. Neither they nor the Galileans gave up their worship of the old local gods. Several sanctuaries on Mt Hermon continued in use to the fourth century CE (One of the gods was Baal, 1 Chr. 5:23.). Carmel was both a mountain and a god when Vespasian visited its sanctuary in CE 67 to offer sacrifice; the cult there continued beyond CE 200, the god being identified with Zeus Heliopolitanus. The high place at Dan was repaired in late Hellenistic or Roman times. Many minor sites have yielded artifacts indicative of the worship of various gods, some Hellenistic, some Semitic.<sup>73</sup>

The Ituraean ruler, Ptolemy son of Menneus, after reaching this *entente* with Aristobulus and attending to some minor affairs, attacked Damascus. The Damascenes called on Aretas the Nabataean to help them. He replied by attacking the *Ioudaioi* (presumably to prevent their intervention, *Bell.* 1.103; *Ant.* XIII.392). After defeating them he imposed a treaty (*ibid.*). It probably required them to help him when requested, since the next time Damascus needed help against Ptolemy, Queen Salome Alexandra, who had succeeded Jannaeus, sent an army under her son Aristobulus II (*Bell.* 1.115; *Ant.* XIII.418f). The army (diplomatically?) did nothing to speak of, but Aristobulus made friends with Ptolemy. Consequently when Salome died Ptolemy's Ituraeans helped Aristobulus take the throne away from his elder brother Hyrcanus II. Yet later, when Aristobulus was driven out and finally murdered, Ptolemy took care of his children, married his daughter, and backed her brother's efforts to recapture Judaea (*Bell.* 1.185f, 239; *Ant.* XIV.126, 297). After Ptolemy's death this policy was carried on by his son Lysander. Gradually, the Ituraean kingdom was dismembered (*Bell.* 1.140; *Ant.* XV.92, 94f; Cassius Dio XLIX.32; etc.) and its parts were gradually made over to Herod and his descendants.<sup>74</sup> With one peripheral exception (Philip) the Herodians chosen for these grants were descendants of Aristobulus II, whose daughter Ptolemy had married. They were thus connected with both the Hasmonaean and the Ituraean royal lines. Presumably it was thought that the old alliance would recommend them to their new people.

<sup>73</sup> Continuance of the Ituraeans, Schürer, 1.708f and notes. Cults on Mt Hermon, Eusebius, *Onomasticon*, ed. Klostermann, p. 70; R. Mouterde, 'Antiquités de l'Hermon', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 29 (1951–3), 22–37; on Carmel, Tacitus, *Hist.* II.78, cf. Suetonius, *Vespasianus* 5.6; M. Avi-Yonah, *IEJ* 2 (1952) 118ff; and Dan, J. Laughlin, 'The Remarkable Discoveries at Dan', *BAR* 7, 5 (1981) 34; minor finds, see *Hadasbot Arkebaioiogiot passim*.

<sup>74</sup> Details in Schürer-Vermes, *History* 1.564ff.

In both the Idumaeen and the Ituraean alliances, and in the annexation of Samaria, the Judaeans had taken the leading role. They retained it. The whole political–military–religious league that now united the hill country of Palestine from Dan to Beersheba, whatever it called itself, was directed by, and soon came to be called by others, ‘the *Ioudaioi*’.<sup>75</sup> Thus the term *Ioudaios* acquired a new meaning. For clarity, we may recall that the three main earlier meanings were: (1) one of the descendants of the patriarch Judah, i.e. (if in the male line) a member of the tribe of Judah; (2) a native of Judaea, a ‘Judaean’; (3) a ‘Jew’, i.e. a member of Yahweh’s chosen people, entitled to participate in those religious ceremonies to which only such members were admitted. Now appears the new, fourth meaning: (4) a member of the Judaeo–Samaritan–Idumaeen–Ituraean–Galilean alliance. These members we shall call ‘*Ioudaioi*’, but we shall use the term often for the non-Judaean members only. The three older meanings lived on vigorously in their proper contexts, but in discussions of Palestinian politics the fourth meaning now becomes common, and most of those who use it pay no attention to the fact that by religious criteria most Ituraeans, many Idumaeans, and some Galileans were pagans, i.e. Gentiles.<sup>76</sup>

Political and military concerns now became predominant in talk about *Ioudaioi*, because the military coalition thus put together gave its members a splendid opportunity to rob their neighbours. It could field more men than the largest of the independent cities. Some of these cities had some Jewish residents, but all were mostly pagan; the inscriptions found in the ruins of those to the west, north, and north-east, are predominantly in Greek. The league members presumably had border quarrels with all cities on which their lands bordered – such quarrels were endemic in ancient society. Each side of course accused the other of harassment. It was a moral duty to defend one’s allies. For the league it was also a

<sup>75</sup> Such ethnic–religious–military leagues had been common in Hellenistic history. In particular the formation, growth and destruction by Rome of the Aetolian League furnish many parallels to the history of the *Ioudaioi*.

<sup>76</sup> This list of meanings has the weakness of most dictionary lists which are based on usage, not intellectual analysis, viz., the different meanings reflect different determinants which are those of most concern in ordinary thought, but not equally important, nor invariably definitive, nor mutually exclusive. Thus the criterion of tribal ancestry was mainly a literary fossil, though some politicians and visionaries (especially messiahs) will have claimed it: both the *nasi* and the exilarch claimed descent from David; Paul claimed to be a Benjaminite (Phil. 3:5). Not all natives of Judaea became Judaeans; the children of most of Herod’s ‘ten thousand’ Greek officials would have claimed their fathers’ citizenships. Most, but not all, Judaeans were also Jews, but those accepted as Jews in the Diaspora might be Judaeans, *Ioudaioi*, or, most often, neither. And so on. In spite of all this I think the above meanings deserve attention as the main ones implied by common usage. [For a survey see G. Harvey, *The True Israel*.]

profitable enterprise; virtue was guided by the sight of its reward. In Italy, Rome had already conquered the entire peninsula by its relentless righteousness in defending its allies.

Hence the campaigns of Alexander Jannaeus. He is explicitly credited (?) with destruction of eight or nine cities. Their populations were either slaughtered or (probably more often) enslaved. No more ‘conversions’ are reported (see n. 41 above). He had all the men he needed; to take more would only diminish the per capita profit. The list of other places he captured, with unspecified enslavement and slaughter, runs to about fifteen; places that later had to be rebuilt, and rural areas said to have been ravaged, add another dozen. Only two of the many gentile sites in Palestine are known to have escaped: Ptolemais, which called in Egyptians, and Ascalon, which Egyptian influence protected.<sup>77</sup> A conservative estimate of number of persons killed or enslaved would be about 200,000.<sup>78</sup> Since most were sold as slaves, and many slaves were used in the land, the profit to the *Ioudaioi* from the slaves alone, not to mention the lands and property acquired, must have been large. Such success will have hastened the allies’ ‘conversion’ to Judaism. Military success was commonly taken as evidence of divine approval.<sup>79</sup>

Evidence of the economic consequences for the Galileans can be seen in the coin distribution of the Khirbet Shema/Meron/Gush Halav area, which had natural trading connections with Tyre. In a sample of 1,736 coins from Seleucid through Roman strata there are twice as many Tyrian (autonomous) as Seleucid, and twice as many Hasmonaean as Tyrian; and most of the Hasmonaean are of Alexander Jannaeus. With the coming of ‘Roman’ (Herodian?) times the number of coins falls back to the Seleucid level.<sup>80</sup> Upper Galilee had nothing to sell the rest of Jannaeus’ territory; all the hill country lived by much the same agriculture and pasturage. The most valuable thing they could export were the soldiers who brought back as their pay those coins, coined from Jannaeus’ loot. Herod, with Roman help, put an end to this profitable industry.

Jannaeus, however, was not consistently successful. In some of his many defeats the numbers of men lost are said to have run into the ten

<sup>77</sup> M. Stern, ‘Judaea and her Neighbors in the Days of Alexander Jannaeus’ in *The Jerusalem Cathedra*, ed. L. Levine, 1 (1981) 26–7.

<sup>78</sup> Allowing an average of 5,000 for each of the 36 cities or settlements specified, and about 20,000 for settlements not recorded specifically and for the unsettled countryside; for more than twenty years of campaigning, this is low. Of the places recorded, few will have had less than 5,000 inhabitants; many were much larger.

<sup>79</sup> This on the authority of divine revelation, Deut. 28:1, 2, 7, 15, 25.

<sup>80</sup> R. Hanson, *Tyrian Influence in Upper Galilee* (Cambridge, MA 1980), pp. 51–3 (= *Meron Excavation Project*, No. 2).



thousands.<sup>81</sup> Their families probably grumbled. The king's frequent absence from Jerusalem, the increasing importance, in the military and the court, of allies and/or Gentiles – Idumaeans, Galileans, and Ituraean leaders, and captains of mercenaries from God knows where – the rise of prices for luxuries due to the influx of money and the spending by the military, the fall of prices for agricultural products as markets (cities) were destroyed and new slaves were put to work on newly acquired lands: all these contributed to hostility among the landed Judaeans and Samaritans. Hence the riots and revolts which filled perhaps ten years of Jannaeus' reign (c. 96–86 BCE). These broke out in Jerusalem (*Bell.* 1.88; *Ant.* XIII.372), but the decisive battle was fought near Shechem (*Bell.* 1.92ff, *Ant.* XIII.377f). Though Shechem remained in ruins, a Shechemite population evidently survived in the countryside and infiltrated the revived Samaria, so that the term 'Samaritan' gradually came to refer to the fused population and also to the revised form of the old Shechemite religion. Perhaps the gentry of Samaria and Judaea had made common cause.<sup>82</sup> No trouble is reported in Idumaea and Galilee; those peoples and the Ituraeans are said to have been warlike<sup>83</sup> and were profiting from the new order. Alexander Jannaeus had been brought up in Galilee (perhaps as a hostage),<sup>84</sup> no doubt he had friends there.

His opponents were not above making gentile friends for themselves: they called in a Seleucid king, Demetrius 'the Unready', as an ally in this war against the High Priest and their fellow Jews. Jannaeus punished the ringleaders by having some eight hundred crucified and their wives and children killed in their sight, while he dined publicly with his concubines and watched the proceedings (*Bell.* 1.97; *Ant.* XIII.380). At this, eight thousand of his opponents fled from Judaea to some necessarily unclean

<sup>81</sup> Josephus' figures are obviously approximations and probably corrupted by copyists, or Josephus, or his sources, or all three. However, they suffice to indicate that the losses were numerous and sometimes large. M. Stern, 'Nicholas of Damascus as a Source for Israelite History in Hasmonaean and Herodian Times' in *Studies in Bible and Jewish History* (*J. Liver volume*) (Tel Aviv 1971), pp. 391–4 (in Hebrew), has discredited them as due to the malice of Nicholas, but to suppose all the reports completely false would leave no adequate explanation for the Jews' revolt against a consistently victorious king. On the other hand (as Stern argues) the conquests prove that he often did succeed. He had more men.

<sup>82</sup> The identity of their last holdout is uncertain, *Bell.* 1.96. Marcus *ad loc.*, citing Abel and Avi Yonah, opts for Misilye, ten miles NE of Samaria. The 40,000 of *Ant.* XIII.377 is probably the total of Demetrius' army plus his Jewish allies. A. Schalit's conjecture, a fortress on Gebel Qarantal, is too far away and not a city ('Der Schauplatz des letzten Kampfes', *Josephus-Studien*, ed. O. Betz *et al.* (Göttingen 1974), 300–18).

<sup>83</sup> *Bell.* 1.93. Schürer-Vermes 1 (1973) 562 and references there.

<sup>84</sup> *Ant.* 1.3.322.

land (*Bell.* 1.98; cp. *Ant.* XIII.383). Who they were we do not know. What has been told fits none of the three little legal sects – Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes – that Josephus mentions about this time. The *Damascus Document*, of which texts were found in Qumran and Cairo, came from a sect whose predecessors had made a ‘new covenant in the land of Damascus’ (VI.19). These may have been the survivors of the eight thousand, but it would be hasty to suppose that there were no other bodies of Jewish refugees from such a ruler, so the connection is not certain.

#### IV DAMNOSA HAEREDITAS

Jannaeus’ achievements have been summarized by Rappaport as follows:

The conquest of Palestine and the eradication of its foreign elements, above all the *poleis*<sup>85</sup> (which resisted Judaization . . . because of a sense of self-esteem, pride in their Hellenistic culture . . .) was almost completed . . . By the time of Salome’s reign only a few enclaves of Hellenistic cities remained in the country (Ascalon, Acre,<sup>86</sup> and Philadelphia, the last conquered by the Nabateans). Another few decades were required to convert the rest of the country to Judaism. Toward this end, it was desirable that alien pockets be eliminated, and particularly that the destroyed and disenfranchised *poleis* be forgotten and their former inhabitants (whether continuing to reside in their old locations or finding refuge elsewhere in Palestine) be reconciled to their loss.<sup>87</sup>

This happy account of a successful religious persecution does not fit the facts. There was little likelihood that the destroyed or disenfranchised *poleis* would be forgotten; many of their former residents were present in the country as slaves; to suppose that they would be reconciled to their loss is absurd. Most of those enslaved or driven out were not ‘foreign elements,’ but descendants of Palestinian peoples who had been in the country prior to the Israelite invasion or had arrived and become thoroughly at home in the course of the many subsequent centuries. Even in the ‘hellenized’ cities the element of the population derived from the Aegean coastlands was usually minuscule; the ‘Hellenizers’ of Marisa, Shechem, and probably Jerusalem, claimed only to be ‘Sidonians’ – and were probably lying.<sup>88</sup>

Moreover, Jannaeus’ conquests cannot plausibly be represented as a religious persecution to achieve the conversion and purification of Pales-

<sup>85</sup> I.e. the cities organized on Greek lines. <sup>86</sup> I.e. Ptolemais.

<sup>87</sup> U. Rappaport, ‘Jewish-Pagan Relations and the Revolt against Rome in CE 66–70’ in *The Jerusalem Cathedra*, ed. L. Levine 1 (1981) 86.

<sup>88</sup> Marisa, see E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York 1955–68), 13 vols., I.65 ff and III, nos. 7–16; Shechem, *Ant.* XII.257–64 and 2 Macc. 6:2; on these, Smith, *Parties* 52 and notes 87–90.

tine. He was not a religious type. His crucifixion dinner party (though Rappaport may see it as a devout interpretation of Ps. 23:5) embarrassed even Josephus,<sup>89</sup> who reports that he was nicknamed ‘the Thracian’ ‘because of his cruelty’.<sup>90</sup> He held the High Priesthood in defiance both of biblical law<sup>91</sup> and of much pious opinion,<sup>92</sup> and his legal administration was such that his widow, Salome Alexandra, reportedly had to pacify ‘the Judaeans’ by reinstating the old laws which had been ‘according to the ancestral tradition’ (*Ant.* XIII.408, cf. 296f, and *Bell.* I.108). Given these facts his conquests can most plausibly be explained as results of avarice and the desire of power, and his destructions by the hope to leave no centre of political resistance. Dionysius I of Syracuse followed similar policies.

In *Bell.* Salome’s return to old Judaeian law precedes the rise of the Pharisees, who are introduced afterwards, as hitherto unmentioned, and ‘grow up beside’ the queen ‘into power’ (*Bell.* I.110) as authorities on those Judaeian laws that she was reviving. In *Ant.* XIII.399–406, the Pharisees are already, at Jannaeus’ death, the most powerful party in Jerusalem. Jannaeus, in a melodramatic deathbed scene, tells Salome she must conciliate them. She does so, by promising them control of his funeral and a voice in her government.

If this story were true,<sup>93</sup> it would indicate that the Pharisees had not been important in the revolt against Jannaeus. Had they been his main

<sup>89</sup> *Bell.* 1.97; *Ant.* XIII.381–3. Admittedly the story smacks – not to say, ‘smells’ – of the propaganda against tyrants that was circulated by Greek philosophical schools (resolute liars in their defence of truth), and Nicholas doubtless knew and used such material. Nevertheless, it cannot wholly be dismissed, because (a) some tyrants did (and still do) behave in such ways; (b) Jannaeus’ introduction of crucifixion is attested by 4Q169 (Peshar Nahum) 1.6–8, which has no such pseudo-philosophical overtones.

<sup>90</sup> *Bell.* 1.88; *Ant.* XIII.374, 380–3. M. Stern’s apology, ‘Trachides’, *Tarbiz* 29 (1960) 209 overlooks the facts that Jannaeus had recruited Cilicians and Pisidians as well as Thracians, and at the time in question had few or no mercenaries – they had ‘all’ been killed, *Ant.* XIII.378.

<sup>91</sup> G. Hölscher, ‘Levi’, *RE* 12 (1925), 2189–91.

<sup>92</sup> *Ant.* XIII.292; CD 8 (MS B15–19; A3–7); b. Qiddushin 66a; Pss. Sol. 17:5–9; Test. Moses 5:5.

<sup>93</sup> The story is immediately recognizable as folkloristic; it gives us a verbatim account of the proceedings at one of those private deathbed scenes about which ancient religious writers are often incredibly well informed. For the type see J. Munck, ‘Discours d’adieu’, *Aux Sources de la tradition chrétienne* (Goguel volume) (Neuchâtel 1950), pp. 155–70. Admittedly, folklore may sometimes tell the truth. But this is one of many passages in *Ant.* which declare the Pharisees to be the party with most influence over the people, the party that must be won over by any government desiring popular support. In ‘Palestinian Judaism in the First Century’ (in *Israel: Its Role in Civilization*, ed. M. Davis (New York 1956), pp. 67–81; repr. in *Studies in the Cult of Yabweh* vol. 1, by M. Smith (Leiden 1996), pp. 104–15), I listed these passages and argued that they were probably

opponents they would have lost some thousands in the fighting, eight hundred in the crucifixion, eight thousand by flight, and all whom Jannaeus was able to catch during the last ten years of his reign (86–76 BCE). Josephus says in *Bell.* 1.91 and *Ant.* XIII.376 that in six years of the civil war Jannaeus killed ‘no less than 50,000 Jews’, a round figure meaning approximately ‘lots and lots’. That he spared opponents after consolidating his power is not likely. Given the losses necessary to produce such exaggeration, could those remaining in Jerusalem (not a big city) have been strong enough to threaten Salome’s hold on the throne when she returned at the head of a victorious army (*Ant.* XIII.405)?

Since the deathbed story is false, we are left with no more than the fact that the reports about the resistance do not fit the Pharisees. Further evidence comes from Jannaeus’ coinage. The issues with inscriptions fall into two groups: (1) ‘Of King Alexander’ in Greek and/or ‘Yehonathan the King’ in Hebrew, (2) ‘Y(eh)onathan High Priest and the League of the *Yebudim*’ in Hebrew only – evidently Judaeen leadership had made Hebrew the official language of this Semitic-speaking league. More than

invented by Josephus to win Roman support after CE 70 for the Pharisees. D. Schwartz, ‘Josephus and Nicolaus on the Pharisees’, *JStJ* 14 (1983), 157–71, tried to refute this theory by pointing out that in a very few passages of *Bell.* Josephus does attribute to the Pharisees great influence over the people, and in a very few of *Ant.* he does tell unpleasant stories about them, stories probably derived from Nicholas. However, Josephus is a notoriously careless writer (as demonstrated fully by Cohen, *Josephus*) so it is not surprising that when using Nicholas he carelessly took over a few bits of gossip about the Pharisees that were not to their credit, but not severely damaging. As for the *Bell.* passages that attribute to them predominant position and influence, these, as shown in my article, are refuted by the actual course of events – in which the Pharisees were usually unable to stop popular movements of which they disapproved, and almost never able to do anything of much political importance. Therefore the few exceptional *Bell.* passages making these false claims for them are best understood as additions inserted by Josephus when he revised the work in the 90s. (For such a revision of Book 7 see S. Schwartz, ‘The Composition and Publication of Josephus’s *BJ* Book 7’, *HTR* 79 (1986) 373–86, esp. 379ff.) The long digression on the three ‘forms of Jewish philosophy’, *Bell.* II.119–66, which breaks the course of the narrative, contributes nothing to it, and reflects sources quite different from anything Josephus used elsewhere in the work, seems a clear case of such interpolation. It, at least, used elements partially reliable, whereas the story of Hyrcanus’ quarrel with the Pharisees in *Ant.* XIII.289 was cut from the same sleazy stuff as the following death-bed scene. Readily recognizable as folkloristic motifs are: the banquet at which the host asks a foolish question, the one wicked guest who gives an unwelcome answer, the evil counsellor of the good but foolish king, the humane courtier(s) who will not impose the severe penalty ordered/desired by the tyrant. The whole was inserted to explain how it happened that the Pharisees were not in power till Salome put them there; its historical value is therefore as evidence that when Josephus wrote *Ant.* XIII the Pharisees were already claiming immemorial authority and making up stories to explain away historical facts that contradicted their claims.

90 per cent of the largest groups of the first type were restruck with the later legend – evidence that the change was important. *Prima facie*, the change indicates a limitation of royal power by association with the ‘league’ (‘union’, ‘association’, *vel sim.*) of the *Yebudim*, in Greek *Ioudaioi*.<sup>94</sup> But which *Ioudaioi*? If Josephus’ report, that Jannaeus’ mercenaries were killed off but that he nevertheless overcame his Judaeans opponents,<sup>95</sup> be true (and the latter clause seems guaranteed by the course of later events), then after the killing he must have found other support, most likely from the military allies classed as *Ioudaioi* – the Idumaeans, Galileans, and Ituraeans. This ‘League of *Ioudaioi*’ may therefore have been given official position as associate of the High Priest. The allies had agreed to be members of a military union, not subjects of a monarchy.

Such demonstration of the throne’s dependence on the allies may explain Salome’s decision to try to rebuild support in Judaea. Other factors contributed. The rich places had already been looted (except for Acre and Ascalon, but those were protected by Egypt); the Nabataeans were already beginning to take back Transjordan; a woman pushing sixty (as Aristobulus’ widow she had managed Jannaeus’ accession), she was not well suited for the role of a military leader; to entrust campaigns to others was to invite usurpation. She prudently preferred peace. She managed to get large credit for piety (*Bell.* 1.108), but she greatly increased the mercenary, i.e. gentile, element in the army, a bulwark against Judaeans, allies and aliens alike (*Bell.* 1.112; *Ant.* XIII.409). In Judaea, prudence may

<sup>94</sup> Y. Meshorer, *Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period*, tr. I. Levine (Tel Aviv 1967), pp. 56–9, 118–21, and pl. II and III. The argument of M. McLean, ‘The Initial Coinage of Alexander Jannaeus’, *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 26 (1981), 159, discounting the importance of the change of title because ‘one would expect all the Anchor/Diadem coins to have been recalled’ overestimates the control of circulation by ancient states with minimal means of supervision. H. Minc’s ‘Coins of Alexander Yannai’, *Journal of the Society for Ancient Numismatics* 12 (1981), 49–57, 64–7, trying to reverse the sequence of the overstriking, does not convince me. Overstriking is usually clear, so the consensus of the earlier experts is weighty. Moreover, the formula ‘and the league of the *Yebudim*’ continued to be used on the coinage of Hyrcanus II, more likely a perpetuation of Jannaeus’ last usage than a resumption of a formula he had dropped eight years earlier.

<sup>95</sup> *Ant.* XIII.377f says all Jannaeus’ 6,200 mercenaries were killed in the battle against Demetrius; *Bell.* 1.93ff tells of eight or nine thousand defeated, though fighting bravely. Jannaeus reportedly had ‘about 20,000’ *Ioudaioi*, as distinct from his mercenaries, *Ant.* x.377 (*Bell.* 1.93 says ‘10,000’). The total force of his opponents, including Demetrius, came to 43,000 (*Bell.* says 17,000). After the battle 6,000 Judaeans went over to Jannaeus, and this decided Demetrius to withdraw, but the remaining opponents were strong enough to keep up ‘a long war’ before their final defeat. From such data the most that can securely be inferred is that there was very strong opposition in Judaea and Samaria. Hence the inference, that the forces which enabled Jannaeus to keep up the fight were probably those of the Idumaeans and Galilean allies, i.e. *Ioudaioi*, not Judaeans.

have led her to patronize a small party which would depend on her (as *Bell.* 1.110 suggests the Pharisees did). If the (rabbinic) story that the leading Pharisee, Simeon ben Shetah, was her brother has any basis beyond the wishful thinking of later Pharisees, we should have a further reason for her choice. At all events she seems to have placed many Pharisees in positions important for her proposed legal reform.

Josephus' story is that they used their legal powers to harass those of Jannaeus' friends who had encouraged him to execute his Judaeans opponents. Given Jannaeus' career it is likely that his circle was mostly military, and Josephus indicates as much in the speech made up for their defence, and by his story of their means of escape (*Bell.* 1.113–14; *Ant.* XIII.408–14). Looking for a defender, they turned to Jannaeus' second son, Aristobulus. His mother had made his elder brother, Hyrcanus, High Priest, in accordance with the biblical, Judaeans law of primogeniture. Aristobulus therefore welcomed military petitioners. By defending them he formed a powerful body of supporters. Yet more, he got them strategic positions as commanders of the minor fortresses about the country (*Bell.* 1.114; *Ant.* XIII.415–17). He also strengthened his ties with the military by serving as commander of the force his mother sent to aid Damascus (*Bell.* 1.115; *Ant.* XIII.418). At the same time he used this expedition to establish good relations with Ptolemy, son of Menneus, the Ituraean ruler of southern Lebanon, nominally his opponent (see above). The understanding with Ptolemy will have helped him with the Ituraeans in Galilee.

Thus prepared, when his mother fell into her last illness he raised an army (with Ptolemy's help?) and soon had control of twenty-two fortresses. Many supporters came to him from Ituraean Lebanon (*Bell.* 1.117; *Ant.* XIII.424–47). When his mother died he defeated his brother Hyrcanus II (most of whose soldiers deserted), forced him to retire to private life, and illegally took over the high priesthood (*Bell.* 1.119–22; *Ant.* XIV.4–7). In these events the Pharisees did just what we should expect of a small party of jurists who owed their positions to the favour of a deceased ruler – they vanished. Of their legendary power to move the people to paroxysms of resistance, there is no trace. Presumably Hyrcanus was their candidate. He and they were both Salome's protégés, and by biblical law he, as first born, had the right to the place. No doubt, in defence of their discreet silence, they reflected that almost nothing legally takes precedence over saving one's life. The rest of the Judaeans seem to have thought the same. In spite of Salome's attempt to regain local support, there is no trace of any substantial local action on behalf of her legitimate heir. Perhaps Jannaeus had made so clean a sweep of the province that there were no important local leaders left.

With his establishment of Aristobulus II as High Priest of Jerusalem and leader of the 'union' of the *Ioudaioi*, Ptolemy the son of Menneus came to the height of his power: he controlled all southern Lebanon, held two seaports on the Mediterranean coast, and was threatening Damascus on the east, Berytus on the west.<sup>96</sup> The alliance of Ituraeans and *Ioudaioi* had long given him a body of supporters in Galilee, and the military repute of his people makes it likely that many of them had been earning money in Jannaeus' army as mercenaries or hired leaders of Galilean levies.<sup>97</sup> Now that he had strengthened these ties by his help to Aristobulus, the whole union of the *Ioudaioi* was in his sphere of influence, and he could hope to keep it there by a dynastic marriage – a plan he still tried to carry out after Aristobulus' death (see above).

This plan threatened the hopes of another planner, Antipater the Idumaeen, who 'by ancestry, wealth, and abilities was the foremost of his *ethnos*',<sup>98</sup> i.e. of the Idumaeans, as distinct from the Judaeans. According to Josephus, his father had been 'appointed' by Jannaeus 'general of all Idumaea' (*Ant.* xiv.10). 'Appointed' reflects Josephus' story of a Judaeen conquest. Perhaps his text, or the text he used, originally had 'recognized as', *sc.* from among competing leaders of the Idumaeen allies; the difference in Greek is only one *iota*.<sup>99</sup> Whatever his office, he had made friends with the adjacent Nabataeans, who had the largest army in the vicinity. Now he needed their help because of his old enmity to Aristobulus (*Bell.* 1.123).

He too, Josephus says, devised a plan: to persuade Hyrcanus to flee to the Nabataeans, and the Nabataeans to restore him to his throne, expelling Aristobulus and his allies. Thus Idumaea, Judaea, and Samaria, at least, would become a Nabataean puppet kingdom, with himself as governor and Hyrcanus reduced to High Priest of the Jerusalem temple. This plan, once formed, he held to, modified as events required, and eventually carried out, though with Roman rather than Nabataean backing. At first, however, all went well. He persuaded, Hyrcanus fled, the Nabataeans

<sup>96</sup> H. Volkmann, 'Ptolemaios (60) Sohn des Mennaios', *RE* 23 (1959) 1766–7.

<sup>97</sup> Schürer 1.708f and notes.

<sup>98</sup> *Bell.* 1.123; *Ant.* xiv.8–13. There is no good reason to doubt Josephus' report of this, nor his report of Nicholas' lie and the reason for it, *Ant.* xiv.9. Other stories are collected by Marcus, *ad loc.* Antipater may have been an Ascalonite – his father may have been given honorary citizenship in the neighbouring city; such civic honours were often given to potentially useful officials of neighbouring kingdoms. The temple-slave yarn is typical of early Christian slander.

<sup>99</sup> Read in *Ant.* xiv.10 *apodexantōn* instead of *apodeixantōn*. That he probably held the office by inheritance rather than appointment was also suggested by M. Gihon, 'Edom – Idumaea and the Herodian Limes' in *Doron* (B. Katz vol.), ed. S. Perlman *et al.* (Tel Aviv 1967), p. 208 and n. 19.



invaded, Aristobulus was defeated and his followers were besieged in the temple. But just then the Romans arrived.<sup>100</sup>

The Judaeans who had taken no part in the brothers' war emerged in the Romans' peace conference.<sup>101</sup> Representatives of 'the (Judaeans) *ethnos*' claimed that their people's 'ancestral custom was to obey their priests,<sup>102</sup> but these (Hasmonaeans) had attempted to change the constitution and enslave the people' (*Ant.* XIV.41). Besides these, a thousand *Ioudaioi* organized by Antipater on behalf of Hyrcanus, appeared and claimed, among other things, that 'the *ethnos*' (*sc.* the Judaeans) had revolted from Aristobulus because of his bad character. Aristobulus, too, sent a delegation – of young men from his own entourage, ethnicity unspecified; from what Josephus says of their appearance and behaviour they seem to have been the sons of his father's officers.<sup>103</sup>

These are the parties Josephus records. Besides these the interests of the captured cities were represented by Pompey's trusted freedman, Demetrius, from Gadara (*Bell.* I.155; *Ant.* XIV.75). The eminent philosopher, Philodemus, may have used his influence; he, too, was a native of (the same?) Gadara, and was now living near Naples as philosopher to L. Calpurnius Piso Caesonius, consul in 58 BCE along with Pompey's protégé Gabinius. Another distinguished emigré had been the philosopher Antiochus of Ascalon, whose city had narrowly escaped Jannaeus. He

<sup>100</sup> *Bell.* I.124–7; *Ant.* XIV.8–29 adds that after the victory of the Nabataeans the people (*demos*) of Jerusalem went over to Hyrcanus, but the priests remained loyal to Aristobulus and protected his interests by holding the temple as a fortress. This is puzzling. By priestly law the High Priesthood should have gone to the elder son, Hyrcanus. Presumably Aristobulus' troops had taken the temple and so controlled the priests. Josephus may have used this as evidence of priestly approval of Aristobulus – by making a case for the claims of Aristobulus' line he could flatter its last important representative, his patron Agrippa II. (An interesting detail of the story is the report that Aretas put the camps of the *Ioudaioi* and the Arabs side by side, *Ant.* XIV.21. These *Ioudaioi* whom he commanded were probably in large part Idumaeans, the 'Arabs' were Nabataeans, and Idumaeans–Nabataean relations were at this time good.)

<sup>101</sup> The Shechemites may have appeared, too, but from here on Josephus says little of them. Jannaeus' punishment after the revolt may have left them insignificant. The non-Jewish cities are also unmentioned.

<sup>102</sup> This claim could have been made (honestly) only by the Judaeans. The Idumaeans and Galilean *Ioudaioi* had been allies (not subjects, see above) of the High Priests only some sixty and forty years prior to the conference.

<sup>103</sup> *Bell.* I.131–2; *Ant.* XIV.42–6. In spite of the illegality of Aristobulus' claim, those of his party who held the temple observed the sabbath laws – perhaps they wanted to conciliate the priests, perhaps sabbath observance was like circumcision, one of the Semitic practices common to the Hasmonaeans and the hill peoples who allied with them, but perhaps this detail is merely a Josephan use of a common topos – almost everybody who fought the Jews was said to take advantage of the sabbath laws, *Ant.* XII.4, 274f; XIII.337; etc.

had died in 68, but had visited Palestine with Lucullus in the early seventies and had probably spoken to him about its recent history.<sup>104</sup> Lucullus was still influential, as was Cicero, who had formerly studied with Antiochus. These are only the best-known representatives of what must have been an important body of informants, whose work was reflected a generation later by the geographer Strabo's *en passant* description of the Hasmonaeans as 'tyrants' and their adherents as 'pirates' and 'brigands'.<sup>105</sup> Pompey was in constant correspondence with his fellow senators. When his campaign took him into Palestine his friends in Rome probably wrote him whatever they thought might be useful about the recent history of the country.

When matters went from arguing to fighting, Hyrcanus had enough influence with the Judaeans around Jerusalem to prevent them from acting on Aristobulus' side – so Josephus (*Bell.* 1.153; *Ant.* XIV.73), but the presence of Pompey's army was probably the chief deterrent. Josephus does not say that Hyrcanus could persuade them to act on his own side.

The force which neither Hyrcanus nor Aristobulus could control was Aristobulus' soldiers. When he himself surrendered and ordered that his money, and access to Jerusalem, be given to Pompey, 'his soldiers would not permit this' (*Ant.* XIV.56; *Bell.* 1.140). When Pompey reached Jerusalem they tried to shut him out; when this was prevented by the people, they seized the temple and stood a siege until it was captured. Of course it was damaged and polluted in the process. Nevertheless, their refusal and resistance are commonly represented by modern scholars (though not by Josephus) as expressions of religious devotion. They can more plausibly be explained as acts of an army largely of professional soldiers, who saw that with submission to Roman rule their occupation would be gone. The life of adventure and looting that had prevailed in Palestine for forty years would cease. Yet worse, they would be called to account for their crimes, beginning with disobedience to Pompey. Roman punishments being what they were, it is understandable that many chose suicide, and chose the temple as the fortress in which they could exact from their enemies the highest price for their lives. As followers of Aristobulus, all but the mercenaries were probably *Ioudaioi* – members of the military alliance. How many of them were Jews, there is no telling. Their treatment of the temple would seem more easily understandable if the Jewish contingent were small.

Pompey's settlement of Palestine was dictated by fairly clear considerations: (1) The *Ioudaioi* had overrun their neighbours and so created a

<sup>104</sup> For all this information see the *Kleine Pauly* under the names of the persons concerned; for Antiochus add G. Luck, *Der Akademiker Antiochos* (Berne 1953) (*Noctes Romanae* 7), 13ff.

<sup>105</sup> *Geography* XVI.2, 28, 37, 40. Parallels are cited by Stern *GLAJJ* 1.292 and 306.

territory large enough to be potentially troublesome for Rome; both justice and prudence required that they be cut down to size. (2) His own conquests and dispositions of territories would have to be justified to the Senate. (3) The most effective justification would be money – additional income for Rome, pay and bonuses for his soldiers, gifts for his friends, and funds for his political war chest. He therefore imposed a tribute on Jerusalem and on ‘the country’ (Judaea? *Bell.* 1.155; *Ant.* XIV.74). He took a thousand talents from Ptolemy, the son of Menneus (*Ant.* XIV.39). ‘He took from the *ethnos* [here apparently the *Ioudaioi*] the cities in *Koile Syria* [i.e. Palestine and Transjordan] which they had captured... and shut them up in their own limits’ (*Bell.* 1.155; *Ant.* XIV.74; similarly he expelled Ptolemy from the coastal cities of Lebanon, Strabo XVI.2.18 C755). ‘He had Gadara rebuilt’ and liberated the other cities not utterly destroyed,<sup>106</sup> ‘all of which he gave back to their true citizens and enrolled in the province of Syria’ (*Bell.* 1.155–7). Enrolment in a province normally entailed payment of the taxes imposed on the province, but it also guaranteed against future conquest; henceforth the city would be Roman territory and therefore, probably, safe. The next half-century would see Palestinian cities petitioning for admission.

*Bell.* 1.155ff and parallels<sup>b</sup> are remarkable for their use of ‘the people’ (*to ethnos*) and ‘the country’ to refer to all the members of the alliance and to all the territories they, as separate peoples, had originally held, or, as members of the alliance, had early acquired and solidly settled. This may be anachronistic retrojection of the Roman imperial use of the first century CE, but it also accords with Josephus’ purpose to represent ‘the Jews’ as a single, great and powerful people, and Palestine as their ancestral country (*Bell.* 1.1–8, 17f, and *passim*). It also anticipates the actual fusion of the *Ioudaioi* into a single people, a process continued through the first century CE and beyond. How far that process had gone in Pompey’s time, and what he thought ‘the *ethnos*’ and ‘their own limits’ to be, we cannot be sure.

Gabinus, when he came back as proconsul half a dozen years later, defined the limits so as to produce five territories with independent civil governments: the regions of Jerusalem, Amathous (for central Transjordan), Jericho (for the southern Jordan valley), Sepphoris (for Galilee), and Gadara (?) for northern Transjordan – more likely ‘Gamala’, since he was

<sup>106</sup> I.e. Hippos, Scythopolis, Pella, Samaria, Jamnia, Marisa, Azotus, Arethusa, Gaza, Joppa, Dora, and Strato’s Tower, *Bell.* 1.154–7; *Ant.* XIV.74–6 adds Diom. Gabinus, who carried through the rebuilding in 57 BCE, added Anthedon, Apollonia, Raphia, Adora, and others, *Bell.* 1.160–6; *Ant.* XIV.82–8.

<sup>b</sup> (Smith is apparently referring to the use of *ethnos* in *Bell.* 1.155//*Ant.* XIV.74, and *chora* in *Bell.* 1.153–154//*Ant.* XIV.73.)

rebuilding Gadara as a city of gentile refugees (*Bell.* 1.170; *Ant.* XIV.91). The Idumaeans, not mentioned, may have been separated from the *Ioudaioi* altogether, and so, too, the Shechemites. Hyrcanus was restricted to governance of the temple.

This arrangement was soon junked by the war of Aristobulus II and his descendants against Hyrcanus II – a dynastic fight in which neither side represented ‘the Jewish nation’. Both parties were backed by non-Judaeans: Hyrcanus by the Idumaeans, Nabataeans and finally, Romans; Aristobulus’ family by the Galileans, Ituraeans and finally, Parthians. The greater backers were the least active. For action Aristobulus and his sons had the descendants of Jannaeus’ friends in Galilee and soldiers settled in the Peraea. There, too, they suffered their defeats: Machaerus, Itabyrion, Taricheae, the Galilean caves.<sup>107</sup> Hyrcanus’ interests were represented by Antipater, his most dangerous enemy. Where Antipater raised his forces we are not usually told. Most likely, Idumaea, although when near the end of his life he went to Transjordan for ‘Arabs and natives’ (*Ant.* XIV.277, cf. *Bell.* 1.223; for his use of Arabs, *sc.* Nabataeans, see also *Bell.* 1.187; *Ant.* XIV.128).

For twenty years there is no mention of substantial Judaeans support for Hyrcanus. Then, about 43 BCE, we are told that Malichus, who poisoned Antipater, had so much popular support in Jerusalem that Antipater’s sons, Phasael and Herod, dared not attack him for fear of a civil war (*Bell.* 1.227f; *Ant.* XIV.283).<sup>108</sup> The long absence of support for Hyrcanus may have been due, as Josephus indicates, to Hyrcanus’ sloth and Antipater’s activity. However, other factors were probably contributory. One may have been the hostility of the old Jerusalem priesthood towards the Hasmonaean High Priests, as upstarts and illegal. This feeling was expressed by their delegates to Pompey (*Ant.* XIV.41; Diodorus XL.2).<sup>109</sup> Another factor may have been the hostility of the Judaeans landlords. Josephus has a report that he probably heard as a child in Jerusalem: when Hyrcanus

<sup>107</sup> Machaerus, *Bell.* 1.171–4; *Ant.* XIV.92–7; Itabyrion, *Bell.* 1.176f; *Ant.* XIV.100–2; Taricheae, *Bell.* 1.180; *Ant.* XIV.120; the Galilean caves and Ezekias, *Bell.* 1.204; *Ant.* XIV.159.

<sup>108</sup> His brother also had control of many fortresses and the support of a leader of the mercenaries, as well as an alliance with ‘the tyrant’ of Tyre, *Bell.* 1.236–8; *Ant.* XIV.294–8. Again, Gentiles in the background. Perhaps even in the foreground, since Malichus is a Nabataean name and A. Schalit’s conjecture, that the man may have been a mercenary who rose to command, is not unlikely (*König Herodes*, Berlin, 1969, 749f, henceforth ‘Schalit, *Herodes*). Josephus’ representation of Hyrcanus as no less afraid of Malichus than of Antipater, may not be far from the truth.

<sup>109</sup> Its background has been traced by J. Sievers, *The Hasmonaean and their Supporters from Mattathias to the Death of John Hyrcanus I* (Atlanta 1990) (USF Studies in the History of Judaism 6).

was deprived of political power, ‘the people . . . glad at being freed from monarchic government, henceforth conducted their affairs as aristocracies’ (*Bell.* 1.170; cf. *Ant.* XIV.91).

In spite of all this, the Hasmonaean high priesthood lasted more than a century (153–37 BCE). It had no serious rival, and no comparable successor, so it came to occupy a higher place in Jewish imagination than it had actually enjoyed in popular esteem. By historians it has been credited chiefly with carrying through the Maccabean revolt, shaking off the Seleucids, and saving Judaism (for better or for worse) from syncretism. That was truly an important achievement, but a second, comparable to it, was the transformation of the Jews from a little provincial people (albeit one with important colonies in distant lands) to the chief element of a powerful military–political–religious complex of which the brief conquests not only made them notorious throughout the Near East, but also produced in Palestine the many curious combinations of Jewish and gentile elements that must be posited to explain the diverse Palestinian products of the two first centuries, BCE and CE – the Palestinian apocrypha and pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, the Dead Sea sects and the works they produced, the Herodian dynasty, temple, priesthood and state religion, the Sadducean party that worked with it, the Shechemites who went their own way, the Pharisees, the many individual pietists and prophets (among them John the Baptist), the miracle-workers like Jesus and Simon ‘the magician’, the legalistic revolutionaries like Judas of Galilee (or Gamala<sup>2</sup>), the devout assassins, the sacrilegious zealots, the many leaders, the more numerous partisans, the innumerable victims, the local cults and cultures of the diverse cities – old Semitic, Hellenized, new foundations (Greek and Herodian) – and the religious groups from which would grow Christianity, the cult of Simon, and other similar sects, rabbinic Judaism and its variants; and finally, enveloping all these distinguishable groups, the life of the ordinary people of the land. All these are parts or products of the amazing amalgam that the Hasmonaean conquests produced, and none of them is free from the pervasive influences of Hellenistic culture and Jewish tradition.

## V KING HEROD, THE *IOUDAIOS*

The Parthian invasion and the end of the Hasmonaean high priesthood (need not be rehearsed here). Once again the Gentiles, this time solicited by a Hasmonaean and/or his gentile backer (Lysanias, successor of Ptolemy son of Menneus, *Bell.* 1.248f; *Ant.* XIV.33of) had produced a major change in Judaism and left the Jews to work out the consequences. Similarly, the Romans appointed Herod merely ‘King’, without bothering to say, of

what. The act bestowed a recognizable status in the Roman hierarchy of administrators, the territory and subjects attached were adjustable. On his coinage, Herod wisely left the question open; he used always 'Herod, King' without further definition which might turn away the awards he hoped yet to receive. He seems mainly to have loved power, and wanted all he could get.

Nevertheless, he was in fact limited by the supporters he could attract. His grandfather, father and brothers had held important administrative posts under Jannaeus, Salome and Hyrcanus. They had presumably built up a corps of followers, most of them Idumaeans from their own estates or tribe, but also many mercenaries. He himself had begun administration at age 25 in 47 BCE,<sup>110</sup> and had thus made friends (as well as enemies) in Galilee, Samaria and Judaea, where he had held authority. He and his brothers with their friends had been able to defeat, without foreign help, the conspiracy started by Malichus (*Bell.* 1.227–40; *Ant.* XIV.283–99). In this conflict he had captured (and kept) Masada. When he had to flee Judaea in 41 BCE he could take a company of – reportedly – 9,000; it enabled him to beat off a serious Judaeian attack. On reaching safety in Idumaea he sent away most, but left 800 as guards for his womenfolk in Masada. Besides these, shortly afterwards, when he went to Egypt and thence to Rome, he took with him enough to fill a trireme (*Bell.* 1.280f; *Ant.* XIV.378).

Consequently, when he got back to Ptolemais in 39 BCE with his new Roman title, he was probably able to recall quickly many of his former soldiers, as well as to hire new mercenaries. (Roman troops were not available. Ventidius, Antony's general, had left a small force to besiege Jerusalem, but was busy with the rest in Syria.)<sup>111</sup> Herod, with his own troops, went first to Galilee where he had been governor. 'Almost all Galilee came over to him.'<sup>112</sup> This statement obviously came from a eulogy. Probably he did get some men. Next, to Joppa, an old Judaeian colony that had profited from piracy (Strabo XVI.2.28); it had to be conquered and he had enough men to conquer it. This provided money, gave him a tax-free port and perhaps some ships, and opened the way for relief of Masada, which Antigonos' forces were besieging, and for rescue of his family. Going through Idumaea he attracted a large following, old friends and new joiners (*Bell.* 1.293; *Ant.* XIV.398). From Masada to Jerusalem his following increased; country places submitted, deserters from the city came in numbers. Thus far (if we can trust Josephus, who is hostile) he had had no substantial help from the Romans.

<sup>110</sup> *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, 2nd edn, IV.1 (1952), 83, correcting *Ant.* XIV.158 (cf. *Bell.* 1.203).

<sup>111</sup> H. Gundel, 'Ventidius (5)', *RE* 2R 8 (1955) 807–12.

<sup>112</sup> *Bell.* 1.291; *Ant.* XIV.395; cf. *Bell.* 1.303; *Ant.* XIV.413 (revolts).

What follows is often incoherent and self-contradictory, perhaps a drastic abbreviation of several texts. The basic facts: Galilee often revolted, but was resubjugated; Jericho was divided, the rich for him, the poor against; the Judean countryside was generally hostile; Idumaea (except for occasional troublemakers) and Samaria (with similar exceptions) were friendly. He quartered his family in Samaria and celebrated there his marriage with Mariamme, which made him grandson-in-law of both Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. When he came back to the siege his army is said to have totalled 30,000 besides his former troops (*Ant.* xiv.468), and he now had large Roman support. Nevertheless, although the Pharisees urged them to admit him (*Ant.* xv.3), the people of Jerusalem stood a long siege. Since the city was controlled by Antigonus, the question of Herod's popularity is left open. Some indication is given by troop figures. Allowing for exaggeration, we may suppose he had 30,000 men in all. If 10,000 were mercenaries (Jannaeus had had only six to nine thousand) there would remain about 20,000 partisans who were willing to follow Herod and fight for him when his chances were still uncertain. (He might be killed in battle or poisoned, Antigonus might win over the Roman commander, the Parthians might come back . . . Who knew?) In proportion to their families and friends, the men who came out to fight for him were probably less than one to ten; so his force of 20,000 probably came from a body of more than 200,000 supporters in the population. Did Antigonus have more?

In reading Josephus' reports of popular support for the Hasmonaeans, we must remember that Josephus himself was of the Hasmonaeian family; this we know, for Josephus tells us so. The knowledge of it grew in him with time: when he began *Bell.* he was merely 'son of Matthias . . . a priest from Jerusalem' (1.3). After a dozen years in Roman Jewish society, he was 'nearly' related to the 'Kings from the Hasmonaeian line',<sup>113</sup> this is why he has an honoured place in the priesthood, and thinks it beneath him to tell anything false about them (!). A few years later, and all ambiguity is gone: 'I am of the royal family on my mother's side' (*Vita* 2). From a witness so highly placed above prejudice we should expect perfect veracity, were it not that he was also much indebted to his (not-very-close) relative, King Agrippa II, for information and patronage.<sup>114</sup> Agrippa II was great-grandson of both Herod and Mariamme the Hasmonaeian, but Herod had executed both Mariamme and his grandfather (Aristobulus IV), and even worse had been a *parvenu*, so Agrippa II much preferred to

<sup>113</sup> *Ant.* xvi.187. The ambiguity is that of Swift, 'The Progress of Marriage'.

<sup>114</sup> S. Schwartz, *Josephus and Judaean Politics* (Leiden 1990) (Columbia Studies in Classical Tradition 18), 110–60, gives a detailed history of this relationship.



recall his relation to the ‘Kings from the Hasmonaeon line’. Also, he may have harboured some hope of an ultimate restoration, a hope Josephus tactfully encouraged by providing historical evidence of the popularity of former Hasmonaeon rulers. Such evidence should therefore be discounted sharply, and the fact that Hyrcanus II and Herod were put in by the Romans should be balanced by the fact that Antigonus was installed by the Parthians, and Aristobulus II by the Ituraeans and Jannaeus’ bully boys (whom the Pharisees had tried to execute).<sup>115</sup>

Allowance must also be made for Josephus’ misunderstanding of the events. He had grown up while the revolt of CE 66 was brewing and had been so much involved in it that he got a place on a committee sent to Galilee by some Jerusalem leaders, a place he parlayed into some sort of local command that led the Romans to think him important. His failure as a commander, acceptance of the Roman triumph, success in exploiting it for his advantage, and complete rejection, for political purposes, of his earlier revolutionary dream, ‘The people will unite against the Romans’, did not obliterate the influence of this dream on his thought about pre-revolt history.<sup>116</sup> He had been taught, as an adolescent, to see the preceding century as a prelude to the realization of this hope. When the hope proved false in the present, he nevertheless continued to see the past as he had before, substituting his more realistic view only when forced to do so by his own memories of events or his new determination to exculpate the people as a whole from the charge of revolt.

Hence his misunderstanding of the reign of Hyrcanus II, an age of dynastic conflicts, not revolts of the *ethnos* – neither side was ‘the *ethnos*’ – against outside powers.<sup>117</sup> Similarly he misunderstood the politics of the early years of Herod’s reign when the old, Hyrcanian party split, some joining Herod’s followers, others joining the Aristobulus–Antigonus party

<sup>115</sup> Compare the credulity of M. Stern, ‘Social and Political Realalignments in Herodian Judaea’ in *The Jerusalem Cathedral* 2, ed. L. I. Levine (1982) 40f.

<sup>116</sup> Nor even the influence of his revolutionary values. The heroism he most admires, even in his enemies, is the ability to hold to one’s principles, endure torture, and die without flinching. He praises it with the eloquence of one who could not display it; cf. *Bell.* II.152f; *Bell.* VII.333–336; *Ant.* xv.287f. This lofty glorification of suicide with its Stoic façade, is built on self-hatred.

<sup>117</sup> None of the Hasmonaeans had been anti-Roman in principle. From Judas Maccabaeus on they had sought Roman assistance and often got it. Even Antigonus in his last days was intriguing for the support of the officer in charge of the siege, *Ant.* XIV.403f; *Bell.* I.302; *Ant.* XIV.412; etc. U. Rappaport, ‘La Judée et Rome pendant le règne d’Alexandre Jannée’, *REJ* 127 (1968), 329–45, tries to find a long-term anti-Roman policy in the adjustments by Salome and Jannaeus to the temporary predominance of Tigranes and Mithridates in their part of the world, but the long-term policy he reveals is, in fact, opportunism.

which now, lacking a viable candidate, concentrated its attack on Herod as a *parvenu*, not of royal stock, only half a Jew, an insult to national tradition. So long as they had any hope for Roman support they could not add, as an objection, ‘an agent of Rome’. Only as they gradually gave up hope of a Roman reversal did they gradually begin to accuse Herod of serving the Roman cause. Thus the dynastic conflict gradually, but only gradually, turned into a disorganized but widespread ethnic resistance. More information would probably show that Herod at first succeeded in building a substantial Herodian party, but lost much of it in the domestic reign of terror at the end of his life.<sup>c</sup> What then remained was shattered by the division of his kingdom and the quarrels of his sons, so that the ‘Herodians’ of Mark (3:6 and 12:13) and Matthew (22:16 – still cooperating with the Pharisees!) puzzled even Luke, as they have most later commentators. Agrippa I had not the time, nor Agrippa II the position, to rebuild the party. By the late fifties CE various resistance groups were able to join in opposing simply ‘the Romans’, though their junctures were far from complete or permanent.

How much of this history Josephus knew, is hard to say. His chief ‘modern’ source, Nicholas, failed him shortly after Archelaus’ deposition. From then, on to his own time – roughly from CE 6 to 56 (when he turned 18) – his information about Palestine is spotty. Fortunately for history, however, he was a lazy and careless author.<sup>118</sup> Instead of research and reconstruction, he much preferred free paraphrase of available sources. When one of these sources praised Herod highly, Josephus would transcribe or paraphrase the eulogy without taking the trouble to reconcile what he was copying with his own slanders. The praises are no less obviously prejudiced than the polemics, but prejudiced statements are often true, so neither can be rejected at once. Both must be evaluated by comparison with the course of events. What were the facts?

It is certain that Herod’s reign gave the Judaeans and the *Ioudaioi* peace. After seventy years of recurrent wars, from 107 to 37 BCE, the thirty-three years of his reign saw fighting only in three: an operation against the Nabataeans was assigned him by Antony in 32 and ended in 31; he himself in 9/8 led a brief punitive campaign against brigands in Trachonitis.<sup>119</sup> Whether or not during this long peace (guaranteed, not to say, enforced, by Augustus) he chose to keep his army at 30,000, is unknown, but

<sup>c</sup> (Below Smith doubts the veracity of this reign of terror.)

<sup>118</sup> S. Cohen, *Josephus*, especially the passages cited on p. 276 under the heading, ‘Josephus: . . . inconsistency and sloppiness’.

<sup>119</sup> *Bell.* 1.364–72; *Ant.* xv.108–20; xvi.286–99; cf. Nicholas of Damascus, *FGrHist* 90 F 136. Herod also contributed 500 men (mercenaries?) to the exploratory campaign of Aelius Gallus in Arabia in 25–24 BCE (*Ant.* xv.317).

unlikely.<sup>120</sup> He didn't need it. Never, during his reign, did he have to deal with any serious revolt. Had there been one, Josephus would have happily reported it.<sup>121</sup> That their absence was due solely to suppression seems unlikely because, once resistance to the Romans became serious, the Romans themselves were unable to keep the country quiet.

Moreover, Herod was not indifferent to his people's needs. He made severe financial sacrifices to relieve a famine in 25 BCE (*Ant.* xv.299–316); about 20 BCE he cut taxes by a third after bad harvests (*Ant.* xv.365); in 14 he cut them by a quarter after his great expenses to win Agrippa's support for the Jews of Asia (*Ant.* xvi.62–5). Augustus, who was a sharp judge of administrators and particularly disliked revolts (they were expensive) was well pleased by Herod's performance and showed his pleasure by repeatedly extending his territories.<sup>122</sup>

This record, especially the absence of revolts, makes most unlikely Josephus' claims that Herod was generally hated by his subjects. We should therefore look at those claims more closely. Like Josephus' own claims to royal ancestry, these claims too seem never to be mentioned in *Bell.*<sup>123</sup> The silence about Josephus' ancestry we might attribute to his charming modesty, but what could explain his failure to mention so important an historical fact as the general hatred of Herod? In this case, ignorance. Since the charge was probably false (as shown above) it was probably not a common report, but a libel Josephus found in some single source (when writing *Ant.*). The first time he uses the charge, he cites

<sup>120</sup> The sudden diminution of Judaeac coinage in north Galilee (see above n. 80) argues against it, but is not conclusive. Herod probably preferred to recruit fellow Idumaeans.

<sup>121</sup> The worst thing he could find was a conspiracy when Herod was reported to be dying: about forty young men cut an eagle off the pylon of the temple. They were rounded up, apparently without serious trouble, and condemned to death; the condemnation was approved by a public assembly; yet Josephus calls the episode a 'revolt of the common people' (*dēmotikē tis epanastasis*), *Bell.* i.648–55, 667–73. His judgement was apparently based on the fact that after Herod's death a series of protests, organized to make trouble for persons involved in the event, got out of hand (because Archelaus, not yet confirmed as king, was afraid to suppress them at once), and led to a riot in which many were killed. A riot is not a revolt.

<sup>122</sup> Herod probably had Judaea, Idumaea, the southern Peraea, and Galilee after Actium. In 30 BCE he was given Gaza, Anthedon, Joppa, and Strato's Tower (along the coast), Jericho and its district, Samaria, and in northern Transjordan, Gadara and Hippos (*Bell.* i.396–7; *Ant.* xv.215–17). In 23 BCE Augustus gave him large tracts north-east of them – Trachonitis, Batanaea, Auranitis (*Bell.* i.398; *Ant.* xv.343–8); in 20 BCE, territories north of Hippos – Gaulanitis and Ulatha (the upper Jordan valley, *Ant.* xv.360). In all this period he lost Augustus' favour only for about a year (8/7 BCE) and then (reportedly) because he was slandered (*Ant.* xvi.286–92, 335–55).

<sup>123</sup> *Seem* – I have checked only the uses of *misein*, *misos*, *ekbthra*, and *ekbthros*, so expressions of the idea in other words may have escaped me.

Strabo as evidence (*Ant.* xv.8ff citing FGrHist 91 F 18). Was Strabo the source?<sup>124</sup>

Once he had found it, Josephus treated it with his usual inconsistency. It is rarely mentioned, perhaps because there was little evidence for it, so the best (worst?) he could do was insert it occasionally where it did not fit. For instance, in the episode of the trophies set up around the Jerusalem theatre (*Ant.* xv.267–91). They drew protests because they were thought to be statues. So Herod had one publicly stripped and showed the bare beams beneath the armour. At this the outcries turned to laughter and he won over the majority (280). ‘Some’, however, remained angry, calling him ‘an enemy of all the *ethnos*’. Ten of these formed a plot to assassinate him in the theatre (evidently he was popular enough to go there without many guards). The plot was betrayed and Herod did not think it improbable, ‘considering the hatred of himself which he knew *most people felt*, and the disturbances arising *on every occasion*’ (286, my italics, neither claim substantiated). So the conspirators were invited to the palace. Evidently they thought it safe to accept the invitations, but they were arrested on arrival, confessed the plot, and died with the high moral dignity Josephus sometimes attributed even to unsuccessful murderers (cf. n. 116). No public disturbance followed. Clearly the references here to general hatred of Herod are interpretations added by Josephus and refuted by the facts. Moreover, the following report that Herod’s building programme was motivated mainly by fear of rebellion, resultant from these events (*Ant.* xv.292), is chronologically impossible for structures erected before 27/26 (the date of the conspiracy), and is absurd for complexes like Caesarea, Phasaelis, Paneas/Caesarea Philippi.

Similarly the account of the famine of 25/24 has been skewed. The pro-Herodian source said it made Herod hated by his subjects but added in his defence ‘because hard times always make people blame their rulers’ (*Ant.* xv.304). It then told of his efforts to relieve the suffering and concluded that these so impressed the *Ioudaioi* ‘that the old hatreds were eradicated from the entire *ethnos* and the zeal shown in help during the crises seemed a fair exchange’ (*sc.* for the prior suffering, *Ant.* xv.315).

<sup>124</sup> The primary source may have been Cleopatra. In Strabo the libel appears as part of an excuse for Antony’s execution of Antigonus – contrary to Roman custom. Cleopatra is said to have liked Antony; she hated Herod (*Ant.* xv.75–9, etc.). Her story would have circulated in Egypt. Strabo may have learned it from Aelius Gallus, prefect of Egypt about 25 BCE, when Strabo visited him there. Gallus was the adoptive father of Sejanus, whose hostility to the Jews is either reported or invented by Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 24.159f. For data and doubt see M. Smallwood’s commentary (Leiden 1961), *ad loc.* Further, *PIR*, 2nd edn 1 (1933) nos. 179 and 255; G. Aujac and F. Lasserre, introduction to Strabo, *Géographie* 1.1 (Paris 1969), p. xxxv.

Clearly ‘the old hatreds’ were those produced by the famine. But Josephus saw his chance and inserted a gloss to make them ‘the old hatreds stirred up by his recasting some things of the customs and of the monarchy’, matters not here in question.

Again, when he reports the tax cut of 20 BCE Josephus says it was ‘on the pretext’ of bad crops, ‘but more to conciliate those ill disposed’ because his policies threatened their religion and customs (*Ant.* xv.365). ‘More’ is obviously questionable, but here he cites some evidence: assemblies were prohibited,<sup>125</sup> informers multiplied, and a loyalty oath was imposed (366–71). These do indicate substantial opposition, but neither indicate its cause nor prove that the opponents were the majority. In fact, most of his subjects consented to take the loyalty oath.<sup>126</sup> Perhaps uneasily, Josephus supplemented his pretended evidence of general hatred for Herod with a passage of psychohistory explaining why Herod hated the Jews. Again the hatred is not demonstrated, but is ‘explained’ by the fact that their law prohibited them from honouring him with statues and temples (*Ant.* xvi.158). This is written as if Herod were neither a Jew nor an adherent of the Mosaic law.<sup>d</sup> With this Josephus lets the matter drop and turns to gloat over Herod’s domestic disasters (book xvi, end, and most of xvii).

To close the account, however, he tells the following story: Herod at the end was bitter because he believed the *ethnos* took pleasure in his misfortunes (*Ant.* xvii.148); he said he knew the Judaeans were praying for his death (xvii.176); therefore he called in all the distinguished men ‘of the whole *ethnos*’, shut them up in the hippodrome of Jericho, and, with his sister Salome and her then husband Alexas, had one of those secret bedroom scenes about which Josephus was so well informed (cf. n. 93). He told them that before announcing his death they should have his soldiers kill everyone shut up in the hippodrome. This would assure him that the whole people would mourn when he died, and their mourning would make him happy. Salome and Alexas promised to obey, but as soon as he was dead they dismissed the prisoners unharmed.

This is obviously a folktale. The tyrant who plots to make his victims mourn his death, the notion of mourning as magical (*ex opere operato* it benefits those who die when it is done, regardless of the mourners’ intent), the tyrant’s good sister/wife/courtier, who foils his dying wish –

<sup>125</sup> The assertion that walking or living together was prohibited (in the city!) is absurd.

<sup>126</sup> As to the Pharisees, *Ant.* xv.396–70 is more ambiguous than the Loeb translation suggests, but *Ant.* xvii.42 indicates refusal.

<sup>d</sup> (Note, however, that below Smith says several times that Herod was not beholden to pentateuchal law.)

these need no introduction. Of course, some folktales are basically true, but this is not likely to be one of those. The historical Herod was much concerned about his will, repeatedly altering it and anxious to have it confirmed by Augustus; that he should have done something like this is therefore incredible. Such a massacre would surely have made Augustus declare him insane and annul the will. For the same reason it is incredible that Salome and Alexas, the only parties to the plot, should ever have reported it. Salome was much interested in the validity of that will – it gave her three cities and 500,000 pieces of coined silver (*Ant.* xvii.189). She would never say a thing to discredit it. The historical basis may be that an ethnic assembly was called, probably to meet the chosen heirs and hear a final harangue by Nicholas. When the king's illness cancelled the proceedings, those invited were held for a few days in the hippodrome and then dismissed at the king's death. The persons immediately in charge of the operation provided no explanation, perhaps from thoughtlessness, perhaps because they had none. Malicious invention took over and drew its inspiration from 3 Maccabees, which has a plot for a similar massacre. The legend of 'the slaughter of the innocents' (Matt. 2:16–18) came from the same sort of bloodthirsty fantasy.

Finally, the case for general hatred of Herod cannot be proved by the disturbances that followed his death, nor from the fact that a delegation was sent from Jerusalem to ask Augustus to put Judaea under direct Roman government, abolishing the monarchy. The disturbances were produced by distinct, limited groups, exploiting the administrative uncertainty between Herod's death and Augustus' approval of Archelaus.<sup>127</sup> Only in Judaea and Galilee did some win brief popular support, in both cases local, and only in the beginning of the trouble in Jerusalem was there a direct relation to hatred of Herod (demands for diminution of taxes, release of prisoners, and revenge for the punishment of those who had cut down the eagle). The delegation sent to Augustus by 'the Jews' (the city council in Jerusalem?)<sup>128</sup> is said to have begun its plea for abolition of the monarchy with a denunciation of Herod – a vitriolic example of ancient rhetorical abuse, not supported by particulars.<sup>129</sup> The report of these proceedings is Josephus', but the rhetoric was whipped up by his secretary from the commonplaces of anti-tyrannical literature.<sup>130</sup> Granting

<sup>127</sup> *Bell.* II.8.5–13, 39–79; *Ant.* xvii.206–18, 221–3, 250–98.

<sup>128</sup> *Bell.* II.8.80; *Ant.* xvii.299–316.

<sup>129</sup> *Bell.* II.84–91, enlarged in *Ant.* xvii.304–14, but still without any specific reference.

<sup>130</sup> From Thucydides on, ancient historians commonly wrote the speeches for their characters. Josephus was an exception. The speeches for his characters were commonly written by his assistants who could write rhetorical Greek.

that something of the sort happened (and, therefore, that Herod had left many wealthy opponents able to send such a delegation), the question is, how far does the rhetoric correspond to the facts? The absence of serious revolts in a reign of more than thirty years, the evidence that Herod made important efforts to help his people, and the inability of Josephus to find good evidence for extensive resistance (this made him resort to the falsifications reviewed above) make it seem that Herod's government was not bitterly or generally hated.

With the legend set aside we can glimpse the actual figure. An Idumaeen, one of the *Ioudaioi* allied with the Judaeans, Herod was by Judaeen standards only 'a half Jew', as Antigonus called him (*Ant.* XIV.403) – a *Ioudaios* by alliance and by the basic rite of circumcision, but not a Judaeen by ancestry and observance of the pentateuchal law.<sup>131</sup> The history of the *Ioudaioi* and his family history account for many peculiarities of his reign.

His grandfather, governor of Idumaea in the days of Jannaeus, had seen how the support of the *Ioudaioi* enabled Jannaeus both to overrun the neighbouring cities and to put down the resistance of the Judaeans and the surviving Shechemites (see above). His father, the general executive officer (*epitropos*) of Hyrcanus II, had taught him that political power depended on manpower, ultimately, therefore, on the Romans, but immediately on the Palestinian troops and mercenaries available. His displacement of the Hasmonaeans assured him of much hostility in Judaea (however unpopular the individuals, the dynasty had been a matter of local pride). The adherents of Aristobulus' line in Galilee and the Peraea (but not the rest of the populations there) will also have been his enemies. His status as a *Ioudaios* would make the Hellenized cities look at him askance. His men and his power would have to come mainly from *Ioudaioi* like himself in Idumaea, Galilee and the Peraea, and from the Samaritans. However, with his own skill and forces, and with Roman support, he could, by military successes, win followers from other areas, even from Judaea. And there were always mercenaries. The friendly areas are identifiable as those he used for winter quarters. In the first winter after his return from Rome, these were Idumaea, Samaria and Galilee (*Bell.* I.302f; *Ant.* XIV.411). The following year and a half saw hard fighting only in Galilee, where he won, and in northern Judaea and Jericho where,

<sup>131</sup> That the reference is to his supposedly Nabataean mother is unlikely. The description in *Bell.* I.181, 'a woman of distinguished (parents) from Arabia', probably means, 'of a distinguished Idumaeen family living in Arabia'. Otherwise Josephus would have said 'of distinguished Arab (parents)', and would have referred to his mother's alien origin from time to time.



in spite of his attempt to conciliate the people by marrying Mariamne, granddaughter of both Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, it was only with massive Roman help that he was finally able to take Jerusalem, a strong position requiring skill in siege warfare. The marriage with Mariamne may have been less effective than he hoped because it was celebrated in Samaria, where he had put his womenfolk for safe keeping (*Bell.* 1.344; *Ant.* xiv.467).

Installed as king and married into the dynasty, he was still, in Judaeen eyes, at best an ally – in the terminology we are using, a *Ioudaios*, circumcised, indeed, but not otherwise an observer of the law. This he remained; it was often a convenience.<sup>132</sup> When fleeing Antigonos, he could put up in an Idumaeen temple (*Bell.* 1.277; *Ant.* xiv.374); after being granted kingship he could join in sacrifices to Jupiter Capitolinus and in a dinner given for him by Antony (*Bell.* 1.284f; *Ant.* xiv.383); before a difficult battle he could hearten his *Ioudaioi* and mercenaries by offering sacrifice (*Bell.* 1.380; *Ant.* xv.147);<sup>133</sup> he could use pagan symbols on his currency;<sup>134</sup> he could marry his sister to a fellow Idumaeen aristocrat, Costobar, hereditary priest of the god Qos, make his new brother-in-law governor of Idumaea and Gaza, and have his sister divorce him when he proved a traitor.<sup>135</sup> Besides such minor conveniences, his freedom as a *Ioudaios* was essential for his domestic and foreign policy. The ruler cult around the eastern Mediterranean being as it was, no such cities as Caesarea and Seleucia could have been built without temples for the worship of the emperor. Omission would have been considered *lèse majesté* (*maiestas*, an actionable crime). Not to have built the cities would have been almost as bad. Such territorial gifts as Herod received required acknowledgement, and the most appropriate acknowledgement was a city commemorating a name or title from the imperial circle.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>132</sup> It had also its inconvenient side. For instance, it may explain *Ant.* xv.420, which Hudson was forced to suppose corrupt.

<sup>133</sup> In the *Antiquities* the sacrificial act is described as *kata ta nomizomena*. If this means, ‘according to the requirements of Jewish law’ it is as surprising as a kosher stamp on a ham. Does it mean, ‘according to (Idumaeen) custom’? Marcus’ note is preposterous.

<sup>134</sup> D. Jacobson, ‘A New Interpretation of the Reverse of Herod’s Largest Coin’, *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 31 (1986), 145–65, esp. 148–9 and 158–65.

<sup>135</sup> For the name, G. Harding, *An Index and Concordance of Pre-Islamic Arabian Names* (Toronto 1971), p. 491, and M. Smith, *Parties*, 69. For Costobar’s family and career, *Ant.* xv.253–66. Josephus thought Salome’s divorcing him to be contrary to Jewish law, *Ant.* xv.259. This suggests that the Judaeen–Idumaeen alliance provided for valid *connubium* with Gentiles.

<sup>136</sup> Paneas was excusable as a reference to the local god. The other places without imperial names were minor sites.

As a *Ioudaios*, Herod could not only build such temples in Palestine, he could also contribute to the cults of pagan gods abroad, for instance, Apollo at Rhodes, and the Olympian Zeus – he was made honorary president of the Olympic games (*Ant.* XVI.147–149). These, and his many contributions to pagan cities, are explained by Josephus as bids for fame and adulation (*Ant.* XVI.152ff). No doubt they were, but they also had a mercenary motive. Most of his gifts went to cities of the Syrian coast, Asia Minor, the Aegean islands, and Greece. These cities had large Jewish settlements which regularly sent much money to Jerusalem. ‘Money’ meant gold and silver; such coins were in relatively short supply. To have large numbers annually drained from an area raised the price of money there and hindered business. The cities therefore kept trying to hinder such shipments, and the resultant disputes were exacerbated by the other privileges the Jews had been granted, mainly by Julius Caesar: the right not to appear in courts on sabbaths or other Jewish holy days, the rights to form associations, hold funds, erect and own buildings, assemble for worship and common meals, and generally follow the requirements of their own law, including the refusal to contribute to or participate in other cults – an innocent-looking provision which could be interpreted to include freedom from military duty, since the army worshipped as a body.

Herod’s father, Antipater, had established the good relations with Caesar from which these rulings probably resulted.<sup>137</sup> They had partially fallen into desuetude during the civil wars, and the Jewish communities, in conflicts with their local governments, needed an advocate with standing, who could get respect from local governors and even friendly attention from Augustus. Herod was the man, the more so because, as a *Ioudaios*, he was free to make gifts even to the temples and the religious cults<sup>e</sup> of the cities concerned. Also he had the services of Nicholas, a highly skilled legal pleader whom Augustus liked.<sup>138</sup> The result of all this was an empire-wide establishment of Judaism as a religion legally tolerated and protected by the Roman government – the most important achievement of the Herodian dynasty, since it was the legal basis of the religion’s survival to and through the middle ages.

Herod’s status as a *Ioudaios* probably put him also on good personal terms with many in the diasporic communities who were themselves

<sup>137</sup> Both the relations and the rulings are to some extent conjectural. See the excellent reconstruction by Smallwood, *Jews*, 125–37.

<sup>e</sup> (Smith’s original typescript reads ‘costs,’ which almost certainly is a typographical error for ‘cults’. In his last proofing of the manuscript, Smith corrected the word to ‘funds’, but what are ‘religious funds?’)

<sup>138</sup> Plutarch, *Quaestiones convivales* VIII.4.1, end (723D) (= FGtH 90 T 10).

*Ioudaioi* or descendants of *Ioudaioi*.<sup>139</sup> In the predominantly pagan world of the Diaspora it is likely that Jews, Judaeans, and *Ioudaioi* often stuck together, overcoming their differences by compromise or neglect. We have little evidence on the requirements for admission to diasporic synagogues; no doubt they differed greatly. We find Philo writing of Alexandrian Jews who thought the commandments allegorical, to be understood, not obeyed (*De migratione Abr.* xvi.89). Josephus tells us that the first Jewish mentor of the King of Adiabene assured him, ‘It is possible . . . to revere the deity even without circumcision . . . To be a zealous adherent of the ancestral customs of the Jews . . . is more important than being circumcised’ (*Ant.* xx.41). But what did such people think ‘the ancestral customs of the Jews’ were? In Sardis they seem to have included sacrifice, since the assembly of Sardis gave the Jews there a place to perform it (*Ant.* xiv.259ff).<sup>140</sup>

Whatever they were, there is no doubt of Herod’s ability to secure Roman approval, or of the financial importance of this for the income of his kingdom. His greatest triumph would seem to have been in 14 BCE, when he got Marcus Agrippa, then Augustus’ personal representative in the East, to meet with the representatives of the Jews of Ionia and hear a presentation, by Nicholas, of their grievances against the cities in which they lived, and their petitions for remedies. Agrippa granted them everything they asked for. Herod came home, reported this to an assembly, and at the same time announced a 25 per cent tax cut for the coming year – probably in anticipation of the increased income from Ionia (*Ant.* xvi.16–65). If Ionia alone could give so much, what could be expected from the other areas of the Diaspora: the Black Sea coasts, the rest of Asia Minor, Syria, Parthia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Africa, Sicily, Italy, Gaul, Greece, Macedonia, Crete, Cyprus – to mention only those with substantial Jewish populations?

To increase the attachment of diasporic Jews to Palestine, Herod tried to improve Palestine’s tourist attractions. First of all, the temple. His magnificent rebuilding, which made it one of the wonders of the world,

<sup>139</sup> It will probably, however, not have sufficed to overcome the partisan hostility of those who were captured and enslaved as supporters of Aristobulus or Antigonus. Descendants of such were probably the 8,000 Jews of Rome who supported the delegation from Jerusalem asking that the kingship be taken from the house of Herod, and the Herodian territories be added to the province of Syria (see above n. 129). Such a demonstration is easier to understand as an expression of hatred for the Herodians, than as one of appreciation for Roman government. (Cf. Smallwood, *Jews*, 109.)

<sup>140</sup> Additional passages in Smith, *Parties*, 72f. Marcus’ note in the Loeb Josephus, *ad loc.*, “‘Sacrifices’ . . . must here be used in the . . . sense of “offerings””, illustrates the exegetic use of the categorical imperative – the sort without rational basis.

was not merely to conciliate the Judaeans and advertise himself (as Josephus suggests, *Ant.* xv.380). It was also to attract the diasporic Jews and also to hold the loyalty of the *Ioudaioi* (in danger of drifting off, now that the old alliances meant little) and also to provide work for the craftsmen of Jerusalem and attract craftsmen for the work. (When it seemed at last to be about to be wholly completed, in CE 64/5, the eighteen thousand and more workers still employed on it had to be set to paving the city streets with white stone, *Ant.* xx.222.)

Along with its practical importance, the temple gave Herod a magnificent opportunity to indulge his love of beauty and his great ability and greater passion for monumental architecture.<sup>141</sup> But it was also important for his own, Idumaeen religion. It was his ancestral shrine, as well as the Judaeans'; the god was the god of his fathers, as well as of theirs. He consecrated to it his most extravagant gift, and when that was vandalized he reacted with true religious rage. (Following Josephus, *Ant.* xvii.149–61, modern writers discussing the incident have spoken only of the religious feelings of the vandals.)

Caesarea and Sebaste are to be seen primarily as approaches to the temple. Caesarea was the monumental gateway to Palestine, built especially for the temple trade from the north and northwest; Anthedon was rebuilt as Agrippias for that from the south. Sebaste was the half-way stop between Caesarea and Jerusalem, a fine new city, well worth several days' rest. From Jerusalem the pious or curious would want to go on to the Idumaeen Abrahamic shrines of Hebron and Mambre;<sup>142</sup> these also – especially the great *temenos* at Hebron – Herod rebuilt magnificently. (Josephus does not mention them in his list of Herod's buildings; his father, a priest of Jerusalem, had disliked the competition.) For these, too, there was a half-way house, the spectacular castle-palace of Herodion, with accommodation for travellers at the base. Herod built it to be his tomb and monument, at a site where he had defeated the Judaeans (*Bell.* i.265, 419ff, 673; *Ant.* xiv.360; xvii.199).

The common interests of the *Ioudaioi* and the diasporic Jews found another expression in the creation of a new high priesthood, mainly from diasporic families.<sup>143</sup> The change was of more than ritual and symbolic

<sup>141</sup> The eulogy by E. Netzer, 'Herod's Building Projects', *The Jerusalem Cathedra* I, ed. L. I. Levine (1981), 48–61, is wonderfully perceptive of things indemonstrable, but rests on a reasonable inference from the magnificent remains to the character of the man who ordered the buildings.

<sup>142</sup> E. Mader, *Mambre* (Freiburg i.B. 1958).

<sup>143</sup> Judaeen local feeling probably prevented any non-Judaeen *Ioudaioi* of Palestine from becoming priests of Jerusalem. Who succeeded Costobar in the priesthood of Qos, and who were the priests at Dan, Mambre, and Hebron, we should like to know.

importance. It improved the ties of the Diaspora to Jerusalem, and also presumably, the contributions. In Jerusalem itself, it created a sharp breach between ‘the high priests’ (those of the chosen families) and the old, hereditary Jerusalem priesthood, probably the backbone of resistance to the new order. The High Priest not only had at least nominal control of the temple money, but also presided over the court which interpreted the law. Presumably temple funds would be made available for the needs of the state, and religious law interpreted to meet them, but the presumption must go almost unsupported, since the transactions of the temple treasury were never reported and whatever reports there were of Herodian *halakha* have been lost, not to say, obliterated.

Inferential evidence of obliteration is sometimes available. For instance, a major embarrassment to the Herodians must have been Deut. 17:15, ‘You are to appoint a king over you from among your brethren; you shall not have the right to impose on yourselves an alien *who is not your brother*.’ Josephus probably had this in mind when he made Antigonus complain to the Romans that their backing of Herod, an Idumaeen, was contrary to Jewish law (*Ant.* xiv.403f). Characteristically, neither Antigonus (in Josephus’ report) nor Josephus himself said anything of Deut. 23:8f, ‘You shall not despise an Edomite, for *he is your brother*... the third generation of children born to them shall [be permitted] to enter the assembly of Yahweh [i.e. become Israelites].’ The Edomites became the Idumaeans. If the story of their compulsory conversion were true, Herod’s grandfather, an associate of Jannaeus, must have been a convert’s son or himself a convert; Herod’s father, an associate of Hyrcanus, must also have been a Jew, and Herod himself would have been at least of the third generation.<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, when *his* grandson, ‘Agrippas the King’ (probably Agrippa I), at the end of the feast of booths, had to read the law about the king and came to Deut. 17:15, tears came to his eyes. The officiants said to him, ‘Don’t be afraid, Agrippas; you are our brother, you are our brother’ (Sotah vii.8). Had the family been Jewish for five generations, the tears would have been needless and the assurance impertinent. Presumably the family had remained Idumaeen *Ioudaioi* and the assurance was based on Deut. 23:8f. But 23:8f is not mentioned. It must have had an important place in the politico-religious teaching of Herod’s priestly supporters. The silence about it in the preserved material shows how thorough the censorship has been.

<sup>144</sup> S. Cohen, ‘Origins of the Matrilineal Principle in Rabbinic Law’, *AJS Review* 10 (1985), 19–53, has shown that determination of gentilic status according to that of the mother was not customary before the second century CE.

How much importance Herod would have attached to such arguments is uncertain. This one might have helped reconcile some Judaeans, and so have been useful. But his own religious life seems to have been shaped by his Idumaeans background. Circumcision he insisted on for men entering his family. Even his sister Salome was not permitted to marry the Nabataean grandee, Syllaeus – a marriage which might have been of great economic and diplomatic advantage – because he would not consent to circumcision.<sup>145</sup>

Herod's concern for Idumaeans<sup>f</sup> shrines and his rebuilding of Hebron, Mambre and Jerusalem, have already been mentioned. In accord with this concern are the efforts he reportedly made, when capturing Jerusalem, to keep his gentile soldiers out of the temple, and all soldiers from entering, or even looking into, the holy of holies (*Bell.* 1.354; *Ant.* xiv.482ff). This concern also helps explain why he kept Jerusalem as his capital, instead of moving to Samaria, or even, as the Romans later did, to Caesarea. (Little help is needed, however; money was probably decisive. The contributions from the Diaspora determined the buildings of Jerusalem, the buildings then fixed the capital there.)

Since we know so little of Idumaeans food and purity laws we cannot tell whether his abstinence from pork, attested by Augustus' pun,<sup>146</sup> and his concern for ablutions, attested by the baths and pools of Jericho,<sup>147</sup> were indications of Idumaeans observances or concessions to the Jews of his staff and his harem. The same uncertainty attaches to the consistently aniconic decorations of his buildings. The eagle on the portico of the temple may have marked a final break with his own traditions.<sup>g</sup> He either inherited or respected the rural Idumaeans' hostility towards Hellenization in Idumaea – he never rebuilt Marisa nor, from all we hear, Adora.

Josephus claims that none of the pagan temples Herod built was 'in the land of the Jews', since the Jews 'would not have tolerated . . . reverence of statues and pictures' (*Ant.* xv.329, a warning to the Romans). Consequently Josephus goes on to claim that Caesarea is in Phoenicia (333). Would he have claimed that Sebaste in Samaria was also outside 'the land

<sup>145</sup> *Ant.* xvi.225. Some sixty years later, his great-grandson, Agrippa II, still observed this rule, *Ant.* xx.139.

<sup>f</sup> (Smith's manuscript reads 'Nabatean'.)

<sup>146</sup> 'It's better to be a pig (*buis*) of Herod's than a son (*buios*)', Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 11.4.11 (= Stern, *GLAJJ* 11.665f). The Greek pun is lost in Macrobius' Latin.

<sup>147</sup> S. Singer, 'The Winter Palaces of Jericho', *BAR* 3, 2 (1977), 6–17. Both the immersion tank and the synagogue of Masada, if Herodian, must have been, because of their size, conveniences for only a few of the large staff, and because of their finish and location, probably not for the king.

<sup>g</sup> (Note, however, that above Smith speaks of the eagle as a sacred object for Herod.)

of the Jews? Probably, since he tells with pleasure of a later occasion when Vitellius came down the coast with an army and the foremost Judaeans besought him not to go through ‘the land of the Jews’ because ‘it was not their ancestral custom to tolerate images being carried through it’; so he consented and went through the great valley (*Ant.* xviii.122). By ‘the land of the Jews’ Josephus seems to have meant here ‘the land of the Judaeans’, i.e. Judaea. If Herod held similar views, he may have thought himself within the limits of whatever religious law he revered – a fine subject for speculation.

Without much speculation one can say that the preceding data are not well explained either by the supposition that Herod was a complete unbeliever whose occasional acts of apparent piety were produced by materialistic self-interests or by the (common) supposition that he was an orthodox Jew who was very, very naughty. Complete unbelievers are rare in antiquity, and it seems unlikely that one in Herod’s position would have contented himself with such austere decorations in his private quarters. On the other hand, Herod’s divergences from what is commonly thought to have then been ‘Jewish orthodoxy’ are so great, that it is easier to think his behaviour limited (with expectable lapses) by some set of norms (otherwise) unknown to us. These may well have been the beliefs and practices of an Idumaeon *Ioudaios*.

## VI THE ROMAN TAKEOVER

In spite of Herod’s example, during his reign the position of the *Ioudaioi* declined. A strong central administration maintained a long peace and thus diminished the importance and income of its military allies. Hence the drop in the numbers of coins found in north Galilee (see above). This was probably made more severe by the continued attachment of many Galileans to the family of Aristobulus, which proved dangerous when Herod’s sons by Mariamne plotted a revolt. Josephus, to flatter their grandson/grand-nephew, Agrippa II, represents them as completely innocent and reduces the army’s support to pity and a speech by one old soldier, but he then adds that Herod found three hundred officers so deeply involved as to deserve execution (*Ant.* xvi.375–93). Admittedly Herod’s criteria for involvement were low, but he probably valued his army officers – a selected and trained group – and he would hardly have risked widespread disaffection in the army had he not been sure it was already there. We may suppose that after this the backgrounds and sympathies of Galilean recruits were checked and relatively few were accepted.



Idumaeans doubtless continued to be favoured in recruitment, but recruitment shrank and pride of place in the army went to the king's bodyguards and corps of exotic mercenaries with bigger bodies and fancier armour. At Herod's funeral the army's procession was led by (1) the bodyguards, (2) the Thracians, (3) the Germans, (4) the Gauls (*Bell.* 1.672; *Ant.* xvii.198). Even if the bodyguards were Idumaeans, those in the rank and file must have boiled. Four or five years earlier Herod had settled three thousand of them in Trachonitis, only to let them be overrun by the local brigands and the Nabataeans (*Ant.* xvi.283, 292). And instead of sending more settlers and making the district solidly Idumaeian, he had got a company of Babylonian Jews who were not *Ioudaioi* at all, but observed the Jewish laws, and had settled them next door and given them exemption from all royal taxes – a favour not given the Idumaeans (*Ant.* xvii.25). No wonder that after Herod's death the veterans in Idumaea revolted and the revolt spread to '10,000' (one of Josephus' too round numbers) before they were calmed (*Bell.* 11.55, 76f). What they wanted and what they got are alike unknown, but the relations of the Idumaeans to the central government seem to have cooled.

The Ituraean kingdom had been dismembered and the parts were irregularly being attached to, and taken from, the province of Syria. Some were ruled briefly in the thirties and forties CE by Agrippa I, and for forty or fifty years (c. CE 51–90/100) by Agrippa II, but there is no evidence that either dealt with *Ioudaioi* as a class. Earlier a few Ituraeans had found places in Herod's court; Soemus, one of his most faithful friends, was an Ituraean who died while being left in charge of Mariamne. Generally, however, Ituraeans seem to have played no important part, henceforth, in Jewish history.

Like the Ituraeans, the Galileans had been divided. The splitting up of north Galilee left no political solidarity there. Central and southern Galilee had been torn by fights between Aristobulus' line and, first, Hyrcanus' adherents, then Herod (see above). Many of the partisans of Aristobulus and his sons had been killed or enslaved.<sup>148</sup> Their places were probably taken by migratory workers from neighbouring areas; to Matthew, writing a century later in neighbouring Syria (?), Isaiah's expression, 'Galilee of the (many different) *ethne*', still seemed appropriate (Matt. 4:15; Isa. 8:23). However, Herod had had his Galilean partisans, too, and had rewarded them; they remained strong in the land and probably begat the great-

<sup>148</sup> The survivors suffered a major defeat shortly after Herod's death when they took up arms and the revolt was suppressed, Sepphoris burnt, and its population sold into slavery (*Bell.* 11.56, 68; *Ant.* xvii.271, 288f). For the earlier calamities, see *Bell.* 1.177, 180, 204, 307–8, 310–13; *Ant.* xiv.102, 120, 159, 413–17, 421–30. Many Galileans probably accompanied Antigonus and were captured by Sosius or Herod.

great-grandfathers of the prosperous 'Jewish' landowners whose indifference to the law scandalized the Judaeans when they came north in the mid second century CE.<sup>149</sup>

Samaria, as a Macedonian-Greek colony, had been rebuilt by Gabinius (Shechem had not). Samaria probably got back as many as possible of its former citizens, and was filled out with local people, very likely ones the citizens recommended. The new citizen body expressed their thanks by calling themselves 'Gabinians'.<sup>150</sup> Herod rebuilt the city on a much larger scale, adding 6,000 colonists, 'many of those who had fought as allies with him in his wars and many people of the vicinity' (*Bell.* 1.403; *Ant.* xv.296ff), presumably including a good number of ex-Shechemites and other *Ioudaioi*. The city furnished a corps of 3,000 soldiers, first for the army of Herod and Archelaus, then for the Roman governors, then for Agrippa I, and then again for the Romans, thus maintaining the tradition of the connection between the *Ioudaioi* and Samaritans and the Herodian/Roman government.<sup>151</sup> They also maintained and intensified the hostility to the Judaeans that had been traditional in some Samaritan circles (as that to Samaria in some Judaeans)<sup>152</sup> and had been communicated to the Macedonians by Hyrcanus' destruction of the city. Whether the *Ioudaioi* in the new foundation continued to think of themselves as such, and whether the survivors of the Shechemites continued to identify Yahweh with Zeus Hellenios as they formerly had (*Ant.* xii.261–3) is uncertain. However, the common identification of their troops, the Sebasteni, as ordinary pagan troops is almost certainly mistaken, and the possibility that the city became a centre of syncretistic Samaritanism cannot be ruled out. *Prima facie* evidence is the figure of Simon 'magus'.

In these various ways, the Hasmonaean structure of religious and military alliances partially disintegrated, partially was replaced by different connections. Another of these connections was that of religious assimilation. The original alliance had been based on common religious practices, but it had brought the peculiar practices, beliefs and literature of the Judaeans to the attention of the allies. That assimilation often followed is certain from the results, though the process is not documented. ('Conversion' is not the right word here, since the allies were *Ioudaioi* already in popular parlance. Besides, for the question, 'How far must assimilation go before it becomes conversion?' the commonly accepted answers were

<sup>149</sup> On these, A. Büchler, *The Political and Social Leaders of the Jewish Community of Sepphoris* (London, n.d. Jews' College Publications 1), and compare M. Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee, AD 132–212* (Totowa 1983).

<sup>150</sup> Cedrenus, ed. Bekker, I, p. 323.

<sup>151</sup> T. Burkill, 'Judaea under Roman Governors' in Schürer-Vermes, *History* 1.363–5.

<sup>152</sup> Smith, *Parties*, 144.

not worked out before the second century CE) Change in the opposite direction also occurred, as the case of Tiberius Julius Alexander shows. Presumably he was the most successful of many brothers. Inside the Herodian kingdom it probably paid, for the ordinary man, to be a Judaeon in Judaea and a *Ioudaios* elsewhere. Much attention has been given to the difference between the history of ancient Judaism in Palestine and its history elsewhere, but the difference between the history of ancient Judaism in Judaea and its history in the rest of Palestine has been too much neglected.

Josephus' view of the matter is expressed succinctly in *Bell.* II.43 (= *Ant.* XVII.254). At Pentecost, after Herod's death, there came to Jerusalem 'an enormous crowd from Galilee and Idumaea, Jericho and Transjordan', but 'the true (Jewish) people, from Judaea itself (*ho gnēsios ex autēs Ioudaias laos*) surpassed the others both in numbers and in eagerness' to make trouble. *Antiquities* omits 'true'. Perhaps two decades in Roman Jewry had taught Josephus tact, but the original snobbery is clear. For him the *Ioudaioi* were the 'mixed multitude' of the exodus; the true Israelites were the Judaeans.

Of course Josephus' view was merely a personal opinion. A similar one, however, seems to have been held by the Romans. On Herod's death Archelaus was given mainly Judaea, Jericho, Samaria and Idumaea, with the title *ethnarch* ('ruler of the *ethnos*'). Antipas got Galilee and the Peraea; Philip, the upper Jordan valley, the Golan/Gaulanitis, and points northwest; both with the title *tetrarch* ('ruler of a district'). For the Romans, it seems, the *ethnos* was the Judaeans and allied *Ioudaioi*. The Galileans had broken the alliance, and the numbers of *Ioudaioi* in Transjordan were not sufficient to make them parts of the ethnic territory.

Returning now to the course of events after Herod's death: since Herod's treasures were the funds of any future government, the people needed no religious or ethnic motive to riot at a Roman threat to seize them. The revolt of the Idumaeon veterans has already been explained (see above). That a 'Judas of Galilee' led a revolt for which Sepphoris was burnt and its people enslaved (*Ant.* XVII.271, 289) suggests that many Galileans had gone from support of the Hasmonaeans to hatred of the Romans. The troubles in the Jordan valley and rural Judaea sound like slave/peasant revolts without extensive ethnic support,<sup>153</sup> but this was how Josephus wanted them to sound. We approach the development of

<sup>153</sup> That the leaders in both areas called themselves kings, wore diadems, etc., probably resulted not from messianic theology, but from common lower-class wishful thinking. The same things happened in the slave revolts in Sicily, Diodorus xxxiv(xxxv).2.41; xxxvi.4.4 and 5.1; etc. These books of Diodorus are full of parallels to the Palestinian history of this period.

his famous theme, ‘Our resistance was the fault, not of the whole *ethnos*, but of a few robbers/fanatics.’ Robbery was endemic in the Roman world, thanks to the social conditions, poor communications, and difficulty of effective prevention and pursuit. It was also, then as now, the means by which many antisocial types supported themselves. Robbers became revolutionists when they could, and revolutionists robbers when they had a chance. Clear distinction is impossible.<sup>154</sup>

The division of Herod’s kingdom into three meant that there were now three centres to which its income went, and from which it was expended. The share given to Idumaea, Judaea and Samaria, therefore dropped sharply; those of Galilee and Transjordan increased. Understandably there was much dissatisfaction in Archelaus’ territory – so much that Judaeans and Samaritans cooperated (!) in denouncing him (*Ant.* xvii.343). By the time Augustus deposed him and took over his kingdom in CE 6, only the Idumaeans remained loyal to the Idumaeans. Philip and Antipas began building cities in their provinces (*Ant.* xviii.27f): Autocratoris (ex-Selephoris), Livias/Julias (ex-Betharamphtha), Caesarea (ex-Paneas), and Julias (ex-Bethsaida). Having imperial names/titles, these presumably had cults of the divinities referred to, but Josephus says nothing about the cults. They did not produce, from the *Ioudaioi* in those regions, the protests he thought proper.

An attempted protest which failed was that against the census taken when Archelaus’ territory was transferred to the province of Syria. The instigator was a northerner named Judas,<sup>155</sup> evidently a devout Jew, who had some Pharisaic support but failed to win that of most people, largely because the high priest opposed him (another example of the Pharisees’ lack of popular following). After the census, however, the high priest was soon dismissed by the Roman governor because of popular agitation

<sup>154</sup> Least of all the distinction between wicked robbers and moral bandits, proposed by R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs* (San Francisco 1985), p. 87, n. 9, adopting E. Hobsbawm’s romantic imagination (*Bandits*, 2nd edn, New York 1981) of a class of ‘social bandits’ – ‘social’ in this context means ‘nice’ – oppressed peasants attempting a ‘simple redistribution of goods’, ‘defenders and champions of the common people’, and symbols ‘of the people’s hope for the restoration of a more just order’, pp. 70–1. In fact ancient bandits lived on the country they infested and for the peasants were one more set of idle mouths to feed. The peasants’ unwillingness to report them indicated fear of reprisals. As for equalitarianism, the ‘robber king’ (*arkhiblestes*) had power of life and death. (Hobsbawm was anticipated by W. S. Gilbert on the Pirates of Penzance, ‘They are all noblemen who have gone wrong.’)

<sup>155</sup> Josephus in *Bell.* ii.118 said this Judas was a ‘Galilean’; in *Ant.* xviii.4 he corrected himself and said he was ‘a Gaulanite from Gamala’, but in a passing reference in *Ant.* xx.102 he again said ‘Galilean’, perhaps by absence of mind. To suppose this man the same as the Judas who led the revolt in Galilee a decade earlier is equally undemonstrable, unlikely, and unimportant.

against him (*Ant.* XVIII.26). This suggests the fight had been too close for comfort.<sup>156</sup> To judge from Judas, Judaism had been making devoted converts among the *Ioudaioi* of Galilee. This does not look like the Aristobulan tradition, but Antigonus had earlier broken with that tradition by putting more religious symbols on his coinage. Devotion, or desperation? They had not saved him.

Another sign of increasing religious fanaticism (if truly reported) was the pollution of the temple by some Samaritans who scattered human bones in the porches and court (*Ant.* XVIII.29f). The story is suspect. If the culprits were caught, or even killed, we should hear more about them (number, rank, connections). If they were not caught, how was it known that they were Samaritans? Josephus' suggestion that they had to enter Jerusalem secretly is incredible. Samaritans had held important positions in Herod's court (*Ant.* XVII.69) and we have been told nothing to explain an intervening change of attitude. Has something been suppressed? In any event, the story's circulation attests to the worsening of relations between Judaeans and Samaritans.

In Galilee, Herod's policy was continued by Antipas' building of Tiberias (between 17 and 20 CE) but he built it on a site unclean according to (Josephus' notion of) Jewish law. Nevertheless, many Galileans wanted to settle there.<sup>157</sup> Presumably they were *Ioudaioi* for the most part; forty-some years later, when Josephus arrived, the city was entirely 'Jewish', but with how many of what sorts is not clear. Evidently it had not long been a stronghold of legalism. Herod's palace there had been decorated with representations of animals. They seem to have caused no trouble until Josephus' arrival. When he and his Jerusalem associates came, fresh from the Judaeans revolt, he asked the members of the city council to have the palace demolished, because of these abominations. Several leading members opposed the request. Negotiations began. Imagine his anger when (he claims) the poor, the sailors and some Galileans (evidently distinct groups), not waiting for him, burnt it for loot. He rushed – to get as much loot as he could, so as 'to save it for the King' (Agrippa II, his patron, *Vita* 64–8).

<sup>156</sup> The passage on the terrible consequences of the rise of a popular sect of fanatics, which Josephus attaches to his report of Judas' preaching (*Ant.* XVIII.6–10), is probably best understood as an anticipation of the conditions of the sixties CE, since Josephus makes no such complaints about the intervening period. But Judas and Zadok got enough followers to start a sect which Josephus ranks with the Essenes, who had about 4,000, and the Pharisees, who had more than 6,000, *Ant.* XVIII.20 and XVII.42.

<sup>157</sup> *Ant.* XVIII.36–38. Josephus' malicious gossip about the other settlers is adequately explained by the fact that Tiberias was cool to him during the war. His allegations can hardly be true: a chance to get a place as a citizen, or even a legal resident, in a new royal city, would have been coveted.

The Samaritans were also suffering from religious revivals. In the late twenties many were persuaded to go to Mt Gerizim to see the sacred vessels buried there by Moses (reportedly, about to be revealed). Pontius Pilate stopped them with considerable fighting (*Ant.* XVIII.85–7). In Galilee Herod Antipas got rid more quietly of John ‘the baptizer’, a preacher of moral reformation – according to Josephus – who used immersion as a means of sanctifying the body after the soul had been cleansed by repentance. Herod feared his followers might become dangerous, and arranged a quiet execution, about CE 30. So *Ant.* XVIII.116–19, saying nothing of John’s preaching about the coming judgement and the Messiah, reported in the gospels. Josephus described John’s adherents as ‘some of the *Ioudaioi*’, but adds that ‘the others’ – presumably the Gentiles – began also to flock around (116–18). That the first hearers were *Ioudaioi*, and not observant Jews, is indicated by the gospels’ report that the high priests, scribes, elders, Pharisees, and lawyers did not believe him, but ‘the people’ and the publicans did.<sup>158</sup> That even the people’s acceptance was not unanimous appears from Matt 11:18 and Luke 7:33.

The same holds for Jesus, of whom Josephus’ famous *testimonium* (*Ant.* XVIII.63f) is almost worthless as evidence (though in this case the fault was mainly his editors’). The gospels unanimously report that he was followed by ‘the crowd’/‘crowds’ (of whom the Pharisees are said to have said, ‘This crowd who are ignorant of the law are accursed’, John 7:49). According to the synoptics his words were questioned and his teaching challenged almost solely by the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, lawyers, elders, and high priests. The only major exceptions are the people of his home town and the disillusioned crowds at the trial and crucifixion;<sup>159</sup> other scenes of popular rejection are few. In John he is often opposed by groups of ‘the Jews’ who commonly appear in Jerusalem and are presumably Judaeans; he escapes them by going to Galilee or Transjordan.<sup>160</sup> This may be one of the reliable traits of the Johannine tradition, but such questions are too complex for investigation here.

Suffice it to say that the evidence of the gospels strongly supports the picture given unintentionally by Josephus of the different senses of *Ioudaios* (see above), but shows that a change has taken place in the last of them: The military–religious alliance formed by Hyrcanus and his sons is no more, but the descendants of the allies (and of those subjects/slaves whom they kept in the territories they were able to hold) are still *Ioudaioi* in common parlance, and think of themselves as such; the political–

<sup>158</sup> Mark 11:31f; Matt. 21:25f; Luke 20:5–6; also 7:29–30.

<sup>159</sup> Mark 6:1–6; Matt 13:53–58; Luke 4:16–30.

<sup>160</sup> John 5:46–6.1; 7:1; 10:39f; 11:8, 53f.

military meaning has been replaced by a social–religious one. They still practise circumcision, observe the sabbath, etc. Most now look to Jerusalem as the great centre of their cult. Assimilation to Jerusalem observances is spreading, albeit irregularly.

Only with Samaria has there been a definite break. Why? What provoked the bone episode? Or was it unprovoked mischief? Or fiction? We don't know. Whatever happened, the author of John (about CE 100) thought that by Jesus' time (about CE 30) the Samaritans were no longer calling themselves *Ioudaioi*. 'Jews don't associate with Samaritans', says the woman of Samaria to Jesus (John 4:9), the clear implication being, 'Nor we with them' (cf. Luke 9:53). In the next generation it would come to open fighting (*Bell.* II.232–46; *Ant.* XX.118–36). But communication was not wholly broken. Antipas, the ruler of Galilee in Jesus' time, was the son of a Samaritan woman (though he is never referred to as a Samaritan – ethnicity was patrilinear). Josephus, in spite of his dislike of Samaritans, had friends among them to whom he could write for help (and get it) when he had to send messages to Jerusalem (*Vita* 269).

Outside the core country (Idumaea, Judaea, Samaria, Galilee), matters were different. Judaeans, Jews, and *Ioudaioi* all found their ways into the coastal and decapolitan cities and there made the compromises necessary for them to unite in synagogues. But the hostility of and to the Gentiles, inherited from the cities' histories, continued and was often exacerbated by the frictions of life at close quarters. When serious fighting finally broke out, Josephus says, 'Every city was divided into two military camps' and the conflict was made worse by uncertainty, for, 'Thinking they ought to get rid of the Jews, in each city they regarded with suspicion those practising Jewish ways, and nobody was willing to kill out of hand those [whose attitudes were], in each city, dubious, and those of mixed [ancestry] were feared as certainly alien' (*Bell.* II.463).<sup>161</sup> Evidently assimilation had been going on.

<sup>161</sup> I cannot agree with S. Cohen, 'Respect of Judaism by Gentiles', *HTR* 80 (1987) 409–30, p. 416, that the three terms (*boi ioudaizontes*, *to amphibolon*, and *to memigenon*) are used as synonyms. As to Greek meanings they plainly are not synonymous. Moreover, their different meanings correspond to three different groups that had to be dealt with: (1) the Judaizers, who had clearly adopted Jewish ways; (2) the dubious, who might or might not be Jewish sympathizers in secret; (3) those of mixed ancestry, who regardless of visible practice or possible attitude, had some Jews in their families. Such different groups must, in the nature of things, have really existed in most cities of any size. Since the words are thus readily understandable with their normal meanings, the attempt to force them into synonymy is not persuasive. Political interpretation is also unsatisfactory. If *boi ioudaizontes* are 'the supporters of the Jews', and *to amphibolon* 'the neutrals', who are the *to memigenon*?



Estimation of the actual situation outside Judaea is made difficult by Josephus' exaggerations. 'Many ten thousands', for instance, are said to have appeared in CE 40 before the governor of Syria, both at Ptolemais and at Tiberias, to protest against the arrival of Caligula's statue, and to have stayed there for forty<sup>162</sup> days (living on what? *Ant.* xviii.263, 271f, 279), this in planting season, so the crops were saved only by a miraculous rainstorm that broke a desperate drought (285f). In *Bell.* II.200 a crowd of unspecified size waited fifty days (and the governor waited, too!) without getting a miracle. From such folktales it seems that large crowds came to protest at Akko-Ptolemais and Tiberias, but where did they come from?

Their sensitivity to statues contrasts strikingly with the tolerance of the *Ioudaioi* of Caesarea where, in the next year or so, Agrippa I, the friend of the Pharisees (see above), set up statues of his daughters as votive offerings in the imperial temple.<sup>163</sup> Did he count on this remaining unknown to the Jews because no good Jew could enter the temple? Hardly. Nevertheless, the statues caused no trouble until he died, when some of the local soldiers, probably Sebasteni who hated him as pro-Jewish, hauled them out and stood them in brothels (about which, also, no pious protests have been recorded). Although Agrippa, not long before, had got the governor of Syria to order the removal of an imperial statue from a synagogue in Dora, where it had been placed by some troublemakers, he seems to have died of a stroke suffered in 44 CE, shortly after he himself was hailed as a god while attending at Caesarea the games for the deified Augustus (*Ant.* xix.300–11, 343–59). The most likely reconciliation of these apparent contradictions is that he was, like Herod his grandfather, a *Ioudaios*. His father, being Herod's son, had been an Idumaeon, and so was he.<sup>164</sup>

From here to the defeat of Cestius in late 66 CE Josephus' history concentrates on Jerusalem and Judaea, with one long digression on the

<sup>162</sup> Forty is a number famous in folklore: the rain for the flood, Moses' stay on the mountain, the Israelites' years in the desert, Jesus' fast in the wilderness, etc.

<sup>163</sup> *oikade* in *Ant.* xix.357 probably means, 'to the temple', *sc.* of the imperial cult, the main temple of the city, where the statues of the girls would have been placed as votive offerings, in the forms of petitioners beside the statues of Augustus and Livia/Julia; cf. L. Ollendorff, 'Livia (37)', *RE* 13.1 (1926), 900ff, esp. 907. *Oikos* for 'temple' is not rare (LSJ sub voc.) but is less usual than *hieron* and *naos* which Josephus here avoids because they were more commonly used of the Jerusalem temple, with which he did not wish to compare this one.

<sup>164</sup> See above, n. 144. Since matrilinear reckoning of ancestry was not yet common, his mother and grandmothers, whatever their ethnicity, had become on marriage, by biblical law, members of their husbands' tribes; the children belonged to their fathers' *ethne*.

conversion of the royal family of Adiabene, and only brief reports of relevant events elsewhere, mainly the conflict between Jews and Gentiles in Caesarea. The account of the Adiabeniens is for the society page; in Josephus' opinion it influenced Judaism only through their relief of the famine in Jerusalem (*Ant.* xx.51–3). The most conspicuous example of such concentration, however, is the story of the Judaeo-Samaritan fighting under Cumanus (c. CE 48–52; *Bell.* II.233–46; *Ant.* xx.118–36). In *Bell.* a single Galilean going to Jerusalem is killed in a village in Samaritan territory. The Galileans assemble to attack the Samaritans but their leaders go to complain to Cumanus. He does nothing; they and their following are forgotten; the story turns to the Judaeans' reaction and the effort of the rulers of Jerusalem to cool it. They argued that it would be foolish to risk 'their native land, temple, children, and wives . . . to avenge one Galilean' (*Bell.* II.237). In *Ant.* xx.118 'many Galileans' were killed (better to excuse the Judaeans' violence), but nothing at all was said about avenging them (xx.123). This accords with Josephus' consistently condescending references to Galileans in *Vita* and in the *Jewish War*.<sup>165</sup> They are an *ethnos* sharply distinguished from the Judaeans (*Bell.* II.510; IV.105), but sufficiently connected with them for the murder of one to serve the Judaeans as an excuse for raiding Samaritan villages. Evidently little excuse was needed. Consequently, having recorded their accidental role as occasions of the fighting under Cumanus, Josephus goes back to what he thinks are the important results: the rest of both stories deals with legal proceedings and political manoeuvres of the Jerusalemites and Samaritans as separate and hostile *ethne*.

The same polarization appears in the schematic account of the conflict between 'Jews' and 'Syrians' for political control of Caesarea (*Ant.* xx.173ff; *Bell.* II.266ff) where the 'Jews' are presented as a block. (Perhaps they were now more nearly so; group adherence is strengthened by neighbourhood hostility.) The argument attributed to the 'Syrians', that Herod would not have put statues and temples in the city if he had intended it for Jews (*Bell.*, *ibid.*) is oblivious to the existence and practices of the *Ioudaioi* exemplified in Caesarea by Agrippa I only fifteen years before. Perhaps a comment from Agrippa II led to its deletion from *Ant.* xx.173.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>165</sup> See the examples analysed by Cohen, *Josephus*, 206–14, and the account by S. Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian* (Notre Dame and Wilmington 1980) (U. of Notre Dame Center for the Study of Judaism and Christianity in Antiquity, No. 5).

<sup>166</sup> The use of 'Syrians' for the native Palestinian pagans is misleading, but legally defensible. They were 'Syrians' because legally Roman subjects of the province of Judaea, of which the governors were, in crises, dependent on the Emperor's legate who was in charge of Syria (Schürer-Vermes 1.357–61). Since *Ioudaioi* could not be used for both parties of the dispute, they could be referred to as subjects of the ranking commander.

This polarization will reach its illogical conclusion with the massacre of the Jews of Caesarea in CE 66, and will be enormously extended and intensified by the coming of the war. The profound changes of the attitudes of Jews to Gentiles and vice versa which resulted from the war lie outside the limits of this discussion. Even within its limits there has been room only to trace the basic religious and political history of Hyrcanus' innovation and its consequences during the almost two hundred years (c. 125 BCE to CE 70) in which it radically altered the make up of Jewry and the meaning of the word *Ioudaios*.

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## CHAPTER 8

GENTILES AS SEEN BY JEWS  
AFTER CE 70

Let us begin<sup>1</sup> with a frank avowal not only of the incompleteness of our evidence from the Jewish side, but also of its one-sidedness. Tannaitic sources reflect the pietistic leadership of the scribes and sages, successors of the pharisees. It should not be assumed that the rabbinic views were enthusiastically endorsed by the entire community; indeed, as regards their minutiae, at the periphery of the community perhaps no more than lip service was given. Alternative religious groupings (e.g. Qumran, the Jewish Christians), occasionally disapproved in the Mishnah, were either disappearing fast, or were in process of disassociating themselves from (or being extruded by) the main Jewish community. The ‘*Am ha-’ares* – scholastically unreachable common folk<sup>2</sup> – were regarded by the rabbis with a barely tolerant contempt, reminiscent of fifth-century Greek attitudes to ‘the masses’ as contrasted to ‘gentlefolk’.<sup>3</sup> One need not doubt that emotional ties and an inarticulate sense of ethnic identity linked them with more obviously practising Jewish circles, but their ethnicity was without self-consciousness, and they probably described themselves in Palestine – as in the Diaspora all Jews were described – as ‘Judeans’ (*yebudim*, Aramaic *yebuda’ē*): a term not thus used in rabbinic literature,<sup>4</sup> where an individual Jew is called (an) *Israel* (ite). The great

In the preparation of this chapter for publication, alterations have been confined to the footnotes and bibliography which have been editorially revised.

<sup>1</sup> Two works should be noted as relevant here no less than to the foregoing chapter. (1) M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, English translation (3 vols, Jerusalem 1974–84). T. Rajak’s review-article ‘The Unknown God’, *JJS* 28, 1 (1977), 20–9 should be seen. (2) A. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization* (Cambridge 1975), chaps. 4 (‘The Hellenistic Discovery of Judaism’) and 5 (‘Greeks, Jews and Romans from Antiochus III to Pompey’) of which, though concerned with an earlier period, throw much light on the presuppositions of both Jews and Gentiles regarding each other in the years following 70 CE.

<sup>2</sup> See A. Büchler, *Der galiläische ‘Am-ha-’ares*, 1906; A. Oppenheimer, *The Am Ha-aretz* (ET 1977); S. Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings* (1994), 114–20.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Thucydides viii. 48.6.

<sup>4</sup> Apart from one biblical quotation, *yebudi* occurs 5 times in the Mishnah, of which 3 occurrences (*Nedarim* 11, 12) concern aloof, if not disparaging reference to the Jewish

suffering of Jews in Palestine, Egypt and Cyrenaica, in the wars and revolts against Rome will have made it difficult or impossible for Jews to ignore the reality of Jewish–Gentile distinctions, even when, as individuals, they may have wished to play them down or attempt to overcome them by assimilative integration in the gentile world. Where Judaism is felt to be a *damnosa haereditas* (millstone round the neck), one cannot expect to find philosophical accounts of any specifically Jewish view of the gentile world. The apologists are those who, like Josephus, feel themselves to be part of both communities, and who, whilst aware of the inevitable tension between them, regard such tension as being at least potentially positive. Nor can we learn anything in this respect from Elisha b. Abuyah,<sup>5</sup> whose self-distancing from rabbinic circles did not repudiate or question Jewish separatism, but rather questioned assumptions regarding providence upon which rest the Jewish sense of a distinct ethnic identity and all other Jewish theological axioms. And we have no access to the minds of those who, like Tiberius Julius Alexander, Philo's nephew, turned their back on the Jewish community completely.

For those in any degree theologically aware, Tannaitic (as also later) Judaism determined their identity by the triangle of God, Israel and their covenantal relationship rendered specific by the practical consequences of the institutions of Torah. This particularism is perhaps not markedly different from the self-account of other peoples, but in the Jewish case it involves the paradox that the God whose self-revelation to Israel the Bible records, is claimed to be both a universal and a creator God. Linking the beginning of the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:2) with Ps. 50:7, 'I am God, even thy God', R. Simeon b. Yoḥai – a bitter antagonist of Rome in the second century – commented: 'God am I over all who come into the world, nevertheless with my people Israel alone have I uniquely associated my name.'<sup>6</sup> This doctrine involves the necessity of some theological account of the gentile world, the scheme of which will be discussed below (see pp. 263f.). But this account is but the counterpoint – indispensable, no doubt, if the main theme is to carry any theological plausibility, and arguably self-defeating unless introduced *pianissimo*. Often it is not to be heard at all, the dominant theme being obsessive

community by a recalcitrant wife. In *Kethubboth* 7, 6 it refers to Jewish social *mores* and in 7, 1 to transgressing 'Mosaic and Jewish law' (*dath*). The term 'ibri (Hebrew) in the Mishnah refers to script or, echoing the Bible, a Jew enslaved to a fellow Jew. For Ἰουδαῖος in the Greek world cf. D. Lewis, 'The First Greek Jew', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 2 (1957), 264–6; see also p. 210, above.

<sup>5</sup> For Elisha b. Abuyah or Aḥer ('Another') see the article and bibliography in *Enc. Judaica* 6, 668f.

<sup>6</sup> *Mekhilta, Mishpatim* 20, ed. I. H. Weiss f. 107b; *Exod. R.* 29, 4, ed. Wilna f. 51a col. ii.

fascination with the opportunities for spiritual vitality and intimacy with the godhead afforded by the election of Israel and its institutional consequences. Urbach's comprehensive study of *The Sages – Their Concepts and Beliefs*<sup>7</sup> contains no section devoted to Gentiles. Insofar as the Gentile world was viewed positively, it was generally as the cocoon of Israel, quintessential humanity, which must be primarily concerned with the ever-present necessity (constituting a whole dimension of Jewish life) of maintaining its own distinctiveness; not from mere xenophobia, but out of respect for the divine economy, deemed to be the corollary of the divine choice of Israel.

Some conventional terms in the liturgy are instructive. Rabbinic Hebrew replaced the biblical 'heaven and earth' in the sense of the cosmos by 'olam, which acquired a quasi-spatial sense,<sup>8</sup> and 'sovereign of the universe' (*ribbono shel 'olam*) became a divine appellative. R. Yoḥanan (died c. 279) insisted that a benedictional formula that omitted to refer to God's kingship (*sc.* of the universe) was inadequate.<sup>9</sup> It is complemented in any benediction relating to performance of a specific Jewish ordinance by the words 'Thou . . . who hast consecrated us by enjoining us to . . . ' (*qiddeshanu . . . wešimmanu*) *Qiddesh* and *qedushah* are terms which in post-biblical Hebrew achieve primacy in the vocabulary of election, *torah* (the means) and *qedushah* (the end, holy reservedness to God) coming to be the co-ordinates of all Jewish spiritual endeavour. This sense of vocation explains what may seem excessive Tannaitic concern to erect a *cordon sanitaire* preventing undue contact of Jews with Gentiles.<sup>10</sup> Yet even within the jurisprudential working out through *halakhah* ('established procedure') of Jewish response to Israel's vocation, one encounters awareness that society at large (*tiqqun ha-'olam*, the maintenance of the world's

<sup>7</sup> English translation (Jerusalem 1975); see, however, index, p. 1019. C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology*, includes a chapter (29) on Gentiles, the proportions of which are revealing – 18 extracts out of 1661 in the volume. See, however, its very detailed index *s.v.* Gentile(s), pp. 798f.

<sup>8</sup> See R. Loewe, 'Jerome's Rendering of 'Olam', *HUCA* 22 (1949), 266f.

<sup>9</sup> T. B. *Berakboth* 12a (also 40b); see E. Wiesenber, 'The Liturgical Term *melekh ha-'olam*', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 15 (1964), 1–56; 17 (1966), 42–72.

<sup>10</sup> The basic statement is the tractate on idolatry (*'Abodah Zarah*) of which the Mishnah and Tosephta exhibit parallel texts, the former edited with a commentary by W. A. L. Elmslie (Cambridge 1911). Other relevant Tannaitic matter occurs in the halakhic *midrashim* (*Mekbilta*, *Sifra*, *Sifrey*), and marked out as *baraita* ('external', i.e. to the *Gemara*) embedded in the Talmud. For a summary of a number of significant passages see *Rabbinic Anthology* (above, n. 7), p. 560. For discussion see M. Goodman, *Mission and Conversion* (1994), pp. 110–17; M. Halbertal, 'Coexisting with the Enemy: Jews and Pagans in the Mishnah', in G. N. Stanton and G. G. Stroumsa (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance* (1998), 159–72.

equipoise) is not to be ignored.<sup>11</sup> Implicit in that awareness is the acceptance, albeit reluctant, that Israel and the Gentiles are in some degree interdependent. The Gentiles in their secularism are supposed to benefit from Israel's propensity for the spiritual life;<sup>12</sup> and even though Israel never frankly avows that the Jewish way presupposes the existence of the wider Gentile world, if only to service it, the rabbis so frame their ordinances regarding land tenure, commerce, etc. as to indicate that mutual involvement and cooperative enterprise of Jew and Gentile are such commonplace occurrences, that if their system did not make the necessary provision it would be defective.

The Tannaitic regulation of Jewish–Gentile business transactions sets out to exclude any Jewish promotion or facilitation, even constructive, of the observance or enjoyment by pagans of their festivals – whether formally linked to the Graeco-Roman pantheon, or imperial anniversaries,<sup>13</sup> or the manifold local events that had (or were deemed by Jews to have) an integrally idolatrous sanction. The amount of detail is eloquent of the extent to which Jewish–Gentile commercial relationships formed part of the familiar scene. Business apart, Jews in Palestine will (however reluctantly) have been in occasional contact with the Roman provincial administration either for private purposes (licences, citation before the courts) or in connection with public affairs, despite Roman use of the Jewish patriarchate<sup>14</sup> as a channel of communication and the possible retention by them on the governor's staff of a relatively cooperative adviser on Jewish matters.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the Roman administrative machine made its presence felt, and where necessary imposed its will, through a bureaucracy whose substantial efficiency will often have seemed to Jewish eyes mere officious bumbledom; and Roman concern to maintain civic tranquillity will have lent itself to misconstruction as an arbitrary

<sup>11</sup> E.g. in a city of mixed population Gentiles are accorded the benefits of Jewish charity and social services 'for the sake of peace', T. J. *Demai* 4, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Rome and Parthia are pictured as representing to God that their public works, administration and wars are all motivated by the desire to promote Israel's devotion to Torah, but God dismisses their pleas – their activities are entirely self-interested (T. B. 'Abodah Zarah 2b, R. Ḥanina b. Papa or R. Simlai, 2nd half of 3rd cent.; but the conceit may well be earlier).

<sup>13</sup> An alleged occurrence reported in (or appended to) a *Baraita* in connection with the birth of a child to Trajan is instructive: T. J. *Sukkah* 5, 1, end, see R. Loewe, 'A Jewish Counterpart to the Acts of the Alexandrians', *JJS* 12 (1961), 109f.

<sup>14</sup> On the office of *nasi* or patriarch see H. Mantel, *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin* (1961), pp. 1f, 175f; M. Jacobs, *Die Institution des jüdischen Patriarchen* (1995); C. Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine* (1997), 405–49.

<sup>15</sup> See R. Loewe, 'Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah', *JJS* 25 (1974), (= B. S. Jackson (ed.), *Studies in Jewish Legal History in Honour of David Daube* (London 1974), pp. 149f.



attempt at the enforcement, through rigorous discipline, of an indirect and constructive acknowledgement of the pagan gods on a Jewish public that could not compromise over such issues and retain psychological equilibrium.<sup>16</sup>

But to leave business and military government aside, wide Jewish familiarity with spoken Greek meant that any Jewish attempt at self-sterilization of Gentile impact would have been self-defeating. As much seems to be conceded by the rabbinic ordinance<sup>17</sup> that purported after CE 70 to prohibit the teaching of Greek except to girls, in whose case it constituted a cultural accomplishment. That those of unquestioned Jewish solidarity did not invariably boycott Gentile civic amenities even in Palestine is clear from the encounter of R. Gamaliel the younger with Proclus in a bathhouse in Acre dedicated to Aphrodite, and their conversation on the propriety of Gamaliel's using it.<sup>18</sup> Gamaliel's reply, that the association with Aphrodite was merely incidental, argues a commonsensical approach, which suggests that the weight of rabbinic emphasis on circumspection regarding involvement in Gentile institutions sprang from a general prevalence of lackadaisical attitudes. Jews were certainly not immune to the attractions of the seamy side of Graeco-Roman civilization, and are known to have sold themselves to the 'ludi', i.e. as gladiators, no doubt primarily through dire economic necessity but apparently in some cases out of sheer daredevilism.<sup>19</sup> And the rabbis seem to have had as uphill a task as did the contemporary Church in dissuading their following from attending such occasions as spectators.<sup>20</sup> Against this

<sup>16</sup> Thus TB *Sanhedrin* 74a–b (Raba b. Isaac reporting Rab, who was a pupil of Judah the Patriarch) cites as an example of resoluteness called for in the time of persecution, the obligation of resisting, if necessary, even demands to change the method of lacing one's shoe. This seems to reflect confused recollection of Roman regulations regarding military dress for which a close parallel in British army regulations exists, in the latter case based on primarily practical considerations regarding speed of removal of the boot in case of a foot-wound.

<sup>17</sup> Mishnah, *Soṭab* 9, 14. The (possibly later) concession in the case of girls is added in the Palestinian Talmud (Abbahu, quoting Yoḥanan, i.e. 3rd cent.), See S. Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine* (1942), pp. 23f.

<sup>18</sup> Mishnah, *ʿAbodah Zarab* 3, 4, Danby's translation p. 440.

<sup>19</sup> Mishnah, *Gittin* 4, 9 (Danby, p. 312) speaks of those only who sell themselves and their children to a *Gentile (nokhri)*; the Gemara (TJ *in loc.*, TB 46b) considers cases of those selling themselves as *ludarii*. See the discussion by E. E. Urbach, 'The Laws of Slavery as a Source for Social History, etc.' (Hebrew, *Zion* 25 (1960), p. 184, n. 191; English translation in *Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies London*, ed. J. G. Weiss (Jerusalem 1964), p. 85, n. 195. Rabbi Simeon b. Laqish (Resh Laqish) had sold himself as a gladiator in his youth, TB *Gittin* 47a.

<sup>20</sup> *Baraita* in TB *ʿAbodah Zarab* 18b; Tertullian's well-known tract *de Spectaculis* (PL 1, 627, CSEL 20, 1) is dated before CE 202/3. R. Yudan b. Simeon (? = Judah b. Simon, 3rd–

background some social intercourse between Jews and Gentiles within corresponding class strata is to be assumed, going beyond the few upper-class case-histories such as the friendship of Judah the Prince and ‘Antoninus’<sup>21</sup> and of Joshua b. Hananiah with Hadrian recorded in the sources. All this points to the existence of a Jewish society within which unarticulated attitudes towards non-Jews stretch through a spectrum from overt hostility through suspiciousness, aloofness, social *apartheid* alongside commercial partnership, to neutrality, cooperation and friendship. Were this not so, both the provision for formal conversion to Judaism and the existence of a body of informal ‘semi-proselytes’ associating itself with the Jewish community could not be explained.<sup>22</sup>

It is natural enough that Judaism should take its introspective sense of ethnic distinctiveness in its stride, without self-consciousness: Balaam’s oracle,<sup>23</sup> ‘it is a people dwelling apart, not reckoning itself among the nations’, sums up, after all, their biblical heritage. Several new factors, however, stimulated occasional Jewish questioning of this separateness. Although Jewry might theologize its political debacle as the consequence of its own sins, it could never forget that the Roman world had wrested from it the last semblance of a political dimension of its independence. Apart from the actual casualties, which were very heavy, the trauma of the events will have caused loss through assimilation into the general environment, and a perplexed tension, often near despair, amongst those whose solidarity to the ethnic idea of Judaism stood firm. The interdiction of circumcision and a few other basic Jewish institutions was an act of reprisal by Hadrian in Palestine,<sup>24</sup> relatively short-lived, and there is little or no evidence for any Roman repression of Jewish practice in the Diaspora. But the following passage, which reflects the situation following Bar Kokhba’s defeat, indicates starkly enough the anguish with which many were constrained to assess the personal cost of maintaining religious

4th cent.) declared that the hunt (*κυνήγιον*), or strictly the duel of Leviathan and Behemoth at the end of time would be a sight reserved for those who had shunned such spectacles (*κυνήγια*) in life; Lev. R. 13, 3, ed. Wilna 18b, col. i.

<sup>21</sup> Identified by S. Krauss with Avidius Cassius (*Antoninus und Rabbi*, xvii. Jahresbericht der Israelitisch-theologischen Lehranstalt (Vienna 1910), pp. 88f), but most later writers have reserved judgement; S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*,<sup>2</sup> 2, pp. 187, 400, n. 19; Hezser, *Social Structure*, p. 441.

<sup>22</sup> See Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine*, pp. 68f. (‘Gentiles and Semi-proselytes’). In a *baraita* R. Jose b. Halafta (mid-2nd cent.) refers to ‘self-declared proselytes’ (*na’asu gerim gerurim*), TB *‘Abodah Zarah* 3b. At the end of the third century R. Ḥelbo declared proselytes to be as much a nuisance to the community as a scab is to the body, TB *Yebamoth* 109b, *Qiddushin* 70b. For more appreciative views in aggadic sources see *Rabbinic Anthology* (above, n. 7), pp. 566f.

<sup>23</sup> Num. 23:9. <sup>24</sup> See Baron, *Social and Religious History*, 2, pp. 107, 374, n. 22.

loyalties. R. Nathan (second half of the second century) commented<sup>25</sup> on the Ten Commandments: ‘showing mercy to thousands of those that love me and keep my commandments’ (Exod. 20:6), ‘those here referred to are Jews who live in the Land of Israel and sacrifice their lives for the sake of Jewish institutions’. ‘Why are you going out to execution?’ ‘For circumcising some Jews.’ ‘And you, to be burned?’ ‘For reading the Torah.’ ‘And you, for crucifixion?’ ‘For eating unleavened bread (*sc.* on Passover).’ ‘Why are you suffering 100 lashes?’ ‘For carrying the palm-branch (*sc.* on Tabernacles)’ . . . ‘It is these same scourges that occasion my being the object of the love of my Father in heaven.’ Such comments illustrate (the more so if they are in fact exaggerations) Jewish awareness of Gentile anti-Jewish sentiments – sentiments no doubt intensified by Roman bitterness at the cost in blood and money of the Jewish wars, but which were nevertheless of much longer standing. But if Jewry could learn to live, grimly enough, with the negative Gentile counterpart of its own positive awareness of Jewish separatism, the matter was complicated by Roman insistence that Christians, whether of Jewish or Gentile origin, were to be administratively reckoned as Jews. Whilst a drawbridge was available to admit the occasional individual proselyte across the ideological moat on the defenders’ terms, Jewish leadership could neither allow the terms to be dictated from without, nor tolerate an indiscriminate association leading to the blurring of distinctiveness. As apocalyptic expectation of an imminent supernatural solution of the situation receded, Jewish reflection on its long-term nature at first found expression in incidental observations and exegetical implication, rather than in any systematic theological accounting for it.

Incidental remarks should be used as evidence with circumspection, since whether they are universalistic, jingoistic or xenophobic, they may embody hyperbole stimulated by the occasion or by the audience, and may indeed be largely ironic; whilst exegetical universalism,<sup>26</sup> if it is aggadic (i.e. edificatory and non-institutional), will be of great significance as reflecting aspiration and thus potential actuality, but it can afford to be unrealistic. This last is equally applicable to the liturgical evidence, to be considered below (pp. 259f). Alongside Simeon b. Yoḥai’s outspoken assertion (p. 251) of God’s special relationship to Israel despite his universal claim on man’s worship, we may set his adage ‘the best of Gentiles –

<sup>25</sup> *Mekbilta, Yitbro, Ba-ḥodesh*, 6, end, ed. I. H. Weiss f. 75b, = Lev. R. 32, 1, ed. Wilna f. 46b col. i. On the historical background to this passage see R. Loewe, ‘“Salvation” is not of the Jews’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series 32, 1981, pp. 353f.

<sup>26</sup> Positive evaluation of the Gentiles is evinced in a number of the passages briefly described in the index of the *Rabbinic Anthology* (see n. 7), but for the reason indicated in the text they are not adduced here.

kill him; the best of snakes – just crush it'.<sup>27</sup> Such slogans, the product of war or revolutionary hysteria, and directed against European enemies or against ex-colonial powers, are familiar enough from recent history. They are neither to be disregarded nor taken 100 per cent seriously. Scriptural exegesis that is halakhically orientated may be used, albeit with caution, since its own terms of reference being institutional, idealism can never be transmuted into utopianism, as frequently tends to happen in the *'aggada*. The relative rarity of universalistic halakhic exegesis should not overshadow the significance of such passages as the following interpretation of Lev. 18:5, 'you shall keep my commandments, which if a man (*sc.* any man) does, he shall live'. R. Me'ir<sup>28</sup> assembled an anthology of texts to emphasize their universal and not exclusively Jewish import, including Isa. 26:2, where 'righteous nation' (*goy*) is understood as indicating an individual Gentile (see below, p. 262.) Me'ir here equates a Gentile who fulfils the law with the high priest himself, and his formulation excludes the possibility that he is presupposing conversion. Fulfilment of the law by a Gentile is, as we shall see below, a feasibility that is somewhat less demanding than in the case of the Jew (see pp. 263f.)

So far our approach has been mainly pragmatic, basing itself on the facts of Jewish history and social reality. As we turn to things that may throw into focus speculative statements or implications regarding the Jewish view of the Gentile world, we should note the progressive atrophy after CE 70 of Jewish apocalyptic writing. In the war of Armageddon that characterizes such compositions, the wicked – generally assumed to include the Gentiles – are eliminated, and the rule of the saints is established. Rabbinic non-apocalyptic eschatology did not overtly forswear such notions, and assumes that 'the war of Gog and Magog' will precede the Messiah's triumph, but it at least purged them; and yet in its *'halakbab*' of the end-time, it insisted<sup>29</sup> that proselytes would then not be admissible – sensing, apparently, that whereas the cautious processes of individual conversions would be inapposite, the alternative of a continued separate Gentile community, no longer hostile to Israel, is unattainable without an unforeseen, messianic solution to the problem.

<sup>27</sup> *Mekbilta*, *Beshallah* 1, ed. I. H. Weiss f. 32b, n. 3. The remark may be placed in perspective by noting, alongside the generally flattering Rabbinic appreciation of the medical profession, Judah b. 'Ila'i's apophthegm that 'the best of doctors is destined for hell' (Mishnah, *Qiddushin* 4, 14, Danby's translation p. 329).

<sup>28</sup> *Sifra*, *in loc.* (*'Aḥarey moth* 13, 13, ed. I. H. Weiss, f. 86a), where where R. Jeremiah is an error for R. Meir: see Weiss's note *shin*, and parallels (besides the *'amora*, there was a minor Tannaic figure named Jeremiah).

<sup>29</sup> *Baraita* in TB *'Abodah Zarab* 3b (above).

Two considerations must be dealt with by those concerned to account speculatively for Jewish ethnic distinctiveness, if both intellectual integrity is to be respected and rabbinic premises maintained. The first derives from the universalist axioms of Judaism itself – a creator-God whose concern for man antedates the emergence of Israel, and whose choice of Israel because of the love of the patriarchs has been continued to their descendants – or rather, to some of them: Esau-Edom was traditionally identified with Rome.<sup>30</sup> How is the divine election of Israel to be protected from the charge of arbitrariness? Was the conventional answer, *viz.* God's foreknowledge of a higher ethical potential and theological sensitivity in the patriarchal stock, too glib? The second might be less pervasive, inasmuch as it was stimulated from angles that rabbinic Judaism regarded as extraneous, but it could not always be by-passed: the Pauline critique of Judaism. Granted the election of Israel, Israel (as understood in pre-Christian times) had proved a moral failure even if ultimately redeemable, because of the inadequacy of Torah in its aspect of *nomos* (law), and because of an alleged Jewish incapacity to feel moral concern for humanity beyond its own ethnic frontier. Torah, if it is to survive, must be radically re-interpreted (and so, from a rabbinic point of view, in effect downgraded and jettisoned) by being subsumed within a second, equally authentic revelation of God incarnate in Christ, whose teachings as articulated by Paul would so transcend all distinctions between Jew and Greek as to render ethnic frontiers meaningless. The Church henceforth, as the new Israel, or the 'Israel of God' succeeds to the position of 'Israel according to the flesh'.<sup>31</sup>

Any rabbinic rejoinder had to start from the premise of a Torah antedating creation,<sup>32</sup> with permanent and unimpaired validity as crystallized in 'law,' i.e. institutional Judaism as linked to the Pentateuch through the 'oral Torah' in theory coeval, or intrinsically coeval, with its written kernel. Broadly speaking, three lines of argument were open.

The first in effect by-passes the challenge. Creation had had no object in view other than the emergence of Israel.<sup>33</sup> In revealing Torah, God had promulgated the ethical, social and political ideal to be implemented by Israel – as an example, indeed, to mankind: but an example which, as history shows, the world may profess to admire or respect, but will

<sup>30</sup> See references in L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 5, p. 272, n. 19, and index, 7, p. 409, col. ii, top.

<sup>31</sup> See W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London 1948), especially chap. 4, pp. 58f.

<sup>32</sup> *Baraita* in TB *Pesahim* 54a.

<sup>33</sup> *Cant. R.* on *Song of Songs* 2, 2, ed. Wilna f. 14a col. i (late amoraic tradents, but there are earlier parallels; cf. 4 Ezra 6, 55). See J. Theodor on Gen. R. 1, 4, p. 6 line 14, and the full discussion by Ginzberg (see n. 30), 5, p. 67, n. 8.

not emulate. The unspoken corollary is that the Gentiles, unfavoured by God with the revelation of Torah, have not been ignored, inasmuch as an earlier and less rigorous dispensation, likewise vouchsafed by God (see below, pp. 263f) remains open to them, as does the option of adopting the fuller one as converts to Judaism. The ‘Gentile problem’ is here at least in theory resolvable piecemeal, but there is neither anticipation, nor indeed enthusiasm for its being liquidated by wholesale conversion.

The second type of answer takes more seriously the charge of irremediable exclusiveness as being inherent in the Jewish notion of revelation – an objection forthcoming from pagan quarters as well as from Pauline Christianity. The attempted rebuttal is two-pronged. First, it stresses the universal availability of Torah to all prepared to accept it – hence the divine decision to reveal it in no man’s land.<sup>34</sup> Complementary to this is the emphasis on the divine concern that no people (to say nothing of individual potential converts) should be debarred from the advantages of Torah through lack of opportunity, so that God had actually ‘hawked’ Torah around the nations, each of which had suspiciously inquired about its obligations and had found them unacceptable.<sup>35</sup> Edom-Rome, for example, on learning that the Torah prohibits murder demurred, in that the blessing of their ancestor Esau (Gen. 27:40) had declared that he would live by the sword: the rabbis could appreciate, no less than Virgil, the military genius of Rome.<sup>36</sup> It was not until the Torah was offered to Israel that it met with unquestioning acceptance – ‘*we will do, and (thereafter only) will we bear*’ (Exod. 24:7).<sup>37</sup>

The third – and most significant – approach steers a middle course between the other two, and makes its point obliquely. Inasmuch as it is enunciated through the medium of *balakbab* – procedure and jurisprudence – and through that of liturgy (itself a department of *balakbab*), it may be regarded as expressing the more or less official (and certainly the authentic) voice of Judaism. The liturgy is articulated in a series of benedictional formulas, regarding which we have already noticed (p. 252) rabbinic insistence on the inclusion of reference to God’s universal kingship.

<sup>34</sup> *Mekhilta, Yitbro, Ba-hodesh* 5, ed. I. H. Weiss f. 74a below. Similar passages collected in the *Rabbinic Anthology* (n. 7), pp. 165f.

<sup>35</sup> *Mekhilta* (a few lines earlier), *Sifrey, Deut., We-zoth ba-berakbab*, 343, ed. L. Finkelstein p. 396, and other parallels.

<sup>36</sup> *Aen.* vi.852–4. According to Jonathan of Beth Gubrin, Latin is the pre-eminently martial language: Tj *Megillab* 1, 9, = Esther R. 4, 12 (on Esth. 1, 22), ed. Wilna f. 9a col. i. The dying Jose b. Qisma, at the time of the revolt against Hadrian, acknowledged the divinely ordained destiny of Rome to rule: *baraita* in TB ‘*Abodah Zarab* 18a.

<sup>37</sup> See n. 35.

The assertion by R. Me'ir<sup>38</sup> that 100 benedictions are to be recited each day is not motivated directly by universalist considerations, but inculcates incidentally throughout the daily rhythm the lesson that a providence concerned for the cosmos cannot be unconcerned for the Gentiles. A similar point is made by the quotation in liturgical contexts of universalist sentiments found in the Bible, e.g. Pss. 136: 25 or Zech. 14: 9. More telling, however – since the tendency can scarcely be overlooked – are the formulation and the structural arrangement of certain prayers, the effect of which is to spell out (by design more than in words) the following proposition: unless the election of Israel and its corollary of response to revelation through Toranic institution is seen within the context of a divine providence that embraces, together with the cosmos, the whole of mankind, the notion of Israel's election is theologically meaningless.

An impressive example concerns the daily prayers at morning and evening, which centre round the recitation of the *Shema*<sup>c</sup> (*Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, one Lord*, Deut. 6:4 and associated passages) as a Jewish *credo*, to be uttered 'when you lie down and when you rise' (6:7). The Mishnah<sup>39</sup> delimits the times appropriate for this so that the act may be palpably associated with the changes from night to day and vice versa; it also lays down<sup>40</sup> a benedictional framework of two paragraphs preceding, and one (at evening two) following the *Shema*<sup>c</sup>. The first focuses on the natural phenomenon ('*Blessed art Thou . . . who createst light . . .*', or '*. . . who by thy word bringest on darkness*') as affecting humanity at large. Thereafter follows assertion of Israel's election ('*with everlasting love hast Thou loved us . . . blessed . . . who didst chose Israel in love*'); and a credal statement following the *Shema*<sup>c</sup> has as its climax '*blessed . . . who hast redeemed Israel*'. In the morning liturgy the first paragraph underscores the universalist assertion by explicit statements that the gift of light is for all inhabitants of the world.

Similar subordination of introspective preoccupation with the Jewish microcosm to the wider scene may be observed in the arrangement of the special features of the liturgy for the new year festival. The assumption that 1 Tishri is the anniversary of the creation,<sup>41</sup> on which day God

<sup>38</sup> *Baraita* in TB *Menahoth* 43b, below. The insistence of Me'ir (*ibid.*; the parallels, Tosephta *Berakboth* 7(6), 18, ed. M. Zuckerman p. 16, and TJ *Berakboth* 9, 1 name instead R. Judah b. 'Ila'i) on benedictional thanksgiving each morning for not having been born a female, a slave or a Gentile seems to be polemically motivated as a contraversion of Pauline doctrine (Galatians 3:28). See R. Loewe, *The Position of Women in Judaism* (1966), p. 43, n. 35. Compare p. 382, n. 65, below.

<sup>39</sup> *Berakboth* 1, 1 and 2, Danby's translation p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Berakboth* 1, 4, Danby, *ibid.* <sup>41</sup> *Baraita* in TB *Rosh Ha-shanah* 10b (R. Eliezer).



annually ‘passes in review all humanity like a body of troops’,<sup>42</sup> makes apposite a more explicit statement that Jewry and Judaism have to account for themselves as part of humanity at large and as integral to a cosmic design. The formulation of the insertions into the additional service for that festival (in part taken over into the ‘*amidah* or *tephillah* – ‘prayer’, *par excellence* – for its other services) ascends to the second century or earlier, being known to ‘Aqiba and Yoḥanan b. Nuri.<sup>43</sup> Once again the exordium is general:

Now therefore, O Lord our God, impose the dread of Thee on all thy works . . . that all creation may bow down to Thee as one band, united to thy service with a perfect heart: even as we know . . . that thy name is to be revered by all that Thou hast created.

The ecumenical setting established, attention can concentrate on one spot:

Thereupon grant glory unto thy people . . . the renewed flourishing of David, thine anointed one . . . So shall the righteous see it, and rejoice . . . wickedness shall vanish in smoke, for Thou wilt remove the rule of arrogance from the world and wilt Thyself reign over all thy works in Zion . . . Holy art Thou, awe-inspiring is thy name, beside whom there is no God, as is written (Isa. 5:16), ‘*through justice is the Lord of Hosts exalted, through righteousness does God manifest Himself as holy*’.

The same pattern runs through the three sections – in effect, symphonic movements – peculiar to the new year additional service, part of which (and probably all three) ascends to ‘Abba ‘Arekha, better known as Rab, ‘the Master,’ a junior associate of Judah the Patriarch.<sup>44</sup> The three themes are respectively the divine kingship, divine remembrance, i.e. providential concern for man, and divine revelation as symbolized by the trumpet-call sounded on the ram’s horn through history from Sinai to the Messiah. Although the last section naturally concerns itself almost entirely with Jewish historical experience, it relates it universally by quoting Isa. 18:3: ‘*O all ye. . . that dwell on earth, as when a banner is raised, ye shall see, and as when the ram’s horn is sounded, ye shall hear: . . . may the Lord of Hosts be a shield to them . . . a shield to you . . . a shield to us.*’ Preceding it, the remembrance theme harks back to Noah, second founder of mankind:

<sup>42</sup> In place of the obscure *kei-beney maron* in Mishnah *Rosh Ha-shanah* 1, 2 (Danby, p. 188) the text should read *kei-be-numerum* (*numerus, νοῦμερος = cohort*; see N. Wieder, ‘A Controversial Mishnaic and Liturgical Expression’, *JJS* 18 (1967), 1–7.

<sup>43</sup> Mishnah, *Rosh Ha-shanah* 4, 5, Danby, p. 193. I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst*<sup>2</sup> (1924), pp. 141f, 536, ET *Jewish Liturgy* (1993), pp. 118–19, 418.

<sup>44</sup> TJ *Rosh Ha-shanah* 1, 3, quoting the prayer as Tannaitic (Rab’s great authority and his proximity to Judah the Patriarch making him a ‘quasi-Tanna’). Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst*, p. 143, ET 119–20.

Who is not called to account on this day, when the record of all actions comes before Thee? . . . Noah, too, didst Thou remember . . . when Thou didst destroy all mankind for their evil deeds: so let his remembrance come before Thee to increase his seed.

Not surprisingly, the total bulk of such outward-looking matter in Jewish liturgy is slight. Any group at prayer will be primarily conscious of its domestic situation, its own pressing needs and ultimate aspirations. What deserves attention here is the recognition that despite Judaeocentric concern the model is not, as the term Judaeocentricity would imply, a circle; it is rather an ellipse, described round the axis of Israel's peculiar relationship with God which must, unless it is to forfeit theological credibility, encompass the whole of humanity.

Recognition that all genealogies ascend to Noah points to the other limb of the rabbinic essay in ecumenical self-account. Being prosecuted through the juridical categories of halakhic thinking, as contrasted to the idealism of liturgy and the utopianism of *'aggada* (see above, p. 256), it remained circumspect where practical conclusions might be concerned, though pregnant with universalizing potentialities that a few mediaeval thinkers would exploit. Humanity is here viewed as a series of concentric circles disposed around Israel.<sup>45</sup> The surrounding Gentile world may be described pejoratively ('idolaters' *'ovedey 'avodah zarah*), or negatively ('Gentiles' (*goyim*), the biblical collective *goi* = *nation* being reminded to mean an individual pagan, and then pluralized again, or *nokhri*, 'stranger', not usual in the plural), or quasi-neutrally, but with a negative tinge ('peoples of the world', *'ummot ha-'olam*). Since the outer circle necessarily includes Israel, the whole can be described, again quasi-neutrally but now with an ecumenical nuance, as 'all who enter the world' (*kol ba'ey 'olam*). These categories are essentially sociological, even if they fail to exclude value-judgements. Speculatively and metaphysically the scheme is unsatisfactory, since, if left like that, it would presuppose that beyond Judaism, or (in chronological terms) before Israel emerged foreshadowed in Abraham, no divinely granted dispensation was available to mankind in which to give expression to its spiritual vitality. Such an assumption would impose upon (a perhaps inevitable) Jewish particularism the further embarrassment of postulating an obsessively exclusive Jewish tribal deity, whose character would not markedly differ from that ascribed by their worshippers to the baals of Canaan, whose cult the prophets had decried and pilloried. The biblical message eschews so narrow a theology. Did not Genesis itself presuppose a dynamic relationship between God and Adam, a

<sup>45</sup> A fuller description will be found in R. Loewe, 'Potentialities and Limitations of Universalism in the Halakhah' in *Studies in Rationalism, Judaism and Universalism in Memory of Leon Roth*, ed. R. Loewe (London 1966), pp. 122f.

notion which the rabbis developed by crediting Adam with authorship of Ps. 92, 'for the (first ever) sabbath' and with a capacity for penitence allegedly referred to therein ('it is good to give thanks/confess (le-bodoth) to the Lord,' v. 2)?<sup>46</sup> In the same vein they read into Gen. 2:16, translated as 'and the Lord gave commandment concerning the (race of) man', the interdiction of five things, *viz.*, idolatry, blasphemy, murder, unchastity and robbery, together with the positive injunction to establish courts of justice.<sup>47</sup> The straight contrast of Israel, spiritually meaningful, as against the remainder of mankind was consequently unacceptable.

The solution was to postulate between the outer circle of humanity (as variously described) and the inner one (representing Israel), an intermediate circle comprising the 'descendants of Noah', it being claimed that after the flood the foregoing six commandments were re-promulgated together with a seventh (discovered in Gen. 9:4) that would prohibit the consumption of flesh taken from a living animal.<sup>48</sup> These Noachian laws were deemed to be a divinely ordained polity on the basis of which Judaism could countenance the existence within the Gentile world of a culturally integrated moral code, acknowledged (in theory) by the Gentiles themselves as being divinely sanctioned, and not the result of any mere social contract.<sup>49</sup> The tacit extension of seven commandments into a 'constitution' is emphasized by some variation and imprecision in the parallel sources as to their identity, and by the circumstance that in one text<sup>50</sup> 'Ulla (mid-third century) declares that there were thirty (unspecified) laws, presumably derivable from the seven. The loose parallel of these three concentric circles and the Roman distinction between *ius civile* and *ius gentium*, as influenced by the Aristotelian and Stoic notion of *ius naturale*, was already observed by Selden and Grotius.<sup>51</sup>

The intermediate Noachide circle could provide the rabbis with an adjustable spanner. It might be so extended as to be all but congruent with the outermost circle of humanity (the reservation being necessary, in

<sup>46</sup> *Midrash Psalms*, Ps. 92, ed. S. Buber f.202a–b (R. Levi), translation by W. G. Braude, 1959, 2, pp. 111f; Ps. 100 (R. Huna, quoting Ḥanina b. Isaac), f. 212b, Braude, 2, p. 146f. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 1, pp. 86f, 112, 5, p. 115 n. 106; Gen. R. 22, end.

<sup>47</sup> TB *Sanhedrin* 56b (R. Yoḥanan and R. Isaac), Gen. R. 16, 6 (R. Levi) mention the five prohibitions only. For other sources see Ginzberg, *Legends* 5, pp. 92f, n. 55.

<sup>48</sup> TB *Sanhedrin* 56b, where a *baraita* indicates that the concept of the Noachian commandments was known in Tannaitic times (it is in fact as old as *Jubilees* (7, 20f, where however the list of items differs considerably).

<sup>49</sup> On the Noachian laws see *Jew. Enc.* 7, pp. 648f (*Laws, Noachian*); R. Loewe, 'Potentialities', (n. 45), 1966, pp. 125f (see also index, for numerous references in other articles in the same volume); D. Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism* (1983); M. Bockmuehl, 'The Noachide Commandments and New Testament Ethics', *RB* 102 (1995), 72–101.

<sup>50</sup> TB *Hullin* 92a, below.

<sup>51</sup> J. Selden, *De Jure Naturali & Gentium iuxta Disciplinam Ebraeorum* (London 1640).

that no code and few social philosophies will acknowledge as morally feasible such 'uncivilized' practices as e.g. cannibalism). Although so liberal an interpretation belongs (as a minority view) to the middle ages, it was in effect already anticipated in third-century Palestine by R. Yoḥanan, who declared<sup>52</sup> that 'Gentiles outside the Land of Israel are not idolaters, but merely maintain their ancestral customs.' Even had Yoḥanan felt inclined to go further, he would have felt precluded by the biblical anathema of the pre-Israelite population of Canaan, which for the rabbis carried the corollary of non-countenance in the Land of Israel of any religious system other than Judaism.

A less outgoing reading of the facts might also occur, whether from illiberalism or through facing the stark facts of social realities. Did the giving of the Decalogue to Israel leave the Noachian code unimpaired, or did it supersede it? For Yose b. Ḥanina<sup>53</sup> (third century) it relieved them of all items not expressly re-promulgated, such matter becoming thenceforth a purely Jewish ordinance, so that Noachides tacitly revert to the status of idolatrous Gentiles. This may, however, be a merely academic riposte to Pauline claims regarding the obsolescence of the institutional law, or to Christian elevation of the Decalogue on to a plane superior to the Pentateuch, where it might be wrested by the church from the hands of the synagogue. At about the same period 'Abbahu read the gentile situation cynically, and linked it exegetically with Habakkuk 3:6 – God '*bebeld, and released (wa-yatter: NEB makes tremble) the nations*'.<sup>54</sup> Realizing the Noachides' moral failure, God abrogated their code in the sense that whilst its punitive sanctions stand, fulfilment of its prescriptions (with the consequent merit) becomes, for Gentiles, a voluntary affair: their wealth is thereby 'released' for transfer to Israel, in virtue of sundry discriminatory details in the Jewish law of torts. We may here observe the weak point in any rabbinic endeavour to formulate a social theory that can deal satisfactorily with the theological 'Gentile problem'; they could not allow themselves, even momentarily, to forget their responsibility as leaders, equipped with jurisprudential expertise resting on spiritual axioms, for administering the judicial system. They had to deal, in a manner that their following would support, with Gentile parties to civil suits involving Jews, and in theory they might have to deal with Gentiles charged with criminal offences. They likewise had to come to terms with the circumstance that non-Jewish courts (whose juridical authority rested, for the rabbis, on their being reckoned 'Noachian') operated according to their own legal systems. The latter were legitimized by the assumption that Noachian criminal law was, broadly speaking, more lenient than its

<sup>52</sup> TB *Hullin* 13b. Cf. *Rabbinic Anthology* (n. 7), p. 653.   <sup>53</sup> TB *Sanhedrin* 59a.

<sup>54</sup> TB *Baba Qamma* 38a. R. Yoḥanan, his senior, derived the same point from Deut. 33:2.

halakhic Jewish counterpart. Thus Noachides appearing before a Jewish court were safe from many detailed charges to which Jews might be exposed, but *per contra* were entitled to fewer procedural safeguards than those which could protect an accused Jewish party.<sup>55</sup>

The halakhic and the liturgical response to the theological challenge can be correlated, but this must be done in full awareness that each of them has its major focus of interest elsewhere – the *halakhab* in controlling the development of Jewish life whilst preserving the divinely ordained difference between Jew and non-Jew from compromise, and the liturgy in enunciating and thus promoting the Jewish vocation for response to God's call to associate itself, as a worshipping community, with God's own holiness. These central motifs being acknowledged, it may be suggested that the positive idealism implicit in liturgical universalism, and the circumspection inherent in the halakhic attempt to come to terms with the existence of a Gentile community and its ethical standards, can act as reciprocally corrective forces, and were, perhaps inarticulately, intended to stand in equipoise.

Any rabbinic attempt to come to terms with the non-Jewish world is teleologically determined; and to rabbinic teleology, messianism is integral. During Bar Kokhba's war under Hadrian the messianism of most (but not all) rabbis was caught up in the intoxicating enthusiasm of apocalyptic activism, thereafter to discipline itself into a mood of quietist expectancy. Torah embodies a divinely given, and thus, *ex hypothesi*, perfect institutional system: the general suitability and availability of which is not compromised by Israel's own limited success in implementing it, hampered both by their own sinfulness and exile and by the complication caused by the existence of secular world powers, whose successive waxing and waning is deemed to be likewise divinely authorized. Israel's obsessive devotion to the implementation of Torah is thus primarily in witness to their own vocation, but also (and not dispensably) as a light unto the Gentiles, despite the scant likelihood of any short-term Gentile predisposition to be won to it. The endeavour may nevertheless not go entirely unnoticed, and it may be expected to attract the occasional 'proselytes of righteousness' of whom Jethro<sup>56</sup> and Rahab<sup>57</sup> were reckoned archetypes. Internal social and extraneous political factors (see above, pp. 250f, 255) may blur the frontiers of the Jewish community, and thus necessitate halakic watchfulness where marriages are concerned.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>55</sup> TB *Sanhedrin* 56af.

<sup>56</sup> So, e.g. Simeon b. Yoḥai, *Sifrey, Numbers, Be-ha' alotbekha* 78, ed. H. S. Horovitz, 1917, p. 72, *below*.

<sup>57</sup> Num. R. 8, 9, ed. Wilna f. 24b col. i; Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 6, p. 171, n. 12.

<sup>58</sup> See R. Loewe, 'Potentialities' (n. 45), pp. 133f and the sources there cited which, though late, could be traced back to their authorities.

Jewish messianism distinguishes itself from the Christian mutation, in that its messianic age, whilst constituting the culmination of history, remains on the same historical plane; so that Torah with its institutional life is deemed to retain its validity into the messianic age, for which Israel must hold itself in a state of readiness by ensuring its ethnic integrity, and hence its ability to produce priests for the temple that is to be restored. Acceptance of would-be proselytes must therefore be controlled, in the interim, by the community's capacity to absorb them completely. Wholesale solutions in the messianic age itself, whether by elimination of Gentiles or their conversion, being halakhically unattainable,<sup>59</sup> they will be effected by unforeseeable means, divinely introduced: and where *halakhab*, obedient to its terms of reference, must keep silent, *'aggadab* could wax lyrical and, on the basis of Zeph. 3:9, assert that in the world to come (not here distinguishable from the messianic age) it will be God Himself, and no longer the righteous in Israel, who will bring about the conversion of the Gentiles.<sup>60</sup> In the interim, although premature messianic 'coups' must be eschewed, messianic hope must be nurtured by 'looking forward to the redemption';<sup>61</sup> and the minority of those from without who can, as converts, take upon themselves, like native-born Jews, the 'yoke of the kingdom of heaven' and the 'yoke of the commandments',<sup>62</sup> must share the latter's aspirations, spiritual endeavour, and indeed the attendant suffering.

The Jewish attitude to Gentiles after CE 70, and indeed throughout Jewish history until the rise of emancipation and secularism in modern times, has been a guarded one; but it was an attitude resting upon axioms regarding the nature and the purpose of God, both in creation and in the election of Israel, that render it, despite appearances, essentially positive. It was these, occasionally highlighted liturgically in a universalistic sense, that made possible the formulation of more explicitly liberal philosophies (or 'theonomies') of the Gentile world by a few mediaeval thinkers, notably Maimonides<sup>63</sup> and Menahem Me'iri.<sup>64</sup> Because of the coherence of the latter with the earlier rabbinic material that has been under review here, it was possible for them in their turn to point the way forward to post-mediaeval attempts to formulate a philosophy of Judaism in the face of progressively greater Jewish experience of pluralistic society.

<sup>59</sup> See above, pp. 257f, n. 29.

<sup>60</sup> *Tanḥuma*, ed. S. Buber, *Genesis, Wa-yera* 38, f. 54b.

<sup>61</sup> TB *Sabbath* 31a, below (Raba, died 352, Babylonia; but cf. for Palestine earlier Luke 2:25).

<sup>62</sup> Mishnah *Berakboth* 2, 2, Danby p. 3; cf. *Rabbinic Anthology* (n. 7), pp. 568, 642.

<sup>63</sup> The essential passage is *Mishneh Torah, Hilkboth Melakchim* 8, 11; see J. Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance* (Oxford 1961), p. 175.

<sup>64</sup> On Me'iri see *Enc. Jud.* 11, 1257f, Katz, *Exclusiveness* (n. 63), pp. 115f; briefly, R. Loewe, 'Potentialities' (n. 45), pp. 137, 138.

## CHAPTER 9

## THE SYNAGOGUE

The synagogue has been and is one of the most important Jewish institutions, the spiritual, cultural and religious centre of any Jewish community<sup>1</sup>. It fulfilled a multitude of functions in antiquity, of which the most important, besides those of prayer and worship, was the teaching of the Law. It was where the Jews assembled to pray and to hear on the Sabbath the weekly reading and interpretation of the Torah; it was where their children gathered to receive instruction from their teachers; it was where they could get advice on everyday questions concerning the observance of the commandments; it was where problems of the *Halakah* were discussed and resolved, and so on.

In addition to these religious functions, the synagogue also had an entirely secular role. It was where announcements were made that concerned the community; it acted as a kind of 'lost property office'; it was the place where legal witnesses could be found. In other words, the synagogue fulfilled the functions of a secular as well as a religious centre, and of a civil administration. In addition, there was its role of providing accommodation for visitors, especially in the synagogues of minority Jewish communities (*Landsmannschaften*), and in the Diaspora.

We find numerous references to synagogues and their functions in Philo, Josephus, the New Testament and rabbinic literature. Archaeological finds have also substantially enriched our knowledge of synagogues. Above all, in the last eighty years a wide-ranging literature has dealt with the different aspects of synagogues, from the explanation of individual words in synagogue inscriptions to monographs treating their origin and all the problems related to their study. Today we have material from literary sources and archaeological finds can supply us with a thorough knowledge of the development and functions of synagogues, even though solutions to certain problems still remain elusive.

<sup>1</sup> See also chapters 10–12 below, and, for archaeology and inscriptions, also chapters 1, 3–4 and 30. This chapter was written when this volume was first commissioned and has been revised for publication.



## I TERMINOLOGY

In Hebrew the word for synagogue is *bēt ha-kēneset*, in Aramaic *bē kēništā*. *Kēneset* or *kēništā* alone may also stand for synagogue,<sup>2</sup> as is shown by rabbinic texts and inscriptions. In any case we have to distinguish between the meanings ‘congregation’, ‘assembly’, and ‘synagogue’ in the sense of building.

In the Land of Israel the standard Greek equivalent is *synagōgē*. In the New Testament this word as a rule means ‘synagogue’, but the meaning ‘congregation’ also occurs.<sup>3</sup> In Acts 6:9 it can assume either meaning: ‘Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue (congregation) of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose.’ We know of such synagogues serving Jewish minorities in other towns as well as in Jerusalem. For example, rabbinic literature refers to the synagogue for the Babylonian Jews in Sippori (Sepphoris) and probably also in Tiberias,<sup>4</sup> and a papyrus from Arsinoë mentions a synagogue for the Thebans.<sup>5</sup>

In inscriptions found in the Land of Israel the only occurrence of the word *synagōgē* meaning ‘synagogue’ is the inscription of Theodotus, found in Jerusalem in 1913/14, which dates from the period shortly before the destruction of the Second Temple.<sup>6</sup> The vernacular expression was *bēt hā-‘ām* (‘house of the people’).<sup>7</sup> All these terms merely signify ‘place of assembly’, and thus have no connotation of a building used for cultic purposes. This indicates that the synagogue was used *among other things* as a house of prayer. It is possible that an existing establishment with no cultic role was used and then gradually over time – particularly after the destruction of the Temple – became established as a centre of worship, until this use supplanted the former. Thus from the fourth century on we find on inscriptions the terms *atrā q<sup>e</sup>dišā* or *bagios/bagiōtatos topos* (‘holy’ or ‘most holy place’),<sup>8</sup> which point to a predominantly cultic function.

The Aramaic word *atrā* denotes a *place*, a *site*; this is the concurrent and exclusive meaning according to the older dictionaries.<sup>9</sup> Sokoloff was the

<sup>2</sup> As against Krauss 1922, 7–11; but cf. Krauss 1955, 223.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. 2:9; 3:9. Biblical quotations are from the RSV.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. *Yer. Ber.* v, 1–9a, 32. Cf. Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 409–10 (Sepphoris), 442–3 (Tiberias).

<sup>5</sup> CPJ II, no. 432.

<sup>6</sup> Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 192–5; Roth-Gerson 1987, 76–86, no. 19.

<sup>7</sup> *Bab. Sabb.* 32a.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Naveh 1978, 150 s.v. אַתָּר; Lifshitz 1967, 91 s.v. τόπος; Roth-Gerson 1987, 214–15 s.v. ἄγιος and τόπος.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g. A. Kohut, *Aruch completum, sive lexicon vocabula et res, quae in libris Targumicis, Talmudicis et Midraschicis continentur, explicans auctore Nathane filio Jechielis*, vol. I (Vienna

first to point out that *atrā* in some cases in the literature can also mean *synagogue*.<sup>10</sup> Thus *Yer. Dem.* 7, 4–26b, 22–8 describes a teacher of children, who had fallen asleep in a synagogue (*atrā*).<sup>11</sup> A teacher of children in a synagogue (*ḵēništā*, var. lec. *bē ḵēništā*) is also mentioned in *Bereshit Rabbah* 75, 16 (ed. Theodor-Albeck 728f). Especially important is *Yer. Ber.* 5, 3–9c, 39, where the Leiden manuscript uses *ḵēništā* for *synagogue*, yet the Vatican manuscript (fol. 39b) and the Genizah fragment<sup>12</sup> use *atrā*.

The term *proseuchē* is found exclusively in the Diaspora, and there especially in Hellenistic Egypt. In the Septuagint it usually denotes prayer, and only later, in the synagogue inscriptions, it is used for the building itself.<sup>13</sup> It is possible that this is the result of a deliberate attempt to avoid the term *synagōgē*, as it was the technical term for a ‘society’ in general, and this would have blurred the special features of the synagogue. For this reason and to highlight the religious importance of the synagogue, the term *proseuchē* was chosen.<sup>14</sup> *Synagōgē*, however, may in Diaspora inscriptions, also, as in the New Testament, signify the ‘congregation’, and then it stands in contrast to *proseuchē*, *hagios/hagiōtatos topos* or *oikos*.<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, in the Diaspora, to a much greater degree than in the Land of Israel, the synagogue functioned as the community centre for a minority in a foreign environment, available just as much for cultural, political and social purposes, such as the lodging of guests, as for prayer and worship. This is revealed by the fact that most of the synagogues excavated in the lands of the Diaspora seem to consist of a larger complex of buildings than those in the Land of Israel.<sup>16</sup>

1872; reprints), 335; E. Ben Yehuda, *Thesaurus totius Hebraicitatis et veteris et recentioris*, vol. 1 (Berlin 1909; reprint New York 1974), 448; M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targum, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (London-New York 1903; reprints), 133–4; J. Levy, *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim*, vol. 1 (Berlin-Vienna 1924; reprint Darmstadt 1963), 185–6; similarly: M. Kosovsky, *Concordance to the Talmud Yerushalmi* (Palestinian Talmud) (Jerusalem 1982), 261.

<sup>10</sup> Sokoloff 1981; Sokoloff 1990, 82.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Wewers/Hüttenmeister 1995, 176, n. 45.

<sup>12</sup> Ginzberg 1909, 21.

<sup>13</sup> *proseuchē* originally meant ‘prayer’, ‘supplication’. In the Septuagint, *oikos proseuchēs* stands for ‘house of prayer’ = temple. In the New Testament the word has the same meaning in most cases, but there also occurs the meaning ‘house of prayer’, ‘synagogue’ (Acts 16:13, 16). As well as *proseuchē*, the word *eucheion* occurs in papyri; cf. n. 5. Rivkin 1963, 350–4 distinguishes between *proseuchē* and *synagōgē*.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Schrage 1971, 799–808; Hengel 1971; Hüttenmeister 1993.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Lifshitz 1967, 18–19, no. 10; 21–2, no. 13; 34–6, no. 33; 70, no. 78; CIJ 1<sup>2</sup>, no. 694; CIJ II, nos. 738, 766, 867. For *oikos* meaning ‘synagogue’ cf. Lifshitz 1967, 90 s.v. *oikos*.

<sup>16</sup> See Goodenough III 1953, Fig. 879 (Priene), Fig. 886 (Naro); H. Bloedhorn: Hengel 1996, 127–8 (Stobi).

In the literature only isolated instances exist of other terms such as *bē t<sup>e</sup>šillā*,<sup>17</sup> *bē hištahāwot* (Qumran),<sup>18</sup> *sabbateion* (Josephus)<sup>19</sup> and similar expressions, and there is some contention as to their meaning. The word *hebraikē* in an inscription from Cyprus<sup>20</sup> might originally have been a gentile term that was later adopted by the Jews.

## II ORIGIN

Very little can be said about the origin of the synagogue with any certainty. Its early spread in the Diaspora reflects the need for a focal point for religious purposes which apparently emerged once the community had been physically cut off from the Temple in Jerusalem. Relations between the Jews of the Diaspora and the Temple were never broken off: Jerusalem remained the central sanctuary, to which the Temple tax was sent from the remotest countries, to which pilgrimages were made, and where one asked for advice and information on difficult halakhic questions. Even after the destruction of the Second Temple, relations with the Land of Israel were not terminated. Thus the synagogue was in no way intended to be a replacement for the Temple – a role for which it was, in any case, incapable.

Among many biblical passages<sup>21</sup> Ezek. 11:16 especially is put forward as a proof of the existence of the synagogue during the Babylonian exile: 'I will remove them far off among the nations and scatter them among the countries, and I will be a little sanctuary (*miqdaš nī'at*) to them in the countries where they are scattered.' The Targum of Jonathan translates: 'And I will give them synagogues in addition to my sanctuary, and they will remain only a little while in the countries where they are scattered.' These words spoken by the prophet in Babylon were, understandably, applied to the synagogues in Babylon and regarded as the most ancient testimony to their existence. We cannot, however, infer with any certainty from any of these passages that there already existed in biblical times an institution similar to those later synagogues known in the Diaspora which appear first in Egypt in the third century BCE and in the Land of Israel only from the first century CE onwards.

When the synagogue is described in the rabbinic literature as already in existence before Moses, this should not be taken historically. Indeed, the rabbis did not intend to give an historical proof. In the minds of

<sup>17</sup> *Bab. Gitt.* 39b.    <sup>18</sup> *CD* xi, 21f.

<sup>19</sup> *Jos. Ant.* xvi.164.    <sup>20</sup> Lifshitz 1967, 73–4, no. 82.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of these see Krauss 1922, 35–53.

the rabbinic conditions in Tannaitic and Amoraic times (the period of the Mishna and the Talmud) are projected unhesitatingly on to the early history of the Jewish nation, and this is a quite legitimate and standard practice in rabbinic exegesis. A period without the institution of the synagogue, which now occupies such a central position in everyday life, is simply unthinkable.

We must therefore rely on other sources. From an early stage in the Diaspora, as has been said, the need for a community centre, as much for secular as for cultural and specifically religious purposes, seems to have existed and to have been recognized. This accounts for the fact that the earliest archaeological discoveries from synagogues were made in the lands of the Diaspora, namely two inscriptions from Egypt, one from Schedia near Alexandria, the other from Arsinoë in the Fayūm, dating from the second half of the third century BCE.<sup>22</sup> The oldest synagogue building to have been excavated is on Delos (figure 9.10) and dates from after 88 BCE.<sup>23</sup>

In comparison, the oldest archaeological and literary information that we have acquired which enable us to date synagogues in the Land of Israel is from the first half of the first century CE. We can only speculate on the reasons for such a relatively late date. As its name implies, the synagogue seems to have developed out of an existing secular institution. As a consequence it is not easy to trace it back in time. Only the haggadic passages in the rabbinic literature point to an earlier period, but they contribute nothing to the historical discussion. Accounts from the middle of the first century CE (the New Testament and Josephus)<sup>24</sup>, however, speak of the synagogue as such a widespread and well-known institution that we may assume an earlier date. A precursor of the synagogue in the Land of Israel appears to be the 'town-gate' or the 'town-place' or 'square' referred to in the Old Testament and in the Tannaitic sources.<sup>25</sup> The majority of the activities associated with them appear later in statements about the synagogue. Even archaeological finds, however, have not elucidated matters. We have no knowledge when the first synagogues appeared. There was a long development from the first synagogues up to the basilicas of the Roman and Byzantine periods. In theory, any building with adequate room for a sizeable congregation could have served as a

<sup>22</sup> Horbury/Noy 1992, 35–7, no. 22 (Schedia) and 201–3, no. 117 (Arsinoë); Griffiths 1987.

<sup>23</sup> The debate whether it really is a synagogue is still going on; *contra*: Mazur 1935, 15–24; Kraabel 1979, 491–4; *pro*: Bruneau 1982 and White 1987.

<sup>24</sup> And also the Mishnah when describing the Second Temple period. Concerning the synagogues before CE 70 see Grabbe 1989; Flesher 1995.

<sup>25</sup> Hoening 1979.

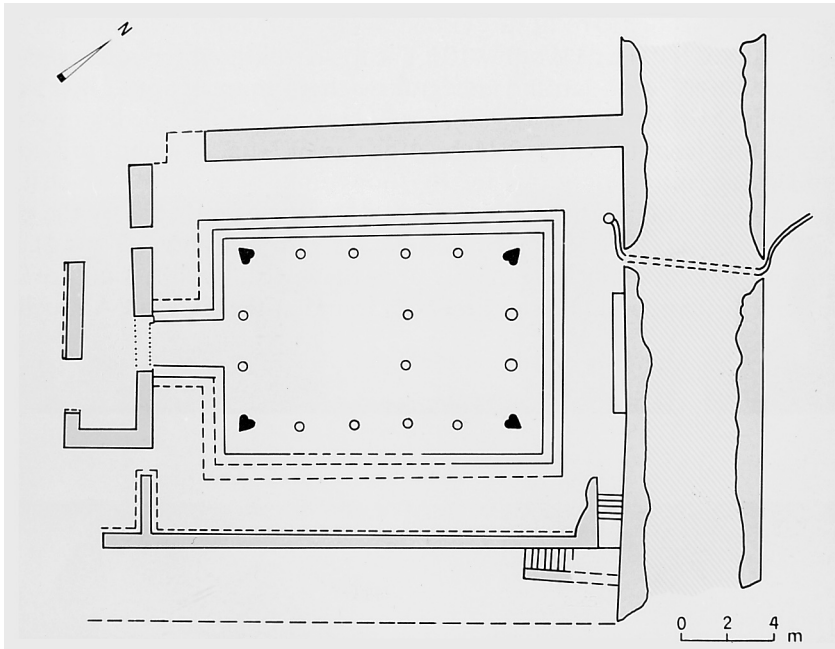


Fig. 9.1 Plan of the synagogue in Gamala, built in the first century BCE and destroyed in CE 67. On its north-east side the synagogue adjoins the town wall. Access is from the south and through a side entrance from the lane on the south-east side. The Hall (13.4 × 9.2m) has columns and seating steps.

synagogue. From the first century CE there is only one building known (destroyed in CE 67), which can be called a *public building* on account of its ground-plan, its layout and furnishings: in Gamala (figure 9.1).<sup>26</sup> Both rooms in Herodion and in Masada certainly served as synagogues; this is suggested in Herodion by the miqweh next to the entrance and in Masada by the findings of scriptures in the adjacent room (Genizah). Both buildings, however, are architectural emergency solutions precipitated by the revolt and thus lasted only a few years (c. CE 66/7–73/4).<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 524, no. 53a; Bloedhorn 1993, 12–13; Riesner 1995, 184–7, 210; Urman 1995, 513–18. The miqweh situated nearby may also indicate cultic functions. The so-called ‘mini-sinagoga’ in Migdal (Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 316–18, no. 106) was certainly not a synagogue but a well-house: Netzer 1987.

<sup>27</sup> Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 173–4, no. 68 and 314–15, no. 105; Bloedhorn 1993, 12–13; Riesner 1995, 184–7, 210.

## III THE SYNAGOGUE BUILDING

Apart from the three above-mentioned buildings, all the other excavated synagogues belong to the time of the late Empire and the Byzantine epoch. The oldest buildings date from the second half of the third century, and some remain in use until the early Arabic time.

Since the 1930s until recently the synagogues in the Land of Israel have been divided into three different types based upon the initial study of the eighteen synagogues known at the time.<sup>28</sup>

The first type of building was called *Basilica* or *Galilee Synagogue*, as they had a basilican ground-plan and (virtually all) were discovered in Galilee or in the Golan/Gaulanitis. Usually, one main and two side entrances on the shorter south side facing Jerusalem led into the inside, which was divided into three aisles by two lines of columns; sometimes there was an additional line of columns in front of the back wall. The floor was paved with stone slabs, and seating steps were installed along the walls. Additional furnishings were not yet discovered, so that it was assumed that the Torah scrolls used to be brought in from a side room. The interior of the building was decorated on the inside with bases, columns, capitals, architraves and friezes. The exterior was ornamented with archivolt above the entrance belonging to this first type as well as with decorated lintels and cornices. The buildings were dated to the 2nd to 3rd centuries.

The second type of building was called the *broadhouse*, because its entrance was on the east side, and inside, on the long side facing Jerusalem, the Torah shrine was permanently installed. Some of these synagogues were decorated with mosaic floors.

The third and last building type, the *apsidal building*, had an apse similar to those found in churches. The apse, however, was situated on the short side facing Jerusalem – in Galilee on the south side and in Judaea on the north wall. The ground-plan was basilican, with three or five aisles, the exterior was no longer decorated but the floor inside was covered with what were at times quite elaborate mosaics, while, in the apse, the Torah scrolls were stored. An atrium or narthex was located at the front of the building, and further rooms were built to adjoin the synagogue. The third building type was prevalent in the fifth to sixth centuries.

Intensive excavation activity, especially during the last decades, has generated five times the number of synagogues.<sup>29</sup> Apart from further finds in Galilee, those in the Golan/Gaulanitis (e.g. Qazrin, figure 9.2)

<sup>28</sup> Summarizing for the first time Sukenik 1934.

<sup>29</sup> Bloedhorn 1993, 1–11; additional literature: Gutmann 1975; Levine 1981; Gutmann 1982; Kasher/Oppenheimer/Rappaport 1987; Levine 1987; Hachlili 1988; Hachlili 1989; Ilan 1991; Fine 1996. Concerning the Samaritan synagogues see below.

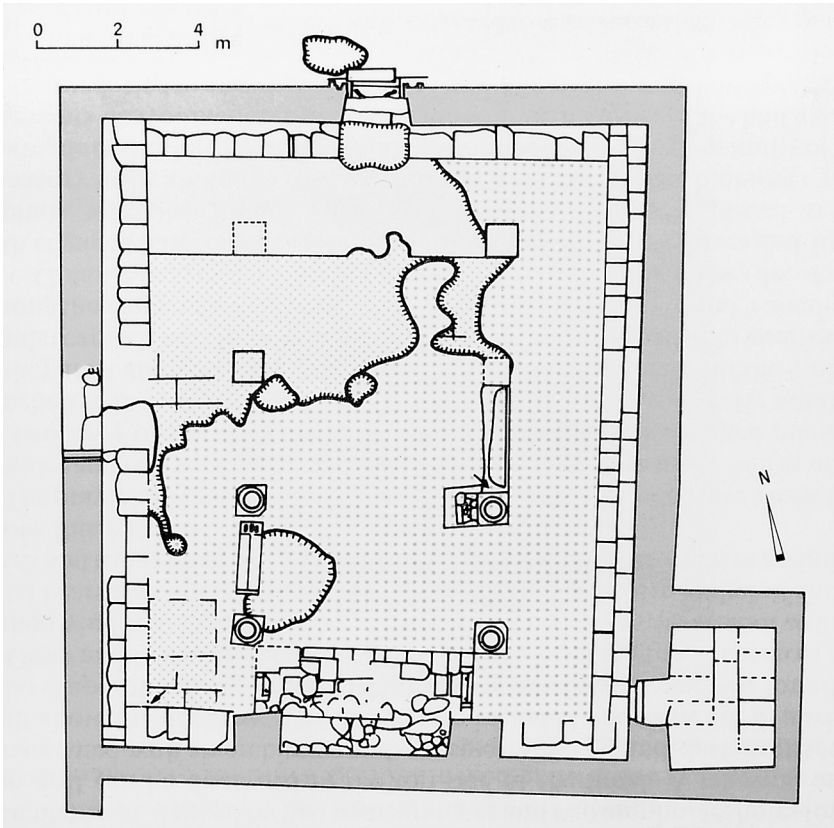


Fig. 9.2 Plan of the synagogue in Qazrin, fifth to sixth centuries CE.

The synagogue ( $18 \times 15.4\text{m}$ ) has its main entrance to the north and a side entrance on the west. In the interior there are two rows of four columns; the Torah shrine in front of the south wall; a *genizah* between this and the back wall; and a side room in the south-eastern corner.

must be mentioned in particular, as well as those in the south of the land, in Judaea (figures 9.3 and 9.4)<sup>30</sup> and in the coastal towns. With the beginning of more careful excavations a detailed observation of stratigraphy and a more comprehensive knowledge of the decoration material, the synagogues could be assigned a more precise date. At the same time it has become apparent that we can no longer apply such a rigid architectural framework. For example, in the vicinity of Tiberias in the fourth century all

<sup>30</sup> Amit 1993.



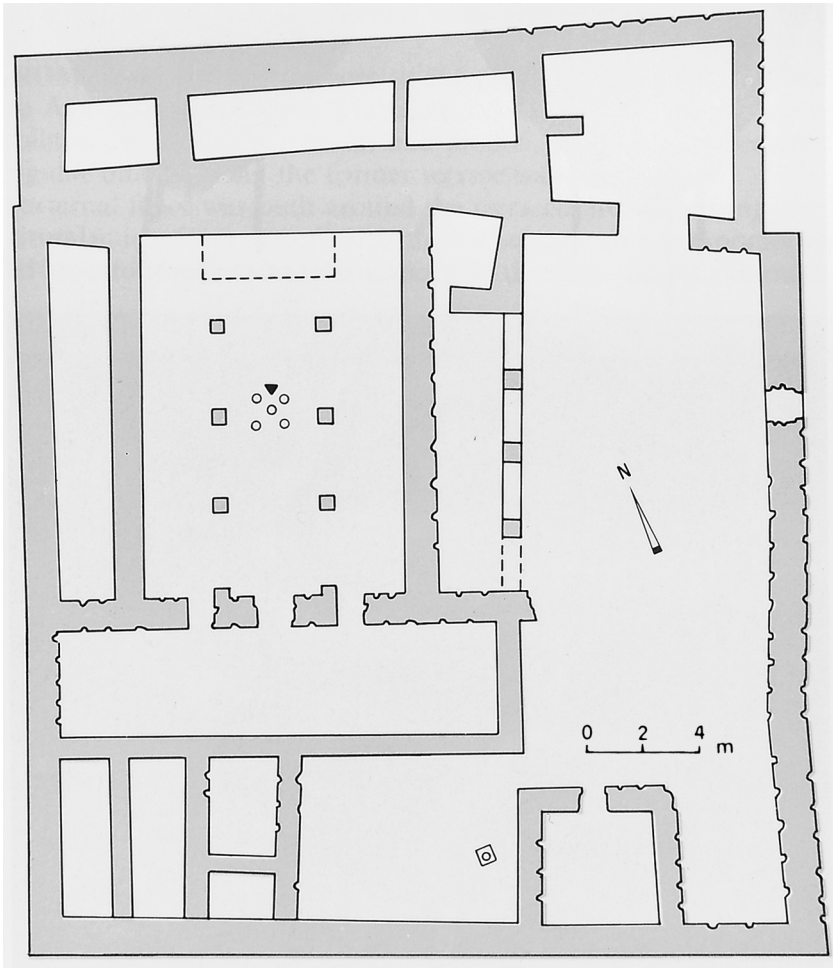


Fig. 9.3 Plan of the synagogue in Rimmon in the Byzantine period, fifth to sixth centuries CE. This synagogue ( $34 \times 29.5\text{m}$ ) was converted in the Byzantine era, becoming a western part of a larger complex of buildings. The basilican ground-plan has two rows of three columns and a *bema* on the north wall; in front of it there is a narthex ( $3.5 \times 16\text{m}$ ). Further rooms are adjacent.

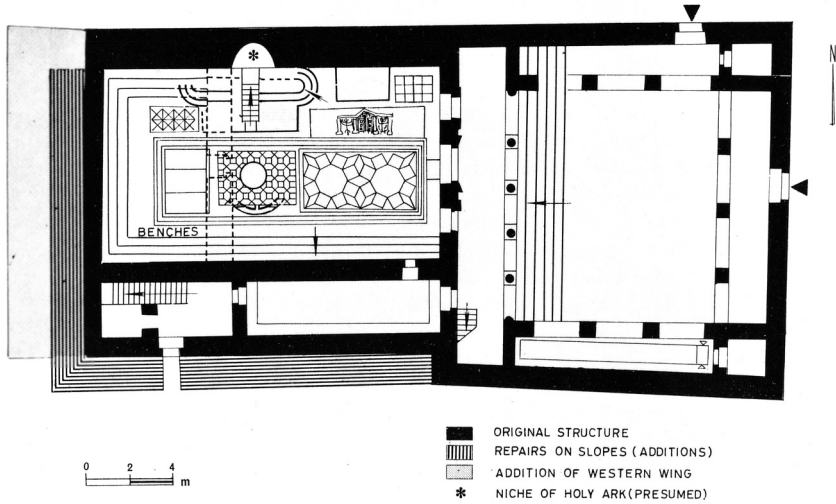


Fig. 9.4 Plan of the synagogue in Kh. Susiya, late third to end eighth century. An atrium with porticoes (14 × 14.8) is situated in front of the synagogue in the east; access to the synagogue is via a flight of steps and through a line of columns into the narthex. There are three entrances to the synagogue, on the south and west wall there are seating steps, and on the north wall a niche and two *bemot*. The richly decorated mosaic floor contains a depiction of the Torah shrine. In the south there is a further hall with seating steps.

three types existed contemporaneously: a basilican building in H. Amudim (with a mosaic floor!) or Meron, a broadhouse in H. Shema and an apsidal building in Hammath Tiberias. All these buildings have the basilican ground-plan, i.e. a raised middle nave to allow more light,<sup>31</sup> aisles separated by columns or pillars, floors covered with stone slabs or mosaics. Apses for the storage of the Torah scrolls can be added on the longer or shorter side or in place of these, pedestals can be placed flanking the main entrance. The existence of galleries – which could also have been designed for women – has not been proven.<sup>32</sup>

The design and construction of the synagogues depended on the size and financial strength of the congregation. In addition to plainly furnished examples, magnificent decorated buildings were also erected, as in Amudim, Beth She'arim, Capernaum, Chorazin (figure 9.5) and Meroth. Others were outfitted with mosaic floors, sometimes adorned with the signs of the zodiac or narratives (e.g. the animals of the ark in Gerasa, the

<sup>31</sup> There are also smaller buildings with only one nave.

<sup>32</sup> Safrai 1962/3; Brooten 1982, 103–38.

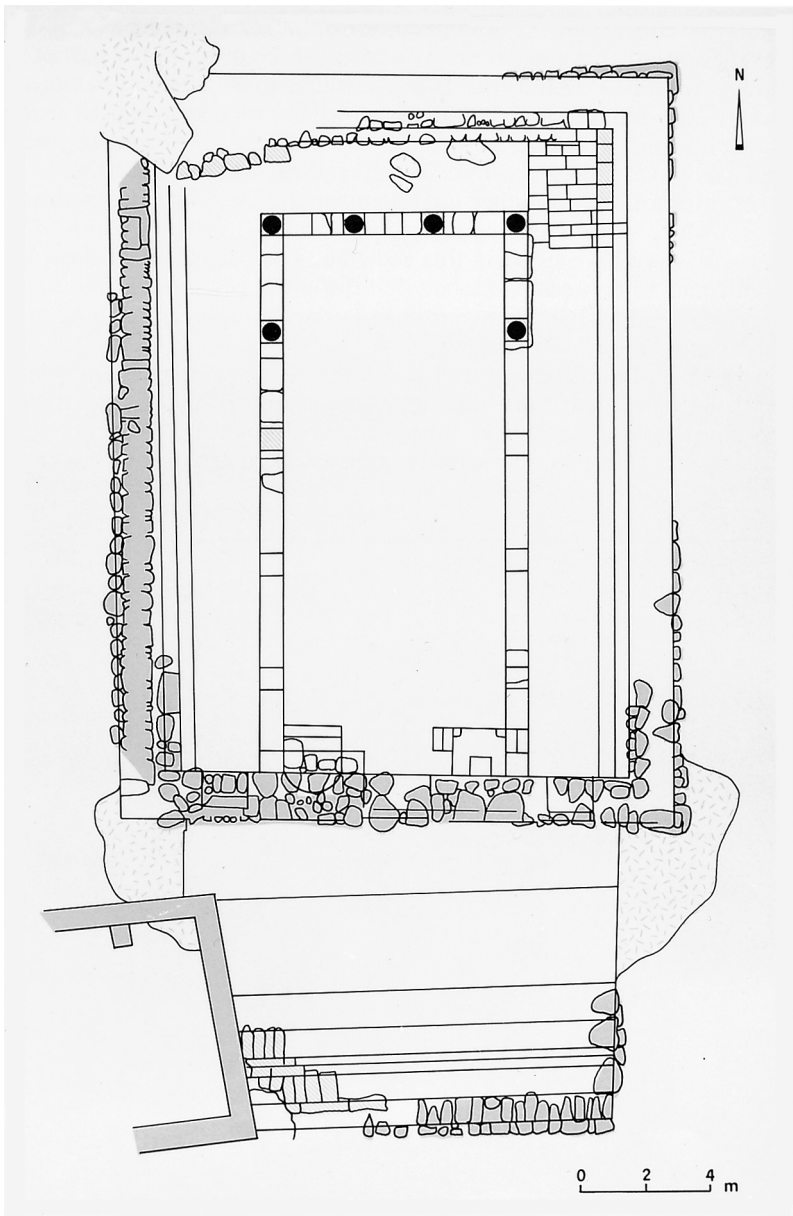


Fig. 9.5 Plan of synagogue in Chorazin, late third to fourth century. Lying on a slope, the synagogue has to be entered from the south via a flight of steps. Three entrances lead into the interior ( $20.7 \times 14.6\text{m}$ ) which has two rows of five columns with an additional two columns in front of the north wall. Between the entrances are pedestals for the Torah shrine and the *Cathedra of Moses*. The floor is covered with stone plates, and the walls are divided with half columns and decorated with highly ornate friezes.

sacrifice of Isaac in Beth Alfa (figure 9.6)). In some cases the same mosaicists laid the floors in both churches and in Jewish or Samaritan synagogues.<sup>33</sup> Frequently, the decorative motifs were drawn from pagan buildings and then often placed alongside well-established Jewish motifs such as the *Menorah* (usually with *Shofar* and *Etrog*) or the Torah Shrine.<sup>34</sup>

An import feature, however, was the (approximate) orientation towards Jerusalem, which could be architecturally emphasized in various ways. On the one hand, Torah shrines and/or *bemot* could be placed on the shorter interior wall or on the longer wall where naturally more space was available. On the other hand through the apse, which extends the body of the building and emphasizes the outside.

#### IV RABBINIC REGULATIONS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

In the rabbinic literature we find only relatively few regulations directly referring to the construction of the synagogues, and these are obviously borrowed from Temple tradition. In practice, these regulations seem not to have been observed as a binding *halakha*, for as a rule archaeological findings in general deviate from them. We must therefore ask to what degree the rabbinic regulations representing the ideal of the Temple as a model polemicized existing practice and to what extent did they reflect an earlier state of affairs. The most important regulations refer to the site of the building and its entrance. The synagogue should be built on the highest point in the town. This prescription was certainly influenced by the custom of setting up places for prayer on elevated sites, as are familiar from the time of the biblical 'high places' up to the present day. Although the Temple did not occupy geographically the highest point in Jerusalem, it was esteemed as the highest point in the world.<sup>35</sup> In the Tosefta, we read (*Tos. Meg.* 4 (3), 23): 'Synagogues . . . they are built only at the highest point of the town, for it was written: "on the top of the walls she (i.e. the wisdom) cries out" (Prov. 1:21).' Hardly any synagogues however, are situated at the highest point in a town, and some even occupy the lowest site.

<sup>33</sup> The so-called school of Gaza is at work in the churches of Hazor and Shellal as well as in the synagogues of Gaza and Maon: Avi-Yonah 1975; Ovadiah 1975. The same father and son work in the Jewish synagogue of Beth Alfa as in the Samaritan synagogue of Beth Shean (Scythopolis) (Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 50, no. 4 and 572-3, no. 2; Roth-Gerson 1987, 29, no. 4 and 33, no. 5).

<sup>34</sup> Hachlili 1988, 234-85.

<sup>35</sup> *Aggadot-Beresbit* 80; *Bab. Sanh.* 87a, but see Davies 1974, 6, n. 12.

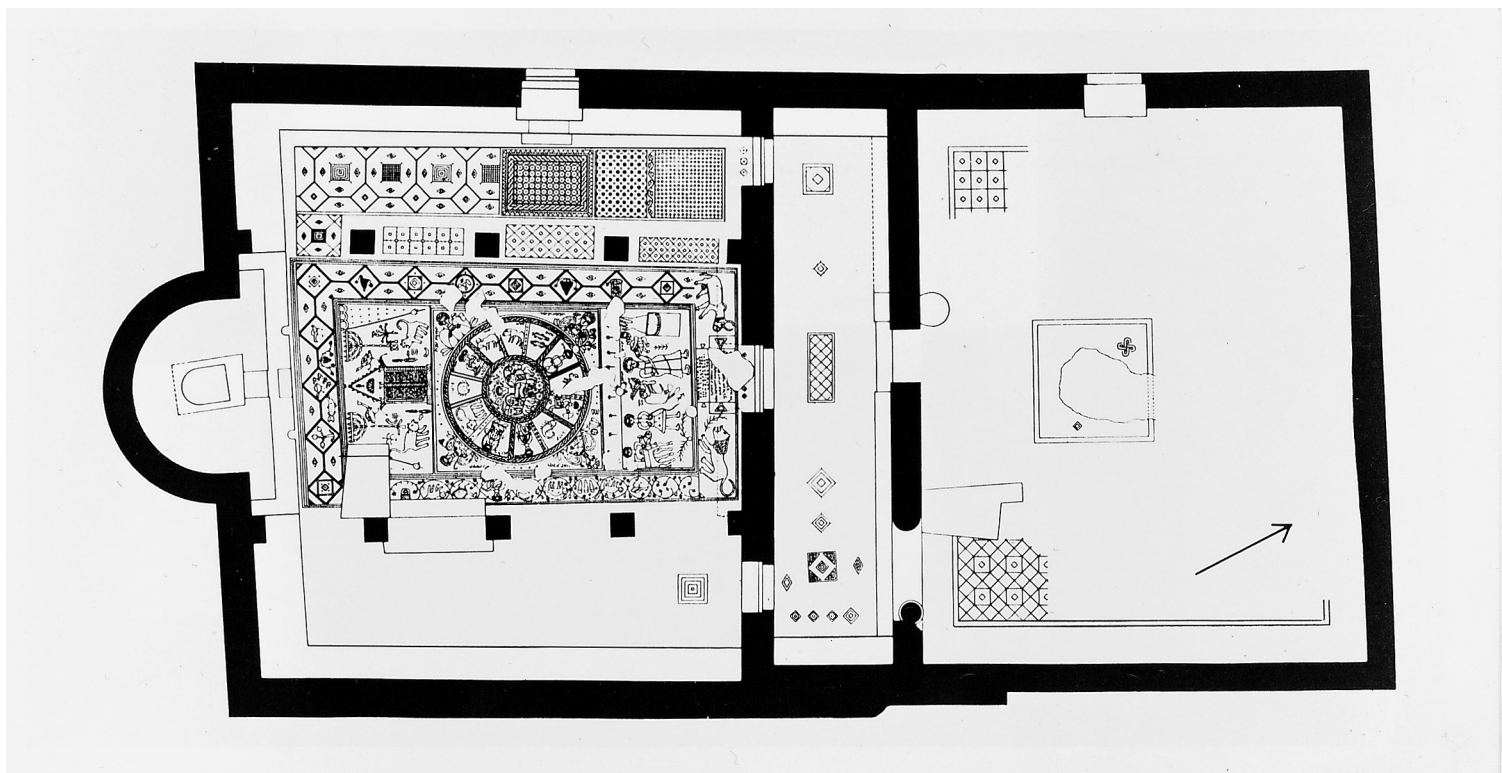


Fig. 9.6 Plan of the synagogue in Beth Alfa. The building complex (14.2 × 27.7m) has a courtyard, narthex and prayer-room (12.4 × 10.8m). Access to the courtyard is from the west side. From the narthex three entrances lead into the synagogue which is divided by two rows of three pillars. On the south there is a raised apse. There are mosaic floors throughout the building: in the prayer room the sacrifice of Isaac, a zodiac and the Torah shrine are depicted. In the west a door leads into another room. The dedicatory inscription mentions the Emperor Justin I (CE 518–527).

According to the same source (*Tos. Meg.* 4 (3), 22) the entrance of the synagogue should be oriented to the east. This regulation is a further attempt to assimilate the Temple tradition. As a rule, however, only a few synagogues have the main entrance in the east, and these are chiefly those of the so-called broadhouse type. The great majority have their entrance to the south or north. Perhaps these prescriptions were introduced because the rabbis saw that the synagogues were not being built to a uniform pattern. According to the rabbis, the synagogues should occupy, following the example of the Temple, the highest point in the settlement and have their main entrance in the east. The first prescription with respect to the location of the synagogue could seldom be carried out however, since the highest point was as a rule already occupied by other buildings. The other prescription with regard to the eastern entrance could be achieved in practice. The synagogues of the second or so-called broadhouse type possibly arose as a result of this prescription. Evidently, this impractical ground plan soon had to be abandoned.

When examining the orientation of the synagogues, a certain pattern may be recognized. The direction for prayer is towards the Temple in Jerusalem, a fact that to this day remains unchanged.

Occasionally, the orientation of a building newly constructed or renovated on the site of an older synagogue deviates from that of the older one for no apparent reason. Only a few synagogues do not conform to this general pattern, and these aberrations are usually necessitated in response to difficult terrain.

## V INTERIOR FURNISHINGS

The interior furnishings of a synagogue are sparse. The sacral focus was the place for the ark of the Torah with the Torah scrolls.<sup>36</sup> The ark was originally made of wood and was portable. Stored in an adjacent room or building, the ark was brought into the room for prayer during the service.<sup>37</sup> At first, the ark was set on a platform; later, approximately from the end of the third century CE, the Torah shrine was installed as one of the permanent architectural components within the synagogue. First, as *aedicula* or as niche, set into the wall facing Jerusalem; later, from the fourth century onwards, as an apse in the same wall.

Depictions on coins of the Bar Kokhba Revolt, on reliefs, mosaics, wall paintings and gold glasses give evidence of a cabinet with two doors (often an imitation of the Temple entrance). In most cases it is surmounted by a pointed, but occasionally rounded gable, on which is displayed a

<sup>36</sup> Hachlili 1988, 166–99. <sup>37</sup> See p. 292 and *Bab. Erub.* 86b; *Bab. Sukka* 16b.



shell or other symbols, such as the eternal lamp, Menorah, Shofar and Etrog. Some depictions of the ark show closed doors, some open doors. Inside it is divided into four, six or nine individual compartments, variously arranged, in each of which lies one or even several Torah scrolls. The individual compartments could be secured with small doors. There are Christian depictions of Bible chests similar to the ark of the Torah.

A curtain hung before the niche or apse, of which mosaics provide us with illustrations.<sup>38</sup> Directly in front of the apse was a platform (*bema*) where the prayer-leader stood for reading. The *bema* could be separated from the rest of the area for prayer by a chancel screen (*soreg*). Those screens that have survived consist of marble panels mounted between small marble pillars and carved with symbols, inscriptions or ornately worked vine tendrils.

Seating was provided by stone benches positioned in the earliest synagogues along all four walls and in the later ones along the long walls and the wall opposite the entrance. Mats were also supplied at times to meet the need for additional seating. Stone seats of honour (*gatedra de-Mosbe – kathedra Mōyseōs*) have been found in various synagogues. One may assume that notables sat in these seats, which faced the rest of the congregation and their backs to the ark of the Torah. These are possibly the seats of honour termed *prōtokathedriai* in the New Testament.<sup>39</sup>

The synagogue was lit by lamps and candles which were frequently donated. A miqwe (basin for ritual immersion) was often located near the synagogue, or during the Byzantine period, in a courtyard adjoining the synagogue.<sup>40</sup>

## VI INSCRIPTIONS

The many inscriptions to be found in synagogues are of particular interest. They occur as floor mosaics, on wall plaster, on door lintels or on objects that have been donated, such as mosaics, pillars, seats of honour and so on. Normally they are in Greek and Aramaic, and occasionally in Hebrew, while a few are bilingual.<sup>41</sup> Most inscriptions record donations and often follow a set formula: 'Remembered for good be so-and-so,

<sup>38</sup> Talmudic references cf. *Yer.* Yom 7, 1–44b, 5–6; Meg 4, 5–75b, 59–61; Sot 7, 6–22a, 22–23; *Soferim* 11, 3.

<sup>39</sup> Matthew 23:6; Mark 12:39; Luke 11:43; 20:46. Concerning the stone seats cf. Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 706 s.v. 'Sitz des Mose'; Diebner 1986; Hachlili 1988, 193–4; Rahmani 1990.

<sup>40</sup> Reich 1987.

<sup>41</sup> A collection of all the inscriptions of synagogues in Eretz Israel can be found in Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977; Naveh 1978; Roth-Gerson 1987. For the Diaspora see Lifshitz 1967. On Jewish inscriptions in general, see chapter 4, above.



who donated . . . (sum of money or description of object). Blessings be upon him! (or: May his portion be with the just!) Amen! Sela! Amen!

An inscription from Rehov is singular for its discussion of halakhic regulations concerning sabbatical years and tithes. In this context, the text outlines the regional borders in Galilee and in the Golan/Gaulanitis region. The inscription is of greatest importance for the historical geography of these areas, since it provides the most ancient textual evidence for the majority of the place-names cited within it.<sup>42</sup> Among other inscriptions recording donations there is one inscription from En Gedi with a curse, the meaning of which has not yet been adequately explained.<sup>43</sup>

In many cases the craftsmen executing these inscriptions had a poor knowledge of the language in which they were composed. The drafts they had to copy, however, were probably often inaccurate. This is the only possible explanation for the unusually high number of errors in the inscriptions. In addition to omissions, there is in Greek the very frequent confusion of the I-sounds ( $\iota$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\upsilon$ ,  $\epsilon\iota$ ,  $οι$ , all pronounced as in the English 'we', – itacism), as well as the confusion of genitive and dative and similar errors – although allowance must be made for change and development in Greek usage. Aramaic inscriptions from Galilee contain some illustrations of the confusion of 'alef and 'ain, as well he and het, this being mentioned in the rabbinic literature as a specific error of pronunciation among the Galilean population.<sup>44</sup>

## VII MOSAICS

The earliest mosaics usually consisted of a few geometric patterns on a simple black and white ground. In time the compositions became more and more magnificent and included depictions of ritual objects, plants and animals, as well as biblical scenes illustrating deliverance from danger (e.g. the sacrifice of Isaac, Daniel in the lions' den). The depiction of the zodiac with the four seasons represented as female figures was popular. Amazingly, Graeco-Roman influence was so strong in the fourth and fifth centuries that even pagan images such as Helios in his golden chariot could be incorporated at the centre of the zodiac.

The practice of representing living beings in the synagogue is reflected even in the Palestinian Talmud (*Yer. AZ* 3, 3 – 42d, 34f): 'In the days of

<sup>42</sup> Discussion in Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 371–6; Naveh 1978, 79–85, no. 49. Cf. *Yer. Dem.* 2, 1 – 22c–22d. See also pp. 74 and 90 above.

<sup>43</sup> Discussion in Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 111–13; Naveh 1978, 106–9, no. 70.

<sup>44</sup> *Yer. Ber.* 2,4 – 4d, 48f; *Bab. Meg.* 24b. Cf. Kutscher 1976, 67–96. For the inscription of the synagogue of Beth Shean see Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 61–2, no. 2; Naveh 1978, 78–9, no. 47.

Rabbi Johanan (ben Nappaḥa, second half of the third century) they began to paint on the walls, and he did not rebuke them for it.' In the Leningrad manuscript we read: 'In the days of Rabbi Abun (middle of the fourth century) they began to represent figures in mosaic, and he did not rebuke them for it.' In this context the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan to Lev. 26:1 is of special interest. To the text 'You shall make for yourselves no idols and erect no graven image or pillar, and you shall not set up a figured stone in your land, to bow down to them, for I am the Lord your God' it adds 'But you may set mosaics (?) with pictures and figures into the floor of your sanctuaries, yet not to worship them, for I am the Lord your God.' The mosaics which sometimes correspond to those of contemporary churches down to the details of execution and thematic design were carried out by craftsmen belonging to a school like the one that existed in Gaza.<sup>45</sup>

From the beginning of the sixth century CE the tendency towards representations without figures reasserted itself. At this time also many of the figures on the stone friezes of older synagogues were destroyed by iconoclasts. Some of the depictions of living beings on mosaics were also cut away and replaced by a monochrome section of mosaic.

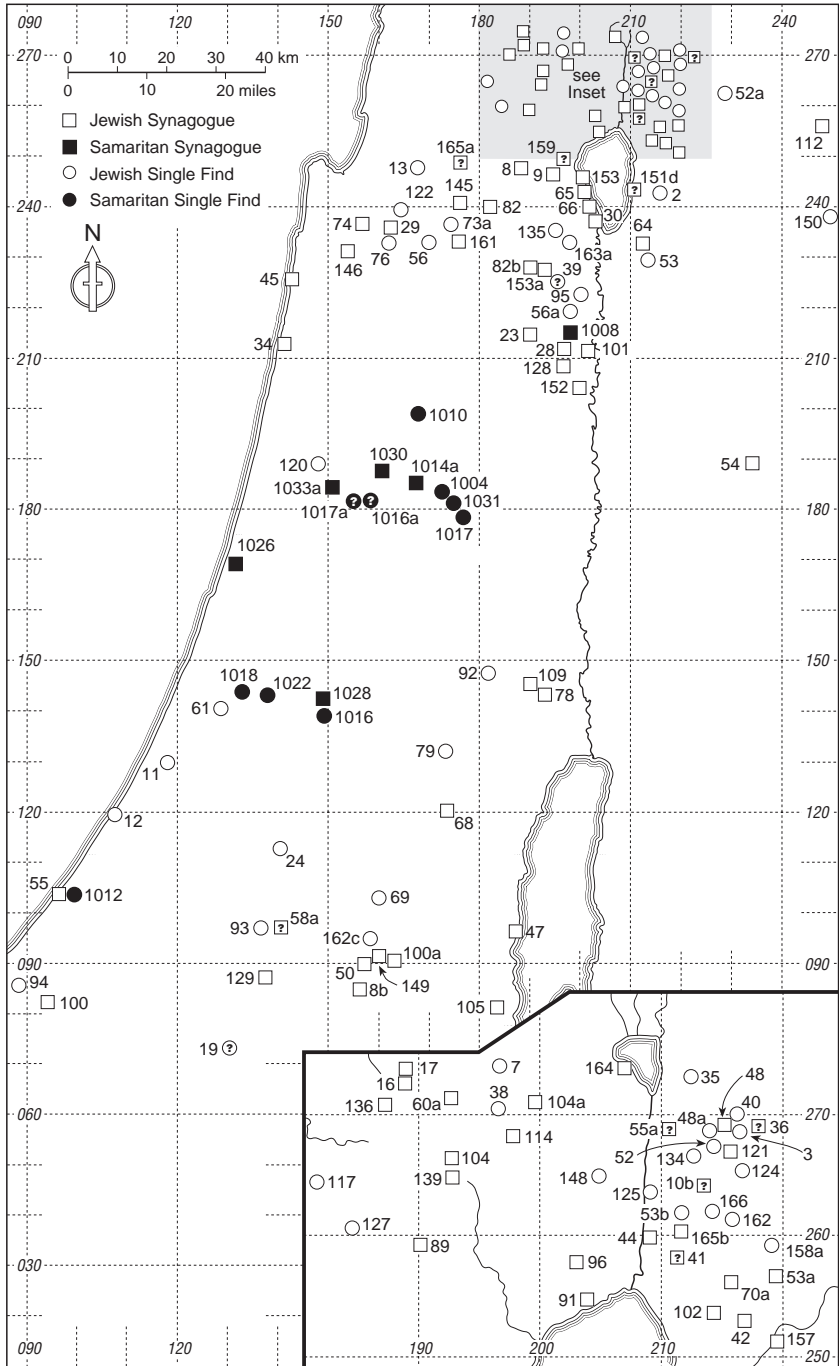
Fragments of painted wall plaster have been preserved from several synagogues in the Land of Israel. Larger pieces have not survived. In Dura Europos on the Euphrates, however, a synagogue from CE 244 (destroyed CE 256) was excavated, half of whose wall paintings were still preserved. These frescoes depict biblical scenes such as the sacrifice of Isaac, scenes from the Exodus, Moses, Aaron, Jacob, Elijah, Samuel and David, the Ark of the Torah, the Ark of Covenant, as well as the Feast of Purim<sup>46</sup> (see figure 30.7).

## VIII DISTRIBUTION IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

The oldest archaeological and literary information testifies to a scattering of synagogues over the whole Land of Israel in the first century CE. Apart from Jerusalem there were synagogues in Judaea, the synagogues of the rebels in the Herodian and in Masada, in the coastal plain between Gaza and Haifa, in Jabneh/Jamnia, Lydda, Caesarea, Dora, and in Galilee, in Ecdippa, Nazareth, Tiberias, Capernaum, Chorazin, as well as in the Golan/Gaulanitis region in Gamala. Only a few synagogues are known from the second century, and these only from literary sources. They are

<sup>45</sup> See above, n. 33.

<sup>46</sup> See du Mesnil du Buisson 1939; Goodenough ix–xi 1964; Gutmann 1973; Kraeling 1979.



13	Abelim	53a	Gamala	100a	Maon
3	Ahmadiya	55	Gaza	105	Masada
7	Alma	1012	Gaza	100	Menois
8	H. Amudim	56a	Gebul	104	Meron
8b	Anaea	54	Gerasa	104a	Meroth
2	Apheca	55a	Gesher Benot Ya'acov	1033a	H. Migdal
9	Arbela	60a	Gischala	1022	Na'ana
10b	Asaliya	58a	H. Gomer	112	Nawe
12	Ascalon	61	H. Habra	1031	Neapolis
11	Azotus	65	Hammath Tiberias	109	Noorath
16	Baram	66	Hammath Tiberias	117	Peq'in
17	Baram	64	Hammatha	120	Qalansuwa
101	Beela	158a	Hazzan-Beth Lavi	124	Kh. Qazbiya
19	Beer Sheva	69	Hebron	121	Qazrin
1004	Beit el Ma	68	Herodion	122	H. Qoshet
23	Beth Alfa	74	Husifa	125	H. Rafid
24	Beth Guvrin	161	Iaphia	127	Rama
28	Beth Shean	73a	Ilut	1026	Ramath Abib
1008	Beth Shean	165a	lotapata	129	H. Rimmon
29	Beth Shearim	162c	Iutta	128	Rooba
30	Beth Yerah	76	Kh. el Izhaqiya	1030a	Kh. Samara
34	Caesarea	53b	Jaraba	134	Sanaber
91	Capernaum	78	Jericho	135	H. Sarona
96	Chorazin	79	Jerusalem	136	Sasa
35	Dabbura	1016a	Kafr Abush	145	Sepphoris
36	Dabiye	82	Kafr Kanna	1028	Sha'albim-Selebi
38	Dalton	82b	Kafr Misr	148	Kh. Shura
40	ed Danqalle	1017	Kafr Qallil	162	Sogane
41	Dardara	1017a	Kafr Zebad	146	Kh. Summaqa
42	Deir Aziz	102	H. Kanaf	149	Susiyia
44	Kh. ed Dikke	1018	Kefar Bilu	150	Tafas
1016	Emmaus	39	Kefar Dan	151d	Tel ha-Yie'ur
47	En Gedi	89	Kefar Hanania	139	Thecoa
48	En Nashut	163a	Kefar Iamma	152	Tira
48a	En Semsem	114	Kefar Nevoiraia	153	Tiberias
50	Eshtemoa	70a	Kh. Khawkha	153a	Tirat Zvi
1010	Fahma	1014a	el Khirbe	157	Umm el Qanatir
52	Fahura	92	Kh. Kilya	159	H. Veradim
52a	Farj	93	H. Kishor	164	Yesud ha-Ma'ala
56	Gabatha	94	Kissufim	165b	H. Zavitan
53	Gadara	95	Kokhav ha-Yarden	166	H. Zamimra

Fig. 9.7 Synagogues in the Land of Israel according to archaeological evidence.

attested in the towns where the Sanhedrin had its seat after the Bar Kokhba rebellion, namely in Lydda, Usha, Sippori (Sepphoris), Simonias and Tiberias. Only from the second half of the third century is there a wealth of archaeological finds from Golan/Gaulanitis, Galilee and Carmel. Synagogues were also found on the coast and in the south of Israel, yet so far not as many as in the north.

Altogether we have solid archaeological evidence for about seventy synagogues and literary evidence for about fifteen whose location can be identified. In addition to this there are about thirty-five sites that have yielded archaeological finds probably from a synagogue. Additionally, there are a few doubtful literary references. It is significant that there is no direct archaeological evidence for any of the synagogues mentioned in the literature.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> All the literary references to synagogues in the Land of Israel are gathered by Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977 and 1984.

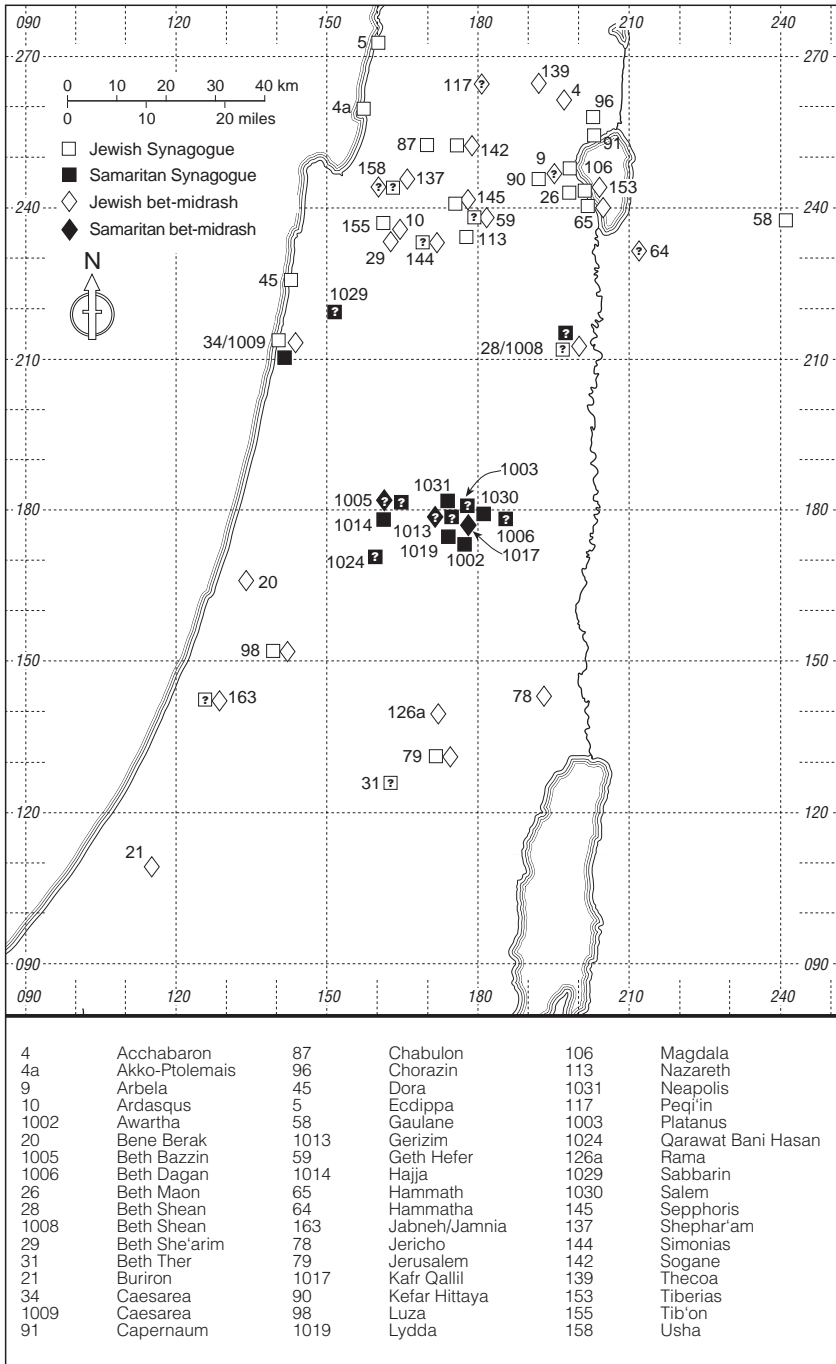


Fig. 9.8 Synagogues and Bate-Midrash (houses of study) in the Land of Israel according to literary evidence.

## IX DISTRIBUTION IN THE DIASPORA

The Diaspora synagogues dating from the third century BCE to the seventh century CE were scattered over the entire ancient world.<sup>48</sup> Let us begin with the two largest centres of the Jewish Diaspora in Egypt and in Babylonia. Already from Ptolemaic Egypt fifteen synagogues are known through inscriptions, among these, the oldest synagogue at all, in Schedia, dated to the third century.<sup>49</sup> Some papyri mention additional synagogue buildings,<sup>50</sup> and the rabbinic sources inform us about the large synagogue with five aisles in Alexandria.<sup>51</sup> In Babylonia, we find synagogues attested in the literary sources in larger numbers. Surprisingly, many synagogues were situated here because it was one of the greatest centres of the Jewish Diaspora and the scene of intensive efforts in the teaching and exegesis of the Bible. Babylonia produced many great teachers who held classes in the academies of Sura, Nehardea, Pumbedita and Mahoza and in numerous schools.<sup>52</sup> Unfortunately we have no archaeological finds.

In Syria<sup>53</sup> archaeological remains of synagogues were discovered only in Apamea on the Orontes<sup>54</sup> and in Dura Europos on the Euphrates;<sup>55</sup> in Antiochia, another large community, well attested by Flavius Josephus, only a relief with a menorah was found.<sup>56</sup>

The New Testament supplies us with information on synagogues of the first century in Asia Minor: in Antiochia Pisidia, Iconium and Ephesus.<sup>57</sup> There are archaeological finds from about a dozen cities of which the most important buildings are at Aphrodisias, Priene (figure 9.9) and Sardis.<sup>58</sup> In Cyprus, the New Testament mentions a synagogue in Salamis and a synagogue inscription was found in Golgoi.<sup>59</sup>

In Greece, according to the Book of Acts, synagogues were located in Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens and Corinth.<sup>60</sup> Synagogues were

<sup>48</sup> Bloedhorn 1992. <sup>49</sup> See above p. 271 and n. 22.

<sup>50</sup> CPJ I, no. 129, no. 134, no. 138; CPJ II, no. 432.

<sup>51</sup> *Tos.* Sukka IV, 6; *Yer.* Sukka V, 1–55a, 72–55b, 8; *Bab.* Sukka 51b. Cf. also Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 152.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Oppenheimer 1983, 545 s.v. synagogues; Oppenheimer 1987; Gafni 1987.

<sup>53</sup> The synagogues in southern Syria (Golan/Gaulanitis) are part of the Land of Israel (according to the rabbinic sources), likewise the one in Gerasa (Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 126–30 no. 54). Synagogues in Damascus are mentioned in Acts 9:2.

<sup>54</sup> Sukenik 1950–1; Brenk 1991. <sup>55</sup> See above p. 283 and n. 46.

<sup>56</sup> G. Downey: Stillwell 1938, 150–1, no. 24; it is questionable whether the small relief comes from a synagogue.

<sup>57</sup> Antiochia Pisidia: Acts 13:14; Iconium: Acts 14:1; Ephesus: Acts 18:19, 26; 19:26.

<sup>58</sup> Aphrodisias: the synagogue came to light during the foundation work for the new museum; however, it was not uncovered by the excavator but built over immediately; only the stele with the two inscriptions was preserved, see Reynolds/Tannenbaum 1987. Priene: Goodenough II 1953, 77. Sardis: Seager/Kraabel 1983.

<sup>59</sup> Golgoi: Lifshitz 1967, 73–4, no. 82. Salamis: Acts 13:5.

<sup>60</sup> Acts 16:11–14 (*proseuchē*); 17:1, 10, 16–17; 18:1, 4, 7–8.

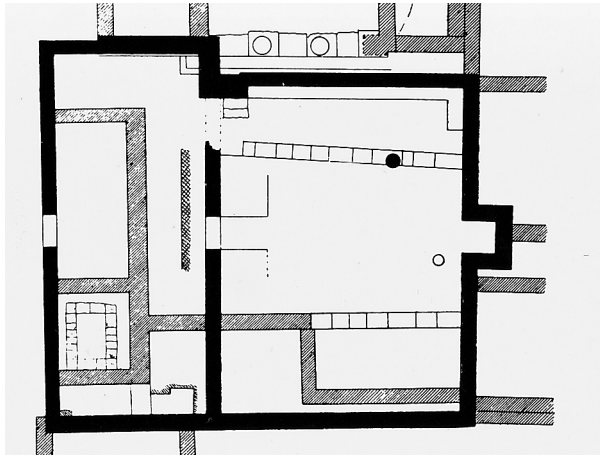


Fig. 9.9 Plan of the synagogue in Priene. This was converted from a private hellenistic house. From the lane there was access from the west to an ante-room (15 × 6m), and from there entrance to the synagogue (13.6 × 10m). On the east wall there was a niche (1.5 × 1.5m) with a marble basin in front of it, a bench on the north wall and a relief with Menorah and birds. A further Menorah relief was set into the floor of the church at the theatre as a spoil; probably it originally came from the synagogue.

excavated on Delos (figure 9.10)<sup>61</sup> and on Aegina.<sup>62</sup> At Stobi in Macedonia, the synagogue mentioned in a long endowment-inscription has now been found,<sup>63</sup> while at Philippopolis in Thrace (Plovdiv), a synagogue was recently found by chance.<sup>64</sup> On the northern shore of the Black Sea synagogue inscriptions were found in Olbia and Panticapaeum.<sup>65</sup> The synagogue building at Chersonesus has also perhaps been found.<sup>66</sup>

In Italy, we know eleven synagogues in Rome from inscriptions.<sup>67</sup> There are inscriptions also from other cities.<sup>68</sup> Synagogues were excavated in Ostia (figure 9.11) and recently in Scyle (Bova Marina in Calabria).<sup>69</sup>

<sup>61</sup> See above, p. 271 and n. 23.

<sup>62</sup> The oldest excavated synagogue: Sukenik 1934, 44–45; Mazur 1935, 25–33; Goodenough II 1953, 75–6; Kraabel 1979, 507; White 1987.

<sup>63</sup> Hengel 1966; Moe 1977; H. Bloedhorn: Hengel 1996, 125–30.

<sup>64</sup> Koranda 1988–9.

<sup>65</sup> Olbia: Lifshitz 1967, 19–20, no. 11. Panticapaeum: CIRB, no. 64.

<sup>66</sup> Brenk 1991, 17–19; MacLennan 1996, 49–51.

<sup>67</sup> Leon 1960, 135–66; Noy 1995; Lichtenberger 1996, 2155–66.

<sup>68</sup> CIJ I<sup>2</sup>, p. 643 s.v. synagogue.

<sup>69</sup> Ostia: Kraabel 1979, 497–500; Noy 1993, 22–6, no. 13; White 1997. Scyle: Costamagna 1991; Noy 1993, 180–1, no. 140.



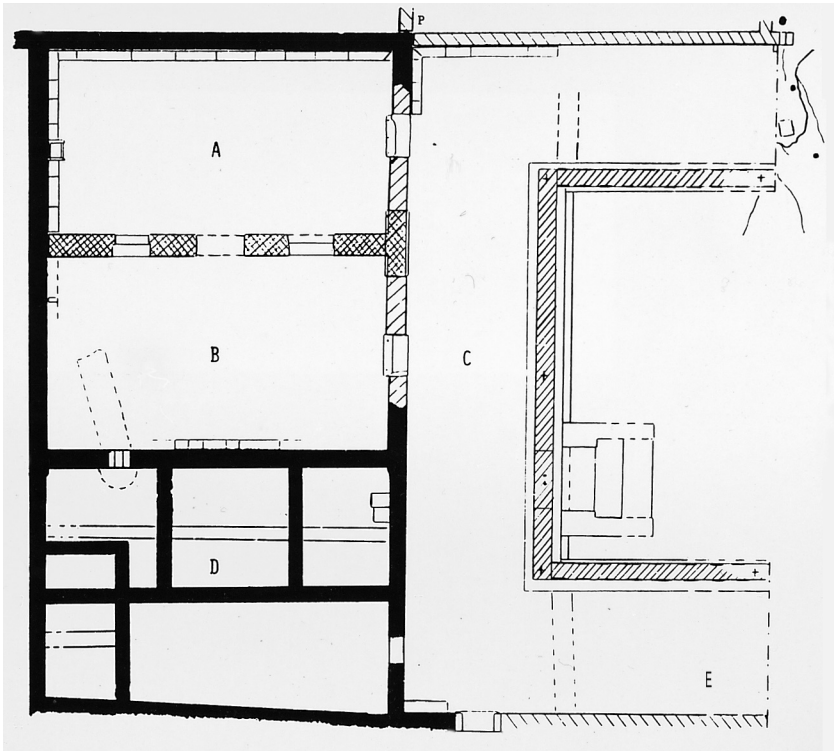


Fig. 9.10 Plan of Delos synagogue. This was converted from an older building after 88 BCE. It was originally one large room (A/B, 16.9 × 14.4m) and in the northwest there was an atrium (C). It was divided by a partition and the northern room (A) was used as a synagogue. There were benches on the north and west walls, and also a *cathedra*. Under room B there was a cistern (used as a *mique*?).

In Spain a building from the fourth/fifth century was excavated in Ilici (Elche); it is disputed as to whether this is a synagogue or a church.<sup>70</sup> In North Africa at Ruwaiha in Mauretania a capital with a menorah was found, which probably originated from a synagogue.<sup>71</sup> At Naro (Hammam Lif in Tunisia) a synagogue of the fourth century was excavated.<sup>72</sup> Finally, in Berenice (Cyrenaica) an endowment inscription was found.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Schlunk/Hauschild 1978, 143–7 (*contra*); Noy 1993, 241–7, nos. 180–2 (*pro*).

<sup>71</sup> Cadenat 1978, 247–9, figs. 9–10; LeBohec 1985, 19.

<sup>72</sup> Goodenough II 1953, 89–100; LeBohec 1981, 176–9, nos. 13–15; LeBohec 1985, 14; Darmon 1995.

<sup>73</sup> Lifshitz 1967, 81–3, no. 100; Lüderitz 1983, 155–8, no. 72.

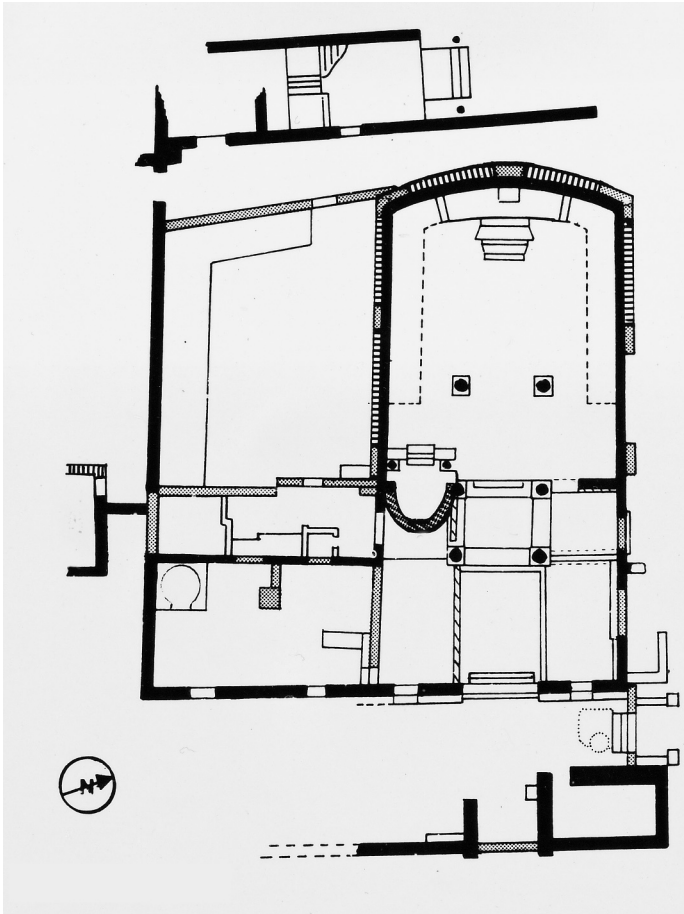


Fig. 9.11 Plan of synagogue in Ostia which was converted from a private house into a synagogue ( $24.9 \times 12.5\text{m}$ ) in the fourth century. In the east three entrances from a vestibule led into the portico and then through a four-column monument into the room of the synagogue. A Torah shrine was subsequently built to the south. In front of the west wall there was a *bema*. Further rooms adjoined in the south, among these a kitchen and storage room.

## X SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE CULT

We have only a very fragmentary knowledge of the significance the synagogue had for the cult during the existence of the Temple. Assemblies on fast-days seem to have been associated with it from quite an early date. The influence that these assembly procedures had on later synagogue worship cannot be overestimated. Furthermore, we may assume an early association with the synagogue in connection with the twenty-four priestly divisions (*mišmarot*). During the two weeks that each division yearly spent in Jerusalem, the ‘men of standing’ (*ma‘amad*) assembled for public prayer in their home town. We can only speculate that the synagogue was chosen for this purpose. A regular daily assembly for prayer and the reading of the Scriptures appears to have developed only very slowly with the establishment of the service prayer. At the time of the New Testament the reading of the Scriptures on the Sabbath followed by their exposition was a fixed institution.<sup>74</sup> A similar conclusion may be drawn from the first-century inscription of Theodotus from Jerusalem, where we read: ‘Theodotus . . . built the synagogue for the reading of the Law and the teaching of the commandments.’<sup>75</sup>

The reading and exposition of the Torah, on the one side, and the ‘*Amidah*’ prayer<sup>76</sup> on the other, formed the basis of the synagogal service. Both were in existence from a very early date. We do not, however, know at what time they became a regular daily institution and specifically whether daily prayer was introduced only after the destruction of the Temple.

## XI LITURGY

After the destruction of the Temple, the synagogue assumed to an increasing degree the function of a house of prayer – in addition to its existing secular roles. Archaeologically we see this reflected in the development of the building from a simple rectangular structure to a house of prayer with at first a raised platform and later a niche or apse for the ark of the Torah containing the Torah scrolls, as well as a *bema* for the person who led the congregation in prayer and did the reading.

In the Talmudic period the elements of worship were morning prayer (*šəḥārīt*), afternoon prayer (*minḥāb*) and evening prayer (*‘arabīt*; originally termed *n‘‘lāb* = ‘the closing’ of the Temple gates). At least ten mature male Jews had to attend each gathering (*minyān*). For this purpose in many synagogues ten ‘men of leisure’ (*baṭlānīm*, ‘unemployed men’) made themselves available, employed by the congregation or, in some cases,

<sup>74</sup> Cf. e.g. Luke 4:16–30. <sup>75</sup> See n. 6. <sup>76</sup> See n. 78.

voluntarily.<sup>77</sup> The Eighteen Benedictions (*š<sup>e</sup>mōneh-<sup>e</sup>sreḥ, <sup>e</sup>amūdāb*), with the priestly blessing (in an altered form), were from an early date part of the synagogue liturgy, although the number of benedictions and their wording were in the course of time subject to change.<sup>78</sup>

While the Torah still had no fixed place in the synagogue, it was brought in on Friday before the beginning of the Sabbath.<sup>79</sup> The climax of the Sabbath service was the reading of the weekly portion of the Torah followed by its translation and exposition. Members of the congregation were called for the reading. According to the Talmud, people from several towns in Galilee were excluded from this honour on account of their bad pronunciation.<sup>80</sup> The exposition was the task of the *daršan*, but a visitor could also be invited to perform it.<sup>81</sup> After the conclusion of the service the congregation stayed in the synagogue until the Torah scrolls had been carried out.<sup>82</sup> Special services were held on feast-days.

## XII SIGNIFICANCE FOR TEACHING

In larger towns with a number of synagogues in close proximity we may find a synagogue being used exclusively or principally as a house of prayer with all the accompanying religious functions. This tradition of synagogues existing side by side can be seen in several towns (such as Betar/Bitter, Jerusalem and Tiberias) and also from archaeological evidence.<sup>83</sup> It can easily be explained. First of all, at some stage an increasing population made several synagogues necessary, since one building could not provide sufficient space for the entire congregation. In addition to this, we know that people who had settled in a town from a distinct region had their own synagogues, which they used for prayer, as a cultural and community centre, and also for the accommodation of visitors. These existed alongside the indigenous synagogues. Thus we read of a synagogue

<sup>77</sup> Cf. e.g. *Mish. Meg.* 1, 3; *Bab. Meg.* 3b; 5a; 21b.

<sup>78</sup> There are two versions of the Eighteen Benedictions, a Palestinian and a Babylonian. Both vary in wording but not in content. Clearly there was no original formulation, rather the number, wording and sequence of the Benedictions varied until the time when under Rabbi Gammaliel II at Yamnia they were gathered in an unified prayer with a fixed sequence of petitions (compare *Bab. Ber.* 28b–29a; *Bab. Meg.* 17b). The *Birkat ha-Minim* also (the ‘Benediction against heretics’) which on this occasion was introduced, does not appear to have been a new benediction but rather a remodelling and updating of an already existing benediction. Cf. Elbogen 1931, 27–60, 250–6; Schäfer 1973, 404–9; Heinemann 1978, 138–57. See also Davies 1964, 309–13.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *Bab. Erub.* 86b; *Bab. Sukka* 16b.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. n. 44. <sup>81</sup> Cf. e.g. Luke 4:16–30. <sup>82</sup> Cf. *Bab. Sot.* 39b.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 74–5 (Betar), 199–210 (Jerusalem) and 440–449 (Tiberias).

(or congregation?) of the Alexandrians in Jerusalem,<sup>84</sup> of the Babylonians in Sippori (Sepphoris),<sup>85</sup> and so on. The situation seems to have been similar in the Diaspora. A second-century papyrus from Arsinoë makes mention of a synagogue of the Thebans.<sup>86</sup> There were also towns without synagogues.<sup>87</sup> Since well-known scholars had their own centres for teaching and preaching, it is not surprising to find a number of synagogues in the larger towns. Teaching took place in the school (*bēt ba-midrāš*, *bē midrāšā*, also *midrāšā* alone; in Babylonia *bē rab*). The root *DRŠ* means 'to seek', 'to research', 'to search the Scriptures' and thus 'to teach'. The Talmud defines the synagogue as a 'house of prayer', the school as a 'house of instruction'.<sup>88</sup> The *halakha* distinguishes clearly between the synagogue and the school. For example, a school may be built with the proceeds from the sale of a synagogue, but not vice versa.<sup>89</sup> Although an almost equal number of references to synagogues and schools exists in the literature, only a single archaeological find from a school stands, as against seventy well-established finds from synagogues. The single find is an inscription from Dabbura in the Golan/Gaulanitis region: 'This is the school of Rabbi Eli'ezer ha-Kappar.'<sup>90</sup> Regrettably the building in question has not been found. No references in the rabbinic literature have been able to help us to identify archaeological finds as remains from a school. Nevertheless, it emerges from linguistic usage in the rabbinic sources that the synagogue seems also to have been used as a school. Several passages which illustrate this quite clearly speak of the institution as a synagogue whenever its cultic significance is foremost and as a school in the context of teaching and learning.<sup>91</sup> A synagogue in which a well-known scholar preached and taught was called 'the school of Rabbi so-and-so'.<sup>92</sup>

It is, therefore, no surprise to find in many haggadic texts 'synagogue and school' used as a hendiadys. This is in contradiction to the halakhic regulations mentioned above. Possibly, these are purely theoretical, the kind of regulations that occur occasionally in the rabbinic literature; more probably, these sources reflect a situation in which synagogue and school

<sup>84</sup> Acts 6:9.

<sup>85</sup> *Yer. Shab* 6, 2–8a, 40–2; *Sanh* 10, 1–28a, 51–4; *Ber* 5, 1–9a, 32–4; *Gen. Rabbah* 33, 3 (ed. Theodor and Albeck, p. 305); 52, 4 (ed. Theodor and Albeck, p. 543). Discussion in Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 409–10.

<sup>86</sup> See n. 5. <sup>87</sup> Cf. *Bab. Ber* 8a. <sup>88</sup> *Bab. Meg.* 27a.

<sup>89</sup> *Yer. Meg.* 3, 1–74d, 27–9; *Bab. Meg.* 26b–27a.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, 94. Whether the room in front of the synagogue, which was uncovered in Meroth, really is a school has yet to be resolved; cf. Ilan/Damati 1987, 72–87 188; Urman, 1993.

<sup>91</sup> E.g. *Bab. Sot.* 22a. <sup>92</sup> E.g. *Bab. Sanh.* 11a.

existed side by side as two separate institutions either before or after they constituted a single unity. It is possible that in larger towns there were buildings or premises used exclusively as a school. In the smaller localities this can hardly ever have been the case.<sup>93</sup>

Reading and writing were learned in the *bēt ha-sēfer*, where children also learned to recite the most important prayers. The lesson in the synagogue/school consisted of the study of the Mishnah and the Talmud. Famous teachers attracted many pupils. According to a haggadic source, Rabbi Aqiba is said to have had 12,000 or even 24,000 pairs of pupils.<sup>94</sup> Some of these schools developed into academies (*y<sup>e</sup>šivāb; m<sup>e</sup>tibtā*), for the training of scholars. Such academies existed, in the Land of Israel, in the vicinity of Jabneh/Jamnia (Beror Hayil (Buriron); Lydda; Bene Berak; Peqi'in), in Caesarea and in the north (Beth Shearim; Sippori/Sepphoris; Tiberias; Sogane)<sup>95</sup> as well as in the Babylonian towns of Mahoza, Nehardea, Nisibis, Pumbedita and Sura<sup>96</sup> and one in Rome. An integral part of each academy was a *bēt din*, a branch of the Sanhedrin with jurisdiction over halakhic problems and decisions. Thus the schools, besides the academies, acted as upholders and mediators of the oral law. Relations between scholars in the Land of Israel and those in Babylonia were intensive. They knew each other's opinions and quoted and discussed them. We hear again and again of Babylonian scholars travelling to the Land of Israel and resuming their teaching there, for example, Rabbi El'azar ben Pedat, who came from Babylonia and succeeded Rabbi Yoḥanan as the leading teacher of the Academy at Tiberias. He was also referred to from Babylonia on halakhic matters.<sup>97</sup>

### XIII THE OFFICES OF THE SYNAGOGUE

The structure and functions of the synagogue necessitated several administrative offices. In the larger towns the various tasks may have been allocated to several persons, but in smaller towns or synagogues, such as those of the minority communities, one person may have assumed several functions, possibly in a part-time and/or honorary capacity. Since work for the congregation and work for the synagogue obviously overlapped, most offices were not tied exclusively to the synagogue. In their spheres of operation the individual offices that we encounter in the

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Hüttenmeister/Oppenheimer 1981.

<sup>94</sup> *Bab. Yeb.* 62b; *ARN*, version B12 (ed. Schechter, p. 15a); *ARN*, Perush Abot 8 (ed. Schechter, p. 81a).

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977, see place-name.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Oppenheimer 1983, 179–93, 276–93, 351–68, 413–22.

<sup>97</sup> E.g. *Yer. BK I*, 1–2c, 2–4; *Bab. Ket.* 112a.

literature are often not clearly distinguishable. We find Greek and Latin titles in inscriptions, and in the non-rabbinic literature, whose relationship to the Hebrew or Aramaic expressions is not always clear.

The two most important offices whose titles include the word 'synagogue' are those of the synagogue ruler and synagogue attendant. The synagogue ruler (*roš bēt ha-k'neset*; *archisynagōgos*) saw to the performance of the service, a role which rendered his office honorary. In addition, he had administrative duties in the congregation. This title appears in rabbinic literature, in the New Testament and on inscriptions.<sup>98</sup> Whether or not the terms *patēr synagogēs* and especially *mētēr synagogēs/mater synagogae* from Italy are purely honorary titles is debated.<sup>99</sup>

The upkeep of the synagogue and its general appearance were the task of the *ḥazzān*. As a sort of caretaker, he was allowed to reside in the synagogue, that is, in an accommodation attached to it. The office of the *ḥazzān* was the only one almost exclusively tied to the synagogue. The word occurs in the rabbinic literature as well as in inscriptions from synagogues and graves in Israel and in the Diaspora (Greek form *αζ(ζ)ανά*).

#### XIV SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SYNAGOGUE IN THE SECULAR SPHERE

The synagogue had many functions besides those of prayer and teaching. We have already stressed the special position of the synagogues of the Diaspora and those serving Jewish ethnic minorities, and the duties arising from such a position. The accommodation of guests is also emphasized in the inscription of Theodotus, where we read: 'the adjacent rooms and washing facilities (were) for the use of those visitors from afar who were in need of them'. The floor mosaics with patterns like carpets in the synagogues of Beth Alfa and Hammath Tiberias to the south of the springs, seem to have been laid down for the entertainment of visitors, since they could have been used as a board for games. The same is true of the graffiti on the floor of the courtyard of the synagogue in Capernaum.<sup>100</sup> Children were exposed near a synagogue; divorce warrants were drawn up; the loss and recovery of property was announced; legal witnesses could be publicly sought; visitors could eat and drink. Business was transacted, halakhic decisions were given, corpses were laid out; justice was administered; matters of general concern were announced. At

<sup>98</sup> Mark 5:22, 35, 38; Luke 8:49; 13:14; Acts 13:15; 18:8, 17; Krauss 1922, 114–21; Lifshitz, 1967, 88 s.v. ἀρχισυνάγωγος; CIJ 1<sup>2</sup>, p. 628 s.v. ἀρχισυνάγωγος.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Krauss 1922, 118; Brooten 1982, 57–72.

<sup>100</sup> Such games incised on the floor (morris) are found moreover also in the great church of Rehoot in the Negev, on the threshold of the main entrance and in the narthex.



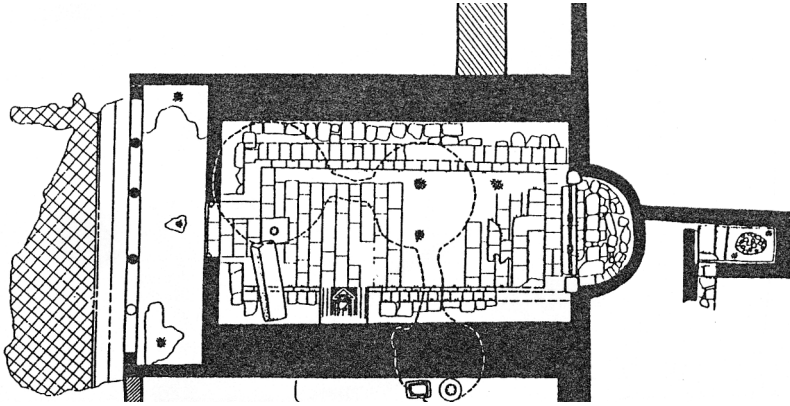


Fig. 9.12 Plan of a Samaritan Synagogue in Kh. Samara which was converted from a Roman building complex into a Samaritan synagogue (16.4 × 12.7m) in the fourth century. A narthex was situated in front, an apse was added in the east decorated with, and the floor was mosaics. Stone plates on the floor and seating steps along the longer sides date from the sixth century as do additional buildings in the south and the *miqwe* east of the apse.

the time of the Great Revolt against the Romans in CE 66–70, the synagogue would have been used on more than one occasion as a centre and base for military confrontations, as in the clash with a Greek *agent provocateur* in Caesarea in May 66, reported by Josephus.<sup>101</sup>

The synagogue was a religious, a political and a community centre, where people assembled for prayer in the same way as they would to discuss community affairs, to attend lessons, or to visit casually. It was simply *the* centre of Jewish life *par excellence*.<sup>102</sup> With the conquest of Israel in the seventh century by Islam, the spread of Christianity and the further decline of the Jewish population, the synagogues entered a period of gradual decay. By the tenth and eleventh centuries only a very few synagogues still existed. Most of them, as reported by travellers, stood in ruins.

## XV THE SAMARITAN SYNAGOGUES

The Samaritans had their own synagogues, but we know very little about their significance. Nothing more emerges from the literary sources than that the congregation gathered there for daily prayer and the reading of the Torah and on the Sabbath and feast-days. These sources distinguish

<sup>101</sup> Jos., *Bell.* II.285–92.      <sup>102</sup> Safrai 1981; Kasher 1987.

between synagogue and school, but we may assume that in Samaritan as well as Jewish practice the two roles coincided. There are no references to this, possibly because of the scarcity of source material. The origin of the Samaritan synagogues is obscure. Late Samaritan chronicles tell of second-century synagogues.<sup>103</sup>

Our earliest archaeological finds date from the third/fourth century. These synagogues reached their zenith in the fourth century when they were constructed in larger numbers in the wake of Babba Rabba's reforms. In an edict of Theodosius II dated 438, the reconstruction of synagogues was forbidden, and in 529 during the Great Revolt, their destruction was ordered by Justinian I.<sup>104</sup>

The main centre of the Samaritan synagogues lay in the region of Neapolis, for which we have almost exclusively literary evidence; another centre was in the coastal plain to the south and southeast of Jaffa, known exclusively from archaeological finds.<sup>105</sup>

Meanwhile, archaeological remains of synagogues survive from six sites: Beth Shean (Scythopolis), el Khirbe, Kh. Samara (figure 9.12), Sur Natan (H. Migdal), Sha'albim and Ramath Abib.<sup>106</sup> Some were in use until the early Arabic times. In addition, we have a series of Samaritan inscriptions of the Decalogue and texts from the Samaritan version of the Torah carved in stone, all with their fixed place in Samaritan liturgy. They were probably erected in synagogues. From literary sources we know of about a dozen Samaritan synagogues in all; archaeological remains exist of roughly the same number, although the literary information does not overlap with the archaeological finds.

We have only very little information about Samaritans in the Diaspora.<sup>107</sup> We know of a Samaritan synagogue in Rome from literary sources<sup>108</sup> and in Thessalonica from an inscription.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Kippenberg 1971, 145–71; R. Pummer: Crown 1989, 135–47.

<sup>104</sup> Theodosii Novellae III and Codex Iustinianus I 5, 17.

<sup>105</sup> Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1984. <sup>106</sup> Hüttenmeister/Reeg 1977 and Magen 1993.

<sup>107</sup> Crown 1989, 195–217; van der Horst 1990, 136–47.

<sup>108</sup> Cassiodorus, *Epistola* 45; cf. Crown 1989, 210; Leon 1960, 147–8.

<sup>109</sup> Lifshitz/Schiby 1968; Schiby 1977.

## CHAPTER 10

## THE TEMPLE AND THE SYNAGOGUE

During the period of the second temple (520 BCE to CE 70) Judaism remained loyal to the past while sowing seeds for the future. It continued to maintain the temple, the priesthood, and the sacrificial cult, the legacies of the religion of pre-exilic Israel, but it also invented an institution of a completely different type, the synagogue. After the destruction of the second temple in CE 70, the synagogue gradually assumed a larger and larger role in Jewish society and consciousness. The synagogue is an enduring contribution of the second temple period to the history of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.<sup>1</sup>

The origin of the synagogue is unknown, and, without a new discovery equal in magnitude to the Dead Sea scrolls, unknowable. The widely accepted theory that the synagogue originated in the sixth century BCE during the Babylonian exile as a replacement for the Jerusalem temple seems plausible and attractive but is unsubstantiated and overly simplistic. Unsubstantiated, because it is not supported by a single ancient source. Overly simplistic, because it assigns to a single time and place the origin of a most complex institution. The earliest extant reference to a synagogue is an inscription from Upper Egypt from the third century BCE which uses the term *proseuche*, 'prayer(-house)'. The earliest known Judaeon synagogue is the building erected in Jerusalem by one Theodotus in the first century BCE or CE 'for the reading of the law and the teaching of the commandments', not, apparently, for the recitation of prayer. Ancient synagogues also served as assembly halls or community centres, much as the temple itself often did. Hence the synagogue is an amalgamation of three separate institutions: a prayer-house, a study-hall or school, and a community centre. The time and place at which this amalgamation was effected are as unknown as are the origins of each of the institutions which comprise the whole. Even after the destruction of the second temple, the amalgamation was not always complete. The rabbis regularly distinguish 'synagogues' (*bātê kēnēsîyôt*) from 'schools' (*bātê midrāšôt*),

<sup>1</sup> G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Common Era*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass. 1927), vol. 2, p. 285.

although they occasionally study in the former and pray in the latter. The traditional view, therefore, can be dismissed as overly simplistic.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter is a study not of the history of institutions but of the history of ideas. It addresses two sets of questions. First, how did the Jews of antiquity see the synagogue? How did they assess its relationship with the temple of Jerusalem? Was the synagogue considered a second-best institution, a poor surrogate for the temple and its cult? Or was it regarded as an independent and autonomous institution endowed with its own importance and worth? Second, did synagogue practice (Torah study and prayer) affect attitudes towards the temple? Did the temple lose any of its centrality as a result of ‘competition’ with the synagogue? These questions are immensely complex, and this is not the place for a full discussion of all the evidence. This chapter is devoted to the broad picture.

## I THE TEMPLE AND THE SYNAGOGUE: PARALLELS AND CONTRASTS

A synagogue differs from the temple in three respects: place, cult and personnel. Let us look at each of these in turn.

According to Deuteronomy profane slaughter was permitted anywhere in the land of Israel, while sacred slaughter could be performed only at the one place which the Lord had chosen and in which the Lord had placed his name (Deut. 12). The original identity of this place is not entirely clear (the Samaritans argued, with some justification, that Mount Gerizim was meant), but the supporters of the Davidic monarchy and the writers of the Deuteronomistic school had no doubt that the place was the temple in Jerusalem. That the temple was the ‘house’ of God or the ‘gate’ of heaven, that the cherubim were the throne and that the ark was the footstool of God, and that Jerusalem was the dwelling place of God and the navel of the earth – these claims are advanced by numerous biblical passages, especially in the book of Psalms, on behalf of the Jerusalem temple.<sup>3</sup> Later texts, probably reflecting ideas of the biblical period, supply much more: Jerusalem is the ‘mother city’ of the Jewish people;

<sup>2</sup> M. Hengel, ‘Proseuche und Synagogue’, *Tradition und Glaube: Fs K. G. Kubn* (Göttingen 1971), pp. 157–84, repr. in Hengel, *Judaica et Hellenistica: Kleine Schriften I* (Tübingen 1996), pp. 171–95, and J. Gutmann, ‘Synagogue Origins: Theories and Facts’ in *Ancient Synagogues: The State of Research* (BJS 22; Chico 1981), pp. 1–6. See above chapter 9, pp. 268–72.

<sup>3</sup> M. Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1978), pp. 246–59; W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land* (Berkeley 1974), pp. 6–11 with the notes. Navel of the earth: Ezek. 38:12, compare *Jub.* 8:19. See the sensible strictures of S. Talmon, “‘*Tabûr Ha’āreš*’ and the Comparative Method”, *Tarb* 45 (1976), 163–77 (Hebrew).

the temple is the centre of the cosmos, erected upon the foundation stone of the world; the temple and its appurtenances are symbolic representations of the cosmos; the temple and its rituals guarantee fertility, prosperity, and the smooth functioning of the cosmos; the temple and/or Jerusalem are reflections of a heavenly temple and/or Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> Developing the ideas of Leviticus and Numbers, the Mishnah states that there are ten degrees of holiness in the world. The inner sanctum of the temple is the holiest of all ('the Holy of Holies'), followed by the sanctuary, the area between the temple porch and the altar, the court of priests, the court of Israelites, the court of women, the outer rampart, the temple mount, the city of Jerusalem, the walled cities of the land of Israel, and the land of Israel as a whole. God's dwelling on earth is the source of all holiness.<sup>5</sup>

Before the Josianic reform of c. 618 BCE and the discovery of Deuteronomy, the centrality of Jerusalem and its temple was not widely recognized. The revolt of the northern tribes against the southern was prompted, at least in part, by the rejection of the claims advanced by the Davidic house on behalf of the Jerusalem temple. The men of the south, unlike Jeroboam, did not build temples to compete with Jerusalem, but like him they built *bamot*, 'high-places', which, in the recurring words of the book of Kings, 'did not disappear from the land' until the Josianic reform. The builders of these *bamot* believed that the God who dwelled in the temple in Jerusalem would not object to sacrifices offered outside the sacred precincts, but Deuteronomy taught that God's jealousy extended not only to other gods but also to other shrines.<sup>6</sup>

During the period of the second temple even the Jews of the Diaspora respected the centrality of Jerusalem and its temple. They built syna-

<sup>4</sup> 'Mother-city': Philo, *Against Flaccus* 46 and various midrashic passages (see Krauss, *Lehnmörter*, s.v.). Foundation stone: *b. Yoma* 54a–54b. Cosmic symbols: Josephus, *Ant.* III.7.7 §§ 179–87; *Pesiq. Rab Kab.* 1:3, p. 8 ed. Mandelbaum; *Midrash Tanbuma, Pequde*, beginning; *Midrash Tadsbe* § B (in A. Jellinek, *Beth Hamidrash*, vol. 3, pp. 164–7). Guarantee fertility: *ʿAbor R. Nat* 4 (pp. 10a–b ed. Schechter) and B5 (pp. 9b–10a ed. Schechter); *t. Sukk.* 3:18 p. 271 ed. Lieberman and *b. Sukk.* 55b. Reflections of heavenly Jerusalem and/or temple: Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, pp. 131–54 and 162–3; T. H. Gaster, *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament* (New York 1969), § 272 (commentary of Psalm 87); Wisdom of Solomon 9:7–12 with the commentary of D. Winston (AB 43), pp. 203–5. In general see M. Eliade, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour* (Paris 1949), pp. 30–7, ET *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York 1954), pp. 12–17 ('The Symbolism of the Center'); J. Lundquist, 'What is a Temple? A Preliminary Typology', *The Quest for the Kingdom of God*, FS G. Mendenhall, ed. H. B. Huffmon et al. (Winona Lake, IN 1983), pp. 205–19; R. Patai, *Man and Temple* (New York 1967).

<sup>5</sup> *m. Kelim* 1:6–9, trans. Danby, pp. 605–6; see Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, pp. 58–9. The connection with Leviticus and Numbers is made explicit by *t. Kelim B. Qam.* 1:12 p. 570 ed. Zuckerman.

<sup>6</sup> The *bamot* were not temples; see Haran, pp. 18–25.

gogues but they streamed to the temple for the pilgrimage festivals (see below). Although the Deuteronomic prohibition of sacrifice outside Jerusalem applied only to the inhabitants of the land of Israel, Diaspora Jews generally refrained from building temples, and the ones that they did build (notably Elephantine and Heliopolis) did not gather widespread support or recognition.<sup>7</sup> Ancient synagogues were occasionally called *hiera*, ‘temples’, by gentile observers, but this was a natural mistake. The Jews knew the difference between synagogues and temples.<sup>8</sup>

In contrast with the temple synagogues were not inherently sacred; they were not built on sacred earth and were not the ‘house’ or ‘throne’ of God. They did not claim to be unique or to be located at the centre of the cosmos. Synagogues were built anywhere and everywhere throughout the Graeco-Roman world; even private houses were converted into synagogues. One advantage which synagogues had over *bamot* was that their cult was non-sacrificial and their existence therefore unhampered by Deuteronomic theology, but fundamentally synagogues and *bamot* are the same. Both are based on the premise that public worship of God should not be restricted to Jerusalem.

The second distinction between synagogue and temple is cult. The cult of the temple was sacrifice, i.e. the slaughter, roasting and eating of animals. It was a bloody affair; as the rabbis say, ‘It is a glory for the sons of Aaron that they walk in blood up to their ankles.’<sup>9</sup> The cult was governed by a complex set of rules and consisted of various types of sacrifices. Some, notably the morning and afternoon *tāmīd* (‘continual offering’) and the Sabbath and festival offerings, were purchased with public monies and brought in the name of the entire nation; others, notably the *‘ōlā* (‘holocaust’), *šēlāmīm* (‘peace-offering’), and *ḥaṭṭāt* and *‘āšām* (‘sin-offering’), were brought by individuals either to seek atonement

<sup>7</sup> The existence of the temple of Elephantine was not even suspected until the discovery of the Elephantine papyri in the early part of the twentieth century. Josephus is our sole ancient source for the temple of Heliopolis (Leontopolis); its absence from the voluminous Jewish literature of Egypt is striking. Until its destruction in 411 BCE the Elephantine temple had a sacrificial cult; the nature of the cult at Heliopolis is uncertain. For Elephantine see B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine* (Berkeley 1968), pp. 105–22; for Heliopolis see R. Hayward, ‘The Jewish Temple at Leontopolis’, *JJS* 33 (1982), 429–43. Whether the Tobiads had a ‘temple’ at Araq-el-Amir is not as certain as is often supposed; see Haran, p. 47 and J. Goldstein, *II Maccabees* (New York 1983; AB 41a), p. 149.

<sup>8</sup> Tacitus, *Histories* 5.5.4 in M. Stern, *GLAJJ*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem 1974 and 1979), no. 281; perhaps Agatharchides in Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.22 § 209; and the remarks of Petronius in Josephus, *Ant.* 19:305. Christian writers too occasionally call synagogues *hiera* or *templa*. In the fourth and fifth centuries the Jews began to call their synagogues ‘holy and ‘holy-place’, but this usage has its own origins; see below note 89.

<sup>9</sup> *B. Pesahim* 65b, a reference I owe to Professor D. W. Halivni.

or to express gratitude to the Deity. The Passover offering was of a different character altogether: it was a family feast at the central shrine. Offerings of non-animal origin (for example, grain, fruit, bread and incense) played an important but less prominent role.<sup>10</sup>

Prayer had little or no official place. Neither Leviticus nor Numbers nor Deuteronomy nor Ezekiel nor the Qumran Temple Scroll nor Philo nor Josephus mentions prayer as an integral part of the sacrificial cult.<sup>11</sup> The *'āšām* offering was accompanied by a 'confession', in which the person who brought the sacrifice stated the trespass for which he sought atonement (Leviticus 5);<sup>12</sup> the offering of the first fruits and the giving of the tithe to the poor in the third year were accompanied by oral declarations (Deut. 26); but these exceptions do not disprove the rule.<sup>13</sup> Aside from the squeal of the victim and crackle of the fire the act of sacrifice was silent; neither the priest nor the worshipper said anything.<sup>14</sup> Of course, in times of need people prayed, and what better place for prayer than the central shrine, but these prayers, whether private or public, were occasioned by special circumstances and were not fixed parts of the temple ritual (that is, they were not 'statutory').<sup>15</sup> By late second temple times individuals would pray regularly at the temple, coordinating their prayers with the times of the sacrifices, but these were private petitions, not integral parts of the public cult.<sup>16</sup> Scholars debate the reliability of the

<sup>10</sup> For descriptions of the cult see R. de Vaux, *Les Institutions de l'Ancient Testament* 2 (Paris 1960), pp. 291–302, 349–413, ET *Ancient Israel* (New York 1961), pp. 415–23 and 457–506; S. Safrai in *JPFC* II (Philadelphia 1976), pp. 865–907.

<sup>11</sup> Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.23 §§ 196–7, seems to imply that communal prayer was offered with the sacrifices, but the passage is somewhat ambiguous.

<sup>12</sup> J. Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience* (Leiden 1976); SJLA 18.

<sup>13</sup> When the passover sacrifice began to be accompanied by the recitation of a *haggada* is not clear.

<sup>14</sup> The silence of the cult is emphasized by the Letter of Aristeas §§ 92–5. Contrast the testimony of Theophrastus in Stern, *GLAJJ*, no. 4. See also pp. 365–6 below.

<sup>15</sup> See for example 1 Sam. 2 (the prayer of Hannah); 1 Kgs 8; Isa. 1:15 and 56:7; Sir. 51:14; etc. The Psalms which equate prayer with sacrifice probably were uttered at the temple by poor people who could not afford to bring an animal sacrifice; see below note 52. For a discussion of 'statutory prayer' see J. Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns*, SJG (Berlin and New York 1977), pp. 14–17. The distinction between 'statutory' and 'spontaneous' or 'special' prayer does not necessarily imply that the former consisted of a fixed text or of set phrases and the latter did not; see M. Greenberg, *Biblical Prose Prayer* (Berkeley 1983).

<sup>16</sup> Luke 1:10 and Acts 3:1; compare Ezra 9:5, Dan. 9:21, Jdt. 9:1 and the rabbinic traditions about the *má'āmādôt*, discussed below. Of course, they also prayed regularly elsewhere too. Prayer is a prominent motive in the works of the 'Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha'; see N. B. Johnson, *Prayer in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, JBL MS 2 (Philadelphia 1948).



claim of the Chronicler that Levitical song was part of the cult even in the time of King David (1 Chr. 25),<sup>17</sup> but no matter when it was instituted, the song of the Levites always remained in the background. The central element of the cult was the sacred ballet of the priests, not the sacred music of the Levites.<sup>18</sup>

When did song and prayer emerge from the background to the foreground and become an independent part of the temple cult? Important but problematic testimony is offered once again by the Chronicler. King David transferred the ark to Jerusalem but left the altar (the *bāmā*, ‘high-place’) of the Lord at Gibeon. The ark and the altar were reunited only in the Solomonic temple. How was God worshipped during the period of transition? The Chronicler claims that sacrifices were offered on the altar in Gibeon and that prayer and song were offered before the ark in Jerusalem (1 Chr. 6:16–17; 16:4–6 and 37–42). In his view, then, prayer is separable from sacrifice; the ark can be a site of worship even without the altar.<sup>19</sup> A similar idea is advocated by the author of Solomon’s prayer in 1 Kgs 8:23–53. The dedication of the Solomonic temple was marked by the sacrifice of 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep (1 Kgs 8:63, cf. 8:5), but in his great invocation Solomon does not mention sacrifice once. The temple will serve, he says, as the focal point for the prayers of the Israelites (and foreigners) in times of need. They will pray to (or at) that place and God will hearken to their requests. Whoever the author and whatever the date of this composition, 1 Kgs 8:23–53 claims that the major function of the temple ought to be prayer.<sup>20</sup> To what extent this idea was put into practice in the period of the second temple, is not clear. Rabbinic texts claim that ‘the prophets of old’ instituted a system of *ma’amādôt* (‘stations’) for Israelites to parallel the system of *mišmārôt* (‘posts,’ usually translated ‘courses’) for the priests and Levites. Each week a

<sup>17</sup> The classic defence of the Chronicler is S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 2 vols. (New York 1962), vol. 2, pp. 79–103. Relevant to this discussion is the *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalter, but that problem is too complex to be discussed here. King David composed 446 songs to accompany the daily *Tamid* and the Sabbath and festival offerings (11Q Ps<sup>a</sup> 27:4–9).

<sup>18</sup> This is not to imply that the Jews regarded the song of the Levites as *unimportant*, only that they regarded it as secondary. Its importance is emphasized by various rabbinic texts, notably *b. Arak* 11a (according to R. Meir, without the Levitic song a *Tamid* offering is invalid). Does this reflect the thinking of the second temple period?

<sup>19</sup> S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles* (Jerusalem 1977; Hebrew), pp. 196–7; ET (same title), *Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des Antiken Judentums* 9, p. 90.

<sup>20</sup> J. Levenson, ‘From Temple to Synagogue: 1 Kings 8’, *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*, ed. B. Halpern and J. Levenson (Winona Lake, IN 1981), pp. 143–66.

different group of priests and Levites would serve in the temple, and each week a different group of Israelites would gather in the temple and in the villages in order to recite biblical verses (and, apparently, prayers) while the priests were offering the *Tamid*. The point of this practice was to make explicit the connection between the people, as represented by their delegates, and the public sacrifices.<sup>21</sup> Rabbinic texts also claim that after the morning *Tamid* the priests would recite the ten commandments, the *Shema*<sup>c</sup> (Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Num. 15:37–41), the benediction (Num. 6:24–6), and various prayers.<sup>22</sup> The historicity of these statements is uncertain. The strongest argument in their favour is the fact that various prayers in the rabbinic prayer-book seem to have originated in these temple prayers of the priests and the members of the *māʾāmadōt*.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps, then, by late second temple times prayer and the recitation of biblical verses had attained an official role in the temple cult, but the role was limited. Until the end of its existence the cult consisted primarily of the offerings of animals and crops.

It was the synagogue, not the temple, which ultimately became the home to both statutory prayer and Torah study. Daniel prays to God three times a day, directing his prayers towards Jerusalem through an open window (Dan. 6:11). This passage presumably reflects the practice of the third or second century BCE more accurately than it does that of the sixth. By the first century CE regular prayer by individuals at the temple was common.<sup>24</sup> Josephus remarks that Jews recite the *Shema*<sup>c</sup> twice daily ‘in order to thank God for his bounteous gifts’.<sup>25</sup> During the latter part of the second temple period prayer became an established way of communicating with God, not just on special occasions but also in daily use.

The worship of God through the study of God’s Torah has a different history. Deuteronomy enjoined upon the Israelites the constant study of the law so that they would know which actions to avoid and which to pursue, thereby escaping punishment and gaining reward.<sup>26</sup> Study of the Torah is here conceived as a means to an end. Gradually, however, it

<sup>21</sup> The major text is *m. Ta’an.* 4:2–3 with the Tosepta and the Talmudim *ad loc.* See too *m. Bik.* 3:2. *m. Tamid* is surprisingly silent (except for a stray reference in 5:6). For the divisions of the priests and Levites see 1 Chron. 24–5.

<sup>22</sup> *M. Tamid* 5:1. Several rabbinic passages refer to a *kēneset* in the temple (*m. Yoma* 7:1 and *Sota* 7:7–8) but it is unclear whether the term means ‘synagogue’ (hence the notion that the second temple contained a synagogue) or ‘assembly’.

<sup>23</sup> Heinemann, *Prayer*, chapters 5 and 6; E. Bickerman, ‘The Civic Prayer for Jerusalem’, *HTR* 55 (1962), 163–85.

<sup>24</sup> See note 16 above. <sup>25</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* IV.8.13 § 212.

<sup>26</sup> Deut. 6:6–9, 11:18–21, 31:10–13; Josh. 1:8.

became an end in itself. The author of Psalm 119 can imagine no greater joy than meditating on the words of the Lord:<sup>27</sup>

Oh, how I love thy law!  
 It is my meditation all the day.  
 Thy commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,  
 for it is ever with me . . .  
 Thy testimonies are wonderful;  
 therefore my soul keeps them.  
 The unfolding of thy words gives light;  
 it imparts understanding to the simple.  
 With open mouth I pant,  
 because I long for thy commandments.

This is a new type of piety whose origins are not clear. Perhaps it derives from the tradition which enjoins the constant study and pursuit of ‘Wisdom,’ here equated with Torah. Perhaps it emerged under Hellenistic influence, reflecting the Socratic view that the soul is ennobled and made virtuous through knowledge. Perhaps it is somehow connected with the cessation of prophecy and the ‘canonization’ of scripture, which left no means of discerning God’s will except by study of God’s written word.<sup>28</sup> In any case, Psalm 119 is a clear sign of the transition. Josephus and Philo boast that all Jews are learned in the law because Moses, unlike other legislators, ordained the regular study of his statutes.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, by Maccabaeian times, at the latest, worship of the Lord through regular ‘statutory’ prayer and Torah study became a fixture of Jewish piety. When did these modes of worship become associated with the synagogue? In their inscriptions Diaspora Jews call their synagogues *proseuchai*, ‘prayers’ or ‘prayer-houses’, putative evidence that the cult of the Diaspora synagogue was primarily prayer. The Jews of Israel called their synagogues not *proseuchai* but *synagogai*, ‘assemblies’ or ‘associations’. The Jews of Jerusalem certainly could have prayed at the temple whenever they wished, but Jews who lived more than a day’s journey from the temple were in the same predicament as the Jews who lived in the Diaspora: the temple was too far away to serve as the site for regular contact with God. We may presume that these Jews prayed in their synagogues, although this presumption is not confirmed by the literary

<sup>27</sup> Pss. 119:97–98 and 129–31, trans. RSV.

<sup>28</sup> See B. Viviano, *Study as Worship* (Leiden 1978; SJLA 26). On the cessation of prophecy, see below note 36.

<sup>29</sup> Josephus, *Against Apion* 2:175; Philo, *Life of Moses* 2:39 §§ 211–12 and 216; and elsewhere. See too Acts 15:21; the Targumic passages listed by E. Schürer, *HJPAJC* vol. 2 (Edinburgh 1979), p. 427, n. 7; and Tractate *Soperim* 10:1–2.

sources of the second temple period.<sup>30</sup> They refer instead to the synagogue as the locus for the teaching of Torah. The highlight of the Sabbath gatherings of the Therapeutae and the Essenes was (according to Philo) a sermon on the allegorical meaning of the Law. Jesus taught in the synagogues of Galilee, Paul in the synagogues of Asia Minor. In first-century Jerusalem one Theodotus erected a synagogue for ‘the reading of the Law and the teaching of the commandments’.<sup>31</sup> The reticence of the sources to speak about synagogue prayer is perhaps related to their reticence to speak about the synagogue itself, a subject we shall address below.

The third distinction between the temple and the synagogue is personnel. The sacrificial cult was carried out on behalf of the Jews by the priests. The actual ministrations, that is, the slaughter, roasting, and much of the eating, could be performed only by the priests. Lay Israelites were not even allowed to enter the inner precincts, let alone minister before the Lord. The welfare of Israel thus depended upon the piety and punctiliousness of the priests. In his vision of the temple of the utopian future Ezekiel assigns a role in some of the ceremonies to representatives of the people (the *nāšî* and the ‘*am bā’āreš*), a democratic tendency which found its successor in the rabbinic legislation of the *ma’āmadôt* (see above), but the temple always remained an institution of the priesthood, a hereditary aristocracy.

The synagogue by contrast was a lay institution. No clergy mediated between the people and their God. Torah study and prayer were virtues to be cultivated by every Israelite (that is, every male Israelite). Positions of leadership in the synagogue were open to all (including women).<sup>32</sup> Whether pre-CE 70 synagogues were controlled by the Pharisees and post-CE 70 synagogues by the rabbis, is a difficult question which need not be pursued here.<sup>33</sup>

Let us now conceptualize these three differences between the temple and the synagogue. The first difference (place) reflects the tension between the one and the many, between monism and pluralism. Josephus and Philo say explicitly, ‘One Temple for the One God.’ Judaism is based on the belief in the One God and the temple is the visible symbol of that Oneness.<sup>34</sup> The second and third differences (cult and personnel) reflect

<sup>30</sup> The only possible exception is the testimony of Agatharchides mentioned above (see note 8).

<sup>31</sup> The evidence is detailed by *HJPAJC*, vol. 2, pp. 425–7.

<sup>32</sup> B. Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* BJS 36 (Chico 1982). The evidence consists of Greek and Latin inscriptions in which Jewish women bear the titles ‘head of the synagogue’, ‘elder’, ‘mother of the synagogue’. See chapter 12 below.

<sup>33</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, ‘Epigraphical Rabbis’, *JQR* NS 72 (1981), 1–17. See below chapter 29.

<sup>34</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* iv.200–1 and *Against Apion* 2.190–8; Philo, *On the Special Laws* 1.12 §§ 66–70. Cf. 2 *Bar.* 48:20–24; Hippolytus, *Philosophoumena* 9.18.1; Origen, *Against Celsus* 5:44; and the passages discussed by H. Nibley, *JQR* NS 50 (1959/1960), 100–4.

the tension between aristocracy and democracy, between elitism and populism. The tension between monism and pluralism is parallel to, but not necessarily identical with, the tension between elitism and populism. The struggle between Jerusalem and the local *bāmôt* was certainly a struggle between monism and pluralism, but not necessarily a struggle between elitism and populism. Some *bāmôt* had priests.<sup>35</sup> The prophetic tirades against the sacrificial cult and on behalf of personal piety and morality can be interpreted as pleas for the democratization of the Israelite religion, but the prophets were certainly not in favour of the local shrines. One could believe in the uniqueness of the sacred centre (monism) while advocating an unmediated cult of mass participation (populism) or, at least, refusing to accept the centrality of the sacrificial cult. Lamentations bemoans the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 587 BCE and is distressed by the loss of the visible symbol of God's presence. The author even asks whether God still loves Israel. He does not ask, however, how he will atone for his sins without the blood of rams, or how he can find favour with God without the altar. This author is not disturbed by the loss of the sacrificial cult. For him the sacred centre was essential, the sacrificial cult was not. Ambivalence of this sort characterized many segments of both second temple and rabbinic Judaism.

## II THE SECOND TEMPLE

During the second temple period it was easy to entertain ambivalent ideas about the centrality of the cult, even of the temple itself. The beginnings of the second temple were most inauspicious. Jeremiah had predicted that the exodus from Egypt would be eclipsed by the even more glorious exodus from Babylonia (Jer. 16:14 and 23:7). But the prophecy was not realized. Instead a pagan king issued an edict allowing the Jews to return to their homeland and to rebuild their temple. No Davidic king, no miracles, no glory, no political freedom – just an edict issued by the Persian bureaucracy in the name of Cyrus the Great. Was this the return promised by the Lord? Some Jews objected and were scolded by a prophet. ‘Shall the clay say to the potter “What are you doing?” . . . Shame on him who asks his father “What are you begetting?” or a woman “What are you bearing?”’ Thus said the Lord, Israel’s Holy One and Maker: Will you question Me on the destiny of My children, will you instruct Me on the work of My hands?’ (Isa. 45:9–11). God does with his creation as he sees fit. The God who had once commanded his ‘vassal’ Nebuchadnezzar to destroy the temple (Jer. 25:9 and 27:6) was now commanding his ‘anointed’

<sup>35</sup> Jdt. 17–18; 1 Kgs 12:31–32 and 13:33; 2 Chr. 11:15.

Cyrus to rebuild it. Let the Jews accept the divine decree. Similarly, the author of the book of Ezra insists that Cyrus' kindness to the Jews was motivated not by personal considerations but by inspiration from God, thereby fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy of redemption (Ezra 1:1).

But the failure of Jeremiah's prophecy was not the only obstacle to the legitimacy of the second temple. That the divine presence entered Solomon's temple, was plain for all to see. A cloud filled the sanctuary (1 Kgs 8:10–11) and, according to the Chronicler, fire descended from heaven and consumed the offerings upon the altar (2 Chr. 7:1). At the consecration of the second temple there was no sacred cloud and no sacred fire. The old men who had seen the glory of the first temple cried at the dedication of the second, not tears of joy but tears of sadness (Ezra 3:12). Later developments seemed to confirm the illegitimacy of the temple. Prophecy ceased, or at least, changed its character and lost much of its authority.<sup>36</sup> The *Urim* and *Thummim* ceased. Later, corruption spread among the priesthood. A pagan king entered the holy precincts, plundered the treasury, sacrificed swine on the altar, and established 'idols' in the temple, all the while persecuting the Jews and proscribing Judaism. Was this really God's holy temple? Ultimately the temple was regained and the altar was rebuilt, but still no fire from heaven, no miracles, no Davidic king, no explicit sign that God approves the doings of men. Even the high priests were no longer legitimate; they were regular priests who usurped high priestly rank. And less than a century before its destruction the temple had the ignominy of being rebuilt by that 'half-Jew' and complete madman Herod, who incorporated pagan decorations into the structure. Whatever claims the high priesthood still had to religious authority must have been lost when Herod converted it to an annual office, to be occupied by those whom he wished to honour and whose support he coveted. The Romans continued this policy. By the middle of the first century CE the corruption of the high priests was as apparent as it had been in the time of Malachi.<sup>37</sup> Looking back at the second temple the rabbis observed:<sup>38</sup>

The second temple lacked five things found in the first: the sacred fire, the ark, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, the oil for anointing, and the holy spirit.

<sup>36</sup> D. E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids 1983), pp. 103–6.

<sup>37</sup> E. M. Smallwood, 'High Priests and Politics in Roman Palestine', *JTS* NS 13 (1962), 14–34. For the corruption of the high priests see Josephus, *Ant.* xx.180–1 and 20. 205–7; *t. Menah* end (= *b. Pesah*. 57a); and *Lev. Rab.* 2:19 pp. 487–489 ed. Margalio (and parallels).

<sup>38</sup> *y. Ta'anit* 2:1 65a; *b. Yoma* 21b; and parallels. Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 35, p. 160a ed. Friedmann (Ish-Shalom).

In their homilies the rabbis occasionally leap from the first temple to the last (the messianic), omitting the imperfect and forgettable second temple.<sup>39</sup>

To what extent did the Jews of the second temple period itself regard the temple as illegitimate or blemished? The evidence is meagre but suggestive. Propagandists for the Maccabean party insisted that the temple, even after its desecration and repurification, was still sacred, that a sacred fire still burned on its altar, that the voice of God could still be heard in its inner precincts, and that it was still the site of miracles. Propaganda implies a need to convince.<sup>40</sup> Two visionaries of the period declared that the second temple and its priesthood were impure from their inception. Even the sacrifices of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest had been profane.<sup>41</sup> Many visionaries spoke of a heavenly temple or heavenly Jerusalem which would descend in the glorious day of the eschaton and replace the earthly temple or the earthly Jerusalem.

Clearest of all is the evidence provided by Jewish sectarianism. Sects defined themselves *vis à vis* the temple. The Essenes of the Dead Sea regarded the Jerusalem temple as defiled, its cult impure and its priests illegitimate. They removed themselves from communion with the temple and regarded their own sect as a temple. In the glorious future, however, God would build a temple to their specifications, install legitimate priests, and inaugurate the proper observance of the sacrifices and festivals. The details are spelled out in the Temple Scroll.<sup>42</sup> Less extreme were the Pharisees and (some of the early) Christians, who transferred some of the temple's sanctity to their own associations although they did not separate themselves from the temple's cult. The Pharisees regarded their table as an altar, their meal as a sacrifice, and imposed the laws of priestly purity upon themselves.<sup>43</sup> The first Jewish-Christians prayed in the temple

<sup>39</sup> *Sipre Deuteronomy* § 352, p. 410 ed. Finkelstein.

<sup>40</sup> 2 Macc. 1:10–2:18; Josephus, *Ant.* XIII.10.3 §§ 282–3 and *t. Sota* 13.5 pp. 232 ed. Lieberman. See J. Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, pp. 13–17. Supporters of the Herodian temple also told miracle stories: Josephus, *Ant.* xv.11.7 § 425 (paralleled by *b. Ta'anit* 23a) and *t. Sota* 13:6, p. 232 ed. Lieberman. *M. 'Abot* 5:5 lists ten aspects of temple life which were considered 'miraculous,' but it is unclear which temple is meant.

<sup>41</sup> *As. Mos.* 4:6–8; *Enoch* 89:73–4.

<sup>42</sup> R. J. Daly, *Christian Sacrifice* (Washington DC 1978), pp. 157–74; J. M. Baumgarten, *Studies in Qumran Law* (Leiden 1977), pp. 39–87. A judicious selection of texts on this theme is given by G. W. E. Nickelsburg and M. Stone (eds.), *Faith and Piety in Early Judaism* (Philadelphia 1983), chapter 2.

<sup>43</sup> The laws of purity were not the be-all and end-all of Pharisaism, but their prominence is reasonably certain. See J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, edn 3 (Göttingen 1962), pp. 279–303; ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia 1969), pp. 246–67 with the strictures of E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia 1977), pp. 60–2 and 152–7; and, of course, the numerous works of J. Neusner. See pp. 420–1 below.



and participated in its rituals, all the while they told stories about its pollution, its cleansing by Jesus in preparation for the end of days, and its wicked priests who killed God's prophet.<sup>44</sup>

These sectarian Jews clearly believed that the temple and its cult, as then constituted, were imperfect and inadequate, and that, at least temporarily, they had to be augmented if not supplanted. Only a few radical Jews, inspired either by one strand of biblical thought (God cannot be contained by the heavens, much less by a single building) or by Stoic philosophy (Zeno argued that no man-made building can be worthy of the gods) or both, concluded that God does not need any temple at all – the entire cosmos is his throne.<sup>45</sup> These Jews found their home in Christianity. Stephen tells the Jews of Jerusalem that 'the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands' (Acts 7). The wilderness tabernacle had been authorized by God and created in imitation of a divine model, but God never desired a temple. The author of the Revelation of John proclaims, upon his inspection of the heavenly Jerusalem, 'And I did not see a temple in her, for the Lord God, the ruler of all, is her temple' (Rev. 21:22; contrast 11:19). Like the Jews of Qumran Paul argued, *inter alia*, that the new community of the church was the real temple; unlike the Jews of Qumran Paul and his Christian followers believed that the real temple would never again find favour in God's eyes. The author of Hebrews argued that Jesus was the perfect high-priest who offered the perfect atonement sacrifice, himself, thereby demonstrating the inferiority of the Aaronide priests and the sacrifice of rams.<sup>46</sup> Later Christianity insisted that the temple and its cult were meant by God to be understood in allegorical ('spiritual') fashion, and that the Jews erred badly by understanding them carnally. The strident tone of some of these later discussions

<sup>44</sup> Cleansing of the temple: Mark 11:15–17 and parallels; the eschatological connections of the story are made explicit by John 2:18–20, but John tries to reinterpret the reference to the earthly temple (John 2:21–2). Prayer in the temple: see above, n. 16. Jesus' confrontation with the priests at his trial is inspired, at least in part, by Jer. 26. See further the footnote at the end of the next paragraph.

<sup>45</sup> Biblical thought: Isa. 66:1–2 and 1 Kgs 8:27. Stoic thought: J. von Arnim, *SVF*, 3 vols. (Leipzig 1905), 1, pp. 61–2 (Zeno, fragment 264). See too the Letters of Heraclitus 4:2 in *The Cynic Epistles*, ed. A. J. Malherbe, SBL SBS 12 (Missoula 1977), pp. 190–1, and *Sibylline Oracles* 4:8. Philo has similar ideas, but does not draw these conclusions; see below. Cf. Josephus, *Bell.* v.11.2 § 458.

<sup>46</sup> Hebrews does not 'spiritualize' or allegorize the cult; the author argues instead that one sacrifice (that of Christ on the cross) has replaced the other (the sacrifices offered by the high-priest in the temple). Some rabbis would agree with his argument that 'without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins' (Heb. 9:22); compare *Sipra* on Leviticus 1:4, p. 6a ed. Weiss, p. 35 ed. Finkelstein (= *b. Yoma* 5a and parallels). Hebrews discusses the tabernacle, not the temple. For an analysis of Heb. 8–10 see Daly, *Christian Sacrifice*, pp. 261–85.

might, however, conceal some feelings of ambivalence, if not envy, towards the temple.<sup>47</sup>

Most Jews, however, never made explicit their ambivalent feelings about the temple and its cult. From far and near, from Galilee, Alexandria, Babylonia, and elsewhere, they went to Jerusalem on pilgrimage. Josephus claims that in CE 70 the population of Jerusalem was swollen by the thousands of people who ignored the perils of the war, came to Jerusalem as pilgrims for the Passover, and were trapped in the city.<sup>48</sup> In the second century BCE the Jews of the Diaspora began to send a half shekel per caput annually to the temple, a practice which was instituted by the Maccabees and maintained by the Herodians.<sup>49</sup> Rabbinic literature describes the enthusiasm with which the assembled multitudes witnessed and participated in the festival rituals.<sup>50</sup> Philo, Josephus and other writers describe the temple and the cult without any sign of disapproval or disdain.<sup>51</sup> Any ambivalence towards the temple and the cult was well suppressed.

<sup>47</sup> The major Pauline passages are: 1 Cor. 3:16–17 and 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; cf. Eph. 2:19–22 and 1 Pet. 2:1–10. Christian life is sacrifice: Rom. 12:1–2 and 15:15–16. For a detailed discussion of these and related passages see Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, pp. 185–94 and Daly, *Christian Sacrifice*, pp. 208–307. On the attitude of the gospels to the temple, see Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, pp. 252–60, 289–96, and *passim*. For Christian material on ‘Spiritual Sacrifice’, with parallels from Jewish and Greco-Roman sources, see E. Ferguson in *ANRW*, ed. W. Haase (Berlin 1980), II.23, 2, pp. 1151–89; H. Wenschkewitz, ‘Die Spiritualisierung der Kultusbegriffe Tempel, Priester und Opfer im Neuen Testament’, *Angelus* 4 (1932), 70–230; and F. M. Young, *The Use of Sacrificial Ideas in Greek Christian Writers*, Patristic Monograph Series 5. (Cambridge, MA 1979). The ‘spiritualization’ of the temple did not prevent Christianity from regarding the church building as a temple (see below) and applying to it some of the purity laws prescribed for the temple by Leviticus. In the fourth century a few Christians (the Eustathians) argued that church buildings were contemptible because one may pray to God anywhere, but this view, analogous to that of Stephen, was declared heretical by the fifth canon of the council of Gangra. On ‘Christian Envy of the Temple’ see H. Nibley, in *JQR* NS 50 (1959–60), 97–123 and 229–40. The Christians of Julian’s time realized that if the Jews succeeded in rebuilding the temple, the truth of Judaism and the falsehood of Christianity would be demonstrated; see R. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley 1983), pp. 132–48.

<sup>48</sup> Josephus, *Bell.* 6.9.3. §§ 420–21; Philo, *Special Laws* 1:12 §§ 66–70. See Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, pp. 66–98, ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 58–84, and S. Safrai, *Die Wallfahrt im Zeitalter des zweiten Tempels*, Forschungen zum jüdisch-christlichen Dialog (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1981).

<sup>49</sup> J. Liver, ‘The Half-Shekel Offering in Biblical and Post-biblical Literature’, *HTR* 56 (1963), 173–98.

<sup>50</sup> Josephus, *Bell.* 6.9.3 §§ 423–4, compare *t. Pesah* 4:15 (p. 166 ed. Lieberman); *m. Sukk.* 4–5 with the Tosepta *ad loc.*

<sup>51</sup> Philo ‘spiritualizes’ the cult and the temple (see for example the passage in note 48, but nowhere questions their literal truth. See H. A. Wolfson, *Philo*, 2 vols. (Cambridge,

Several texts declare, in the tradition of the prophets, wisdom literature, and the Psalms, that fear of the Lord, giving of charity, performance of the commandments, love of one's neighbour, and earnest prayer are in God's eyes equal to, if not greater than, the sacrificial cult.<sup>52</sup> The intent of all these texts, like the intent of the prophets and the Psalms, is not clear. Perhaps they are suggesting that alternate modes of piety really are preferable in God's eyes to the sacrificial cult, and that the ideal world has no need for worship based on the slaughter of sheep and cattle. Or perhaps they are emphasizing the importance of these virtues alongside the sacrificial cult; God wants both forms of worship.<sup>53</sup> Whatever the intent, two facts are remarkable. First, the number of these texts is relatively small. Second, no text of the period explicitly suggests that Torah study is a surrogate or a complement to the sacrificial cult. The rabbis' list of surrogates or complements is much longer than that produced in the late second temple period, and their list includes Torah study, the quintessential act of rabbinic piety (see below).

What was the role of the synagogue in this ideological struggle? Josephus and Philo describe the glories of Judaism but do not discuss the synagogue. They boast that all Jews are learned in the law and pray to God regularly. But their praise of Judaism does not extend to the synagogue which they mention only *en passant*. Similarly, the Dead Sea Scrolls do not mention synagogues. The numerous works of the 'Apocrypha' and 'Pseudepigrapha' mention them at most two or three times.<sup>54</sup> The New

MA 1947, repr. 1968), vol. 2, pp. 241–8, and V. Nikiprowetzky, 'La spiritualisation des sacrifices et le culte sacrificiel au Temple de Jerusalem chez Philon', *Sem* 17 (1967), 97–116. Philo also 'spiritualizes' the land of Israel; see Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, pp. 121–3.

<sup>52</sup> Jdt. 16:16; Tob. 4:10–11; *Jub.* 2:22; Mark 12:28–34 and parallels; Pss. 154:10–11 (11QPs<sup>a</sup> 18:7–10) and *Manual of Discipline* (1QS) 9:4–5. On the Psalms which declare that prayer is superior (40:7–10; 69:31–2; 51:19) or equal (119:108; 141:2) to the sacrificial cult, see M. Haran, 'Priest, Temple, and Worship', *Tarb* 48 (1978/9), 175–85, esp. 182–5 (Hebrew). The Prayer of Azariah 15–16 equates martyrdom with sacrifice.

<sup>53</sup> This is explicit in Sir. 34:19–20 and 35:1–11. The intent of coordinating prayer with the sacrifices (see above, note 16) is ambiguous. It may indicate either a conception of prayer as a surrogate for sacrifice, or the idea that the times ordained by God for sacrifices were propitious for prayer as well. This point is debated by the rabbis (*b. Ber.* 26b and *p. Ber.* 4:1 7a–b). See I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst*, Frankfurt, edn 2 1924, edn 3 1931, p. 251, Hebrew edition, *Ha-tefillah be Yisra'el*, ed. J. Heinemann *et al.* (Tel Aviv 1972), p. 190, ET *Jewish Liturgy* (Philadelphia and New York 1993), p. 199.

<sup>54</sup> 3 Macc 7:20 (written in Alexandria) and Pseudo-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities* 11:8 (reminiscent of Philo and Josephus). In his translations of *APOT* R. H. Charles occasionally employs the terms 'synagogue' and 'congregation' (1 Enoch 38:1, 53:6, and 62:8; Pss. Sol. 17:18), but in these passages the meaning is 'community', not 'school' or 'prayer-house'. Compare the translations in the new edition of the Pseudepigrapha by J. H. Charlesworth.

Testament mentions them, like Philo and Josephus, only *en passant*. Why this reticence to talk about synagogues? Why were second temple Jews willing and eager to talk about prayer, study and the observance of the commandments, but not about synagogues?

The classical prophets had indicated that God was not content with the sacrificial cult alone. God wanted piety, social justice, and other virtues as well. But the temple *per se* was never assailed or rejected by the prophets, because it was such a powerful symbol of the monistic truth of Judaism (see above). Any institution which upset this unity and which was not established on this sacred centre was not part of the Jewish ideal. The multiplicity of synagogues, like the multiplicity of *bamot* in the first temple period and the multiplicity of sects in the second, represents the breakdown of unity and unanimity, the dissolution of Judaism's claim to truth. Hence both for the prophets and for the Jews of the second temple period, the sacrificial cult could be supplemented by 'democratic' modes of piety, but the temple could not. Josephus and Philo extol prayer and study but not synagogues. Texts of the second temple period do not bestow on the synagogue any ideological justification. In the heavens God has a temple and/or a Jerusalem prepared for the delectation of his faithful at the end of days, but he does not have a heavenly synagogue, because synagogues have no role in the ideal world of the heavens and the messianic future. Some Jews replaced the monism of the temple with the monism of Christ and the Church, but these Jews soon found themselves beyond the pale of Judaism. For most Jews the monism of the temple could not be compromised, and the synagogue therefore could not emerge from its ideological obscurity. These ideas were developed by the rabbis, as we shall see below.

### III PRAYER, TORAH STUDY AND SACRIFICIAL CULT IN RABBINIC JUDAISM

It is often said that Judaism was devastated by the the cessation of the sacrificial cult in CE 70. No longer able to obtain atonement or to commune with God, the Jews felt lost and adrift. These concerns probably troubled some Jews, especially the simple folk, but it is unlikely that they troubled all the Jews, and especially unlikely that they troubled the rabbis. The apocalypses of Baruch and Esdras, both written shortly after CE 70, hardly mention the cessation of the sacrificial cult.<sup>55</sup> Like Lamentations these works are distressed not by the loss of the cult but by the loss of

<sup>55</sup> *2 Bar* 35:1–5 laments the loss of the *glory* of the sacrificial cult. The importance of the cult is highlighted only briefly in *2 Esdr.* 10:45–6.

Jerusalem, the holy city, and the loss of the temple, the visible symbol of God's protective presence. Presumably the sacrificial cult had been supplemented for so long, especially among sectarian circles (including the ancestors of the rabbinic movement), that its loss was not as devastating as it might otherwise have been. The Mishnah too does not reflect any anguish caused by the cessation of the sacrificial cult; in fact, it does not reflect any anguish at all in the wake of the events of CE 70. It gives no indication of crisis, no sign that the destruction of the temple marks an epoch in the relationship between Israel and God. The Mishnah mentions the destruction several times but never speaks *about* the destruction, either to advance an explanation for the tragedy or to state what the future course of Judaism ought to be. The temple and the sacrificial cult figure prominently in the ideal world delineated by the Mishnah (as they do in the ideal world delineated by Ezek. 40–8 and the Temple Scroll),<sup>56</sup> but the depiction of the ideal is never accompanied by plaintive laments or doleful pining for what no longer exists.<sup>57</sup> The Mishnah pays little attention to the Ninth of Ab, the fast day which commemorates the destruction of both the first and the second temples, and to the enactments (*taqqanot*) of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai.<sup>58</sup> These observations apply not only to the Mishnah but also to tannaitic literature generally: not a single tannaitic work gives any explicit indication that a response is needed to the destruction of the temple.<sup>59</sup> Some of the Mishnah's modern interpreters are more obsessed with the destruction of the temple and its cult than is the Mishnah itself.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>56</sup> J. Neusner, 'Map without Territory: Mishnah's System of Sacrifice and Sanctuary' in *Method and Meaning in ancient Judaism* (Chico 1979), pp. 133–53. The influence of Ezek. 40–8 is apparent in *m. Mid.*

<sup>57</sup> The sole possible exception is *m. Sota*, end, but the passage is heavily interpolated.

<sup>58</sup> Ninth of Ab: *m. Ta'an* 4:6–7. Enactments of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai: *m. Roš Haš.* 4:1–4.

<sup>59</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, 'The Destruction: From Scripture to Midrash', *Prooftexts* 2 (1982), 18–39, esp. 18–19. The sole possible exception is *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* (see below).

<sup>60</sup> 'The cessation of sacrifice, however deeply it was deplored, caused no crisis', writes Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 1, p. 114; compare vol. 1, pp. 502–3 and vol. 2, p. 13. This is one of the rare instances of agreement between Moore and W. Bousset: 'It [the Jewish religion] was hardly shaken by this terrible event' (*Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter*, ed. H. Gressmann, HNT 21 (Berlin 1926), p. 113). Similar views appear in H. Graetz, *The Structure of Jewish History*, ed. I. Schorsch (New York 1975), p. 93, and I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, 2 vols. (Cambridge 1917 and 1924; repr. New York 1967), vol. 2, p. 198. In the post-Holocaust era scholars tend to the opposite view; see G. Alon, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age I* (Jerusalem 1980), pp. 41–55; H. J. Schoeps, *Aus frühchristlicher Zeit* (Tübingen 1950), pp. 170–1 (rejecting Bousset); and J. Neusner, *Judaism: the Evidence of the Mishnah* (Chicago 1981), p. 25 and *passim*, with the review of S. J. D. Cohen in *CJed* 37 (1983), 48–63.

How then did the rabbis of the tannaitic period (CE 70–200) feel about the catastrophe of CE 70? We do not know. It is unlikely that they heaved a sigh of relief when they beheld the flames take hold of the holy precincts, but we have no evidence that they were gripped by a terror of the sort which pervades the apocalypses of Baruch and Esdras. They ignore the destruction of the temple, for any of various possible explanations: not knowing what to say they say nothing; they pretend that nothing has happened; they realize, if only subconsciously, that the loss of the temple was not unexpected and not entirely disastrous. Although their feelings are hidden from us, their actions are not. The very fact that the Mishnah exists is an implicit endorsement of the power of study and of the will to continue. Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai enacted that some of the prerogatives of Jerusalem and the temple be transferred to the court at Jamnia-Jabneh. When, in order to mourn the destruction, some Jews refrained from eating meat and drinking wine, Rabbi Joshua reminded them of the teaching of the sages, ‘A man plasters his house but leaves a little bit unplastered as a memorial for Jerusalem.’<sup>61</sup> A sense of normalcy must be maintained.

An even stronger response is offered by the following tannaitic midrash on Deut. 11:13:<sup>62</sup>

‘To love the Lord your God and to serve him.’ This is Torah study . . . Just as the service of the altar is called ‘service’, so too Torah study is called ‘service’. Another opinion: ‘to serve him’ is prayer . . . Just as the service of the altar is called ‘service’, so too prayer is called ‘service’.

The Psalmist sang ‘Let my prayer be counted as incense before thee, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice’ (Pss. 141:2), clearly implying that God really wanted sacrifice but would settle for prayer.<sup>63</sup> By contrast, the midrash declares explicitly that prayer and Torah study are alternate forms of worship, equal in God’s eyes to the sacrificial cult.<sup>64</sup> This view does not appear in the Mishnah, at least not explicitly.<sup>65</sup> The

<sup>61</sup> Enactments of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai: see *m. Roš Haš.* 4:1–4 with the talmudim ad loc. Rabbi Joshua: *t. Soṭa* end and *b. B. Bat.* 60 b.

<sup>62</sup> *Sipre Deuteronomy* 41, pp. 87–8 ed. Finkelstein.

<sup>63</sup> The *Sipre* does not appreciate this point and cites Psalm 141:2 as one of its prooftexts. <sup>64</sup> In their interpretation of Mal. 1:10–12, Justin’s Jewish opponents argue that the sacrifices to which the prophet refers are the prayers offered by the Jews. See Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 117.

<sup>65</sup> Perhaps this view appears in the Mishnah in subtle form; see B. Bokser, ‘Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity’, *PAAJR* 50 (1983), 37–61, esp. 40–7. The Mishnah, however, omits some of the most characteristic elements of rabbinic piety (the use of phylacteries and fringes), and says little about others (prayer, the study of Torah, the preparation of Torah scrolls).

elevation of Torah study to a form of worship is novel too, the culmination of a process which began much before (see above).

Tannaitic literature, then, scarcely takes cognizance of the destruction of the temple and the cessation of the cult. The first generations after the catastrophe succeeded in maintaining a sense of ‘normalcy’, but later Jews sensed and gave expression to the magnitude of the loss.<sup>66</sup> During the amoraic period (CE 200–500), as the temple receded further into the past, as the prospects for its restoration seemed to grow dimmer and dimmer, as the nostalgia for the ‘good old days’ increased, and as the enormity of the destruction impressed itself more strongly on the rabbinic consciousness, the loss of the temple and the sacrificial cult was felt more keenly. Rabbi Eleazar declared, ‘since the day the temple was destroyed, the gates of prayer have been locked . . . Since the day the temple was destroyed an iron wall has separated Israel from their father in heaven.’<sup>67</sup> Origen claims that the Jews of his time are distraught because of their inability to atone for their sins:<sup>68</sup>

The Jews say concerning themselves, ‘Since we have neither the altar nor the temple nor the priesthood and, on this account, we do not offer sacrifices, our sins (the Jews say) remain in us and consequently no forgiveness is obtained.’

A similar cry of anguish is raised by Rabbi Joshua in the following story from *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan*.<sup>69</sup>

Once, as Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai was coming forth from Jerusalem, Rabbi Joshua followed after him and beheld the temple in ruins. ‘Woe unto us!’ Rabbi Joshua cried, ‘that this, the place where the iniquities of Israel were atoned for, is laid waste.’

‘My son’, Rabban Yohanan said to him, ‘be not grieved. We have another atonement as effective as this. And what is it? It is acts of loving kindness, as it is said, “For I desire mercy and not sacrifice” (Hosea 6:6).’

<sup>66</sup> This is a normal psychological process; see Bokser, pp. 59–60.

<sup>67</sup> *b. Ber* 32b; the ‘iron wall’ motif derives from *Lam* 3:7–9 and 44. Is R. Eleazar referring to the destruction of the first temple? The identity of this R. Eleazar is elusive. See B. H. Bokser, ‘The Wall Separating God and Israel’, *JQR* NS 73 (1983), 349–74.

<sup>68</sup> Origen, *Homily on Numbers* 10:2 (ed. Baehrens, GCS 30, p. 72); see A. Marmorstein, ‘Deux renseignements d’Origène concernant les Juifs’, *REJ* 71 (1920), 190–9, esp. 190–4. Did Origen really know what third-century Jews were saying, or did he know only what they *should* have been saying? Compare his rhetoric at *Homily on Numbers* 7:4 (ed. Baehrens, p. 44). For whatever it is worth, I note that Julian’s decision to rebuild the temple was the result of *his* initiative, not that of the Jews. See John Chrysostom, *Against the Jews* 5.11.4 (PG 48, col. 900); Rufinus, *History of the Church* 1:37 (PL 21, col. 505); and Theodoret, *History of the Church* 3:15 (PG 82, col. 1112).

<sup>69</sup> *Abot R. Nat.* A 4 (ed. Schechter, p. 112); compare B 8 (ed. Schechter, p. 11b). I follow the translation of J. Goldin (New Haven 1955), p. 34.



In all likelihood this story reveals the concerns not of the first century, the chronological setting of the story, but of the third, the date of the story's source.<sup>70</sup> The story's literary context confirms this interpretation. Simeon the Righteous said, 'The world is based upon three things: the Torah, the temple service (*'ăbôdâ*), and deeds of loving-kindness' (*m. Abot* 1:2). In its commentary on the first and third elements of this saying, *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* emphasizes that the study of Torah and the practice of charity are equal to, if not greater than, the sacrificial cult. These two pillars are sufficiently strong to carry the world even if the third pillar is removed. In support of this position Rabban Yohanan's response to R. Joshua is adduced. In its commentary on the second element of Simeon's triad, *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* emphasizes the opposite point. Without the sacrificial cult the world is out of balance and the cosmic order is reduced to chaos. *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* juxtaposes two contradictory attitudes; rabbinic Judaism never tried to resolve the tension between them.<sup>71</sup>

Many amoraim believed that the sacrificial cult was still the only true and effective mode of reaching God; prayer was its inadequate, temporary and unavoidable replacement. Paradoxically enough, this attitude came to be enshrined in the liturgy which declared itself to be a poor substitute for the real thing. Hos. 14:3, a cryptic, perhaps corrupt, prophetic utterance (literally, 'we will render the bulls of our lips'), was understood to mean that prayer should be offered in lieu of sacrifice.<sup>72</sup> The rabbis therefore declared that he who studies the scriptural passages concerning the sacrifices and meditates upon the laws of the sacrificial cult, is regarded by God as if he had brought a burnt offering.<sup>73</sup> Rabbi Sheshet used to pray on the evening after a fast day:<sup>74</sup>

Lord of the world, when the temple was standing one who sinned offered a sacrifice, of which only the fat and the blood were taken, and thereby his sins were forgiven. I have fasted today, and through this fasting my blood and fat

<sup>70</sup> This position is defended also by Bokser. *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* is a composite work consisting of both tannaitic and amoraic material. See A. Saldarini, *Scholastic Rabbinism*, BJS 14 (Chico 1982), pp. 138–42.

<sup>71</sup> R. Goldenberg, 'The Broken Axis: Rabbinic Judaism and the Fall of Jerusalem', *JAAR* 45 (1977), supplement, F:869–82, esp. 877 ('The self-conception of rabbinic Judaism is built on the contradictory assumptions that the earlier worship in the Temple has been successfully left behind, but that things will never be quite right until it has been restored'). For a similar observation see Sanders, *Paul*, pp. 162–4.

<sup>72</sup> For the liturgy's view of itself, see the *Musap* prayers for the Sabbath and the holidays in *Daily Prayer Book: Ha-Siddur Ha-Shalem*, ed. P. Birnbaum (New York 1949), pp. 396, 578 and 614–16. Hos. 14:3; *Pesiq. Rab Kab.* 24:19, p. 377 ed. Mandelbaum.

<sup>73</sup> *b. Ta'an.* 27b; *b. Meg.* 31b; *b. Menah* 110a; *Lev. Rab.* 7:3, p. 155 ed. Margaliot.

<sup>74</sup> *b. Ber.* 17a. I follow the translation of J. Lauterbach, *JE* 10 (1905), p. 625.

have decreased. Deign to look upon the part of my blood and my fat which I have lost through my fasting as if I had offered it to thee, and forgive my sins in return.

The amoraim debated the origins of the statutory prayers. According to some, they were established by the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that is, they have independent existence and value just as the tannaim had said. According to others, however, they correspond to the various offerings of the sacrificial cult. This view prevailed.<sup>75</sup> The amoraim declare 'He who prays in synagogue is regarded as if he had brought a pure offering'<sup>76</sup> and claim that various other manifestations of rabbinic piety are equivalent to the sacrificial cult.<sup>77</sup> The norm, against which the rabbinic virtues are measured, is the sacrificial cult.

Some amoraim argued the contrary position. Rabbinic piety is not merely a replacement of the sacrificial cult, it is superior to the original. 'Torah study is greater than the continual offerings.' God told king David that he took more pleasure from one day of his Torah study than he would take from the thousand holocausts which Solomon would offer on the altar. 'He who studies Torah has no need for any of the sacrifices.' Humility, charity, and repentance were the equivalent of all the sacrifices put together.<sup>78</sup> Prayer was greater than the sacrifices, greater in fact than good deeds. A late rabbinic homily narrates that 'Moses foresaw through the holy spirit that the temple would be destroyed and that the offerings of the first fruits would cease. He arose and enacted that the Jews should pray three times a day, because prayer is dearer to the Holy One, blessed be He, than are good deeds and all the sacrifices.'<sup>79</sup>

In sum, the rabbis had three different understandings of the relationship of the sacrificial cult to prayer and Torah study. The studied silence of the tannaim implies that they regarded rabbinic virtues as a form of worship parallel to the sacrificial cult, an attitude made explicit in one midrashic passage.<sup>80</sup> Some amoraim argued that the sacrificial cult was still the only authentic way to communicate with God, and that prayer, Torah study and everything else were inadequate replacements. In contrast other amoraim argued that the rabbinic virtues were superior to the original. Of course, these different attitudes were never worked out systematically and the distinctions among them should not be pressed too

<sup>75</sup> See note 53 above. <sup>76</sup> *y. Ber.* 5:1 8d.

<sup>77</sup> N. Glatzer, 'The Concept of Sacrifice in Post-biblical Judaism', *Essays in Jewish Thought* (University, Alabama 1978), pp. 48–57. See too Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 2, pp. 218–19. A selection of texts is given by C. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (London 1930), index, s.v. sacrifices.

<sup>78</sup> *b. Meg.* 3b; *b. Mak.* 10a; *b. Menah.* 110a; *b. Soṭa* 5b; *b. Sukk.* 49b; *Lev. Rab.* 7:2, pp. 150–1 ed. Margalioṭ.

<sup>79</sup> *b. Ber.* 32b and *Tanbuma Ki Tabo* 1. <sup>80</sup> But not by the Mishnah; see note 65.

rigorously. Each of these views has different eschatological implications, but the rabbis seldom articulated these implications precisely. We may presume that most tannaim believed that in the end of days the sacrificial cult would continue to be complemented by prayer and Torah study, but the tannaim never make this point clear.<sup>81</sup> As a logical consequence of their belief that the sacrificial cult was inherently superior to all other modes of worship some amoraim should have believed that prayer would have little function in the messianic era, but this belief is never expressed.<sup>82</sup> They probably did not imagine that prayer would be eliminated altogether, any more than they imagined that Torah study, humility and acts of charity would cease in the end of days. As a logical consequence of their belief that prayer, Torah study, etc. are superior to the sacrificial cult other amoraim should have concluded that there is no need in the future for the sacrificial cult, but this belief is never expressed explicitly in amoraic sources. After preaching that Torah study is infinitely superior to the sacrificial cult, an ancient rabbi might have prayed with all sincerity that the cult be restored speedily in his days. A few late (post-amoraic) rabbinic homilies try to be consistent on this matter ('Sacrifices are practised only below, while charity and the commandments are practised both below and above. Sacrifices are practised only in this world, while charity and the commandments are practised in this world and in the world to come'), but consistency was not desired. Even Maimonides, who, as is well known, argued that the sacrificial cult was instituted for the sole purpose of weaning the Israelites away from idolatry, insisted that the sacrificial cult would be restored in the messianic era.<sup>83</sup>

#### IV TEMPLE AND SYNAGOGUE IN RABBINIC THOUGHT

Missing from this discussion is the institution which housed prayer and study, the synagogue. Prayer versus sacrificial cult was an ideological issue, synagogue versus temple was not. Both literary and archaeological evidence shows that after CE 70 the synagogue gradually usurped more and more of the rituals and ideology of the temple, but the usurpation

<sup>81</sup> That the tannaim believed that the sacrificial cult will be restored is implied by the lavish attention devoted to it by the Mishnah; see too *m. Pesah.* 10:6.

<sup>82</sup> The petition for the restoration of the sacrificial cult is more prominent in the prayers of the amoraim than in the prayers of the tannaim. See Elbogen, pp. 88 and 190.

<sup>83</sup> *Deut. Rab.* on Deuteronomy 16:18, p. 96 ed. Lieberman. *Lev. Rab.* 9:7, pp. 185–6 ed. Margalio, argues that most of the sacrifices would not be needed in the world to come, but this is a different argument; see W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come*, JBL MS 7 (Philadelphia 1952), pp. 54–6. For the views of Maimonides, contrast *Guide for the Perplexed* 3:32 (based on *Lev. Rab.* 22:8, p. 517 ed. Margalio) with *Mishneh Torah* 14: *Laws of Kings* 11:1. Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, pp. 130 and 157, emphasizes that the rabbinic views must not be regarded as mutually exclusive positions.

could never be entirely successful, because in the end of days the temple will be rebuilt and synagogues will have no reason to exist. Unlike prayer and Torah study the synagogue never received a legitimation which would justify its continued existence in the ideal future. Let us briefly examine these ideas.

The Mishnah states that the sanctity of a synagogue must be respected even if the synagogue has been destroyed, because God declares 'I will make your sanctuaries desolate' (Lev. 26:31), the plural indicating that a ruined synagogue, like the ruined temple, is still a 'sanctuary'.<sup>84</sup> Is a standing synagogue also a 'sanctuary'? This question is ignored by the tannaim but is addressed by the amoraim.<sup>85</sup> Ezekiel's declaration that God has become 'a diminished sanctity' for the Israelites in exile (Ezek. 11:16) was mistranslated by the amoraim to yield the idea that God dwells in a 'diminished sanctuary' (*miqdāš mē'at*) in the exile, that is, in synagogues and schools.<sup>86</sup> That the divine presence (*šĕkīnā*) can be found in synagogues, at least during moments of prayer, is the subject of many amoraic dicta (see below). Throughout late antiquity and the middle ages, prayers and rituals which originated in the temple were transferred to the synagogue.<sup>87</sup>

Archaeological evidence too shows an increasing assimilation of the synagogue to the temple. The Tosefta legislates that synagogue doors must face east, just as the doors of the Tabernacle faced east, and archaeology has revealed synagogues whose doors do, in fact, face east.<sup>88</sup> Synagogue inscriptions regularly employ names which originally referred to the temple: 'holy', 'holy place', 'place', 'house of God', etc.<sup>89</sup> Synagogue

<sup>84</sup> *m. Meg.* 3:3.

<sup>85</sup> The rituals and status of the synagogue are seldom discussed in tannaitic texts. Contrast the brief references in *m.* and *t. Meg.* to synagogues and in *m.* and *t. Ber.* to prayer with the expansive discussions of the talmudim *ad loc.* The amoraim delineate the content of the liturgy and assess the relationship of the synagogue to the school house.

<sup>86</sup> *b. Meg.* 29a.

<sup>87</sup> For prayers which were transferred see note 23 above. For a general discussion see S. Krauss, *Synagogale Altertümer* (Berlin 1922), chapter 14 ('Die Synagoge – Ersatz für den Tempel') and Hengel, 'Proseuche und Synagoge', pp. 166–9. A full study of this theme is a desideratum.

<sup>88</sup> *t. Meg.* 3:22, p. 360 ed. Lieberman. See F. Landsberger, 'The Sacred Direction in Synagogue and Church', *HUCA* 28 (1957), 181–203, and M. J. S. Chiat, *Handbook of Synagogue Architecture* (Chico 1982; BJS 29), p. 402, index, s.v. Tosefta Megilla 4:22. The Tosefta employs the Tabernacle as a model rather than the temple. Compare note 46 above (Stephen and Hebrews).

<sup>89</sup> See P. Wexler, 'Terms for "Synagogue" in Hebrew and Jewish Languages', *REJ* 140 (1981), 101–38; the indices to B. Lifshitz, *Donateurs et fondateurs dans les synagogues juives*, CRB 7 (Paris 1967) and J. Naveh, *On Stone and Mosaic: The Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues* (Israel 1978; Hebrew); L. Robert, *Bulletin épigraphique* 8 (1974–7), year 1976, p. 558, entry 684 (Nicomedia and district), at no. 104.

art was replete with images of objects used in the temple cult: the menorah, the shofar, the lulab, the incense shovel and others. Some synagogues contained portrayals of the temple itself or of the ark.<sup>90</sup> By the third century some synagogues incorporated not merely an artistic portrayal of the ark but an actual structure to house the Torah scrolls permanently in the sanctuary.<sup>91</sup> Perhaps the depiction of the zodiac and the sun-chariot on the synagogue floor was part of this attempt to bring the temple into the synagogue, as if to indicate that the role of the temple as cosmic centre could be transferred to the synagogue too.<sup>92</sup>

But the assimilation of the synagogue to the temple had clear limits. The synagogue had no inherent sanctity. It could be bought and sold; according to one opinion it could even be converted into a bathhouse. When a synagogue is no longer used for sacred purposes its sanctity disappears.<sup>93</sup> Most rabbinic passages which refer to the divine presence (*šekînâ*) in the synagogue do so in connection with the prayer and study conducted by the Jews. R. Yudan said in the name of R. Isaac, 'Whenever the Jews assemble in synagogues and schools, the Holy One, blessed be He, assembles his *šekînâ* with them.' The pious behaviour of the Jews, not the building or the place or the institution, confers sanctity on the synagogue.<sup>94</sup> Most synagogues which have been discovered do not imitate the temple's orientation; they face not east but the temple, thereby indicating that they are not mirror images of the temple but remote outposts of the sacredness of the centre. The Mishnah too ordains that those who pray must 'direct their hearts' towards Jerusalem and ignores the orientation of the imperfect but necessary structure which protected the congregation from the wind, rain and sun.<sup>95</sup> The Talmud opposes the erection of any

<sup>90</sup> J. Gutmann, 'A Note on the Temple Menorah', *ZNW* 60 (1969), 289–291; C. H. Kraeling, *The Synagogue* (New Haven 1956), pp. 54–62, 105–13, and 125–33; and E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 13 vols. (New York and Princeton 1953–68), especially volumes 1–2 (the synagogues of Israel and the Diaspora) and 9–10 (the Dura synagogue).

<sup>91</sup> E. M. Meyers, J. Strange and C. Meyers, 'The Ark of Nabratein', *BA* 44 (1981), 237–43.

<sup>92</sup> Churches too tried to claim the status of cosmic centres; see Eusebius, *History of the Church* 10.4, especially 10.4.3 §§ 36 and 46, and the material assembled by Nibley, 'Envy', p. 112. This claim is conspicuous in the art and architecture of mediaeval cathedrals. *Naos* became a common term for 'church'.

<sup>93</sup> *m. Meg.* 3:2–3 and *t. Meg.* 2:17–18, pp. 352–3 ed. Lieberman.

<sup>94</sup> *Pesiq. Rab. Kab.* 28:8, pp. 431–2 ed. Mandelbaum; cf. *b. Ber.* 6a–b; *Mek.* p. 243 ed. Horowitz-Rabin. Tertullian argues that synagogues are scorned by Jeremiah (2:13), 'broken cisterns which cannot even hold water', because they do not contain the holy spirit; see *Against the Jews* 13:14–15. Goodenough, *Symbols*, 1:183–4, exaggerates the degree to which synagogues were considered 'houses of God'.

<sup>95</sup> *m. Ber.* 4:5–6 and *t. Ber.* 3:14–16, pp. 15–16 ed. Lieberman. These texts do not refer to synagogues. It is unclear whether to 'direct their hearts' means a physical change of

building which imitates the temple and the creation of any object which imitates the sacred vessels.<sup>96</sup> Some practices, the rabbis said, must not be transferred from the temple to the synagogue.<sup>97</sup> Thus the synagogue could replace some of the temple's functions, but it could not replace the temple itself and all that it symbolized. In parallel fashion, the rabbis usurped the role of the priests and even arrogated to themselves a measure of priestly status, but these efforts too were half-hearted and incomplete. The priests remained an active force in Jewish society and the temple remained an active force in Jewish ideology.<sup>98</sup>

The synagogue's status as an ideological step-child is clear from eschatology. Following the legacy of the second temple period, the rabbis speak about a heavenly temple, a heavenly Jerusalem, and a heavenly court (or sanhedrin). They also speak about a heavenly altar and a heavenly academy. But nowhere, neither in their mystical speculations nor in their musings about the end of days nor in the apocalyptic texts of the sixth and seventh centuries, do they refer to a *bêt kēneset šel ma'ālā*, a heavenly synagogue.<sup>99</sup> In the ideal world of the heavens and the future, synagogues do not exist. In one stray remark a rabbi declares that in the future all the synagogues and academies of Babylonia will be picked up and established in the land of Israel – what will happen then, he does not say. Even this lone passage does not ascribe to synagogues any important role in the messianic future.<sup>100</sup>

In sum, all attempts to bestow temple ideology on the synagogue were doomed to failure, for how could there be more than one cosmic centre,

direction (cf. Dan. 6:11 and 1 Esdr. 4:58) or merely the direction of one's thoughts ('heart'); see Lieberman's discussion. Origen, *On Prayer* 32, writes that a Christian at home should pray not in the direction of the doors of his house but towards the east. See E. Peterson, 'Die geschichtliche Bedeutung der jüdischen Gebetsrichtung', *Frühkirche, Judentum, und Gnosis: Studien und Untersuchungen* (Rome and Freiburg 1959), pp. 1–14.

<sup>96</sup> *b. 'Abod. Zar.* 43a (and parallels); cf. *Mek.* p. 241 ed. Horovitz-Rabin.

<sup>97</sup> *m. Ta'an.* 2:5.

<sup>98</sup> Usurpation of priestly status: *t. Ker.* 1:20, pp. 562–3 ed. Zuckerman; *Sipre Numbers* 116, p. 133 ed. Horovitz; *b. Ber.* 10b; *b. Ketub.* 105b; *b. Ned.* 62a. Priests remain active: R. Kimelman, 'The Priestly Oligarchy and the Sages in the Talmudic Period', *Zion* 48 (1983), 135–47 (Hebrew). Christian clergy, of course, usurped both priestly status and ideology; see B. Kötting, 'Die Aufnahme des Begriffs "Hiereus" in den christlichen Sprachgebrauch', *Text – Wort – Glaube Fs Aland*, ed. M. Brecht. *Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte* 50 (Berlin 1980), pp. 112–20.

<sup>99</sup> Heavenly Jerusalem etc.: see note 4. The apocalyptic texts are edited by Yehuda ibn Shemuel (Kaufmann), *Midrašē Ge'ūlā* (Jerusalem 1954). The earliest reference to a heavenly synagogue is in the Zohar; see I. Tishby, *Mišnat Haẓẓobar*, II (Jerusalem 1961), pp. 307–8 (Hebrew).

<sup>100</sup> *b. Meg.* 29a; cf. 28b. A sermon plea for synagogue attendance in this world is the context for a reference to a synagogue in the age to come in *y. Ber.* 5:1 8d.

more than one divine throne, more than one gate of heaven? The gap between the synagogue and the temple was too large for a successful assumption by the synagogue of the functions of the temple. Neither in second temple nor in rabbinic times did the Jews bestow on the synagogue an ideology which would enable it to ‘compete’ with the temple in the same way that prayer and Torah study ‘competed’ with the sacrificial cult. The explanation of this phenomenon should be clear. Although the sacrificial cult was divinely ordained, exclusive reliance upon it had been criticized by the prophets. It was predicated on an aristocratic, elitist theory of religion which was diametrically opposed to the democratic, populist theory of religion which was the basis of rabbinic piety. Consequently, the relationship of the sacrificial cult to prayer, Torah study and the rabbinic virtues generally, was a serious question which provoked much thought and speculation. But between the one and the many, between monism and pluralism, between the temple and the synagogue, there was no choice. The rabbis knew that in unity there is truth and that Israel’s monotheistic creed was based on oneness. The temple was the concrete expression of this oneness; the synagogue, like the *bāmā* of the first temple period, detracted from this oneness and had no role in the ideal world. The rabbis looked forward to a time when they would have the monism of the temple and the democratic cult of the synagogue, an uneasy union of dissimilar ideals.

## V BIBLIOGRAPHICAL POSTSCRIPT

The fundamental argument of this chapter is that in ancient Jewish thought the synagogue was always deemed to be inferior to the Temple, whereas prayer and Torah study were often deemed to be the equivalent, or perhaps even superior, to the sacrificial cult. I am still persuaded by this argument. However, I am not now persuaded that the notion of ‘statutory prayer’ (pp. 302–5) really derives from the second temple period, or that prayer ever established itself as an inherent part of the liturgy of the second temple. The silence of the Mishnah regarding Torah study, prayer, the synagogue, and the destruction of the temple, is still puzzling, and I am not sure what can be inferred reasonably from it. A topic like ‘The Temple and Synagogue’ resists a simple documentary or chronological approach, since so many of the sources are undated or undatable, and so many of the ideas expressed might easily be much older than their earliest attestation. Nevertheless, perhaps I should have tried more carefully to date and place the traditions that I was discussing, in order to see whether any of them can be attributed to specific schools or historical contexts. I realize too that my attempt to fix the ideological position of the temple



and the synagogue in ancient Jewish thought will appear to some to be hopelessly unfashionable, since they do not believe in the existence of the singular noun 'Judaism' and consequently in the existence of the singular noun 'Jewish thought'. At the cost of being unfashionable, I believe that we can usefully speak of a singular something called Judaism.

On the Jerusalem temple as the locus of second temple sectarianism, and on rabbinic reactions to the destruction of the temple, I have written more fully in 'The Significance of Yavneh', *Hebrew Union College Annual* 55 (1984), 27–53.

On the history and archaeology of the synagogue in antiquity, numerous works have appeared, including the following: *Synagogues in Antiquity*, ed. A. Kasher, A. Oppenheimer and U. Rappaport (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak ben Zvi 1987; Hebrew); Heather A. McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue: The Question of Sabbath in Ancient Judaism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill 1994); *Ancient Synagogues: Historical Analysis and Archaeological Discovery*, edited by Dan Urman and Paul V. M. Flesher (Leiden: E. J. Brill 1995); *Sacred Realm: The Emergence of the Synagogue in the Ancient World*, ed. Steven Fine (New York: Oxford University Press 1996). A comprehensive historical and archaeological history of the synagogue in antiquity is now in preparation by Lee Levine. On the ideological aspect of the synagogue, the subject of this chapter, see Steven Fine, 'Did the Synagogue Replace the Temple?' *Bible Review* 12 (1996) 18–26, a summary of his book scheduled to be published by University of Notre Dame Press in 1997. See too Samuel Safrai, 'The Temple and the Synagogue' in *Synagogues in Antiquity* 31–51.

The introduction of regular prayer into the temple, and the democratization of the temple cult through the participation of lay people, have been the subject of work by Israel Knohl. See his 'Participation of the People in the Temple Worship – Second Temple Sectarian Conflict and the Biblical Tradition', *Tarbiz* 60 (1991) 139–46 (Hebrew); *The Sanctuary of Silence: the Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1995); 'Between Voice and Silence: The Relationship between Prayer and Temple Cult', *JBL* 115 (1996), 17–30. The emergence of statutory prayer in the rabbinic period has been studied by Ezra Fleischer in two important articles. See his 'On the Beginnings of Obligatory Jewish Prayer', *Tarbiz* 59 (1990), 397–441 (with the subsequent remarks of S. Reif and Fleischer in *Tarbiz* 60 (1991) 677–88), and 'The *Shemone Esre*, its character, internal order, content, and goals', *Tarbiz* 62 (1993), 179–223. On the mediaeval developments, Fleischer's book *Eretz-Israel Prayer and Prayer Rituals as Portrayed in the Geniza Documents* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press 1988; Hebrew) is fundamental. Fleischer argues that statutory prayer is a creation of the rabbinic period, and that the rabbinic prayerbook owes nothing to the temple of the pre-70 period, because the temple had no

established prayer liturgy. Jews of the Second Temple period prayed, of course; but the question remains whether they had a conception of statutory prayer and whether their prayers were fixed unchanging texts. The Qumran community certainly had fixed texts of 'angelic' prayer, but the relationship of the Qumran texts to the rabbinic texts still has not been established. See Bilhah Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (Leiden: Brill 1994). See also chapter 26 below.

On the rabbinic evaluation of the sacrificial cult and its efficacy, there are a number of studies (in Hebrew) listed by Noam Zohar, 'Ancient Rituals Transmitted by R. Judah: Evidence of a Transformed Understanding of "Blood is Life"', *Tarbiz* 58 (1989), 525–30.

This chapter is a thoroughly revised and expanded version of a lecture which was first published in *The Temple in Antiquity*, ed. T. G. Madsen (Provo, Utah 1984), pp. 151–74. I am grateful to Professors W. D. Davies and George W. E. Nickelsburg for their suggestions.

## CHAPTER I I

THE EARLY LITURGY OF  
THE SYNAGOGUE

The nature of Jewish liturgical expression in the period immediately preceding the destruction of the Second Temple and the loss of any semblance of Jewish political independence in 70 CE is clearly of interest to a wide body of scholarship. Historians of Jewish religious practice, analysts of Christian origins and students of the cultic forms in existence in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds all have sound reasons for seeking to reconstruct for themselves what may for the moment, pending the more accurate assessment and definition that I hope to offer, be referred to as ‘the early liturgy of the synagogue’.

In pursuit of this reconstruction, liturgists have sometimes turned for guidance to the authoritative Jewish prayer-books of almost a thousand years later, or even of the more modern period, and sought to extrapolate backwards, making assumptions that defy the vast chasms of history, geography and ideology that separate one millennium from another. Those who have adopted such a position have transplanted some or all of the rabbinic rites and customs of tenth-century Babylon or early mediaeval Europe to first-century Judaea and the surrounding Jewish Diaspora and declined to distinguish the continuity of some liturgical traditions from the patent novelty of others. However methodologically untenable the theory underlying such an approach, the picture painted of proto-rabbinism and its liturgical practice was a clear one, unobfuscated by doubts and complications.<sup>1</sup>

Recent, more reliable research in the field tends, on the other hand, to stress the lack of concrete evidence, the questionable admissibility of sources even one or two centuries after the destruction of the temple, and the complex nature of Judaism in the time of Jesus and Hillel, thus

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the attempt of D. Hedegård to reconstruct the first-century liturgy on the basis of the prayer-book of Amram ben Sheshna in ninth-century Babylon, *Seder R. Amram Gaon. Part I. Hebrew Text with Critical Apparatus. Translation with Notes and Introduction* (Lund 1951) and the unfavourable comment that this attracted from E. D. Goldschmidt, *Kiryat Sefer* 29 (1953–4), 71–5, and K. Hruby, *Cahiers sioniens* 9 (1955), 303ff; cf. also my review of T. Kronholm’s edition of the second part of the same work (Lund 1974), *JSS* 23 (1978), 119–22.

shying away from a commitment to simple description and taking refuge in a welter of doubt and hesitancy. In consequence, the less specialized scholar is left unenlightened about the general situation that obtained with regard to Jewish liturgy in the first century, and with many unanswered questions about its particular aspects.<sup>2</sup>

The object of the present essay is to complement the contributions made to this volume by Shaye Cohen and Gil Hüttenmeister in the areas of temple and synagogue. In their informative and well-documented studies they have touched upon the theme of liturgy in diverse ways but it has not been their task to stand back and survey the whole scene or to identify all the various trends and tensions. The intention here is to build on their detailed research and bibliography and, by offering some further comments of a methodological, historical, ideological and linguistic kind, to clarify for the reader the topic that stands at the head of this chapter.

## I METHODOLOGY

The scholar in search of first-century Jewish ideology and practice in the field of liturgy faces the same problems as his colleagues concentrating on the alternative areas of law, biblical interpretation or the history of personalities and events. The major difficulty is constituted by the absence of any primary sources that can categorically be classified as contemporary. The origins of the whole vast network of talmudic-midrashic literature remain shrouded in mystery and there is no scholarly consensus about the method of dating traditions, particularly not their earliest pre-literary forms, or the way of testing the reliability of ascriptions. Although most (but not all) specialists would today eschew the talmudic tradition's own version of its early history, they would, at the same time, remain reluctant to declare the whole of that tradition an invalid witness to earlier customs and ideas. However much it complicates the task of the researcher, their preference would be for the *ad hoc* analysis of each tradition, or, at least, each group of traditions, particularly by way of the historical study of the manuscripts that have transmitted them.<sup>3</sup>

This complication is further compounded for the student of Jewish liturgy by the existence of a number of other factors that have special

<sup>2</sup> In my 'Jewish Liturgical Research: Past, Present and Future' (*JJS* 34 (1983), 161–70), I have attempted to describe the situation and to argue that a comprehensive rather than an exclusively philological or form-critical approach is required.

<sup>3</sup> The state of research into rabbinic literature is well summarized by Schäfer, 'Research into Rabbinic Literature', *JJS* 37 (1986), 139–52, although his own methodological proposals in no way represent a consensus of contemporary scholarly views.

application to that area of study and generally concern the matter of definition. Certain attitudes to prayer, its form and its centrality, became almost axiomatic in the talmudic-midrashic literature and indeed, to a certain extent, in the wider Judaeo-Christian system of religious values. By the same token, the rabbinic Hebrew terminology for such concepts as synagogue, prayer, benediction and scriptural reading that became such a familiar part of daily Jewish life was assumed to convey that particular meaning and those special characteristics that they appear to have acquired during the talmudic era. A further assumption, unwarranted from a purely scientific viewpoint, was and is that, when a named prayer is cited in an early rabbinic source, its overall content and detailed text are identical with what they came to be in one or other of the rites known to us from the mediaeval period. The fact is that only rarely is any more than the introductory and concluding phraseology recorded in the tannaitic and amoraic literature.

Wary as he must be of reading later talmudic meanings back into earlier rabbinic texts, the scholar must be equally cautious about taking for granted that those alternative Jewish sources that predate the talmudic-midrashic literature necessarily guide him in his search for the liturgical practice of first-century Judaism.<sup>4</sup> Earlier as much of their literary form may be, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Jewish-Hellenistic corpus and the New Testament give no guarantee that any or all of the attitudes that underlie their approaches to worship in its widest sense provide us with the missing link between the late Old Testament books and tannaitic traditions. It must constantly be borne in mind that at least some rabbinic ideas and traditions may well have their origins in some form of oral transmission or, indeed, a lost textual form and that no one alternative Jewish ideology is necessarily to be defined as having once been the dominant or central one that influenced all the others. Consequently, the interpretation of the various sources for a better understanding of Jewish liturgical history, while following basic principles of historical research and avoiding the unjustified presuppositions already mentioned, cannot be done on a blanket basis but must be, to a certain extent, *ad hoc* in nature. This accounts for the variety of approaches adopted in scholarly books and articles on the subject, including the volume of which this essay forms a part, and explains why no definitive analysis has yet proved possible.

<sup>4</sup> One should always bear in mind the strange tendency of some scholars to ascribe a *prima facie* degree of veracity to Philo and Josephus that they would grudge the talmudic sources, not to speak of the theologically tendentious reasons for looking upon Qumran and New Testament literature as more reliable than even the earliest rabbinic texts.

## II HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

It is of primary importance to recognize that there was no one exclusive medium for the expression of the Jewish need to communicate with God in the period under discussion. A dispassionate, unbiased survey of all the available sources that may be regarded as relevant reveals a remarkably variegated set of contexts in which some form of liturgy was conducted. The second temple certainly seems to have stood at the centre of such contexts, in a daily and pervasive manner as far as Jerusalem and the immediate environs were concerned, and on special occasions for Jews living at less commutable distances. Sacrifices were offered and rituals enacted with the use of sacred implements on behalf of the people of Israel as a whole in order to demonstrate its allegiance to the requirements of pentateuchal legislation and to cement its relationship with God. Individuals could play a role in these formal acts by donating sacrifices and defraying temple costs but it was only the hereditary priesthood, at its various levels, that was responsible for what might be termed the actual acts of worship. The recitation of certain formulae accompanied a minority of the rituals and on special occasions the milling crowds could declaim a response to a formal recitation.<sup>5</sup> Later tannaïc sources (e.g. *m. Tamid* 5.1) speak of the daily recitation of an introductory benediction, the Ten Commandments, the *šema*, the priestly blessing, and, if any of the later rabbinic liturgy was actually part of the temple service, these elements, as well as sections of the Psalms, by virtue of their incontrovertible antiquity and immediate relevance, seem the most likely candidates for inclusion, as will later be argued. The historical authenticity of other talmudic claims about the content of the temple liturgy (perhaps with the exception of some references to festival prayers)

<sup>5</sup> Such a situation hardly requires documentation since it is widely presupposed in the latest books of OT, in Philo and Josephus, in Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, in NT and in early rabbinic traditions preserved in such tractates as *Yoma*, *Tamid* and *Middot*. See, in particular, R. de Vaux, *Les institutions de l'Ancien Testament*, edn 2 (Paris 1960), pp. 162–71, 191–3, 254–77 and 349–53, ET *Ancient Israel, Its Life and Institutions* (London 1961), pp. 322–9, 343–4, 388–405 and 457–9; H.-J. Kraus, *Gottesdienst in Israel*, edn 2 (Munich 1962), pp. 264–72, ET *Worship in Israel* (Oxford 1966), pp. 229–36; S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought* (Hebrew; Jerusalem 1977), pp. 187–212, ET (same title), BEAT 9 (Frankfurt 1983); N. B. Johnson, *Prayer in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, JBL M52 (Philadelphia 1948); D. Flusser, 'Psalms, Hymns and Prayers' in *JWSTP*, ed. M. E. Stone (Assen and Philadelphia 1984), pp. 551–77; J. H. Charlesworth, 'A Prolegomenon to a New Study of the Jewish Background of the Hymns and Prayers in the New Testament', *JJS* 33 (1982), 265–85; S. Safrai, 'The Temple and the Divine Service' in *The World History of the Jewish People, First Series, 7. The Herodian Period* (ed. M. Avi-Yonah, New Brunswick 1975), pp. 282–337; and P. F. Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church* (London 1981), pp. 1–46.

remains a moot point because of the remark earlier made about the uncritical projection of later customs on to earlier generations and institutions.<sup>6</sup>

A further link was forged between the temple and the common people by the existence of an institution known as the *ma'amad* according to which those left behind when a particular group of priests and Levites (*mišmar*) went up to Jerusalem to take its turn at officiating in the temple would gather together to fast, to recite scriptural passages and perhaps to pray.<sup>7</sup> The remnants of information available to us in the talmudic sources about such an institution are not paralleled in other literature but smack of the authentic, particularly since there was no reason to wish such an arrangement into retrospective existence after the temple had been destroyed. Equally authentic and also demonstrating a practical interaction between the cultic centre and the wider populace are the descriptions of the involvement of the people in the Passover ceremony in which the statutory lamb is offered at the temple to the accompaniment of a *hallel* recited by the Levites and is then consumed at home in an atmosphere of feasting and thanksgiving and with reference to the biblical texts.<sup>8</sup>

The association of fasting with the recitation of special prayers was already an established practice in what is commonly known as the Old Testament period<sup>9</sup> and clearly provides us with another liturgical context in the late second temple period. On such distressing occasions as droughts, the people would congregate to perform acts normally associated with mourning, and to make special appeal through supplicatory prayers, readings and fasting for relief from their adversity.<sup>10</sup> These acts of popular piety, which presumably had their equivalents on joyful occasions, were played out in public places, but not necessarily in a synagogue or similar institution, a fact to which further reference will be made later in this essay. Where there were leaders of the group's devotions, they were either communal dignitaries or men of special piety whose reputation

<sup>6</sup> Contrast the ascriptions of Pss. 92 to Adam (*Ber. Rab.* 22, end, ed. T-A, 220); 'blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom for ever and ever' to Jacob (*b. Pesah.* 56a); Grace after Meals to Moses, Joshua, David and Solomon (*b. Ber.* 48b); and the thrice daily recitation of an *'amidah* to the patriarchs (*b. Ber.* 26b) which are clearly in the realm of the fanciful, with casual references to known prayers included in *t. Ber.* 3.13 (Zuck. 7), *m. Yoma* 7.1 and *m. Roš. Haš.* 4.5.

<sup>7</sup> The *locus classicus* for the existence and function of the *ma'amad* is in *m. Ta'an.* 4.2.

<sup>8</sup> See *m. Pesah.* 5 and B. M. Bokser's analysis of the pre-rabbinic sources in *The Origins of the Seder: The Passover Rite and Early Rabbinic Judaism* (Berkeley 1984), pp. 14–28.

<sup>9</sup> Typical are 1 Sam 7:5–9, 2 Sam. 12:16, Joel. 1:14 and 2:15–18, Pss. 35:13 and 69:11–14, Neh. 9:1–3. Cf also Mark 2:18–22 and parallels.

<sup>10</sup> Although the text has clearly been edited and redacted at a later stage, the second and third chapters of the mishnaic tractate *Ta'anit* contain the earliest rabbinic traditions about such customs.



encouraged the public to believe that their appeals to God would be more likely to succeed and about whose miraculous powers in matters of supplicatory prayer many old folk-tales came to be recorded.<sup>11</sup> Just as some of the prophets of old appear to have alternated spells of communal activity with periods of intense asceticism experienced within a group of peers or even in isolation,<sup>12</sup> so these men of devotion (*hasidim*) appear to have had both a public and a private side to their religious endeavours. Perhaps it is not unfair to say too that the common people saw their special value in terms of magic, with the stress on wonders and miracles, while they themselves were attempting to give expression to that strong element of ‘mysticism’ that scholarship has recently traced through the whole history of Jewish religious ideology. It is to that element that Judaism ultimately owes the composition of liturgical formulae that stress apocalyptic, angelological and cosmological themes and although the rabbinic versions of these incorporated into the standard prayer-book are of later vintage they would appear to have their generic origins in the second temple period.<sup>15</sup>

The praising or blessing of God, either for his powers in general or for their particular manifestation, counts as another form of Jewish worship that continued from earlier times into the post-biblical era. Before the tannaitic teachers of the late first and early second centuries began the process of legislation and standardization that was eventually to lead to their ‘authorized’ form, these benedictions were a popular form of religious expression, possibly with more than a tinge of superstition attached to them. They were employed as a means of thanking God for his bounty by those who felt that it was an act of ingratitude, or possibly a dangerous provocation, to enjoy the benefits of the creation without acknowledging the role of its creator.<sup>14</sup> It was particularly apt to introduce them at communal meals, where the gratitude could be publicly acknowledged, or at noteworthy events of an especially happy or social kind, and the basic

<sup>11</sup> See the passages discussed in G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew. A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (London 1973), pp. 58–82.

<sup>12</sup> The evidence is well presented by J. Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (London 1962).

<sup>13</sup> See C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven. A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London 1982), particularly pp. 113–20 and pp. 208–13; G. G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (New York 1965), especially pp. 20–30 and pp. 56–64; E. E. Urbach, ‘The Traditions about Merkabah Mysticism in the Tannaitic Period’ in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion presented to Gershom G. Scholem* (Jerusalem 1967), Hebrew section, pp. 1–28.

<sup>14</sup> See *TWAT* 1 (Stuttgart 1973), cols. 808–41; *ET IDOT* 2 (Grand Rapids, Michigan 1975), ‘*brk*’ by Scharbert, pp. 279–308; and the entry ‘Prayers and Blessings’, substantially the work of J. Heinemann in *Encyclopedia Hebraica*, 32 (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv 1981), cols. 1008–23 (Hebrew).

format was no more than a praise of the Supreme Being followed by a brief reference to the attribute for which praise was deserving.<sup>15</sup> No doubt, individuals or groups expressed preference for their own formulation and the context in which the whole custom operated was a wide and popular one. It is from this context that the nineteen benedictions of the *‘amidab* subsequently emerged and there are a considerable number of interesting parallels in apocryphal and Qumranic sources to the concepts and language expressed in that central prayer of tannaitic and later Judaism.<sup>16</sup> There is, however, no convincing evidence that even the earliest known texts of the *‘amidab* predate the destruction of the temple and it remains a matter of speculation whether prototypes of some of the introductory and concluding benedictions were in existence as such at that time.

Even if blessings of the type just discussed were at times pronounced in a public or communal setting, they surely belong in essence and in origin to the area of private rather than public prayer. Ample evidence attests to a considerable practice of private prayer from the time of the earliest books of the Hebrew Bible and to a complicated interplay between the spontaneous devotions of the individual, on a regular basis or on occasions of special need, and the formal liturgy of the cult throughout the early history of Judaism.<sup>17</sup> It may well be that, as will shortly be noted, the resultant compromises reached in the homeland were not those that appealed to the communities of the Diaspora. In this context, as in all the other contexts mentioned above, one should not think of watertight, discrete groups occupying separate contexts but, rather, of a variety of forms of expression that commended themselves to particular people at specific times but that were never mutually exclusive or beyond reciprocal influence.<sup>18</sup> The identification of recognizable sets of people

<sup>15</sup> There are clear indications of such graces or reminiscences of their later aspects in Jub. 22:6, Ep. Arist. 184f, IQS 6.3–7, IQSa 2.17, CD 13.1, Sir. 36:12–14, Josephus, *Bell.* II. 131, Did. 10 and *m. Ber.* 6–7. For detailed analysis see J. Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud. Forms and Patterns* (SJ 9, Berlin 1976), pp. 113–22.

<sup>16</sup> See Sir. 36:1–17 and 51:21–35 (Heb.), 1QH 16.8–20, IQS 9–11 where concepts and terms occur that have their parallels in the *‘amidab* and adumbrate the later developments. This is not, however, to say that either a formal *‘amidab* or a set of specific daily benedictions are to be traced to the pre-Christian centuries. See A. Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Liturgy and its Development* (New York 1932), pp. 20–3; Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 218–24; M. Weinfeld, *Tarb* 48 (1978–9), 186–200 and the discussion between the last mentioned and R. Brody, *Tarb* 51 (1981–2), 493–6.

<sup>17</sup> See the monograph of M. Greenberg, *Biblical Prose Prayer as a Window to the Popular Religion of Ancient Israel* (Berkeley, Los Angeles 1983) and the works cited there, especially in Lecture 3.

<sup>18</sup> This point is well argued and illustrated by L. A. Hoffman in his ‘Censoring In and Censoring Out. A Function of Liturgical Language’ in *Ancient Synagogues. The State of Research*, ed. J. Gutmann, BJS 22 (Chico 1981), pp. 19–37.

with particular characteristics is often the predilection of later historians rather than the tendency of contemporary witnesses to events. In order better to understand the place that these forms of expression occupied in the Jewish life of the period under discussion it will be necessary to comment on some of the theological concepts that lay behind the liturgical practices at that time. Before this is undertaken, however, some attention will have to be given to a topic that has been mentioned a number of times in passing, namely, biblical readings and interpretations.

### III HEBREW BIBLE

It is not surprising that the Jews, who saw history as God's plan for his people and particular events as his response to the degree of loyalty currently being displayed by them to him, should lay emphasis on the acquisition of a sound knowledge of the texts that described that history. The Hebrew Bible itself constantly makes reference to the transmission of its message from father to son and the need for it to be understood and conscientiously absorbed, and to the importance of learning theological lessons from what were seen as the sacred records of a special relationship. Only a limited number of texts makes reference to the public reading of scrolls or of specific sections of the written tradition but, taken together with the enthusiasm for religious education already noted and the evidence that some later biblical traditions reveal a reworking of their earlier counterparts, they provide a fairly clear picture of the general situation, if not its detailed constituents, in the period of the second temple.<sup>19</sup>

The transmission of the Jewish people's authoritative sources was accomplished by the copying of scrolls, the recitation of their contents in family and larger social groups, and the exegesis of the traditions in a language that would be understood by the public rather than by only an elite and in a manner that would make their message relevant to the spiritual dilemmas of the day. The *hakham* and *sofer* will surely have made a significant contribution to this process, the ideas common to the 'wisdom movement' of the ancient Near East and the scribal customs leaving their mark on its development.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> See the contributions of S. Talmon and M. Weinfeld on the biblical period and those of D. Flusser, A. Shohat and H. Mantel on the later period in *Educational Encyclopedia*, 4 (Hebrew, Jerusalem 1964), cols. 52–72 and 136–57, and e.g. Exod. 13:14, 24:4, 7, Deut. 6:7, 31:9–13, 26, 2Kgs 23:1–3, 2 Chr. 17:7–9 and Neh. 8:8–9, 13–15. Cf. also J. L. Crenshaw, 'Education in Ancient Israel', *JBL* 104 (1985), 601–15.

<sup>20</sup> For a useful summary of the processes of transmission and translation see E. Würthwein, *Der Text des Alten Testaments*, edn 4 (Stuttgart 1979), ET *The Text of the Old Testament*

The clash between the Jewish way of life and the Hellenistic civilization must also have prodded the traditionalists into strengthening the preservation of their inherited texts and traditions by seeking opportunities to recite and interpret them, as it inspired their more symbiotically inclined coreligionists to clothe their religious inheritance in the garb of Greek language and philosophy.<sup>21</sup> The evidence of this blossoming of biblical recitation and interpretation is all-pervasive, occurring as it does in almost all the literature emanating from Jewish circles in the later pre-Christian and early Christian eras. The Greek and Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Bible that were the basis of the Septuagint and the targumim; the *pesher* system of exegesis that the Qumran sect used for underpinning their philosophy of life and their prognostications; the allegories that the Jewish scholars of Alexandria employed to lend a new relevance to an old message; the use made of scripture by Jesus and his followers to expound and justify their religious claims; and the earliest midrashim of the rabbis – all point to a preoccupation with sacred writ. In addition, there is ample testimony to the use of scriptural verses in such religious accoutrements as *tefillin* and *mezuzot*, whether (if the distinction is meaningful) of a prophylactic or of a devotional nature, and whichever collections of passages they actually contained.<sup>22</sup>

It hardly seems possible to imagine a situation in which such significant and extended use was made of scriptural texts without seeing a concomitant recitation of these as a regular feature of Jewish communal activity. Whether they can be traced back as far as Ezra, as the talmudic tradition would have it, is a matter of some doubt; what seems indubitable is that scriptural readings were familiar to many Jews of the Greek

(London 1980) and the chapters on Targum and Septuagint in *CHJ* vol. 2. For midrash see B. W. Holtz in the third chapter of the volume he edited, *Back to the Sources* (New York 1984). On the physical nature of scrolls see M. Haran's articles in *Erls* 16 (1982), 86–92; *JJS* 33 (1982), 161–73 and 35 (1984), 84–5; *HUCA* 54 (1983), 111–22 and 56 (1985), 21–62. For scripture as liturgy see A. Kavanagh, 'Scripture and Worship in Synagogue and Church', *Michigan Quarterly Review* 22 (1983), 480–94.

<sup>21</sup> The whole of Martin Hengel's *Judentum und Hellenismus*, WUNT 10 (Tübingen 1969, edn 2 1973), *ET Judaism and Hellenism* (London 1974) is here relevant, but see in particular Excursus 1, pp. 143–52, *ET* 1, pp. 78–83.

<sup>22</sup> *Mezuzot* and *tefillin* have been discovered among the Qumran, Murabba'at and Nahal Se'elim scrolls and designated xQPhyl 1–4, 8QPhyl, 8QMez, 4QPhyl a–d and 1, MurPhyl, MurMez(?) and 34 SePhyl; see Y. Yadin, *Tefillin from Qumran* (Jerusalem 1969), J. T. Milik, 'Tefillin, Mezuzot et Targums (4Q128–4Q157)' in R. de Vaux and J. T. Milik, *Qumran Grotte 4*, II (DJD VI, Oxford 1977), 31–93, and J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Major Publications and Tools for Study*, SBLBS 8 (Missoula 1975 reprint, 1977), pp. 22, 25–26, 39, 41 and 50; new edn SBLBS 20 (Atlanta 1990), pp. 17, 30, 43–4, 76, 79 and 89. Note also the Nash Papyrus, the contents and significance of which I have discussed in a brief article in *Cambridge* 15 (1984), 41–5.

and Roman periods. Various minor contexts in which such readings were undertaken have already been noted and have included the *ma'amad*, Passover *haggadah*, and occasions of special liturgical import. To these should also be added the sabbath which appears to be the most likely occasion on which Jews first gathered to read the Hebrew Bible.<sup>23</sup>

If the exegesis of scripture was as popular as has just been argued and there were occasions when readings were part of a ceremony, it seems reasonable to assume that, on the one hand, a regular lectionary would evolve and that, on the other, the expounding of the biblical text would attach itself to such liturgical expressions. Attempts at locating the earliest form of such a lectionary and identifying its primary characteristics have been made for almost a century and received a particular boost from the discovery of a number of unknown systems in the manuscripts and fragments located in the Cairo Genizah.<sup>24</sup>

The fact is, however, that none of the suggested reconstructions is convincing and that these texts are now seen to bear witness to the existence of a variety of systems for pentateuchal and prophetic readings that existed, side by side, in Palestine and Babylon from the tannaitic until the end of the geonic period and that failed to agree even on the time to be taken to complete a cycle, let alone what precisely to include in it.<sup>25</sup>

What may be identified at the end of the second temple period, then, is the gradual incorporation into various liturgical contexts of a preoccupation with scriptural reading and study that may originally have belonged elsewhere. If there ever was an original, independent and major context from which such borrowing could have been made, it must surely have been the educational one to which reference has already been made. The question that remains is whether it is possible to trace any theological developments in the century before the destruction of the temple that

<sup>23</sup> Philo, *Som.* 2.127 and *De Opificio Mundi* 128, Josephus, *Contra Apionem* II.17.175; Acts 15:21; *m. Meg.* 3.4; *b. Meg.* 31b and *B. Qam.* 82a; I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Frankfurt am Main 1931), III, para. 25, 3, pp. 157–9, ET *Jewish Liturgy* (1993), pp. 130–2.

<sup>24</sup> The attempts began with Büchler's two articles on the Palestinian triennial cycle in *JQR* 5 (1892–3), 420–68 and 6 (1893–4), 1–73, and continued up to and including the work of E. Werner, *The Sacred Bridge* (London 1959) and A. Guilding, *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship* (Oxford 1960). J. Mann exploited the mediaeval fragments from the Cairo Genizah to demonstrate how different the Palestinian customs were from the standard Babylonian practice in his *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue*, 1 (Cincinnati 1940), 2 (with I. Sonne, Cincinnati 1966).

<sup>25</sup> The convincing objections raised by L. Crockett, W. D. Davies and J. Heinemann to the detailed aspects of the work of Büchler, Mann and such followers as Werner and Guilding have been neatly summarized by J. J. Petuchowski in the introduction to his *Contributions to the Scientific Study of Jewish Liturgy* (New York 1970), pp. xvii–xxi.

shed light on why such a merger between the liturgical and the scriptural should have been effected and provide us with an insight into the degree of importance that was accorded to the liturgical area in the Jewish theological priorities of the day.

#### IV THEOLOGICAL PRIORITIES

The decidedly sparse information available to researchers on the precise nature of Jewish worship in the 'inter-testamental period' is matched by an absence of any obvious guidance in the contemporary sources on the place of liturgy in the theological hierarchy of contemporary Judaism. Our way of establishing what that place was will be to summarize the situations presupposed in the Hebrew Bible and in the talmudic-midrashic literature and, by combining these findings with what has already been said about the intervening period, to reconstruct the ideological developments that appear to have taken place in the period being discussed.

In a monograph on biblical prayer, Moshe Greenberg has argued convincingly against two opposing views: one that sees the spontaneous, personal prayer as the impetus for the development of communal worship and the other that takes the formal liturgy of the community as the paradigm on which the individual based his own devotions. He prefers to postulate the contemporaneity of private prayer and communal worship and assumes their parallel existence throughout biblical history. That parallel existence was not, however, without its tensions. Popular religion always preferred the direct and simple method of individual communication and was uneasy with a form of worship that had to be mediated by a priesthood on behalf of a whole community and that savoured of the magical. This preference laid the foundations of a democratization of worship that came to fruition in post-biblical Judaism.<sup>26</sup>

In an article of my own in which I analysed some liturgical issues in the talmudic sources, I pointed out that the rabbis of the post-destruction era were forced to reach some urgent conclusions about the religious way forward. I indicated that there was considerable controversy about the relative merits of Torah-study, worship and good deeds, and that arguments were put forward in favour of each of these as the essential element of Judaism. Ultimately, Torah-study appears to have been the victor and this had an effect on all subsequent interpretation, particularly since the reason for its pre-eminence was given as its ability to win people

<sup>26</sup> See n. 17 above; the whole monograph is germane to this chapter, but the third lecture is worthy of special attention. See also M. Haran, 'Priesthood, Temple, Divine Service', *Hebrew Annual Review* 7 (1983), 121–35.

over to practice. What is perhaps more important for our present purpose is that it emerged from that analysis that there were considerable doubts among the rabbis about the nature of Jewish liturgy. For some it was identified as rabbinically formulated prayer and to be seen as the natural successor to the temple cult in as many respects as possible, while for others it was to be sought in Torah-study. Just as the sacrificial system had once cemented the special relationship between God and Israel in a manner that bore an element of the mysterious, so would the study of the Torah or, for others, the practice of good deeds now fulfil the same function. In that case, the true liturgy, or service of God, was no longer to be found in formal, public worship. That exercise was limited to prayer which was simply one of a number of precepts (possibly but not necessarily one of those central requirements later defined as Torah-based rather than rabbinically ordained) enjoined upon the observant Jew. As such, it had to be performed in a prescribed manner, but there was no unanimity about the precise injunctions to be followed. Public or private, synagogal or domestic, towards Jerusalem or heavenwards, lengthy or brief, daily or occasional – it took a number of centuries for these issues to be finally settled. Similarly, the nature of prayer was the subject of controversy, some arguing for its magical effect and therefore its transmission to God by a man of special piety, while others settled for a daily recitation by ordinary individuals as a requirement of the faith.<sup>27</sup> It should, of course, be stressed that as liturgy developed into the geonic and later periods these controversies remained part of the argument about prayer, but often had to give way to a tendency towards formalization, authorization and prescription, but this is a subject that must be left for treatment elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

If an ambivalence towards the temple cult was a significant element in the religious attitudes to be detected both in ancient Israel and in talmudic Judaism, it is hardly likely that traces of it are not to be found in the Jewish liturgical outlook of the second temple period. Indeed, it is clear from what have already been listed as the liturgical contexts relevant to that age, that the dissatisfaction felt by those who were geographically distant from Jerusalem which led them to express themselves in less centralized ways was a sentiment shared by their later counterparts. There

<sup>27</sup> S. C. Reif, 'Some Liturgical Issues in the Talmudic Sources', *StLi* 15 (1982–3), 188–206. The article briefly discusses methodology and historical background before treating the subject under the tripartite division of 'The Theological Status of Prayer', 'The Essential Nature of Prayer' and 'The Mechanics of Prayer'. Full documentation is there provided for the conclusions here summarized.

<sup>28</sup> A start has been made by L. A. Hoffman in his useful study *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service* (Notre Dame and London 1979).



were certainly those who bitterly criticized the second temple and its priesthood as corrupt and evil and would have nothing to do with it and others who perhaps looked to men of special piety as an alternative medium of contact with heaven.<sup>29</sup> But even among those larger numbers who might still send their annual half-shekel for temple maintenance or manage to undertake a journey to Jerusalem on one of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, there was enough interest in some form of independent expression to encourage, as has already been pointed out, the development of the *ma'amad*, the prayer gathering, the individual devotion, and what we might call the Bible reading group.

It does not require a very thorough reading of contemporary Jewish literature in order to encounter some of the reasons for the disenchantment with the temple. The divide between the aristocracy and the common people that often seemed to be perpetuated there; the political machinations of the Hasmonaeans and their successors that were bound up with the abuse of the high priesthood; and the growing distances between Jerusalem and the Diaspora, in more senses than the geographical – all contributed to a drift from exclusive devotion to one liturgical centre. It should be stressed that certain pentateuchal obligations could be met only by making use of the temple's facilities and that there was consequently an enforced attachment between the established cult and the majority of the populace who, it would seem, would not go to the length of such groups as the Dead Sea sect in denying the validity of the service as then carried out on Mount Zion. Nevertheless, the doubts that had existed from biblical times grew and the more that priestly factions assimilated to Hellenistic ways, the more would the worship conducted by them be open to suspicion. With the introduction of Greek and Roman elements into the architecture of an expanding building there must have been those who feared the growing similarity with at least the outward appearance of pagan cults and, possibly, some who were growing progressively more impatient with rituals that were not without their

<sup>29</sup> See the remarks of F. M. Cross about Essene and Qumran objections to the contemporary Jerusalem cult in *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies*, edn 2 (New York 1961), pp. 100–3. The references in tannaitic literature to the ritual activities of the *hasidim* and the *'anše ma'aseh* may also indicate a popular equivalent to the temple priesthood. See also Josephus, *Ant.* xx.180–1, xx.205–7. Furthermore, although the priests did not fully lose their status with the destruction of the temple, the Levites appear to have moved out of the centre of the cult from the Hellenistic era; cf. S. Safrai (n. 5 above), pp. 293–4. For the overall historical development of alternative temple sites see M. Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1978), pp. 13–57. On the matter of cultic tension regarding the status of Jerusalem and other centres in the Second Temple period, see J. Schwartz, 'Jubilees, Bethel and the Temple of Jacob', *HUCA* 56 (1985), 63–85.

mystery and magic.<sup>30</sup> The characteristic features of individual devotion that had sometimes been relegated to a secondary role were bidding once again to become dominant among the various responses to the temple's assumed centrality in the liturgical *status quo*.

That it was a multifarious rather than a single response that was made in the wake of such gnawing doubts is clear from the contemporary sources that have already been listed. One obvious solution was to stress the role of the family and the home in offering a simpler and more direct means of communication with one's creator. If the theory recently championed by Baruch Bokser is correct, and the origins of the *seder* service and Passover *haggadah* are to be sought in transforming a biblical ritual tied to the temple sacrifice into a domestic celebration with liturgical and pedagogic elements, there is no reason to assume that this transformation commenced only after the destruction of the temple. Indeed, in the earliest textual witnesses to a ritual being conducted at home the existence of that institution is certainly presupposed.<sup>31</sup>

Whether such a domestic liturgy was being conducted in scribal circles, pietistic groups, or among a more proletarian or rustic segment of the population, is difficult to judge and any conclusion would inevitably be dependent on the degree to which credence is lent to the simple division of the Jews of the period into Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, or into Hellenists and nationalists, or into plebeians and patricians – the list of possible divisions has grown as historians of the period have multiplied and new historical theories have been propounded. Perhaps the suggestion made earlier to speak of tendencies rather than groups will allow the discussion to proceed without committing itself to a definitive assessment. Wherever it originated, the development of a domestic alternative to the temple is paralleled by other such tendencies. The emphasis laid by Jesus and/or his followers on good deeds rather than assisting the operation of the cult by providing a system of money-changing may be defined as a pietistic or proletarian response<sup>32</sup> while the swift substitution of intellectual discussions for sacrificial rituals made by the generation of the early tannaim may betoken an earlier and fundamental preoccupation

<sup>30</sup> The substantial alterations to the temple made by Herod in order to bring it 'closer to the grandiose ideal of the great Hellenistic-Oriental sanctuaries' are described by M. Avi-Yonah in 'Jewish Art and Architecture in the Hasmonaean and Herodian Periods', in the volume of *The World History of the Jewish People* referred to in n. 5 above, pp. 254–6. The tensions between Herod and the people arising out of his ambition to construct what amounted to a third temple are also documented there.

<sup>31</sup> See n. 8 above, and on the antiquity of family rituals see M. Haran (n. 29 above), pp. 289–323.

<sup>32</sup> Matt. 21:12–16 and Mark 11:15–18.

with Torah-study that welcomed the revolution as an evolution.<sup>33</sup> The events of the Jewish Revolt and the later defeat by the Romans also lent support to those patterns of thought that had already questioned the simplistic systems of theodicy that associated physical comfort with devoutness and suffering with evil and had thereby driven a philosophical wedge between appeals to God and actual human experience, between petitions and the response to them. Perhaps scholastic circles were in this way opting for a novel view of man's communication with the Divine. However motivated, all these developments give testimony to a changing system of priorities and the reconsideration of the nature of liturgy, worship and prayer.

## V DEFINITION OF LITURGY

The quest for the origins of Jewish rabbinic, Christian and Muslim prayer customs in the immediate pre-Christian period has, paradoxically, been blighted by scholarly acquaintance with such customs and the presuppositions that underlie them. For the scholar in Christianity, liturgy calls to mind the Eucharist, or its equivalent, an act that confirms the believer's status as an adherent of the faith in good standing and, through a mysterious process, unites him with its founder. A colleague concentrating on Jewish liturgy will think of a prescribed number of recitations of the *šema'* and the *'amidab* each day with accompanying lectionaries on many occasions, while a student of Islam will be reminded of the central requirement to acknowledge the unity of God and the uniqueness of Mohammed's prophecy five times daily. Synagogues, churches and mosques are the ideal centres for such liturgy; the act of worship is best performed communally; there are officials to act as mediators or leaders; authoritative formulations are a *sine qua non* of the ceremonial. The very use of the Greek term that refers to the performance of the public service of the gods by the priests (*leitourgia*) is in itself an indication of a somewhat preconceived notion. It assumes that the Hebrew word employed by the tannaim, and presumably their predecessors, to describe the temple service, namely *'abodab*, which is equivalent to the Greek *leitourgia*, adequately describes Jewish worship in its totality during the second temple period.

As has been pointed out, there was no unanimity during that period about what constituted the most effective and essential means of performing a public service of God, this being determined by the theological propensities of a particular gathering, group or occasion. Acts of piety, study or benediction might each lay claim to such a distinction and could

<sup>33</sup> See Reif, 'Some Liturgical Issues' (n. 27 above), 192–6.

equally be referred to as a liturgy of second temple Judaism. The term 'liturgy' must therefore either be abandoned in the present context as a deceptive misnomer or given a much wider definition that avoids taking for granted the earlier existence of what later became the standard, authoritative theory and practice and rather refers to all aspects of Jewish worship and prayer, whatever their origin, milieu and ideological basis.

Since this essay was entitled 'The Early Liturgy of the Synagogue' when it was commissioned and before it was composed, I have chosen to retain the title here in the latter sense on the understanding that it soon becomes apparent to readers that only such a sense tallies with the views I am expressing. What must now be tackled is the definition of the word 'synagogue' and whether its use too has tended to mislead students of its early history.

## VI DEFINITION OF SYNAGOGUE

It is widely recognized that the origins of the synagogue are shrouded in mystery and that there is little concrete evidence available to enable scholars to plot its history before the first Christian century. This shortcoming has not, however, prevented historians of the institution from commonly making a number of questionable assumptions about the impetus for its creation and about its physical state, its functions and its relationship with the temple.

Its earliest form is traced to pre-exilic Israel as a means of providing a place of worship for those who were deprived of their cultic shrines after the centralization of the liturgy in the Jerusalem temple<sup>34</sup> or had become disenchanted with that centre, or to the Babylon Jewish communities established after the destruction of the first temple which had no prospect of making the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup> It is seen as a smaller copy of the temple (*miqdaš me'at*),<sup>36</sup> incorporating various elements of the original institution and providing a centre for communal worship. The architectural designs that are known from archaeological discoveries to have existed in the early centuries of the Christian era are cited in the

<sup>34</sup> See S. Krauss, *Synagogale Altertümer* (Berlin 1927), pp. 52–88; L. Finkelstein, *PAAJR* 1928–30 (1930), 49–59; J. Weingreen, *Hermathena* 98 (1964), 68–84; I. Levy, *The Synagogue. Its History and Function* (London 1963), pp. 5–27.

<sup>35</sup> See G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era. The Age of the Tannaim* (Cambridge, Mass. 1927), vol. 1, pp. 283–307; S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. 2, edn 2 (New York and London 1952), pp. 121–29.

<sup>36</sup> Ezek. 11:16, explained by R. Isaac in *b. Meg.* 29a as a reference to the synagogues and academies of Babylon and, even more fancifully, by R. Eleazar as a reference to Rav's academy in Sura.

presentation of the synagogue's history and encourage the view that it is a specific type of building that should be imagined when considering its earliest form. The truth is, however, that there is no definitive source that indicates the existence before the first century BCE of such a specific building in the Holy Land or in Babylon, no archaeological site in those countries that can be identified as a synagogue, and no evidence of a centre for public service in Hellenistic Judah that somehow matched that of the temple. What historians can refer to are inscriptions from Egyptian sites as early as the third century BCE that make mention of *proseuchai*, or, prayer-places there.<sup>37</sup>

It may well then be the case that the synagogue was the creation of the Hellenistic diaspora not exclusively as a place of public worship (the Jews actually had temples at Araq el-Amir, Elephantine and Leontopolis) but as an assembly point for the local community where they could express themselves as Jews in a variety of social and religious ways, including scriptural readings, study, prayer and the performance of other traditional Jewish customs.<sup>38</sup> While such an institution in the Diaspora might wish to imitate the temple practices of Jerusalem and would *faute de mieux* be applauded for doing so, its equivalent in the homeland would be less likely to do so. For those for whom the Jerusalem temple alone stood paramount this would be offensive and those with doubts about aspects of the sacrificial cult would no doubt prefer to develop institutions and practices that provided more distinctly alternative means of expression. The reason why no synagogue has been found that may even tentatively be dated earlier than the first pre-Christian century in Palestine is that there was no such specific building. Jews came together in a public place for benedictions, prayers, Bible reading and interpretation, or for the *ma'amad* and what they thereby constituted might well be referred to in Greek as a synagogue, but, just as the context differed, depending on the group and the situation, so the site was not necessarily a fixed one nor subject to the same physical requirements on each occasion. If the word

<sup>37</sup> See the extensive and latest evidence cited in *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*, ed L. I. Levine (Jerusalem 1981); *Ancient Synagogues. The State of Research* (n. 18 above); M. Meyers and J. F. Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity* (London 1981), pp. 140–54; M. Haran (n. 26 above), pp. 127–8. Significantly, the Theodotus inscription refers to a centre of scriptural reading and Torah study, not of prayer; see E. Schürer, *HJPJC* 2 (Edinburgh 1979), p. 425. See further J. Gwyn Griffiths, herein, pp. 1028–36 and 'Egypt and the Rise of the Synagogue', *JTS* NS 38 (1987), 1–15.

<sup>38</sup> See M. Friedländer, *Synagoge und Kirche in ihren Anfängen* (Berlin 1908), pp. 53–78; M. Hengel (n. 21 above), Index s.v. 'Synagogue'; E. Rivkin, 'Ben Sira and the Non-existence of the Synagogue' in *In The Time of Harvest*, ed. D. J. Silver (New York 1963), pp. 320–54; and J. Schwartz (n. 29 above), 80.

*kēneset* that occurs in the Mishna in the context of temple liturgy (*Yoma* 7.1 and *Soḥa* 7.7–8) has to be seen as the equivalent of *bet hakēneset* and therefore a reference to a synagogue, it may well be an anachronistic gloss. More likely, both historically and linguistically, is that the sense borne by this use of the noun amounts to no more than a description of a formal assembly or congregation of Israelites and conveys precisely the same as its Greek equivalent.

In the first century CE, possibly as more external influences on the whole of Judaeon society made themselves felt, the Diaspora synagogue also took root in that milieu and actual buildings gave form to the previously less tangible concept. This understanding of the situation would explain why there are so many varieties of physical structure used for synagogues in the early Christian centuries and why it took so long for a standard format to emerge.<sup>39</sup> It was only when the tensions between the temple and the various alternative expressions of Jewish worship disappeared after the destruction of the former that the synagogue in Palestine was able to consider absorbing within its own infrastructure not only all these various expressions but also major elements of temple ritual. That this was not done without objection and controversy is a matter for discussion when the later history of Jewish worship is considered. In the present context it need only be stressed that while for the Jews of the Hellenistic diaspora the synagogue may well have constituted a characteristic building, the equivalent concept for their brethren in the Judaeon homeland probably amounted to no more than a public gathering. If that is indeed the case then the ‘early liturgy of the synagogue’ must be redefined to refer to the various means used by the Jews during the second temple period for expressing the closeness that they felt to God and his revealed word.

## VII OPPOSING TRENDS

So much has been said about the inacceptability of uncritically assuming the existence of second-century CE tannaitic prayers and prayer customs in the latter part of the second temple period that a few remarks should also be made about those elements of controversy that characterize the tannaitic and, indeed, to a large extent, the amoraic attitudes to liturgy in its widest sense and owe their origin to dissenting opinions and varying priorities that already existed before the Jewish Revolt. These will serve as a corrective to any impression that might have been given of an overall

<sup>39</sup> See the various designs illustrated in the volumes cited in n. 37 above.

lack of continuity and will demonstrate that there was a long process of liturgical development during the whole of which variety and uniformity were vying with each other and exercising a mutual influence. Indeed, it could strongly be argued, albeit not in the present context, that the essence of Jewish liturgy is that it carries within it all these competing tendencies and successfully absorbs them all.<sup>40</sup>

Clearly, the relative roles of the individual and the community, and of spontaneity and formality stand at the centre of such controversies. While the temple service was performed on behalf of the entire community, present and absent, it was conducted by a relatively small number of priests of the required heredity and needed to find the popular dimension through such devices as the *ma'amad*. On the other hand, petitions, supplications and benedictions that were originally expressed by individuals became the foundation of a system of prayers that became progressively more formal and ceremonial. In spite of the existence of both temple and synagogue in the first century CE, important liturgical developments took place, as has been noted, among individuals, in public places, at home, or in centres deliberately chosen for their inaccessibility. Remnants of alternative *loci* are still to be found long after rabbinic Judaism has established the synagogue as the major centre of worship.<sup>41</sup> The fact that the temple was virtually in permanent action must have made the occasional prayer, or even regular benediction, appear a somewhat parsimonious act of piety and no doubt led to the growth of three daily sessions of communal worship and the argument between expansion and abbreviation.

It was inevitable that the diaspora synagogue would have a large number of members that preferred Greek to Hebrew and that, even in Judaea, Aramaic would be regarded as the more popular tongue in certain areas. The status of the language of the Hebrew Bible as against the practical advantage of a widely understood vernacular was destined to become a recurrent theme in the halakhic discussions of the rabbis concerning the precise form in which various prayers were to be recited. Distinctions between the homeland and the diaspora extended from language to ritual. It only becomes clear from sources dating from the talmudic period that such variations exist but it is not unreasonable, in view of what has been suggested above about the synagogue and the Greek language, to assume

<sup>40</sup> For more detailed discussions of these elements of controversy see J. Heinemann (n. 15 above), J. J. Petuchowski, *Understanding Jewish Prayer* (New York 1972) and my article cited in n. 27 above.

<sup>41</sup> It should be recalled that these were not restricted to the home, the academy and the desert but apparently included temples used for a continuation of the sacrificial cult after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple; see *b. Meg.* 10a and the references given in n. 29 above.



that at least some of these distinctions had their origins in late temple times.<sup>42</sup>

In his various publications J. Heinemann has challenged the notion that research in Jewish liturgy must be devoted to the discovery of *the* original text of each of the prayers and convincingly demonstrated that it is a number of original texts that are to be sought. Such reasoning would support the assumption that as soon as there were communal prayers in more than one centre there had to be a variety of oral versions. One is tempted with regard to that stage of history to refer to oral versions rather than written ones. Indeed, as far as the attitude that continued into rabbinic tradition is concerned, there could be no Jewish prayer *texts* that were not directly borrowed from the Hebrew Bible. For the rabbis they had to be either biblical and written or rabbinic and oral. The sect from the Dead Sea thought differently and preserved written versions of their prayers that imitated the biblical style and idiom but clearly adopted their own linguistic characteristics, so that here too there is controversy.<sup>43</sup> Presumably the oral transmitters' basic objection lay in giving a written form and authority to something other than the Hebrew Bible, and only after the consigning of the talmudic traditions to writing did it become inevitable that the *siddur* would follow suit.<sup>44</sup> But it was almost a thousand years before the first rabbinic prayer-books made their appearance and during that time the successors of the Dead Sea sect, the Karaites, and, presumably, any sects that existed in the generations between them but have yet to be discovered and identified, staunchly maintained what was apparently a minority view.<sup>45</sup> Here too, then, there is a millennium of divergent predispositions in a major matter of liturgical policy.

The controversy about ritual ablutions before prayer may be described in similar terms. One trend was towards the maintenance of such a symbol of purification long after the loss of the temple, to which it was

<sup>42</sup> See S. Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine* (New York 1942); M. Hengel (n. 21 above), especially pp. 108–20 and 191–5, ET pp. 58–65 and 103–6; V. Tcherikower, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (ET Philadelphia 1959), especially pp. 344–77; E. Bickerman, *From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees. Foundations of Post-Biblical Judaism* (New York 1962), pp. 72–90. For Jewish liturgical Greek see *m. Meg.* 1.8 and *m. Soṭa* 7.1; *y. Soṭa* 21b–c and *b. Soṭa* 32a–33a, 49b.

<sup>43</sup> See B. P. Kittel, *The Hymns of Qumran. Translation and Commentary* (Chico 1981) and J. Licht, *The Rule Scroll. A Scroll from the Wilderness of Judaea. 1QS, 1QSa and 1QSb. Translation, Introduction and Commentary* (Jerusalem 1965).

<sup>44</sup> Those who write down benedictions are likened to those who consign the Torah to flames in *b. Šabb.* 115b.

<sup>45</sup> See P. S. Goldberg, *Karaite Liturgy and its Relation to Synagogue Worship* (Manchester 1957) and the various controversies between Rabbanites and Karaites discussed by L. A. Hoffman in his book on the geonic liturgy (n. 28 above).

originally most relevant, and the other gradually restricted its use to a few specific areas. Here, rabbinic Judaism remained ambivalent and there appear from time to time major revivals of such stringencies in line with the Qumran community and the Islamic tradition, while for the most part the ritual ablution is left to the devotees of the mystical element in Judaism, which in itself has from earliest times made various forays into Jewish liturgy, with no small degree of success in its effects on the formulation of the prayers and the practice of various rituals.<sup>46</sup>

Even the current debate about the role of women in acts of worship has its origins in the varying Jewish responses to this question in the late second temple period. While there were Essenes that are reported to have admitted no women to their company and while the Qumran sect are seen to have accorded them no status in ‘the purity of the many’, there was a women’s court in the Jerusalem temple and there were occasions when men and women participated there in the same ceremony, albeit in segregated arrangement.<sup>47</sup> Again, the diaspora synagogues appear to take what today might be called a more egalitarian line in connection with the involvement of women in the bestowal of honorific synagogal titles. If, as has been suggested by Bernadette Brooten, these titles betray a functional as well as an honorific role, and if the relevant inscriptions from the first few Christian centuries also reflect an earlier situation, this would necessitate a reconsideration of the place of women in the early synagogue.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, later rabbinic views about the possibility of women playing a part in Torah reading and study but not in leading the prayers for men might be a continuation of the different attitudes originally taken in the educational and devotional contexts, but the evidence is lacking and any conclusion must remain in the realm of speculation.<sup>49</sup> At any rate, enough is known to indicate that there was no uniform stance about

<sup>46</sup> Apart from the general work of G. G. Scholem, see also S. Safrai, ‘The Teachings of the Pietists in Mishnaic Literature’, *JJS* 16 (1965), 15–33; N. Wieder, *Islamic Influences on the Jewish Worship* (Hebrew; Oxford 1947); P. B. Fenton, *The Treatise of the Pool* (London 1981); and J. Dan and F. Talmage (eds.) *Studies in Jewish Mysticism* (Cambridge, MA 1982).

<sup>47</sup> See Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* v.xv.73; the other sources cited by F. M. Cross (n. 29 above), pp. 96–100, G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Qumran in Perspective* (London 1977), pp. 96–109; and *m. Sukk.* 5. 2–4.

<sup>48</sup> *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* (Chico 1982); and herein M. H. Williams, ch. 4 above, and W. Horbury, ch. 12 below.

<sup>49</sup> The relevant talmudic references are *m. Hag.* 3.1, *Ned.* 4.3, *Soṭa* 3.4 and *Qidd.* 1.7; *y. Šebu.* 35b and *Soṭa* 19a; *b. Ber.* 20ab, 45b, *Roš. Haš.* 29a, *Meg.* 23ab, *Soṭa* 20a–22a, *Qidd.* 29b, *Sanh.* 94b and *Nid.* 45b. For discussion of the issues see J. Z. Lauterbach’s ‘Responsum on the Question “Shall Women be Ordained rabbis?”’, *Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook* 32 (1922), pp. 156–62, reprinted in his *Studies in Jewish Law, Custom and Folklore*, ed. B. J. Bamberger (New York 1970), pp. 240–6, and M. Meiselman, *Jewish Woman in Jewish Law* (New York 1978), pp. 34–42 and 130–46.

the degree of female participation in liturgical acts, and that when new circumstances led different varieties of the Jewish religious experience to take up contrasting positions on the subject, they were each able to claim some support from historical precedent.

### VIII LITURGICAL LANGUAGE

Since the language of the Hebrew prayer-book is sometimes cited as an important link between the earlier classical and the later rabbinic form of the language, a brief treatment of that subject will not be out of place here. It will also enable us to see how each of the particular liturgical contexts that have been touched upon makes use of its own type of language and how elements of these were eventually absorbed into what became the basic structure of the rabbinic prayer-book. There is of course the danger of circular argument. One cannot at the same time declare a form to be early because of its language and a language to be early because of its form. What will rather be done here is to make some general points about liturgical language in the latter part of the second temple period, following the assumptions already made about the larger historical situation, without using the conclusions to strengthen those assumptions.

It needs to be stated at the outset that any theory that postulates a line of direct development from biblical Hebrew through liturgical Hebrew to mishnaic Hebrew is based on a misunderstanding of the history of language in general and of the Hebrew language in particular. All manner of environmental factors affect language in diverse ways at different times and written sources that have come down to us do not tell the whole story. It is now well recognized that the language of the Hebrew Bible can represent no more than a 'frozen section' of a dialect or a dialectical tendency in the period of classical Hebrew and that mishnaic Hebrew may have originated in a different linguistic context and preserved all manner of characteristics that had once existed side by side with that form that became associated specifically with the Hebrew Bible. One is therefore obliged to view the differences between the two forms of the language in a synchronic as well as a diachronic fashion and to be wary of plotting a graph with a single line of development. In that case, liturgical Hebrew too must be seen to contain a variety of linguistic elements originating in the period under discussion, each of them representative of the context in which it was being used.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> See E. Ullendorff, 'Is Biblical Hebrew a Language?' in *BSOAS* 34 (1971), 241–55, reprinted in the volume of his essays bearing the same title (Wiesbaden 1977), pp. 3–17; S. C. Reif, *VT* 31 (1981), 123–5; and E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Jerusalem and Leiden 1982), pp. 115–47.

Before turning to Hebrew one should immediately acknowledge that it was not the only liturgical language being employed. Ubiquitous as it is in one form or another in the contemporary literature, and predominant as it was becoming among the Jewish communities of the Diaspora, Greek inevitably found its way into the synagogues of Jews for whom Hebrew was a foreign language, as the evidence of the early tannaitic sources about its liturgical use, and the ultimate preferences of the early Christian Church, appear to demonstrate.<sup>51</sup> Aramaic, too, was employed in similar contexts. The private prayers of common people, particularly those living in Galilee or other less central areas, were couched in Aramaic, not only because it was the vernacular and better understood but also because there may have been among them a feeling that it was in the reading and transmission of sacred scripture that the 'holy tongue' was most suitably employed. The same logic, drawing as it did a distinction between scripture and the vernacular, was used by those who instituted, for recitation in the study centre or *bet hammidraš*, special prayers that still carry the mark of this original, educational context.<sup>52</sup>

It was not entirely clear, however, that the language that we now refer to as mishnaic Hebrew was to be regarded as identical with the medium used for scripture and therefore capable of being confused with it, and the later rabbis certainly made a distinction between the two.<sup>53</sup> What is more, the use of Aramaic may essentially have been geographical rather than ideological. It is therefore not surprising to find that some of the earliest prayers were recited in the mishnaic dialect. Certain temple responses, where they were not actually catenae of biblical Hebrew passages and verses, appear to have been recited in mishnaic Hebrew and this precedent seems to have been followed in such public contexts as the *ma'amad*, *haggadah*, fast-day and grace after meals, if the earliest versions available to us of what they contained are to be trusted.<sup>54</sup> It is of course possible that there was an exchange of Aramaic for Hebrew in certain areas but since Aramaic passages were later incorporated into the liturgy without obvious embarrassment one would have to wonder why the change was made in some cases and not in others. Perhaps the process of standardization towards mishnaic Hebrew, just as the later tendency to 'correct' that language to what had come to be regarded as more accurate biblical Hebrew,<sup>55</sup> was never comprehensively achieved.

<sup>51</sup> See S. Lieberman (n. 42 above), pp. 29–67.

<sup>52</sup> See J. Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 190–2, 265–6 and 287. Cf. also J. J. Petuchowski and M. Brocke, *The Lord's Prayer and Jewish Liturgy* (London 1978), pp. 1–117, and P. F. Bradshaw (n. 5 above), pp. 1–46.

<sup>53</sup> E.g. *b. Hul.* 137b and *Abod. Zar.* 58b. <sup>54</sup> Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 123–38.

<sup>55</sup> See S. C. Reif, *Shabbethai Sofer and his Prayer-book* (Cambridge 1979), pp. 29–38.

Some of the oldest temple prayers have indeed been classified as *piyyuṭim*, that is, liturgical Hebrew poetry, thus making that genre of Jewish liturgical expression as old, if not older, than the more prosaic Hebrew texts that are characteristic of the rabbinic prayer-book. Heinemann details the simple and repetitive *bošā'anut* and the *seliḥot* among such prayers and argues that their form and content retain some of the earliest patterns of Jewish liturgical expression used in the temple.<sup>56</sup>

The simple benediction directly addressed to God and describing him as blessed was based on biblical Hebrew precedent, particularly the language of the later books of the Hebrew Bible, and, therefore, in its earliest form did not deviate from its original pattern, although it may originally have had an Aramaic equivalent in certain circles. The more complicated it became, and the more innovative its style and content, the more it veered towards mishnaic Hebrew.<sup>57</sup> Perhaps it is here that we can detect the growing schism between such groups as that of Qumran and the forerunners of the tannaitic rabbis. The former also based their original prayers on the precedent of biblical Hebrew, especially that of the Psalms, and adjusted the content rather than the linguistic style while the latter made a more radical alteration.<sup>58</sup>

## IX CONCLUSIONS

In spite of the complex and indefinite nature of the situation just described, it would be churlish and a disservice to readers of this volume to conclude this essay without attempting, by way of summary of the arguments and evidence presented above, to catalogue those elements of the later synagogal liturgy that are to be found in the period before the destruction of the temple and to suggest the form that they took at that stage. Having already explained that there was no one context in which they all co-existed and that there was an interplay between the various ideas and practices, and having identified the original setting of each of the tendencies as far as the evidence permits, I shall avoid further definition of who contributed what and limit myself to a brief description of the prototypes for what became standard elements in the rabbinic prayers. It should not be forgotten that there was no unanimous conviction that public prayer, other than that which might have existed in the temple, deserved a central place in the religious commitments of the ordinary Jew and that it was probably only in the Diaspora that an actual synagogue

<sup>56</sup> Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 139–55; cf. also E. Fleischer, *Hebrew Liturgical Poetry in the Middle Ages* (Hebrew; Jerusalem 1975), pp. 41–6.

<sup>57</sup> Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 77–122.

<sup>58</sup> Kutscher (n. 50 above), pp. 93–106, especially pp. 102–3.

building provided a central setting for such and related activities. This lack of formal structure applied to the frequency, order and composition of Jewish devotions as much as to their location.

The substantial archaeological and literary evidence of the use of the *šema*<sup>c</sup>, together with the Ten Commandments, as a form of amulet, and as a daily prayer in the temple and outside it, clearly establishes Deut. 6:4 as one of the earliest forerunners of synagogal liturgy.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, the traditional recitation of the sentence 'blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom for ever and ever', which is a temple response in origin, immediately after that verse, may be seen as confirming the authenticity of the claim about the *šema*<sup>c</sup>'s use in the temple.<sup>60</sup> Whether the whole passage (6:4–9) and the second paragraph (Deut. 11:13–21) were also recited is a more controversial point. The earliest tannaitic discussions support the contention that the first paragraph was an early adoption and that the third paragraph (Num. 15:37–41) had not yet achieved an equal status in the second century CE.<sup>61</sup> It has been suggested that benedictions preceding and following the *šema*<sup>c</sup> may have predated the destruction<sup>62</sup> but the lack of conclusive evidence about the content of the *šema*<sup>c</sup> itself makes it unlikely that its liturgical setting had been so far defined, and, even when benedictions did begin to attach themselves to its recitation in, say, the latter part of the first Christian century, their oral nature and lack of standardization meant that they could be no more than brief and simple.

For all the approximate parallels that have been suggested for the contents of the daily *amidab*, there was still controversy about the precise number and contents of the benedictions in the early tannaitic period and if a skeletal form did exist at an earlier period it probably constituted no more than prototypes of some or all of the first three and last three benedictions that later became integral to all forms of the *amidab*. Covering as they do the importance of the ancestral traditions, the afterlife, divine holiness, worship, thanksgiving and peace, these benedictions are sufficiently 'neutral' in content to reflect a pre-rabbinic stage but there is no doubt that they were later modified to meet standard criteria laid down by the tannaim.<sup>63</sup> Since daily public prayers appear to be later than those attached to special occasions of sadness and joy, it is not surprising to find what appear to be early prayers attached to fast-days, sabbaths and

<sup>59</sup> See n. 22 above and Josephus, *Ant.* iv.212.

<sup>60</sup> See *m. Yoma* 4.1–2 and *b. Taʿan.* 16b.

<sup>61</sup> See *m. Ber.* 1.5 and 2.2 and the expansion of these comments in *t. Ber.* 1.10 (Zuck, 2) and *y. Ber.* 3d; cf. L. Ginzberg, *A Commentary on the Palestinian Talmud* (Hebrew: New York 1941), 1, pp. 209–12.

<sup>62</sup> Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 129 and 230.

<sup>63</sup> See 2 Macc. 1:1–6 and Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 130–1.

festivals in the earliest rabbinic literature.<sup>64</sup> Another factor militating against any tendency to see the joint daily recitation of the *šema* and the *amidab* as predating the tannaim is to be identified in the strenuous efforts made by the latter scholars to insist on their linkage by stressing the supreme importance of joining the latter benedictions to the paragraphs of the *šema* and their doxological conclusion to the beginning of the *amidab*, efforts that would otherwise have been unnecessary.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, the tannaitic requirements in the case of the *šema* are not identical with those of the *amidab* and demonstrate that the former was a common custom attached to the beginning and end of the day while the latter was a more concentrated act of pious devotion.<sup>66</sup>

Another common custom was the recitation of benedictions in the context of daily life and these were simply constituted as praises directed to God. Only in the later rabbinic period did they acquire a more lengthy and complicated structure, as the essence of the form moved from a personal act of thanksgiving to a structured prayer. It is possible that the invitation to the community to praise God (*barēken*), used to introduce prayer sessions, was an important stage in that development. The earliest benediction with formal overtones is the grace after meals, as is clear from the difficulties later encountered by the rabbis in accommodating it to the pattern that they were constructing for less established doxologies.<sup>67</sup> The priestly blessing is of course of a different order altogether and entered the rabbinic liturgy from temple use where it must surely have had a very respectable pedigree.<sup>68</sup>

Among other elements of the liturgy that eventually moved from temple to synagogue were the biblical Psalms and those selections of them known as *hallel* (Pss. 113–18), the Ten Commandments (about the inclusion of which there continued to be controversy for many centuries),<sup>69</sup> the poetic *seliḥot* and *hošānot* and certain rituals of the High Priest on the

<sup>64</sup> Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 124–9.

<sup>65</sup> See n. 61 above and *y. Ber.* 2d, *b. Ber.* 4b, 9b and 42a, *Šabb.* 119b.

<sup>66</sup> That the same religious legislation is not applied to these two principal parts of the tannaitic liturgy is clear from the first five chapters of Mishna *Berakot*.

<sup>67</sup> Heinemann (n. 15 above), pp. 113–22.

<sup>68</sup> Compare the later controversy between the Babylonian and Palestinian authorities on whether the cantor or the priest should recite this benediction, an interesting reflection of the ambivalence towards the continuation of temple practices in the synagogue; cf. Hoffman (n. 28 above), pp. 53–5.

<sup>69</sup> See J. Mann, 'Genizah Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service', *HUCA* 2 (1925), 269–338 (282–4), G. Vermes, 'The Decalogue and the Minim' in M. Black and G. Fohrer (eds.) *In Memoriam Paul Kahle*, *BZAW* 103 (1968), pp. 232–40, reprinted in his *Post-Biblical Jewish Studies*, *SJLA* 8 (Leiden 1975), pp. 169–77; and J. Blau, *R. Moses b. Maimon Responsa*, 2 (Jerusalem 1960), pp. 495–9.



Day of Atonement. It is possible that they and their like were introduced into the temple in the first place under the pressure of the populace for recitations to be attached to the cultic service. Be that as it may, they were certainly among those items that may justifiably be regarded as part of the second temple's institutions in the latter part of its existence. In view of their obvious suitability to the synagogal context, there was no matter of principle involved in their transfer, the issue of the Ten Commandments being related to polemics against heretics rather than matters of liturgical principle, but the same cannot be said for other temple institutions. It is my own view that such ceremonies as the blowing of the *shofar* and the waving of the *lulab* were not incorporated into the synagogal liturgy without considerable controversy, some believing that they could only ever be part of an authentic temple service and others preferring to preserve their practice in the only context available after CE 70.<sup>70</sup> These suggestions will have to be pursued elsewhere at greater length but they are relevant here to the extent that they may provide further evidence that the early synagogue was as much the temple's contender as its imitator. Ultimately, and paradoxically, the less realistic and desirable the restoration of such a temple service became, the more successful were the efforts to emulate its example in the synagogue.

Although Jews certainly came together for the reading and study of scripture in the early first century CE, there is no possibility, on the basis of the evidence currently available to us, of establishing precisely which passages were read on which occasions. One may only speculate that the readings were linked with the manner of the occasion being marked, so that festivals and fasts must early have attracted their own readings, both on the dates themselves and on sabbaths preceding them. There is clear evidence in the tannaitic sources, for instance, that the four readings on sabbaths around the time of Purim and Passover were early versions of a cycle of readings and not additions to one. The more formal the synagogal liturgy became, the more control was exercised over what was read and how it was translated and interpreted.<sup>71</sup>

While the mystical element in the rabbinic liturgy was once thought to be among its later accretions, the current tendency to trace that element

<sup>70</sup> To this controversy I attribute the tendency in such cases to reach a compromise whereby such rituals were at least abandoned in the synagogue on the Sabbath; see my article in *SLi* (n. 27 above), 194.

<sup>71</sup> See e.g. *m. Meg.* 3.4–6, 4.10, *Hag.* 2.1 and *b. Meg.* 29a–30b. On the vexed question of the canonical status of the Hebrew Scriptures, see W. D. Davies, 'Reflections about the Use of the Old Testament in the New in its Historical Context', *JQR* NS 74 (1983), 105–36.

through the whole of Jewish religious history encourages the view that there were among those who pressed for the development of Jewish public prayer pietists who had felt their spiritual sensitivity heightened by mystical experiences and saw a place for the introduction of mystical formulations into the rabbinic liturgy. Such pietists will have included those who composed the earliest forerunners of the later *hahalot* hymns.<sup>72</sup> The rabbis remained ambivalent on the subject for many generations but there is no reason to assume that the controversy about the place of mysticism in public Jewish prayer was not already present when its nature was first being debated.

Whatever the attractions of the developing synagogue, the home always remained an important centre of Jewish ritual and liturgy, the dietary laws, sabbath and festival customs such as the *qidduš* and *habdalab* in their earliest forms,<sup>73</sup> and the traditional education of children necessitating the performance of various precepts in the domestic context. The best example is of course the *seder* service on the first evening of Passover and the development of the Passover *haggadah*, the earliest aspects of which certainly belong to the century before the destruction of the temple. And no matter what transpired in the realm of public worship, and regardless of the pressure on the Jew to transfer the private to the communal, individual prayers and supplications were always an ingredient of Jewish religious practice. Daniel's example of fervently praying three times a day (Dan. 6:11), as many other such individual acts of piety, ultimately became archetypal for public worship in Judaism, but its motivation was a personal need for support and inspiration that would never be displaced by the formalized service, whatever its degree of expansion and acceptance.

#### *Additional note*

This chapter was written before the publication of my volume, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer* (see p. 354 below). I am happy to stand by what I wrote at that time, and to add here a few remarks about recent developments which include some updated bibliographical guidance.

On the matter of such guidance, J. Tabory has recently provided an indispensable tool for all researchers in the field of Jewish liturgy with his 'Jewish prayer and the yearly cycle: a list of articles', published as a supplement to the Hebrew bibliographical periodical *Kiryat Sefer* 64

<sup>72</sup> See the reference to G. G. Scholem in n. 13 above and P. Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-literatur* (Tübingen 1984).

<sup>73</sup> Heinemann (n. 15 above), p. 218.

(Jerusalem 1992–3), and a substantial collection of *addenda* to that publication that appeared together with his facsimile edition of the Hanau prayer-book of 1628 (eds. J. Tabory and M. Rapeld, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, 1994). To that same scholar we are indebted for a survey of the latest developments in the whole field in the form of a Hebrew article entitled ‘*Tefillah*’ that was included in Supplementary Volume 3 of the *Encyclopaedia Hebraica* (Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv 1995), cols. 1061–8.

The wider subject of the history of Jewish liturgy as a whole has perhaps received more attention in the past decade than in many previous such periods and a number of English publications deserve mention here for their contributions to our general understanding of matters relevant to the period under discussion in this volume. Ismar Elbogen’s masterly German study dating from 1913 had its scholarly life extended through the publication of an updated Hebrew version in 1972, and an English translation that covers both versions has now been prepared by R. P. Scheindlin and issued by the Jewish Publication Society and the Jewish Theological Seminary under the title *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Philadelphia, Jerusalem and New York 1993). The origins of liturgy in both Judaism and Christianity are tackled in a collection of essays edited by P. B. Bradshaw and L. A. Hoffman and entitled *The Making of Jewish and Christian Worship* (Notre Dame and London 1991). Some interesting insights are to be found in the volumes *Jewish Prayer. Concepts and Customs* (Columbus 1986) by E. Klein; *Studies in Jewish Prayer* (University Press of America 1990) by T. Zahavy; *Entering Jewish Prayer* (New York 1994) by R. Hammer; and *Blessed Are You: A Comprehensive Guide to Jewish Prayer* (Northvale, NJ 1993) by J. M. Cohen. My own volume *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer* (Cambridge 1993) attempts to provide a broad, scholarly overview of many aspects of Jewish liturgical history, covering all periods from the biblical to the contemporary.

Another relevant publication of mine is my article ‘Jewish liturgy in the Second Temple period: some methodological considerations’ in the *Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division C, vol. 1 (Jerusalem 1994), pp. 1–8. There I stress the point that historians of the twentieth century, unlike their predecessors of a hundred years ago, are aware of the fact that neither sources nor those analysing them are capable of being totally dispassionate. In that case, considerable caution must be exercised in identifying the characteristics and achievements of any Second Temple group or of any individual of the period. The definition of liturgy itself must be broadly based and close attention should be paid not only to its theological and intellectual aspects but also to the geographical, social and political contexts in which it was practised, as

well as to the various processes of reaction and interaction that it generated. As I expressed it then, ‘the stresses and tensions that may be located in any area of human activity and at any time or place were most certainly present among the Jews of our period as they strove to express their desire for communication with the divine’.

There is currently a lively discussion among specialists in the field about the precise nature of the development of Jewish prayer among the earliest rabbis. By vigorously challenging the views of J. Heinemann, E. Fleischer has reopened the debate about when the text of the *‘amidab* was first authoritatively established. He has argued strongly that the process of formulating and championing this prayer was a revolutionary one and was entirely the work of Rabban Gamliel in the second Christian century. The earlier liturgical evidence is therefore not directly relevant for our understanding of that process, and the later texts that Heinemann characterized as equally valid variations are in fact departures from an established rite (*Tarbiz* 59, 1990, pp. 397–447; Hebrew). Fleischer has also expressed the view that the original Palestinian lectionary was an annual, and not a triennial one (*Tarbiz* 61, 1991, pp. 25–43, and 62, 1993, pp. 179–223; Hebrew). Various aspects of his approach have been challenged, particularly in Hebrew articles by M. Bar-Ilan (*Sinai* 112, 1992–3, pp. 126–34), M.-Z. Fuks (*Sinai* 114, 1994, pp. 164–70) and myself (*Tarbiz* 60, 1991, pp. 677–81). The ongoing struggle between the supplicatory needs of the individual and the liturgical obligations of the community is also of relevance to the discussion and has been charted by Y. (G.) Blidstein in a Hebrew article in *Sinai* 106 (1990), pp. 255–64. A consensus may ultimately emerge according to which Rabban Gamliel and his school come to be credited with novel developments but at the same time it is acknowledged that these were neither created in a vacuum nor wholly successful in imposing themselves on all subsequent rabbinic circles.

Of particular importance in establishing that there was no such vacuum is the recent work on the nature of prayer in the literature and practice of Qumran (see chapter 26 below). An increasing number of texts testify to a wide use of thanksgiving psalms, hymns and benedictions on the one hand, and supplicatory formulas and incantations on the other. Some items are intended for daily, sabbath and festival use while others are more closely related to social and political contexts, or to apocalyptic and angelological themes. The linguistic and contextual parallels with later rabbinic prayer are striking, even if the precise formulation is unique to each group. For an overview of recent Qumran studies, see D. Dimant’s article ‘Qumran sectarian literature’ and D. Flusser’s article ‘Psalms, Hymns and Prayers’ in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, ed. M. E. Stone

(Assen and Philadelphia 1984), especially pp. 522–5 and 558–70, and the volume *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* edited by D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (Jerusalem and Leiden 1992). For more specific treatments of the liturgical sphere, see C. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta 1985), B. Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (Leiden, New York and Cologne 1994) and E. G. Chazon, 'Prayers from Qumran', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 1 (1994), pp. 265–85.

The origins and early development of the synagogue continue to intrigue many scholars and to produce a welter of theories and publications. L. I. Levine ('The Nature and origin of the Palestinian synagogue reconsidered', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 115/3 (1996), pp. 425–48) takes the discussion beyond the stage reached in his own collection of essays *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia 1987). Levine summarizes the scholarly findings and interpretations to date and makes a strong case for regarding the forerunner of the synagogue building as the main public stage of the settled area in earlier times. As he himself puts it, 'most of the activities that found expression in the synagogue at the end of the Second Temple period are already documented for the city-gate area in biblical times'. Such activities were political, social, legal and educational and by no means exclusively religious-liturgical. The changes that were made to the synagogue and that altered the character of the institution to something more familiar to us from later times were gradually introduced during the first few centuries of the Christian era under various influences, not the least of them that of Byzantine Christianity.

The mystical constituent of Jewish liturgy also continues to attract attention although many of the notions to be found there are notoriously difficult to date. They may appear in substantial form only in the post-talmudic and mediaeval periods but they are now widely considered to have originated many centuries earlier. Those interested in establishing the nature of the relationship between Jewish mysticism and Jewish liturgy from as early as the axial age should now consult P. Schäfer, *Geniza-fragmente zur Hekhalot Literatur* (Tübingen 1984); M. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven and London 1984); R. Goetschel (ed.) *Prière, Mystique et Judaïsme* (Paris 1987); M. Bar-Ilan, *The Mysteries of Jewish Prayer and Hekhalot* (Hebrew; Ramat-Gan 1987); and M. D. Swartz, *Mystical Prayer in Ancient Judaism: An Analysis of Ma'aseh Merkavah* (Tübingen 1992).

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that two other areas have received much study, namely, the role of women (see chapter 12, below) and the earliest origins of hermeneutic approaches to biblical traditions. In the case of the former, useful summaries of the liturgical activities of women are offered by Susan Grossman and Hannah Safrai in the volume *Daughters of the King: Women and the Synagogue*, ed. S. Grossman and

R. Haut (Philadelphia, New York and Jerusalem 1992), pp. 15–49. For the latter, Michael Fishbane's studies are particularly important; see his *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1985) and *The Garments of Torah* (Bloomington and Indianapolis 1989).

## CHAPTER 12

## WOMEN IN THE SYNAGOGUE

Women took part in synagogue services in the ancient world, and sometimes received official titles like 'ruler of the synagogue' or 'elder'. So much is clear, and the situation in antiquity evidently contrasts with the less prominent position of women in the synagogue at some later periods; but interpretation is hampered by lack of detailed information on the ancient synagogue. Did women worship apart from men, perhaps, as in mediaeval and later times, in a special section of the building? Did women with official titles carry out the functions of the offices concerned, and thereby take part in the government of the synagogues?

Since the early nineteenth century these historical questions have been ardently debated against the background of women's emancipation and synagogue reform.<sup>1</sup> Signs of the times were the opening of the partition between the men's hall and the women's hall of the mediaeval synagogue of Worms (1843), and the discontinuance of the use of a women's gallery by the Berlin 'Genossenschaft für Reform im Judenthum' (1845);<sup>2</sup> and in the USA 'family pews' and female office-holders gradually became familiar during the nineteenth century in reformed congregations.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Particular desire among women for reform is noted by L. Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden* (2nd edn, Frankfurt a.M. 1892), p. 474; the contemporary mood is also reflected in the stress laid on female attendance at sermons and religious instruction in government synagogue ordinances of 1828 from Württemberg and Bavaria, quoted by Zunz, *ibid.*, p. 479, notes (a) and (c). The continuing importance of this background is exemplified from different viewpoints in the studies of women in the synagogue, cited below, by L. Löw (1884) and S. Schechter (1892) (see the bibliography below, section (iv)).

<sup>2</sup> The alteration at Worms, part of a larger-scale restoration (see R. Krautheimer, *Mittelalterliche Synagogen* (Berlin 1927), pp. 151, 166, 176), was influenced by the reformer Samuel Adler (B. Felsenthal, 'Adler, Samuel', *JE* 1, p. 199); for Berlin see I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (edn 3, Frankfurt a.M. 1931, repr. Hildesheim 1962), p. 423:7 (ET 314) (men and women now sat on the right-hand and left-hand sides, respectively). Women's place in public worship had been discussed at the 1845 rabbinical conference in Frankfurt (see F. Dexinger, 'Frau, III. Judentum', *TRE* 11 (1983), 424–31 (430)).

<sup>3</sup> D. Philipson, 'The Progress of the Jewish Reform Movement in the United States', *JQR* 10 (1897–8), 52–99 (52; 96, n. 1).



More recent writing again reflects the impetus of women's movements in Judaism and Christianity,<sup>4</sup> but can also draw on intensified study of women in the ancient world.<sup>5</sup> No more is attempted in what follows than to indicate and assess evidence bearing on the two linked questions of women's place in communal worship and women as office-holders. The broader issues implied but not explored below were ironically evoked in 1913 by an essayist who entitled her study 'Woman's Place in the Synagogue'.<sup>6</sup>

Preliminary attention is required by the Graeco-Roman setting (i), the problems of the nature and development of the synagogue (ii), and women's place in early Christian worship and organization, both rooted in Jewish practice (iii). Women's share in Jewish worship (iv) and communal office (v) will then be discussed, with attention to the interplay between specifically Jewish conceptions and those current in Graeco-Roman society.

## I WOMEN IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

Three aspects of women's life in antiquity are especially important for the questions under review. First, 'it's hard for women to get out' (Lysistrata's friend's explanation for late arrival by others), and their domestic hindrances are backed up by a general conviction that women's place is in the home.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, temple visits are approved; Aristotle recommends expectant mothers to take their daily exercise by attending the shrines of deities concerned with childbirth (Aristotle, *Politics* vii 1335b 14f).<sup>8</sup> Jewish communities, therefore, were not encouraged by current Graeco-Roman *mores* to keep their womenfolk from the synagogue.

Secondly, however, women were not expected to share in government, as Aristophanic comedy underlines, despite Plato's advocacy of female education;<sup>9</sup> but they exercised influence by birth and property-ownership,

<sup>4</sup> See Bibliography, section 4.

<sup>5</sup> See Bibliography, section 1, and the survey by Gillian Clark, 'Introduction', in McAuslan and Walcot, *Women in Antiquity*, 1–17.

<sup>6</sup> G. E. Spielmann, 'Woman's Place in the Synagogue', *The Jewish Review* 4 (1913–14), 24–36.

<sup>7</sup> Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 16; continuity on this point between the classical and Hellenistic periods is shown by Pomeroy, *Egypt*, p. 97, and Lefkowitz, as cited in n. 9, below.

<sup>8</sup> The importance of religion in the activities of women in the Roman world is stressed by A. Cameron, 'Neither Male Nor Female', *GaR*, Second Series, 27 (1980), 60–8, reprinted with addendum in McAuslan and Walcot, *Women in Antiquity*, 26–35.

<sup>9</sup> M. R. Lefkowitz, 'Influential Women', in Cameron and Kuhrt, *Images*, pp. 49–64 (54–7); on Plato, see Annas, Lesser and Saunders as cited in the Bibliography, section 1.

and played a significant part in business life, notably in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.<sup>10</sup> Hence, in the communal life of the Greek cities where the synagogues flourished, women were active and influential, but outside the process of government.<sup>11</sup>

Thirdly, despite women's exclusion from government, they are recorded in inscriptions, from about the second century BC onwards, as holding public offices like that of master of the gymnasium (gymnasiarch). In this period public offices and public services (liturgies) became the perquisite of property-owners, who figured as benefactors.<sup>12</sup> The distinction between public offices and liturgies became blurred (so that the gymnasiarch's prime function was to pay for the oil used in the gymnasium), and avoidance of office became common. A record of public office was therefore primarily the record of an honour, a claim to be called a benefactor, and an attestation of wealth. Women office-holders were influential in public life, but the functions of their offices had become financial.<sup>13</sup> This phenomenon must be reckoned with in assessment of the contemporary epigraphic record of women in synagogue office.

## II DIVERSITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE

Synagogal worship can probably be traced to the Persian period, but is first directly attested by references to a Jewish *proseuchē* ('prayer-house' or 'place of prayer') in Greek inscriptions from Egypt of the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes (c. 240–221 BCE).<sup>14</sup> Excavations and literary evidence show

<sup>10</sup> Pomeroy, *Egypt*, pp. 148–73 (less distinction in the economic sphere between men and women in Ptolemaic Egypt than in earlier Greek society); R. Van Bremen, 'Women and Wealth' in Cameron and Kuhrt, *Images*, pp. 223–42 (230–3, arguing for similarity in women's legal and economic status between the classical period and the Hellenistic and Roman periods).

<sup>11</sup> Lefkowitz, 'Influential Women', p. 56.

<sup>12</sup> de Ste Croix, *Class-Struggle*, pp. 305f, cf. p. 525 (L. Mummius establishes property qualifications for holding office in Achaëa); Van Bremen, 'Women and Wealth', p. 224.

<sup>13</sup> Lefkowitz, 'Influential Women', pp. 56f; Van Bremen, 'Women and Wealth', pp. 224–6. R. MacMullen, 'Women in Public in the Roman Empire', *Hist.* 29 (1980), 208–18, stresses that offices, whether held by men or by women, were viewed primarily as honours.

<sup>14</sup> M. Smith in *CHJ* 1, pp. 258–60; M. Hengel, 'Proseuche und Synagoge', in G. Jeremias, H.-W. Kuhn and H. Stegemann (eds.) *Tradition und Glaube . . .* Fs K. G. Kuhn (Göttingen, 1971), pp. 157–83 (158–60), reprinted in J. Gutmann, ed., *The Synagogue* (New York 1975) and in Hengel, *Judaica et Hellenistica*, 171–95; E. Schürer, *HJPAJC* iii. 1 (Edinburgh 1986), pp. 46f, 52; J. G. Griffiths and L. L. Grabbe, as cited in n. 17, below. For the inscriptions see *JIGRE*, nos. 22, 117.

that synagogue buildings varied considerably.<sup>15</sup> Local usage will have varied accordingly; it is suggested, for example, that women may have sat to one side of single-storey buildings, but in galleries above the aisles in basilican structures.<sup>16</sup>

More far-reaching differences and changes have been suggested. Earlier theories of origin, stressing the influence of the Jerusalem temple (S. Krauss and, to some extent, I. Elbogen) or, on the other hand, stressing independence of growth in the Diaspora (M. Friedländer), have been further developed in connection with the Greek names *proseuchē*, already noted, and *synagōgē*, ‘place of assembly’, ‘synagogue’.<sup>17</sup> *Proseuchē* is mainly

<sup>15</sup> The point is made by J. Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain*, 1 (Paris 1914), p. 456, n. 2 (on literary evidence) and A. T. Kraabel, ‘Social Systems of Six Diaspora Synagogues’ in J. Gutmann (ed.) *Ancient Synagogues: The State of Research* (Chico 1981), pp. 79–91 (87, on archaeological evidence).

<sup>16</sup> E. L. Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece* (London 1934), pp. 47–8.

<sup>17</sup> Theories of origin are discussed by W. Bacher, ‘Synagogue’, *HDB* 4 (1902), pp. 636–43; I. Abrahams, ‘The Freedom of the Synagogue’, in his *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, First Series (Cambridge 1917), pp. 1–17; S. Krauss, *Synagogale Altertümer* (Berlin and Vienna 1922), pp. 52–66; Krautheimer, *Synagogen* (n. 2, above), pp. 39–47; H. H. Rowley, *Worship in Ancient Israel* (London 1967), pp. 213–45; and J. Gutmann, ‘The Origin of the Synagogue: The Current State of Research’, *AA* 87 (1972), 36–40, reprinted in Gutmann, *The Synagogue* (n. 14, above). Temple influence is advocated by T. Friedman, ‘Some Unexplained Features of Ancient Synagogues’, *CJud* 26 (1983), 35–42. See further G. Hüttenmeister and S. C. Reif, pp. 270–1, 341–3, above; J. G. Griffiths, ‘Egypt and the Rise of the Synagogue’, *JTS* NS 38 (1987), 1–15 (arguing for origin among the Jews of Egypt); L. I. Levine, ‘The Second Temple Synagogue: The Formative Years’ in L. I. Levine (ed.) *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia 1987), pp. 7–31 (despite antecedents at the end of the First Temple period, the synagogue was still a relatively young institution at the end of the Second Temple period); E. J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1988), pp. 241–3, 279–84 (regular public prayer without sacrifice spread from the Diaspora to Judaea); L. L. Grabbe, ‘Synagogues in Pre-70 Palestine’, *JTS* NS 39 (1988), 401–11 (arguing for Diaspora origin, probably in the Greek period); M. Haran, ‘Temple and Community in Ancient Israel’, in M. V. Fox (ed.) *Temple in Society* (Winona Lake 1988), pp. 17–25 (no pre-Hellenistic evidence, but the first spores of the synagogue could have appeared towards the end of the Persian period); D. Urman and P. V. M. Flesher, *Ancient Synagogues* (2 vols, Leiden 1995), i, xx–xxv (trends in modern study); R. Riesner, ‘Synagogues in Jerusalem’ in R. J. Bauckham (ed.) *The Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting* (Grand Rapids and Carlisle 1995), 179–211 (an institution of the Greek period, with roots in the exilic age). On prayer, see also P. F. Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church* (London 1981), pp. 1–22 (a chapter on ‘Daily Prayer in First-Century Judaism’), and S. Safrai, ‘Gatherings in the Synagogue on Festivals, Sabbaths and Weekdays’ in R. Hachlili (ed.) *Ancient Synagogues in Israel, Third–Seventh Century CE* (BAR International Series 499, Oxford 1989), pp. 7–15; D. K. Falk, ‘Jewish Prayer Literature and the Jerusalem Church in Acts’ in Bauckham, *Palestinian Setting*, 267–301; W. Horbury, ‘Early Christians on Synagogue Prayer and Imprecation’ in G. N. Stanton and G. Stroumsa (eds.) *Tolerance and Intolerance in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (Cambridge 1998) pp. 296–317.

but not exclusively used of prayer-houses in the Diaspora, whereas *synagōgē* is at first rarely found in this sense in a Diaspora connection, but becomes the standard Greek term (also taken over into Latin) after the first century CE (cf. Hebrew *bēt k'neset*, 'house of assembly').<sup>18</sup> Thus S. Zeitlin, in an influential theory which takes up an element in the views of L. Löw and S. Krauss, holds that the synagogue originated under Pharisaic influence as a 'place of assembly' for communal needs, a council-house rather than a prayer-house;<sup>19</sup> while M. Hengel argues that the Diaspora *proseuchē*, distinguished by the prayer and psalmody which its name suggests, developed under Pharisaic influence into the *synagōgē*, an institution more closely linked with Judaea and the temple, and characterized especially by the reading of the law.<sup>20</sup> On Zeitlin's theory the synagogue began as a centre of public life, in which women might accordingly have been expected initially to play a lesser part; but they could have been prominent, on the pattern of the prayer and prophecy of Miriam (see (iii) and (iv) below), in the *proseuchē* as envisaged by Hengel.

These theories underline two considerations of note in discussion of custom, the influence of the Pharisaic and rabbinic movements and the distinction between Judaea and the Diaspora. Rabbinic influence will certainly have affected the development of synagogue practice; on the other hand, much of the evidence to be reviewed below comes from Diaspora regions not so clearly subject to that influence. Thus E. R. Goodenough could hold that Diaspora worship differed greatly in atmosphere from rabbinically approved synagogue prayers.<sup>21</sup> The uncertainty of rabbinic influence, however, should not be exaggerated. The Diaspora

<sup>18</sup> Juster, i, pp. 456b–457, n. 3 and Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 2–17 survey occurrences; epigraphic material on *proseuche* is surveyed by I. Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in its Diaspora Setting* (Grand Rapids and Carlisle 1996), 213–25; in the first century CE Philo has *proseuchē* much more often than *synagōgē*, Josephus (a small number of references) has *synagōgē* more often, and the New Testament books have *synagōgē* often, *proseuchē* only once.

<sup>19</sup> S. Zeitlin, 'The Origin of the Synagogue: A Study in the Development of Jewish Institutions', *PAAJR* 2 (1930–31), 69–81, reprinted in Gutmann, *The Synagogue*; cf. Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 55–6, with reference to Löw. *Beth k'neset* was understood, by contrast, as a place of assembly for prayer in Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah* II ii (*Hil'kot T'fillah*), 11, 1 ('a house where they may assemble for prayer . . . and this place is called the house of assembly').

<sup>20</sup> M. Hengel, 'Die Synagogeninschrift von Stobi', *ZNW* 57 (1966), 145–83 (174–6), reprinted with supplement in Hengel, *Judaica et Hellenistica*, 91–130; Hengel, 'Proseuche', especially pp. 162–9; with the suggestion of differences in the character of the worship compare W. L. Knox, *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles* (Cambridge 1939), p. 200, and E. R. Goodenough, as cited in n. 21, below.

<sup>21</sup> E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, ix (New York 1964), pp. 30–7 (also finding support in rabbinic literature).

had strong links with Judaea, symbolized most vividly by the Jews' collection of their own tax for the Jerusalem temple within the Roman empire as well as beyond the Euphrates.<sup>22</sup> The increasing importance of the rabbinic movement in Judaea in the second century CE would therefore have made its impact on the Diaspora communities.<sup>23</sup>

Correspondingly, evidence from the first century CE suggests that a good measure of unity could be recognized in Diaspora and Judaeian synagogue usage. Elements stressed in the different theories of synagogue origins were held together. The reading of the law was important both in Jerusalem and the Diaspora,<sup>24</sup> Josephus applies both the principal Greek names to the synagogue, and he describes communal deliberations suitable to a 'place of assembly' as being conducted at Tiberias in 67 in a building which he calls the *proseuche*.<sup>25</sup> In all, therefore, custom concerning women in the synagogue may have exhibited diversity and change, but the strength of forces making for consistency should also be remembered.

Consideration of women's place in the synagogue raises the more particular question whether any pattern of synagogue worship can be identified as widespread, despite diversity and fluidity. The currency of the widely differing views of synagogue origins already noticed underlines the lack of information on synagogue worship before the third century CE (see chapter 11 in this volume). About the beginning of that century, it is envisaged in the Mishnah that the recitation of the Shema<sup>6</sup> and the Eighteen Benedictions, the reading of the law and the prophets and the recitation of the priestly blessing may take place if ten or more are gathered together, and that the biblical lections are opened and closed by benedictions (*m. Meg.* 4:1–5). These regulations will reflect what had for

<sup>22</sup> The evidence is collected by Juster, i, pp. 377–85.

<sup>23</sup> This impact is probably attested by the reference to 'the patriarch' in the Stobi synagogue inscription (of the late second or the third century CE), so interpreted by Hengel, 'Stobi', pp. 152–8 and Schürer *HJPJC* iii.1, p. 67; this interpretation is viewed as possible by S. J. D. Cohen, 'Pagan and Christian Evidence on the Ancient Synagogue' in Levine, *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity*, pp. 159–81 (172–3), but he also allows for the possibility that the patriarch in question may have been a local official rather than the patriarch of Israel.

<sup>24</sup> In the Theodotus inscription (Mount Ophel, before CE 70) the synagogue was built 'for the reading of the law and the teaching of the commandments' (text and photograph in Sukenik, *Synagogues*, p. 70 and plate xv1a) see also pp. 84–5 above; discussion of date reviewed by Riesner, 'Synagogues in Jerusalem', 192–200; for the Diaspora, see for example Philo, *V. Mos.* ii. 216.

<sup>25</sup> Josephus, *Vita* 277, 280, 293; the consistency of the various evidences is stressed by S. Safrai, 'The Synagogue' in S. Safrai, M. Stern, D. Flusser and W. C. van Unnik (eds.) *JPFC* (CRINT T), ii (Assen 1976), pp. 908–44, and 'Gatherings', cited in n. 17, above.

a time been customary in Judaea and Galilee, that is, public biblical readings in a framework of common prayer.

Were both biblical reading and common prayer well established in conjunction, in Jewish observance? Public reading, especially of the law, together with exposition, is likely to have formed the focus of assemblies on the sabbath and other notable days from early in the Second Temple period (see section (iv), below). It is attested for both Judaea and the Diaspora (n. 24, above), for example in Luke 4:16–20 (Nazareth), the Theodotus inscription (Jerusalem; n. 24, above), Acts 13:14–15 (Pisidian Antioch), and Philo of Alexandria (with *VM* ii 216, cited in n. 24, above, compare *Leg. ad Gaium* 156, and *Hypothetica*, as quoted by Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* viii 7 and discussed in section (iii) below). The custom can be traced in biblical literature (section iv (b), below) to the post-exilic period, notably in the marks left by liturgical usage on the account of the reading of the law by Ezra in Neh. 8:1–12 (see especially verses 5–7, where the congregation stand, the reader utters a benediction, they lift up their hands and answer Amen, and then bow to the ground). The passage in Nehemiah cannot be called an account of a synagogue service, if by that is meant an assembly for all the elements of reading and common prayer later to be specified in the Mishnaic rulings summarized above; but Neh. 8:5–7 are most naturally explained as reflecting usage already known to the writer in assemblies for the public reading of the law.

Much less is known, however, of common prayer before the time of the Mishnah, and it is asked whether in the pre-Mishnaic period it had any place, or any regular place, in the public gatherings for the reading of the law. The question is significant here especially because of the importance of women in prayer, noted in sections (iii) and (iv) below. Fuller discussion must be sought elsewhere (see for example L. I. Levine (n. 17, above), pp. 19–22, and S. Safrai, ‘Gatherings’ (n. 17, above); on prayer, see also P. F. Bradshaw and E. J. Bickerman, as cited in n. 17, above also pp. 324–5, 355, above; 852–3, 873, below). Here, however, some considerations may be noted which make it likely that common prayer, however diverse in form, already had a place, in conjunction with public readings of the law and the prophets, in synagogue worship of the Second Temple period.

(a) The most common early name for the Jewish place of assembly is *proseuchē*, ‘prayer-house’ (nn. 14 and 18, above). (The corresponding Greek verb *proseuchesthai* is used for prayer towards Jerusalem and the temple at I Kgs 8:44 and 48 LXX.) The comparable Hebrew expression ‘house of prostration’ (*bet hištalʾnot*) is found in the Damascus Document (CD xi 22; the Hebrew verb is used for prostration in prayer at Neh. 8:6 and elsewhere, and can be used without qualification as the equivalent of ‘worship’, as at Gen. 22:5).



(b) There are a few specific references to common prayer and hymnody of the Jewish community before the time of the Mishnah. See (to move backwards in time) Justin Martyr (mid-second century CE), *Dial.* cxvii 2 and 4 (Jews understand Mal. 1:11, on the 'pure offering' (LXX *thysia*, 'sacrifice') to be offered in every place and among the Gentiles, as a reference to Jewish prayers (so the Targum on this verse)); cxxxvii 4 (instruction by *archisynagogi* 'after the prayer'); Philo, *Flacc.* 121 (first century CE; hymns, discussed further in section iv (b) and n. 60 (comparing a rabbinic text on synagogue hymnody), below); and Josephus, *Ant.* xiv. 258, 260–1 (decrees of Halicarnassus and Sardis allowing the Jews, respectively, their *proseuchai* (here probably prayers rather than prayer-houses) and their 'prayers and sacrifices' (*euchai kai thysiai*, perhaps the equivalent of 'prayers and thanksgivings', as the biblical expression 'sacrifice of thanksgiving' or 'of praise' might suggest (see Lev. 7:12 LXX, as explained in Heb. 13:15), but in any case probably referring to the sacrifice of prayer, as in the interpretations of Mal. 1:11 noted above). For antecedents of the customs reflected in these passages see Bar. 3:6–7, Jer. 29:7 and 12, and 1 Kgs 8:44 and 48 (2 Chr. 6:34 and 38), cited above (common prayers by Jews away from Jerusalem and Judaea).

(c) Common prayers were offered by the Therapeutae in Egypt (Philo, *V. Contempl.* 64–89, on their sabbath-day meetings), by the Essenes described by Josephus (*Bell.* II.128, on the 'ancestral prayers' offered at dawn), and by the Jews for whom the Qumran texts of psalmody with refrain (11QPS145) or collective prayers and hymns were produced (see, for example, 4Q503, fragments of an order of evening and morning benedictions for each day of a month, and the 'Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice', hymns for a series of thirteen sabbaths in 4Q400–7 and other texts); these customs (see ch. 26, below), viewed together with the widespread attestation of individual prayer, suggest that other groups too could readily have prayed and sung hymns in common, as the people are said to do in 1 Macc. 3:44 (they are ready for prayer) and 4:24 (they sing a hymn).

(d) In the Jerusalem temple, common prayer and hymnody was associated with the sacrifices (1 Chr. 16:4–42 (including a hymn of praise corresponding to several passages from the Psalter)); 2 Chr. 23:18, 29:25–9; Sir. 50:14–21; 1 Macc. 12:11 (the Jews remember the Spartans without ceasing 'in the sacrifices which we offer, and in our prayers'); 2 Macc. 1:23–30, a prayer comparable at several points with the later Tefillah; *m. Tamid* 7:3–4 (naming set psalms); the priests recited the decalogue, the morning Shema', other biblical passages and a series of benedictions in common, according to the Mishnah (*m. Tamid* 5:1); and the reading of the law is united with public confession and praise in Neh. 9:3–5, where the



temple is probably envisaged as the setting. Temple usage influenced prayer elsewhere, as is suggested by the customs of orientation (e.g. 1 Kgs 8:44, 48; Dan. 6:11) and of praying at the hours of the temple service (e.g. Ezra 9:5, Jdt. 9:1, Acts 3:1, 10:30). (Compare pp. 303–4 above.)

(e) Early Christian worship included common prayer as an important element (thus 1 Cor. 11:4–5, discussed in section (iii), below, probably refer to the assembly; *Did.* ix and x give forms of collective thanksgiving); Jewish custom is likely to be reflected.

(f) Josephus (*Ant.* iv.209–12), in the course of a summary of the Pentateuchal laws, attaches regulations for morning and evening prayer (with no explicit biblical warrant, but probably based on Deut. 6:7) to the ordinance of a public septennial reading of the law (Deut. 31:10, discussed in section iv (b), below); this arrangement of the material, which may antedate Josephus himself, suggests an association of the Shema' and accompanying benedictions with the public reading of the law.

Prayer and hymnody were very widespread, therefore, and by the time of Josephus daily prayers were considered a Mosaic ordinance incumbent on all ((f), above). Common prayer was known in the temple ((d), above), and in special groups like the Essenes (c), and in Jewish Diaspora communities, where it is specified as a communal observance of the Jews to be recognized by the city in which they reside (b). It would be very natural that the assembly for the reading of the law should also be an assembly for prayer (compare Neh. 9:3–5), as the name *proseuche* for the house of assembly in which the law was expounded suggests (a). Correspondingly, Philo says that exposition of the laws in the sabbath assembly takes place in the houses of prayer (see *VM* II. 216 (*proseukterion*); *Leg. ad Gaium* 156 (*proseuche*)). In view of the close links between homeland and Diaspora in Philo's time there is a general likelihood that Diaspora practice reflected Judaeon usage; in the absence of specific evidence this general consideration should not be over-pressed, but it combines with the indirect evidence for post-exilic Judaeon customs noted above from Neh. 8 and 9 and with the later attestations of common prayer and a house of prayer in special Judaeon groups to permit the hypothesis that the reading of the law was combined with prayer in Judaea and Galilee as well as the Diaspora at the end of the Second Temple period. The Mishnaic practice of public biblical reading in a framework of common prayer probably therefore had a prehistory of some length, as is suggested by Josephus' association of rules for daily prayer with the septennial Deuteronomic reading of the law (f). It is particularly notable that prayer in the form of a benediction and congregational prostration before the reading is already envisaged at Neh. 8:5–7.

In the Graeco-Roman period, therefore, it is likely that before the time of the Mishnah there was already a widespread form of synagogue assembly in which the focus was the reading and exposition of the law and the prophets, in a framework of common prayer. The conjunction of prayer with the biblical reading can most readily be inferred from the references to Diaspora communal assembly for prayers, for the reading of the law, and in the *proseuche*; but against this background, and in view of the conjunction of readings with prayer already envisaged in different ways in Neh. 8:5–7 and 9:3–5, and presupposed in a developed customary form in the Mishnah, it is likely that Judaeen and Galilean public readings of the law also included prayer. (As hints of this practice in the homeland note Josephus' use of the term *proseuche* for a large synagogue in Tiberias (n. 25, above), and his association of daily prayers with the septennial reading of the law in his arrangement of the commandments.) In Judaea and Galilee from the second century AD onwards the congregational prayer conjoined with the biblical readings and exposition is likely to have included the Shema' and some form of the Tefillah, but still to have retained considerable fluidity of expression. Comparably, psalms and hymns were probably sung in the Diaspora assemblies of the pre-Mishnaic period, and in view of temple usage and Qumran and rabbinic evidence are also likely to have gained their place in Judaeen and Galilaean synagogue assemblies no later than the second century CE.

### III WOMEN IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Women were prominent among the early Christians as patronesses, like Mary the mother of Mark in Jerusalem, Lydia the Thyatiran purple-seller in Philippi, and Chloe in Corinth (Acts 12:12, 16:14f; 1 Cor. 1:11). They also received praise and blame as prophetesses (notably at Acts 21:9 (Caesarea) and Rev. 2:20 (Thyatira; see further below)). Phoebe held the congregational office of deacon at Cenchreae (Rom. 16:1f).

The Jewish roots of early Christianity mean that Christian sources may illuminate the place of women in the synagogue. Allowance must be made for the special character of Christianity as a messianic movement, in which prophecy was pervasive and customs might be changed; but the movement was also pervaded by strong tendencies towards continuity and order, as Matthew's gospel and the teaching of Paul attest, and its messianism and prophecy were themselves continuations of currents in contemporary Jewish life. Hence it is not surprising that the position of women among the early Christians, in functions like those just noted,

seems largely to accord with the position of contemporary Jewish women of comparable social background.<sup>26</sup>

Here attention will be given to New Testament evidence on women in the Christian assembly, to New Testament and later evidence on women in office, and to evidence from the third century and later for the separation of the sexes in Christian worship.

The earliest references to women in Christian worship are Pauline, from 1 Corinthians (probably of CE 54).<sup>27</sup> Note that, according to Acts 18:1–8, Paul stayed in Corinth in a Jewish household, that of Aquila and Priscilla, and spoke regularly in the synagogue. Paul was joined by Silas and Timothy, but after encountering opposition in the synagogue he declared that he would turn to the Gentiles, and withdrew to hold meetings in the neighbouring house of Justus, ‘a worshipper (*sebomenos*) of God’, probably one of those gentile adherents of the Jewish community who in inscriptions from the second century CE onwards are classified as *theosebes*, ‘God-fearer’ (see Reynolds and Tannenbaum, as cited in n. 108, below, pp. 51–66). Those who accepted Christian teaching included Crispus, an *archisynagogus* (in 1 Cor. 1:14, correspondingly, the baptism of a Crispus is mentioned), as well as many of the Corinthians. The Christian community addressed in 1 Corinthians, therefore, included many Gentiles, as shown by 1 Cor. 12:2 ‘you were Gentiles’; but it arose in the Corinthian synagogue, God-fearers like Justus were probably an important element

<sup>26</sup> On messianic freedom and its correctives in early Christianity see W. D. Davies, *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (London 1984), pp. 257–77 (especially 274–7), ‘From Schweitzer to Scholem: Reflections on Sabbatai Svi’ (reprinted from *JBL* 95 (1976), pp. 529–58 (antinomianism was checked more strongly in Christianity than in Sabbatianism)); in a private communication Professor Davies informs me that that he would be ready to envisage Christian upheavals with regard to the position of women, such as might disturb the general correspondence with contemporary Jewish conditions suggested in the text above. Note, however, that Christian prophecy need not form an exception to this correspondence. In view of the prophetic figures mentioned by Josephus in his accounts of his own times, for example in *Bell.* vi.285–7 (prophets suborned by the tyrants) and 300–9 (Jesus, son of Ananias), contemporary Jewish conditions are probably reflected in the New Testament description of Anna the prophetess (Luke 2:36–8), as is assumed without argument by Brenner, *Woman*, p. 66. For Jewish women’s prophecy, compare also Jdt. 11:17–18 (knowledge is divinely imparted to her after prayer) and *Test. Job* 47–53 (on the ecstatic hymnody of Job’s daughters; discussed, with an argument for the Jewish origin of these chapters, by P. W. van der Horst, ‘Images of Women in the Testament of Job’ in M. A. Knibb and P. W. van der Horst (eds.) *Studies on the Testament of Job* (Cambridge 1989), at pp. 101–16). The mendicant fortune-teller satirized by Juvenal (*Sat.* vi.542–7) as ‘a trembling Jewess . . . the faithful go-between of highest heaven’ (*iudaea tremens . . . summi fida internuntia caeli*) is of humbler status than Judith or Job’s daughters, but in spiritual claims akin.

<sup>27</sup> C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London 1968), pp. 1–5. On Christian women at Corinth see Kraemer, *Her Share*, 145–50.

among the gentile Christians, and Jews, including an *archisynagogus*, were in leading positions in the church.<sup>28</sup> Synagogue usage is therefore likely to receive some reflection in the Christian institutions of Corinth.

Passages on women which are comparable with 1 Corinthians, but later (probably within the limits CE 60–100) come from the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. 2:8–15, Titus 2:3–5), predominantly non-Pauline writings circulated in the name of Paul.<sup>29</sup> For the present purpose it is noteworthy that, on the subject of women in public worship, both 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy appeal to the law of Moses.<sup>30</sup>

What practice is reflected in 1 Corinthians, and what was Paul's view? It was customary for women to pray and prophesy in public worship (they are to do so with covered head, 1 Cor. 11:5); on the other hand, they are to keep silence in the assemblies, 'for they do not have leave to speak, but must be in subjection, as also the Law says' (1 Cor. 14:34f). The difficulty of reconciling these prescriptions, viewed together with variation in the textual tradition (14:34f are placed after 14:40 in Western witnesses), has prompted suggestions that 14:34f are interpolated.<sup>31</sup> The apparent inconsistency between chapters 11 and 12 is resolved, however, if it can be allowed that female prophecy (and prayer), having precedent in the law, and perhaps in some current Jewish practice (n. 26, above), and widespread Christian attestation, is assumed in 14:34f to be an exception (see Exod. 15:20f, and section (iv), below; Luke 2:36–8, Acts 2:17, Acts 21:9, Rev. 2:20).<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Crispus and the female adherents are discussed by W. A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven 1983), pp. 57–60, 70f.

<sup>29</sup> Debates on authenticity in 1 Corinthians therefore concern possible interpolations in Pauline material; but in the Pastoral Epistles, which differ markedly in both style and thought, the question is whether any authentically Pauline fragments have been incorporated into predominantly non-Pauline writings. See C. F. D. Moule, 'The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: a Reappraisal', *BJRL* 47 (1965), 430–52 repr. in *Essays in New Testament Interpretation* (Cambridge 1982), pp. 113–32; B. S. Childs, *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (London 1984), pp. 373–95 (survey and bibliography); J. Murphy O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford 1996), 356–9 (urging that 1 Timothy and Titus are non-Pauline, but 2 Timothy authentic).

<sup>30</sup> This point, brought to the fore by M. Küchler, *Schweigen, Schmuck und Schleier: Drei neutestamentliche Vorschriften zur Verdrängung der Frauen auf dem Hintergrund einer frauenfeindlichen Exegese des Alten Testaments in antiken Judentum* (Freiburg and Göttingen 1986) is also recognized in the account of Christian attitudes towards women by de Ste Croix, *Class Struggle*, pp. 103–11.

<sup>31</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, *ad loc.*, inclines to this view after careful discussion; in a special excursus C. Wolff, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther, Zweiter Teil* (Berlin 1982), pp. 140–3, concludes for authenticity.

<sup>32</sup> H. Grotius, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum*, 2 (Paris 1646), p. 411, on 1 Cor. 11:5; comparably, modern commentators such as W. G. Kümmel, listed by Wolff (as cited in the previous note), p. 142, n. 384.

It might then be supposed that the particular form of speech envisaged in the command to silence is teaching (cf. 1 Cor. 14:6, 26), perhaps in exposition of a scriptural reading (not mentioned in 1 Corinthians, but probably part of early Christian worship). The questions forbidden in 1 Cor. 14:35 (women are to ask their husbands privately) would then be such as arise in connection with such exposition. Teaching is specified in the similar prohibition at 1 Tim. 2:12.

This suggestion<sup>33</sup> receives some support from Jewish references to silence, exposition and questions in connection with the reading of the law. At the sabbath meeting the laws are heard in silence, except when it is thought right to add something; exposition is given by priests and elders (Philo, *Hypothetica*, quoted by Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* viii.7, 13; cf. in general Philo, *VM* ii.216, on study of the ancestral philosophy in the places of prayer (*proseuktēria*), and Josephus, *c. Ap.* ii.175, on weekly assembly for instruction in the law). Similarly, the Therapeutae listen in silence to their president's exposition of some scriptural problem, which one of the hearers may have propounded (Philo, *De vita contemplativa*, 75). This practice can be compared with the rabbinic view that Moses prescribed both questioning and exposition concerning the laws (b. Meg. 32a). So instructed are the Jewish husbands by the sabbath-day exegesis, according to Philo, that they seem competent to transmit the laws to their wives (Philo, *Hypothetica*, quoted by Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* viii.7, 14). Exposition might then be the context envisaged in the command to silence in 1 Cor. 14:34f, and women's questions would be prohibited there as interconnected with teaching (as in the posing of problems among the Therapeutae). Women, then, according to this command, would be prohibited from teaching, and directed to keep their questions for their husbands (who would be credited with the competence claimed for them by Philo).

However this may be, it seems best to regard prophecy as an implied exception at 1 Cor. 14:34f; but note that the verses remain awkward, even on this view, for they closely follow regulations on prophecy (this still applies if they come after verse 40), and could readily be taken to forbid women's prophecy.

Probably, therefore, Paul held that, 'in the assemblies' (1 Cor. 14:34), women are free to pray and prophesy (1 Cor. 11:5), but not to speak or to ask questions (1 Cor. 14:34f) – that is, on the interpretation offered above, not to teach in public. This view would tally with the opinion

<sup>33</sup> Paul's reference to questions suggests that women desired to learn; their disputativeness or loquacity are envisaged as possible causes of the ruling by Barrett and Wolff, both on verse 35.

current among Jews that women pray and hear the law, but do not teach (section (iv), below). If, however, the passage 1 Cor. 14:34f is interpolated, it may have been intended to forbid women's prophecy. In either case, in early Christian worship some liberty of prophesying for women co-existed with a marked tendency towards constraint, characterized by the derivation of the subordination of women from the law (1 Cor. 14:34, 1 Tim. 2:11–15). Philo and Josephus similarly derive it thence, probably with Gen. 3:16 in mind.<sup>34</sup>

Despite the prevalence of this view, women were prominent in first-century Christian communities, and sometimes held office, as noted already. How far can this Christian usage serve as a guide in the question of women in synagogue office? Female patronage and prophecy probably reflect contemporary Jewish phenomena; but it is striking, against the background of Jewish practice so far as it is attested, that Phoebe (Rom. 16:1f) and other women (on the probable interpretation of 1 Tim. 3:11) held the office of deacon. Deacons were commonly married men (1 Tim. 3:12), and their office had a dignity sufficient for mention in the address of a Pauline epistle ('to the saints . . . with the overseers (*episkopoi*) and deacons', Phil. 1:1).<sup>35</sup>

The commendation of Phoebe to a Christian community not her own (Rom. 16:1f) both contrasts and agrees with the later epigraphic records

<sup>34</sup> Philo, *Hypothetica*, quoted by Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* viii.7, 3; Josephus, *c. Ap.* ii.201; de Ste Croix, *Class Struggle*, pp. 106f (emphasizing the coherence of this view with the general impression left by Gen. 1–3); Kückler, *Schweigen*, pp. 58–63 (arguing that Philo and Josephus follow an ancient misinterpretation of Gen. 3: 16, whereby an aetiological explanation of an abnormality is itself turned into a norm).

<sup>35</sup> For *episkopoi* and deacons together, cf. 1 Tim. 3:1–13, 1 Clem. 42 4f (where allusion to the two offices is found in Isa. 60:17), and Didache xv.1; for a second-century female deacon, note Grapte in Hermas, *vis.* ii. 4, 3 (cf. *sim.* ix. 26, 2); for the female deacon's duties in the third century, see Didascalia ii.26, iii.12 (Syriac) and xx, xxv, xxxv (Latin); in the fourth century, Apostolic Constitutions ii.26, iii.15 (developing the Didascalia). For discussion see the commentaries on Romans by W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam (eds., Edinburgh 1902) and by C. E. B. Cranfield (vol. 2, Edinburgh 1979), on xvi 1f; H. Lietzmann, 'Zur altchristlichen Verfassungsgeschichte', reprinted from *ZWT* 55 (1914), 97–153 in H. Lietzmann, *KS* 1 (TU 67, Berlin 1958), pp. 141–85 (with special attention to Jewish inscriptions), at pp. 148–53, 169–85. For epigraphic and literary evidence suggesting that the *hazzan* was also known as a deacon (*diakonos*), see Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 126–8, 237; S. Applebaum, 'The Organization of the Jewish Communities in the Diaspora' in Safrai, Stern, Flusser and van Unnik, *JJFC* i (Assen 1974), pp. 464–503 (p. 496); and Schürer *HJPAJC* 2, p. 438 and (with Goodman and P. Vermes) 3.1, pp. 14, 34, on Epiphanius, *Baer.* xxx 11 (*azānītēs* to be interpreted *diakonos* or *hypēretēs*) and inscriptions: from Rome *CIJ* 172 = *JJWE* ii 290, *hyperetes*) and Apamea in Syria (*CIJ* 805 = Lifschitz, *Donateurs*, no. 40, Nehemiah 'azāna and *diakonos*').



of women as *archisynagōgos*, elder or *prostatēs* (section (v), below).<sup>36</sup> Thus, the inscriptions publicize an honour and record it for posterity, whatever function it may have entailed; but Phoebe is commended for practical reasons, probably as bearer of a letter, at the start of inter-communal greetings and messages which are likely to reflect synagogue usage, but which also underline the small-scale and close-knit character of the Christian congregational network (Rom. 16:1–24; note the women’s names here and in the comparable passages 1 Cor. 16:15–24, Col. 4:7–18, 2 Tim. 4:19–22). The contrast of form therefore evokes the difference between these Christian communities and the large Jewish bodies of the contemporary Diaspora, in which synagogue buildings were the focus of a quasi-civic organization and ethos.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, Phoebe resembles the women of the inscriptions insofar as she was probably of some wealth and social standing (n. 36, above). Further, when Christian communities became comparable with the synagogues in size, female deacons continued to be found; in the third and fourth centuries they were primarily concerned with charitable work and instruction among women (n. 35, above). The office of deacon developed distinctively in Christianity, but it corresponded in some respects to that of the synagogue *ḥazzān*, also probably called ‘deacon’ (*diakonos*) by Greek-speaking Jews.<sup>38</sup> To return to the contrast, however, the office of *ḥazzān* (for which there is, admittedly, not much Diaspora evidence) does not figure so far among those attested as held by women. The points of contrast preclude any straightforward inference that woman officers like the female deacons must have functioned in Jewish communities; but the toleration of these woman office-holders in both the first-century and the later church underlines the need for a broad view of possibilities in the synagogue.

<sup>36</sup> Phoebe is called ‘*prostatēs* (helper) of many’ (Rom. 16:2), but the word does not denote office. Her ability to help probably reflects wealth and position (so Cranfield (as cited in the previous note), *ad loc.*), but not necessarily on a large scale (see Meggitt, *Paul, Poverty and Survival*, pp. 143–9). Pace Cranfield, her pagan theophoric name need not weaken the possibility that she was Jewish; see M. Schwabe and B. Lifschitz, *Beth She‘arim*, 2 (Jerusalem 1967), p. 16, no. 52, on the name Dionysia.

<sup>37</sup> Applebaum, ‘Organization’ (as cited in n. 35), especially pp. 490–8.

<sup>38</sup> On the *ḥazzān* see n. 35, above; words for ‘serve’ and ‘service’ cognate with *diakonos* (*diakoneîn*, *diakoniā*) occur in early Christian contexts suggesting that they had come into Jewish usage for communal ‘ministry’, and the office of deacon is regularly linked (n. 35, above) with that of *episkopos*, for which a Jewish background is possible. Thus, with 1 Clem. xl (the *diakonai* of the Levites), cf. Acts 1:17, 25 (the *diakoniā* of the Twelve) and 6:1 (communal charitable distribution called *diakoniā*); and for comparison between the *m<sup>e</sup>baqqēr* named in the Damascus Document (xiii 9) and similar texts, and the Christian *episkopos*, see, for example, M. Weinfeld, *The Organizational Pattern and the Penal Code of the Qumran Sect* (Freiburg and Göttingen 1986), pp. 19–21, 48, 77.



Another Christian custom bearing on the question of women's place in the synagogue, but in this case first known from evidence later than the New Testament, is the separation of the sexes in public worship. Their segregation by various means is widely attested from the third century onwards (e.g. (Syriac) Didascalia ii.57 (the women behind the men); Apostolic Constitutions ii.57 (separate entrances and gatekeepers); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses*, Introductory Lecture (Procatechesis), 14; Augustine, *CD* ii.28, xxii.8).<sup>39</sup> Among Chrysostom's hearers (end of fourth century) women were divided from men by a wooden barrier, but the senior could remember when it had not been there;<sup>40</sup> it would presumably have been preceded by separation without a barrier. Women's galleries were also known from the fourth century onwards, figuring for example, in Gregory Nazianzen's versified dream of his favourite church of Anastasia, where he preached in Constantinople (379–81).<sup>41</sup>

The practice of separation is probably of considerable age. At the end of the third century Eusebius, arguing that Philo's Therapeutae must have been Christians, notes with approval their separate dwelling-places for men and women, as if this were one of the features of their life corresponding to well-known Christian characteristics (Eusebius, *HE* ii. 16.2; 17.19; 17.21). Origen, in the first half of the third century, cites a tradition that a special place was appointed for virgins in the Jerusalem temple; this tradition might well reflect Christian practice at the end of

<sup>39</sup> Sources are collected by J. Bingham, *The Antiquities of the Christian Church* (1708–22), book viii, chapter v. 6 (repr. London 1843, vol. ii, pp. 418–28); H. T. Armfield, 'Sexes, Separation of', *DCA* 2 (1908), pp. 1891–2. Thraede, 'Frau', cols. 258f and Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 135 both cite sources not in Bingham and Armfield, including the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (early third century; see in G. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St Hippolytus of Rome* (corrected reissue, London 1968), p. 29 (xviii 2–4, women, both baptized and catechumens, stand in the assembly by themselves), and the preface by H. Chadwick, p. 9, in a defence of the view that the document represents Roman usage); but they are silent on almost all the attestations in those authors, and therefore tend unduly to minimize the practice. Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 396, n. 3 approves the suggestion that the arrangement of the Christian assembly by classes derives from the synagogue; the arrangement envisaged in the Didascalia is summed up by R. H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum* (Oxford 1929), p. xxx.

<sup>40</sup> Chrysostom, *Hom. in Matt.* 73:3 (ed. F. Field, vol. 2 (Cambridge 1839), p. 355; *PG* 58 (Paris 1862) cols. 676–7); he goes on to praise the blameless mixed worship of the earliest Christians, but this implies only that he thinks they needed no wooden barrier, not (as suggested by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 261, n. 171) that he thinks that they had no separation of the sexes.

<sup>41</sup> Gregory Nazianzen, *Carmina* ii.16, lines 19f (see *Gregorii Theologi... Opera Omnia*, ed. D. A. B. Caillan (Paris 1778–1840), 2, p. 844; *PG* 37 (Paris 1862), cols. 1255–6; the passage is quoted by Bingham, vol. ii (as cited in n. 39, above), pp. 421f); the virgins and married women listen from the places upstairs.

the second century.<sup>42</sup> In any case, the widespread fourth-century attestation in both east and west, implies old-established custom.

Jewish derivation of the Christian usage has been envisaged as possible (for example by Krauss and Thraede, as cited in n. 39, above). Much speaks for this identification of origin, but, even if the question is left open, the Christian practice attests two influences which will equally have affected Jews. The first is admiration for 'order' (*taxis*, 1 Cor. 14:40, 1 Clem. 40), a trait implying concern with placing (as at Mark 6:39f) and rooted in biblical tradition (note the appeal at 1 Clem. 40 to the priests' place in the temple).<sup>43</sup> Order was important in the congregation of Israel, the model for both Jewish and Christian assemblies, as appears in the disposition of the tribes about the tabernacle (Num. 2:1–3:40), and it could seem fitting that in a solemn assembly women also should have a special place (as at Zech 12:12–14; see the following section). Secondly, Graeco-Roman public opinion regarded separation of the sexes in assemblies as proper; the emperor Licinius appears somewhat cynically to have relied upon this view when he ordered, in legislation repressing the Christians, that men should not attend public prayers together with women (implying, what Christian practice was designed to avoid, that Christians could not maintain a decent separation of the sexes).<sup>44</sup> The prevalence of separation in Christian usage then suggests that Jewish custom is likely to have been similar, since it was subject to the same convergence of biblical and cultural influences.

To summarize this section, then, it may be said that in first-century Christianity women enjoyed a prominence, including liberty of prayer and prophecy in public worship, which probably reflects current Jewish conditions (n. 26, above). Prophecy implies considerable influence, evidently sometimes amounting to communal teaching (Rev. 2:20), but there was a marked tendency, backed by appeal to the law of Moses, to check women's activity in teaching. Paul's directions show both the liberty of women in worship (1 Cor. 11:5) and the firm checks placed upon it (1 Cor. 14:34f; note the possibility of interpolation). Women at least sometimes held the congregational office of deacon, from the first century onwards. Their functions were determined in part by distinctive Christian needs, and do not necessarily correspond to the activities of woman office-holders in the synagogues; but the phenomenon of the woman deacon in Christian

<sup>42</sup> Origen, *Comm. ser. in Matt.*, 25; special places in church for widows, virgins and married women are comparably presupposed in Tertullian, *Virg. Vel.* 1x (beginning of third century).

<sup>43</sup> The importance of *taxis* is brought out by A. Jaubert, 'Thèmes lévitiques dans la Prima Clementis', *VC* 18 (1964), pp. 193–203.

<sup>44</sup> Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 1.53.

church order in antiquity constitutes a warning against too narrow a view of what was possible in contemporary synagogue usage. Sources later than the New Testament show that it was customary to separate the sexes in Christian worship. This practice is likely to be ancient, and may well derive ultimately from Jewish usage, but in any case it illustrates the converging influences of biblical tradition and contemporary culture, both of which also impinged on the synagogues.

#### IV WOMEN IN SYNAGOGUE WORSHIP

The influence of the temple upon the synagogue can be variously assessed (n. 17, above), but both institutions shared, at least from the Greek period, a common inheritance of prayer and biblical tradition. The question of women's place in synagogue worship is now approached, therefore, through consideration (a) of the Court of the Women in the Jerusalem temple and (b) of women in biblical passages offering precedents for Jewish worship. Evidence for the separation of the sexes in the synagogue is then reviewed (c), in the light of the broader view of women's participation in communal worship suggested by (a) and (b), and in conjunction with the observations made in sections (i)–(iii), above.

##### (A) THE COURT OF THE WOMEN

The names 'Court of the Women' (Hebrew) or 'Women's Section' (Greek) given to the outer of the two main courts of Herod's temple<sup>45</sup> can well be taken to symbolize both the definite inclusion of women in the worship of Israel, and the concomitant checks on their participation. The Temple Scroll likewise mentions women expressly, and at the same time restricts them to a large outer court (xxxix 7, xl 5f). This suggests that the arrangement is of some antiquity, even though it is not expressly mentioned in the Pentateuchal laws of the tabernacle or in Ezek. 40–8.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *צֶרֶת נָשִׁים*, *m. Mid.* 2:5f. (cf. *m. Sukk.* 5:2–4, *m. Kelim.* 1:8); *gynaikōnītis*, Josephus, *Bell.* v.198–206, *Ant.* xv.417, *c. Ap.* II.103. According to the Mishnah the Court of Israel, which women ordinarily did not enter, was a narrow strip of the great inner court (most of which was ordinarily reserved for the priests) on the side nearest the Court of the women (S. Safrai, 'The Temple' in Safrai, Stern, Flusser and van Unnik, *JPFC* 2, pp. 865–907 (866–9)). The court of the women (to the east) and the court of the priests (to the west) were orientated on an east–west axis within the vast outer court, a rectangle on a north–south axis; see the plan at p. 45, above. See further D. Bahat, chapter 2, above, and Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, pp. 60–2.

<sup>46</sup> The silence of the sources, now broken by the Temple Scroll, is an important element in the relatively late datings of the institution of a women's court by L. Löw, 'Der synagogale Ritus: 5. Kapitel, Frauenabtheilung', *MGWJ* 33 (1884), 364–74, 458–66

Josephus shows, like other sources, that men as well as women used this court ('when ritually clean, we used to pass through (into it) with our wives', *Ant.* xv.418); but he also stresses that it was 'a special place of worship walled off for the women' (*Bell.* v.198). Its use by men is highlighted in the rabbinic tradition that galleries for women were put up here.<sup>47</sup> The 'rejoicing of the place of water-pouring' during the feast of Tabernacles could therefore be held in this court without arousing concern, also exhibited by early Christians, for women in the crowds at festivals.<sup>48</sup> Fourth-century Babylonian rabbis similarly divided men from women on crowded occasions by temporary barriers (*Qidd.* 81a).<sup>49</sup>

The tradition on the galleries is noteworthy for its incorporation into rabbinic sources, whereby it could influence post-Talmudic practice, but for the ancient synagogue it is also important that the name 'court of the women' could be given to the outer court, with a corresponding emphasis on its function as a 'women's section'. These names indicate a tendency to separate the sexes in communal worship, operative at least from the Herodian period, and of obvious significance for synagogue practice. It should not be forgotten, however, that the names also imply that women are entitled to a place.

#### (B) BIBLICAL PASSAGES ON WOMEN IN THE WORSHIP OF ISRAEL

The importance of the reading of the Law in the synagogues, noted in section (iii) above (and cf. n. 24), means that special significance attaches to the mention of women in the final exhortations to 'all Israel' in Deuteronomy (for the address to 'all' see 29:1 (2); 31:1, 11). Here women

(p. 367; Hasmonaean); A. Büchler, 'The Fore-Court of Women and the Brass Gate in the Temple of Jerusalem', *JQR* 10 (1898), 698–718 (pp. 706–12; CE 44–8); and S. Safrai, 'Was there a Women's Gallery in the Synagogue of Antiquity?' (Hebrew), *Tarb.* 32 (1963), 329–38 (p. 331; late, without specification). T. A. Busink, *Der Tempel von Jerusalem von Salomo bis Herodes*, ii: *Von Ezechiel bis Middot* (Leiden 1980), pp. 1076–9 holds, as seems probable, that there was a women's court before Herod, but ascribes its origin, perhaps more debatably, to Sadducaic influence under Alexander Jannaeus; he refers only to preliminary reports of the contents of the Temple Scroll.

<sup>47</sup> *m. Mid.* 2:5 (see Sanders, *Judaism*, 61–2, nn. 41–2); *m. Sukk.* 5:4 and *b. Sukk.* 51b–52a, discussed by Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 4 (1954), p. 154, Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 130–2 and Archer, 'Jewish Women', pp. 279f.

<sup>48</sup> P. R. L. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (London 1981), p. 43 and nn. 99–102; compare the third-century Acts of Cyprian, 2, where the Christians assemble outside the house where Cyprian is detained, and he orders that the girls among them should be carefully guarded (H. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford 1972), pp. 170–3).

<sup>49</sup> *b. Gidd.* 81a, discussed by Löw, 'Frauenabtheilung', pp. 373f; Safrai, 'Gallery', p. 334; and Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 134f.

are specified among those assembled before Moses (29:10 (11), cf. 17 (18)), and those to be assembled – men, women, children and resident aliens – to hear the reading of the law in the year of release (31:12, cf. *m. Sota* vii. 8).

Women are correspondingly specified in Josh. 8:35, as present in Joshua's assembly, and in Nehemiah, with still greater emphasis, as present in the great assembly (Neh. 8:2f, 1 Esdras 9:40f; cf. Neh. 10:28f) when Ezra read the law from a pulpit of wood (Neh. 8:4; LXX, and 1 Esdras 9:42, *bēma*, the word later used for the synagogue dais and lectern).<sup>50</sup>

In agreement with the emphasis of these passages the presence of women was further specified, in the Graeco-Roman period, with regard to the assembly at Sinai (Philo, *Dec.* 32; Exod. 19:3 in Mekhilta (n. 51, below) and Targum Ps.-Jonathan).

Similarly, seeing that Deut. 31 and Neh. 8 form respectively a Pentateuchal commandment to read the law, and a report of Ezra's fulfilment of such a commandment, it is not surprising that women can in principle be called up to read the law from the *bēma* (*m. Meg.* 4:6, *t. Meg.* 4:11);<sup>51</sup> children and women are mentioned when a Qumran rule models its assembly on Deut. 31:11f (1QS i. 4); and there is ample biblical precedent for the well-attested attendance of women at synagogue services (see for example Josephus, *Ant.* xiv.258, 260 (decrees allowing Jewish men and women to hold public worship in Halicarnassus and Sardis); Acts 16:13 (Philippi), 17:4 (Thessalonica); *b. 'Abod Zar.* 38a–b (woman absent from home to attend synagogue); Lev.R. ix 9, par. in Num.R. ix 20 (woman at sermon); Chrysostom, *Adv. Iud.* i. 2 (Antioch)).<sup>52</sup>

Interpretation of these passages, however, also exhibits the tendency towards constraint. In the midrash the wives convoked in Deut. 29 are there to hear, even though they may not understand.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, in Deut.

<sup>50</sup> On the *bema* see Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 384f; many ordinances concerning prayer were ascribed to 'the men of the great assembly' under Ezra (*m. Abot* 1:2) in rabbinic tradition (*b. Ber.* 33a, quoted by Elbogen, *Gottesdienst* (as cited in n. 2, above), p. 240), ET 192.

<sup>51</sup> Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, pp. 157, 170, ET 130, 139. For the Mekhilta (Yithro, Bahodesh, ii) see J. Z. Lauterbach, *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, 2 (Philadelphia 1933), p. 201.

<sup>52</sup> For these and other sources, with the exception of Josephus, see Safrai, 'Synagogue', pp. 919f and 'Gallery', pp. 329f. The decrees in Josephus, even if inauthentic or adapted, show that Josephus or a predecessor thought the specification of women in this context natural; it is of course comparable with Josephus, *Ant.* xv.418 (on temple attendance, quoted above) and with Deut. 31:12 and Neh. 8:2f (on the reading of the law). Chrysostom's invective against the 'effeminate men' and 'prostituted women' who make the synagogue like a theatre is an only slightly stronger form of his charges against the men and women in his own congregation, *Hom. in Matt.* 73.

<sup>53</sup> Midrash ha-Gadol, cited by Safrai, 'Synagogue', pp. 919f.

31:12 men are convoked to learn or teach, but women just to hear (Targ. Ps.-Jonathan, followed by Rashi; this interpretation is attributed to R. Eleazar b. Azariah (end of first century CE) in *b.Hag.* 3a, *'Abot R. Nat.* 18, and Num.R. xiv. 4); compare the New Testament injunctions to silence discussed in section (iii), above). Accordingly, in practice women do not go up to read the law (*b. Meg.* 23a–24b). It was recognized, however, that Miriam ‘used to teach the women’ (Sifre Zutta, as cited in n. 58, below).

A well-known cause of exclusion from the temple, in the Pentateuchal laws, is the need for purification. This applies to men as well as women (Lev. 15:31, Num. 5:3), but falls more heavily on women because of menstruation and childbirth (Lev. 15:19–24 and Lev. 12, respectively). In the Graeco-Roman world such requirements of purification were not peculiar to Jews,<sup>54</sup> and the offering prescribed after childbirth or prolonged impurity involved a special return to the temple (Lev. 12:6–8, 15:29f; Luke 2:22–4); but the Mishnah attests a distinctive extension of the purity laws into daily life, and the attention given in this connection to the regular disqualifications of women will have played its part in the rabbinic exemption of women from many commandments related to worship. Notably, as regards the synagogue, women could not be counted in the reckoning of a quorum for a congregation (*m. Abot* 3:6, *b. Ber.* 6a), and they were exempt from recitation of the Shema’ – but they were obliged to say the ‘Prayer’, the Eighteen Benedictions (*m. Ber.* 3:3). Often the exemptions can be explained as applying to commandments to be fulfilled at a specific time (*m. Qidd.* 1:7), performance of which might be hindered by women’s household duties; but it is doubtful whether this is the whole reason, and in later Jewish history women sometimes carried out such precepts with zeal, when social circumstances were appropriate.<sup>55</sup>

Two Pentateuchal passages on women with a prominent part in worship differ strikingly from one another in the interpretation they receive. First, the tabernacle laver – which often had its counterpart in synagogue forecourts<sup>56</sup> – was made from the mirrors of ‘the ministering women who ministered at the door of the tent of meeting’ (Exod. 38:8; almost the same form of words at 1 Sam 2:22). The Hebrew verb (*šb'*) here rendered

<sup>54</sup> Closely similar Greek customs are described by W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (ET Oxford 1985), pp. 77–9, 86f; for a Hellenistic instance see Pomeroy, *Hellenistic Egypt*, p. 136 (a city law, known from inscription not earlier than first century BCE, requires purification before entering temple after menstruation and childbirth, and in various other circumstances); cf. *m. 'Abod. Zar.* 3:4.

<sup>55</sup> On time-related precepts see Loewe, *Women*, pp. 42–4 and L. Jacobs, *A Tree of Life* (London 1984), p. 45 (cf. p. 129 (zealous women fulfil such precepts in mediaeval France)).

<sup>56</sup> Evidence for fountains and basins at the entrances of synagogues is collected by Schrage, ‘Synagoge’, notes 99 and 135.

'minister' is used of military or divine 'service', but at Exod 38:8 the LXX turn it by a word for fasting, Targums and Peshitta by words for praying; that is, interpretation of the Graeco-Roman period makes it mean prayer (like Anna's perpetual prayer and fasting in the temple, Luke 2:36f) rather than an official or priest-like function.<sup>57</sup>

On the other hand, when Miriam the prophetess leads the women in a hymn of triumph with timbrels (Exod. 15:20f), the passage is not restricted, but developed. It is, of course, by no means isolated. Deborah the prophetess sang with Barak (Judg. 4:4, 5:1), prophetesses are mentioned elsewhere (2 Kgs 22:14, Neh. 6:14, Ezek. 13:17, Joel 3:1 (2:28)), and women's choirs and music are envisaged in the temple (Ezra 2:65, Neh. 7:67, Pss. 68:26; cf. 2 Chr. 31:18, 35:25 (male and female choirs)). Correspondingly, Miriam's position as choir-mistress was enhanced in the LXX;<sup>58</sup> she 'governed' the women, could be regarded by a Christian reader of the Septuagint at the end of the second century as the fellow general of her brother Moses (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* iv.19), and has a prominent place with her timbrel in fourth-century Christian art.<sup>59</sup> In Jewish writing, Judith is similarly envisaged as followed by women with a dance and men with a song, and herself leads the people in a hymn of praise (Jdt. 15:12–16:1; probably second century BCE); Job's daughters sang hymns in the language of angels (Testament of Job 48–51, see n. 26, above); Moses and Miriam were thought to have led antiphonal choirs of men and women in the 'seashore hymn' of Exod. 15 (Philo, *Agric.* 79–82; *VM* i.180, ii.256; similarly, Mekhilta, Beshallah, Shirata x, on Exod. 15:21 (Moses and Miriam recited the song for the men and the women, respectively)); and Philo, accordingly, says that the men and women at the Red Sea formed the model for the double choir of the Therapeutae (Philo, *V. Contempl.* 83–9). The importance of hymns in the festal service of the Alexandrian Jews is suggested by Philo, *Flacc.* 121–2, on the hymns sung – with a climax at dawn on the seashore, because the *proseuchae* are not available – when the news of the arrest of Flaccus arrives at the time of the feast of Tabernacles; the custom of common prayer by the sea is mentioned in the decree of Halicarnassus cited above (Josephus,

<sup>57</sup> The point was emphasized by J. Lightfoot, *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae in Evangelium S. Lucae* (1674), reprinted in Lightfoot's *Opera omnia*, ed. J. Leusden, ii (Leyden 1699), on Luke ii. 37.

<sup>58</sup> Exod. 15:21 LXX 'And Miriam governed them, saying' for Hebrew 'And Miriam answered them, saying'. The distinct but comparable idea that Miriam taught the women appears in the midrash (Sifre Zutta, as quoted in Yalkut Shimeoni on the Pentateuch, no. 741 (Wilna 1909, p. 484a)).

<sup>59</sup> J. Doignon, 'Miryam et son tambourin dans la prédication et l'archéologie occidentales au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle' in F. L. Cross (ed.) *St Patr.* iv (TU 79, Berlin 1961), pp. 71–7.



*Ant.* xiv.258), and later on by Tertullian (*Ad Nat.* i.13.4; *Iei.* xvi.6). M. Hengel accordingly conjectures that the model of Moses and Miriam may have been followed not only among the Therapeutae, but also in communal practice.<sup>60</sup> Double choirs of boys and girls were well known in the contemporary world.<sup>61</sup>

The interpretation of Exod. 15 reflected in usage among the Therapeutae, and probably more widely, thus holds together the prominence of women with the separation of the sexes. An earlier example of this combination is offered by the arrangement of a great lamentation imagined at Zech. 12:11–14. Here every clan is to mourn separately, in an isolation which is possibly a sign of mourning, and is also divided into male and female sections – precisely for a function in which women would play a major part.<sup>62</sup>

Lastly, women are mentioned separately in the Pentateuchal laws on vows and the Nazirite vow (Num. 30 and 6:1–21, respectively), which are accordingly treated in the division of the Mishnah entitled ‘Women’.<sup>63</sup> Vows, not strictly part of public worship, were none the less closely connected with sacrifice and prayer, for example at Isa. 19:21, Pss. 65:1–2; note that Hebrew *neder*, ‘vow’ is rendered in the Septuagint by Greek *euche*, meaning both ‘vow’ and ‘prayer’. They were often an aspect of women’s piety. Husbands or fathers could revoke wives’ or daughters’ vows, but their right to do so was restricted (Num. 30:3–15, disapproval is only binding if expressed at once; the women’s interests here no doubt overlapped with those of the priesthood). Women’s vows included the Nazirite or ‘great’ vow, as Philo calls it, taken for instance by Agrippa II’s

<sup>60</sup> Hengel, ‘Proseuche’ (as cited in n. 14, above), p. 163, n. 25; the case for a widespread practice is strengthened by the currency of a similar interpretation in the Mekhila, as noted above, viewed together with the importance of hymnody in synagogue worship in the homeland as reflected in rabbinic sources (for example, *b. Ber.* 6a (baraitha), quoted by Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 430 (cf. p. 432): the verse 1 Kgs 8:28, ‘to hear the joy (*rinnah*) and the prayer’, signifies that prayer must be made in the place of joy – that is, the synagogue, with its hymns).

<sup>61</sup> The use of a double choir has literary reflections, a little before Philo, in Catullus, poem 34 (boys and girls sing a hymn to Diana) and Horace, *Carmen Saeculare* (boys and girls sing a hymn to Apollo and Diana at Augustus’ ‘Secular Games’ of 17 BC); strong cultivated interest in such hymnody is noted by R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven and London 1981), pp. 24f.

<sup>62</sup> On women as mourners see S. Schechter, ‘Women in Temple and Synagogue’ in his *Studies in Judaism*, ser. 1 (London 1896), pp. 381–96 (390f), and Archer, ‘Women’, pp. 283f; cf. 2 Chr. 35:25.

<sup>63</sup> The Mishnah and Tosefta tractates Nedarim (‘Vows’) and Nazir (‘The Nazirite Vow’) are translated with commentary by J. Neusner, *A History of the Mishnaic Law of Women*, 3 (Leiden 1980).

sister Berenice.<sup>64</sup> Vows therefore deserve notice in the present context as a generally popular expression of Jewish piety in which women were prominent, as the Pentateuchal laws themselves already attest.

To illustrate the background against which these passages were read one should note, in conclusion, the importance of women in Jewish literature circulating in the Graeco-Roman period. Wary or hostile treatments, for example in Ecclesiasticus and some apocalypses (see KÜCHLER, as cited in n. 30, above), are countered, especially but not exclusively in writings available in Greek, by a gallery of heroines (see bibliography, IV, under Brenner and Standhartinger). Esther and Judith deliver the nation, and Susanna is vindicated as a faithful wife; Judith sings a hymn, and all three utter prayers. Synagogue life may be reflected here, and perhaps also (n. 26, above) in the Jewish prophecies of the Sibyl; and practice is certainly reflected when, in the biblical book of Ruth and in *Joseph and Asenath*, Ruth and Asenath become proselytes. A minor but not insignificant instance of the same interest, including gnomic commonplaces both for and against the female sex, is found in 1 Esdras: Zerubbabel there obtains permission to rebuild the temple because he has stood up in debate for the power of women and of truth (1 Esdr. 4:13–63). The currency of these stories suggests lively and often favourable awareness of the place of women in the community and in the synagogue.

This brief review, mainly of pentateuchal passages, can do no more than indicate a few important aspects of women's place in worship, as the law of Moses presented them in the synagogues of antiquity. Once again, as in the concept of a 'Court of the Women', a tendency to check women's participation emerges side by side with a tendency to include women and to emphasize their role. Thus, checks appeared in connection with vows and, in interpretation of the laws, with regard to reading, teaching and the obligations of worship; the ancient interpretative renderings of the 'ministering women' of Exod. 38:8 constitute a striking example of the restrictive tendency.

Such contrasts between text and interpretation show that the restrictive tendency was strong in the Graeco-Roman period. A spirit akin to it breathes in the famous thanksgiving for not having been created as a woman, which was current in rabbinic circles at least from the second century CE, and also circulated much earlier among the sayings of Hellenistic philosophical tradition; in its Hebrew form 'Blessed art thou . . . who hast not made me a woman', variously attributed to the prominent second-century rabbis Meir and Judah b. Ilai, it eventually made its way into the introductory section of the synagogue morning service, although

<sup>64</sup> Josephus, *Bell.* II.313f; on the 'great' vow, Philo, *Immut.* 86–90, *Spec. Leg.* I.247–54.

it probably belonged originally to private prayer.<sup>65</sup> Even in the Graeco-Roman period, however, counter-tendencies were not absent, as the Jewish literature just mentioned already suggests. Thus, in the interpretation of the Pentateuch, women's share in prophecy and hymnody is affirmed (cf. 1 Cor. 11:5), and some place even for teaching by women remains in this connection (as seen with regard to Miriam; Deborah's teaching of all Israel was also at least sometimes emphasized).<sup>66</sup> The most notable of the tendencies in favour of women's participation, however, is probably the

<sup>65</sup> On the triad of Hebrew benedictions giving thanks for not having been created a heathen, a slave, or a woman (women thank God for having been created according to his will) see D. Kaufmann, 'Das Alter der drei Benedictionen von Israel, vom Freien und vom Mann', *MGWJ* 37 (1893), 14–18; C. Taylor, *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers* (2nd edn, Cambridge 1897), pp. 15, 26, 137–40 (the fullest presentation of the primary classical and rabbinic sources); Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, pp. 89–90, ET 78; I. Abrahams, *A Companion to the Authorized Daily Prayer Book* (revised edn, London 1932), pp. xvi–xvii; C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (London 1938; repr. Cleveland, New York and Philadelphia 1963), pp. 507, 656–8 (discussion of the attitude to women implied in the benedictions); R. Loewe, *Position*, pp. 89–90 and p. 260, n. 38 above. A similar thanksgiving is ascribed to Plato, Thales or Socrates in Greek and Latin authors from the first century CE onwards, but goes back at least to the third century BCE. See Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, 46 (Plato); Diogenes Laertius i.1 (Life of Thales), 7 (33) (Hermippus (third century BCE) refers to Thales what some repeat as a saying of Socrates: he gave thanks that he was a human being, not a beast; a man, not a woman; and a Greek, not a barbarian); Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* iii.19.17 (attributing a form of this thanksgiving to Plato; on the basis of a traditional saying, according to R. M. Ogilvie, *The Library of Lactantius* (Oxford 1978), p. 37). Rabbinic sources include *t. Ber.* vii (vi) 18 (Judah b. Ilai) and *b. Menab.* 43b (Meir; but the name Judah should be read, following the Tosefta, according to Kaufmann and Taylor (citing W. Bacher)). Gal. 3:28 'neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, no male and female' is thought to reflect the saying as current in the Greek schools by J. E. B. Mayor (quoted by Taylor, p. 26); but Kaufmann (who also cites a similar Mazdaean prayer, ascribed to the fourth century CE) and A. Lukyn Williams (ed.) *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians* (Cambridge 1911), *ad loc.*, think that Paul was influenced by a Jewish form of the saying, and R. Loewe allows this as possible. In view of the early circulation of the saying among Greek writers perhaps the best proposal is that of Taylor, who suggests (p. 139) that an existing Jewish grouping of women with slaves and Gentiles in respect of Torah is attested at Gal. 3:28, but allows for the possible influence of Greek on Jewish thought in this matter at an earlier date. The series of morning benedictions was formed by combination of the three quoted in *b. Menab.* 43b with those quoted in *b. Ber.* 60b; Saadia and Maimonides (Mishneh Torah II ii (*Hil'kot Tefillah*) 7, 6) both still ascribe the three benedictions in question to private rather than public prayer, and say that they are recited daily only in the land of Israel (Elbogen).

<sup>66</sup> Deborah admonishes and enlightens all Israel, according to Ps.-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities* 33:1, part of a passage contrasted with the cooler treatment in Josephus by L. H. Feldman, 'Josephus' Portrait of Deborah' in A. Caquot, M. Hadas-Lebel and J. Riaud (eds.) *Hellenica et Judaica: Hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetzky* (Leuven and Paris 1986), pp. 115–28 (128).

continuance from Deuteronomy, Joshua and Nehemiah of the specific recognition of women as a constituent part of the whole assembly. Evident in late prophecy (Joel 2:16, 3:1f (2:28f); Zech. 12:12–14), it emerged in Philo and the Mekhilta on the assembly at Sinai, and in the mention of women in the decrees permitting Jewish worship in Diaspora cities; it can perhaps also be identified in the idea of a double choir, which has representative as well as vocal significance (cf. Pss. 148:12). The strength of the communal solidarity behind this recognition can perhaps also be identified in Jewish opposition to the exposure of children, a practice from which daughters suffered more than sons (cf. Philo, *Spec. leg.* iii.110–19 and Josephus, *c. Ap.* ii.202). Complementary to this recognition of women's place in the community is the scope for individual expression given by women's vows. Hence, despite the strength of the tendency towards subordination in the Graeco-Roman period, the determination of women's place in worship was not entirely detached from the process of articulating the different parts of the Jewish community. This process is sometimes signalled by the concern with *taxis* noted already (section (iii) and nn. 43 and 62, above). It remains possible to recognize in the Jewish assemblies of the period, as in the festivals of Greek religion, an attention to the parts of the body corporate which contributes to the solidarity of the whole.<sup>67</sup>

### (C) SEPARATION OF THE SEXES IN THE SYNAGOGUE

If women had their separate place in the synagogues of antiquity, the custom should then be related to communal articulation as well as female subordination; but what was in fact customary cannot readily be discerned.<sup>68</sup> Archaeological evidence is ambiguous, for galleries and separate rooms, where identified in synagogue excavations, need not necessarily have been used for this purpose;<sup>69</sup> on the other hand, the sexes could

<sup>67</sup> Burkert, *Greek Religion*, pp. 258f (society articulated into male and female, young and old); the continuation of this characteristic of Greek religion into the Roman period is illustrated by the account of the cults of Stratonicea in MacMullen, *Paganism*, pp. 46–8.

<sup>68</sup> Evidence for women's galleries, and for seating arrangements in general, is surveyed by Krauss, *Altentümer*, pp. 356f, 392–8 Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, 466–7, ET 357; S. Safrai, 'Was there a Women's Gallery in the Synagogue of Antiquity?', *Tarb* 32 (1963), 329–38 (in Hebrew); and Z. Safrai, 'Dukhan, Aron and Teva: How was the Ancient Synagogue Furnished?' in Hachlili, *Ancient Synagogues*, pp. 69–84.

<sup>69</sup> Archaeological evidence is surveyed with this question in view by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 104–30; the synagogue investigated from 1981 onwards at Meroth in Galilee, and ascribed to the fifth century, with a seventh-century rebuilding, probably had a balcony, which may have been used as a women's section (perhaps after the Arab

have been separated without special or permanent structural provision. Hence, to turn to literary evidence, Maimonides' failure to mention a women's section in the treatment of synagogue building in his Code (*Mishbened Torab*, 11 ii (*Hilekêôt Tefillâb*), 11) indeed suggests that such provision may not have been usual in twelfth-century Egypt (contrast early thirteenth-century Worms);<sup>70</sup> but it does not follow that the separation of the sexes was a custom unknown to him.<sup>71</sup>

Literary and epigraphic evidence from the Graeco-Roman period is sparse, but it includes one clear mention of a barrier between the sexes. Philo describes the place of worship of the Therapeutae as a double enclosure divided by a wall three or four cubits high into a men's section (*andrôn*) and a women's (*gynaikeônitis*).<sup>72</sup> This barrier is so carefully described, however, that (as Brooten notes) it may well have been unusual; but this may not be true of the separation which it effected, for other customs of the Therapeutae are found more widely, for example their hymnody (n. 61, above) and their bodily attitude.<sup>73</sup>

*Andrôn* recurs, however, in connection with a Jewish place of worship. Josephus quotes an edict of Augustus in favour of the Jews of Asia, penalizing theft of their sacred books or moneys 'from sabbath-house (*sabbateion*) and hall (*andrôn*)' (Josephus, *Ant.* xvi.164).<sup>74</sup> The latter has often been interpreted as a men's section of the synagogue, with differing

conquest, under the influence of Islamic separation of the sexes, according to Z. Ilan, 'The Synagogue and *Beth Midrash* of Meroth', in Hachlili, *Ancient Synagogues*, 21–41 (22–3)). A room adjoining the Herodian-period synagogue at Gamala has been identified as a women's section, again debatably, by Z. U. Ma'oz, 'The Synagogue in the Second Temple Period', *Eretz-Israel* xxiii (Avraham Biran Volume) (1992), 331–44 (in Hebrew).

<sup>70</sup> The Worms women's hall ('Frauensynagoge'; cf. n. 2, above) is dated 1213 in Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, p. 468, ET 357.

<sup>71</sup> Löw, 'Frauenabtheilung', p. 460 (holding that, in the usage known to Maimonides, women sat in special places, but without a dividing wall); Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, p. 467, ET 357, (holding that women in the east will not often have attended the synagogue). That mediaeval halakhists in Islamic lands were less concerned than their French and German counterparts to uphold the position of women is suggested, with reference to Maimonides, by Jacobs, *A Tree of Life*, pp. 128f.

<sup>72</sup> Philo, *V. Contempl.* 32–3, quoted and discussed by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 133f.

<sup>73</sup> Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 134; on bodily attitude cf. Philo, *V. Contempl.* 30 (Therapeutae have hands inside the robe, right between breast and chin, left along flank) with *Somm.* ii.126 (Jews on their way to synagogue have right hand inside, left hand close to flank).

<sup>74</sup> Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 25, 357 leans towards A. Reland's conjecture <sup>3</sup>ron 'ark', printed in the text of this passage by R. Marcus and A. Wikgren (eds.) *Josephus* 8 (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass. 1963), p. 272. The passage is not discussed in Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 130–5 (survey of literary evidence for women's section of synagogue). For the retention of *andrôn* and its translation here as 'dining-room' see S. J. D. Cohen (as cited in n. 23, above), pp. 164–6; temple dining-rooms and the dining facilities of pagan associations are extensively documented by MacMullen, *Paganism*, pp. 36–42.

identifications of the room or hall concerned.<sup>75</sup> J. Jeremias envisages the sabbath-house as the worship hall, but the *andrōn* as a room for scribal teaching, restricted to men.<sup>76</sup> M. Hengel views the *andrōn* as a men's assembly hall, but notes that the word is attested in the sense of 'banqueting-hall' in connection with the cult of Zeus Hypsistos, and suggests that *andrōn* in the edict may represent a non-Jew's attempt to define the sabbath-house.<sup>77</sup> A separate room seems likely to be intended, however, for money as well as books are in question, and the additional specification of *andrōn* is natural if, being separate, it could possibly be regarded as not being part of the sabbath-house. It might then be a room adjoining the main hall, in which the synagogue chest or, outside service times, the ark with its valuable scrolls might be kept; separate rooms of this kind could also have been used for communal dining, as in the usage noted by Hengel, and as suggested by S. J. D. Cohen (n. 74, above).<sup>78</sup> The pair '*sabbateion* and *andrōn*' would then be comparable with 'the *proseuche* and the adjoining buildings (*ta synkyronta*)', a phrase found in two Ptolemaic inscriptions from Lower Egypt.<sup>79</sup> These considerations favour Jeremias' view that the *andrōn* was a separate room, modified to allow that it could have been used for dining (which might include women as well as men, and be combined with symposiac biblical exposition, as at Passover and among the Therapeutae (Philo, *V. Contempl.* 67–82)). In usage, *andrōn* probably did not always retain reference to reservation of the room for men exclusively.<sup>80</sup> In sum, therefore, it remains noteworthy that a word which can indeed denote 'men's section' occurs here in connection with a synagogue; but in the edict as quoted *andrōn* seems likely to refer to a

<sup>75</sup> Juster, *Les Juifs* (n. 15, above), i, pp. 457f (conclusion of p. 456, n. 3); Schrage, 'Synagogue', n. 115; Jeremias, and Hengel, as cited in the two following notes.

<sup>76</sup> J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, edn 3 (Göttingen 1962), p. 410: ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (ET, London 1969), p. 373.

<sup>77</sup> Hengel, 'Proseuche', p. 176.

<sup>78</sup> For the storing of the ark see Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, pp. 469–75 ET 359–63; the fixed Torah shrine is a later development. Rooms additional to the main hall are amply attested in excavations and by inscriptions (Hengel, 'Stobi', p. 165).

<sup>79</sup> Inscriptions from Nitriai (143–117 BCE) and Alexandria (second century BC), quoted by Schürer *HJAJC* 2, p. 426 (see *JIGRE* 25 = CIJ 1442 and *JIGRE* 9 = CIJ 1433, respectively); compared with other evidence for additional rooms, and Egyptian temple plans, by Hengel, 'Stobi', p. 165 and n. 68.

<sup>80</sup> This is suggested by the function of *andrōn* as a loan-word in Latin, when its meanings include 'corridor', and by the occurrence of Aramaic and Syriac *'idrōnā* in the form *'andrōnā*, probably treated as the equivalent of Greek *andrōn* but used in a wider sense for a large room or chamber. See P. G. W. Glare (ed.) *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford 1968–82), p. 128, s.v.; R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Oxford 1879), col. 257, s.v.; A. Kohut, *Plenus Aruch . . . Lexicon Auctore Nathane filio Jechielis*, i (Vienna 1878), pp. 40f, s.v. *'idrān* (Nathan of Rome (died at the beginning of the twelfth century) adduces the Greek word).



room adjoining the main hall, and therefore unlikely to witness directly to the separation of the sexes for worship; the room signified was possibly used for dining, an important adjunct of worship, but its name, in any case, does not necessarily imply that women were excluded.

Thirdly, it has been ingeniously argued that the description in the Jerusalem Talmud of Trajan's slaughter of the Alexandrian Jews assumes that the women are placed in the galleries of the basilica synagogue (as was customary in Christian basilicas); but the text is uncertain, and the suggestion is no more than a possibility.<sup>81</sup>

Lastly, an inscription, perhaps of the third century CE, records that the Jewish community of Phocaea (Kyme) in Ionia awarded a golden crown and a place of honour (*probedria*) to their benefactress Tation, who built them their synagogue.<sup>82</sup> This special privilege probably means a seat with the elders on the dais;<sup>83</sup> it best suits a situation when other women are present in synagogue, on the ground floor or in galleries,<sup>84</sup> but gives no indication of their places.

This meagre evidence confirms that Jews were affected by the tendency to separate men and women in assemblies (Philo) and to order the seating arrangements (Tation's *probedria*). *Andrōn* in Josephus probably designates a dining-room adjoining the main building, and is therefore unlikely to indicate separation in the hall where synagogue services were held, although of course it does not rule the practice out. Any attempt to discern what was customary as regards women's places must bring these scattered data together with considerations already noted.

These point towards the view that separation of the sexes was usual. First, biblical texts and interpretations from the post-exilic period onwards are, at the least, consistent with the development of such a custom.

<sup>81</sup> Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues* (as cited in n. 16, above), p. 48, n. 1, on Y. Sukk. v 1, 55b, with the criticisms by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 132f.

<sup>82</sup> Text quoted from *CIF* ii, no. 738, and elsewhere, by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 157 and Schürer, *HJPAJC* 3.1, p. 19; comment by Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 164; Hengel, 'Stobi', pp. 162f; Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 143f; Schürer *HJPAJC* 3.1, pp. 103f.

<sup>83</sup> Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 164 (cf. pp. 386, 395), citing Mark 12:39 and parallels ('chief seats (*protokathedraï*) in the synagogues'), and *Y. Sukek.* v 1, 55a (the golden thrones (*kathedra'ôt*) of the elders in the great synagogue of Alexandria; cf. Jas 2:2f (man with gold ring may be well seated in your assembly (*synagōgē*)).

<sup>84</sup> Tation's *probedriā* would only be incongruous with a women's gallery if the latter were cut off from the main hall far more definitely than seems to have obtained in ancient Christian usage (cf. Gregory Nazianzen, as cited in n. 41, above). It was counted as meekness in Constantine's mother Helen that she prayed 'in the women's appointed rank (*tagmā*)' (Socrates, *HE* i 17); it is assumed, therefore, that the *probedria* which she might have claimed could have been arranged despite the allotment of a special place to women (which could have been a gallery, by the time of Socrates (first half of fifth century)).



Abstinence from marital relations preceded the assembly at Sinai (Exod. 19:15), at which the presence of women came to be emphasized (p. 377 and n. 62, above). Thus, when the separation of the sexes is attested in late post-exilic prophecy (Zech. 12:12–14) with regard to a great lamentation, it is probably meant to signal not only grief, but also the purity and awe appropriate to a divine visitation. At the same time it articulates the community representatively, as the regular stress on women's presence in assemblies to hear the law suggests (Deut. 31:12 and other evidence discussed in (b), above). Representation of the different parts of the community is also an aspect of the continuing usage of male and female choirs, discussed above in connection with Exod. 15:20f; this practice would be consistent with separation of the sexes in the assembly as a whole, as a feature in its general order (*taxi*).

This understanding of the evidence just noted is encouraged, secondly, by the description of part of the temple, the place of national assembly *par excellence*, as a 'women's section'. The name represents an opinion current at least from Herodian times, and probably older. The fact that men used the Court of the Women is less important in this regard than its designation as such.

Thirdly, the separation of the sexes in early Christian worship, discussed in (iii) above, may well derive ultimately from Jewish custom; but in any case it suggests that Jewish custom was similar, for Jews and Christians were subject to the same converging influences of biblical tradition and contemporary culture. Thus Philo assigns women to the home, on the Greek lines discussed in (i) above, with the characteristically Greek exception of visits to a holy place;<sup>85</sup> and Jews and Christians shared the view that men and women lived apart on Noah's ark, a view connected by Christians with the separation of the sexes for prayer (Ber.R. xxxi 12; Jerome on Zech. xii 12 (quoting 1 Cor. 7:5)).

It seems likely, then, that men and women customarily occupied different parts of the main hall of the synagogue, not necessarily divided structurally.<sup>86</sup> Philo's Therapeutae would then offer, with regard to placing as well as hymnody, an elaborate and specialized example of a more widespread practice. In view of the fourth-century evidence for women

<sup>85</sup> Philo, *Spec. Leg.* iii.169–74 and *Flacc.* 89, discussed with regard to Greek and Jewish custom by H. Box, ed., *Philonis Alexandrini In Flaccum* (London 1939), *ad loc.*

<sup>86</sup> With this conclusion compare in general S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 2 (2nd edn, New York 1952), pp. 240–1; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 2, pp. 447–8, n. 98; Archer, 'Jewish Women', p. 282; Mattila, 'Where Women Sat'; other views (see the text, below) are held by Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, i (1953), pp. 210, 226, 228, n. 367; ii (1953), p. 74; and ix (1964), p. 32; Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 356–7; Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, p. 374; S. Safrai, 'Women's Gallery', and Z. Safrai, '*Dukhan*', pp. 78–9.

in church galleries, synagogue galleries may sometimes have been used for the same purpose; but the custom of separation envisaged here would have been independent of variations in synagogue architecture. In a simple form, it might have involved ranking the women behind the men, as in the Didascalia (p. 373 and n. 39, above). Comparably, the Qumran Manual of Discipline envisages the order priests, Levites, people (1QS ii); and the series of temple courts, as noted already, placed 'Israel' (lay men) behind 'priests', and 'women' behind 'Israel'.

The view taken here therefore differs from the following opinions (cited in n. 85, above): (i) that in various cases women may have stood outside, or may well have prayed in separate rooms, or ordinarily did not attend synagogue at all, although they sometimes showed great interest in what went on (E. R. Goodenough); and (ii) that the women's section was regularly separated by a lattice or other barrier, if it was not placed in a gallery (S. Krauss, J. Jeremias); but also, on the other hand, (iii) that women's galleries were not in use (S. Safrai, Z. Safrai). It is suggested, rather, that separation was customary, irrespective of the place of assembly; where galleries existed, they would probably have been used by women, but elsewhere women will normally have shared the floor with men, grouped either behind or (as probably among the Therapeutae, where the women were well placed to hear speakers) beside them, with a space or barrier between. The custom of separation will have cohered readily with the belief that the Law prescribed women's subordination, but it also reflected a general tendency to articulate the sections of the community in public gatherings, and thereby attested that women formed a constituent part of the Israelite assembly.

## V WOMEN IN OFFICE

In inscriptions, the most important of which date from the second to the sixth centuries CE, women appear with the titles ruler of synagogue (*archisynagōgos*), principal person or ruler (*archēgissa*), elder (*presbytera*), mother of synagogue (*meter synagoges*, *mater* or *pateressa synagogae*), priestess (*hierieia* or *hierissa*), and possibly president (*prostatēs*).<sup>87</sup> The body of epigraphic evidence will probably continue to grow.

<sup>87</sup> For texts, translations and discussion see the collection of this material by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 5–99, 149–51; inscriptions which are or may be earlier than the second century CE concern a priestess (Marin of Leontopolis, 28 BCE), whose dignity is of rank rather than office (*JIGRE* 84 = *CIJ* 1514), and a *presbytis* (in an epitaph from the Monteverde Catacomb in Rome, 1st century BCE–3rd century CE (*JJWE* ii 24 = *CIJ* 400)), who may not be an office-holder. See further R. S. Kraemer, 'A New Inscription from Malta and the Question of Women Elders in the Diaspora Jewish

Were these titles honorific only, or did women undertake the functions pertaining to the offices in synagogue government and (where applicable) worship? B. J. Broton (n. 87, above) has argued for the latter position. The offices named above, where their functions are known, are predominantly governmental rather than liturgical, but public reading and teaching could come within the sphere of *archisynagōgos* and elder (see below). The survey of Jewish scripture and interpretation in section (iv), above, showed a strikingly consistent emphasis on the importance of the presence of women in communal assemblies, coupled, however, with a tendency to restrain their leadership in worship to hymnody. (Hymnody verges, indeed, on prophecy, in which women spoke with authority (n. 26, above); but prophecy is unlikely to have had a regular place in the constitution and worship of the synagogues.) There was a similar tendency to restrict any teaching and government by women to the women's section of the community. The same tendencies emerge in the development of the Christian congregations, despite the initial importance of Christian prophecy (section (iii), above); it is characteristic that the female deacon has a recognized office, but one that is exercised among the women of the community (see below). The position of women who held synagogue offices might therefore be expected to reflect both the recognition of the importance of the women's section of the community, and the tendency to restrict women's authority and teaching to their own section.

The early Christian evidence constitutes a warning, as noted in section (iii), above, against overemphasis on the influence of the restrictive tendency among Jews in the Graeco-Roman world. Thus, among the women prominent in early Christianity, patronesses have many Jewish counterparts. Could the same have been true of the Christian female deacon (n. 35, above)? In the churches she would probably have undertaken charitable relief, administrative help and perhaps private teaching, especially among women; but her office developed distinctively in Christianity, so far as is known, although the synagogue *bazzan* had some comparable functions. Female deacons retained their place when Christian

Communities', *HTR* 78 (1985), 431–8, 'Hellenistic Jewish Women: The Epigraphical Evidence', *SBLASP 1986 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta 1986), pp. 183–200, and (including reference to the two earlier inscriptions noted above) 'Non-Literary Evidence for Jewish Women in Rome and Egypt' in M. Skinner (ed.) *Rescuing Creusa: New Methodological Approaches to Women in Antiquity* (*Helios* 13 (1986); NS, 1987), 85–101 (90, 94). On the Jewish legal position in the period of the inscriptions see J. Gaudemet, 'La condition juridique des Juifs dans les trois premiers siècles de l'empire', *Aug* 28 (1988), 339–59, and Reichardt and Bachrach, as cited in n. 94, below. On the study of inscriptions see M. Williams in this volume, above.

communities became larger and acquired a quasi-civic consciousness like that of the synagogues; the women of the congregation were expected to address themselves to the female deacon, who should co-operate submissively with her male opposite number (Apostolic Constitutions ii. 26 (fourth century), based on Didascalia (third century)). She was likely to belong to the better-off section of the community, as was already the case with Phoebe in the first century (n. 36, above); thus deaconesses were later regarded as a likely source of legacies.<sup>88</sup> The performance of congregational functions by a woman was therefore tolerated, despite contemporary feeling against women in politics. Christianity may have been distinctive here, but the phenomenon deserves notice when the implications of synagogue titles held by woman are considered.

Notice should also be taken, however, of the epigraphic record of women in public office in the Graeco-Roman cities (section (i), above). The assimilation of magistracies to liturgies (public services)<sup>89</sup> meant that the record of office implied honour, financial contribution and a claim to the status of benefactor, but not necessarily a role in government. Women's office in these circumstances did not offend. It is possible that, on the same pattern, the burdens of synagogue office were likewise often viewed as financial. Women office-holders in the synagogues would then have been primarily benefactresses.<sup>90</sup>

It seems possible in principle, then, both that women played some part in the various communal functions of synagogue office, as Christian usage might suggest, and that they held office on the pattern which had become common in public life, when their titles would mean that they supported the synagogue with their wealth. On a preliminary appraisal this second possibility seems preferable. There is no evidence of a consistently maintained synagogue office like that of the woman deacon, although not much is known in any case of the functions of the synagogue *ḥazzan* or 'deacon' in the Diaspora.<sup>91</sup> On the other hand, the

<sup>88</sup> A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (2 vols., Oxford 1964), i, p. 166 (to curb clerical legacy-hunting, Theodosius I enacts that bequests by deaconesses and widows to the church, individual clergymen and the poor shall be null and void, but the measure is soon rescinded; Theodosian Code xvi 2, 27 and 28, of 390).

<sup>89</sup> See notes 12 and 13, above; de Ste Croix, *Class Struggle*, pp. 305f, stresses the importance of Aristotle's view that liturgies should be attached to the most important magistracies, and that office-holders can also reasonably be expected to offer ample sacrifices and to erect some public building (Aristotle, *Politics*, vi.7, 1321<sup>a</sup> 31–42).

<sup>90</sup> Women's synagogue offices were explained on the pattern of Graeco-Roman women's magistracies by W. M. Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire before AD 170* (London 1893, edn 3, 1894), p. 68, and H. Leclercq, 'Femme', *DACL* v.1 (1922), cols. 1300–53 (1319f).

<sup>91</sup> See Krauss, Applebaum, and Schürer as cited in n. 35, above.

evidence which is available for women's office points by its very nature to the likelihood of Graeco-Roman influence. From the synagogues, as from the cities, there is an epigraphic record of women in office, and inevitably it comes in each case from the wealthier section of the community. The synagogue organization, as already noted, was quasi-civic in character. Further, during the period covered by the Jewish inscriptions, Jews were active in municipal life and the imperial service, and are attested with high civic titles.<sup>92</sup> Much therefore speaks for the view that public life is reflected in this aspect of synagogue usage.<sup>93</sup>

Before a decision is reached, however, it must be asked what functions usually pertained to the offices recorded as held by women in the synagogue. Much is unclear in this region, but an identification of some of the more prestigious titles can be attempted on the basis of the specification of various synagogue offices in fourth-century laws in the Theodosian Code. Other sources suggest that important communal functions often attached to most of the offices specified. It is sometimes argued, further, that offices named in the Code must therefore have been 'functional' rather than 'honorific'; but this inference is uncertain, as will be seen. In any case, however, a sharp contrast between 'functional' and 'honorific' is unsuited to the alternative explanations under review. The office, say, of *archisynagogus*, if held on the pattern of contemporary public life, need not have entailed – whether held by a man or a woman – the functions of an *archisynagogus* in the ordering of the synagogue service; but it would have entailed, for incumbents of either sex, the vital communal function of financial subsidy, and it would have been esteemed by either sex, like other offices, as an honour.

A first step in classifying the women's titles listed above can be taken on the basis of the laws of Constantine. Four corresponding titles (*archisynagogus*, elder, father of synagogue and priest) occur in exemptions from compulsory public services granted by Constantine in laws of 29 November 330 (patriarchs and elders) and 1 December 331 (priests, *archisynagogi*, fathers of synagogues, 'and others who serve the synagogues') (Theodosian Code xvi.8, 2 and 4).<sup>94</sup> These ordinances are more generous

<sup>92</sup> Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 2, pp. 947f.

<sup>93</sup> Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 150, notes that the political titles borne by women in the period form a further context in which women's synagogue titles might be studied, but the background of contemporary public life is not brought out in her critique of the interpretation of these synagogue titles as honorific (*ibid.*, pp. 1–99, 149–51).

<sup>94</sup> The texts are quoted by Juster, *Les Juifs*, i, p. 408, notes 1 and 4; and by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 47–8 and 19, respectively. Comparable lists of titles occur in later laws renewing these privileges (see the titles collected, with reference to the laws, by Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, ii, pp. 1391–2, n. 18). On the political setting of these laws, see K.

than Constantine's earlier ruling, whereby no more than two or three Jews may be exempted in a given community (Theodosian Code xvi.8, 3, of 11 December 321). The concession was then said to be made 'that something may be left to them by way of relief for their traditional observances'.<sup>95</sup> (The effect of the 321 law can perhaps be gauged from a later fourth-century inscription from Apamea in Syria, showing that a synagogue there in 391 had three *archisynagogi*, a gerousiarch (ruler, perhaps chairman, of council), and at least four elders; if numbers were similar in 321, and all belonged to the curial class (property-owners liable to membership of the council ('curia') and the expense of public services), only three could claim exemption.)<sup>96</sup> Synagogue officers are first named specifically in the laws when this narrower exemption is broadened.

The naming of dignitaries in these laws is probably not intended to give a list of officers with important communal functions, although the names clearly overlap with any such list. Rather, the laws reflect a desire to tax the Jewish communities as heavily as possible without losing their good will; as the law of 321 makes plain, a number of Jews in the curial class are exempted from their public obligations in order that the communal Jewish observances may be maintained (for the background see Reichardt and Bachrach, cited in n. 94, below). When the exemptions are enlarged (330–1), office-holders eligible for exemption are named to ensure that those exempted are in fact likely to use their wealth to maintain the Jewish observances. Hence the laws emphasize that those exempted must give themselves 'with entire devotion' (330) and 'serve the synagogues' (331).<sup>97</sup> The offices named appear to be such as Jews of the curial class, alive to their duties towards the synagogues, might be expected to hold. (This may explain failure to specify executive offices

D. Reichardt, 'Die Judengesetzgebung im Codex Theodosianus', *Kairos* 20 (1978), 16–39 (20–1, 30); B. S. Bachrach, 'The Jewish Community of the Later Roman Empire as Seen in the *Codex Theodosianus*' in J. Neusner and E. S. Frerichs 'To See Ourselves as Others See Us': *Christians, Jews, 'Others' in Late Antiquity* (Chico, California 1985), pp. 399–421; A. Linder, *The Jews in Imperial Roman Legislation* (Detroit 1987).

<sup>95</sup> 'ut aliquid ipsis ad solacium pristinae observationis relinquatur'; text quoted by Juster, *Les Juifs*, i, p. 408, n. 3; on the place of this law in developments concerning public office and Jewish civic rights from the early third century onwards, see Schürer, *HJPJC* 3.1, p. 131.

<sup>96</sup> These points from the inscription (quoted by Brootten, *Women Leaders*, p. 26) are noted by Schürer *HJPJC* 3.1, p. 14.

<sup>97</sup> 'devotione tota' and 'qui synagogis deserviunt', Theodosian Code xvi 8, 2 and 4 respectively; Constantine's first exemption of the Christian clergy (313) similarly has in view the maintenance of Christian observances, and specifies 'those who give the services of religion for the divine worship, that is, those who are called clergymen', 'qui divino cultui ministeria religionis impendunt, id est hi, qui clerici appellantur' (Theodosian Code xvi 2, 1–2, quoted (with reference also to the Greek version of the law in Eusebius, *HE* x.7) by Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, ii, p. 1309, n. 78.



like *ḥazzān* and secretary (*grammateus*).<sup>98</sup> It does not follow that an office named must always have entailed functions other than financial subsidy, and one cannot argue securely from the naming of an office in the laws to its importance in the ordering of synagogue life.<sup>99</sup> Nevertheless, the four women's titles which found correspondence in the laws are confirmed thereby as likely to represent well-known offices, and such offices as wealthier Jews might be expected to hold.

There is support, however, for the view that the titles named in the laws often designate offices which were significant in practice. The office-holders specified in the laws of 330 and 331 strikingly overlap with a later fourth-century list of synagogue functionaries in Cilicia during the reign of Constantine. These officers are said by Epiphanius (in his narrative of the adventures of the baptized Jew, Joseph) to have been examined, and in some cases deposed, on behalf of the Jewish patriarch (Epiphanius, *Haer.* xxx.11, naming *archisynagōgoi*, priests (*hiereis*), elders (*presbyteroi*) and *ḥazzānīm* (*azānītai*; see n. 91, above)).<sup>100</sup>

The mention of priests by Epiphanius and in the laws has caused surprise, but inscriptions confirm their importance, and they probably formed, like the elders, an influential element in the synagogue community.<sup>101</sup> The other two women's titles named in the laws correspond to

<sup>98</sup> On these offices see Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 121–31, 149–51 and Applebaum, 'Organization' (cf. n. 35, above), pp. 495f; it is possible that, although honours, they were regarded as relatively low on the scale of honours.

<sup>99</sup> For this argument see Juster, *Les Juifs*, i, pp. 449, 453f (mention in laws surprising if no more than the function of patron or the rank of priest in question); cf. Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 65f (on mother of synagogue). Applebaum, 'Organization', p. 493 comes close to this argument, but he also (p. 497) allows for the possibility that no more may be indicated than an office appropriate to a person of high standing.

<sup>100</sup> The story of Joseph in Epiphanius (bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, 357–403) is summarized with comment by M. Avi-Yonah, *The Jews of Palestine* (ET Oxford 1976), pp. 167–9; the relevant sections of this episode, which is set in the reign of Constantine, are quoted and translated by A. von Harnack, *Die Mission und Austreibung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Lipziz 1902), pp. 238f, ed. 2 rev. 1906, 1 pp. 275f, ed. 4 rev. 1924 pp. 341f; 3 ET, *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, 1 (London 1904), pp. 411f, rev. edn *The Mission, and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* 1 (London 1908), pp. 329f; and the passage on the synagogue office-holders is considered by Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 126, 158, 168 and Schürer, *HJPAJC* 3.1, p. 34.

<sup>101</sup> Epiphanius and the laws are supported through comparison with other evidence (including Philo, *Hypothetica*, vii. 13, cited in (iii), above, and Roman inscriptions) by Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 168–70 (cf. p. 122), who notes that the standing of the priests would be esteemed in the synagogue council, but still thinks that their legal immunity needs further explanation, and suspects that non-Jewish custom has influenced the legal terminology; this reservation need not be made, however, on the interpretation of the laws adopted above (cf. n. 99). Further epigraphic evidence for the importance of priests includes inscriptions from Dura and Sardis (as noted by Kraabel, 'Social Systems' (cited in n. 15, above), p. 84). See also pp. 88–9 above.



*archisynagogus*, an officer of undoubted importance, and father of the synagogue, whose role is debatable. To follow a distinction drawn by S. Krauss, elders, and also probably priests, belong to the synagogue council (*Rat*), whereas the *archisynagogus* is first among the executive officers (*Beamten*).<sup>102</sup>

The scope which these four offices could have offered to women will be considered shortly, but first attention must be given to the two women's titles from the list at the beginning of this section which found no correspondence in the laws of Constantine. First, *archēgissa*, a feminine form of *archēgos*, 'chief' or 'leader', is attested only once; L. Robert suggested that the Greek title might be the equivalent of Latin *principalis* 'principal person', which occurs in a Jewish inscription.<sup>103</sup> The Latin term is used in laws from the fourth century onwards to denote the 'principal' members of the curial order.<sup>104</sup> *Archēgissa* might then be a civil, not a Jewish, title, and so fall out of consideration; if it is Jewish, *archēgoi* might be leading archons, as *principales* were leading councillors, but this is speculation.<sup>105</sup> In all, obscurity is such that the interpretation of this title must be left open.

The second of these two titles to be considered is *prostatēs*, which includes 'president' and 'patron' in its broad range of meaning. The cognate verb denotes men in authority in a *proseuchē* in an early inscription naming two *prostantes* (Lower Egypt, second century BCE).<sup>106</sup> The noun has been taken to refer to the chairman of the synagogue council (Juster, Krauss), but its sense can vary considerably according to circumstances (A. Kasher).<sup>107</sup> Jael of Aphrodisias in Caria, the one known possibly female *prostatēs*, might then have been 'president' (probably, in view of current feeling, without specific connection with council meetings), or

<sup>102</sup> Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 112, 137; similarly, Applebaum, 'Organization', pp. 491–3; Schürer *HJPAJC* 2, p. 433.

<sup>103</sup> Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 35–9 (adopting the translation 'leader', and noting 'founder' as a possible, but uncertain, rendering).

<sup>104</sup> de Ste Croix, *Class Struggle*, pp. 471f.

<sup>105</sup> On *principales* as an executive inner ring of the council, sometimes also called *primates* (for instance in Alexandria, AD 436), see Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, i, p. 731; it is tempting to view Jewish *archēgoi* as the equivalent of *primates Iudaeorum*, mentioned in laws of the years 392 and 429 (Theodosian Code xvi 8, 8 and 29) and identified with archons by Lietzmann, 'Verfassungsgeschichte' (as cited in n. 35, above), pp. 168f.

<sup>106</sup> Inscription from Xenephyris (CIJ 1441 = JIGRE 24) quoted by Juster, *Les Juifs*, i, pp. 348f (starred footnote), and discussed by Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 145, n. 4; Hengel, 'Stobi', p. 178, n. 104 (noting similar wording in CIJ 1447 = JIGRE 20, from Alexandria); and A. Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (ET, Tübingen 1985), pp. 111–14.

<sup>107</sup> Juster, *Les Juifs*, i, p. 443; Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 145; Kasher, *Egypt*, p. 114. Gerousiarch and patron are both allowed as possible meanings by Applebaum, 'Organization', p. 497.

‘patroness’, like Phoebe (n. 36, above; this translation is adopted by G. Vermes and F. Millar); but the Greek name Jael occurs at Aphrodisias in an otherwise exclusively masculine list, and is more probably, therefore, a man’s name corresponding to one of the Hebrew biblical names Jehiel or Jeiel, as at Ezra 10:26 and 43 in some MSS of the LXX 2 Esdras (as argued by the editors of the inscription, J. M. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum).<sup>108</sup>

To return now to the four women’s titles attested in the laws, it may be asked what part women could have played in the offices concerned. The priesthood differs from the other offices, for it is a rank acquired by birth.<sup>109</sup> The priestess would presumably follow the custom that women should not read the law from the *bēma* (p. 377, above), and so would not benefit from the priest’s precedence in reading (*m. Git.* 5:8); she would be unlikely to share the priests’ participation in a communal council (n. 112, below); but she might well have a special place to the fore among the women, corresponding to the priests’ special place (*prohedria*). Her title, however, is not that of a communal office attesting her status as benefactor, but that of a great ancestral distinction of rank.

Elders characteristically form a council, in Roman Egypt as well as among the Jews.<sup>110</sup> Among the inscriptions in which women bear the title ‘elder’ (*presbytera* or the like), one may refer to an aged woman, but this is most unlikely to be a general explanation.<sup>111</sup> Some female elders may

<sup>108</sup> It is taken as feminine by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 151, and Schürer *HJPAJC* 3.1, pp. 25f, and p. 102 and n. 54; but as masculine by J. M. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (Cambridge 1987), pp. 41, 101. G. Mussies, ‘Jewish personal names in some non-literary sources’ in J. W. van Henten and P. W. van der Horst (eds.) *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy* (Leiden 1994), 124–58, judges that the name can be male or female, but that here the former is more likely because Jael is *prostates*; for further literature see Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in its Diaspora Setting*, p. 73, n. 82.

<sup>109</sup> ‘With us connection with the priesthood is a proof of illustrious descent’, Josephus, *Vita*, 1; cf. Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 170.

<sup>110</sup> See especially Lietzmann, ‘Verfassungsgeschichte’, pp. 157f (elders of village and priestly communities in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt), 162–9 (survey of evidence for Jewish elders, including Septuagint, New Testament, Letter of Aristeas, Jewish inscriptions, and the law-codes of Theodosius and Justinian); the scantiness of evidence for elders (*presbyteroi*) as opposed to archons (*archontes*) is underlined by A. E. Harvey, ‘Elders’, *JTS* NS 25 (1974), 318–32 (319–26); Applebaum, ‘Organization’, pp. 491–5 finds that at least sometimes elders formed a board, and archons its executive committee, although board and executive cannot always be distinguished, and the evidence permits only tentative conclusions. See also R. A. Campbell, *The Elders* (Edinburgh 1994), 44–54.

<sup>111</sup> So Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 41–55, in a survey and discussion of the inscriptions (third to sixth centuries CE, save for the earlier Monteverde catacomb epitaph of a *presbytis*, possibly to be rendered ‘aged woman’ (cf. n. 87, above); see further R. S. Kraemer, ‘Malta’ (n. 87, above).

have been the wives of elders, others women appointed to this office. In either case, contemporary feeling would strongly tend to exclude them from the council of elders.<sup>112</sup> Like the *hiereia* (priestess) the female elder would not be called to read in the synagogue, but might sit in a special place (compare Tation, n. 83, above). In all, therefore, this title is best understood as an honour obtained by marriage, or an office corresponding to a benefaction.

'Mother of synagogue',<sup>113</sup> the third of the four titles now under review, shares the uncertainty surrounding 'father of synagogue'. Was he a patron (Juster), or the recipient of an honorific title (Krauss; Schürer, Vermes and Millar)?<sup>114</sup> Did an honorific title accorded to a wealthy member expected to exercise his patronage later develop into the title of an office like that of *archisynagogus* (Hengel)?<sup>115</sup> The theory of development attempts to do justice to evidence including the mention of fathers of the synagogue in the Theodosian Code, but the expanded exemption of 331 in which they are named could embrace, as has appeared, dignitaries who were not, or not always, executive officers. The office may then not have approximated so closely to that of *archisynagogus*.<sup>116</sup> It probably then denoted a wealthy woman's beneficence and patronage.

Lastly, *archisynagogi*, well attested from the Second Temple period onwards, had authority embracing the supervision of the synagogue service, and nominated readers and speakers; they could themselves be regarded

<sup>112</sup> Lefkowitz, 'Influential Women' (as cited in n. 9, above), pp. 56f, and Van Bremen, 'Women and Wealth' (as cited in n. 10, above), p. 236 both emphasize that in public life women magistrates only imitated their male counterparts to a certain extent; they did not deliberate or vote in council. Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 55 suggests that women elders would have belonged to a council, but does not discuss public life or the influence of Greek views on the place of women (exemplified in Philo, as cited in n. 85, above).

<sup>113</sup> Brooten, *Woman Leaders*, pp. 57–72 (six inscriptions of the second to the sixth centuries, including the epitaph of a proselyte, Beturia Paulla (on this and other evidence for female proselytes see Schürer, *HJPAJC* 3.1, pp. 162f); also, a possible literary allusion in the fifth-century *Altercatio Synagogae et Ecclesiae*). In public life, important citizens could be honoured as 'father', 'mother', 'son' or 'daughter' of the city (Van Bremen, 'Women and Wealth', p. 236), and 'father of the city' (*pater civitatis*) was a coveted honour sometimes held by Jews, since Justinian forbade it to them (Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 1, pp. 755, 759 (on the office in the fifth and sixth centuries); 2, p. 948 (its addition to the list of prohibited posts)).

<sup>114</sup> Juster, *Les Juifs*, 1, pp. 448f; Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 166; Applebaum, 'Organization', pp. 497f; Schürer *HJPAJC* 3.1, pp. 101f.

<sup>115</sup> Hengel, 'Stobi', pp. 176f, and n. 103.

<sup>116</sup> It seems not improbable that it came to be viewed as analogous to 'father of the city' (n. 113, above), but more attention has been given to its possible background in the usage of cult associations (for example by Juster and by Schürer, as cited in n. 114, above, cf. Brooten, p. 71).

as teachers (Justin Martyr, *Dial.* cxxxvii. 2), but their office was primarily governmental rather than liturgical.<sup>117</sup> As seen already, there might be more than one in a single synagogue (n. 96, above; cf. Acts 13:15).<sup>118</sup> The earliest of the three known instances in which women held the title is of the third century CE (Rufina of Smyrna).<sup>119</sup> A woman *archisynagogos* could perhaps have participated in the appointment of readers, although current convention might have prevented this, as it certainly would have made it unlikely that she should herself read or teach. Here too, then, in all probability, a distinguished title indicates high communal honour, coupled with the important function of financial subsidy.

In the synagogues, therefore, Judith probably had her woman followers in the field of sacred song, as Philo with Paul and other evidence suggests, at least in the first century CE (section iv (b) and n. 60, above); but Rufina the *archisynagogos* and the other women named as office-holders in these inscriptions will have followed the example of Judith in another respect, her position as a wealthy and pious woman who was 'honourable in her time in all the land' (Jdt. 16:21). Men who held these distinguished offices, however, are also likely to have viewed them mainly as high honours entailing a duty of public munificence. It should perhaps be stressed again that the offices concerned were not primarily liturgical, and that the distinction between 'honorific' and 'functional' is not well suited to offices which were above all honours corresponding to the vital communal function of financial subsidy. The difference between male and female office-holders would probably have been most perceptible in respect of their part in any synagogue council, but otherwise the principal honours and burdens of office would have been the same for either sex.

The questions posed initially on women's participation in synagogue worship and office may therefore now be answered in summary statements, so far as the evidence permits. First, however, the background of

<sup>117</sup> On this office see Krauss, *Altertümer*, pp. 114–21; W. Schrage, s.v. *archisynagogos*, *TWNT* 7, Stuttgart 1964 pp. 842–5, *TDNT* 7 (Grand Rapids 1971), pp. 844–7; Applebaum, 'Organization', pp. 492f; Schürer, *HJPAJC* 2, pp. 434–6 and 3.1, pp. 101f; Rajak and Noy, 'Archisynagogoi'.

<sup>118</sup> So Schürer, *HJPAJC* 2, p. 435; contrast Schrage, *TWNT* 7, pp. 844f, *TDNT* 7, pp. 846f. (arguing that one only was normal).

<sup>119</sup> Brooten, *Women Leaders*, pp. 5–33 (third to fifth centuries); the Smyrna inscription, described as probably second century in Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 5, is dated not earlier than the third century by Schürer *HJPAJC* 3.1, p. 20. An infant *archisynagogos* is attested (Venosa epitaph, quoted by Krauss, *Altertümer*, p. 118 and cited by Brooten, *Women Leaders*, p. 25); children are also found holding other offices, but in view of ancient custom with regard to honours the phenomenon is no guide to the nature of the offices concerned; see Schürer *HJPAJC* 2, pp. 435f, comparing infant church lectors, and on infant clergy see further Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, ii, p. 914.

Graeco-Roman and Jewish custom should be recalled. Graeco-Roman evidence shows the strength of the social constraints on women's government or teaching, but it also suggests that women's synagogue attendance would have been favoured, and that women of standing would have been free to act as patronesses and also, therefore, to hold public offices, for these were primarily honours corresponding to a duty of financial subsidy. Further, the diversity and development of Jewish custom itself, and the varied uses of the synagogue for court hearings and study and communal meals, do not preclude the likelihood that, towards the end of the Second Temple period, the synagogue sabbath assembly would have had its focus in the reading and exposition of the law and the prophets, in a framework of common prayer; the combination of the biblical reading with prayer is strongly indicated for the Diaspora, and was probably also found in the homeland, especially in view of its biblical antecedents in Nehemiah and the usage later presupposed in the Mishnah. For hymnody, likewise, there is much to suggest its importance in Diaspora communities; its place in the synagogues in Judaea and Galilee before the third century CE is uncharted, but the conjecture that it was probably known can be supported from Diaspora and temple usage viewed in conjunction with Qumran and rabbinic evidence. Prayer and hymnody, therefore, elements of worship in which women had some traditional prominence, are likely to have had their place in varying ways in the synagogue assembly from the Second Temple period onwards. Early Christian literature, which probably reflects contemporary Jewish custom to a considerable extent, confirms the importance of women in prayer and patronage, and the constraints on their participation in government or instruction; but the Christian institution of the woman deacon is a further sign that the position of women in the synagogue at this period need not have been restricted to the degree which Jewish custom at some later times might suggest.

With this background in view, and with renewed emphasis on the fragmentary character of the evidence, answers to the initial questions on women in synagogue worship and office may be given in the following summary.

(i) The strong biblical stress on the importance of the presence of the women in the Israelite assembly continued unabated in the Graeco-Roman period, as appears both from Jewish interpretations of biblical texts on the assembly, and from decrees and other evidence for the presence of women in the synagogues (section iv (b), above).

(ii) Separation of the sexes in the synagogue assembly was probably customary, irrespective of the structure of the building. The evidence for separation in early Christian usage confirms this likelihood. An early form

of separation might have involved ranking the women behind the men, as in Herod's temple. In basilica synagogues women might well have taken their place in the galleries, as they did in Christian basilicas. In other settings, they might have taken opposite sides of the floor, as was probably allowed by the twofold enclosure of the Therapeutae, and was necessary for the antiphonal male and female choirs envisaged by Philo. This third form of separation is that which least suggests the subordination of women, but in any case the practice of separation corresponds not only to belief in subordination, but also to a widespread tendency to articulate the different parts of the community in public assemblies. Separation can therefore imply both the subordination of women, and their recognition as a constituent part of the whole congregation of Israel (sections iii and iv (c), above).

(iii) Women probably played an important part in hymnody at the end of the Second Temple period, as is envisaged in biblical accounts of the temple service (section iv (b), above). Hymnody overlaps with prayer, and women's participation in prayer was emphasized, as is indicated by the stress on women's presence in an assembly which could be conceived as an assembly especially for prayer (*proseuchē*), and by early Christian references to women's prayers, viewed together with the rabbinic ruling that although women are not bound to recite the Shema<sup>c</sup>, they should recite the Tefillah.

(iv) On the other hand, Jewish and Christian sources evince a shared tendency to interpret the Pentateuch as teaching the subordination of women, to exclude women from exercising leadership in the general assembly through reading, instruction, or leading the prayers, and to restrict government or teaching by women to the women's section of the community, as came to be the case with the Christian woman deacon (sections iii and iv, above). This tendency is probably also to be discerned as operative in conjunction with the halakhic considerations which led to the rabbinic exemption of women from time-related precepts, and hence from enumeration for the quorum of an assembly and from leadership in common prayer conducted according to rabbinic rulings (section iv (b), above).

(v) The epigraphic record of Jewish women in synagogue office will probably continue to grow, and is comparable with the record of non-Jewish women in public office. The synagogue offices concerned are governmental rather than liturgical; female office-holders are unlikely to have shared like their male counterparts in the proceedings of any synagogue council, but for men and women alike the offices were honours corresponding to the vital function of communal subsidy (section (v), above).

Summary answers have now been offered to the initial questions concerning women's place in the synagogue. The inquiry has been limited to this subject, but one aspect of its relation to the larger question of the position of Jewish women in the Graeco-Roman period may be noted in conclusion. Contrasts have been drawn by historians, to the disadvantage of the Judaism of this period, with women's life in earlier biblical times and in the contemporary Christian communities.<sup>120</sup> The evidence discussed above offers some support for such views, even beyond the widely attested tendency towards women's subordination; restrictive interpretation of biblical texts on women's place in the assembly (iv (b), above), and lack of attestation of women functioning in the Jewish community like the female deacon in the church (v, above), are phenomena which suggest contrasts with earlier Judaism and with Christianity in the same Graeco-Roman setting.

Nevertheless, some qualifications to unfavourable contrasts have also emerged. First, to a great extent the forces making both for constraint and for liberty were common to the public opinion of the time, whether Graeco-Roman, Jewish or Christian, or else common to both Judaism and Christianity. It is in this regard that contrasts with Christianity are often fragile. Thus (as noted in section (iii), above) Philo, Josephus and their early Christian contemporaries all alike find the subjection of women in the law of Moses. Again, the tendency which led to the separation of the sexes in Christian assemblies, and probably also in the synagogues, owes much to the influence of Graeco-Roman public opinion on both Christians and Jews, as well as to Jewish and Christian dependence on biblical tradition (sections (iii) and (iv.c), above). Perhaps the main exception to this widespread community of view is the distinctive rabbinic development of the exemption of women from time-related obligations; but in this period the exemption of women from some of (not all) the obligations of prayer clearly did not prevent regular participation by women in synagogue worship.

<sup>120</sup> For example, with regard to earlier Judaism, L. della Torre, 'La donna israelita' (1846), reprinted in his *Scritti sparsi* (2 vols., Padua 1908), i, pp. 437–60 (especially pp. 454–7); Archer, 'Jewish Women', pp. 277, 283; and Küchler, *Schweigen*, especially pp. 125f, 455–60, 479–81 (biblical interpretations hostile to women make their appearance especially in apocalypses and related literature, not necessarily typical of Judaism as a whole, but influential upon early Christians). Brenner, *Woman*, pp. 132f, concludes that in Israelite society women were increasingly excluded from the public sphere, but she finds this trend well before the exile, especially from the time of the early monarchy onwards. For contrasts with the practice of Jesus and the early church, see Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, pp. 358–76 (pp. 375f, on Jesus' attitude to women); Meeks, *Urban Christians*, p. 81 (role of women in the Pauline movement much greater than in contemporary Judaism).



On the other hand, more favourable aspects of women's life in the Graeco-Roman period were also reflected among both Jews and Christians. Thus, the prominence of patronesses among the early Christians, and of women office-holders in the synagogue, broadly corresponds to the position of women of similar wealth and standing in the cities of the Roman Empire.

Secondly, the inheritance of earlier Judaism survived in a continuing emphasis on women's presence in the assembly. The biblical specification of women recurs in Greek and rabbinic description of the Sinaitic assembly, the communal literature of Qumran, the decrees quoted by Josephus, the hymnody described by Philo, and Josephus' own description of the temple (section (iv.a–b), above). Here the process of articulating the different parts of the community appears side by side with the tendency to separate the sexes. The overtones of separation are therefore by no means exclusively those of subjection. Here, then, there is a measure of community rather than contrast between Judaism in the Graeco-Roman period and in earlier times.

Women in the synagogue, therefore, were indeed subject to repressive tendencies, but they were not in a wholly unfavourable position by comparison with their forebears or their Christian contemporaries. The importance of women in Greek Jewish literature ((iv.b), above) and the continuing accession of women proselytes (n. 113, above) underlines this point. Other aspects of women's life as well as their participation in the synagogue are of course considered in the assessments cited above (n. 120). The remarks just made bear only on the synagogue, but they also suggest that in this period the synagogue continued, despite pressures, to form an important aspect of women's life.

## CHAPTER 13

## THE PHARISEES

In rabbinic tradition, the Pharisaic sages are described as the successors of the men of the ‘Great Synagogue’ and, ultimately, of Moses: ‘Moses received the Law from Sinai and committed it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the Prophets; and the Prophets committed it to the men of the Great Synagogue. They said three things: be deliberate in judgement, raise up many disciples, and make a fence around the Law.’<sup>1</sup> Following this introduction, the Mishnah commemorates famous sages, from Simeon the Just and Antigonus of Sokho down to Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel. Committed to writing well after CE 70, this short ‘history’ of the Sages enabled the rabbis to make sense of and systematize the development of Jewish religious teaching in the aftermath of the catastrophe. Thus, m. Av. 1 may serve as the starting point of an inquiry into the history of Pharisaism, but not as its blueprint.<sup>2</sup>

Before we can embark on our task, a few words concerning our sources are called for. The ‘classic’ texts which have been used by critical scholarship to reconstruct the history of Pharisaism are the works of Josephus, the New Testament and rabbinic works such as the Mishnah, the Tosefta, Tannaitic passages in both the Babylonian and the Jerusalem Talmuds and Tannaitic midrashim. To these we can now add, thanks to the discovery of the Qumran library, 4QP<sup>Nah</sup>, 1QP<sup>Hab</sup>, 4QP<sup>Ps37</sup>, 4Q<sup>Test</sup>, 11Q<sup>T</sup> and, most importantly, 4Q<sup>MMT</sup>. To a certain degree, 1 and 2 Maccabees and the Psalms of Solomon can also assist our reconstruction.

First of all, it is important to establish where the roots of Pharisaism lie. Judaeon society in the Persian period (538–322 BCE) underwent a significant change induced by Ezra’s activity in Jerusalem in 398 BCE. The

<sup>1</sup> M. Av. 1.1; H. Danby (ed.) *The Mishnah Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford 1993), p. 446. In the present study, Mishnaic quotations are taken from Danby’s translation and biblical passages from the NRSV, whereas Josephus’ works are quoted according to the Loeb edition.

<sup>2</sup> Some scholars still accept m. Av. 1 as historically reliable; cf. L. Finkelstein, ‘The Men of the Great Synagogue (c. 400–170 BCE)’, *CHJ* 2, 229–44 and ‘Pharisaic Leadership after the Great Synagogue (170 BCE–CE 135)’, *CHJ* 2, 245–77. We shall demonstrate why this view is no longer tenable.

events narrated in Neh. 8 led to a reorganization of society generally and of the activity of the temple personnel in particular. Before the fall of the Jerusalem temple, its priests had occupied an eminent position in Judaeon society. After 538, they managed to regain and consolidate that position, but another profession rose to relative prominence, viz. that of the scribe. It underwent a development from a merely technical job – that of a copyist – towards an exegetical occupation of religious importance. Earlier generations of scholars, judging on the basis of Jewish tradition, came to the conclusion that the *sōfērīm* referred to in rabbinic literature were in fact the ‘men of the Great Synagogue’ mentioned in m. Av. 1. The era of the ‘Great Synagogue’, thus, was the ‘Age of the Soferim’. This view, however, must be refuted. Neither can we speak of an ‘Age of the Soferim’ nor, indeed, was there ever a Great Assembly in the sense envisaged by rabbinic tradition.<sup>3</sup> Still, this tradition is not historically worthless. It betrays the importance of a professional class of scribes who acted in several capacities. The teaching of *tōrā* was one of the scribes’ most prominent tasks. Neh. 8 depicts Ezra, the archetypical ‘scribe’, and the Levites as Torah instructors. Of Ezra it is said that he ‘had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel’ (Ezra 7:10). He is pictured as the *sōfēr* par excellence; we may thus assume that the tasks ascribed to him are representative of the actual work done by the scribes.

All law calls for interpretation. This was especially true of the Pentateuch, which Ezra had introduced as the binding Judaeon law code. The ‘book of the law of Moses’, as it was called (Neh. 8:1), was a ‘compromise document’<sup>4</sup> that badly needed exegesis in order to adapt it to the complex social, political and religious reality of fourth-century Judaea. During the time of Ezra, this exegetical and didactic task was executed exclusively by the priesthood (the Levites were in fact second-rank priests). We can safely assume, however, that the rise of the practice of the public reading and exposition of *tōrā* at the city gate cultivated the ground on which the work of the ‘scribes’ was to grow and bear fruit. Communal reading and exposition of the Law at the city gate seems to have been inspired by Ezra’s example when he had the ‘book of the law of Moses’ read and interpreted during the ceremony in ‘the square before the Water Gate’ (Neh. 8:1).<sup>5</sup> It is likely that the reading and expounding of the ‘law of

<sup>3</sup> A. Kuenen (trans. K. Budde), ‘Über die Männer der großen Synagoge’ in *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur biblischen Wissenschaft* (Freiburg im Breisgau and Leipzig 1894), pp. 125–60.

<sup>4</sup> F. Crüsemann, *Die Tora: Theologie und Sozialgeschichte des alttestamentlichen Gesetzes* (Munich 1992), pp. 393–404.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. L. I. Levine, ‘The Nature and Origin of the Palestinian Synagogue reconsidered’, *JBL* 115 (1996), 425–8, esp. pp. 432–5.

Moses' had as its aim the immediate solution of practical legal and cultic problems and, more generally, the education of average laypersons. Ever since the late Persian era, these scribes had been organized in guilds<sup>6</sup> and had formed a professional class of exegetes and teachers, the vast majority of them being Levites. Public teaching introduced wider circles to the study of the Law and led to a certain 'democratization' of scribal knowledge that encouraged and enabled perceptive laymen to devote themselves to Torah study. At the same time, the *sōfērīm* became more independent of the temple hierarchy<sup>7</sup> and turned into a semi-independent class of teachers. This class of teachers and exegetes of Levitical origin acted as arbiters of the law in Israel and safeguarded the correct transmission of the texts that embodied it.<sup>8</sup> The teachings of the *sōfērīm* were based on the law-book introduced by Ezra; they did not introduce independent halakhot.<sup>9</sup>

Not all scribes were 'scribes of the temple', and not all 'scribes of the temple' devoted themselves exclusively to 'spiritual' tasks. Under Ptolemaic domination, Palestine experienced decades of sustained economic growth. The volume of foreign trade grew considerably; the positive effects were felt in the whole country.<sup>10</sup> New plants and agricultural methods were introduced, artificial irrigation produced excellent results, technological innovations contributed to the general economic upturn. The growth of the Palestinian population started to accelerate.<sup>11</sup> A new social class arose which, for want of a better term, we shall call petty bourgeois.<sup>12</sup> It flourished predominantly in the city of Jerusalem, where economic conditions favoured the growth of a class of artisans and traders situated at the interface between agricultural production and foreign trade on the one hand and urban consumption on the other. The economic boom of Palestine under the Ptolemies generated significant tax income, which in turn necessitated a fairly complex administrative system. On the whole, the new taxation system favoured the upper and the emerging (lower) middle classes and was loathed by the rural population.<sup>13</sup> It thus sharpened

<sup>6</sup> Cf. 1 Chr. 2.55.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. M. Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus: Studien zu ihrer Begegnung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Palästinas bis zur Mitte des 2. Jh.s v. Chr.* (WUNT 10; Tübingen 3rd edn 1988), p. 146; ET *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, 2 vols. (London 1974), vol. 1, p. 79.

<sup>8</sup> B. Qidd. 30a.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. J. Lauterbach, 'Midrash and Mishnah: A Study in the Early History of the Halakha' in *Rabbinical Essays* (New York 2nd edn 1973), p. 165.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Hengel, *Judentum*, pp. 76–92; ET, vol. 1, pp. 39–47.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Hengel, *Judentum*, pp. 90–2; ET, vol. 1, pp. 46–7.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. M. Weber, *Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen: Das antike Judentum* (Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III; Tübingen 8th edn 1988), p. 405.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Hengel, *Judentum*, p. 97; ET, vol. 1, p. 50.

the division between city and countryside and quickened the pace of urban Hellenization.

It was the urban lower middle class that provided the soil for the growth of Pharisaism.<sup>14</sup> Some members of this class now had sufficient leisure to embark upon the task of scriptural exegesis and legal decision-making besides conducting their businesses.<sup>15</sup> This was a novel situation which contributed to the spreading of exegetical and legal knowledge among segments of society that had never before been touched by it. Thus it became possible for members of the public to act as lay scribes outside any official institutional framework, parallel to the temple scribes, but without their obligations towards the priestly establishment. Probably, one of the tasks of the lay scribes was to deal with the bureaucracy of the ruling power, since ‘the legist was also in demand outside the Sanctuary . . . Down to the shepherd in the wilderness of Judah, everyone was entangled in the red tape of the Greek fiscal system and needed the help of a professional scribe.’<sup>16</sup> At the same time, the lay scribes were, just like their opposite numbers in the sanctuary, well versed in the Torah of Moses which was, to all intents and purposes, the law of the land, as had been established in the Persian period. Presumably the lay scribes had received some of their training at the hands of the temple scribes, during the communal Torah readings and expositions at the city gate.

The immediate predecessors of the Pharisaic scholars proper are the *grammateis* referred to in 1 Macc. 7:12, which tells us about a group of scribes (*synagogē grammateōn*) who tried to mediate in the conflict between Judas Maccabaeus and Alcimus, whom Antiochus V Eupator had appointed high priest of the Jews in 162 BCE. It has rightly been pointed out that these scribes probably were the elite of that group of Jews referred to as the Hasidim in contemporary literature.<sup>17</sup> These ‘Pietists’ formed a community of God-fearing men who initially supported the Maccabean rising but steered a conciliatory course as soon as the freedom of religion had been regained in 163 BCE (1 Macc. 6:31–2). They did not support the overall policies of the Maccabees but were content to live peacefully and in accordance with the laws of their fathers. The Hasidim and their intellectual leaders, the scribes, were prepared to trust Alcimus and to accept him as high priest simply because he was an Aaronide<sup>18</sup> and

<sup>14</sup> On the origin and meaning of the term ‘Pharisee’, cf. H.-F. Weiß, ‘Pharisäer’ in *TRE* 26, pp. 473–4.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Weber, *Das antike Judentum*, pp. 409–11.

<sup>16</sup> E. J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge, MA and London 1988), p. 162.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Hengel, *Judentum*, pp. 183–6; ET, vol. 1, pp. 99–100. Cf. 1 Macc. 2:42, 7:12–13.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Aaronide’ refers to the high priestly line. According to the genealogical construct first promoted by the Priestly Writing, Aaron was the Zadokites’ forefather; cf. A. Cody, *A History of Old Testament Priesthood* (AnBibl. 35; Rome 1969), pp. 170–4.

thus of high priestly stock (1 Macc. 7.13–4). This shows that they objected to the laxity of priestly and aristocratic *practice*, not to the priesthood and the aristocracy as such. This view was to be characteristic of the Pharisees, too, once they emerged as a distinct group. When exactly this happened is impossible to say. It must have taken place around 160 BCE, since the first unambiguous reference to the Pharisees found in Josephus concerns the time of Jonathan the Hasmonaean. By that time, all three ‘schools of thought’ seem to have been in existence: ‘there were three schools of thought among the Jews, which held different opinions concerning human affairs; the first being that of the Pharisees, the second that of the Sadducees, and the third that of the Essenes’.<sup>19</sup> The struggle for the right halakha for Israel had begun. Not long before the inception of Jonathan’s military rule, the Zadokite ‘Teacher of Righteousness’ had separated from the temple establishment and established a community out of which the Qumran *yahad* was to grow.<sup>20</sup> The halakhic disagreements between the community and the Pharisees are discussed, from the point of view of the Essenes,<sup>21</sup> in 4 QMMT. On every single halakhic point, the Pharisees are described as taking the more lenient point of view, whereas the Essenes, in the Sadducaic tradition,<sup>22</sup> promote an uncompromising, rigorous interpretation along the lines of the priestly heritage.

As E. Qimron points out,<sup>23</sup> 4 QMMT may have addressed Jonathan the Maccabee before he was appointed high priest by Alexander Balas in 152 BCE. It seems that Jonathan was under Pharisaic influence and that the Essenes tried to dissuade him from embracing Pharisaic halakha. Regardless of whom 4 QMMT was addressed to, however, it is clear that it is one of the earliest Qumran documents, refers to early Pharisaic halakha<sup>24</sup> and in any case pre-dates the reign of John Hyrcanus I. It is remarkable how clearly defined both the Pharisaic and the Sadducaic/Essenic halakhic systems were at this relatively early time, i.e. the middle of the second century BCE. Considering how prominently Pharisaic teaching figured in the religious-political disputes of the day, it is obvious that it was not ‘new’ in the sense postulated by earlier generations of scholars.<sup>25</sup> It built

<sup>19</sup> *Ant.* XIII.171.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. E. Qimron’s analysis of the language, historical background and halakha of 4 QMMT in Qimron and J. Strugnell (eds.) *Qumran Cave 4, V: Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah* (DJJD 10; Oxford 1994), pp. 65–177; esp. pp. 120–1.

<sup>21</sup> It can now be considered to be beyond doubt that the Qumran *yahad* was an Essene community. On this matter, cf. Y. Sussman, ‘The History of the Halakha and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Preliminary Talmudic Observations on *Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah* (4 QMMT)’ in Qimron and Strugnell (eds.) *Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, pp. 192–6.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *ibid.* <sup>23</sup> Cf. Qimron and Strugnell (eds.) *Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, pp. 118–19.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Qimron and Strugnell (eds.) *Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, pp. 123–77.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Qimron and Strugnell (eds.) *Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, p. 177.

upon a tradition rooted in the Persian period and brought to fruition what earlier generations had sown. Contrary to the impression we may receive from the works of Josephus, the disputes between Pharisees and Sadducees did not primarily centre on tenets of faith.<sup>26</sup> Rather, their struggle was a struggle over the *conduct of life*, over the halakha that was to be binding on the Jewish people. This becomes obvious not just from 4 QMMT, but also from Josephus, as we shall see soon.

Why did Pharisaic, as opposed to Sadducaic/Essenic, halakha appeal to so many Palestinian Jews in the Hasmonaean era? To answer this question, it is necessary to examine Pharisaic and Essenic halakhot in some detail. 4 QMMT provides us with the minutiae of some characteristic problems. Interestingly, the points addressed in that document do not pertain to the Qumran sect specifically. 'Rather, this is a halakha which applies to the entire Jewish people, a practical halakha disputed by the different groups, dealing with practical ramifications of specific halakhot in various areas of communal life: the calendar and festivals, ritual purity, the sanctuary and sacrifices, the priesthood and the priestly gifts.'<sup>27</sup>

One particularly interesting aspect of Pharisaic halakha is its leniency in matters of ritual purity. The Essenes ruled that the whole of the city of Jerusalem was to be understood as the 'holy camp' of Lev. 4: the temple is the 'tent of meeting',<sup>28</sup> 'Jerusalem is the "camp".'<sup>29</sup> Hence, all purity laws relating to the 'holy camp' have to be enforced in the entire city of Jerusalem.<sup>30</sup> This was a fundamental principle of Essenic halakha mirrored in 4 QMMT and in the Temple Scroll.<sup>31</sup> The Pharisees did not agree with such a strict interpretation of the biblical injunctions and postulated that the Torah was in fact referring to three camps: that of God, that of the Levites and that of the Israelites, equalled by the Temple, the Temple Mount and the city of Jerusalem.<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees thus managed to avoid the application of *all* purity laws to the *whole* of Jerusalem. To take the Essene line would have been unpracticable. Thus, most purity rulings were to be enforced only in the Temple proper. The Pharisees understood

<sup>26</sup> This is aptly demonstrated by Y. Sussman, 'History', p. 193.

<sup>27</sup> Sussman, 'History', p. 186. <sup>28</sup> 4 QMMT, B 29–30.

<sup>29</sup> 4 QMMT, B 29; cf. B 59–62. <sup>30</sup> Cf. 4 QMMT, B 31–2.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Y. Yadin (ed.) *The Temple Scroll, I: Introduction* (Jerusalem 1983), pp. 277–343.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. t. Kelim B. Qam. 1, 12; M. S. Zuckerman (ed.) *Tosefta* (Pasewalk 1880), p. 570. The Tosefta passage defines the city (excluding the Temple and the Temple Mount) as the 'camp of Israel': 'From the gate of Jerusalem to the gate of the Temple Mount is the camp of Israel. From the gate of the Temple Mount up to Nicanor's Gate is the camp of the Levites. From the Nicanor's Gate and inward is the camp of the Indwelling Presence of God. And that (corresponded to the place within) the curtains in the wilderness.' The translation is taken from J. Neusner (ed.) *The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. Sixth Division: Tohorot (The Order of Purities)* (New York 1977), p. 4.



'outside the camp' to mean 'outside the *temple*'. This was, contrary to that of the Essenes, the fundamental interpretative decision they made with regard to the degrees of sanctity in the land of Israel, from which followed their lenient views concerning the admissibility of certain practices outside the sanctuary.

The Essenic concept was much stricter, probably caused by the wish to err on the side of caution rather than run the risk of violating divine precepts. The Pharisees took a different stance. They were open to the insight that the Law had to be adjusted to the living-conditions of the people. The purification offering is a case in point: the rules applied to the *ḥaṭṭā't* sacrifice are governed by the fear that 'sins and impurities committed within the camp or city can pollute the sanctuary'.<sup>33</sup> Sins and impurities were thought to be transferred to the *ḥaṭṭā't* in the process of the ritual, and in the case of the burnt *ḥaṭṭā't* the 'impurity is powerful enough to penetrate into the shrine and adytum . . . and is dangerously contagious. In being purged by the *ḥaṭṭā't* blood it is likely to infect the carcass itself, which therefore has to be burned.'<sup>34</sup> Lev. 4:12, 21 stipulates that it be burnt 'outside the camp', so as not to expose the 'camp' to any possible danger. Essenes and Pharisees were thus confronted with a problem of cultic practice. The Essenes decided to make life more difficult for the temple officials rather than expose the sanctuary to the risk of ritual impurity. This had to be avoided at all costs, since 'the God of Israel will not abide in a polluted sanctuary'.<sup>35</sup> Therefore the Essenes ruled that the carcass be burnt outside Jerusalem, whereas the Pharisees seem to have held, according to their interpretation of Lev. 4:12,<sup>36</sup> that it sufficed to have it burnt outside the temple precincts. While the Essenes extended the area of holiness in order to safeguard the purity of the sanctuary by means of a particularly strict exegesis of Lev. 4 and Ezek. 43, the Pharisees kept close to the intention of the Priestly Writing and of Ezek. 43:2.

But not all halakhic problems could be solved by referring to the written Torah. This point is nicely emphasized by m. Hag. 1, 8: '(The rules about) release from vows hover in the air and have naught to support them; the rules about the Sabbath, Festal-offerings, and Sacrilege are as mountains hanging by a hair, for (teaching of) Scripture (thereon) is scanty and the rules many.'<sup>37</sup> The teaching of halakha at times had to be

<sup>33</sup> J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Bible 3; New York 1991), p. 262.

<sup>34</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus*, p. 263. <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258. <sup>36</sup> Cf. n. 30.

<sup>37</sup> Translation from Danby (ed.) *The Mishnah*, p. 212. On this passage, cf. S. Safrai, 'Oral Tora' in Danby (ed.) *The Literature of the Sages*, 1: *Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates* (CRINT II 3/1; Assen 1987), p. 50.

innovative to keep up with the pace of social and economic change and the new living conditions it created. It is the Pharisees' great and most important merit to have risen to that particular challenge. Their answer was what is summarily called the 'Oral Tora'. This expression translates the rabbinic formula *tōrā šebē'al pē*, a late technical term found in the Babylonian Talmud and in Amoraic midrashim.<sup>38</sup> However, Oral Law as such is much older than the terminology the rabbis used to designate it. In fact, the development of the concept of Oral Law can be said to have started with the events narrated in Neh. 8 and the teachings of the *sōfērīm* of the Persian period, as outlined earlier.<sup>39</sup> Oral Tora was fully operative by the middle of the second century BCE. Josephus uses the term 'tradition of the fathers' (*paradosis tōn patērōn*) to refer to it, and it was the single most distinctive feature of Pharisaism. Midrashic exegesis of the Written Torah (*tōrā šebiktāb*) was supplemented by independent halakhot conceived of as ancestral traditions. However, 'there is no ground for assuming that the midrash form of halakha preceded the "independent" mode of study and formulation; nor for the opposite view that the midrash form was secondary. The interpretation that best fits the evidence is that these two forms of study and literary creation developed concomitantly within the very society they were shaping.'<sup>40</sup> Thus, the Pharisaic/rabbinic way of determining the relation between the two *tōrōt* and their respective importance is historically reliable in that it singles out the 'scribes' as the originators of both midrashic exegesis and halakhic innovation.<sup>41</sup> These innovations gave Pharisaism its remarkable strength in dealing with the great and small problems generated by the turbulent social and political upheavals under Seleucid, Hasmonaean and Roman rulers.

The first major political and halakhic difficulty the Pharisees were confronted with after the death of Judas Maccabaeus was the question of legitimacy in the high priestly office. Having assumed the mantle of Judas after his death in 161 BCE, Jonathan, in 157, came to terms with his Syrian overlord. Since the high priestly office was vacant (Alcimus had died in 159),<sup>42</sup> Alexander Balas appointed Jonathan high priest of the Jewish nation in 152 BCE. This put a definite end to the legitimate Zadokite

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Safrai, 'Oral Tora', pp. 42–5, esp. p. 44, n. 47. The concept of an 'Oral Tora' received its final shape only in the Tannaitic period; cf. P. Schäfer, 'Das "Dogma" von der mündlichen Torah im rabbinischen Judentum' in *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums* (AGAJU 15; Leiden 1978), p. 183.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. above, pp. 402–4 and Safrai, 'Oral Tora', pp. 52–6.

<sup>40</sup> S. Safrai, 'Halakha' in (ed.) *The Literature of the Sages*, 1: *Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates* (CRINT II 3/1; Assen 1987), p. 154.

<sup>41</sup> B. Meg. 19b.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. U. Wilcken, 'Alkimos. 15' in G. Wissowa (ed.) *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft. Neue Bearbeitung*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart 1894), col. 1543.

succession, which had its roots in the time of the united monarchy. Alcimus had been its last representative. Alexander's action posed a major constitutional problem that made it impossible for the various 'schools of thought' not to take sides. The deposition of the Zadokites, while it went against tradition, constituted a major breakthrough for the Hasmonaeans, since it meant the demise of the radical Hellenizers in Judaeon society and thus put the finishing touches to the Hasmonaean triumph. This was confirmed when, in addition to having conferred upon him the high priesthood, Alexander Balas appointed Jonathan commander (*stratēgos*) and joint governor (*meridarchēs*) of Judaea and thus recognized him as the official political and spiritual leader of the Jewish nation. From now on, the Hasmonaeans were semi-independent vassals of the Seleucid empire.

The Pharisees had good reason to welcome this new situation. Although their immediate predecessors, the 'scribes of the Hasidim', had previously supported the Aaronides as legitimate successors to the high priesthood,<sup>43</sup> their view of the matter changed when Alcimus put to death sixty of their brethren.<sup>44</sup> This made it easier for the Pharisees to part with the concept of Zadokite/Aaronide legitimacy which, after all, was laid down in the Pentateuch. Another group that grew out of Hasidism, however, found it impossible to give up this fundamental tenet and, led by a Jerusalemite priest of Zadokite pedigree, seceded from the temple to form the community of Qumran.

The Pharisees confirmed their break with the concept of Aaronide/Zadokite legitimacy when they shared responsibility for appointing Jonathan's brother and successor Simon to the high priesthood in 143 BCE. In many ways this was a revolutionary act, since Simon was the first non-Zadokite elevated to the high priesthood *by the will of the Jewish people*<sup>45</sup> (1 Macc. 14:35). Demetrius 'confirmed him in the high priesthood' (1 Macc. 14:38). It was an unprecedented procedure to have the high priest appointed by a national 'assembly of the priests and the people and the rulers of the nation and the elders of the country' (1 Macc. 14:28). This procedure went against the Pentateuchal stipulations inasmuch as it elevated a non-Zadokite to the high priesthood and made the appointment dependent upon the will of a representative assembly. The assembly was thus considered to be of higher authority than the Zadokite priests *and the Written Law*. Who or what had authorized the shift of authority from the Pentateuchal precepts to a representative body? 'Whoever sanctioned the legality of the transfer must have been a class whose authority was acknowledged by both the Hasmonaeans and the people at large as

<sup>43</sup> Cf. 1 Macc. 7:14. <sup>44</sup> Cf. 1 Macc. 7:16.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. E. Rivkin, *A Hidden Revolution* (Nashville 1978), pp. 215–18.

legitimate':<sup>46</sup> the Pharisees. Although it has to be said that 1 Maccabees nowhere mentions the Pharisees as the driving force behind this development, they were the only group in Judaeen society at the time whose legal concepts allowed for a constitutional re-adjustment necessary to legitimize the accession of non-Zadokites to the high priesthood. It may have been an 'independent' halakha that was not derived from scripture but authorized by the Pharisaic sages that made it possible 'temporarily' to transfer the high priesthood from the Zadokites to the Hasmonaeans – 'temporarily' in the sense that Simon was appointed to be high priest 'until a trustworthy prophet should arise' (1 Macc. 14:41). This was an ingenious solution to the problem of legitimacy<sup>47</sup> since, at least in theory, it allowed for a return to the old practice. At the same time, it immunized the Pharisees against charges of heresy.

The Pharisaic concept of 'tradition of the fathers' and the teachings that ensued from it captured the hearts and minds of the majority of the Judaeen people. By the time of the accession of John Hyrcanus I, Pharisaic influence on the population was very considerable and enabled the Pharisees to hold their ground in disputes with even the highest authorities.<sup>48</sup> At the core of their activities lay their distinct concept of halakha from which, Josephus states, their sway over the majority of the nation was derived.

During the early years of Hyrcanus' reign, the Pharisees were at a high point of their political power. Not just did they have a spiritual hold on the 'masses', they also had the ear of the ruler. Presumably they were represented in the Sanhedrin, the constitutional administrative body first referred to in the edict of Antiochus III<sup>49</sup> and later known as *heber*<sup>50</sup> or

<sup>46</sup> Rivkin, *A Hidden Revolution*, p. 221. It is Rivkin's merit to have pointed out the significance of 1 Macc. 14:27–45 for the reconstruction of the history of Pharisaism. He particularly stresses the importance of Pharisaic 'Oral Law' for the transition from Zadokites to Hasmonaeans in the high priesthood; cf. *idem*, *A Hidden Revolution*, pp. 211–51. However, the present author does not share Rivkin's opinion that identifies the assembly of 1 Macc. 14 with the 'Great Synagogue' postulated in rabbinic literature; cf. above, p. 403.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. E. Bammel, 'ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΥΣ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΕΥΩΝ' in *TLZ* 79 (1954), cols. 351–6.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *Ant.* XIII.288.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *Ant.* XI.138, 142. Josephus uses the term *gerousia*, 'council of elders'. Out of what was originally strictly a council of elders grew an administrative body composed of elders, priests and, later, scribes and Pharisees. On its history, cf. J. Wellhausen, *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte* (Berlin 9th edn 1958), pp. 268–71, E. Schürer (rev.) *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC–AD 135)*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh 1978–87), vol. 2, pp. 199–226 and H. Mantel, *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin* (Cambridge, MA 1961), *passim*.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. the coins issued by John Hyrcanus I; A. Reifenberg, *Ancient Jewish Coins* (Jerusalem 2nd edn 1947), pp. 40–1. Reifenberg, however, interprets *heber* as referring to the 'community of the Jews as a whole', p. 13.

*synbedrion*<sup>51</sup> ('Sanhedrin'). Hyrcanus had the support of the Pharisees; after all, the rule that enabled him to inherit the high priestly office had been established by the Pharisees. But the relationship between them and Hyrcanus went sour not too long afterwards. Josephus tells us that 'the envy of the Jews was aroused against (Hyrcanus) by his own successes and those of his sons; particularly hostile to him were the Pharisees'.<sup>52</sup> This reaction seems to have been provoked by Hyrcanus's recklessly expansionist policies and the human and financial sacrifices they required. The Pharisees were opposed to military adventurism for its own sake; in this respect, they followed the line taken by their immediate predecessors, the Hasidim. Also, at least some of the Pharisees are likely to have been opposed to Hyrcanus holding both offices, that of king and that of high priest, while Eleazar is reported as openly saying that a righteous man would content himself with political rule over the nation.<sup>53</sup> Although the point he is said to have made was directed against Hyrcanus personally,<sup>54</sup> the episode may indicate that some in the Pharisaic camp had grown wary of the concentration of secular and religious power in one hand. In any case, the Sadducees used the clash between Eleazar and Hyrcanus to persuade the king 'to join the Sadducean party and desert the Pharisees, and to abrogate the regulations which they had established for the people, and punish those who observed them'.<sup>55</sup> These 'regulations' were the ones that had been 'handed down by former generations and (were) not recorded in the Laws of Moses'.<sup>56</sup> Hyrcanus' abrogation of the Pharisaic halakha earned him and his sons the 'hatred of the masses'.<sup>57</sup> It is thus clear that the influence the Pharisees exercised on the majority of the people was grounded in the success of their halakha. The common people adhered to the Pharisees *because their halakha appealed to them*. But, as we have seen, this did not prevent the Pharisees from losing their political influence and their standing at the Hasmonaean court. With Hyrcanus changing sides, they found themselves in a difficult position. While the Sadducees had 'the confidence of the wealthy alone but no following among the populace', the Pharisees enjoyed the 'support of the masses'<sup>58</sup> but received no support from the ruler and the aristocracy. On the contrary: the abolition of the 'tradition of the fathers' as binding national law<sup>59</sup> meant that Pharisaic halakha lost its institutional framework. Instead,

<sup>51</sup> On the terminology, cf. Wellhausen, *Geschichte*, p. 269.

<sup>52</sup> *Ant.* XIII.288.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. the words Josephus puts in Eleazar's mouth, *Ant.* XIII.291.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. *Ant.* XIII.292. Eleazar insinuates that Hyrcanus's parentage may not be purely Jewish, which would disqualify him from holding the high priestly office.

<sup>55</sup> *Ant.* XIII.296. <sup>56</sup> *Ant.* XIII.297. <sup>57</sup> *Ant.* XIII.296.

<sup>58</sup> *Ant.* XIII.298. <sup>59</sup> Cf. *Ant.* XIII.297.

Hyrchanus now supported the halakhic concept of the Sadducees, which not only provoked the ‘hatred of the masses’ but also caused a rebellion (*stasis*)<sup>60</sup> in favour of the Pharisees which Hyrchanus duly quelled. The reason for this rebellion seems to have been that the newly introduced halakha was considerably more stringent than that imposed by the Pharisees, as we demonstrated earlier with reference to the controversy between the Qumran community – whose halakha was close to that of the Sadducees – and the Pharisees.<sup>61</sup>

Under the reign of Aristobulus I Philhellene (104–103 BCE), nothing seems to have changed in favour of the Pharisees. This can be deduced from the fact that Aristobulus’ successor, Alexander Jannaeus, treated them just as badly as, or rather: worse than, Hyrchanus had done, which makes it unlikely that their position during Aristobulus’ short rule should have been any more powerful than under Hyrchanus. After the death of Aristobulus in 103 BCE, his widow, Salome Alexandra, appointed his brother, Alexander Jannaeus, as successor and entered a levirate marriage with him. Alexander’s subjects strongly disapproved of his military pursuits so that ‘his own people revolted against him’.<sup>62</sup> Some claimed that he ‘was descended from captives and . . . unfit to hold office and to sacrifice’,<sup>63</sup> which was the same taunt as that earlier used by Eleazar against John Hyrchanus I. It is likely that the objections to Jannaeus were inspired by disenchanting Pharisees who furnished the opposition with halakhic arguments against his holding the high priestly office. The atrocities that Jannaeus committed in response to these events<sup>64</sup> led to violent opposition on behalf of the populace and sparked off an insurrection supported by Demetrios Akairos, whom the Judaeans asked to support their cause.<sup>65</sup> Jannaeus lost the battle, but won the war: he managed to gather six thousand Jews around him, whereupon Demetrius withdrew<sup>66</sup> and Jannaeus, after further skirmishes and the siege of Bethoma, took revenge and crucified eight hundred Jews, at the same time slaughtering their families.<sup>67</sup> Thereafter he ruled unopposed; the remaining eight thousand opponents had gone into exile, where they remained until Alexander’s death.<sup>68</sup>

It is likely that the Pharisees were the backbone of the opposition against Jannaeus and that many of them were among the eight thousand exiles. The advice the dying Jannaeus is said to have given his wife<sup>69</sup> indicates that, even in spite of Alexander’s cruelty in crushing the insurrection, the Pharisees still had the power to determine the nation’s attitude

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *Ant.* XIII.299. <sup>61</sup> Cf. above, pp. 406–8. <sup>62</sup> *Ant.* XIII.272.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>64</sup> Cf. *Ant.* XIII.373. <sup>65</sup> *Ant.* XIII.376–8. <sup>66</sup> *Ant.* XIII.379.

<sup>67</sup> *Ant.* XIII.380. <sup>68</sup> *Ant.* XIII.383. <sup>69</sup> *Ant.* XIII.400–4.

towards its rulers. In order to prevent Salome Alexandra from becoming the victim of the Pharisees' revenge, he told her that 'she should yield a certain amount of power to the Pharisees, for if they praised her in return for this sign of regard, they would dispose the nation favourably toward her',<sup>70</sup> 'for they had the complete confidence of the masses'.<sup>71</sup> Salome acted accordingly, entered negotiations with the Pharisees and managed not just to placate them but to turn them into allies.<sup>72</sup> The Pharisees then duly demonstrated that Alexander had been right in his assessment of their influence and publicly extolled his virtues, thus inducing a reversal of public opinion and securing a dignified burial for the dead king and high priest. Salome gave the Pharisees a free hand in reshaping their role under her reign and ordered the populace to heed their instructions.<sup>73</sup> The 'tradition of the fathers', i.e. Pharisaic halakha, once more became the law of the land. The Pharisees recalled their exiled brethren who had fled Judaea in the time of Jannaeus and freed the 'prisoners of conscience' incarcerated in Judaea. In domestic matters, the Pharisees thus wielded great influence, whereas Salome Alexandra controlled foreign policy.<sup>74</sup> During Salome's reign, the moral and legal power of the Pharisees reached its climax. Of course, Alexandra, being a woman, could not succeed to the high priestly office. The positions of ruler and high priest were thus kept apart, which made the situation acceptable to the Pharisees: they had no objections to a Hasmonaean holding the high priestly office, as long as it was not the political ruler. Thus Alexandra's son, Hyrcanus II, was appointed.

However, it is unlikely that Pharisees now constituted the majority of the Sanhedrin's membership.<sup>75</sup> The time-hallowed institution of the Sanhedrin was still dominated by its two traditional main groups; the higher-ranking priests, with the high priest at their head, and the 'elders', viz. Judaeian aristocrats.<sup>76</sup> The composition of such stable institutions

<sup>70</sup> *Ant.* XIII.401. <sup>71</sup> *Ant.* XIII.402. <sup>72</sup> *Ant.* XIII.405.

<sup>73</sup> For Josephus' view of the role of the Pharisees under Salome, cf. *Ant.* XIII.408–15.

<sup>74</sup> As Wellhausen has aptly pointed out, it is due to 'poetic licence' that Josephus (*Ant.* XIII.409) ascribes total control to the Pharisees, thus contradicting the source he works with (cf. *Ant.* XIII.430–2); cf. *idem*, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer. Eine Untersuchung zur inneren jüdischen Geschichte* (Göttingen 3rd edn 1967), p. 97, n. 1.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, p. 97.

<sup>76</sup> The rabbinic sources, e.g. m. Avoth, paint a misleading picture of the Sanhedrin in the Hasmonaean period. They retroject the post-70 CE situation onto the Hasmonaean and Roman periods and thus give the impression that the Sanhedrin was throughout dominated by the Pharisees, with a *nāšī'* at its head and an *'āb bēt dīm* as his deputy. Josephus and the New Testament are more reliable historically and portray the pre-70 CE Sanhedrin as dominated by priests and elders. On this matter, cf. Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer, passim*, esp. pp. 39–43.



does not change instantly, even at the behest of a ruler, and they represent a mainstay of social conservatism.

Although they did not dominate the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees constituted the most influential religious and political force in the Hasmonaean state. That much is evident from Josephus' account of their policies under Salome's rule. It should be noted that their actions are primarily governed by a desire to promote their specific concept of halakha, not by political objectives. In one case, however, their policies were more obviously political; this was when they took systematic revenge on those among their Sadducaic opponents whom they held responsible for the fate of their brethren under Alexander Jannaeus.<sup>77</sup> The Sadducees started to feel the iron grip of the Pharisees – or rather: of the institutions they made use of to enforce their revenge – and petitioned Salome Alexandra to put an end to the persecutions – on the whole, unsuccessfully. But they managed to persuade the queen to give them executive powers over the fortresses of Judaea, which enabled them to prepare the rebellion which was started – under the leadership of Alexandra's other son, Aristobulus – when the queen fell gravely ill.<sup>78</sup> Alexandra died (67 BCE), Aristobulus took Jerusalem, Hyrcanus II was deposed. Now it was the Sadducees' turn to take revenge. But the Pharisees found a way to avert the danger and entered an alliance with Hyrcanus' counsellor, Antipater II, who put himself at the helm of the opposition against the Sadducees. The Pharisees had the support of the majority of the people. The tactical genius of Antipater, together with the people's distrust of the Sadducees, turned the tide in favour of Hyrcanus. His hopes were shattered, though, when the Romans threw in their lot with Aristobulus.

In this desperate situation, the Pharisees remained true to their general religious-political line. In accordance with the fundamental principle that foreign domination which guaranteed the Pharisees freedom to impose their halakha on the populace was better for the nation than Sadducaic leadership and Sadducaic halakha, they put together, in 63 BCE, a delegation to Pompey<sup>79</sup> whose members persuaded the Roman general to put an end to civil war and restrict the power of the high priest and his

<sup>77</sup> *Ant.* XIII.16.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Wellhausen, *Die Phariseer und die Sadducäer*, pp. 98–9.

<sup>79</sup> *Ant.* XIV.41–5; Diodorus Siculus 40.2. It is beyond reasonable doubt that this delegation was appointed and probably led by Pharisees. On this problem, cf. M. Hengel and R. Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism", Jesus, and the Pharisees: Review Article of *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* and *Judaism: Practice and Belief* by E. P. Sanders' in *JTS* NS 46 (1995), 53 and M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism: Edited with Introductions, Translations and Commentary*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem 1974–84), vol. 1, pp. 185–7. See also p. 95 and n. 3 above.

priestly colleagues.<sup>80</sup> The Pharisees thus followed the example set by the Hasidim in their dealings with the Maccabean leader in 163 BCE; their aim had not been Judaea's independence from its Syrian overlord, but internal religious autonomy. Pompey was the man to establish just that: peace in the whole region and religious freedom in Judaea. While he seemed to mediate between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, he in fact set up Roman rule in Palestine. Pompey went to Jerusalem, where the supporters of Hyrcanus, amongst them the Pharisees, welcomed him. The Sadducaic nobility and its troops, who had withdrawn to and held the Temple Mount, resisted, but the temple was taken in the summer of 63 BCE.<sup>81</sup> Judaea became a Roman vassal state, obliged to render tribute to the Empire. Aristobulus and his family were made prisoners and abducted to Rome, whereas Hyrcanus II was confirmed as high priest and national leader (*begoumenos*).<sup>82</sup> For the Pharisees, the tide had turned yet again.

A struggle over the soul of Hyrcanus broke out between the 'natural' supporters of the Hasmonaean house, the Sadducees, and Hyrcanus' able and ambitious counsellor, Antipater. Antipater had a solid power base in administrative circles and kept in with the Roman governor, Gabinius. When Julius Caesar prevailed over Pompey, Antipater chose to switch his support to the winner and was rewarded by Caesar who, during his visit to Syria in 47 BCE, made him regent of Judaea. In theory, Hyrcanus was still the ruler of Judaea, whereas in fact Antipater was the single most powerful man in the country until his violent death, by poisoning, in 43 BCE.

In 42 BCE, Herod and Phasaël, sons of Antipater, were made tetrarchs. They thus held positions which were – officially – subordinate to that of the ethnarch, Hyrcanus, but invested them with great authority. When, in 40 BCE, the Hasmonaean made a last, desperate attempt to restore independence, deposed Hyrcanus and made Antigonus II high priest, Herod fled to Rome, was there given the title of *rex socius et amicus populi Romani* and returned to his country to fight the Hasmonaean and their Parthian allies. Herod slowly gained the upper hand. Finally, in 37 BCE, he besieged Jerusalem, which was being defended with great tenacity by the Hasmonaean side. The Pharisees, however, did not share the defenders' enthusiasm but advised them to turn the city over to Herod. It seems that 'Pollion' and 'Samaias', as Josephus calls them,<sup>83</sup> wanted to avoid useless bloodshed. Possibly they were guided by a certain loyalty towards the son of

<sup>80</sup> Altogether three delegations went to see Pompey: in addition to the Pharisaic one, there were two others, sent by Hyrcanus and Aristobulus respectively; cf. *Ant.* xiv.37–45.

<sup>81</sup> *Ant.* xiv.64–73. <sup>82</sup> *Bell.* i.153. <sup>83</sup> *Ant.* xv.3–4.

Antipater, who had been the factual ally of the Pharisees when they supported Hyrcanus.<sup>84</sup> As we have seen before, the Pharisees did not necessarily feel alienated by foreign influence and thus did not object to Herod's Idumaeen roots. It seems, rather, that 'Pollion' and 'Samaia' – i.e. Hillel and Shammai<sup>85</sup> – supported Herod because they expected him to establish lasting peace and grant religious autonomy. Pharisaism thus once again affirmed its long-held position that a guarantor of peace and religious autonomy was to be supported, even if he was of doubtful origin.

Thus the foundation was laid for a relationship of mutual toleration between Herod and the Pharisees. With the execution of the last male Hasmonaean, Antigonus, the dynasty had ceased to exist. Its supporters, the Sadducees and the nobility in general, had forfeited their leading positions in the Judaean state. Through tolerating the Pharisees, Herod earned himself the respect of the people and thus deprived the Sadducees of popular support. The king could therefore afford to have the Sadducaic members of the Sanhedrin executed. It is likely that the forty-five noble supporters of Antigonus mentioned in *Ant.* xv.6 were those men.<sup>86</sup> Its (only?) Pharisaic member, Shammai,<sup>87</sup> was spared.<sup>88</sup> The Sanhedrin was condemned to a shadowy existence under Herod. He probably appointed

<sup>84</sup> This is confirmed by the observation that 'Samaia' had earlier shown clemency towards Herod in a difficult case that came before the Sanhedrin (cf. *Ant.* xiv.174), the textual critical note in the Loeb edition, vol. 8, p. 3 and A. Schalit, *König Herodes: Der Mann und sein Werk (Studia Judaica 4; Berlin and New York 1968)*, pp. 768–71.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Schalit, *König Herodes*, pp. 768–71.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, p. 106. Contrary to this interpretation of the evidence it has been claimed that Herod persecuted the Pharisees with especial zeal; cf. J. Neusner, 'Josephus's Pharisees' in J. Bergman *et al.* (eds.) *Ex Orbe Religionum*, 2 vols. (Leiden 1972), vol. 1, p. 244: 'Evidently the end of the Pharisaic party comes with Aristobulos, who slaughtered many of them, and was sealed by Herod, who killed even more.' This seems to be at least partly based on the assumption that the members of the Sanhedrin killed by Herod were *Pharisees*, an inference drawn from Tannaic sources of doubtful historical value. As S. Safrai puts it: 'In Tannaic tradition, the Great Sanhedrin is depicted as a link in the chain of the Torah tradition, with the leading sages of the Torah, the chief Pharisees, at its head'; 'Jewish Self-government' in S. Safrai and M. Stern (eds.) *The Jewish People in the First Century. Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions*, vol. 1 (CRINT I/1; Assen 1974), p. 386. However, as Safrai rightly points out, Tannaic tradition itself contains memories of the actual historical composition of the Sanhedrin; cf. t. Sanh. 4.7: 'the court of priests, Levites and Israelites allowed to marry into the priesthood' (trans. Safrai, 'Jewish Self-government', p. 384; cf. M. S. Zuckerman (ed.) *Tosefta* (Pasewalk 1880, p. 421). This court seems to be identical with the Sanhedrin, cf. *Die Tosefta. Seder IV: Neziqin. 3: Sanhedrin-Makkot*. Übersetzt und erklärt von B. Salomonsen. Mit Beiträgen von K. H. Rengstorff (Rabbinische Texte, ser. 1, iv/3; Stuttgart 1976), p. 72, n. 89.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. above, n. 85. <sup>88</sup> *Ant.* xiv.175; cf. Schalit, *König Herodes*, pp. 768–71.

a number of Pharisees to the Sanhedrin, thus increasing their importance in that institution.<sup>89</sup> At the same time, Herod systematically undermined the reputation of the high priesthood through appointing men of insignificant families and dissolving the principle of hereditary succession. Both these moves, that against the Sanhedrin and that against the high priesthood, were intended to discredit and, if possible, eliminate the Sadducaic opposition.

Having crushed his internal enemies, Herod could proceed with his grand design. However, he behaved leniently towards the Pharisees even when they tested his patience, as was at least twice the case when Herod demanded an oath of allegiance to his own person – or, strictly speaking, to his rule – and the Pharisees refused to take it.<sup>90</sup> The reasons for their refusal must have been similar to those of the Essenes, who were also excused from swearing allegiance<sup>91</sup> and about whom Josephus writes: ‘swearing they avoid, regarding it as worse than perjury, for they say that one who is not believed without an appeal to God stands condemned already’.<sup>92</sup> Although the Pharisees did not share the wholesale rejection of oaths proposed by the Essenes, they must have felt it to be blasphemous to swear allegiance – in the name of God<sup>93</sup> – to a mere earthly ruler. This attitude seems to have been part of the Hasidic heritage the Pharisees shared with the Essenes.

In the case of their first refusal Herod did not punish the Pharisees at all, on account, as Josephus says, of his respect for ‘Pollion’. On the second occasion, he imposed a fine on those six thousand Pharisees who refused to take the oath. However, he was wise enough to have none of them executed for their refusal, since that might have led to serious

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Wellhausen, *Die Phariseer und die Sadducäer*, p. 109. Wellhausen rightly concludes this from the fact that, in New Testament times, the Pharisees had a much greater say in the affairs of the Sanhedrin than in the time of Hyrcanus II.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. *Ant.* xv.368–71 (‘Pollion’, ‘Samaias’ ‘and most of their disciples’) and xvii.41–2 (six thousand Pharisees). In accordance with Schalit (*König Herodes*, pp. 316–22) it must be assumed that the two passages refer to two different incidents. The oath mentioned in *Ant.* xv had to be taken on Herod’s rule, that of *Ant.* xvii on the emperor and, secondarily, on Herod’s rule. The former was demanded when Herod came into power; the latter can only be dated to the time after 27 BCE, i.e. the year in which Augustus took over the principate and a specific oath of loyalty was introduced. Thus the interpretation given in E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, 3 vols. (Leipzig 1901–9), vol. 1, p. 399, is correct.

<sup>91</sup> *Ant.* xv.371. <sup>92</sup> *Bell.* ii.135.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. L. Ginzberg, *Eine unbekannte jüdische Sekte*, vol. 1 (New York 1922; repr. Hildesheim and New York 1972), pp. 130–2, n. 3: ‘Diese Verweigerung des Huldigungseides kann keinen anderen Grund gehabt haben, als die Abneigung der Phariseer, beim Namen Gottes zu schwören, sonst wäre Herodes der letzte gewesen, ihnen den Huldigungseid zu erlassen.’

unrest among the people of Judaea. Pharisaism was firmly rooted in the culture and religious practice of vast parts, if not the majority, of the population. Contrary to the view first advocated by M. Smith,<sup>94</sup> the Pharisees were not just one of many Jewish groups under Herod's rule. As S. Mason has shown, Josephus' accounts of the Pharisees in *Antiquities* and *War* are not contradictory:

Josephus consistently represents the Pharisees as the dominant religious group among the Jews, who had the support of the masses. Their key role is evident at every point of Jewish history that Josephus deals with . . . It is unlikely that Josephus' assumption of Pharisaic predominance is his (post-70) invention because . . . Josephus' tendency is to lament the popularity and influence of the Pharisees. But this ongoing lament over Pharisaic predominance would be unnecessary – indeed it would make no sense – if the Pharisees did not hold a dominant position in pre-70 Palestine.<sup>95</sup>

The number of six thousand Pharisees who stood up to Herod has been interpreted as pointing towards the relative unimportance of Pharisaism under Herod.<sup>96</sup> The opposite is true: if there were six thousand men explicitly known as Pharisees in a society of merely 800,000, this rather indicates that, added to its less vociferous supporters and sympathizers, Pharisaism constituted a very significant force in Herod's Judaea.<sup>97</sup> Just how influential it was is shown by the fact that it was the wife of Pheroras, Herod's brother, who paid the fine imposed on the six thousand Pharisees. Pharisaic ideology now exerted a strong influence not just on its 'natural' supporters, the class of artisans, traders and other petty bourgeois groups, but on a considerable number of members of the upper classes, as is witnessed by the fact that some Pharisees had access to the court. They prophesied 'that by God's decree Herod's throne would be taken from him, both from himself and his descendants',<sup>98</sup> and would fall to Pheroras, his wife and their offspring. Here Herod drew the line. He had the Pharisees in question executed.<sup>99</sup> This goes to show that

<sup>94</sup> M. Smith, 'Palestinian Judaism in the First Century' in M. Davis (ed.) *Israel: Its Role in Civilization* (New York 1956), pp. 67–81. Smith's theory (for which see also pp. 214–15, n. 93, above) was taken up by Neusner, 'Josephus's Pharisees' and *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1973). On the debate which they provoked, cf. the careful evaluation by S. Mason, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees: A Composition-Critical Study* (*Studia Post-Biblica* 39; Leiden 1991), pp. 32–5.

<sup>95</sup> Mason, *Flavius Josephus*, pp. 372–3. For the details of his argument, cf. *Flavius Josephus, passim* and 'Josephus on the Pharisees Reconsidered: A Critique of Smith/Neusner' in *JR* 17 (1988), 455–69.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Smith, 'Palestinian Judaism', p. 81.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Hengel and Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism"', p. 33, n. 85.

<sup>98</sup> *Ant.* xvii.42. <sup>99</sup> *Ant.* xvii.44.

Herod was quite prepared to tolerate the Pharisees as long as they occupied themselves with religious and halakhic matters exclusively. When they represented a threat, however, he would crush them.

On the whole, the Pharisees did not overstep the limit. They used their relative freedom to organize their communities, the *hābūrōt*, and to establish them as vehicles of their religious and social activities. A *hābūrā*, i.e. a group of *hābērīm* (friends, comrades), was a group of Pharisees who devoted themselves to mutual support, the keeping of food purity laws, table fellowship and the like. The *hābūrōt* were private associations modelled on similar institutions in the pagan Hellenistic world. Through their associations, the Pharisees managed to create a ‘counter-culture’ of their own. It helped them to put their halakha into practice, defined their identity and strengthened their sense of belonging.<sup>100</sup> There seems to have existed, in the last two centuries before the demise of the temple, a widespread desire for ritual purity which, in Pharisaic circles, was fulfilled through applying the levitical purity rules to all *hābērīm* and their families. ‘Purity broke into Israel’, as t. Shab. 1.14 puts it.<sup>101</sup> This development is witnessed by archaeological finds. Prominent among them are the stone vessels used in many areas of everyday life to ensure the required ritual purity of the goods and sacrifices kept and prepared and the acts performed with their help. It was Pharisaic halakha that paved the way for the general use of such stone vessels, which came in use in the last third of the first century BCE when, with Hillel and Shammai, a period of intense interest in purity-related halakha started. Thus archaeological finds confirm the literary data in the sense that Josephus’ evaluation of the status of Pharisaic halakha must be considered historically reliable: Pharisaism did indeed have a mass following, as is suggested by texts like *Ant.* XIII.298 and XVIII.16–17, and its adherents did take it upon themselves to emulate the priestly class in its fulfilment of the levitical purity laws.<sup>102</sup> One’s whole life was subjected to sanctification; ‘the Pharisees

<sup>100</sup> Cf. R. Meyer, *Tradition und Neuschöpfung im antiken Judentum. Dargestellt an der Geschichte des Pharisäismus. Mit einem Beitrag von Hans-Friedrich Weiß (Sitzungsberichte der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, philologisch-historische Klasse 110/2; Berlin, 1965)*, pp. 23–33 and J. Neusner, ‘The Fellowship (חבורה) in the Second Jewish Commonwealth’ in *HTR* 53 (1960), pp. 125–42.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. the discussion of this saying of R. Simon ben Eleazar in R. Deines, *Jüdische Steingefäße und pharisäische Frömmigkeit: Ein archäologisch-historischer Beitrag zum Verständnis von Job 2,6 und der jüdischen Reinheitshalacha zur Zeit Jesu (WUNT 11/52; Tübingen 1993)*, p. 17, n. 31.

<sup>102</sup> Deines, *Jüdische Steingefäße*, pp. 244–5. This is one of the major results of Deines’s investigation and clearly refutes E. P. Sanders’ theory that the Pharisees did not ‘eat ordinary food in purity’ cf. *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London and Philadelphia 1990), pp. 131–254.

held that even outside of the Temple, in one's own home, the laws of ritual purity were to be followed in the only circumstance in which they might apply, namely, at the table. Therefore, one must eat secular food (ordinary, everyday meals) in a state of ritual purity *as if one were a Temple priest*.<sup>103</sup> The same concern for purity found its expression in the 'numerous *miqva'ot* which suddenly appear at about the same time as the synagogue from the middle of the first century BC'.<sup>104</sup>

Generally speaking, thus, Pharisaic influence on the Judaeen population was very considerable under Herod's reign, in spite of a lack of official institutional support. Although the doctrine of two *tōrōt*, the Written and the Oral Laws, had not yet been officially formalized,<sup>105</sup> it was in fact more or less established by the time of Herod. 'Independent' halakhot could be, and indeed were, accorded the same legally binding status as Pentateuchal precepts.<sup>106</sup> Hand in hand with the conceptualization of the 'Oral Law' and the growth of the corpus of Pharisaic legal traditions went the spread of the synagogue in Palestine. Contrary to Sanders's view that its rise was due to the work of priests and Levites,<sup>107</sup> it is quite clear that 'synagogues are attested in Jewish Palestine only from the Herodian period' precisely because 'the priestly aristocracy in the pre-Herodian period had no interest in creating competition for the temple service by means of the synagogue service'.<sup>108</sup> Rather, the synagogue was a thoroughly Pharisaic institution, as becomes obvious from the purposes for which it was designed. The Theodotus inscription<sup>109</sup> informs us that the synagogue was built for 'the reading of the Law and the teaching of the

<sup>103</sup> Neusner, *From Politics to Piety*, p. 83. In recent discussion, Hengel, Deines and H. K. Harrington have been able to demonstrate, against Sanders, *Jewish Law*, pp. 131–254, that Neusner's and G. Alon's analyses (cf. Alon (trans. I. Abrahams), *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World. Studies in Jewish History in the Times of the Second Temple and Talmud* (Jerusalem 1977), p. 219) are correct; cf. esp. Deines, *Jüdische Steingefäße*, pp. 243–6 and Harrington, 'Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in a State of Ritual Purity?' in *JSJ* 26 (1995), pp. 42–54.

<sup>104</sup> Hengel and Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism", p. 34.

<sup>105</sup> This took place only in the Tannaitic period; cf. P. Schäfer, 'Das "Dogma" von der nündlichen Torah', p. 183.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Hengel and Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism"', pp. 17–39. The authors take issue with Sanders' claim that the Pharisees did not have Oral Law (*Jewish Law*, pp. 97–130) and demonstrate 'that the first steps towards the juxtaposition of "oral" and "written" Torah were taken already before AD 70' (p. 20; cf. the discussion of m. Peah 2:6, *ibid.*).

<sup>107</sup> Sanders, *Jewish Law*, pp. 77, 79, 341, n. 28 and *Judaism: Practice and Belief: 63 BCE–66 CE* (London and Philadelphia 1992), pp. 176–7, 450.

<sup>108</sup> Hengel and Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism"', p. 32.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. J. B. Frey (ed.) *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum*, 2 vols. (Rome 1936–52), vol. 2, no. 1404.



commandments': 'the doubling of the expression can be taken as pointing to the Pharisaic tradition'.<sup>110</sup>

As we have seen, Pharisaism managed, under Herod, to consolidate its position in the society of Jewish Palestine. This was possible only because it acquiesced in Roman overlordship and Herodian rule. Political quietism was the price the Pharisees paid in return for survival and official toleration. Others were not prepared to pay that price; it was under Herod that the Zealots, the 'left wing' of Pharisaism, constituted themselves as a distinct group in Jewish Palestinian society.<sup>111</sup> The Zealots took up the central tenet of the Pharisaic faith, the kingship of God, and reinterpreted it to exclude any notion of 'secular', human rulership. Although in all other respects they agreed with their parent 'school of thought', Pharisaism, the Zealots used their understanding of divine kingship as an excuse for what one might call, in modern terms, political terrorism. The roots of their 'philosophy' are to be found in the conflicts that characterized the last years of Herod's reign.<sup>112</sup> Only about ten years after Herod's death in 4 BCE did the Zealot movement take shape. Although the Zealots remained a minority phenomenon, Pharisaism now had a revolutionary wing that was close to, yet far removed from traditional Pharisaism:<sup>113</sup> through their actions, the Zealots in fact negated the messianic hope that had characterized,<sup>114</sup> and continued to characterize, Pharisaism proper.<sup>115</sup>

The effect on the population was ambiguous. Although the majority remained faithful to Pharisaic halakha, members of the lower classes felt attracted by the radical appeal of Zealotism. Precisely because, from the halakhic point of view, Zealotism was so close to Pharisaism, supporting the Zealots did not feel like a betrayal of Pharisaism. This encouraged many, especially amongst the landless proletariat, to embrace the 'fourth philosophy'.<sup>116</sup> In such a situation, it was easy to overlook what enormous difference this made in terms of the political course of action one supported. A considerable part of Jewish Palestinian society thus slowly slid into anarchy. Moderate Pharisaism started to lose its religious and cultural hegemony, and the society which it had helped to keep together began to disintegrate.

<sup>110</sup> Hengel and Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism", pp. 33–4, n. 86. Cf. the literature indicated there.

<sup>111</sup> *Ant.* xviii.23. <sup>112</sup> Cf. *Bell.* i.648–55, *Ant.* xvii.149–67.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. M. Hengel, *Die Zeloten: Untersuchungen zur jüdischen Freiheitsbewegung in der Zeit von Herodes I. bis 70 n. Chr.* (AGAJU 1; Leiden, 2nd edn 1976); ET: *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 AD* (Edinburgh 1989).

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Pss. Sol. 17 and 18, probably written by Pharisees around 60 BCE.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, p. 23. <sup>116</sup> *Ant.* xviii.23.

This process was accelerated by the political insecurity that followed Herod's death and the revolt led by Judas the Galilean and the radical Pharisee Zadok. The insurrection was put down by Quintilius Varus; two thousand participants were crucified. Archelaus was made ethnarch of Judaea and Samaria (4 BCE–CE 6), whereas Herod Antipas and Philippus were appointed tetrarchs (4 BCE–CE 39 and 4 BCE–CE 34 respectively). In CE 6, however, Augustus deposed Archelaus and sent him into exile. Judaea came under direct Roman rule and was given the status of a procuratorial province (CE 6–41). Given the new situation, the old Sadducaic elite was able to regain some of its strength. Since there was no Judean ruler to mediate between the population and the Romans, the Sadducees were the only ones who had the necessary political acumen to fill the gap.<sup>117</sup> While the Pharisaic movement was represented in the Sanhedrin,<sup>118</sup> its faction did not constitute the majority.<sup>119</sup> The powerful position of the Sadducees, however, only contributed to a further polarization of Jewish Palestinian society. Efforts were made to overcome this polarization. 'The increasingly difficult situation under the prefects and procurators forced the eminent priestly families and the leading Pharisaic scribes to cooperate and to be ready to compromise . . . The "important people in Jerusalem" who are frequently mentioned in the rabbinic literature appear, at least in part, to have been among those who sympathized with the Pharisees.'<sup>120</sup> Pharisaism on the whole, however, did not greatly benefit from such well-intentioned efforts. It was riven by internal conflicts. In addition to the separation of 'left-wing' Pharisaism from the mainstream, there was the intense conflict between the House of Hillel and the House of Shammai that must have strained the diplomatic skills of the Pharisaic leaders to the limit:<sup>121</sup> the Shammaites seem to have been close to the Zealots.<sup>122</sup>

The conviction with which the Pharisees taught their halakha and held their beliefs, however, was not shattered by such adverse political and social circumstances. The New Testament gives us some valuable insights into the arguments used by Pharisees to defend their views and propagate

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, p. 109.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Acts 5:34, 23:6–9.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. H.-F. Weiß, 'Der Pharisäismus im Lichte der Überlieferung des Neuen Testaments' in R. Meyer, *Tradition und Neuschöpfung*, pp. 96–7.

<sup>120</sup> Hengel and Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism"', pp. 65–6. On the 'important people in Jerusalem', cf. y. Hag. 77b (2.1) and Hengel and Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism"', pp. 65–6, n. 161.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. the vote taken on the rigoristic 'eighteen decrees' of the Shammaites, m. Shab. 1.4 and Hengel, *The Zealots*, pp. 189–90, 200–6, 359.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Hengel, *The Zealots*, pp. 200–6.

their halakha. It is particularly interesting to see how the Pharisees reacted to the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Although most of the followers of Jesus were, in Pharisaic terms, *‘ammē bā-’āreš* (i.e. uneducated in the Law and thus untrustworthy), there was a certain proximity between Jesus and the Pharisees. Whereas there is a strong *Tendenç* in many New Testament writings, especially in the synoptic gospels and in John,<sup>123</sup> to stereotype the Pharisees, we get a glimpse of the actual historical disputes between the Pharisees and Jesus. These disputes do not seem to have been characterized by irreconcilable differences. Rather, they have the air of school disputes, of rivalries between representatives of two factions within the same movement. Although it is impossible simply to classify Jesus as a Pharisee,<sup>124</sup> it must be noted that he freely acknowledged the authority of the Pharisees and their intellectual leaders, the scribes,<sup>125</sup> in halakhic matters. He took exception not to their role as the champions of halakha, but to their halakhic *practice* (Matth. 23:2). However, Jesus holds that they ‘sit on Moses’ seat’ (*ibid.*).<sup>126</sup> He shares the opinion of his contemporaries; as Josephus points out, the views of the Pharisees were ‘extremely influential among the townsfolk; and all prayers and sacred sites of divine worship are performed according to their exposition’.<sup>127</sup> If anything, the Pharisees were more lenient in their halakha than was Jesus. Divorce is a case in point: whereas, amongst the Pharisees, ‘the general understanding was that any kind of marriage breakdown qualified a husband to divorce his wife’,<sup>128</sup> Jesus either rejected divorce altogether or acknowledged only fornication as a valid reason for divorce, thus interpreting Deut. 24:1–4 to refer to illicit intercourse exclusively.<sup>129</sup> In spite of their halakhic controversies, some Pharisees were on friendly terms with Jesus and kept table fellowship with him.<sup>130</sup> The people responsible for Jesus’ death were not

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Weiß, ‘Pharisäismus’, pp. 98–114.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus* (Studia Judaica 1; Berlin and New York 2nd edn 1974), p. 133: ‘Jesus was a Pharisee.’

<sup>125</sup> When ‘scribes’ are mentioned alongside of Pharisees, the term probably refers to the intellectual elite of Pharisaism. In other instances, ‘scribes’ may refer to temple personnel (Levites?). D. R. Schwartz thinks that *grammateis*, in the gospels, generally refers to ‘representatives of priestly law’; cf. ‘Scribes and Pharisees’, in *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (WUNT 60; Tübingen 1992), p. 100.

<sup>126</sup> The essence of this saying is at odds with Matthew’s generally anti-Pharisaic outlook. It is possible that the verse reflects an actual Jesuanic saying; cf. the cautious remarks in Weiß, ‘Pharisäismus’, p. 126.

<sup>127</sup> *Ant.* xviii.15.

<sup>128</sup> Schürer (rev.), *History*, vol. 2, p. 485. Cf. m. Git. 9.10, *Ant.* iv.253 and Matt. 19:3.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Matt. 19:9. Mark 10:5–12, which is likely to be closer to the preaching of the historical Jesus, does not accept divorce at all.

<sup>130</sup> Luke 7:36, 11:37 and 14:1.

the Pharisees, but the high priestly circle and the Sadducaic majority in the Sanhedrin.<sup>131</sup>

It has been claimed that Pharisaism enjoyed a renaissance under the rule of Agrippa I (CE 41–4),<sup>132</sup> when Judaea was once more subject to a king. This view is contradicted by the observation that ‘The continuity of the priestly oligarchy from Herod to Agrippa . . . points to an important element of Agrippa’s short reign: it appears to have been a period in which the high-priestly party, the Sadducees, flourished.’<sup>133</sup> Contrary to the Sadducees, who were ardent persecutors of Christians,<sup>134</sup> the Pharisees actually were lenient in their attitude towards the ‘Nazarenes’: Gamaliel I persuaded the Sanhedrin to release the Apostles (Acts 5:34–40), allowing for the possibility that their undertaking might be ‘of God’. On another occasion, the Pharisaic members of the Sanhedrin, sharing with Paul his views on the resurrection, angels and spirits, sided with him: ‘What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?’ (Acts 23:9). The Pharisees had no particular reason to be hostile to the Nazarenes, whereas ‘a party which denies resurrection and which is focused on the temple should, as Acts claims, be hostile to a religious community which was premised on the reality of resurrection and whose founder and members had relativized, if not denied, the significance of the Temple and its cult.’<sup>135</sup> Regarding these latter points, the views of the Pharisees in fact closely resembled those of the Christians. As Josephus says about the Pharisees, using Hellenistic terminology: ‘They believe that souls have power to survive death and that there are rewards and punishments under the earth for those who have led lives of virtue or vice: eternal imprisonment is the lot of evil souls, while the good souls receive an easy passage to a new life.’<sup>136</sup>

After the death of Agrippa, the political situation of Palestine changed dramatically yet again. The whole of the country was returned to direct Roman rule which was executed by a procurator answerable to the governor of Syria.<sup>137</sup> On the whole, the time of procuratorial rule (CE 44–66) was a period of unrest and social and political upheaval.<sup>138</sup> Most of the procurators had no real understanding of Jewish sensitivities and committed

<sup>131</sup> Luke 20:47; Mark 11:18, 14:55–64; Matt. 27:12. Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London and Philadelphia 1991), pp. 52–3.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Schürer (rev.) *History*, vol. 1, p. 446, on the basis of *Ant.* XIX.331.

<sup>133</sup> D. R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea (TSAJ 23; Tübingen 1990)*, p. 116. Cf. Schwartz’s detailed refutation of the usual view, p. 117.

<sup>134</sup> Acts 4:1–3, 5:17, 24:1. <sup>135</sup> Schwartz, *Agrippa I*, p. 117.

<sup>136</sup> *Ant.* XVIII.14. <sup>137</sup> *Ant.* XIX.354.

<sup>138</sup> For an overview, cf. Schürer (rev.) *History*, vol. 1, pp. 455–70.

serious errors of judgement. This incited the populace and thus played into the hands of the Zealots. It seems that Pharisaism lost some of its influence during those years, while the Zealots resorted to violent action<sup>139</sup> and could count upon the passive support of a great many Judaeans. Under Antonius Felix, procurator from *c.* 52 to 60, things came to a head. A group of political assassins, the *sicarii* – presumably identical with the Zealots<sup>140</sup> – wreaked havoc. The priesthood was riven by internal dissent, with some priests depriving others of their dues, thus starving them to death.<sup>141</sup> The Sadducean party remained true to its hatred of Christians: Ananus, the high priest, had James, the brother of Jesus, executed.<sup>142</sup> The whole of the country was in a state of anarchy; Gessius Florus, the last procurator (64–6), ‘ostentatiously paraded his outrages upon the nation’.<sup>143</sup> In early 66, the situation became unbearable. Agrippa II, king of Chalcis, later of the former tetrarchies of Philippus and Lysanias and of parts of Galilee and Peraea (CE 53–100), tried his best to avert the impending conflict. He did not succeed. In May 66, the Jewish War broke out.

The Pharisees, who had been in a comparatively weak position ever since the death of Herod, found themselves in a difficult situation. Their notables held counsel with the chief priests and the ‘principal citizens’,<sup>144</sup> thus trying to revive the alliance of the moderates. However, their appeal to the revolutionaries went unheeded.<sup>145</sup> The moderate Pharisees remained true to their old views; they supported the delegations sent to Gessius Florus and to Agrippa to entreat them to quell the rebellion.<sup>146</sup> Some of the more radical Pharisees, however, took part in the insurrection. The most prominent of those men were Simon,<sup>147</sup> son of the famous Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel I, and Josephus.<sup>148</sup>

The majority of the Pharisees did not support the war effort. Their traditional, quietistic attitude prevented them from getting too deeply involved in the rebellion; this eventually saved their lives and ensured the survival of Pharisaism. While the destruction of the temple in CE 70 gravely injured the Sadducaic party, the Pharisaic movement could start to reassemble its supporters and restructure its organization. With the Sadducaic party disintegrated, the Zealots defeated and the Essene communities dissolved, the competitors of Pharisaism had vanished from the scene. The Sanhedrin, that old stronghold of Sadducaism, had ceased to exist and had to be ‘reinvented’ by the Pharisaic leaders. They founded, at Jamnia-Jabneh, an academy that was to fulfil the functions of the former

<sup>139</sup> *Bell.* II.232–46. <sup>140</sup> Cf. Hengel, *The Zealots*, pp. 88–9. <sup>141</sup> *Ant.* xx.180.

<sup>142</sup> *Ant.* xx.200. <sup>143</sup> *Bell.* II.277. <sup>144</sup> *Bell.* II.411. <sup>145</sup> *Bell.* II.417.

<sup>146</sup> *Bell.* II.419. <sup>147</sup> *Vita* 190–1. <sup>148</sup> *Vita* 12.

Sanhedrin. Pharisaism, now the strongest Jewish 'school of thought', transformed what was left of Palestinian Judaism into a new, more coherent form of society. It was in turn subtly altered by the non-Pharisaic traditions which it inevitably digested in that process. Rabbinic Judaism emerged, with Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai and R. Gamaliel II as its first major leaders.<sup>149</sup> They and their colleagues reshaped Judaism according to the old Pharisaic ideal, centred on the study of the Torah. They acted according to the maxim formulated by R. Nehorai: 'I would set aside all the crafts in the world and teach my son naught save the Law, for a man enjoys the reward thereof in this world and its whole worth remains for the world to come.'<sup>150</sup>

<sup>149</sup> On the Jewish parties after the fall of Jerusalem and the degree of continuity between Pharisaism and rabbinic Judaism, see S. J. D. Cohen, 'The Significance of Yavneh', *HUCA* 55 (1984), 27–53; M. Goodman, 'Saducees and Essenes after 70 CE', in S. E. Porter, P. Joyce and D. E. Orton, *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder* (Leiden 1994), pp. 347–56; C. Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine*, TSAJ 66 (Tübingen 1997), pp. 55–77 (literature).

<sup>150</sup> M. Qidd. 4.14.

## CHAPTER 14

THE SADDUCEES – THEIR HISTORY  
AND DOCTRINES

## I THE SOURCES

Unlike the Pharisees and the Essenes, the Sadducees left no writings. Some scholars have thought to discover a Sadducaean tendency in First Maccabees,<sup>1</sup> but it certainly cannot be considered a Sadducaean book. All the texts on the Sadducees at our disposal were written by their opponents or, at the least, by outsiders. They are necessarily selective and tendentious. Our main witness is Flavius Josephus who, being a scion of a high-ranking priestly family, might be expected to be close to the Sadducees or, at the least, to have inside information about them. He says that in his youth he tested the Sadducaean teaching and way of life,<sup>2</sup> but his writings betray no special knowledge of them. He speaks of the Sadducees almost exclusively in connection with the other groups of the Judaism of his time.

The New Testament provides the earliest references to the Sadducees, in the Gospel of Mark. This gospel frequently names them among the opponents of Jesus, but it does not develop a coherent picture of them. For the New Testament, the Sadducees are entirely secondary to the Pharisees, who are represented as the main group of Judaism and the only important opponents of Jesus.

The Rabbinic sources frequently mention the Sadducees. But these texts have to be used with extreme caution: one has to discard those texts in which the term Sadducees replaces an original *min* (which had to be

<sup>1</sup> G. Baumbach, 'Der sadduzäische Konservatismus' in J. Maier and J. Schreiner, *Literatur und Religion des Frühjudentums* (Würzburg 1973), p. 201, following J. C. Dancy, *A Commentary on 1. Maccabees* (London 1954), p. 3; J. Le Moyne, *Les Sadducéens* (Paris 1972) p. 167. Other writings which have been associated with the Sadducees are the book of Ben Sira (see, e.g. K. Kohler, art. Sadducees, *JE* 10 (New York 1905), p. 632, or more recently, G. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, *JSHRZ* 3, 5 (Gütersloh 1981), p. 492) and the Targum of Ruth (see, e.g. E. Levine, *The Aramaic Version of Ruth*, *AnBib* 58 (Rome 1973), and the arguments against this thesis offered by D. R. G. Beattie, 'The Targum of Ruth – A Sectarian Composition?', *JJS* 36, 1985, 222–9), both without convincing arguments. Le Moyne's claim (p. 321) that there must have been a Sadducaean literature is unfounded.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita* 11.



removed because of Church censorship); only a few Tannaitic texts remain, and even they are not fully reliable historically; later texts display no specific knowledge of the historical Sadducees and offer clichés without revealing new information that can be trusted.<sup>3</sup>

The Church Fathers speak of the Sadducees mainly when presenting the Jewish groups at the time of Jesus, or in their exegesis of Matt. 22:23–33. They follow the New Testament and Josephus, are full of recurrent literary patterns, and offer no trustworthy new traditions.<sup>4</sup>

The Karaite traditions on the Sadducees are mostly derived from the Rabbinic texts or depend on the Damascus Document which was discovered about 780 and was, wrongly, considered to be a Sadduceean writing.<sup>5</sup> Here also we cannot expect new and independent information.

## II THE HISTORY OF THE SADDUCEES, THEIR ORIGIN AND THEIR NAME

In three places, Josephus speaks at some length about the Sadducees, always together with the Pharisees and the Essenes. The first mention is placed after Coponius' appointment as procurator of Judaea in CE 6.<sup>6</sup> The second description likewise occurs in a context following Coponius'

<sup>3</sup> Cf. G. Stemberger, *Jewish Contemporaries*, pp. 38–66. Already in 1980, J. M. Baumgarten, 'The Pharisaic-Sadducean Controversies', suggested that at least sometimes in the rabbinic sources, as e.g. in <sup>2</sup>Abot R. Natan 5 and mYad. 4, *Šedoqim* does not refer to the patrician Sadducees, but to the followers of Zadoq known to us from the Qumran library. B. Z. Wacholder, *The Dawn of Qumran*, pp. 141ff, accepted this suggestion. Others strongly rejected it, as e.g. H. W. Basser, 'The Rabbinic Citations in Wacholder's The Dawn of Qumran', *RQ* 11 (1984), 549–60. Although it is still impossible to reach a clear-cut decision on this point, the Temple Scroll (perhaps pre-Qumranic) and, above all, the publication of 4QMMT have made this suggestion much more likely. This text defends several halakhic positions which according to Rabbinic texts were held by the *Šedoqim*. This is not to say that the people from Qumran were Sadducees, but it demonstrates that in many points of halakha both priestly dominated groups agreed with each other, and suggests points of contact between them not only in their common priestly origin, but probably also during their later histories. On this point, see above all the important study of Y. Sussmann, 'The History of the Halakha'; cf. also L. H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*; D. R. Schwartz, 'Law and Truth'; G. Vermes, 'The Leadership'. For a critique of premature comparisons of these texts with the Sadducees see P. R. Davies, *Sects and Scrolls*, pp. 127–38.

<sup>4</sup> See the list of texts in Le Moyne, *Les Sadducéens*, pp. 142–5.

<sup>5</sup> In modern times, too, it was frequently considered to be a Sadduceean writing after its publication in 1910. A new examination of the whole problem has become necessary after the publication of 4QMMT and, above all, of the Qumran manuscripts of the Damascus Document: *Qumran Cave 4. XIII The Damascus Document (4Q266–273)*, ed. J. M. Baumgarten (DJD XVIII) (Oxford 1996).

<sup>6</sup> *Bell.* II.119ff.

appointment. Here, however, Josephus adds that the three groups are 'from the most ancient times'.<sup>7</sup> The third description is placed in the history of the Maccabee Jonathan: 'Now at this time there were three schools of thought among the Jews . . .'.<sup>8</sup> Josephus nowhere explicitly speaks about the origins of the different groups. Neither the insertion in the passage on Jonathan nor that into the story of the rise of the Zealots after the appointment of Coponius and Quirinius (twice) provides historically reliable information as to the time of the Sadducees' origin.

The first mention of the Sadducees in an historical context is found in *Ant.* XIII.288–98: John Hyrcanus (135–104 BCE), a disciple of the Pharisees, is asked by a certain Eleazar to resign from the office of high priest because some say that his mother had been a captive under Antiochus Epiphanes (this would disqualify her son from becoming high priest). The Sadducee Jonathan makes him believe that this slander has been uttered with the approval of all the Pharisees, and persuades him to 'join the Sadducaean party and desert the Pharisees, and to abrogate the regulations which they had established for the people, and punish those who observed them'. The Talmudic tradition knows the same story with some differences. Above all, it places the king's turning from the Pharisees to the Sadducees in the time not of Hyrcanus but of Alexander Jannaeus (103–77 BCE).<sup>9</sup> *b. Ber.* 29a, however, identifies John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannaeus. This being the only story about the Sadducees in the time before Herod the Great, some historians doubt the very existence of the Sadducees before Herod's time and consider it probable that Josephus has projected the political realities of his own days back into the Hasmonaean period, in order to explain the disgrace of the Pharisees under Hyrcanus.<sup>10</sup>

The question of the origin of the Sadducees is closely connected with the interpretation of their name. Normally, it is derived from *Zadoq*. Philologically, this poses some problems,<sup>11</sup> but is not impossible since the vocalization *šadduq* is attested in manuscripts of the Mishnah, and the Septuagint, in Ezra, Nehemiah and Ezekiel, transcribes the name as *Saddouk*. One generally thinks of the *Zadoq* (*Zadok*) who was priest under David, who anointed Solomon (1 Kgs 1:39) and for whom 1 Chr. 5 claims

<sup>7</sup> *Ant.* XVIII.11.    <sup>8</sup> *Ant.* XIII.171.

<sup>9</sup> *b. Qidd.* 66a. For recent analyses of this Talmudic story see E. Main, 'Les Sadducéens vis par Flavius Josèphe' pp. 190–202; A. I. Baumgarten, 'Rabbinic Literature', pp. 36–52. Not yet available was Baumgarten's monograph *The Emergence of Jewish Sects in the Maccabaeian Era* (Leiden 1997) (JSJS).

<sup>10</sup> For example, E. Bammel, 'Sadduzäer und Sadokiden', *ETL* 55 (1979), 110; repr. in *Judaica* (WUNT 37, Tübingen 1986), pp. 120f.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Le Moyne, *Les Sadducéens*, p. 163.

descent from Levi. For Ezekiel, the sons of Zadoq were the heads of the ideal priesthood; in post-exilic times, they actually became the traditional high-priestly family. The last Zadoqite high priest was Jason (175–172/1 BCE). Soon afterwards, the Hasmonaeans usurped the high-priesthood (Jonathan in 152). Thereupon some Zadoqites withdrew to Egypt, where Onias IV founded the temple of Leontopolis, while another group of the Zadoqites headed the Qumran movement.<sup>12</sup>

If the Sadducees, together with the Pharisees, really had their origin in the beginnings of the Hasmonaean rule, it would be strange if they derived their name from the Zadoqites then out of power, unless one sees them as an opposition party of those Zadoqite priests who remained in Jerusalem. Or are we to assume that the new high priests claimed the dignity of Zadoqite descent?<sup>13</sup> Had the people called the priests without regard to real family descent, the Sons of Zadoq? Should we regard the name as a nickname imposed upon the Temple priesthood by their opponents?<sup>14</sup> Another possible explanation is based on the story in Josephus and the Talmud about the break of John Hyrcanus or Alexander Jannaeus with the Pharisees and his joining the Sadducees. As we have noted, this story does not really prove the existence of a Sadducean party at that time; but it certainly supposes that the Hasmonaeans made their peace with the old priestly establishment at the Temple and joined forces with the Zadoqites.

A third possible point of departure is the reign of Herod. Herod appointed a high priest from Egypt, certainly a member of the Zadoqite line at Leontopolis.<sup>15</sup> He could not have had any ambitions to become high priest himself; he certainly had good reasons to do away with the ruling priestly classes of the Hasmonaean period and to rely on the old high-priestly dynasty. This family of Boethus brought forth several high priests until the revolt against Rome. This could mean that the Sadducees as a group arose only in the time of Herod, as already indicated by the context of two of the three descriptions of the Sadducees in Josephus.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> J. Liver, 'The "Sons of Zadok and the Priests" in the Dead Sea Sect,' *RQ* 6 (1967), 3–30.

<sup>13</sup> Baumbach, 'Konservativismus', p. 203.

<sup>14</sup> R. Meyer, art. 'Saddoukaios', *TWNT* 7 (Stuttgart 1964) p. 43, *TDNT* 7 (Grand Rapids 1971), p. 43, Bammel, 'Sadduzäer', p. 108, following J. Wellhausen, *Die Phariseer und die Sadducäer. Eine Untersuchung zur inneren jüdischen Geschichte* (Greifswald 1874; repr. Göttingen 1967), p. 94.

<sup>15</sup> *Ant.* xv.320–2; xix.297.

<sup>16</sup> Some Church Fathers placed the origin of the Sadducees in the period of John the Baptist. Historically, this is as worthless as the context of the descriptions of the Sadducees in Josephus.

In this connection we must consider *Abot de Rabbi Nathan* (= *ʿAbot R. Nat.*) A 5 (Schechter p. 26): Antigonus of Soko regarded it as an ideal to serve one's master without thought of compensation. He had two disciples who used to study these words. They taught them to their disciples, and their disciples to their disciples in whose opinion this saying presupposed the denial of the resurrection of the dead: 'So they arose and withdrew from the Torah and split into two sects, the Sadducees and the Boethusians: Sadducees named after Zadok, Boethusians, after Boethus.' This text certainly cannot be used indiscriminately for the reconstruction of the origins of the Sadducees. It shows, however, that in the Rabbinic period Sadducees and Boethusians – their names are frequently interchangeable in Rabbinic texts – belong together (no difference of opinions between the two groups is indicated) and that their origins were long after Antigonus of Soko. The name of the Sadducees is here derived from Zadoq: either the disciple of Antigonus who is not explicitly named, or the high priest Zadoq, in which case the cause for the name again remains unclear. Or should we suppose a confusion with the Pharisee Zadoq who, at the advent of Quirinius and Coponius, founded the 'fourth philosophy' of the Zealots?<sup>17</sup> Uncertain as all the details are, the story might well be used – together with other indications in Josephus – as an argument for the rise of the Sadducees in the time of Herod, with the appointment of Boethus or his son to the high-priesthood.<sup>18</sup>

The difficulties connected with the derivation of the name of the Sadducees from the Davidic priest Zadoq (or also another Zadoq) have led to different interpretations. Patristic texts already derive the name from *ṣaddiq*, which is philologically impossible (for example, Jerome on Matt. 22:23: *Sadducaei autem quod interpretantur iusti*).<sup>19</sup> The derivation from a hypothetical adjective *ṣadduq*, 'just, doing justice, especially in court',<sup>20</sup> cannot be proven.

<sup>17</sup> *Ant.* xviii.4ff.

<sup>18</sup> Meyer, 'Saddoukaioi', p. 43, ET, p. 49, considers *ʿAbot R. Nat.* to be without value for the history of the Sadducees. Contrast Le Moyne, *Les Sadducéens*, p. 116, who believes that *ʿAbot R. Nat.* 'contains elements which are historically sound!'

<sup>19</sup> J. Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'histoire et la géographie de la Palestine* (Paris 1867; repr.: Westmead 1971), p. 454, derives the name of the Sadducees from *ṣadaqab*, but believes that the name quickly became a sobriquet. R. Eisenman, *Maccabees, Zadokites, Christians and Qumran*, SPB 34 (Leiden 1983), pp. 7 and 19 identifies Zadokites and Sadducees, connecting both names with Zaddiq. He thus speaks of Qumran Sadduceeism and of the Herodian Sadduceeism. This does not solve the problem and rather adds to the confusion.

<sup>20</sup> R. North, 'The Qumran "Sadducees"', *CBQ* 17 (1955) 165; B. Reicke, *Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte* (Berlin 1965, edn 2 1968), p. 114, ET *The New Testament Era* (Philadelphia 1968), p. 154: 'This derivation would also fit with the strict legalism of the Sadducees.'

Thus, the origin of the Sadducees must be considered to be unknown. Neither the theory of their rise in the Maccabaeian period nor that of their origin in the Herodian period can be proved with absolute certainty.<sup>21</sup> The same is true with regard to the derivation of their name, although a connection with the Davidic priest Zadoq is the most plausible solution.

It is only during the last century of the Second Temple that the Sadducees become for us a recognizable entity in Palestinian society. But even in this period they are not easily defined. *Who were the Sadducees?* One generally connects them with the Temple and the priesthood. But we are not justified in identifying them simply as a party of the Temple priests. According to Josephus, ‘the Sadducees have the confidence of the wealthy alone but no following among the populace, while the Pharisees have the support of the masses’.<sup>22</sup> ‘There are but few men to whom this doctrine has been made known, but these are men of the highest standing. They accomplish practically nothing, however. For whenever they assume some office, though they submit unwillingly and perforce, yet submit they do to the formulas of the Pharisees, since otherwise the masses would not tolerate them.’<sup>23</sup> This description is supplemented by the remark that ‘the Sadducees are, even among themselves, rather boorish in their behaviour, and in their intercourse with their peers are as rude as to aliens’.<sup>24</sup>

No priests are mentioned either here or in the patristic texts.<sup>25</sup> That they formed the nucleus of the Sadducees is to be inferred from their name (if it really refers to the priest Zadoq), from their connection with

<sup>21</sup> R. T. Beckwith, ‘The Pre-History and Relationship of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. A Tentative Reconstruction’, *RQ* 11 (1982) 3–46 (now revised and expanded in: R. T. Beckwith, *Calendar and Chronology, Jewish and Christian*, AGJU 33 (Leiden 1996), pp. 167–276, postulates antecedents of the Sadducean movement already in the middle of the third century BC. To him, the Sadducees were not conservative, but rather reformers in analogy to other biblicist movements. Tendencies, later to be associated with the Sadducees, may certainly be traced back to an earlier period. But is this to say that then already the Sadducees existed as an identifiable group? Another solution of the historical problems connected with the Sadducees has been offered by R. Eisenman, *Maccabees*, pp. 19–23, who distinguishes two stages in the history of the Sadducees: the earlier Sadducees were a pietistic movement the extreme expression of which was to be found at Qumran; they are to be distinguished from the normative Sadduceism of the Herodian period which was closer to the Samaritans or the Shammai wing of the Pharisee Party and barely a caricature of the earlier Sadduceism. Eisenman’s reconstruction relies too heavily on hypotheses, but he is certainly right in emphasizing the importance of the Herodian period for the Sadducees as we know them from Josephus and the New Testament.

<sup>22</sup> *Ant.* XIII.298. <sup>23</sup> *Ant.* XVIII.17. <sup>24</sup> *Bell.* II.166.

<sup>25</sup> Reicke, *Zeitgeschichte*, p. 114, ET *The New Testament Era*, p. 153 concludes therefore: ‘The modern equation of Zadokites with Sadducees therefore does not correspond to any historical evidence.’

the certainly priestly Boethusians and, above all, from Josephus' notice that their members belonged to the aristocracy (which, to a great extent, consisted of priestly families). There is only one high priest whom Josephus explicitly calls a Sadducee: Ananus the son of Ananus (who had James, the brother of Jesus, sentenced to death while there was no Roman governor in office in 62).<sup>26</sup> To this, one may add Acts 4:1: 'the priests and the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees came upon them' (that is, Peter and John, who spoke to the people in the Temple) and arrested them.

Were the Sadducees different from the Boethusians or are the two groups to be identified? Only the Rabbinic sources mention the Boethusians. They are more strongly and consistently connected with the Temple, being a group around the dynasty of Boethus, invested by Herod with the high-priestly dignity. One may perhaps think of the Boethusians as the inner circle, the kernel of the larger Sadducean group. But even the Sadducees, as Josephus says, were only a few members of the wealthy aristocracy (not exclusively, to be sure) which included not only priests but also lay people.

The Sadducees were certainly centred in Jerusalem. As to their organization, nothing is known. Josephus calls them a *hairesis*, as he does the Pharisees, the Essenes and the Zealots. This does not mean, however, that these groups must have been comparable in organization, structure and coherence. The difference of structure between the Pharisees and Essenes points in another direction. On the other hand, Josephus seems to indicate that the Sadducees, as well as the Pharisees and the Essenes, were groups to which members were admitted only after a particular course of training.<sup>27</sup> This would suppose a certain organization. It is, however, a well-known literary topos that somebody passes through the different schools of philosophy before choosing his way of life. Thus, no definite historical conclusions may be drawn from *Vita* 11. The designation of the Sadducees and the other groups of their time as sects or religious parties may be misleading.

What influence did the Sadducees have? Josephus' statement that, once in a position of power, they had to yield to Pharisaic opinions, which were backed by the people, is to be compared with the Rabbinic texts which state that the Sadducees or Boethusians could not even run the cult in the Temple as they wished. On the other side, the high priests, presiding over the Sanhedrin (contrary to Rabbinic descriptions), wielded considerable political power. In the revolt against Rome, the priesthood at the Temple was of particular importance. It cannot be said, however,

<sup>26</sup> *Ant.* xx.199f.    <sup>27</sup> *Vita* 11.

what the Sadducean position was. The fact that after the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple they, as well as the Zealots, practically disappeared and were no longer a factor to be reckoned with might point to their involvement in the rebellion; it cannot be explained only by the fact that, together with the Temple, their base of power had disappeared. Frequently depicted as mere opportunists and collaborators with the Roman occupants, they more probably were staunch nationalists, led by a certain awareness of the political realities which did not, however, prevent them from being drawn into the revolt.<sup>28</sup>

The disappearance of the Sadducees after CE 70 is also to be explained by the decline of the rural aristocracy, caused by the desolation of the country, the confiscation of much of the land, and the end of an autonomous Jewish administration. It does not seem that many Sadducees joined the Rabbinic movement after CE 70. It is probable, on the contrary, that their way of thinking rather contributed to the people's long-lasting resistance to the Rabbinic leadership. Nothing is known of any Sadducean groups that might have survived. For the Church Fathers, even those who lived in Palestine, the Sadducees were like the Essenes, only faint memories from a distant past; and the Rabbis very soon had no concrete knowledge of the Sadducees.<sup>29</sup>

### III THE TEACHINGS OF THE SADDUCEES

(a) *The Sadducees and tradition*: Here, too, our main problem is one-sided and, therefore, insufficient information. The basis of all Sadducean teaching seems to have been their view of tradition. 'The Pharisees had passed on to the people certain regulations handed down by former generations and not recorded in the Laws of Moses, for which reason they are rejected by the Sadducean group, who hold that only those regulations should be considered valid which were written down (in Scripture), and that those which had been handed down by former generations need not be observed.'<sup>30</sup> 'They own no observance of any sort apart from the laws; in fact, they reckon it a virtue to dispute with the teachers of the path of wisdom that they pursue.'<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cf. G. Baumbach, *Jesus von Nazareth im Lichte der jüdischen Gruppenbildung* (Berlin 1971) pp. 56ff.

<sup>29</sup> Their disappearance as an organized group does not, of course, imply that individual members who once had belonged to them, immediately lost whatever influence they had before, and even less that their tendencies and ideas disappeared. The strong priestly bias of the Mishnah points to the contrary. For an attempt to gather their traces after 70, see M. Goodman, 'Sadducees and Essenes after 70 CE'.

<sup>30</sup> *Ant.* XIII.297. <sup>31</sup> *Ant.* XVIII.16.



The Sadducean denial of traditions outside the written Law cannot have been absolute. As everybody else who was concerned with the implementation of the Mosaic Law in daily life, especially in the cult, they had to rely on traditions not contained in the Bible itself. The Sadducees, too, had their traditions, as we shall see.<sup>32</sup> The difference between them and the Pharisees was the authority attributed to these traditions. As Josephus says, the Sadducees were inclined to dispute even with their own teachers; they relied on reasoning more than on the institutionalized authority of the Pharisaic 'chain of tradition' which began with the revelation to Moses on Sinai.

The Church Fathers frequently state that the Sadducees accepted only the Pentateuch and rejected the Prophets.<sup>33</sup> This assertion seems to be based on two points: first, on the confusion of Sadducees and Samaritans, so frequent with the Church Fathers, who thought Dositheus to be the founder of the Sadducees;<sup>34</sup> second, on a deduction from other points of Sadducean belief as known from the New Testament. There is no doubt that the Pentateuch had a special place of honour in Sadducean thinking; but this does not distinguish them from the Pharisees and the Rabbis. The books of Moses were the basis of Jewish law. It is, however, unthinkable that the Sadducees totally rejected the Prophets and the Writings (the Psalms were used in the daily liturgy of the Temple!). Probably only the book of Daniel with its text on the resurrection and, perhaps, Esther as the reading for the comparatively new festival of Purim, were not approved by the Sadducees. In general, however, the other parts of the Bible were certainly accepted although they did not enjoy the same degree of authority as the Torah.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> J. Z. Lauterbach, *Rabbinic Essays* (Cincinnati 1951), pp. 38–9, wrongly describes the Sadducees as 'blind slaves to the letter of the Law without regard for its spirit', to whom the Law had become 'mere formalism and ritualism' without influence upon daily life.

<sup>33</sup> Origen, *Contra Celsum* 1, 49; Jerome, *Contra Luciferianos* 23; Pseudo-Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, etc.

<sup>34</sup> S. J. Isser, *The Dositheans. A Samaritan Sect in Late Antiquity* (Leiden 1976) *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> That the Sadducees accepted all the books of the Pharisaic canon, has been thoroughly argued by R. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and its Background in Early Judaism* (London 1985), pp. 86–91. E. Tov, 'The Socio-Religious Background', suggests 'that the paleo-Hebrew texts found at Qumran came from the circles of the Sadducees who ascribed much importance to the authenticity of the ancient characters' (p. 367). If this assumption is correct, it could also contribute to the discussion of the Sadducean Bible since among the palaeo-Hebrew biblical texts found at Qumran there are not only several copies of books of the Torah, but also fragments of the book of Job (4QPaleoJob<sup>c</sup>) and even of a divergent text or a paraphrase of Joshua (4Q123).

(b) *The Sadducean halakha* differed in some points from that of the Pharisees, as Josephus informs us in a general way and the Rabbinic literature in more detail. ‘The Sadducees are more heartless than any of the other Jews . . . when they sit in judgement.’<sup>36</sup> It is difficult to find a concrete example of this strict attitude of the Sadducees in judgement. One might refer to *Megillat Taanit* 12, which speaks of the abolition of the ‘book of decrees’. The mediaeval Hebrew scholion specifies that this was a Samaritan law-book. It also states that the Samaritans interpreted the law of talion (Exod. 21:24) literally whereas the Pharisees admitted the possibility of monetary compensation. The scholion is, however, of no independent historical value.<sup>37</sup> One might see a possible example of Sadducean strictness in *m. Sanh.* 7:2: according to Pharisaic-rabbinic opinion, the death penalty of burning has to be fulfilled by throwing a burning wick into the mouth of the condemned person. R. Eliezer ben Zadoq says: ‘it happened once that a priest’s daughter committed adultery and they encompassed her with bundles of branches and burnt her. They said to him: Because the court at that time had not right knowledge.’ It may be assumed that this court (before CE 70) was Sadducean. In this case, the Sadducees insisted on a literal understanding of the biblical ordinance whereas the Pharisees invented a new mode of fulfilling it that was more in accord with their doctrine of resurrection. But another text, *m. Mak* 1:6 assigns to the Sadducees the more lenient position compared with that of the Sages: the Sadducees maintain that false witnesses are to be put to death only after the falsely accused has been executed; for the Sages, the execution of the false witness is possible as soon as the death sentence against the falsely accused person has been pronounced.

Another point of difference between Pharisees and Sadducees is recorded in *m. Yad.* 4:7: the Sadducees accept the responsibility of the master for damages done by his slave whereas the Pharisees stick to the letter of the Law and accept responsibility only for the damages done by one’s animal. This might be explained by the social position of the Sadducees: they were more likely to own slaves; as aristocrats, they might also have put slaves on the same level as animals. The Pharisees, on the other side, insisted on the equality of all human beings and considered slaves to be fully responsible for their actions. In another dispute, the Boethusians seem to be closer to the plain meaning of the Bible (Num. 27:8) than the Pharisees: the question is, whether the daughter has any right to the inheritance whenever there is a son whose offspring is still

<sup>36</sup> *Ant.* xx.199.

<sup>37</sup> G. Baumbach, *Jesus*, p. 62, considers Matt. 5:38 to be directed against the Sadducees. But the only basis for this is the mediaeval scholion!

alive. The Pharisaic position is: ‘the son precedes the daughter, and all of the son’s offspring precede the daughter’.<sup>38</sup> The Boethusians, on the other side, are reported to teach: ‘If the daughter of my son, who inherits on the strength of my son, who inherits on my account, lo, she inherits me – my daughter, who comes on my account (directly), logically should inherit me.’<sup>39</sup>

Other halakhic differences concern details of the laws of purity and the cult. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest had to enter the Holy of Holies to offer there the incense. According to Sadducean tradition, the incense had to be placed on the coals before the high priest entered the Holy of Holies whereas the Pharisees claimed that this had to be done within. A baraita in *b. Yoma* 19b tells of ‘a Sadducee who had arranged the incense without, and then brought it inside . . . On his coming out his father met him and said to him: My son, although we are Sadducees, we are afraid of the Pharisees. He replied: All my life was I aggrieved because of this scriptural verse: “For I appear in the cloud upon the ark-cover” (Lev. 16:2). Now that such opportunity has come to my hand, should I not have fulfilled it? It is reported that it took only a few days until he died . . .’<sup>40</sup>

The Sadducean insistence on preparing the incense on the coals without seems to be connected with a more primitive view of God’s presence in the Holy of Holies and the danger of seeing him when he was not from the beginning covered by the cloud of incense.<sup>41</sup> As to the other details of the story, they are typical of the Rabbinic caricature of the Sadducees: they are afraid of the Pharisees (but cf. Josephus!) and must conform to Pharisaic rulings; otherwise, they are killed by divine intervention. That this is a *topos* in the Rabbinic texts about Sadducees may be seen from another controversy that concerned the degree of purity required of the high priest who wanted to burn the Red Heifer. Since this ceremony took place outside of the Temple, the Pharisees were content with the purity of a *tebul yom*; the Sadducees, on the contrary, demanded that the high priest, purified by immersion, still had to await sunset to be completely pure. ‘A certain Sadducee had awaited sunset (for purification) and (then) came to burn the cow. And Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai became cognizant of his intention, and he came and placed his two hands on him (to make him impure) and said to him: “. . . now go down and immerse one time.” He went down and immersed and emerged. After he came up, he (Yoḥanan) tore (on) his ear (rendering him unfit to serve) . . . Not three days passed before they put him in his grave (that is, the high

<sup>38</sup> *m. B. Bat.* 8:2.   <sup>39</sup> *t. Yad.* 2:20.   <sup>40</sup> Cf. *t. Yoma* 1:8.

<sup>41</sup> Lauterbach, *Rabbinic Essays*, pp. 54, 72ff.

priest).<sup>42</sup> Unhistorical as this story is, it documents the difference of opinion and the Pharisees' attempt to impose their own views on the priests.

In one sphere the Pharisees probably imposed their views successfully on the Sadducees, namely the law of purity with regard to women. 'Our Rabbis taught: It once happened that a Sadducee was conversing with a High Priest in the market place when some spittle was squirted from his mouth and fell on the clothes of the High Priest. The face of the High Priest burned yellow<sup>43</sup> and he hurried to his (the Sadducee's) wife who assured him that although they were wives of Sadducees they paid homage to the Pharisees and showed their blood to the Sages . . . There was only one exception, a woman who lived in our neighbourhood who did not show her blood to the Sages, but she died.'<sup>44</sup> This story is built on stereotypes, to be sure; the basic information — that is, the reliance of Sadducean women on the Pharisees in questions of their purity — need not, however, be doubted: the law has a strong basis in the Bible and in popular belief; in this sphere, the Rabbis never had difficulties imposing their authority.

The Rabbinic sources on the Sadducees certainly offer a one-sided picture. Their accounts necessarily add to the fame of the Pharisees and downgrade the Sadducees. Certainly the sources bring forward those differences which correspond to their own centres of interest. But on the whole their representation of halakhic differences seems reliable. (All the examples quoted come from the Tannaitic stratum of tradition; they are not likely to have been invented.)

Is there a common conceptual basis for these halakhic differences? They are frequently explained by the Sadducean literal exegesis and their rejection of tradition. But some of the Sadducean positions are founded on tradition, although one different from that of the Pharisees. As to the Tannaitic sources, 'appeals by either group to general criteria, such as Oral Law *versus* Written Law, or exegetical *versus* literal interpretation of Scripture, are conspicuously absent'.<sup>45</sup> But one thing is perfectly clear: the

<sup>42</sup> *t. Para* 3:8.

<sup>43</sup> He was afraid that the Sadducee might have had intercourse with his menstruant wife and thus that his clothes would have been made impure by the spittle.

<sup>44</sup> *b. Nid.* 33b.

<sup>45</sup> J. Lightstone, 'Sadducees versus Pharisees: The Tannaitic Sources' in J. Neusner (ed.) *Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman Cults* (FS Morton Smith; Leiden 1975) vol. 3, p. 216. D. Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions*, analyses all passages in Rabbinic literature where scriptural arguments are attributed to Sadducees, and tries to suggest some special features of their exegetical presuppositions (pp. 160–3); but finally he has to concede: 'This present study does not provide enough data to defend the distinct characteristics of the Sadducees and Samaritans . . .' (p. 223).

genuine religious zeal of the Sadducees cannot be doubted; they adhered as strictly to what they thought right as did the Pharisees with regard to their teachings. The Sadducees were not irreligious people (as some Rabbinic texts seem to imply). This has to be kept in mind in considering the following 'dogmatic' points of Sadducean teaching.

(c) *The Sadducean Creed* is defined in a negative way in Acts 23:8: 'The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.' This is to be supplemented by the information supplied by Josephus: 'The Sadducees do away with Fate, holding that there is no such thing and that human actions are not achieved in accordance with her decree, but that all things lie within our own power, so that we ourselves are responsible for our well-being, while we suffer misfortune through our own thoughtlessness.'<sup>46</sup> 'The Sadducees . . . do away with Fate altogether, and remove God beyond, not merely the commission, but the very sight, of evil. They maintain that man has the free choice of good or evil . . . As for the persistence of the soul after death, penalties in the underworld, and rewards, they will have none of them.'<sup>47</sup>

As to the Sadducean view of fate and free will, some regard it as practical atheism.<sup>48</sup> But one must keep in mind that Josephus represented the Jewish groups of his time in Hellenistic terms which need not necessarily reflect precisely the views of the Sadducees themselves. (Incidentally, there is no Hebrew word for *heimarmenē*!) The insistence on free will would certainly fit the general picture of the Sadducees and their social position as mostly wealthy and powerful people who might be inclined to insist on man's self-determination. Philaster of Brescia<sup>49</sup> seems to think of this attitude as well as of the Sadducean denial of life after death when he accuses them: 'Secundum carnem aequae solum praedicant vivendum . . . Epicuream dementiam potius quam divinae legis iura sectantes.' Josephus himself never compares the Sadducees explicitly with Epicureans although he accuses the Epicureans, as he does the Sadducees, of doing away with Fate.<sup>50</sup>

The denial of resurrection (formulated by Josephus as the doctrine that in death the soul perishes together with the body) is attested by all sources. The Church Fathers generally combine it with the Sadducees' non-acceptance of the Prophetic writings.<sup>51</sup> The controversy on the subject

<sup>46</sup> *Ant.* XIII.173. <sup>47</sup> *Bell.* II.164f.

<sup>48</sup> So Meyer, 'Saddoukaios,' p. 46, ET p. 46 following G. Hölcher, *Der Sadduzäismus. Eine kritische Untersuchung zur späteren jüdischen Religionsgeschichte* (Leipzig 1906).

<sup>49</sup> *De haeres.* 5. <sup>50</sup> *Ant.* X.278.

<sup>51</sup> Pseudo-Tertullian, Origen and Jerome, commenting on Matt. 22:31f. As to the NT texts, see O. Schwankl, *Die Sadduzäerfrage*, E. Main, 'Les Sadducéens et la résurrection des morts'; B. Viviano and J. Taylor, 'Sadducees, Angels and Resurrection'.

of resurrection goes back into the Maccabaeen period when this doctrine began to be accepted in larger circles of Jewish society. The Sadducees were not the only group to oppose this comparatively new doctrine which was not backed by the main body of the Bible. Not every insistence on resurrection (for example, the introduction of the second benediction into the *Shemoneh Esreh*) is therefore to be interpreted as an anti-Sadducean move of the Pharisees, nor can we always assume in rabbinic discussions on resurrection that the opponents were Sadducees.

<sup>2</sup>*Abot R. Nat.* A 5 places the saying of Antigonus of Soko at the beginning of the Sadducean movement: 'Be not like slaves that serve their master for the sake of compensation; be rather like slaves who serve their master with no thought of compensation. And let the fear of heaven be upon you (so that your reward may be doubled in the age to come).' (This last clause is not contained in *m. Abot.* 1:3!) The disciples of the disciples of the disciples of Antigonus asked: 'Why did our ancestors see fit to say this thing? . . . If our ancestors, forsooth, had known that there is another world and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, they would not have spoken in this manner.' One may compare the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* I, 54: That the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead 'dicentes non esse dignum ut quasi sub mercede proposita colatur deus'.

That the Sadducees denied the existence of angels and spirits, as claimed in Acts 23:8, poses serious problems. This is not mentioned in any other source and is, therefore, frequently rejected. Epiphanius<sup>52</sup> speaks of the Sadducean denial of resurrection and angels and adds their ignorance of the Holy Spirit. But 'angels and spirits' must be taken as hendiadys, as is shown by the texts of Acts ('the Pharisees accept both', that is the resurrection and angels/spirits). Since angels are mentioned even in the Pentateuch, the Sadducees could hardly have denied their existence. Perhaps they were opposed (if there is a historical basis to the text in Acts) to some later development of the doctrine, a development that contradicted their main tenets, such as the doctrine that angels were responsible for the fate of individuals or nations, or generally the multiplication of angels and spirits in the popular belief of later Judaism; or perhaps we should connect this point with their denial of resurrection. In this last case, the Sadducees would have opposed the thesis that in the resurrection the righteous 'shall be made like unto angels'<sup>53</sup> or that 'the spirits of

<sup>52</sup> *Panarion* 14. Recent studies of the New Testament pericope where Jesus refutes the Sadducean denial of the resurrection of the dead include J. J. Kilgallen, 'The Sadducees and Resurrection from the Dead: Luke 20, 27–40,' *Bib* 67 (1986), 478–95; O. Schwankl, *Die Sadduzäerfrage (Mk 12, 18–27 par)*, BBB 66 Bonn 1987, especially pp. 332–8.

<sup>53</sup> 2 *Bar.* 51:10.

you who have died in righteousness shall live and rejoice, and their spirits shall not perish'.<sup>54</sup>

In general, these tenets of the Sadducees have in common the rejection of later developments in the biblical religion. This is also a common aspect of at least some of their halakhic opinions. One is tempted to relate this attitude to the social composition of the Sadducees who – as the rich aristocracy – would have been liable to oppose change and innovation. More important perhaps in this context is the fact that the leaders of the Sadducees were priests, and priestly groups are typically tradents of ancient views, as is even true in the Pharisaic and Rabbinical world. It was not an irreligious attitude which made the Sadducees deny some religious views which later became normative; on the contrary, they were loyal to biblical traditions which they were bound to hand on in their own time.

#### IV EPILOGUE: SADDUCEES AND KARAITES

Parallels between the Karaites and what we know of the Sadducees have induced some scholars (for example, A. Geiger) to regard the Karaites as the direct heirs of the Sadducees. Medieval Jewish texts indeed tend to identify Karaites as Sadducees.<sup>55</sup> In Karaite sources, however, this identification is to be found only once, in the work of Joseph al-Basir (eleventh century).<sup>56</sup> Jacob al-Kirkisani (the tenth-century Karaite) does not equate them, but is conscious of parallels between Sadducees and Karaites.<sup>57</sup> His information on the origin of the Sadducees, however, seems to be derived mainly from 'Abot R. Nat. 5, and from an erroneous identification of the Zadoq mentioned there with the author of the Damascus Document. This may be seen in his assertion that the Sadducees prohibited the marrying of one's niece.<sup>58</sup> Other common halakhic details include the date of Pentecost which, in the opinion of Boethus as well as that of the Karaites, could fall only on a Sunday, and the rejection of the libation at Sukkot.

<sup>54</sup> 1 *Enoch* 103:4.

<sup>55</sup> For example, Abraham Ibn Ezra in the introduction to his commentary on the Pentateuch.

<sup>56</sup> See A. Paul, *Écrits de Qumran et sectes juives aux premiers siècles de l'islam. Recherches sur l'origine du Qaraisme* (Paris 1969), p. 65.

<sup>57</sup> In his work *Kītab al-Anwar* II, 4; see L. Nemoy, *Karaite Anthology* (New Haven 1952) p. 50. B. Z. Wacholder, *The Dawn of Qumran*, p. 153, claims that 'Sedogym in Qirqisani is equivalent to the *Beney Šadoq* in Qumran writings, not to the Sadducees of Josephus and the New Testament.' 'To be sure, Karaism cannot be linked with the patrician Sadducees' (p. 168); it rather has Zadokite roots.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. *CD* V, 7–11.



There is no reason to suppose that Kirkisani ‘possessed a stock of non-Talmudic information on the Sadducees’ or that Anan himself consciously followed the Sadducean example when rejecting the Mishnah.<sup>59</sup> ‘Anan’s debt to the Sadducee teaching is still a matter of uncertainty and controversy; in any case, the available information on the doctrines of the Sadducees is still so meager and in part so contradictory that it would be rather unfair to pass judgment on the degree of their influence upon Anan and his immediate successors.’<sup>60</sup> The known parallels are few and may have arisen independently. Thus the witness of Kirkisani to the derivation of the Karaites from the Sadducees is not acceptable.

<sup>59</sup> Paul, *Qumran*, p. 72.      <sup>60</sup> Nemoj, *Anthology*, p. 10.

## CHAPTER 15

## THE ESSENES

The Essenes formed a third religious group among the Jews of Palestine, after the Pharisees and Sadducees. They existed from the middle of the second century BCE up to the time of the first Jewish uprising against the Romans. Until recently our knowledge of them was derived entirely from Philo, Josephus and Pliny the Elder, all of whom wrote as outsiders. Now, however, the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered from 1947 onwards (the Qumran manuscripts) have provided us with what might be regarded as authentic Essene documents – though the name itself never occurs in them (for discussion see chapters 24–5, below). Both sources complement each other: the classical authors are particularly important for factual information such as dates, places and the way of life of the Essenes, while the Qumran texts also reveal the theological foundations of their singular faith.

## I FACTUAL INFORMATION

## I SOURCES

The Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo (15/10 BCE–CE 45) in his treatise ‘Every good man is free’ and in a subsequent ‘Apology for the Jews’ depicts the Essenes as an example of a truly free and righteous existence.<sup>1</sup> These two accounts bear a close resemblance to one another linguistically and also in context, not least because the author saw his own Platonic and Stoic ideals realized in the life of the Essenes. Flavius Josephus (CE 37–100), who claimed to have belonged to all the different Jewish religious factions in his youth, including the Essenes, offers us a more detailed account of this latter sect than any other author, in his work on *The Jewish War*.<sup>2</sup> He also mentions them frequently in brief remarks and anecdotes in his main work *Antiquities of the Jews*.<sup>3</sup> But even his anecdotes

<sup>1</sup> *Quod omnis probus liber sit* §§ 75–91 (abbrev.: Q); *Pro Judaeis defensio* (abbrev.: Ap), in: Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* VII. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *De bello Judaico* II 119–61 (abbrev.: War); cf. *Vita* 10f.

<sup>3</sup> *Antiquitates Judaicae* (abbrev.: *Ant.*) (a) *Ant.* XIII.171f: The Essenes are mentioned there by Josephus for the first time; (b) *Ant.* XIII.298: Josephus refers to his report on the Essenes in War; (c) *Ant.* XIII.311–13: The Essene prophet Judas, see also War I. 78–80;

are not always free from an idealizing commentary and probably go back to the report of a Hellenistic Jew, except for those passages which draw upon Josephus' own first-hand experience.<sup>4</sup> Josephus' principal description was in turn taken over by one of the church fathers, Hippolytus (CE 175–235),<sup>5</sup> who ascribed to the Essenes features of a Zealot theology; and also by the Neo-Platonist Porphyry (CE 234–301/5),<sup>6</sup> who testifies that Josephus gave a further account of the Essenes in the second book of his lost work *To the Greeks*. We find important geographical information in the brief report of Pliny the Elder (CE 23/4–79), who locates the Essenes on the western shore of the Dead Sea, north of Engedi;<sup>7</sup> this report was borrowed and amplified by Solinus (third century CE).<sup>8</sup> Synesius of Cyrene (CE 370/5–413/14) reports that Dio of Prusa (c. 40 some time after CE 111) extolled the Essenes.<sup>9</sup> Since all these Greek or Latin authors are addressing themselves to Gentile readers, the characteristics of the Essene way of life are often presented in the spirit of Hellenistic ethnography and Greek popular philosophy, at the expense of the biblical foundations and eschatological orientation of this variant of Judaic piety. It is therefore necessary to modify the *interpretatio Graeca* of Essene life and belief with the aid of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which are written mainly in Hebrew, though some of the texts are in Aramaic.

## 2 THE NAME

The very name 'Essenes' (in Philo: *Essaioi*, in Josephus: usually *Essēnoi*, in Pliny: *Esseni*) encouraged an idealizing interpretation. Philo related it to the Greek word *hosiotēs* = piety, Josephus pointed to the word *semnotēs* = holiness.<sup>10</sup> Though Philo emphasizes that his derivation was etymologically not quite correct, his supposition was in fact accurate. The name 'Essenes' derives from the Aramaic word (only found in Syriac) *ḥasē'* (*ḥasēn* = *Essenoi*, with determinative *ḥasayya'* = *Essaioi*) = 'pious';<sup>11</sup> as in the case of

(d) *Ant.* xv.371–9: The Essene prophet Manaemus; (e) *Ant.* xvii.345–8: The Essene prophet Simon, see also War II. 111–13; (f) *Ant.* xviii.11.18–22: Short description of the Essenes; (g) War II. 567; III. 11: The Essene general John; (h) War v. 145: The Gate of the Essenes in Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> G. Hölscher, 'Josephus', *PW* 9 (Stuttgart 1916), cols. 1949, 1974–6.

<sup>5</sup> *Refutatio omnium haeresium (Philosophumena)* IX. 18,2–28,2. See especially 26,2: zealous features of the Essenes; 27,1: belief in a bodily resurrection.

<sup>6</sup> *De abstinentia ab esu animalium*: The Essenes are said to abstain from eating meat.

<sup>7</sup> *Naturalis Historia* (abbrev.: *Nat Hist*) v, 73 (17).

<sup>8</sup> *Collectanea rerum memorabilium* 35,9–11.

<sup>9</sup> Dio 3,2. <sup>10</sup> Q 75; 91; Ap I; *Bell.* II.119.

<sup>11</sup> See the Letter from Murabba'at 45,6 (CE 134–5) ed. J. T. Milik, *DJD* II (1961) pp. 163–4. There the fortress of the pious (*ḥsdyn*) could refer to Qumran.

the Pharisees, the name may have been bestowed on the sect by outsiders. It recalls the group of devout Jews who flourished in the second century BCE, the *Ḥasidīm*,<sup>12</sup> who stressed the practical fulfilment of the Torah and insisted above all on the observance of the laws of cleanliness and the sabbath. From these *Ḥasidīm* emerged the Pharisees. It is less likely that the name 'Essene' derives from the Aramaic 'āsen, 'āsayyā' = Therapeutai, i.e. healers or servants of God, or from other Hebrew or Aramaic words, such as the verb 'asah = 'doing' (the law) or the name Jesse in connection with their messianic hopes (Isa. 11:1).

### 3 CHRONOLOGY

Philo's account, with its emphasis on ethics gives no precise information about the history of the Essenes. Josephus, on the other hand, offers us tangible evidence. They are first mentioned in the time of the High Priest Jonathan (152–143 BCE), along with the Sadducees and Pharisees. In addition Josephus depicts confrontations between prophetic Essene figures and contemporary rulers: a certain Judas with Aristobulus I (104–103 BCE), Manaemus with Herod the Great (31–4 BCE), Simon with Archelaus (4 BCE–CE 6). Finally, one John the Essene is named as an outstanding military leader in the Jewish War.<sup>13</sup> Whereas the Essenes found favour with Herod the Great,<sup>14</sup> they suffered torture and death at the hands of the Romans, clearly in the course of the Jewish War in CE 68,<sup>15</sup> when their sect came to its end. The rare, hidden historical allusions in the Qumran texts, and more importantly, the archaeological evidence accord with this chronology and indicate a period from 160 BC to CE 68. The excavations directed by de Vaux in 1953–6 in Qumran, once the centre of the Essene faith, uncovered traces of an Israelite settlement dating from the eighth or seventh century BCE, which bore the name 'salt-town',<sup>16</sup> followed by an initial Essene building phase from the time of John Hyrcanus (134–104 BCE) to 40–39 BCE or to the beginning of Herod's reign in 37 BCE; a second phase began under Archelaus and lasted up to the Jewish War (CE 6–68); the third and final phase dates from the time of the second Jewish War (CE 132–5) and no longer has any connection with the Essenes.<sup>17</sup> In contrast with Josephus, the Qumran Scrolls do not identify any particular Essene by name, but simply mention a figure known by the title 'the

<sup>12</sup> The *asidaioi* of 1 Macc. 2:42. <sup>13</sup> *Bell.* II.567; III.11.

<sup>14</sup> *Ant.* XV.371–9 and the term 'Herodians' in Mark 3:6 and 8:14–21, which according to Y. Yadin means the Essenes.

<sup>15</sup> *Ant.* XV.378; *Bell.* II.152f. <sup>16</sup> See Josh. 15, 62.

<sup>17</sup> R. de Vaux, *L'archéologie et les manuscrits de la Mer Morte*, SCL 1959 (London 1961); rev. ed. ET *Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London 1972).

Teacher of Righteousness'; this occurs especially in the commentaries on the prophet Habakkuk (1 Qp Hab) and on Psalm 37, and also in the Damascus Document (CD). It is very likely that, as Milik has argued chiefly on the basis of the Habakkuk commentary, this teacher figure lived in the reign of the first Hasmonaean High Priest Jonathan (152–143 BCE). He played a crucial part in the formation of the Essene community and provoked Jonathan's enmity. According to the Damascus Document (19–12) twenty years of 'blindness' without adequate leadership preceded the ministry of the Teacher of Righteousness.

#### 4 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

According to Philo the Essenes lived as farmers and artisans in the villages of Palestine; at another point, however, he makes reference to urban communities. Josephus confirms that there were many Essenes in every town.<sup>18</sup> Both sources give the size of the sect as 4,000.<sup>19</sup> Pliny, on the other hand, specifies one particular area, an area north of the palm city of Engedi on the western shore of the Dead Sea.<sup>20</sup> This matches the location of Qumran, a ruin some 15 km south of Jericho; manuscripts and textual fragments were discovered in eleven caves in the neighbourhood. Though these writings do not contain any precise details about the dwelling places and way of life of the Essenes, the remains unearthed at Qumran – walls, a tower, a water conduit and cisterns, scriptorium, meeting room and refectory, a large cemetery and, finally, agricultural buildings at the oasis of Ain Feshka, 2 km to the south – correspond very convincingly with what our sources reveal about the Essene way of life. Qumran itself can only have been the focal point of Essene life, and cannot have housed more than a few hundred people; the majority of the sect lived elsewhere in Palestine. We can indeed deduce from the Qumran texts that some of the Essenes lived in a monastic settlement in the desert of Judaea on the Dead Sea, while others were scattered throughout the cultivated land of Palestine. Thus the Manual or Discipline (1QS), echoing Isaiah 40:3, demands that the holy and perfect people should go forth into the desert and there prepare the way of the Lord; and the Damascus Document mentions the exodus of the penitent of Israel from the land of Judah and their settlement in the 'land of Damascus';<sup>21</sup> it is debated whether this last reference is meant figuratively and points to a place like Qumran, or whether it must refer to somewhere like the Yarmuk area or

<sup>18</sup> Q 75f; cf. *Ant.* xviii.19; Ap 1f8; *Bell.* ii.124. <sup>19</sup> Q 75; *Ant.* xviii.20.

<sup>20</sup> *Nat Hist* v. 17: . . . *ab occidenti litora* (i.e. of the Dead Sea) . . . ; *infra bos oppidum Engada fuit*.

<sup>21</sup> 1 QS VIII. 13f; CD VI. 5.

the Hauran region to the south of Damascus. At all events the Damascus Document contains rules for living in the 'cities of Israel' and also in camps.<sup>22</sup> Stipulations for a communal meal, prayer and council in the Manual of Discipline imply the existence of small, autonomous Essene groups; the same is true of Josephus' note about Essene travellers who could rely on being taken care of en route by overseers from their own sect.<sup>23</sup> The so-called Essene Gate in the south-western corner of Jerusalem could owe its name to an Essene settlement in that neighbourhood.<sup>24</sup> Together with the Essene Gate, Josephus mentions an area outside the city wall called Bethso 'Place of Dirt' (*Bell.* v.144f). The Temple Scroll of Qumran (11 Q Miqdash) reveals that the Essenes must have had their latrine in this area. They did not want to desecrate Jerusalem and left the holy city through the Essene Gate in order to reach the 'Bethso' for natural excretion (11 Q Miqdash XLVI,15).

## 5 ORGANIZATION

With regard to the internal organization of the Essenes, Philo speaks of 'multitudes' who live in collectives.<sup>25</sup> Josephus on the other hand describes the Essenes – like the Sadducees and Pharisees – as a 'doctrine' (*hairesis*). He is clearly drawing a parallel with the Greek philosophical schools (*philosophiai*), in particular the Pythagoreans. Alongside this, however, we find the concepts 'race or tribe' (*genos*) and 'unity, order' (*tagma*); these may represent attempts to render the Hebrew word *serekh* (*hayyahad*) = 'the Rule (of the community)' which in the Qumran writings regulates and organizes the life of the community.<sup>26</sup> The Qumran Essenes displayed a pronounced love of order, based on observations of nature, above all the stars, and duly applied to the life of man. The law of God is inherent in creation, and the divinely ordained purpose of history is to restore the unity and purity of creation, wherever it has been impaired. Accordingly the Essenes saw themselves as a congregation (*'edā*) pledged to maintain the covenant between God and Israel on the basis of the Torah, and as a community (*yahad*) of chosen holy men who fulfil on earth the same function as God's perfect saints, the angels, in heaven. In this way they combined Israel's historical legacy with the apocalyptic hope of being merged into the heavenly host of saints at the end of time, as the holy remnant of God's people and as the congregation of the new

<sup>22</sup> CD XII. 19.22f. <sup>23</sup> 1 QS VI. 2–6; War II. 125.

<sup>24</sup> War v. 145; see CD XII. 1; 11QT XXXXVI. 13–16. Cf. Emerton, 'Bethso'.

<sup>25</sup> Ap I *homiloi* = *sodalitates*; Ap 5 *thiasoi betairias*; cf. Q 85.

<sup>26</sup> *hairesis* War II. 137; *philosophiai* Ant. XVIII.11; *genos* Ant. XIII.172; *tagma* War II. 125, 143, 160; see 1QS I. 1.16.

covenant; together with the saints, and in the same manner, they would then serve God. This perfect eschatological existence, which aimed at direct communion with God and at a world liberated from evil and ruled by truth and justice, was anticipated by the Qumran Essenes in the form of a life of religious service in deliberate contrast with a world dominated by evil. The common life in work and prayer, involving celibacy and common ownership of property, permits comparison with that of a monastic order. The designation 'sect' is appropriate for the Essenes, since they themselves expressly demanded and practised 'segregation' (*bibbādēl*) from the outside world, which they condemned as impure and godless.<sup>27</sup> The idea of an *ekklesia* as a gathering of the elect and an eschatological congregation first materialized among the Essenes of Qumran. Instead of the historical election of the people of Israel as a whole, the Qumran sect believed in the election of the individual Israelite, who responded to this act of God with penitence which took him into the eschatological community.<sup>28</sup> For the Essenes family and kinship ties were largely replaced by the obligations of life in a spiritual family in which God represented both father and mother and the teacher led his spiritual children with fatherly love and nourished them like a nurse.<sup>29</sup>

Admission to this new community was a long and difficult process. Josephus speaks of a preliminary year of apprenticeship which was spent outside the community but which, with its accoutrements of axe, loin cloth and linen robe, already manifests important tokens of initiation into the ritual purity of the Essenes. There followed a two-year noviciate which led to participation first in the purification rites of the full members and finally in the sacred meals. The process of admission in the Rule of the community is similarly prescribed. In this however, there is no fixed period of candidature and the step-by-step expropriation of private wealth is arranged. During the period of probation the property of the novice was entered in a special account (*yād*) and still available for him; a similar regulation within the earliest Church in Jerusalem is presupposed in Acts 5:4.<sup>30</sup> Members of the community were convinced that they lived as sojourners or strangers in Israel;<sup>31</sup> this again shows the tendency towards sectarianism as does the fact that the special teachings of the Essenes were not propagated with missionary zeal but remained those of an esoteric cult, protected by strict secrecy. The congregation recruited only from among those already avid for conversion.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> 1 QS v. 1f; 4 QMMT.

<sup>28</sup> See the interpretation of Deut. 7:8 in CD II.14f; VI.2–11; 1QSI3.

<sup>29</sup> 1 QH IX 34–6; VII. 20–2. <sup>30</sup> War II. 137f; 1 QS VI. 13–23.

<sup>31</sup> War II. 124f; CD VI. 5. <sup>32</sup> War II. 142; 1 QS IX. 17; V. 1f.



Philo emphasizes that the main principle of Essene charity was equality; slavery was repudiated. Yet despite the ideal of eschatological unity, the Qumran community was no classless society. In particular, the traditional distinction between priests and laity was upheld; in the time of consummation which was impending, it would not be transcended but rather sanctioned by the arrival of two Messianic figures, an 'Anointed of Aaron' and an 'Anointed of Israel'. The priestly Messiah enjoys greater authority than the (Davidic) Messiah from Israel, thanks to his sanctity and his superior knowledge of the Torah, even though the (Davidic) Messiah will appear as a redeemer and his coming was foretold by the prophets.<sup>33</sup> The role of the priests was very significant from the outset. The external cause of the segregation of the Essenes was a conflict within the Jerusalem priesthood; the Essenes objected in particular to the combination of spiritual and secular power exercised by the Hasmonaean High Priests and kings. (Neither Philo nor Josephus mentions this dispute.) There is frequent reference to a 'wicked priest', presumably Jonathan, the first Hasmonaean High Priest and brother of Judas Maccabaeus; he had obtained the office of High Priest with the aid of the Seleucid Alexander Balas. He is accused of transgressing against God's commandments out of covetousness, of confiscating the property of those who 'had rebelled against God', and of enriching himself from the plunder of the nations.<sup>34</sup> Jonathan had probably expropriated the fortunes of the numerous reform Jews who were sympathetic towards Hellenism, and had amassed personal wealth during his military campaigns. As a result of such secular preoccupations on the part of the High Priest and his followers, the Temple in Jerusalem had – in the view of the Essenes – been desecrated.<sup>35</sup> The Essene community now took over its mission of obtaining atonement for the land of Israel; they saw themselves as a living sanctuary 'a holy house for Israel and a foundation of the Holy of Holies for Aaron', where they offered up the heave-offering of prayer and a perfect conduct as a pleasing sacrifice.<sup>36</sup> God has chosen them as living stones for his house. The sect forms the eschatological bridge between the old world threatened by divine judgement and its new form, cleansed of evil. The discipline of the community in the pre-eschatological present was determined by their conviction that they had been called upon to live a life of sacred service along sacerdotal lines. A second formative factor was their conviction that a universal war was imminent between the 'sons of light' and the 'sons of darkness'. The Essene order was therefore also

<sup>33</sup> 1QS IX. 11; 1QS a II. 11–12; 4Q Flor.   <sup>34</sup> 1QP Hab VIII. 8–IX. 7.

<sup>35</sup> 4QMMT; 1QP Hab XII 8f; Jub. 23; 14–21; CD IV. 14–21.

<sup>36</sup> 1QS VIII. 5–10; IX. 4–6; 4Q Flor I. 6f.

modelled on the Israelite levy and divided into groups of a thousand, a hundred, fifty and ten.<sup>37</sup>

Josephus speaks of four estates with different degrees of cleanliness. In the Qumran scrolls they are more precisely defined as the priesthood, the Levites, the laity and the novices.<sup>38</sup> The distinction between clergy and laity was attenuated inasmuch as the Old Testament rules of purity for the officiating priests, who practised their sacrificial ritual in God's presence and therefore had to consecrate themselves with special care,<sup>39</sup> were extended by the Essenes to include the laity as well. In a similar way, some laws for protecting the sacredness of the Temple were applied also to the city of Jerusalem.<sup>40</sup> The whole sect after all awaited the eschatological coming of God and kept themselves in a state of constant readiness for this decisive encounter. They therefore saw themselves in a situation resembling that of the people of Israel at Mount Sinai as they awaited the advent of God on the third day. At that time every Israelite had to undergo ritual purification during the period of waiting by washing and sexual abstinence (Exod. 19, 10f). In the eschatological situation of the Qumran community, for whom the historical turning point of the Parousia ultimately remained a divine secret, the demand for cleanliness could not be limited to any particular interval or persons. In practice this meant a democratization of the priestly Torah.

One may assume that the Sinai pericope, Exod. 19–20, exerted a strong influence on the eschatological outlook of the Essenes. For their encampment in the wilderness, their obedience to the will of God, and their loyalty to the covenant can be explained best from the background of Exod. 19:2 and 19:5. Moreover, the Essenes wanted to live up to the solemn declaration of their fathers, given to Moses at Mount Sinai: 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do!' (Exod. 19:8); this had been promised by 'all the people together' (*yahdaw*, *ibid.*). The self-designation *yahad* = 'Union' of the Qumran community and its earnest desire to do all the commandments of the Law in this holy union, may have originated from Exod. 19:8. Moreover, the Essenes wanted to work toward the realization of a covenant that represented 'a kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (Exod. 19:6). The expectation and partial anticipation of an eschatological, divinely instituted community united in brotherhood and justice did not, however, lead to the total renunciation of socio-religious distinctions. This is explained by the fundamental Essene belief in the exemplary harmony between the heavenly and the temporal order: even the company

<sup>37</sup> IQS II. 21f; cf. Exod. 18:21. <sup>38</sup> War II. 150; CD XIV. 3–6; cf. I QS II. 19–22.

<sup>39</sup> Lev. 22. 1–16; Ezek. 44:15–31; see Lev. 21:17–23; 11QT XXXV:12–14.

<sup>40</sup> 11QT XXXV. 11f; CD XII. 1f; 4QMMT B. 29–33.

of angels and the course of heavenly worship were organized on hieratic lines. Discipline was practised during the service of worship, during the assembly of all members of the sect, and during the communal meal.<sup>41</sup> Of particular importance was obedience to the overseers and elders of the community. To outsiders this might seem like subjugation through fear and tyranny, but in fact it was matched by certain pastoral obligations on the part of those in authority.<sup>42</sup> Within the estates of the priesthood, Levites or laity, the individual was allotted his particular position for a year at a time; his theoretical mastery and practical observance of the Torah were decisive in determining his rank.<sup>43</sup> However, relations between those of humble and those of elevated rank were to be conducted 'in truth, humility and devotion'; any complaints or offences were immediately discussed and clarified. Discipline was enforced by their own tribunals which had the power to mete out rigorous punishments. Again the principles of ritual purity were paramount. Any offence defiled the sinner and imperilled the purity of the whole sect, so that the penalty consisted above all in separating or banishing the offender from the fellowship of the elect.<sup>44</sup>

The priests enjoyed a privileged position thanks to their lineage and their knowledge of the Torah. The Levites usually ranked next to them in importance. The elders had a similar status to the Levites by virtue of their natural authority.<sup>45</sup> The crucial factor determining the respect owed to any particular individual and the sort of service he had to perform was, however, his knowledge of the Torah; this was especially required of the overseer (*mebaqqēr*, cf. *episkopos*), each of whom had charge of a settlement and was responsible for the instruction and admission of recruits.<sup>46</sup> The Manual of Discipline refers to both an 'overseer of domestic affairs' and an 'overseer over the assembly of members'.<sup>47</sup> This assembly which, according to Josephus, had a quorum of one hundred members, was clearly the supreme forum for discussion and decision-making, with regard to both administrative and judicial matters. Every full member was entitled to a seat and a vote which he cast according to his rank and his estate; issues were decided by a simple majority. A similar arrangement obtained in the Jewish Sanhedrin, except that there the junior members cast their votes first.<sup>48</sup> A spiritual duty with somewhat vague organizational implications was entrusted to the 'man of insight' (*maskīl*), i.e. a member of the sect whose knowledge and understanding of the scriptures

<sup>41</sup> Q 81; I QS VI 10f; War II. 130–3.

<sup>42</sup> War II. 126.134f140; IQS V. 25–VI.1; CD VIII 9f. <sup>43</sup> IQS II. 23–5; V. 23.

<sup>44</sup> I QS V. 25–VI. 1; VI. 24–VII. 25; VIII. 21–3; War II. 143.

<sup>45</sup> I QS V 9; War II. 146; I QS VI 8. <sup>46</sup> CD XIII. 5–11.

<sup>47</sup> I QS VI. 20; VI. 12.14. <sup>48</sup> War II. 146.150; I QS VI. 8–13; *m. Sanbn* 4:2.

surpassed those of his fellows and who therefore possessed a special responsibility before God and man. He had an insight into the mysteries which were still concealed from Israel but which God unveiled at certain times. As a good keeper of these spiritual mysteries, he skilfully initiated the members of the Qumran community into them, while at the same time he kept them hidden from the godless world outside.<sup>49</sup> The model of these men of insight was the ‘Teacher of Righteousness’ to whom ‘God disclosed all the secrets of the words of his servants, the prophets’.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, this teacher saw more than the prophets themselves, because he could interpret their message as an eschatological prophecy and thus discern its true ‘meaning’ (*pēšer*) with God’s help. Thus he was able to kindle a penitential movement among the devout Jews; he was the dominating personality in the early years of the Qumran community. He confronted his followers with the message that the end of the world was nigh, and as a former priest he inspired them to lead a life of spiritual and physical purity. The rules which are compiled in the War Scroll and the Manual of Discipline, together with the experiences described before God in the ‘Thanksgiving Hymns’, derive from this teacher, whose severe criticism of the Jerusalem priesthood must have made him a thorn in their flesh – as we see, for example, from the action of the ‘wicked priest’ reported in the Habakkuk Commentary.<sup>51</sup>

## II THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

### I PENITENCE

Philo and Josephus characterize the way of life of the Essenes by such qualities as ‘self-control’ (*enkrateia*) and ‘asceticism’ (*askēsis*).<sup>52</sup> Correspondingly the Qumran texts describe the present age as a ‘time of want’ (*mōced tacanīth*), of ordeal (*mašref*) and of tribulations (*šarōth*) which must be endured in the face of all the assaults of the Devil.<sup>53</sup> The life of the godly in this world is now no more than an exile, an existence ‘in the desert of the nations’.<sup>54</sup> But this ‘age of ungodliness’ in which the Devil rules even in Israel, will soon come to an end, according to the providential design; the advent of the messianic redeemers is at hand. Then they will return to Jerusalem where the ‘fallen house of David,’ i.e. the kingdom of the Davidic dynasty, will be rebuilt.<sup>55</sup> The interim ethic appropriate to

<sup>49</sup> I QS III. 13; IX. 12–21.   <sup>50</sup> IQP Hab VII. 4f.

<sup>51</sup> I QP Hab XI. 4–8; cf. CD I. 10–12. cf: 4Q PS37 IV. 8–10.

<sup>52</sup> Ap. 14; War II. 120, 138, 150.   <sup>53</sup> 4 QP PS 37, II. 10; I QS I. 17; III. 23f.

<sup>54</sup> CD VI. 5; I QP Hab. XI. 6; I QM I. 3.

<sup>55</sup> CD VII.16–21 XII.23; IV.13; 4 Q Flor I. 12f I QMI3;

such a pre-messianic *kairos* is summed up in the call for repentance, which in practice means renouncing the godless world and accepting the true interpretation of the Torah. The 'penitent of Judah' turned their backs on their homeland in order to dwell among strangers, in the 'land of Damascus'. Obeying the summons in Isa. 40:3, they wanted to prepare the way of the Lord in the desert, and this they sought to achieve through a life lived according to the Torah, which they studied ceaselessly and interpreted afresh.<sup>56</sup> A token of their penitence was their rejection of the comforts of life such as anointing oil.<sup>57</sup> (According to the Temple Scroll (xxii 15f) the use of oil was restricted to the feast of oil.) Viewed positively, repentance for the Essenes meant striving to achieve purity of body and soul, for cleanliness was a precondition of the imminent encounter with God, of vindication in the last judgement, and of life in a redeemed world. In comparison with the Pharisees, the Essenes exhibited a far more radical and limiting notion of the purity of the chosen people by preaching the need for the geographical separation of a community of penitents. Similarly, their eschatological orientation led them to interpret that purity as a necessary phase of historical development, with particular socio-political consequences. Behind this lay not only Isa. 40:3 but also God's direction that Israel should be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod. 19:5). The Pharisees, on the other hand, based their doctrines on the demand for holiness in Lev. 19:2.

## 2 ETHICS

The foundations of Essene righteousness (*kalokagathia*), Philo informs us, were threefold: love of God, love of virtue and love of one's fellow man. Love of God expresses itself in consecration, in the rejection of oaths and in truthfulness; one follows the example of God who is the source of all goodness but not of anything evil. Love of virtue is shown through abstinence, the forsaking of money, honour and worldly pleasures – love of one's fellow man through benevolence and integrity and a unique form of communal existence in which one donates all that one has to the community and renounces marriage. In this way are created the preconditions of true freedom which embody the ideals of the philosophers.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, Josephus gives the following summary of the pledge of the Essenes: one should first honour God, then heed what is meet and right for one's fellows, 'neither harming anyone as a result of one's own judgement nor at the command of others, but always repudiating the

<sup>56</sup> CD VI. 2f; VI. 5; I QS VI. 6–8; VIII. 13–16.

<sup>57</sup> War II. 123; I IQT XXII. 15f. <sup>58</sup> Q 83f; Ap. 17f.

unjust and fighting on the side of the just'.<sup>59</sup> Godliness and justice are also seen as the essence of kingly rule, as the Essene prophet Manaemus enjoined on the young Herod; but this truth, though acknowledged, is always ignored in the political conduct of nations.<sup>60</sup> This outline of Essene philosophy is reminiscent of the biblical commandment to love God and one's neighbour (Deut. 6:4; Lev. 19:18). It is confirmed and illuminated by a list of duties of the members of the 'union', given at the beginning of the Manual of Discipline. It is axiomatic here, too, that God's conduct shows what is required: one should love everything that he has chosen and reject what he has repudiated, one should 'love all the children of light, each one according to his lot in the counsel of God, and abhor all the children of darkness, each one according to his guilt, which delivers him up to God's retribution'.<sup>61</sup> It is therefore divine election which demands that one love one's neighbour – and at the same time limits the extent of that obligation. And if justice is the norm of this practical charity, this is not least because the Essenes of Qumran experience here and now the succour of God's righteousness and look for its victory over the powers of error and injustice.<sup>62</sup> Love of God is expressed by devoting one's intellectual and physical powers, and the whole of one's material possessions to the congregation of God's elect and thereby offering oneself to God as a living sacrifice.<sup>63</sup> The confession in Deut. 6:4 was reinterpreted and applied pre-eminently to obedience to the Torah: whoever desires to love God with all his heart must seek him with all his might, in order to do that which is good and just in his eyes. The place to seek Him is in the Torah and the words of the prophets who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, reinterpreted the Torah of Moses and furthermore intimated the mystery of the last days.<sup>64</sup>

### III THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

#### I THE TORAH AND ITS EXEGESIS

The vow taken by members of the Qumran community bound them not only in general terms to the Scriptures but more particularly to the 'truth' of the Scriptures, i.e. to an interpretation of the Torah which had been developed by the priests of their sect.<sup>65</sup> Obedience to the Torah, and respect for Moses the law-giver which was emphasized by Philo and Josephus,<sup>66</sup> were of course part and parcel of Judaism. What was characteristic of the Essenes was the belief that at certain times the truth of the

<sup>59</sup> War II. 139. <sup>60</sup> *Ant.* xv.375f; I Q. 27 (Book of Mysteries).

<sup>61</sup> I QS I. 3f 9f see CD II. 15f. <sup>62</sup> I QS XI. 13–15; I Q. 27. <sup>63</sup> I QS I. 11–13.

<sup>64</sup> I QS I. 2f; VIII. 16; I QP Hab VII. 1f. <sup>65</sup> I QS V. 8f. <sup>66</sup> War II. 145.52; AP I.

Torah was disclosed by special revelation; by this 'truth' they meant the things that were pleasing to God, that were just and good in His eyes.<sup>67</sup> In an age bereft of prophets, those elements of the truth which remain hidden are revealed only to him who pursues them with all his heart through study of the Scriptures and tries to practice them without regard for the consequences.<sup>68</sup> To that extent, Philo is right to identify ethics and moral conduct as the primary concern of Essene philosophy.<sup>69</sup> However, it is the Scriptures which form the foundation of Essene piety and communality. The extensive though mostly fragmentary literary remains of the Essenes discovered in the Dead Sea caves consist largely of biblical books and commentaries; the sect's own writings are firmly grounded in the Old Testament. Even in the smallest organizational unit, the group of ten, the Torah was to be studied by day and by night in rotation.<sup>70</sup> Philo and Josephus did indeed refer to the Essenes' devotion to the laws of God and the study of the Scriptures,<sup>71</sup> but they failed to relate this to the details of their way of life. In fact, the history of the sect is essentially a history of scriptural exegesis; the Scriptures were interpreted not only as a testimony of God's will but also as eschatological prophecy disclosing the significance of the present *kairos*. Philo, who claims that the Essenes' Scriptural exegesis was mainly performed at their sabbath worship, speaks in this context of a traditional method of symbolic interpretation which unlocks the mysteries of the Scriptures; to the extent that he has in mind a type of allegorical exegesis, this is more true of his own hermeneutics than of the Essene tradition.<sup>72</sup> Of course examples of allegorical exegesis do occur, especially in the Damascus Document. Far more characteristic, however, is the fact that in Qumran a distinction was drawn between those things in the Torah which were clearly understood, and those things which remained concealed; it was the latter which attracted particular attention.<sup>73</sup> The Temple Scroll claims to have been made by the command of God himself to Moses. In its laws which are similar but are listed in different books and places in the Old Testament, especially in Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Ezekiel, are gathered together and presented in a new way. Such a free rendering of canonical laws and their composition in the form of a new book of direct divine revelation is quite new. One could call the Temple Scroll another Deuteronomy or a 'Tritonomy' which serves at some points as an addition to and an explanation of the Mosaic Law. Another characteristic feature is the consistently eschatological interpretation of Old Testament prophecy, which

<sup>67</sup> 1 QS v. 9f; I. 2f.    <sup>68</sup> 1 QS v. 12f; VIII. 11f.

<sup>69</sup> Q 80; *De vita contemplativa* I.    <sup>70</sup> 1 QS VI. 6–8.    <sup>71</sup> Q 80f; War II. 136.

<sup>72</sup> Q 81f; cf. *De specialibus legibus* I. 25.167.200.

<sup>73</sup> 1QS v.11f; VIII. 11f 4Q PS37 III 15f IV 8–10.



was applied to the history of the sect and to the fate of the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>74</sup> Josephus is right to link the foretelling of the future with various purification rites and a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.<sup>75</sup> For the manner in which individual Essene seers prophesied the rise and fall of their kings clearly reveals that Essene prophecy was modelled on its Old Testament precursors and had been further developed with the aid of Hellenistic techniques of divination.<sup>76</sup> So, too the medicinal skill of the Essenes which Josephus extols had probably been decisively influenced by a synthesis of Old Testament tradition and classical science. They investigated ‘therapeutic roots and the properties of minerals’ and consulted the ‘literature of the ancients’ to ascertain what was beneficial for body and soul.<sup>77</sup>

## 2 THE SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION OF ESSENE LIFE

The most remarkable features of the Essenes’ *vita communis* (*koinōnia*) which were lauded by all three classical writers – that is, common ownership of property, communal labour, the ceremonial meal and celibacy – are not derived from Greek ideals but are grounded in Holy Scripture and, moreover, are moulded by the sense of the imminence of judgement and the need for penitence and return to the Law. This is another aspect which only becomes clear from the Qumran scrolls. Philo postulated other motives which fitted his own predilections: the Essenes’ sacrifice of private wealth could, he thought, be explained by their renunciation of avarice, their contentedness and love of peace, while their love of their fellow men had led them to form communities in the country away from the corruption of the cities;<sup>78</sup> there they supported themselves as farmers and artisans. Josephus too depicts the Essenes as contemptuous of riches, sensual pleasure and the passions.<sup>79</sup> We come closer to the truth if we explore another feature of their way of life. Josephus describes the lamentable plight of those who were excluded from the order because of serious transgressions; owing to the obligations they had undertaken, they could not accept any food from outsiders and simply starved to death unless at the last minute they were admitted back into the fold.<sup>80</sup> The fate of these unfortunates indicates that the motives determining the common ownership of property and the economic self-sufficiency of the Qumran Essenes were an apprehensive obsession with ritual purity and a desire to

<sup>74</sup> CD VI. 2–11; IQS V. 8–10; I Qp Hab VII. 1f. <sup>75</sup> War II. 159; cf. *Ant.* XV.379.

<sup>76</sup> Cp. War I. 78–80 with I Kgs 21:19; *Ant.* XV.371–9 with I Sam. 16:1–13; 2 Sam. 7:14; *Ant.* XVII.345–8 with Gen. 41:17–24.

<sup>77</sup> War II. 136; cf. Jub. x 12f. <sup>78</sup> Q 77f; Ap. 11; Q. 84; Ap. 4; cf. *Ant.* XVIII.19.

<sup>79</sup> War II. 120–2.141. <sup>80</sup> War II. 143f.

avoid all contact with a pernicious world. Among the twelve tribes of Israel the priestly tribe of Levi had not received any allocation of land because God himself represented the inheritance and possession of the priests and allowed them to share in the sacrifices and first-fruits (Ezek. 44:28–30). The true priest was therefore penniless, and avarice was seen as a sin which defiled the servant of God; the Essenes, however, all wanted to be *therapeutai theou*.<sup>81</sup> Like the abjuring of worldly wealth, the communal meals of the Essenes again had a sacerdotal purpose based on the conventions of divine service. This is attested by the ritual immersion (*bagneia* = *ṭabāṛā*) which preceded the meal, by the robes of white linen worn during it, by the exclusivity of the refectory which Josephus compares to hallowed ground, by the solemnity of the repast, and finally by the fact that the food was prepared by priests and the meal began and ended with a priestly blessing. It should also be remembered that the privilege of partaking in the communal meal formed the culmination and conclusion of the novitiate. The communal meal of the Essenes thus possessed a sacral character, comparable to the consuming of the heave-offering by the priests, an ‘eating from the table of the Lord’.<sup>82</sup> In addition, it was designed as a prefiguration of the feasts of the messianic age.<sup>83</sup>

The precise nature of what the Essenes meant by the common ownership of property, and descriptions of the manner in which dispossession was effected, vary somewhat from one source to another. In one place we read that the Essenes were wont to hand over their wages to a steward, and individuals are assumed to have retained private property; in another we learn that it was incumbent on all members to assign their wealth to the order, and we read of the central direction of labour, which evidently was unpaid.<sup>84</sup> This contradiction can be explained if we recall that the sect had adopted two different modes of living: the strict *vita communis* led by a few hundred members on the shores of the Dead Sea, such as the Manual of Discipline implies, and alongside this the way of life pursued by smaller groups dispersed in Jewish towns throughout Palestine, which is what the Damascus Document primarily refers to. Both these modes of existence are specifically mentioned by Josephus with regard to the question of celibacy. Although disdain for marriage and a preference for adopting other people’s children are still a cardinal principle, later there is mention of a second branch of the Essene sect which accepts the need for marriage and children in the interest of the survival of the human race. Nevertheless, this group sanctions marital

<sup>81</sup> Test Levi II. 12; 1 QP Hab VIII. 10–12; Q 75.

<sup>82</sup> War II. 129–33, 139; cf. 1QS VI. 419–22; *Ant.* XVIII.22.

<sup>83</sup> 1QS VI. 4f; 1QSA II. 17–22.

<sup>84</sup> Q 86; Ap 12; *Ant.* XVIII.22; War II. 124, 127, 134; contradicted by War II. 122, 129.

cohabitation solely for the purpose of procreation.<sup>85</sup> Both Philo and Josephus erroneously account for the Essene distaste for marriage in psychological terms. According to Josephus it springs from the conviction that women are sexually omnivorous and incapable of remaining faithful to one man; he also refers to their quarrelsomeness.<sup>86</sup> Philo, who like Pliny claims that all the Essenes remained celibate, cites as a reason the egoism and ambition of women, their inclination to indulge in magical practices, their cunning and immodesty – all of which are qualities harmful to the communal life of a harmonious and truly free brotherhood of men.<sup>87</sup> The Qumran texts, however, contain no polemic against women, nor do they condemn marriage. On the contrary, monogamy is presented as the true will of God and only marriage with kindred is forbidden.<sup>88</sup> According to the Temple Scroll, the king of Israel also has to follow the strict rule of monogamy; he is not allowed to divorce his wife.<sup>89</sup> A significant factor, nevertheless, is that in the Old Testament sexual congress is deemed to be ritually defiling (Lev. 15:16–18). The celibacy of a large majority of Essenes was in fact due to their sense of being permanently engaged in divine service and their desire to prepare themselves for the eschatological holy war. The Qumran community saw itself not only as a living sanctuary but also as a military host, among whom the angels already passed invisibly to and fro, so that any kind of uncleanness had anxiously to be avoided. It was for this reason that sexual abstinence was imperative;<sup>90</sup> hence too the strict sanitary measures enforced in the living quarters of the Essenes.<sup>91</sup>

### 3 WORSHIP AND SACRAL CALENDAR

The communal worship on the sabbath which, according to Philo, consisted mainly in the reading and interpretation of the Scriptures, was probably not very different from the usual form of Jewish sabbath worship at that time. However, the Essenes were particularly strict in observing the sabbath as a day of rest.<sup>92</sup> Another feature peculiar to Essene religious practices was the prayer immediately before sunrise. This should not be seen as some form of sun worship, but rather as a reminder of the triumph of divine light over the power of darkness;<sup>93</sup> the sun symbolized the holy luminosity of God and regulated the hours of prayer and the

<sup>85</sup> War II. 120f, contradicted by War II. 160f.

<sup>86</sup> War II. 121; *Ant.* XVIII.21. <sup>87</sup> *Ap.* 14–17.

<sup>88</sup> CD IV. 21–V. 2 (based on Gen. 1, 27); V. 8–12; cf. 11QT LVII. 17f.

<sup>89</sup> 11QT LVII. 15–19. <sup>90</sup> Cf. Exod. 19:10f15; Deut. 23:11f; CD XII. 1f.

<sup>91</sup> War II. 148f; 1 QM VII. 5f, cf Deut. 23:13–15.

<sup>92</sup> Q 82; War II. 147; CD X. 14–XI. 23. <sup>93</sup> Cf. 1QH IV. 5f; Isa. 60:1f; War II. 128.148.

sect's own calendar. The first day of the first month (that is, of Nisan) fell on a Wednesday, that is, the fourth day of the week, when the sun and the moon were created (Gen. 1:16). The course of the sun indicated the times for praising the Creator, such as the beginning, the middle and the end of each day, and also the quarters, solstices and years, including the sabbath years and jubilees.<sup>94</sup> Owing to their use of a sacral calendar based on the sun, the sabbaths and feast days of the Essenes did not coincide with those of the Palestinian Jews. This ruled out any common worship in Israel. The Essenes claimed that they were in harmony with the heavenly calendar which regulated the worship of the angels. This calendar was identical with that of the Boethusians and can be reconstructed from the Book of Jubilees and the astronomical work of 1 Enoch. It was based on a solar year of 364 days which it divided into four quarters of 13 weeks each; thus the biblical feasts always fell on the same day of the week, and any clash with the sabbath was avoided. This calendar also determined the festivals mentioned in the Temple-Scroll (11 Q Miqdash). The following days are prescribed: the feast of the ordination of the priests on the 1.1.–8.1, Passover and unleavened bread on the 14.1.–21.1, the offering of the sheaf (of barley) on 26.1. The much debated 'morrow after the sabbath' (Lev. 23:11) was understood to be the day after the sabbath following the whole period of unleavened bread. The other festivals follow in a cycle of 50 days (7 × 7 full weeks): that of offering the first-fruits – of wheat (Pentecost) on 15.3, of the new wine (*īrōs*) on 3.5, of oil on 22.6 – together with the cast of wood (for the fire of the altar) on 23–29.6 (cf. Neh. 10:35). The Feast of Trumpets (memorial) was on 1.7, the Day of Atonement on 10.7, the Feast of Tabernacles on 15.–23.7. Remarkable among these festivals are the feast of ordination and the offerings of the first-fruits. The latter results from a combination of the duty of offering the first-fruits and of the 'second tenth' which had to be eaten at the temple (see Deut. 14:22–9; 26:12–15).<sup>95</sup> An important role was played by the Feast of Weeks observed on the fifteenth day of the third month when the Essenes celebrated the admission of novices or the annual renewal by members of the sect of their covenant with God. The model for this Feast of Weeks was probably the sealing of the covenant on Mount Sinai; the sect hoped for the eschatological renewal of the eternal covenant, on the analogy of this great event in the history of Israel. In the course of this Feast of Weeks of the last days, the Essenes believed that God would cleanse his elect of guilt and error through the Holy Ghost, make them equal in knowledge with the angels

<sup>94</sup> 1 QS X. 1–8; 1 QH XII. 4–11.

<sup>95</sup> 11 Q Miqdash XV–XXIII; XLIII 3–10; Jub. 32:10–14; War II. 425; *Ant.* IV. 240.

through this spiritual baptism, and endow them with Adam's pristine glory.<sup>96</sup>

The attitude of the Essenes towards the Jerusalem Temple, especially the sacrificial cult practised there, is difficult to ascertain. Josephus is of the opinion that although the Essenes sent votive offerings to the Temple, they made their sacrifices according to a different ritual of purification and thus debarred themselves from the common sanctuary. Philo maintains that they did not kill any sacrificial beasts but prepared their own minds as a holy offering.<sup>97</sup> The Damascus scroll maintains the sending of gifts to the Temple. On the other hand, through their criticism of the Jerusalem priesthood and their own holy service, the Essenes clearly set a distance between themselves and the Temple: prayer, obedience to the Torah and the devotion of one's whole person to God made for a better atonement than the flesh of beasts.<sup>98</sup> The Essenes thus spiritualized the conception of sacrifice, as is clearly revealed by the non-ritualistic use of the verb *kipper* = to atone. Yet in principle they did not reject Temple worship, as we see above all from the existence of a scroll from Cave 11, which has been given the name the 'Temple Scroll'. This Scroll contains the order for a life of the people of Israel which has its centre in the temple of Jerusalem. But this sanctuary has to be built according to the 'commandments and ordinances' which God had given to Moses: the author of the Scroll used the instructions for the Tent of Meeting (Exod. 35–40) and Ezekiel's temple programme (Ezek. 40–8). David and Solomon knew this temple programme and should have followed its regulations (see 1 Chron. 22:13; 28:11–22). In this Scroll the offerings for the week-days, sabbath-days, and festivals are prescribed (11–29) and the basic rules for Israel's conduct in war and peace are given according to Deut. 12–23 (48–67). The people of Israel should have had under its kings both in the past and in the present this real sanctuary with its ideal square measures and large courts surrounded by high walls containing chambers and entrance-doors for the twelve tribes. In the future, at the end of times, God will build himself a new temple according to the covenant which he made with Jacob at Bethel (29:8–10, cf. Jub. 1:26–9).

#### IV DUALISM AND ESCHATOLOGY

##### I PREDESTINATION

Josephus defined and distinguished the theology of the three Jewish sects on the basis of their ideas about the role of man's free will in relation to

<sup>96</sup> 1 QS IV. 20–3; cf. Ezek. 36:25–7; 1 QS I. 16–II. 25.

<sup>97</sup> *Ant.* XVIII.19; Q 75. <sup>98</sup> CD XI. 17–20; 1 QS IX. 4f; 1 QS VIII. 6; IX. 4.

fate (*heimarmenê*). Whereas the Pharisees occupied an intermediate position, the Essenes represented the opposite extreme to the Sadducees who eliminated the concept of fate from human life and attributed good and evil to the free decisions of the individual.<sup>99</sup> For the Essenes, fate rules everything; or to put it in theological terms, they ascribed everything to God who decides the future of each individual, and their belief in the immortality of the soul offers them the possibility of a judgement and recompense in the life to come.<sup>100</sup> Deprived of the Stoic and Greek gloss given to it by Josephus, this determinism is also evident in the Qumran scrolls and probably derives from the Teacher of Righteousness. The doctrine is unfolded in the Manual of Discipline, in the teaching about the ‘Two Spirits’ in man.<sup>101</sup> This doctrine gave rise to a theological view of history which not only justifies God’s ways but also accounts for the fate of individuals. The apocalyptic teaching encompasses creation and judgement, theodicy and anthropology. All being and becoming derives from God who is omniscient. Before his creatures came into existence, he had devised a plan for them which determines their actions; nothing happens except according to his will.<sup>102</sup> The instruments of divine predestination are ‘the spirits of truth and error’ in which each individual participates, though in unequal measure. They determine his character, his deeds and his ultimate fate.<sup>103</sup> Since every individual is dominated by either the spirit of truth or the spirit of error, mankind throughout all generations falls into two groups: the children of truth or light, and the children of error or darkness.<sup>104</sup> Inexorable predestination, as Josephus rightly emphasizes, is one of the most important features of Essene theology. One can define the characteristics of the two spirits and their diametrically opposed influence on individuals, and predict how they will be weighed at the last judgement. Even physiognomical and astrological observations were made to ascertain the nature of a man and to decide which spirit had the ascendant.<sup>105</sup> However, the definitive distinction between the two classes of mankind will not become evident until the last days, when God will put an end to error and cast the demons into Sheol and there incarcerate them.<sup>106</sup>

## 2 THE FORCES OF GOOD AND EVIL

The dualism of the Essenes is not gnostic, since it does not oppose spirit and matter, for instance; rather it draws a sharp distinction between the

<sup>99</sup> *Ant.* XIII.171–3; *War* II. 164f; *Ant.* XIII.172.

<sup>100</sup> *Ant.* XIII.172; XV. 373; XVIII.18. <sup>101</sup> I QS III. 13–IV. 26.

<sup>102</sup> I QS III. 15–17; I QH I. 7f. <sup>103</sup> I QS III. 18–26. <sup>104</sup> I QS III. 19f; IV. 15–26.

<sup>105</sup> I QS IV. 2–14; 4 Q mess ar; 4 Q Horoscope (4Q 186).

<sup>106</sup> I QS IV. 18–23; cf I Q 27; I QH III. 18.

spirit of good and the spirit of evil. It is steeped in the sort of pessimistic condemnation of the present which is familiar in Jewish apocalyptic thinking. Admittedly we do not yet find the contrast of two eras, the wicked aeon of the present (*bacôlām haḥzēb*) and the approaching aeon of salvation (*bacôlām hab-bāʾ*), which is characteristic of later apocalyptic and rabbinic theology. Nevertheless, there is a clear opposition even in Essene thought between the contemporary period of tribulation and the age of righteousness which will one day be ushered in by God. Yet the historical understanding of the Qumran sect is more differentiated and dynamic than the clear-cut teaching of the two aeons. The spheres of influence of good and evil overlap, the spirits of truth and error wage their war even in the heart of the individual.<sup>107</sup> On the one hand, error and ungodliness have already reached such a pitch and brought down such grievous affliction upon the godly that the revelation of God's punitive justice and the end of the diabolic dominion must be imminent.<sup>108</sup> On the other hand, the forces of the new age have already made themselves felt in this world of darkness and confusion – for example, in the form of the Holy Spirit which was poured forth on the teacher of the Qumran sect and which attests its purifying power in the disciplined life of the members.<sup>109</sup> The dynamism of this conflict becomes particularly clear when one considers the way in which the teaching of the two spirits can be connected with the idea of two superhuman, antagonistic beings, which allows a metaphysical interpretation of history and human existence. This is supported by a belief in good and fallen angels. Josephus mentions how important the angels were to the Essenes; their names had to be kept strictly secret.<sup>110</sup> The doctrine of the angels, which is based on biblical tradition but goes beyond it, is related to the dualistic doctrine of the two spirits. The origin of evil and the great disruption of God's creation are traced back not to the fall of Adam (Gen. 3) but to the disobedience of the angels (Gen. 6:1–4) who by their association with the daughters of men brought dire distress upon the world.<sup>111</sup> The demons, the powers of evil, are seen as the spirits of the slain giants who were born of the union of the fallen angels with mortal women. The immediate consequence of the fall of the angels was the creation of two kingdoms, the realm of the good angels and servants of God, who are led by the 'Prince of Light', the archangel Michael (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1) and the realm of demons under the leadership of the 'Angel of Darkness', the devil = Belial and 'King of Wickedness' (*mal'ki-rēṣā*). The latter rules the children of error, and is the sworn antagonist of the righteous, whom he tries to tempt

<sup>107</sup> I QS III. 22–25; IV. 23.   <sup>108</sup> I QS I. 17f; IV. 18–20; I Q. 27.

<sup>109</sup> I QH VII. 6f; I QS III. 7f.   <sup>110</sup> War II. 142.   <sup>111</sup> CD II. 17–20; Jub. VII. 21f.



into transgressions and misdeeds or to unnerve through calamity and tribulation.<sup>112</sup> The struggle between the powers of light and darkness will be decided in an eschatological war in which the human enemies of the true Israel will also take part but which with Michael's help will result in the overthrow of the devil and the redemption of the just; Michael will become enthroned in heaven as 'King of Righteousness' (*malki-sedeq*).<sup>113</sup> In view of this state of affairs the virtue of the godly consists in remaining steadfast, adhering to truth and maintaining their unshaken faith in the coming of God's judgement, even when this appears to be unduly delayed. Their disappointment that it is not yet at hand may be overcome if they continue to place their trust in God's design and the predetermined course of history.<sup>114</sup> Determinism based on the foreknowledge and predestination of God does not absolve the individual of ethical responsibility, especially since he cannot be certain of his inclusion among the band of the elect; his allegiance needs to be constantly affirmed and confirmed through a life of divine service. The elect of God does not count on any reward – he sees his righteousness as God's work. The ability to carry out God's will and lead a holy life is not seen in the Qumran texts as redounding to man's credit. Man is indeed supreme among God's creatures and appointed to rule the world. But when he enters the presence of God in prayer, when he considers the prospect of the last judgement, he is filled with a sense of his utter unworthiness. By nature he is a 'figure of clay', transient, foolish, impure, 'the limit of infamy, a source of impurity, a furnace of guilt and a house of iniquity'.<sup>115</sup> It is entirely through God's righteousness that certain individuals are chosen to be delivered from destruction, cleansed from their misdeeds and led into the congregation of those who know and praise him.<sup>116</sup> In the very prayers of the Qumran sect in particular God is ascribed a function which may aptly be called the justification of sinners. Though the concept of 'justification' does not occur in the theological sense – of man being freed by God from the penalty of sin – and though the validity of the law is never doubted, God grants men the power completely to transform their lives. His righteousness supports men when they stumble, cleanses them of the filth which clings to them from birth, and relieves the burden of guilt which is constantly incurred even by the elect. To praise God's righteousness which manifests itself as grace and loving help, is therefore the true mission of man and corresponds to his final destiny.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>112</sup> 1 QS III. 22–4; 1 QM XIII. 10–12.

<sup>113</sup> 1 QM I. 1–6; XIII. 10–16; XVII. 6–9; 11 Q Melch.

<sup>114</sup> 1 QP Hab VII. 9–14. <sup>115</sup> 1 QH I. 15, 21–3; 1 QS XI. 21f.

<sup>116</sup> 1 QH III. 19–23. <sup>117</sup> 1 QH III. 22f; 1 QS XI. 10–19.

## 3 THE EXPECTATION OF THE END

The eschatological orientation of the Essene religion is less to the fore in Philo. It can, however, be discerned in Josephus if one elucidates the information he provides. For example, he extols the equanimity with which the Essenes underwent martyrdom at the hands of the victorious Romans: 'Smiling though their agony and defying their torturers, they joyfully gave their lives in the certain hope of receiving them again.'<sup>118</sup> This attests the steadfastness which enables them to endure under the rule of Belial, to suffer terror and ordeals in the confident belief in God's coming.<sup>119</sup> Josephus speaks of their faith in the immortality of the soul and attributes to the Essenes a doctrine of reward or punishment after death, which smacks of Platonic and Stoic teaching. Like the Greeks, Josephus states, they believe that the souls of the good enjoy an existence in a lovely abode beyond the ocean, while evil men are banished to some dark, inhospitable place of punishment.<sup>120</sup> The Qumran texts very seldom contain clear allusion to the resurrection of the dead, and Ethiopic Enoch, which was familiar to the Qumran community, describes the ultimate destination of men's souls in similar terms.<sup>121</sup> But in Qumran the expectation of the eschaton was based primarily on God's role in the history of Israel; this supplied analogies for the miraculous events which God would bring about in the last days, e.g. David's victory over Goliath, or the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.<sup>122</sup> It was necessary to interpret this past correctly in order to conceive the mysteries of things to come.<sup>123</sup> Thus the hopes of the Qumran sect were pinned not on the fate of the individual after death but, in the final analysis, on the tangible historical evidence of God's saving grace towards the community which he had chosen to be his servant. The narrow conception of this congregation in the present was widened to include the union of all those chosen by God. The holy remnant of the present community will serve as a source of sanctity for the new Israel. The so-called Rule of the Community (*serēkh bāc'ēdā*), a supplement to the Manual of Discipline,<sup>124</sup> is conceived as 'an ordinance for the whole congregation of Israel in the last days'. This 'whole congregation' is the ideal Israel which will emerge triumphant from the final holy war, a great nation which will do penance and fulfil the law according to the guiding principles of the Qumran sect. For this Israel of the messianic age which God will miraculously have

<sup>118</sup> War II. 152f.    <sup>119</sup> 1 QS I. 17f.    <sup>120</sup> War II. 154–8.

<sup>121</sup> Chapter XXII., for the belief in a bodily resurrection see 4Q 521 I. 2.12.

<sup>122</sup> 1 QM XI. 2f9f.

<sup>123</sup> CD I. 1f; cf also the interpretation of Isa. 43:18f in 1 Q 27 1,I 3f.

<sup>124</sup> 1QS a cols. 1–II.

converted and gathered together, the small, present-day Qumran community has prepared the Rule of the Order which governs essential matters of communal life, such as membership, the deliberative assembly and the meals under the leadership of the two Messiah figures. The hopes of the godly of Qumran will be realized in the new, holy Israel; the messianic age will restore the unity and purity of God's people. Their own sectarian existence in exile will come to an end, for they will have the task of organizing the community of all those men of Israel who according to God's promise will inherit the land for ever (Isa. 60:21) and they will be assimilated into the nation of the righteous. But the Essenes did not conceive of Gentiles being admitted into the fellowship of the elect; they rather expected their eschatological unification with the angels.

#### 4 FOREIGN INFLUENCES

One thorny problem remains: were the Essenes, who thought of themselves as a holy remnant of the true Israel, who desired to preserve the covenant with God and observe the Torah in every detail, and who used Hebrew, the holy language of the Bible, in their books and prayers trying to avoid Greek loan words – were these ultra-conservative Jews in fact a prey to foreign influences? Did they owe the specific characteristics of their faith and way of life to alien sources? Their 'monastic' existence in particular seems difficult to reconcile with the Jewish tradition of the Old Testament. Philo compared the Essenes with the seven sages of the Greeks and with the Persian magi 'who inquire into the works of nature in order to find knowledge of the truth', and finally with the Indian gymnosophists who study natural philosophy and ethics.<sup>125</sup> Essene scholarship, especially in the nineteenth century, did indeed postulate influences from these three sources: Hellenism, Parseeism and Buddhism. Since the discovery of the Qumran texts scholars have linked the dualist doctrine of the 'spirits of truth and error', for which there is no proper authority in the Old Testament, with Persian Zoroastrianism, more particularly the Gathas<sup>126</sup> – and, I would submit, rightly so. On the other hand, in Qumran this dualism was completely absorbed into Jewish monotheism and the belief in Creation. God himself has created the two spirits and ordained them to be a criterion of man's spiritual progress;<sup>127</sup> they thus had a function at once ethical and anthropological, similar to the good or evil impulse of which the rabbis spoke. Babylonian influence can be assumed on Essene astrology and their belief in horoscopes (4Q 186; 1 Hen. 72–82).

<sup>125</sup> Q 73f. <sup>126</sup> *Yasna* xxxv. 2; xxx. 3–5; Plutarch, *de Is et Os* 369F–370C.

<sup>127</sup> 1QS III. 18.25; cf Is. 45:6f.

Josephus draws parallels between the tenets of the Essene and Greek philosophy, claiming that they pursued a way of life based on Pythagorean principles. By contrast Hippolytus in his account of the Essenes tried to show that the Greeks owed their religious ideas to the Jews.<sup>128</sup> The Essenes' refusal to take oaths or to sacrifice animals has been ascribed to Pythagorean influences, as has their ritual purity, their white garb and their prayer to the sun, to which the life of the itinerant Pythagorean preacher Apollonius of Tyana is cited as a cogent analogy. Yet as far as the Essenes are concerned, all these features can be traced back to the tradition of the Jewish priests of the Old Testament; and we should remember that the Pythagoreans for their part did not insist on a communal life strictly segregated from the world. The Essene *yahad* (community or unity) may indeed be likened to a Greek religious association (*thiasos*) which was governed by fixed statutes and the authority of a founding father, but even there the abrupt break with ordinary life, such as the Qumran sect demanded, was unknown. Plato, of course, depicted an old primitive age in which there was as yet no private property, no distinction between rich and poor, neither presumption nor injustice, neither jealousy nor envy.<sup>129</sup> Moreover, Plato held that it was impossible to combine wealth and virtue, and extolled agriculture as being preferable to the acquisition of money by trade or usury; the private possession of gold and silver should be banned and only one coin allowed for day-to-day business.<sup>130</sup> The ideals and the lifestyle of the Essenes were to some extent indebted to the development of culture and religion in the age of Hellenism; the Qumran system of water supply (aqueduct), and the cultivation of the desert land (ain Feshha, ain al Guwer) show such influence. Yet the life of the Qumran sect did not derive from imported Platonic ideals but instead represents an analogous development on Jewish soil. These Platonic ideas are important for our assessment of the Essenes only insofar as they coloured Philo's view of the sect. For the rest, the common ownership of property and wealth was a familiar classical ideal found throughout the ancient world: it was embodied in the Sun-State of the Syrian Iambulus. The simple communal existence of the Essenes and their renunciation of private wealth seems more likely to have been a protest against Hellenistic civilization in Palestine, with its money economy and its large estates; the Hasmonaean priest-kings were highly susceptible to the temptations of this civilization. Furthermore, Josephus explicitly relates the Essene doctrine of the twofold destiny of souls after death to Greek religious influences.<sup>131</sup> Indeed, there could be another echo of Plato here: at the end of the *Republic* he speaks of the

<sup>128</sup> *Ant.* xv.371; *Refutatio* xxviii. 1f. <sup>129</sup> Plato, *Laws* 679a–b.

<sup>130</sup> *Laws* 742d–e; 743d; *Republic* 373a. <sup>131</sup> *War* II.154–8.

souls being brought to judgement, of their remorse, punishment and reward. In Plato, too, the immortality of the soul makes it incumbent upon men to strive for righteousness.<sup>132</sup> Yet once again the Jewish apocalyptic tradition offers a closer and a better parallel to the doctrine of the Essenes.<sup>133</sup> Admittedly, in Enoch the dwelling of the souls in this abode represents a temporary condition *prior* to the resurrection of the dead and the last judgement. Yet it is certainly the case that the ancient Israelite belief in Sheol and the shades of the dead was modified by the Greek doctrine of the immortal soul and hell as the place of the punishment of souls. Finally, Josephus elucidated the Essene belief in determinism by reference to the concept of *heimarmenē*, so crucial to the Stoa. The dualist doctrine of the two spirits indeed betrays the influence of Greek abstract thinking, especially in such turns of phrase as ‘being’ and ‘becoming’. And if in Qumran the sun is regarded as the ‘norm of the world’, so too the Stoa glorifies the sun as the essence of the truth and stability of the upper cosmic order.<sup>134</sup> There is one other influence of a rather different level. The description of the holy militia in the Qumran War Scroll is clearly based on the equipment and tactics of Hellenistic warfare and of the Roman army which aroused considerable admiration in Syria and especially in Palestine during the Hellenistic period.

## V THE THERAPEUTAE

The Essenes of Palestine had their counterpart on Egyptian soil in the form of the Therapeutae. We know little about them since our only source of information is Philo’s *De Vita Contemplativa* which contains scarcely any concrete details about their history, numbers and economic circumstances. Instead Philo gives us a highly stylized and idealized picture of a Jewish community, reminiscent in outline of his account of the Essenes. The Therapeutae, too, are made to exemplify his own ethical programme; the report is interspersed with general digressions criticizing the modern age (§§ 3–20; 40–63). What Philo is primarily concerned with is the value of the contemplative life of these philosophers as an alternative to the active life of the Essenes; his account of the latter may have formed the first section of the original edition of this work, a section which is no longer extant or which has been absorbed into the present apologia (§§ 1–2). As in the case of the Essenes, the name of the sect again expresses its philosophy. Philo gives a twofold explanation of *Therapeutae* (§ 2): first, it denotes men who practise medicine and thereby

<sup>132</sup> *Republic* 614a–e; 621c–d. <sup>133</sup> Enoch 22.

<sup>134</sup> 1 Q 27 1, 1. 6f; Cicero *De natura deorum* II.56: *in caelo . . . omnis ordo, veritas, constantia.*

heal sick souls, and secondly it means those who revere the True and Primeval Being (that is, God – see Exod. 3:14). It is conceivable that the name *therapeutae* represents a rendering of ‘Essenes’ in the sense of *’āsayya’* – healers. While the Essenes were confined to Palestine, the Therapeutae were an Egyptian phenomenon; they were to be found throughout the land but the elite dwelt on a hill near the Mareotic Lake (§§ 21–2). In this case too Philo emphasizes the simple rural existence in self-control (*enkrateia*) and very modest circumstances (§§ 34–9), the exodus from the towns into remote areas and the breaking of family ties (§§ 18–24), the ideal of freedom, equality, and voluntary service (§§ 71f), the surrender of private property and the abjuring of avarice and profit (§§ 16f; 66). As in the case of the Essenes he extols the ideal spiritual family with its veneration for and service especially to the old (§ 72) and he gives a more detailed description of the communal meal (§§ 73f; 81f) for which the participants wear white garments (§ 66). He also depicts sabbath worship (§§ 30–3), study of the scriptures and their allegorical exegesis (§§ 28f; 78), and prayer to the rising sun (§ 27; 89). But unlike the Essenes whose daily round is occupied with communal prayer and labour, purification rites and communal meals, the Therapeutae live as isolated individuals. The hallowed ground was a consecrated room (*semneion*; *monastērion*) to be found in every house, which permitted meditation, the concentration of the individual on prayer and Holy Scripture (§§ 25; 27–9). They came together solely for worship on the sabbath (§§ 30–3); the communal meal took place only on the fiftieth day (§§ 65–8), and the motif of silence (*bēsychia*) is mentioned not in relation to the meal but with reference to the service of worship (§ 31). For if one leads a contemplative life, one can make do with little sustenance: bread, salt and water suffice. Frequently the adherents fasted throughout the day (§ 37; 34ff). Chastity was not enjoined upon them in the form of a rule of celibacy but seems to have been a spontaneous ideal (§ 68) which led to the equality of the sexes but also to their segregation during worship (§§ 32f); men and women came together again for their great feasts. In contrast with Philo’s account of the Essenes, this treatise does not contain derogatory remarks about women; the opposite of the contemplative life is not a burdensome marriage but the hedonism of the cities (§§ 40–63). The meal of the Therapeutae seems to have been especially characteristic. It was part of a great assembly, preceded by an exegetical address and the singing of a hymn of praise and followed by a nocturnal celebration which lasted until morning (§§ 73–83). In the course of this feast a choir of men and women appeared, modelled on the chorus of the Israelites as they crossed the Red/Sea (Exod. 15:1–17). This would indicate that, like the Essenes, the Therapeutae saw the great era of Moses as exemplary. Meditation meant

first and foremost studying the Holy Scriptures. It should be seen as the literal fulfilment of God's behest to Joshua to reflect upon the Torah night and day (Josh. 1:8), in order that they might inherit the promise that one would bring forth fruit like a tree by the rivers of water (Pss. 1:3). Whether the Therapeutae, too, believed the end of the world to be imminent cannot be deduced with certainty, but the following sentence is reminiscent of eschatological thinking: 'Out of yearning for eternal and blessed life they consider their mortal life to be already over and therefore bequeath their fortune to sons, daughters and other relatives' (§ 13). Furthermore, it was doubtless with the last judgement and redemption in mind that they celebrated their nocturnal feast on the fiftieth day and took up the hymn of praise sung by the Israelites at the Red Sea. The date of this feast suggests that the Therapeutae used the same sacral calendar as the Essenes. The fact that their great assemblies were celebrated at intervals of 50 days (§ 65) is reminiscent of the cycle of festivals in the Temple Scroll of Qumran. The 'hymns to God' (§§ 80, 84) remind us of the Thanksgiving Hymns of the Qumran sect with their stereotyped opening: 'I praise Thee, O Lord.' If a book such as *Joseph and Aseneth* and other pseudepigrapha written in Greek were actually known to have originated among the Therapeutae, one could examine and amplify Philo's account.

Despite his stylized and idealized report, we must not dismiss it as a figment of Philo's imagination, or regard it as a projection of Christian monasticism in Egypt. There is no reason to doubt Philo's authorship of the *De vita contemplativa*; and the concrete features of the way of life of the Therapeutae, such as the nocturnal feasts, show that the sect was neither a mere fiction, nor Christian in character.



## CHAPTER 16

## THE BAPTIST SECTS

## I PROBLEMS OF DEFINITIONS AND SOURCES

Scholars have come to apply the term 'baptist sects' to a series of phenomena in the post-biblical ('early Jewish') and early Christian phases of religious history. The most comprehensive monograph written on the subject to date is, in fact, entitled *Le mouvement baptiste en Palestine et Syrie (150 av. J-C-300 ap. J-C)*.<sup>1</sup> The meaning and legitimacy of such a title are indeed, arguable, depending on one's interpretation of 'baptism' and of its liturgical significance in a religious community. Not every community practising immersion, of whatever form, is a 'baptist sect'. The act of baptism must occupy a central place in its ritual, that is, should be more than a preparatory ceremony, and must bear a special significance in the beliefs of the sect. One may also think in terms of the ceremony as a sacrament, different from the common and widespread rites of lustration or ablution, even if this is not apparent in mere externals. The ceremony commonly takes the form of partial or total immersion of the believer in 'flowing' (that is, running) water, so the expression 'bath of immersion' or baptism (*baptisma*)<sup>2</sup> is quite in order. The periodic repetition of this ceremony is certainly a distinctive feature of the typical 'baptist sects', but is not necessarily their principal characteristic, since a single celebration – in its central role referred to above – may be a sufficient hallmark of a community which has, in this very respect, cut itself off from a larger community, that is, become a sect. Most representatives of these movements are both 'sectarian' and 'heretical'. Baptist sects, or other peoples sharing similar views, are therefore more or less distinct communities, in which a magically or sacramentally construed baptism in water has become the central feature in the liturgy, and thus been made distinct from

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste à Palestine et Syrie (150 av. J-C-300 ap. J-C)* (Gembloux 1935), hereafter: Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*; Thomas, 'Baptistes', *RAC* 1 (1950), pp. 1167–72.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. on lexical problems, A. Oepke, 'baptō', *TWNT* 1 (Stuttgart 1933), 527–44, ET *TDNT* 1 (Grand Rapids 1964), pp. 529–546.

the occasional specific acts of purification from which the former originally grew.<sup>3</sup>

The problems of definition are compounded by a lack of documentary evidence. For the intertestamental period in particular, we have only very scanty reports of the Baptist Sects, leaving us with no clear picture of the origins and history of these movements. Moreover, the extant material on the subject available at the moment comes from predominantly external sources, particularly from the study of heresies, so that the careful evaluation of sources is especially important in this field. Primary sources, originating from the sects themselves, have only survived from the best-known sects. Among these are the Qumran Essenes, belonging to the earliest group of sects, together with the Ebionites, the Elkesaites and, lastly, the Mandaeans, of whom we have the most comprehensive knowledge, and who are the only baptist sect to have survived from antiquity through to the present day. Other groups are known of only from their names and from isolated items of associated information; included here are the Hemerobaptists, Masbotheans, Baptists (*sic*) and the followers of John the Baptist. In addition, there are some singular literary proofs of the high value placed on water ceremonies in the Judaeo-Christian tradition (Josephus, the Sibylline Oracles, Life of Adam and Eve, the pseudo-Clementine writings, Rabbinica). Viewed as a whole, then, the sources provide a rather precarious base, and make impossible the reconstruction of any full history of the baptist movement.<sup>4</sup> It is only possible to establish a few connections within certain branches of the one tradition, which hypothetically can be traced back to a common starting-point, with perhaps the Jordan region as a dominant centre of such communities. A particular problem in this respect is the continuity between Jewish and Christian movements of this kind; repeated attempts have been made to prove links between the Essenes on the one hand and the Elkesaites or Ebionites on the other. However, chronological and textual lacunae lead all attempts in this direction to no conclusive result. A particularly striking case of this kind, for example, is the postulation of a connection between the followers of John the Baptist and the Mandaeans. For even if there is some evidence of continuity purely on the level of liturgical

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*, pp. 425ff and K. Rudolph, *Die Mandäer II. Der Kult* (Göttingen 1961), pp. 376ff. On the phenomenon of 'sect' cf. my article 'Wesen und Struktur der Sekte', *Kairos* 21 (1979), 241–54.

<sup>4</sup> J. Thomas has attempted this with remarkable courage, but he only succeeds in showing the critical reader that such a task is impossible. Even the history of the world of the baptist sects of Transjordan is very hypothetical, since the affiliations laid down by the anti-heretics (especially Epiphanius) are for the most part not historically authenticated (cf. pp. 49of).

practices, considerable difficulties immediately present themselves on the level of ideology and teaching which make any connection difficult to prove. Strictly speaking, there is no common baptist ideology (not even *gnosis*, as is often maintained). Features of the ritual which might plausibly suggest affinities on this level bear a distinct significance in the tenets of each individual community; this is the feature which divides and differentiates sects from one another, and which enables us to think of different sects within the one genus. For this reason we shall here present the most important pieces of evidence separately and in their presumed chronological order, without pretending to present a common history of all those sects which we have come to know of more or less by chance; nevertheless, points of similarity between them will emerge, and will be treated briefly in the conclusion.

## II THE JEWISH 'BAPTISTS'

Within the early Jewish religious tradition there is a succession of items of evidence to show that in the period from the second century BCE to the second century CE there were on the fringe of orthodox Judaism in Palestine both communities and individuals who gave a form of their own to the traditional lustral baths and developed these into a popular form of ritual. This developed out of a more severe code of purity on the one hand, and ascetic tendencies on the other. Both can then culminate in a magico-sacramental interpretation of the immersion, overtaking and outdating established forms of ritual (especially sacrifice). It is of course impossible to establish individual details of this development; but it can be deduced from the sources at our disposal. Unfortunately, these sources cannot always be dated with precise accuracy, nor can they be interpreted to our total satisfaction.

### A THE ESSENES

The Essenes provide some of the earliest evidence of Jewish baptist sects.<sup>5</sup> As early as Josephus we find reports of strict daily washings (technical term: *apolouesthai*) 'in cold water' before each meal, and whenever an individual soiled himself in any way, and also of initiatory baths of sacramental import for particular stages in spiritual progress.<sup>6</sup> The

<sup>5</sup> We are concerned here only with baptist practices, not with a general portrayal of the Essenes, which may be found in the previous chapter.

<sup>6</sup> Josephus, *Bell.* 11.8, 128, 138, 149. Cf. Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*, pp. 4–34; R. Wolf, *Aqua religiosa. Die religiöse Verwendung von Wasser im frühen Christentum und seiner Umwelt*

Qumran texts, above all the provisions of the 'Manual of Discipline' (I QS III. 4, 9; v. 13f) provide firm confirmation of these practices, and archaeological discoveries of channels and basins would appear to point in the same direction. It is the radicalized concept of 'purity' and 'sanctification' which plays a fundamental role here.<sup>7</sup> The ablutions and immersions (technical term: 'to enter the water' v. 13) were a holy rite and a privilege of the members of the order, or the initiates, and served as atonement and purification before God (III. 4.11). For this, 'running (flowing) water' (III. 9, from Pss. 93:3) was obviously preferred, but any other available supply of water might be used (III. 4ff). Unfortunately we have no description of the details of the ceremony; according to Josephus the celebrant wore a linen loincloth (*Bell.* II.8, 129), It remains uncertain to what extent this emphasis on rites of lustration was related to the contemporaneous discarding of the sacrificial rite and the (Jerusalem) temple service;<sup>8</sup> but the tendency was obviously towards replacing the earlier sacrificial form of worship by purificatory ablutions as an expression of sanctification possessing superior ritual efficacy. Even the lustrations were, according to the Manual, only a symbolic expression of inner disposition and transformation; external cleansing was worthless unless

(Theol. Diss. Pt. 1, typescript; Leipzig 1956), pp. 75ff; K. Rudolph, *Die Mandäer I. Prolegomena: das Mandäerproblem* (Göttingen 1960), pp. 223ff. (On sources, especially in relation to Philo, see W. Bousset in *PW Sup* 4 (1924), cols. 386–430, and the notes in the more recent German translation by O. Michel and O. Bauernfeind, *Josephus De Bello Judaico*, vol. 1 (Bad Homburg vor der Höhe 1960), pp. 431ff). According to R. Bergmeier, *Die Essener Berichte des Flavius Josephus* (Kampen 1993), the report on the Essenes is mainly influenced by Pythagorean ideas and has a strong 'fictional character'; there are no relations to the Qumran materials (?).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. H. Braun, *Spätjüdisch-häretischer und frühchristlicher Radikalismus*; hereafter: Braun, *Radikalismus* (ed. Tübingen 1969), 1, pp. 29, 34; 75, where descriptions of the Essenes in Josephus and in the Qumran texts are compared. More about this topic in J. M. Baumgarten, 'The Purification Rituals in DJD 7', D. Dimant and U. Rappaport, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden 1992), pp. 199–209 (with references to Rabbinic sources, Sib.iv.165, and Life of Adam and Eve, xi); H. Stegemann, *Die Essener, Qumran, Johannes der Täufer und Jesus* (Freiburg/B. 1993), 3rd edn, 1996, pp. 264ff; F. Garcia Martinez and J. Trebolla Barrera, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden 1995), pp. 39ff; B. G. Wood, 'To Dip or sprinkle? The Qumran Cisterns in Perspective', *BASOR* 256 (1984), 45–60.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Braun, *Radikalismus*, pp. 34, 75. On the replacement of sacrificial rites by immersion, cf. I QS 3, 11, in G. Klinzing, *Die Umdeutung des Kultus in der Qumrangemeinde und im NT SUNT* (Göttingen 1971), p. 110. According to the 'Temple Scroll' (*Megillat ham-Miqdaš*), published 1977 (Hebrew) and 1983 (English) by Y. Yadin, the community is oriented to a strict 'pure' and 'holy' service in the temple including sacrifices (cols. 45–7; 51–3). Cf. J. Maier, *Die Tempelrolle vom Toten Meer* (Munich 1978), pp. 48f, 53f, ET *The Temple Scroll*, JSOTSS 34 (Sheffield 1985), pp. 40–2, 45–7; further E. Schürer, *HJPAJC* 2 (Edinburgh 1979), p. 582; 3 (1986), pp. 406–20.

accompanied by inner purification.<sup>9</sup> To this extent a strong move towards spiritualization of concepts of worship can be noted among the Essenes. In their ideology, side by side with the unequivocally Jewish (especially priestly) radicalism of laws and strict monotheism, there existed a noteworthy inclination towards dualistic thinking and esoteric apocalyptic knowledge, which was ultimately to culminate in later heretical movements.

#### B BAPTISTS, HEMEROBAPTISTS, MASBOTHEANS

It is only in Christian studies of heresies that three further names crop up in connection with the schema of the seven pre-Christian Jewish heresies (to which the Essenes also undoubtedly belong), which have been regarded as indicative of the existence of baptist sects. These are the ‘Baptists’ (*Baptistai*: Justin, *Dial.* 80,4), the ‘Hemerobaptists’ (*Hēmerobaptistai*), and the ‘Masbotheans’ (*Masbōtheoi* or *Masbōthaioi*: Hegesippus, in Eusebius, *HE* IV.22).<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately the oldest descriptions give only the names; these are indeed quite informative, and point to an excessive emphasis on baptist practices, but leave us rather in the dark as to which particular sects are intended to be designated (insofar as they are not simply inventions of the historians!). It seems that we may assume the Baptists of Justin Martyr (c. CE 160) and the Masbotheans to be the same sect, since both names mean the same thing. The Aramaic *mašbū‘tā* means ‘immersion, baptism’ (from *šb*<sup>c</sup>) and remains today the technical term of the Mandaeans for baptism (*mašbūtā*) in running water (below). It is striking that in connection with the baptist sects many derivatives of *šb*<sup>c</sup> occur which obviously belong to the established ritual terminology of this world.<sup>11</sup> Hegesippus (in his *Hypomnemata*, written after 180 and preserved only in

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Braun, *Radikalismus*, p. 34. On the individual phases of development in the concept of purity and the institution of baptism, see J. Schmitt, ‘Le Milieu baptiste de Jean le Précurseur’, *RevSR* 47 (1973), 397–407. Among the fragments from Cave 4 (4QM) which bear on cultic and ritual matters there is no text related to the ritual washings or purifications. Cf. Schürer, *HJPAJC* 3.1, 1, pp. 443–469; M. E. Stone (ed.) *JWSTP*, (Assen/Philadelphia 1984) (CRINT, Section 2) pp. 522ff, 566ff.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. also *Apost. Const.* VI.6 (below); Epiphanius, *Panarion* 17,4 (on hemerobaptists); Afrēm (Ephraim) of Edessa, *Ev. Concord.* (ed. Moesinger) p. 287; *Ps.-Clem.* Hom. II.23; *Rec.* I. 54 (below). A comparison of the various lists of baptist sects reveals that the situation of the sects fluctuated to a considerable degree, and they are not mentioned at all by some anti-heretics (e.g. Irenaeus and Hippolytus). Cf. the synoptic scheme in Rudolph. *Antike Baptisten*, pp. 16–17 (revised reprint in: *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, Leiden 1997, p. 591); also S. J. Isser, *The Dositheans* (Leiden 1976), pp. 165f and on the ‘seven sects’ pp. 11ff, 59ff.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* I, pp. 229; II, pp. 76, 357, 380. The Palestinian Christians too use *mašbū‘tā* for baptism, in contrast to the eastern Syrians, among whom the form from ‘*md* (*mā’ mūdūzā*) predominates (cf. Brockelmann. *Lexicon Syriacum*, ed. 2 Tübingen 1928 sv.).

part in Eusebius) connects the Masbotheans with the emergence of a succession of gnostic sects, in accordance with his theory that Christian heresies sprang from Jewish roots. In the sixth chapter of the anti-heretical sixth book of the fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions* they are described as *Basmothaioi* instead of *Masbōthaioi* and their beliefs are reported to encompass not only the denial of Providence,<sup>12</sup> but the self-motivation of all living things and the associated depreciation of the immortality of the soul. These statements do not guarantee historical authenticity, since they serve mainly the subsequent purpose of the works to explain Christian heresies.

The position with respect to the ‘Hemerobaptists’ (i.e. ‘daily-bathers’) is not much better. Epiphanius (fourth century) who mentions them after the Pharisees (*Panarion* 17,1–5) is the first source to provide any detailed information about them: according to him they immersed themselves fully under water every day, summer and winter alike, and believed that only in this way could they attain a state of purity and sanctity pleasing to God which might bring them to eternal salvation. For this purpose the water could come from any one of a number of sources, but they had a particular preference for running water. Epiphanius sums them up in the *Anakephalaiōsis* thus: although Jews, they firmly believed that it was essential to bathe (*baptizēin*) daily to ensure eternal life. It remains uncertain to what extent Epiphanius is reproducing accurate reports, or how far he is just filling in gaps from similar information known about the Ebionites or Elkesaites. *The Apostolic Constitutions*, dating from roughly the same period, attribute to this sect (VI.6) customs reminiscent of those Pharisaic Jewish customs described in Mark 7:3f: each day, not to eat without having first bathed oneself (*baptisōntai*), and not to go to table nor to use dishes, drinking vessels, pots or even couches, until these had first been cleansed with water (*mē katharōsin hydati*). Later reports emphasize these characteristics even more strongly.<sup>13</sup>

The Hemerobaptists have often been associated with the ‘early morning bathers’ (*tōb’ lē šab’ rīt*),<sup>14</sup> of whom we know from rabbinical literature

<sup>12</sup> There may be behind this a secondary etymology of the name of this sect (*sebut, voluntas*); for support of this view see A. Hilgenfeld, *Ketzergeschichte des Urchristentums. Urkundlich dargestellt* (Leipzig 1884; repr. Hildesheim 1963), p. 31, note 43.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. F. Oehler (ed.) *Corporis haeresiologici 3 tomi* I, continens Scriptores haeresiologicos minores Latinos, Berlin 1856, p. 284 (Ps.-Jerome, *Indiculus de haeresibus* I, 10); p. 304 (Isidore of Seville, *De haeresibus Judaeorum* Originum libri VIII. 5, 10); (*Ethymologiarum Sive Originum Libri xxx* ed. W. M. Lindsay OCT (Oxford, 1911) Libri viii, iv.11); p. 325 (Honorius ‘of Autun’, *De haeresibus libellis* 8).

<sup>14</sup> Brandt, *Die jüdischen Baptismen oder das religiöse Waschen und Baden im Judentum mit Einschluß des Judenchristentums* (Giessen 1910; hereafter Brandt, *Baptismen*); S. Krauss, *Bad und Badenwesen im Talmud* (Frankfurt am Main 1908), pp. 7f, hereafter *Bad*; H.-J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Juden-christentums* (Tübingen 1949), p. 204.

(*t. Yad.* 2.20; *b. Ber.* 22a; *y. Ber.* 3,60); yet these latter are not attested as a special (and separate) sect, but only as radicals, who immersed themselves first thing each morning in case they had, during the night, defiled themselves in any of the ways described in *Deut.* 23:12. Nevertheless, such practices can be seen as providing the seedbed from which other baptist sects, like the Masbotheans and Hemerobaptists, grew. The authors of Christian anti-heretical tracts manifestly had no clear picture of them. As is well known, Tertullian himself attributed the practice of daily bathing to all Jews, because of their impure nature (*De bapt.* 15; cf. also *De orat.* 14) – a view obviously derived from *Mark* 7:2ff, and perhaps attributing what were purely sectarian practices to the whole of Judaism. Similar ignorance is revealed in the *pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (II.23), where John the Baptist is called an ‘Hemerobaptist’ (*Hēmerobaptistēs*), in an attempt to depict him as a false prophet and arch-heretic (teacher of Simon Magus) (below).

In this connection the ‘Samaritan heresy’ of the Sebuacans (*Sebouaiōi*), noted only by Epiphanius (*Pan.* 11) is worth mentioning; this name, obviously meaning ‘baptized ones’ (Aramaic *šebuʿaiya*), is formed from the root *šb*<sup>c</sup>. The name is reminiscent of the Elkesaite (*Sobiai*), and the later Sabians of the Aramaic sources (below). To what extent they appear as Samaritan sects in Epiphanius remains, once again, uncertain. They may stand in place of the Masbotheans, of whom he makes no mention. Certainly, we know of many water ceremonies among the Dositheans, a Samaritan sect.<sup>15</sup> However since in this case, as in all the others, this is clearly not the terminology of the sect itself, we are not in a position to say more than that the labels of these anti-heretical tracts point to the existence of various baptist groups on the periphery of orthodox Judaism. All knowledge of them, as of their Jewish origins, has been lost to the early Fathers of the Christian church.

### C JOHN THE BAPTIST

Here John the Baptist (*ho baptistēs*) should be mentioned. In his case it is easier to establish chronological details, and as his nickname<sup>16</sup> suggests, he was particularly associated with baptist practices. He first appears

<sup>15</sup> J. Bowman, *Samaritanische Probleme* (Stuttgart 1967), p. 48, n. 67. ET: *The Samaritan Problem* PTM 4 (Pittsburgh 1975), p. 133, n. 67; S. J. Isser, *The Dositheans*, pp. 79, 98 (baptism in a magic pool as an instrument of conversion), 204 (Abūʿl Fath, p. 154), 207 (*ibid.* p. 157). In the *Mēmār Marqāb* (of Dosithean influence) VI, chap. 6, there is mention of a baptism of purification *mašbū* which absolved all sins (ed. J. Macdonald, *Memar Marqab. The teaching of Marqab* (BZAW, 84; Berlin 1962) I, p. 141, line 22; II, p. 232).

<sup>16</sup> With the exception of Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII.116, this is only attested from Christian sources.



around CE 28/29 and was executed by Herod Antipas in about CE 32. The few but characteristic reports we have of him, namely those of Josephus (*Ant.* xviii.116–19) on the one hand and those of the New Testament on the other, are unfortunately both strongly coloured by their respective textual histories and by the particular interests of the authors, so that we are not able to gain any clear picture of him. What is certain however is that he presented to the Jews of his time (possibly inspired by Ezek. 36:24f, 28f?)<sup>17</sup> a form of baptism as a demonstration of ‘conversion’ or ‘repentance’, an act which would save them from the coming judgement of God. This was accompanied by eschatological preaching which included criticism of the social and religious defects of Judaism, and was one cause of his violent death. The baptism ‘in water’ which he offered (Mark 1:8; 3:11) took place in the lower River Jordan, hence in running water (obviously at a suitable ford – according to John 1:28, also in Transjordan). The form of this baptism remains uncertain, since we do not know the original Aramaic terminology. The passive form *baptisthēnai* (Mark 1:9; Matt. 3:16; Luke 3:21) has led some scholars back to the Aramaic intransitive active Qal *tebal* ‘to immerse oneself’,<sup>18</sup> so that John’s function was only that of a witness to the self-immersion of the person being baptized (as in the later baptism of proselytes). On the other hand Matt. 3:13,16; Mark 1:5 (*hyp’ autou*) point to the active participation of the ‘baptist’ and indeed his nickname could indicate this; John baptized by his own hand, either by immersion or by pouring water over the candidate, as in the bathing customs of antiquity.<sup>19</sup> All this evidence could point to

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Mark 1:2ff; Matt. 3:1–6, Luke 3:1–6. The stereotyped expression in Matthew and Luke, ‘he came . . . preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins’ seems, at least the latter part, to be coloured by Christian influences (cf. Acts 2:38 and 19:40). Contrast Josephus, *Ant.* xviii.117. Does the Jordan have particular symbolic significance because of the passage through it of the Israelites under Joshua to the ‘Promised Land’ (Josh 3:14–17)? This Old Testament event later became an image of Christian baptism (see F.-J. Dölger, ‘Der Durchzug durch den Jordan als Sinnbild der christlichen Taufe’, *Antike und Christentum* 2 (1930), 70–9). From Matt 3:11 and parallels it is clear that John anticipated a baptism with fire through the Messiah which would serve the purification of Israel and corresponded to apocalyptic expectations. On Luke cf. also O. Linton, ‘Johannes Døber, Johannesdåb og åndsdaåb i Lukasskrifterne’ in N. Hyldahl and E. Nielsen, *Hilsen till Noack*, Fs B. Noack (Copenhagen 1975), pp. 151–67. Stegemann, *Die Essener*, pp. 297f, 304ff.

<sup>18</sup> According to J. Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie, Die Verkündigung Jesu* (Berlin 1971), p. 58, *ET New Testament Theology*, 1 (London 1971), p. 50, cf. also H. V. Martin, ‘The Primitive form of Christian Baptism’, *ExT*, 59 (1947/8), 160–3.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. E. Stommel, ‘Christliche Taufriten und antike Badesitten’, *JAC* 2 (1959), 5–14. Stommel (p. 10) considers only Greek and Roman bathing rituals and his thesis is very one-sided. The active role of John as baptizer is increasingly emphasized in more modern literature; cf. *RGG* edn 3, p. 806; 6, p. 628; J. Becker, *Johannes der Täufer und Jesus*

the assumption that John played a more active role in accordance with Greek customs. Josephus, who was writing for Hellenistic readers, says simply that John exhorted the Jews 'to gather at the place of baptism' (*baptismō syniēnai*). It seems that the original meaning is preserved here: the purificatory bathing took the form of self-baptism, with the Baptist present only as a witness. He bears his nickname on the grounds that he exhorted men to this baptism of repentance as the only saving act before judgement. He thus also assumes the role of a mediator with God, and the act of baptism replaces for all *practical purposes* the normal form of sacrificial worship in the temple, which did not contribute to salvation or penance (John takes no account of this). To this extent the baptism of John already has a kind of sacramental character.<sup>20</sup> It gathers together the chosen people (of Mark 3:7 and Luke 3:7) and at the same time offers salvation to the individual. It was not indeed the purificatory immersion as such but the changed attitude of mind which had to accompany it, which brought salvation (as is emphatically maintained by Josephus).

The problem of the origin of the baptism of John has often been examined. Its affinity to traditional baptist practices is indisputable, even if its relative significance and importance were an original idea of John. As a religious practice baptism was at that time the subject of some attention. The parallels with the Essene baptismal immersions are noteworthy; these also were only external manifestations of the inner disposition required even before the purificatory bath, which was brought about by the 'spirit of sanctity' (of 1 QS III.1–8; V.13–14). What differentiates John from the Essenes at this point is that his baptism was administered only once (this is, at any rate, what the sources suggest) and that it had eschatological relevance (the very source of its unrepeatability).<sup>21</sup> Any attempt to propound a link with the baptism of proselytes must also

*von Nazareth*. *Biblische Studien* 63 (Neukirchen and Vluyn 1972), pp. 38f; H. Thyen, 'Baptisma metanoias eis aphesin hamartiōn,' *Zeit und Geschichte, Fs Bultmann* (Tübingen 1964), p. 97, and n. 3 (hereafter Thyen, *Baptisma*); G. Barth, *Die Taufe in frühchristlicher Zeit* (Neukirchen and Vluyn 1986), pp. 27, 34, 36. H. Kraft, *Die Entstehung des Christentums* (Darmstadt 1981), pp. 20f stresses the practice of pouring water over the candidate, and not immersion; the act of pouring water over means the announcement of the coming of spirit, not repentance or remission of sins (these are later Christian interpretation).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. also Dinkler, *RGG* edn 3, 6, p. 628; Thyen, *Baptisma*, p. 98 and note 6. Stegemann, *Die Essener*, pp. 305f.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. H. Braun, *Qumran und das NT* (Tübingen 1966), vol. 2, pp. 1–29; H. Braun, 'Die Taufertaufe und die qumranischen Waschungen', *TbViat* 9 (1963), 1ff; E. J. Pryke, 'John the Baptist and the Qumran Community,' *RQ* 4 (1963/4), 483ff; Becker, *Johannes der Täufer*, pp. 56ff (a comparison of John and the 'Teacher of Righteousness' in the Qumran texts); G. Barth, *Die Taufe*, pp. 32f; J. Schmitt, 'Le milieu baptiste,' 391–404. Schmitt finds closer connections with the older teaching on purity of the reformist priesthood of the Essenes, and above all in the eschatological expectation.

fail on chronological grounds.<sup>22</sup> A Judaism already predisposed to baptism must be assumed to lie behind John the Baptist; such a predisposition is indicated by the baptism in flowing water (the Jordan) and its sacramental character (central rite). This view is made most probable by the fact that John's disciples were clearly reabsorbed into just such a Judaism. If therefore later sects, primarily the Mandaean, claimed John as their inspiration, and even if he was made out to be a Hemerobaptist and the originator of the Samaritan 'gnosis' (cf. pp. 477f), such claims have no historical foundation; yet they are indicative of the imprecise stature of the Baptist in the religious world of the day.<sup>23</sup>

The few pieces of information we have about John's disciples are not very revealing. The reports of them in the New Testament make one recognize that they remained outside and separate from the Christian community, which may be explained by the fact that Jesus himself once belonged to the circle of John's followers, and was even baptized by him (Mark 1:9–11; John 1:29–34; see below pp. 496ff). According to Luke (Acts 19:1–7) they were a kind of 'half-Christians' who had only received the imperfect baptism of John (*to Iōannou baptisma*) without having received the Spirit, and had to receive the Christian baptism (in the name of Jesus) to be imbued with the Holy Spirit.<sup>24</sup> Two different conceptions of baptism clash here. These differences are made clearer in the fourth gospel (especially the prologue), since elements of baptist theology are obviously being criticized here.<sup>25</sup> To his followers John was a kind of

<sup>22</sup> Rudolph, *Die Mandäer I*, p. 230 and note 2. On the differences in content cf. R. J. Z. Werblowsky 'On the Baptismal Rite according to St Hippolytus', *St Patr* 2 (1957), pp. 96f; G. Barth *Die Taufe*, pp. 30f, 35.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Rudolph, *Die Mandäer I*, pp. 74f and 231. Cf. also G. Barth, *Die Taufe*, p. 33; Kraft, *Die Entstehung*, pp. 1–43 (emphasized the prophetic character of John). If we stress the singularity of John's role during the baptismal ceremony (as 'baptist' or 'witness') and the function of baptism as a central religious act the relation between John and the Mandaean tradition of baptism would be much more convincing.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. E. Käsemann, 'Die Johannesjünger in Ephesus', *ZTK* 49 (1952), 144–54; repr., in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* (Göttingen 1964), pp. 158–68, KEK 3 (Göttingen 1956), pp. 487–92; ET *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford 1971), pp. 552–7; Kraft, *Die Entstehung*, pp. 37–43.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Rudolph, *Die Mandäer I*, pp. 77ff; H. Thyen, *Baptisma*, pp. 117ff; Becker, *Johannes der Täufer*, pp. 13f; J. Schmitt, 'Le milieu baptiste', 395ff. The 'Christianization' of the figure of John the Baptist in the Gospel of John has been demonstrated by M. Hooker, 'John the Baptist and the Johannine Prologue', in *NTS* 16 (1969/70), 354–8; P. von der Osten-Sacken, 'Der erste Christ, Johannes der Täufer als Schlüssel zum Prolog des 4. Evangeliums', *TbViat* 13 (1975/6), 155–73; E. Trocmé, 'Jean-Baptiste dans le Quatrième Evangile', *RHPbR* 60 (1980), 129–51. In Mark the statements on John the Baptist are 'christological' statements, too (cf. C. Wolff, 'Zur Bedeutung Johannes des Täufers im Markusevangelium', *TLZ* 102 (1977), 857–65), ET 'The Disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus', *Essays in New Testament Themes*, SBT 41 (London 1964), pp. 136–48.

Messiah (see Luke 1; Matt. 11:1f; Mark 2:18ff) and was also associated with the gnostic idea of a prophet sent by God (John 1:6f, 19f). The significance of the Master's baptism had obviously changed from expiation to initiation, perhaps even a repeatable act; one may at least postulate ablutions of purification of the sort referred to in the pseudo-Clementine writings II.23.1. The thin thread of the community following John, which was obviously centred in Syria and Palestine,<sup>26</sup> can be followed no further than to the third century CE, if the polemics in the pseudo-Clementine writings (*Hom* 1.17; II.23ff; *Rec.* 1.53f, 60) and in Ephraem<sup>27</sup> can be taken to indicate the existence of a continuing living community, and are not simply the result of second-hand literary knowledge. To what extent John's disciples became absorbed into the Mandaeans can no longer be ascertained (cf. below).

#### D SOME OTHER REPORTS ON BAPTISMAL RITES

There remain further reports from the first century CE, whose value in establishing the existence of baptist sects is disputable, but which nevertheless suggest a striking interest in baptist practices. We may firstly consider the statement of Josephus, that for three years (CE 53–6) he was the follower of a hermit named Bannus (*Bannous*), who 'lived in the wilderness, wore clothes made from tree-bark, consumed the fruits of the wilderness and washed himself night and day in cold water as an act of personal sanctification' (*Iouomenon pros bagneian*, *Vita* § 11). This obviously refers to ablutions endowed with a heightened spiritual significance, which like the other ascetic practices described, were intended to render the performer of them pleasing to the eyes of God; in the pursuit of 'sanctity' they correspond to the rabbinical *ṭab<sup>a</sup>rā up<sup>e</sup>rīšōt*.<sup>28</sup> It is worthy of note that Bannus gathered disciples around himself in order to further knowledge of and adherence to his practices.

A passage in the Jewish Sibylline Oracles (IV.165) possibly refers to similar customs, where poor mortals were exhorted to make an end to

<sup>26</sup> Luke (Acts 19) places them in Ephesus, following his sources (cf. the literature in n. 24). Legend wrongly places the grave of John the Baptist in Syria (cf. J. Jeremias, 'Drei weitere spätjüdische Heiligengräber', *ZNW* 52 (1961), 96–8).

<sup>27</sup> Ephraem, *Evangelii concordantis expositio*, ed. G. Moesinger (Venice 1876), p. 288; Vigilius of Thapsus, *Contra Arianos, Sabellianos et Photinianos*, ch. 20 (PL 62, cols 179–238); R. Reitzenstein, *Die Vorgeschichte der christlichen Taufe* (Leipzig and Berlin 1929), p. 60; Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*, pp. 114ff. Contrast Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums*, p. 401, note 2; and Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* 1, p. 72, note 1.

<sup>28</sup> According to Krauss, *Bad*, p. 9, n. 2. Cf. also Brandt, *Baptismen*, pp. 69f and Wolf, *Aqua*, p. 81. Kraft, *Die Entstehung*, pp. 4–9, stresses the ancient tradition of Nazirite ideals in Bannus.

their godless ways of living and ‘to immerse themselves (*lousasthai*) fully in ever-running water, to stretch their hands out towards heaven and beseech God to forgive them’. This passage has nothing to do with proselyte baptism nor with the Essene ablution, but it bears the hallmarks of baptist concepts as we must assume them to have existed in contemporary Judaism.<sup>29</sup> To the same period belongs the unusual act of penance attributed to Adam and Eve after their expulsion from paradise in *Adam and Eve* (6–11): ‘Adam stood for 40 days immersed up to his neck in the River Jordan, whilst Eve, because of the Devil’s temptation, stood for only 18 days in the Tigris; in this way they hoped to gain God’s pity and forgiveness.’ Because ‘uncleanliness’ is also alluded to (6), this ceremony has not only an expiatory but also a purificatory purpose, and thus belongs within our terms of reference. Finally, in the Diatribes of Epictetus (c. 50–130), as recorded by Arrian (c. 95–175), there is probably an allusion to baptist practices in contemporary Judaism (II.9, 20f). He differentiates here a real ‘official’ Jew from one who has the appearance only (*logō Ioudaioi*); the former has the disposition of one who has been baptised (*bebammenoi*), whilst the latter is a *parabaptistēs*, which means either a ‘special category of baptist’, or ‘half-baptized’, and may be understood as an indication of sectarian tendencies.<sup>30</sup> It is noteworthy that around this particular time a proselyte baptism, as an act of initiation, began to establish itself in Judaism (attestable from around 80 CE onwards), on the one hand as a reaction against Christian baptism, and on the other hand as an expression of the greater value placed on immersions which served for purification and sanctification before God.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Brandt, *Baptismen*, pp. 87–90; Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*, pp. 46–60, 434; *RAC* 1, p. 1171; Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* 1, p. 227. J. J. Collins, in *OIP*, ed. by J. H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (Garden City, New York 1983), p. 388, note e2, and in M. E. Stone (ed.) *JWSTP* (Philadelphia 1984), pp. 362, 365. On supposed Essene origins see B. Noack, ‘Are the Essenes Referred to in the Sibylline Oracles?’, *ST* 17 (1963), 90–102. Christian influences are suggested by Dinkler, *RGG* edn 6, p. 628. H. Lichtenberger, ‘Täufergemeinden und frühchristliche Täuferpolemik’, *ZThK* 84 (1987), pp. 36–57, stresses the connection with a kind of Johannine ‘Diaspora of baptists’ (rel. to Sib. IV.158.161–9; Josephus; Acts 19:1–7; John, Synoptics); cf. also his article on ‘Synkretistische Züge in jüdischen und judenchristlichen Taufbewegungen’ in J. D. Dunn (ed.) *Jews and Christians* (Tübingen 1992), pp. 85–97; ‘The Dead Sea Scrolls and John the Baptist’ in D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (eds.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden 1992), pp. 340–6.

<sup>30</sup> According to R. Reitzenstein, *Die Vorgeschichte der christlichen Taufe*, pp. 232f; J. Kosnetter, *Die Taufe Jesu. Exegetische und religionsgeschichtliche Studien* (Vienna 1936), p. 44. For a different view see K. Hartte, *Zum semitischen Wasserkultus (vor Ausbreitung des Christentums)* (Phil. Diss. Tübingen, Halle 1912), pp. 120ff.

<sup>31</sup> For a detailed treatment of proselyte baptism see Brandt, *Baptismen*, pp. 57ff; Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*, pp. 35ff; Kosnetter, *Taufe Jesu*, pp. 41ff; Wolf, *Aqua*, pp. 177ff;

## E THE ELKESAITES

The only group first encountered around the beginning of the second century CE which can fairly be described as a baptist sect is the Elkasaite. They are mentioned by Hippolytus (*Ref.* ix.13–17; x.29), Origen (according to Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi.38) and Epiphanius (*Pan.* 19; 53).<sup>32</sup> These reports indicate that the sect had been founded by a Jewish prophet, who was variously called Elchesai, Alchasaio, Elkesai, Elxaios or Elxai,

Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* II, pp. 370ff; Werblowsky, 'On the Baptismal Rite', 93–105 (stressed the non-sacramental character of the *miqweh* for proselytes); 'A Note on Purification and Proselyte Baptism' in J. Neusner (ed.) *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults*, Fs M. Smith, SJLA 3 (Leiden 1975), pp. 200–5. According to Heb. 9:10 the Jewish sacrifice in the Temple consists of food, drink, and 'various ablutions (*baptismoi*)'; similar in 6:2. Cf. also the literature of the Hêkhalôt where we hear of lustral rites or ritual baths which prepared for mystical ascension (Merkâbâh); cf. J. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, AGAJU 14 (Leiden 1980), pp. 101f, 164, 175. Apart from the Qumran evidences the oldest two *miqwôt* (ritual immersion baths) have been excavated in Masada (1st cent. CE) cf. Y. Yadin, *Masada* (New York 1966), pp. 164ff; G. Foerster in S. Safrai and M. Stern (eds.) *JPFC* 2 (Assen 1976), p. 995. 'Bathing Pools are often found near ancient synagogues in Palestine' (S. Safra, *ibid.*, p. 942, n. 2); L. I. Levine (ed.) *Ancient Synagogues revealed* (Jerusalem and Detroit 1982), pp. 26, 32. On the excavation of *miqwôt* in Jericho dating from the Hasmonaean Period see E. Netzer 'Ancient Ritual Baths (miqvaot in Jericho)' in L. I. Levine (ed.) *The Jerusalem Catbedra* 2 (Jerusalem 1982), pp. 106–19 (with pictures); R. Reich, 'The Great Mikweh Debate', *BAR* 19:2 (1993), 52f, 57. There is some likelihood of discovering traits of Jewish or Jewish-Christian 'baptismal' practices and ideas behind gnostic texts and documents, e.g. the 'Apocalypse of Adam' from Nag Hammadi (Codex v.5): cf. A. Böhlig and P. Labib (eds.) *Koptisch-agnostische Apokalypsen aus Codex V von Nag Hammadi*, Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 1963 (Sonderband), 93–5; F. Morard, *L'Apocalypse d'Adam* (BCNH Textes 15), pp. 14, 116ff; Rudolph, 'Coptica-Mandaica' in M. Krause (ed.) *Essays on the Nag Hammadi Texts Fs P. Labib*, NHS 6 (Leiden 1975), pp. 208–15 (reprint in *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 433–57); further *Die Mandäer* II, pp. 375–80, 380–402; J.-M. Sevrin, *Le dossier baptismal séthien. Etudes sur la sacramentaire gnostique* (Quebec 1986).

<sup>32</sup> Text in A. Hilgenfeld (ed.) *Novum Testamentum extra Canonem receptum* fasc. III, Hermae Pastor (Leipzig 1866), pp. 153–67, 'Elxailibri fragmenta'; tr. in A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden 1973), pp. 114ff, 146f, 154ff, 194ff (hereafter Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*); G. P. Luttikhuisen, *The Revelation of Elchasaï*, TSAJ 8 (Tübingen 1985), pp. 39–152 ('Source-Critical Studies' with texts and translations; hereafter *Revelation*). See also E. Hennecke, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* (edn 2 Tübingen 1924), pp. 425ff (H. Waitz) 3 edn, ed. W. Schneemelcher 2 (Tübingen 1964), pp. 529–32.; ET (London 1965) 2, 745–50 (Irmscher); ed. 5 W. Schneemelcher, 2 (Tübingen 1989), pp. 619–23 (Irmscher), ET *New Testament Apocrypha* 2 (Cambridge 1992), pp. 685–90, F. Stanley Jones, 'The Book of Elchasaï', R. W. Funk, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 3, ed. by A. J. Collins and M. Himmelfarb (Santa Rosa, CA, forthcoming; with a synoptic chart of the reports).



presumably meaning 'hidden power' (Aramaic *ḥail(a) k̄as(a) yā(i)*).<sup>33</sup> To him is attributed a book of revelation, from which both Hippolytus and Epiphanius in fact quote, though they offer different accounts of its origins; one account says that it supposedly came from the east, from the Parthian Seres,<sup>34</sup> and was given by Elkesai to one Sobiai (probably a group of 'the baptized' is referred to here – yet in the Cologne Mani Codex an Elkesaite authority named Sabbaios is mentioned); the other version claims that it was the revelation of a gigantic angel, who was accompanied by an equally huge female being; these are interpreted as being the Son of God and the (Christian?) Holy Ghost (Hippolytus, *Ref.*

<sup>33</sup> See also my observations on this in *Mélanges d'histoire des religions Fs H.-Cb Puech* (Paris 1974), p. 475, note 5 (= *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte* pp. 673f, note 26). My views are confirmed both by the Samaritan expression *el* for *hyl*, and by the form Alchasaioi used in the Cologne Mani Codex; cf. now Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 179–88. According to a Nabataean-Aramaic inscription there is a proper name *elkassi* (cf. *Biblical Archaeological Review* 14, 6 (Nov./Dec. 1988), p. 31).

<sup>34</sup> D. Flusser has recently interpreted the book rather daringly as a sort of 'Chinese' or 'Tibetan gospel'. See D. Flusser, 'Salvation present and future' in *Types of Redemption*, R. J. Z. Werblowsky and C. J. Bleeker eds. (SHR 18; Leiden 1970), p. 57. The Seres (*hoi Sēres*) are a legendary people in the geography of history, in the Ps.-Clem. *Rec.* VIII. 48 they are represented as a paradisaic people. The former is the most probable. The name goes back to the Chinese word for silk, *sjēg, sse* and thus signifies 'the people who produced silk.' Cf. A. Dihle, *Antike und Orient*. SBHAW, phil.-hist. Kl. 1983, 2 Suppl. (Heidelberg 1984), pp. 201ff. Since the first century BCE they were reported to be a paradisaic people of primordial time of whom wisdom and knowledge were a peculiar property, as is expressly stated by the *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions*, VIII, 48 (ECS 51, pp. 247f). Josephus, *Ant.* i 71 knows the land of *Seiris* (heb. *Šir*) as that land in which there still exists from the flood a much embellished pillar of the children of Seth. The Coptic-Gnostic document *The Hypostasis of the Archons* from Nag Hammadi calls the mount of the ark of Noah the Mountain Sir (92, 14, J. M. Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, edn 3 (San Francisco 1988), p. 166). In Syriac Christian legends about Jesus Šir is the dwelling place of the Sethians and their descendants, the Magi. It is connected here with the *Mons Victorialis* or Mount of Triumph and its treasure cave. On this cf. G. J. Reinink, 'Das Land "Seiris" (Šir) und das Volk der Serer in jüdischen und christlichen Traditionen', *JStJ* 6 (1975), 72–85; Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 24f, 60, 86. Cf. also G. A. G. Stroumsa, *Another Seed: Studies in Gnostic Mythology*, NHS 24 (Leiden 1984), pp. 115–19, who suggests that the original meaning of Seiris (Sir) was 'Transjordan', connected with the 'sons of Seth' on the basis of Num. 24:17–18 and Josephus (above). The statement is therefore a fiction, legitimizing the importance of the book as a divine or heavenly revelation. It is an example of the so-called 'Letter from Heaven' which we know from several documents of the early Christian times. A very different view of the Book of Elchasaï as a 'Churchorder' is pointed out by F. S. Jones, 'The Genre of the Book of Elchasaï: A Primitive Churchorder, not an Apocalypse' in A. Ötzen (ed.) *Historische Wahrheit und theologische Wissenschaft* (Frankfurt/M. 1996), pp. 87–104 (mainly based on Epiphanius' report, pp. 98f). There is sometimes no strict contrast between a 'revelation-text' and a manual for the community because the last one needs often heavenly legitimation by the author (cf. *Apc of John*).



ix.13,1–3). According to Origen, the book fell from heaven. The older view, that the name Elkesai was simply the misunderstanding of the title of a book, or else of the revealer-angel ('The Book of Hidden Power') has been recently renewed by A. F. J. Klijn and G. P. Luttikhuisen,<sup>35</sup> but this is not tenable in the light of the earlier research of W. Brandt and the discovery of the Cologne Mani Codex, in which Mani specifically refers to his predecessor Alchasaïos.<sup>36</sup> The book, whose original language (Greek or Aramaic?) and contents can no longer be reconstructed, proclaims a new absolution of sins for the third year of Trajan's reign (CE 100/1), specifically in the form of a baptism (*baptisma*); it further threatens an apocalyptic battle between the 'angels of the north', which would rock to their foundations all the kingdoms of the earth, for the third year after the subjugation of the Parthians by Trajan (116/17?) (Hippolytus, *Ref.* ix.13,15; 16, 4; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 19,1). The prophet himself was to be present to witness the judgement (based on an Aramaic formula: Epiphanius, *Pan.* 19, 4.3). Behind these contemporary allusions one can detect quite a pro-Parthian, or alternatively an anti-Roman partisan bias on the part of the author, such as was commonly found in the East at this

<sup>35</sup> Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, p. 55, n. 3; Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*. pp. 177–224; he concludes (pp. 187f): '1. In the Aramaic original of the book of revelations, the huge revealer-angel bore the name or title *hyl(ʿ) ksy(ʿ)*, "(the) Hidden Power". The Aramaic book was called after this angel: (the Book of the) Hidden Power. 2. The Greek version continued to be designated by the Aramaic name which was transliterated in Greek as (the Book of) *Ēlchasai* or *Ēlksai*. 3. *Alcibiades of Apamea* supposed that the name *Ēlchasai* belonged to the recipient of the allegedly revelatory or heavenly writing. 4. It is possible that this misunderstanding about the original reference of the name mentioned in the title of the book has given rise to the idea of a religious authority called "Elchasaï", "Elksai", or "Alchasaïos".

<sup>36</sup> W. Brandt, *Elchasaï, ein Religionsstifter und sein Werk* (Leipzig 1912, hereafter *Elchasaï*). Brandt received positive reviews from Lidzbarski, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 34 (1913), cols. 1804–6. and F. Haase, *Theologische Revue* 15 (1912), 483ff. This view was supported by G. Strecker, 'Elkesai', *RAC* 4 (1959), pp. 1171ff, reprinted unchanged in: *Eschaton und Historien* (Göttingen 1979), pp. 320–33, and now by the thorough treat-ments of L. Cirillo, 'La tradizione eresiologica di Elchasaï', *Henoch* 1 (1979), 371–95 and *Elchasaï e gli Elchasaïti* (Cosenza 1984). It is true that from the CMC alone there is no strict evidence for the historical existence of a prophet called 'Hidden Power' (cf. A. Henrichs and L. Koenen, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 183; Henrichs, in *HSCP* 83 (1979), 362f); there is, however, enough connection between the records of the CMC and the other information on the 'Elkesaites' that we should accept the tradition of the CMC concerning Elchasaï as the founder (*arbegas*) of the sect. Cf. also L. Cirillo, *Elchasaï*, pp. 85ff; 'Il "Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis" (CMC) e gli Elchasaïti' in *Miscellanea di Studi Storici* III (1983), pp. 11–35; 'Elchasaïti e Battisti di Mani: i limiti di un confronto delle fonti', in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti de Simposio Internazionale*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. Roselli (Cosenza 1986), pp. 97–139; A. F. J. Klijn, 'Alchasaïos et CMC' in *ibid.* pp. 141–52; F. S. Jones in his critical review of the book by Luttikhuisen in *JbAC* 30 (1987), 207 (stressed the historicity of Elchasaï).

time.<sup>37</sup> This movement probably began around the Syrian–Parthian border on the upper Euphrates (northern Mesopotamia), whence it then spread outwards to the west, south and east. Since in the oldest evidence (that of Hippolytus) various sources (the book, the exegesis of Alcibiades, and the other teachings of the Elkesaites) are conflated, it is no longer possible to determine what the original teaching and practices of Elkesai were.<sup>38</sup> But they seem to have been those of heretical Jewish sect, which quickly adopted Christian, especially Jewish Christian practices: sources from the beginning of the third century onwards testify to this. This clearly goes back to Alcibiades, a leading Elkesaite from Apamea in Syria, who in the time of the Roman bishop Callistus I (217–22) and Hippolytus (whose reports of proceedings are thus not completely unbiased) intervened in the dispute about penitential discipline and put forward the concept, in accordance with Elkesaite baptismal practice, of a ‘second baptism for the forgiveness of sins’ in the name of the Christian Trinity.<sup>39</sup> He is doubtless also responsible for the christological elements (Hippolytus IX.14, 1; X.29), reminiscent of those in the pseudo-Clementine writings, and which are held by Epiphanius to be of Ebionite origin.<sup>40</sup> An impression of this form of Elkesaism is also presented by Origen, who knew of its existence at Rome (brought from Caesarea in Palestine) around 247 in manifestations similar to those in Alcibiades.<sup>41</sup> Finally, the CMC (Cologne

<sup>37</sup> Flusser, pp. 54ff, also brings in the Testament of Isaac, which he holds to be an Elkesaite or Ebionite text; the eschatological approach in connection with the victory of the Romans derives from Ebionite circles in Parthia (?). Also CMC 86f brings evidences for eschatological expectations of the Elkesaite Baptists; cf. Henrichs and Koenen, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 152ff (nos. 219, 222, 224, 225); L. Koenen in Cirillo (ed.) *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis*, pp. 286–97.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. the excellent source-critical study in Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, pp. 54–67. See also Strecker, ‘Elkesai’, pp. 1174f (reprint pp. 327ff), and now Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, Part I (pp. 39ff) More cautious, espec. on the report by Epiphanius, is F. S. Jones in his review of Luttikhuisen in *JbAC* 30 (1987), pp. 200f.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Brandt, *Elchasai*, pp. 94ff; Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 70ff; also Rudolph, *Mandäer* I, p. 235. The baptismal formula containing both God and the Son (Hipp., *Ref.* IX.15,1) is not necessarily Christian, as shown by the Mandaean equivalent (see Rudolph, *Mandäer* II, p. 345f; above, p. 482).

<sup>40</sup> This point is well covered in the survey in Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, pp. 78f (Appendix II). Cf. now Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 129ff, Cirillo, *Elchasai*, pp. 34ff. The CMC also appears to support the transformation of the Logos (Christ) (see n. 42)

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, pp. 60f; Brandt, *Elchasai*, p. 77; Cirillo, *Elchasai*, pp. 21ff 80f. The rejection of Paul is remarkable. According to a suggestion of H. M. Jackson, ed. and tr., *Zosimos of Panopolis on the Letter Omega* (SBL TT 14, Greco-Roman Religion Series 5 (Missoula 1978), p. 54, n. 72, the relevant material of the letter of c. 300 CE, taken from the Apocalypse of Nikotheos (c. 2nd century CE) could originate in Jewish-Christian circles which possibly were somehow connected, if not identical, with the Babylonian baptist sect in which Mani had been raised, and specifically with

Mani Codex) attests that Judaeo-Christian Elkesaism flourished in Babylon around the same time.<sup>42</sup>

The clear Jewish substratum is revealed, on the other hand, in the following teachings: strict observance of the Sabbath, circumcision, prayer facing Jerusalem requirement of matrimony and dietary stipulations.<sup>43</sup> Included in this list must also be the ablutions (or immersions in water) of which Hippolytus gives the most comprehensive reports (*Ref.* ix.13,4; 15, 1. 3.5.6; 16, 1–3; x.29, 3).<sup>44</sup> These were required for purificatory purposes (after fornication or menstruation), as a precaution against sickness (apoplexy) or demons, and for general expiatory purposes (a Christian element?). The second baptism offered to Christian sinners also promised ‘peace and a share in salvation among the just’ (15, 3). It is not apparent from this whether such a result was expected from every ritual

its western branch at Rome; cf. also L. Koenen in Cirillo (ed.) *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis*, pp. 288ff who upholds such relations.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. A. Henrichs and L. Koenen, ‘Ein griechischer Mani-Codex’, *ZPE* 5 (1970), 136ff, where the ‘Commandments of the Saviour’ serve as authority within the community (CMC 80, 84f, 91, 92f). The doctrine of the reincarnation of the Logos or the ‘true Prophet’ comes from other parts of this text (86, 87); on this, cf. Henrichs and Koenen, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 152f, note 219; 160f note, 225; L. Cirillo, ‘Verus Propheta’, in *Henry Corbin, Cahiers de l’Herne* 39, ed. C. Jambert (Paris 1981), pp. 240–55, esp. 248ff. The connections with some other designations of baptismal sects such as Coptic *baptistai*, *katharioi*, Parthian *abšodagān*, Syriac *mnaqqdē*, which are found in Manichaean and other texts necessarily remain uncertain. Cf. W. Sundermann, ‘Parthisch *’bšwdg’* n “die Täufer”’, *AAH* 25 (1977), 237–42. The same problem arises with the term *mktky* in the inscription of the Zoroastrian high priest Kirtēr at Naqsh-e Rostam (cf. *ibid.* 241f). On this cf. my remarks in B. Aland (ed.) *Gnosis*. Fs H. Jonas (Göttingen 1978), pp. 272f (my *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 333; 616, n. 22), and H. W. Bailey, ‘Iranian *Mktk*-Armenian *mkrtem*’, *Revue des Etudes Arméniennes* NS 14 (1980), 7–10, who gives a new explanation from Iran. *mak* –, ‘to immerse’, with suffix *makataka*, ‘washer, baptizer’; the stem and its derivations are mostly attested by Armenian sources.

<sup>43</sup> In the context the embargo on the eating of meat in Epiphanius, *Pan.* XIX.3,6 is probably concerned with sacrificial meat. According to the CMC the Elkesaites refrained from eating bread made from wheat (87f, 89f, 91f) and had vegetarian inclinations, but Manichaean interpretation may play a part in this. Bread had to be home-made, and fruit and vegetables home-grown; it must be ‘baptized’, i.e. ritually washed, because of the concern over cleanliness (9, 80, 88f, 93, 97). Cf. Henrichs and Koenen, ‘Ein griechischer Mani Codex’, *ZPE* 5 (1970), 145ff; *ZPE* 32 (1978), 135, n. 181; 162f, n. 229; 164 n. 231; 173 n. 258. More about the Jewish background is indicated by J. C. Reeves, ‘The “Elchasaite” Sanhedrin of the CMC in Light of 2nd Temple Jewish Sectarian Sources’, *JJS* 42 (1991), pp. 68–91, *Syro-Mesopotamian Gnosis and Jewish Tradition* (Leiden 1996), and by J. M. Baumgarten ‘The Book of Elkesai and Merkabah Mysticism’, *JJS* 17 (1986), pp. 213–23.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Brandt, *Baptismen*, pp. 103ff; Brandt, *Elchasaï*, pp. 25ff; Rudolph, *Mandäer* I, pp. 234f; Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 70–8, Cirillo, *Elchasaï*, pp. 62–73. The daily baptism is well attested in CMC, 83 (see below p. 489).

ablution. This rite of baptism (*baptisma*), a borrowing of an established Christian practice, involved a baptizer or a witness to the baptism (in 13, 4; 15, 1). The repeated baptism (also described as *baptisma*) obviously took a different form, involving self-immersion without a baptizer;<sup>45</sup> it is briefly described thus (15, 4f): the person concerned should ‘run fully clothed and go down to a river or a fountain wherever there is a deep spot, and let him be baptized (*baptisasthō*) with all his clothes on and pray to the great and most high God in faith of heart and let him then call upon the seven witnesses described in this book: “See, I call to witness heaven, water, the holy spirits, angels of prayer, oil, salt and earth. I testify by these seven witnesses that no more will I sin, nor commit adultery, or steal, or be guilty of injustice, or covetous, or hate or be scornful; nor will I take pleasure in any wickedness. Having uttered these words let such a one be baptized (*baptisasthō*) fully clothed in the name of the great and most high God”’.<sup>46</sup> Elsewhere, consumptives and maniacs are advised to immerse themselves in cold water (*baptizesthai*, *ibid.* 16, 1) forty times within seven days. Epiphanius only mentions briefly that the Elkesaites practised particular forms of baptism and that they esteemed water more highly than the fire of sacrificial ritual (see below, p. 500). There is no reference to this in Origen.

The CMC now provides very good documentary evidence of the extensive range of lustral practices of the sect, at least in so far as it describes (in Manichaean style) Elkesai and Mani as critics of external

<sup>45</sup> The terminology is misleading in that the middle *baptisasthō*, normally active, corresponding to *baptizesthō* can also be translated as a causative in the passive sense, ‘let him be baptized’; the latter sense seems to me to have been incorporated into Christian terminology (cf. Hippolytus ix.13,4; 15,1). The context suggests that the baptizer did not play an active part in the baptisms of purification, except in the initiatory baptism. Cf. also Brandt, *Elchasai*, pp. 26 and 94; different by Strecker, *RAC* 4 (Stuttgart 1959), p. 1181. For the baptism of the body (83, 1.4.12; 94, 9), and for the ‘baptism’ of the vegetables (80, 3; 81, 1; 83, 7. 20; 88, 12f) the CMC mostly use *baptizesthai*; purification rites are not distinguished from ‘baptism’, so the terms *louesthai*, *apolouesthai*, *katharisai* and (*apo-*) *katharthēnai* can equally well be used; the main purpose of the water ceremonies is the idea of purification. Cf. Henrichs and Koenen, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 134f, n. 180; 143 n. 201; 186, part of n. 273 (here the authors try to differentiate between profane and ritual use of water).

<sup>46</sup> Taken from Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, p. 119. On the order of the witnesses, which is not preserved intact in any one of the sources, see the survey on p. 57f, n. 3. These seven witnesses to the oath are also found in *Ps.-Clem. Contestatio* 2, 1 and 4, 1 (*Die Pseudoklementinan* 1. *Homilien*, ed. B. Rehm, GCS 42 (Berlin 1953, edn 2 1969), pp. 2–4) (from which Strecker deduces the existence of the sect in Syria around the year 200, *RAC* 4, p. 1174). According to Henrich and Koenen some of them (water, bread, earth) can be found in the CMC (*ZPE* 32 (1978), 163f, 185, 192). Cf. also Cirillo, *Elchasai*, p. 112. On the eschatological meaning of the ‘witnesses’ see Lutikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 206, 208, 217.

water rites.<sup>47</sup> Mani says: 'But it makes no sense to baptize yourselves (*baptizesthe*) daily in water. Why do you baptize yourselves anew each day when you are, after all, baptized and purified once and for all? It thus becomes clear you revile yourselves each day, and therefore baptize yourselves before you can become completely clean.'<sup>48</sup> This strict ideal of cleanliness demands the washing (baptism!) of food, especially of fruit and vegetables, before eating.<sup>49</sup> Mani's fierce criticism, which was intended to lead to a reform of the sect, ended at a baptist synod (in the year 240 or thereabouts) in his expulsion.<sup>50</sup> It is noteworthy that Mani attributes his teachings to Elkesai and thus regards the latter as being his mentor. This view, of course, has hardly any connection with the historical Elkesai, yet shows what authority he was credited with, on a par with Jesus, whom Mani likewise claims as an authority. In this context we are afforded a few glimpses into the structure of the community. As well as the simple 'baptists' (*baptistai*) the 'righteous' (*dikaioi*), the 'pure ones' (*katharoi*) there are the 'elders' (*meizones*), 'leaders' (*archēgoi*) and 'wardens' (*proestōtes*), and presbyters. The first two of these served as 'guardians of the revelation' and as the community authorities on doctrine (*dogma*); in particular, Elkesai is the 'founder of the law' (*ho archēgos tou nomou*) of the sect – but at the same time, a certain Sabbaios is also mentioned as an

<sup>47</sup> Some references to this also in Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, pp. 254f (following Henrichs and Koenen, 'Ein griechischer Mani-Codex', *ZPE* 5 (1970), 135f, 143, 146, 147; Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, 156f (following *ZPE* 32 (1978), 114–17). See also A. Henrichs, 'Mani and the Babylonian Baptists: A Historical Confrontation', *HSCP* 77 (1973), 23–59. On the relation between the Baptists of the CMC and the Elkesaites see Henrichs and Koenen, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 183f (Survey); L. Cirillo, *Elchasai*, pp. 85–117; 'Elchasaiti e Battisti di Mani' (see n. 36); Rudolph, 'Jüdische und christliche Täufertraditionen im Spiegel des CMC' in Cirillo (ed.) *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis*, pp. 69–80; G. Strecker, 'Das Judenchristentum und der Manicodex' in *ibid.* pp. 81–96 (esp. 90ff); R. Merkelbach, 'Die Täufer bei denen Mani aufwuchs', P. Bryder (ed.) *Manichaean Studies* (Lund 1988), pp. 105–34. More critically, Klijn, in *ibid.* pp. 141ff; Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 158–64, 172, 176. The authenticity of the reports in the CMC is demonstrated by the editors, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 178ff, n. 269; especially 181; on the literary problems of the relevant part, pp. 94–7, cf. now Henrichs, 'CMC Reconsidered', 366f; Rudolph, 'Jüdische und christliche Täufertraditionen', pp. 74f.

<sup>48</sup> CMC 82, 23–83, 13 (*ZPE* 32 (1978) 103).

<sup>49</sup> CMC 81, 1–82, 13; 88, 13ff; cf. Henrichs and Koenen, 'Ein griechischer Mani-Codex', 144ff; *ZPE* 32 (1978) 135, n. 181; 164, n. 231.

<sup>50</sup> Henrichs and Koenen, 'Ein griechischer Mani-Codex', 155ff; *ZPE* 32 (1978), 99ff. (CMC pp. 79ff); *ZPE* 44 (1981) 206–25 (CMC pp. 99–117). On Mani's break with the traditions of the Baptists and the consequences for the development of the Manichaean ideology of 'Gnosis' cf. L. Koenen, 'From Baptism to the Gnosis of Manichaeism' in B. Layton (ed.) *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, 2 (Leiden 1981), pp. 744–66; J. J. Buckley, 'Tools and Tasks, Elchaite and Manichaean Purification Rituals' in *JR* 66 (1986), 399–411.

authority.<sup>51</sup> Alcibiades of Apamea was probably also such a figure.<sup>52</sup> Mani deals most comprehensively with his former teacher Sita, who functioned as presbyter and who convened the synod of presbyters (obviously an influential decision-making body in the community) in order to excommunicate his apostate pupil who was causing a schism within the community. These events cast light on the role of the Elkesaites in the Sassanid territory between the Tigris and the Euphrates in the first half of the third century, where Mani grew up (in the vicinity of Seleucia-Ctesiphon). Even the tenth-century Arab historian Ibn an-Nadīm knew of the connection between Elkesai (Al-Ḥasīḥ) and the southern Iraqi Mughtasila ('the self-immersing') among whom, according to an-Nadīm, Mani grew up.<sup>53</sup>

The rejection of the sacrificial offering and of the priesthood, of which Epiphanius speaks (*Pan.* 19,3,6f), seems to be connected with magico-sacramental baptismal practices. The rejection of kings and prophets is obviously an imported Ebionite concept. The syncretistic heathen side of the sect, on the other hand, is revealed in the predilection for astrology and superstitious belief in 'lucky days' (Hippolytus IX.16, 2f), the mental reservation (Epiphanius 19, 2, 1, a reference to the behaviour of the priest Phineas who, by worshipping the Artemis of Susa, escaped death), and the arcane discipline (4,3). To what extent we can speak of pronounced gnostic feature remains, in the last resort, a question of terminology; the

<sup>51</sup> CMC pp. 94f (*ZPE* 32 (1978), 115); 97, 187 (*ibid.* 117); 98, 5f (*ibid.* 119); on the 'presbyteral constitution' of the sect cf. Henrichs and Koenen, *ibid.* 166 n. 241, and J. C. Reeves, 'The "Elchasaite" Sanhedrin of the CMC' (s. note 43); on the self-designations 'righteous ones' and 'pure ones' see Henrichs and Koenen, 188f, n. 278; 195, n. 293; both terms also used for Elchasai and Sabbaios. On 'Sabbaios' cf. *ibid.* 194, n. 290 and above pp. 477, 484.

<sup>52</sup> For Luttkhuizen, *Revelation*, p. 67, Alcibiades 'acted as an authoritative and, in a large degree, independent religious teacher'; he is responsible for the specific combination of the ideas reported in Hippolytus, *Ref.* IX.13–17, and the spread of them to Rome (*ibid.* pp. 211–18). But I do not believe that Alcibiades was the real founder of the 'Elchasaite' sect, only using the anonymous 'Book of Hidden Power' for his propaganda. It has to be taken into account that Hippolytus introduced this idea without possessing knowledge of the history of the Elchasaite religion. The reconstruction of the development of Elchasaism suggested by Luttkhuizen is not convincing. His book is however an excellent contribution to recent scholarship on this topic, especially in source-critical studies.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, p. 271; G. Flügel, *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften* (Leipzig 1862; repr. Osnabrück 1969), pp. 133f. Ibn an-Nadīm attributes to the Elkesaites the same teaching as Mani (including dualism). Cf. also A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, 'Elchasai und Mani', *VC* 28 (1974), 277–89; Henrichs, 'CMC Reconsidered', 360ff; Cirillo, *Elchasaï*, pp. 114–17; Luttkhuizen, *Revelation*, pp. 165–72; K. Rudolph, 'Das Verhältnis der Mandäer zum Manichäismus', *Grazer Theol. Studien* 16 (1996), pp. 155–78, esp. 163ff (reprint in: *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 607–26).



following points can be advanced in favour of such a view: the doctrine of revelation (transformation of the Logos), the 'highest God' and his 'emissary', the doctrine of the elements and the angels, and the demonized stars. We must conclude that there is insufficient material to provide a clear picture. But the role played by Elkesaism in the birth of Manichaeism suggests, in any case, a close connection with gnosticism.<sup>54</sup>

It is virtually impossible to follow the course of Elkesaism beyond the fourth century, because Epiphanius offers no eye-witness reports, and his linking of the Sampseans (*Sampsaioi*) in Peraea with the Elkesaites (in ch. 53) is not historically confirmed, nor is his very artificial reference back to the mythical Osseans (19,1,1).<sup>55</sup> In the case of the Sampseans, the two sisters descended from Elkesai are reported to have sojourned with the Osseans and been worshipped as goddesses (19,2,12f; 53,1,2.5f); also the book of a brother of Elkesai, named Iexai, is supposed to have been in circulation among them (53,1,3; 19,1,4). This cannot be verified further.<sup>56</sup> Possibly the Sampseans whose name has never been unequivocally established or interpreted,<sup>57</sup> inherited Elkesaite traditions, although strongly influenced by Judaeo-Christian ideas. Later texts on heresy repeatedly assert that Elkesaites (Sampseans) resided in the vicinity of the Dead Sea.<sup>58</sup> Fihrist on the other hand sees the southern Iraqi baptists as the community of Elkesai (see above). The only common elements between these and the Mandaeans derive from their place of origin, the chief example being their similar baptismal practices. Various conjectures have been made about the survival of Elkesaite teachings in early Islam, above all under the name of the Šābians – the *Sobiai* are reminiscent of this name, which refers to the prominence of baptism.<sup>59</sup> The Mandaeans

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Rudolph, 'Die Bedeutung des Kölner Mani-Codex', pp. 471ff. (*Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 667–85). I have assembled all evidence of contacts with Mandaeism in my *Die Mandäer*, I, pp. 234ff, and 'Das Verhältnis der Mandäer zum Manichäismus' (s. note 53), pp. 167ff.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. now the source-critical treatment by Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 114ff; 134ff; on the problem of reliability of Epiphanius' report see *ibid.* pp. 126–9; more cautious F. S. Jones, *JbAC* 30 (1987), pp. 205f; 'The Genre of the Book of Elchasai' (s. note 34), pp. 93ff.

<sup>56</sup> Iexai may be a variant of Elxai (*jb = el*) and thus an invention of Epiphanius. Cf. now Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 134f.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Brandt, *Baptismen*, pp. 118f; Brandt, *Elchasaï*, pp. 129f, Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* I, p. 237, n. 1; J.-P. Audet, *RB* 68 (1961), 633, a review of Rudolph's *Die Mandäer* II. Perhaps the form is a distorted version of *Sabaioi*.

<sup>58</sup> According to Theodor bar Kōnai, the 'Red Sea'! (Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, pp. 266f). Cf. also L. Cirillo, *Elchasaï*, pp. 39f, 127; Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 34, 143–52.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. M. P. Roncaglia, 'Éléments Ebionites et Elkésaites dans le Coran', *POC* 21 (1971), 101–26; G. Quispel, 'The Birth of the Child from Gnostic and Jewish aspects' in



apart, the Elkesaites can be seen to have had the most pronounced influence of all the semi-Jewish baptist sects – they were obviously the most significant branch of the movement, and made themselves the most widely noticed: they spread outwards from eastern Syria to the west as far as Rome (via Apamea), to the south into the southern part of eastern Jordan (Peraea, Moabitis), and to the east, presumably along the line of the Euphrates, as far as Babylon (CMC, Fihrist); these areas were reached in the third and fourth centuries, and in the process Elkesaism came to accommodate itself primarily to Christianity. To this extent one may regard the founder of the sect, Elkesai, as being the outstanding personality of the baptist movements.<sup>60</sup> His greatest successor was Mani himself (216/17–74), who belonged to his community for twenty years (220–40) and who was obliged to leave the movement after fruitless attempts to reform it. He too was motivated by the desire to overcome and surpass both Christianity and Judaism, and he certainly accomplished this with greater success and ability, by utilizing the policies of accommodation followed by Elkesaite missionaries.

#### F THE MANDAEANS

The Mandaean (their old name for themselves was Naṣōreans; for believers, ‘the chosen ones of righteousness’, *bbirê zīdqa*) are the only baptist sect of antiquity to continue to flourish in the present day, in southern

*Eranos-Jahrbuch* 40 (1971), 296f. See also Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* 1, pp. 36ff. A new critical investigation on ‘Šābiens coraniques et ‘Šābiens’ de Ḥarran’ has been put forward by M. Tardieu in *JA* 274 (1986), 1–44, with a proposal for a new etymology of *šā-bi’ūn* as ‘adeptes des armées célestes’ (from Hebrew *sābā*, ‘army’, already proposed by E. Pocock in *Specimen historiae Arabum* (Oxford 1649), pp. 142–3). ‘Les Šābiens coraniques, correspondant arabe du nom grec de Stratotiques, ne sont donc pas autre chose que des Gnostiques au sens strict’ (42).

<sup>60</sup> Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*, pp. 140ff, 432. Brandt’s depiction of Elkesai often goes too far, but he does recognize that the importance of this figure lies in his attempt to form an independent movement outside both orthodox Judaism and Christianity. So F. Haase, *Altebristliche Kirchengeschichte nach orientalischen Quellen* (Leipzig 1925), pp. 320f. On the other hand Strecker places Elkesai too much in the mainstream of Christian development (*RAC* 4, p. 1185). According to the very different view of Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, the ‘Book Elchasaï’ ‘was written by an anonymous Jewish author in northern Mesopotamia during Trajan’s Parthian war, CE 114–17’ (p. 207); the ‘Elkesaites’ (e.g. Alcibiades) who used this book for their own ideas had a ‘Syrian Judaeo-Christian background’ without being ‘representatives of an older Judaeo-Christian sect’ (p. 213), but they also had a ‘features in common with the ps.-Clementine’ ‘Judaeo-Christians’ (*ibid.*). It is true, however, that there is a Jewish-Christian impact on this literature or tradition.

Iraq and south-west Iran (Khuzistan). They are currently some 25,000 strong.<sup>61</sup> This sect has taken on a very idiosyncratic form in both religious and linguistic respects. Their literary production, in their own language and script, is considerable; it indicates that the sect originally shared the same roots as the previously described phenomena of the early Jewish tradition. In its original form there were characteristics which were related ideologically to movements on the fringe of official Judaism in Palestine (Transjordan) and which contributed to the formation of early gnosticism; its religious practices show it to be an offshoot of Jewish baptism.<sup>62</sup> The Mandaean may reasonably be regarded as an oriental

<sup>61</sup> In what follows I am drawing largely on my own works, most of which are listed in the bibliography.

<sup>62</sup> I have attempted to demonstrate this in *Die Mandäer* I–II and in *Theogonie, Kosmogonie und Anthropogonie in den mandäischen Schriften*. The important feature is that the place of worship was an area which apart from the place of immersion (the Jordan) also contained a small building for which the older expression is *maskēna* ‘Temple (tent)’; the later term for it is *bit manda, bimanda*. Is there a harking back to the sanctity of the wilderness among the Israelites, together with a rejection of Jerusalem temple worship, as also happened in other Baptist sects? Can one assume similar events lying behind the Mandaean priests (*tarmidi*) to those we know of among the Qumran sect? The sources speak of persecution of the *tarmidi* in Jerusalem in the first century CE (see the extracts from these sources in my contribution to W. Foerster, *Die Gnosis* 2. Koptische und Mandäische Quellen (Zurich 1971, 2nd edn 1995), pp. 377–400, ET *Gnosis* II, Coptic and Mandaic Sources (Oxford 1974 pp. 296–317). In the Mandaean tradition anti-Jewish polemics directed against orthodox Judaism alternate with older established Jewish ideas and traditions. The only monograph on the Mandaean priesthood, by W. G. Oliver (*The Mandaean Tarmid – the Growth of a Priesthood*, PhD thesis; Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati 1967) mainly follows the lines of my own work, and accepts the view that ‘the formation of a priesthood came, not from any outside influence, but from within Mandaicism itself, dictated by the needs of a changing community’. Cf. also E. Segelberg, ‘The Ordination of the Mandaean *tarmida* and its Relation to Jewish and Early Christian Ordination Rites’, *St Patr* 10 (1970) TU 107, pp. 419–25; J. J. Buckley, ‘The Making of a Mandaean Priest: The Tarmida Initiation’, *Numen* 32 (1985), 194–217. On the whole question of the origin and history of the Madaeans cf. my studies, ‘Zum gegenwärtigen Stand der mandäischen Religionsgeschichte’; ‘Quellenprobleme zum Ursprung und Alter der Mandäer’; ‘Der Mandäismus in der neueren Gnosisforschung’; ‘Die Mandäer heute’. *Ztschrift für Religionswiss.* 2 (1994), 161–84. Reprints in my collected essays: *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 301ff, 370ff, 402ff, 538ff. Similarities between Mandaean and Elkesaite baptism ritual are stressed by A. Henrichs and L. Koenen, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 189f; on other common elements cf. *ibid.* 146f. Whether behind the *m. Para.* 8:10 (ed. G. Mayer, Berlin 1964, p. 97) concerning the waters of the Jordan and the Yarmuk as invalid (*pōsēl*) for the ritual washings, ‘because they are mixed waters’, there stands a hidden polemic against baptismal sects of the Jordan valley or not, depends on the interpretation of the text in connection with the rabbinic discussion of ‘mixture’. Cf. Werblowsky, ‘On the Baptismal Rite’, p. 98; R. Meyer (personal information in a letter of 22 April 1981 quoted in Rudolph, *Antike Baptisten*, 35, n. 60).

manifestation of gnosticism, organized as a baptist sect and based on a syncretic Jewish substratum.

The baptismal practices<sup>63</sup> with which we are primarily concerned, and which have a central liturgical value, consist of a regular total immersion (*mašbuta*) in running water (called *yardna*, 'Jordan') every Sunday (*habšabba*): more specifically, the practitioner immersed himself (*ḥb'*) three times, wearing a sacred garment, and then the priest (*tarmida*) immersed his face three times (this latter practice was certainly a later development in the service); then followed: a threefold marking of the forehead with water, the priest at the same time pronouncing the short baptismal formula ('the name of the Life and the name of Manda dHajê are pronounced upon you'), a threefold draught of water (from the river), the donning of a garland of myrtle and the laying on of hands, accompanied by the invocation of the 'secret names' (of the Elkesaite invocation of the witness). These procedures all took place in the 'Jordan'. There then followed, on the bank of the river, unction with sesame oils (Christian influence is evident here), distribution of (unleavened) bread (*piḥta*) and water (*mambuba*) and the laying on of hands to afford protection (*batamta*) against evil powers (exorcism). This baptism (in a slightly altered form) was also administered to children and to the dying. In the case of offences against the ritual code it would be repeated up to 360 times. Apart from this Sunday baptismal ceremony there was also the daily morning ablution (*rišama* – 'marking' or 'signing') and the simple baptism (*tamaša*) in a river, to be performed by every layman for particular offences or on particular occasions. To all appearances these lustral practices are today certainly by total immersion (*mašbuta*), but they nevertheless reveal that they were once anchored in such simple purificatory practices. The self-baptism, the marking with water, and the draught of water are certainly derived from those original practices; the role of the priest extended primarily to the laying on of hands and the crowning with myrtle. The very simple meal of bread and water which formed part of the water-rite dates back equally far, since parallels to it can be seen in early Christian times, and it is also reminiscent of the ceremonial meals taken by the Essenes after baptism.<sup>64</sup> Indications of a link between the water-rite and gnosticism can be found in other gnostic texts, admittedly overlaid extensively by the Christian tradition of the single baptism. The underlying ideas normally refer above all to the spiritually redemptive character of the baptism and the drink of water which at the same time affords protection and leads to

<sup>63</sup> Cf. the thorough treatment in *Die Mandäer* II, pp. 61–112 and 340–409; Segelberg, *Mašbuta*. Studies in the Ritual of the Mandaean Baptism (Theol. Diss.; Uppsala 1958).

<sup>64</sup> Cf. *Die Mandäer* I, pp. 223ff; II, pp. 398ff.

rebirth, but may also refer to the imparting of gnosis.<sup>65</sup> The ‘celestial baptism’ of the resurrected soul, which is often only understood symbolically (‘pneumatically’), acquired a very flexible form among the Mandaeans, and is closely connected with the widespread symbolism of enthronement.<sup>66</sup>

Even if the Mandaean religion developed in a way totally antipathetic to Judaism and Christianity, it is nevertheless an example of how what was initially a heretical Jewish baptist sect has developed into a quite distinct form of religion. Its rich documentary heritage also makes available to us priceless material for the study of the long-past world of the baptist sects of late antiquity, material which is otherwise only preserved in very fragmented forms.

### III CHRISTIAN ‘BAPTISTS’

Right from the outset Christianity has used baptism as the act by which men are accepted into the church; obviously this is connected with the baptismal practice of John the Baptist. Because Christian baptism is only undergone once, it is different from the repeated baptism of the baptist sects, and yet in its form and practice its origins in that baptist milieu – brought into the compass of Christianity by John – cannot be denied. Apart from this, in some forms of Christianity stricter purificatory practices have been retained or re-established; for this reason, the Christian Baptist must be mentioned in this chapter.

#### A JESUS OF NAZARETH

Jesus of Nazareth was a disciple of John the Baptist, and accordingly allowed himself to be baptized by John (cf. above). Remarkably, the synoptic gospels do not tell of any acts of baptism performed by Jesus, although the practice was established in the very earliest community (of Acts 2:38ff); they do not indeed say that the practice was initiated by Jesus (Matt. 28:19 is a secondary justification of missionary practice). It is only in John (3:22; 4:1) that Jesus is reported to have baptized men himself, although this is corrected (4:2) by a striking gloss: ‘although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples did’. This indicates that there was an old tradition which maintained that Jesus had, at least for a

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 384–401 (this material is in need of correction and updating; a second edition of the book is in preparation). On relations between Mandaic and the Coptic Nag Hammadi texts cf. Rudolph, ‘Coptica-Mandaica’, pp. 191–225 (reprint in *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 433–57).

<sup>66</sup> G. Widengren, ‘Heavenly Enthronement and Baptism, Studies in Mandaean Baptism’, *Religions in Antiquity. Essays in Memory of E. R. Goodenough*, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden 1968), pp. 551–82.

time, baptized men in emulation of his teacher.<sup>67</sup> It was obviously crucial for the Christian community that Jesus had received the baptism of John, an act which was also of soteriological and eschatological significance for the community, in as far as this was understood to be the ‘rite of initiation for the host of the “holy remnant” or of the eschatological “Israel”’.<sup>68</sup> There are also some indications that the first disciples of Jesus had been disciples of John (cf. John 1:35ff; 3:22ff). The baptism of the original Christians clearly took place chiefly in flowing water (Acts 8:36; Heb. 10:22; Did. 7:1; Barn. 11,11; Justin *Apol.* 1 61.2),<sup>69</sup> which however was shown at an early date to be irrelevant to the practice of baptism (Did. 7:2–3; Tert. *de bapt.* 4; Gregory of Nyssa, *de bapt.* (PG 46, col. 421)). The excavations on the site of the Christian community at Dura-Europos have unearthed probable evidence of a simple baptistery.<sup>70</sup> Baptism increasingly became – at least in the West – a ‘process of sprinkling’ (Gregory of Nyssa) performed by the baptizer. The formation of a standardized doctrine of baptism was slow at first.<sup>71</sup> The ‘heathen’ aspect of cleansing in the Christian baptism has never been completely lost, and has often been only artificially concealed by any Christian interpretation.<sup>72</sup> The water retains its original, physical function, yet is consecrated to become *aqua salutaris* or *fons immortalis*.<sup>73</sup> The early church also maintained

<sup>67</sup> Cf. also J. Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, 1 (Gütersloh 1971), pp. 53f, ET *New Testament Theology* (London 1971), pp. 45f; Becker, *Johannes der Täufer*, pp. 13–15; also E. Dinkler, *RGG*, edn 3, vi, p. 628; Barth, *Die Taufe*, pp. 37ff.

<sup>68</sup> Dinkler, p. 629.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. T. Klauser, ‘Taufet in lebendigem Wasser. Zum religions- und kulturgeschichtlichen Verständnis von Didache 7, 1–3’, *Pisciculi. Studien zur Religion und Kultur des Altertums*. Fs. F.-J. Dölger (Münster 1939), pp. 157–64; Wolf, *Aqua*, pp. 218f.

<sup>70</sup> C. H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building Excavation at Dura-Europos* 8/2 (New Haven/New York 1967), pp. 145ff; also K. Wessel, review of H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building* (Final Report 8, Part 2) (New Haven 1967), *ZDMG* 123 (1973), 155. Another pre-Constantine baptistery with seven stairs and mosaic decorations has been excavated in St Joseph’s Church in Nazareth; cf. B. Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision*, PSBFM 2 (Jerusalem 1971), pp. 129, 249ff).

<sup>71</sup> Cf. R. Bultmann, *Theologie des NT*, pp. 32ff, 40ff, 307f, 405ff, 458f, 504ff, 465f, 511ff, ET *Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 39ff, 133ff, 511ff; 2, pp. 38f, 112f, 160ff; Dinkler, *RGG*, edn 3, vi, pp. 629ff; Barth, *Die Taufe*, pp. 73ff.

<sup>72</sup> Clearly demonstrated by R. Wolf, *Aqua*, pp. 186–201. Cf. also Stommel, *Christliche Taufriten* (see above, n. 19). Heb. 6:2 refers to ‘instruction about ablutions’ (*baptismōn didachēs*), i.e. Jewish-Christian performances of ritual bathings. Later Cyril and Epiphanius stressed the existence of only one baptism in Christianity and attacked the practice of lustrations (cf. B. Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision*, p. 242). On the difference between the Jewish ‘baptism’ of proselytes and the Christian rite as sacrament and exorcism, see Werblowsky, ‘On the Baptismal Rite’, pp. 102f.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. the evidence in Wolf, *Aqua*, pp. 204ff; Barth, *Die Taufe*, pp. 80ff (baptism as sacrament), pp. 106ff (baptism as rebirth).

a whole series of ritual ablutions which preceded sanctified acts such as prayer or which were performed after transgressions of the religious code.<sup>74</sup>

#### B THE EBIONITES

The Judaeo-Christian *Ebionites* maintained or revived a quite strong baptist influence, which is noteworthy because they are regarded as being the successors to the old Jerusalem community.<sup>75</sup> However, the reliability of the sources here too is dubious, and not much confidence can be placed on the reports of the anti-heretics, since these do not rely to any real extent on eye-witness accounts (such must be assumed in the cases of Origen, Irenaeus, and at least in part in the case of Epiphanius).<sup>76</sup> The principal reporter of baptist practices is Epiphanius (*Pan.* 30), who also bears the credit for linking the Ebionites with the Elkesaites and who also quotes directly from 'Ebionite' sources such as the *periodoi Petrou* and *anabathmoi Iakōbou* from the collection of pseudo-Clementine writings; according to these the Ebionites considered water to be divine (*Anakeph.* 11.30, 3) and, like the Samaritans, (*ibid.* 4; Samaritans, above, p. 477) continually baptized themselves in water (*synechōs de baptizontai en tois hydasi*) both summer and winter, to ensure sanctification (*eis hagnismon dēthen*). Their daily baptism in water (*baptizesthai en tois hydasin*) was practised while fully clothed (*Pan.* 30, 2, 4f) and particularly after sexual intercourse and contact with strangers. Epiphanius also supports this with evidence from the *periodoi Petrou*, according to which Peter baptized himself daily in order to be sanctified (*ibid.* 15,3). Alongside these lustral rites (always rendered as *baptizein*) the Ebionites also practiced the conventional Christian baptism (*baptisma*, 16, 1). On the other hand Jerome stresses (*adv. Luc.* 23) that an 'Ebion' (a secondary eponym for the community), like other heretics was not baptized more than once; a reference, doubtless, to the validity of the baptism as such, and not to the lustrations. Later reports are for the most part derived from Epiphanius, as is shown

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Wolf, *Aqua*, pp. 57ff and 120ff.

<sup>75</sup> C. Colpe, 'Die älteste judenchristliche Gemeinde' in J. Becker *et al.* (eds.) *Die Anfänge des Christentums* (Stuttgart 1987), pp. 59–79; R. A. Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity* (Jerusalem/Leiden 1988); G. Strecker, 'Das Judenchristentum und der Manikodex', pp. 85–93; on baptismal and ablutionary practices Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* I, pp. 239ff; Pritz, pp. 78, 87ff; D. Vigne, *Christ au Jourdain. La baptême de Jésus dans la tradition Judéo-Chrétienne* (Paris 1992).

<sup>76</sup> Cf. the critical observations in Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, Part 1, and my comments in *TLZ* 100 (1975), 131–4. A different view is taken by Cirillo, *Elchasai*, pp. 34–8.

very clearly in this context by John of Damascus (*de haer.* 30) and Theodore bar Kônai (*Lib. schol.* II, 301).<sup>77</sup>

The picture which Epiphanius offers us accords well with the evidence we have from the relevant pseudo-Clementine writings: the predominance of ritual baptismal immersions against the once-only initiatory baptism, the predilection for flowing water and the relative emphasis laid on water as against fire and ritual sacrifice (*Rec.* I.39, 48, 5).<sup>78</sup> Without going into the difficult literary problems of this corpus it remains the case, now as always, that the most comprehensive source of the so-called 'foundation document' (*Grundschrift*), the so-called *Kerygmata Petrou*, belonged to the Judaeo-Christian tradition; whether it belonged to the Ebionite branch of that tradition, as Epiphanius maintains, is of little relevance here. What is important is that even he was aware of a connection between the original Clementines and Judaeo-Christianity. This can hardly be claimed as an original discovery, and does not exclude the possibility (indeed suggests it) that Epiphanius' presentation of the Ebionites is based on gleanings from other sources. Where these suggested to him divergencies from the traditional picture of Judaeo-Christianity – not an entirely unitary phenomenon – he postulated influences from other sects, particularly the Elkesaites.<sup>79</sup> Even this does not seem to me to be entirely a figment of his imagination, as the points of similarity between the Judaeo-Christian parts of the pseudo-Clementines and the Elkesaite tradition suggest either a common area of activity or cross-fertilization of the one upon the other. (This goes also for the 'gnostic' features.) The similarities in respect of the water ritual are anyway quite patent and probably go back to the earliest days of these communities, in the first and second centuries CE, in the area of the baptist movements and influence. This is supported by the contacts with the Mandaeen tradition. These more radical lustral practices, which are strictly speaking alien to Christian initiatory baptism, must be derived from the radicalization of the Jewish *toh'arā* (purity) precepts of Lev. 15.<sup>80</sup> This is true for all baptist

<sup>77</sup> Cf. the text in Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, pp. 264, 266; Luttkhuizen, *The Revelation*, pp. 146f.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. the evidence in Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* I, pp. 240ff and bibliography.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, pp. 28ff, 69ff, 78f (see above, note 40); Luttkhuizen, *Revelation*, pp. 129ff.

<sup>80</sup> According to Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte*, pp. 202ff. On the general radicalization of the law in early Jewish sects, see the work already mentioned of H. Braun (note 7). This was preserved in part by the Mandaeans (Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* I, pp. 85–7). Cf. further J. Neusner, 'History and Purity in First Century Judaism', *History of Religions* 18 (1978), 1–17, espec. 11f, 14ff; *Early Rabbinic Judaism*, SJLAB (Leiden 1975), pp. 3–33. A well-known document of this tendency from Qumran is the Temple scroll, called by J. Maier 'Heiligkeitsrolle' (*Die Tempelrolle*, p. 13, ET *The Temple Scroll*, p. 6; cf. above n. 8)



sects of this genus, as we have already noted. Thus even these Christian baptismal customs are mere offshoots of the Jewish.

#### IV CONCLUSION

The few reports of communities and individuals not only evincing a more regular use of immersion but also attributing to these ceremonies an indispensable central place in religious life, cannot easily be moulded into one straightforward story. They are individual manifestations of a movement visible in Judaism in the period from the second century BCE to the third century CE and also evident in early Christianity, especially in the eastern border areas of Palestine and Syria (Transjordan and the Dead Sea), extending to northern Mesopotamia (Elkesai) and southern Babylonia (Mandaeans) and as far as Rome (Elkesaites). Typical features are: a predilection for 'flowing water' (river or spring) and for open-air bathing facilities, the magico-sacramental interpretation of baptism, frequent ritual ablutions, the rejection of sacrificial and temple worship (replaced, as it were, by the ablutions – though evidence is not always available for this). The year CE 70, with the destruction of the temple, clearly brought no interruption to these circles, but on the contrary confirmed existing tendencies. In their teaching, apart from the Jewish or Christian framework, one sees tendencies towards syncretistic, particularly gnostic, ideas. These groups consequently remained on the periphery of orthodox religion and soon for the most part disappeared. Their most powerful influences were on Christianity, via John the Baptist, with baptism remaining a sacrament to this very day, and on Mani, via Elkesaism, and, together with Judaeo-Christian traditions, on Mohammed and Islam (Şabians); one should finally mention the still surviving Mandaean community in southern Iraq (Şubba). The most prominent personalities were John the Baptist and the prophet Elkesai, each of whom had great successors, respectively Jesus and Mani.

It is not easy to determine the provenance and origins of these movements. They certainly presuppose Jewish ablutions as prescribed in Lev. 15; the increased severity of these precepts as part of a more emphatic insistence on cleanliness and purity, coupled with ascetic tendencies, certainly played an important part. One must also take into account the introduction of certain foreign elements, possible in the Hellenistic period,

and recently by H. Stegemann 'a new *Sefer Torah*, a new Book of the Law' (*BAR* 13 (1987), 35; *Die Essener*, pp. 137f). The sociological background of this trend is analysed by G. Theissen, *Soziologie der Jesusbewegung* (Munich 1977) (TEH 194), pp. 75ff (ET *The First Followers of Jesus*, London 1978) issued as *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity* (Philadelphia 1978), p. 78.

both from Greece and further east where washing rituals were both more common and, in parts, even more rigorous.<sup>81</sup> It is possible at the same time that a decisive part may have been played by the developing tendency to spiritualize ritual concepts and replace the traditional sacrificial and temple rituals,<sup>82</sup> and at the same time to go back to the old and popular purificatory instrument, water, which was held to be a vehicle of sanctification and of divine powers. 'Water is more pleasing to God than Fire', Elkesai announced to his disciples, and he therefore exhorted them to turn away from fire and instead to follow the 'voice of the water' (*hē phōnē tou hydatos*).<sup>83</sup> Thus the baptist sects form a relatively short, but nevertheless interesting, chapter in the multifarious development of Judaism in the Hellenistic and late classical periods.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Wolf amassed a considerable amount of material in his dissertation. Cf. also Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* I, p. 250, n. 3. On the importance of water in the Old Testament see the work of P. Reymond, *L'eau, sa vie et sa signification dans l'Ancien Testament* (VT Sup. 6, Leiden 1958). On the Mesopotamian and Iranian side, see Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* II, pp. 358ff. Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste* emphasizes especially the Iranian influence (p. 431).

<sup>82</sup> Cf. H. Wenschkewitz, *Die Spiritualisierung der Kultusbegriffe*, Angelos-Beiheft 4 (Leipzig 1923); Thomas, *Le Mouvement baptiste*, pp. 426–30; Rudolph, *Die Mandäer* II, p. 378. The spiritualized concept of purity of the Essene and Qumran communities and their polemics against sacrificial worship should be remembered. Compare in detail for this the research mentioned in n. 8 of G. Klinzing, who traces the meaning of the cultus at Qumran. The same kind of spiritualization on a second level is effective in the tendency to 'gnosticizing' of some of these circles. Cf. Rudolph, *Gnosis* (Edinburgh 1983), pp. 219ff, 287f; L. Koenen, 'From Baptism to the Gnosis' (see above n. 50). Concerning the influence of 'Qumran ideas' on Gnosticism see also J. A. Fitzmyer, 'The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites and Their Literature', *Theol. Studies* 16 (1955), pp. 335–72 (repr. in *Essays on the Semitic Background of the NT* (London 1971), 2nd edn, 1974, pp. 435–80).

<sup>83</sup> Epiphanius, *Pan.* 19, 3, 7. According to Luttkhuizen this statement quoted by Epiphanius cannot be conclusively assigned to the original 'Book of Elchasai' (*Revelation*, pp. 122, 128, 203f, 208). A different view is taken by F. S. Jones, *The Book of Elchasai* (see note 32). Apart from the Jewish sacrificial form of worship, which in any case was not practised after CE 70, this polemic may also be directed against Zoroastrian fire-worship! The CMC contains examples, such as Elkesai following the voice of the water (12, 1–5; 94–7). Cf. on this Henrichs and Koenen, *ZPE* 32 (1978), 187 n. 274. Connections between the Elkesaite baptists of the CMC and the Essenes are argued for by L. Koenen, 'Manichäische Mission und Klöster in Ägypten' in *Das Römisch-Byzantinische Ägypten*, Aegyptiaca Treverensia 2 (Mainz 1983), pp. 93–108, esp. 102f. This is an old view in the history of the study of Elkesaism (cf. Luttkhuizen, *Revelation*, pp. 2–11), primarily based on fictions of Epiphanius (*ibid.* pp. 116, 226). Cf. also Cirillo, *Elchasai*, pp. 29–34; 'Elchasaiti e Battisti di Mani', pp. 116ff, 132f.

<sup>84</sup> On the sociological and economical background of the 'baptist' movement in the frame of the early Jewish and Christian history of that time cf. my concluding remarks in *Antike Baptisten*, pp. 22f. (reprint in: *Gnosis und spätantike Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 601ff).

## CHAPTER 17

## THE TROUBLEMAKERS

## I THE EVIDENCE

Two things of great historical importance certainly happened in Palestine during the first century CE. A Galilean miracle-man formed a group of followers which survived his crucifixion and became Christianity. A Jewish revolt led to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and so put an end to most powers of the priests and determined the development of Judaism as a religion without influential priesthood or public sacrifices.<sup>1</sup>

While we are reasonably certain that these events occurred, their backgrounds and details are uncertain because of the inadequacy of sources and the ingenuity of scholars. For Jesus we are almost entirely dependent on the devotional utterances of Paul (c. 50) and the hagiographic accounts of the gospels (c. 75–100). Both Paul and the gospels preserve earlier material, but in such ways that the original elements and their dates, forms, and contents are uncertain.<sup>2</sup> For the history of the country, the revolt and its immediate consequences we are similarly dependent on Josephus whose sources for most of this century were chiefly hearsay, his notes, and his memories – none of these reliable.<sup>3</sup> Besides, he distorted them all to serve various motives (some of them discussed below) and his *War* was thoroughly edited (and many passages, especially the speeches,

<sup>1</sup> Julian, *Against the Galileans* 305B–306A, says Jews still sacrificed in private. Sacrifice is prescribed in *Sepher harazim*, Firmament 1, Camp 4, lines 119ff and Camp 5, lines 162ff, passages probably of about Julian's time.

<sup>2</sup> This has been demonstrated by the discrepant results of New Testament criticism.

<sup>3</sup> For the unreliability of his memories see the contradictions between his own accounts of what he himself did while in Galilee in 66–7, *Bell.* II.568–III.408, and *Vita* 28–412, on both of which S. J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome*, CSCT 8 (Leiden 1979), *passim*. A different assessment in T. Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and his Society* (London 1983); J. J. Price, *Jerusalem Under Siege: The Collapse of the Jewish State 66–70 CE* (Leiden 1992) (esp. pp. 180–93). For varying approaches to Josephus see P. Bilde, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, His Works, and Their Importance*, JSPSupp. 2 (Sheffield 1988), pp. 191–200.

were written) by secretaries assigned to him by Titus.<sup>4</sup> Josephus claims that Titus also signed the *War* and ordered it published (*Vita* 363, written after Titus was dead).

Titus', and perhaps Vespasian's, initial sponsorship of the *War* is commonly thought a consequence of the desire to prevent the big Jewish populations of Mesopotamia and Adiabene from trying to intervene in Palestine or using their influence to secure a Parthian invasion. This purpose would explain why the *War* was first written in Aramaic and sent to these communities. To judge from the preserved Greek text, it represented the revolt as the result, in large part, of the work of small factions of troublemakers, who seized power illegally and tyrannized over the majority of the Palestinian Jews, especially those of Jerusalem.

Whatever the success of the Aramaic work, Vespasian and Titus paid Josephus and several secretaries to redo it in Greek for circulation inside the empire. The Greek version continued the same propaganda. The opponents of the Romans were 'brigands' (Josephus' usual word for them), the war was essentially a police action by the Romans to deliver the peaceable Jews from these 'tyrants'. The leading Jews never wanted to revolt because they knew the Romans' overwhelming power and superb organization, as well as their moderation and, by the standards of the day, clemency,<sup>5</sup> which would make any action against them unjustified, as well as unsuccessful.

The Greek *War* (= *Bell.*) also played down the support which the Jews of Adiabene and Mesopotamia had given,<sup>6</sup> and it set forth the case against revolt in a masterly speech put into the mouth of King Herod Agrippa II, another patron of Josephus (*Bell.* II.345–401). Josephus surely could not have written the speech and probably could not have written the outline; the grasp of empire-wide politics and the coherent argument

<sup>4</sup> For the secretaries, *C. Ap.* 1.50. Josephus when first at Rome was pensioned and maintained in one of the Emperor's houses, *Vita* 423; *Bell.* when completed was presented to Titus and Vespasian and approved by them, *Vita* 361. What the secretaries did can be inferred from comparison of *Bell.* and especially the speeches in it, with those passages of *Ant.* and *Vita* which Josephus had to write on his own. See further S. Schwartz, *Josephus and Judaeae Politics*, CSCT 18 (Leiden 1990), which defends the following (approximate) dates: *Aramaic War* 74–6; *Bell.* 77–81 (Book 7 much revised *c.* 100; alterations in other sections may have been made at this time too, see Schwartz, 'Composition', *HTR* 79 (1986), 373–86); *Ant.* 82–94, revised 97–8; *Vita* 97–8; *Contra Apionem* 98–100.

<sup>5</sup> Z. Yavetz, 'Reflections on Titus and Josephus', *GRBS* 16 (1975), 423–6.

<sup>6</sup> It mentions only twice that some Adiabenean princes fought on the revolutionists' side, *Bell.* II.520; VI.356, and stayed with them to the end. Nothing is said of any sizeable body of Adiabenean or Mesopotamian troops. But Dio Cassius says that many Jews (not 'Judaeans', but *homoëthoi*) 'not only from Roman territories, but also from the lands beyond the Euphrates' fought in defence of Jerusalem (66.4.3).

are so far beyond his ramshackle compositions that we must suppose another source, perhaps Agrippa II or one of *his* secretaries.

However, Josephus had to be careful not to trivialize the revolt too far – that would have deprived the Romans of the honour of their victory. Also, he was proud of being a Jew and was determined to represent the Jews as a great people. His secretaries humoured him by writing a Thucydidean introduction declaring this the greatest of all wars (*Bell.* 1.1 = Thuc. 1.1). They also wrote up the siege of the little Galilean hill town where Vespasian captured him; its taking was enlivened with amazing military devices and prodigies of individual valour borrowed from the most fashionable hellenistic histories. As for the final siege of Jerusalem, that became a literary production of epic scale.<sup>7</sup>

That Josephus not only celebrated his people, city, and temple, but also hoped for their restoration, is an inference supported by the care he takes to exonerate the people and praise the city and temple. Besides his defence of the ruling classes<sup>8</sup> and the commons, and his denigration of the revolutionists, he also shifted much of the blame of the revolt on to the Roman governors, whose avarice and corruption (according to him) produced the situation that made the revolt possible, whose stupidity led to the outbreak of hostilities, and whose fear of punishment and hope of putting the blame on the Jews led them to exacerbate the troubles. Fortunately for Josephus, all these governors had been approved by emperors of the Julian line; abuse of them would get him in no trouble with his patrons, the Flavians, who now held the throne. So *caveat lector*.<sup>9</sup>

This sketch is far from a complete account of the apologetic and polemic themes in Josephus' work. More will have to be mentioned later, yet more will not. This much, though, will alert the reader to the difficulties of trying, with Josephus as our chief, often our only, source, to give an accurate picture of the troublemakers of Palestine from Herod's death

<sup>7</sup> Epics were fashionable in Rome about this time: Lucan, Valerius Flaccus, Statius, Silius Italicus, not to mention Petronius' parodies. A study of their relations to Josephus might increase the list of his untrustworthy elements.

<sup>8</sup> This defence has now been attacked by M. Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea* (Cambridge 1987); 'The Origins of the Great Revolt: A Conflict of Status Criteria' in *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel*, edited by A. Kasher, U. Rappaport and G. Fuks (Jerusalem 1990), pp. 39–53. Like most healthy reactions, it goes a bit too far. See the review by E. Bammel in *JTS* ns 40 (1989), 213–17. Many of the highest class must have had realistic notions of the probable results of revolt, and have acted accordingly. Hence the flight which immediately followed Cestius' defeat, *Bell.* 11.556.

<sup>9</sup> This propaganda against the Romans has been swallowed whole by many writers, most recently by R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs* (San Francisco 1988), who read Josephus with the simple faith that used to be given to Mother Jones's stories of 'peasant resistance movements'.

in 4 BCE to the fall of Masada in CE 74, and to place, in relation to them, Jesus and his followers. A further obstacle is the 'scholarly' work on the question. Much of it is very poor. Let us begin with the facts.

## II THE FIRST SKIRMISHES

It was shown in the chapter on Gentiles that Herod owed his throne not only to Roman support, but even more to the support of the Herodian party which his father, his brothers and he had built up through three quarters of a century. That was basic. If he had not had such support the Romans would not have supported him. This was made clear by Antony in 42 BCE, when a large delegation of Jewish notables asked him to oust Herod and his brothers (and, implicitly, turn the government over to them, *Bell.* 1.243). According to Josephus, and to probability, Antony's one question was, 'Who is better able to rule?'

By 'rule' he meant collect the tribute, maintain normal business and governmental procedures, and make least trouble for Rome. Chosen by these criteria, first by Antony, then by Octavian, Herod was given the help he needed to capture Jerusalem, and was then left on his own. We hear nothing of Roman garrisons or permanent camps in his territories. His own foreign troops were mercenaries, like those of the Hasmonaeans before him. To their Thracians and Galatians, he added Germans, but not Italians (*Bell.* 1.397, 437, 672, etc.). Consequently, such opposition as we hear of seems to have been opposition to him, not to the Romans, who were not officially on hand to be opposed.

This state of affairs was transformed after Herod's death. Soon thereafter protests at his execution of some fanatics who had vandalized the temple's decorations<sup>10</sup> were transformed by the opponents of his successor, Archelaus, into riots of which the purpose was to discredit the new regime. This was indicated by the fact that they continued after Archelaus granted the initial demands. His nomination by Herod had still to be approved by Augustus. If he put the troubles down by force he could be accused to Augustus of tyranny; if he let them increase, of inability

<sup>10</sup> The eagle, chopped down from the Temple's gate, reappears in the carved decoration of Galilean synagogues. The arrested vandals, followers of two extremist preachers, are said to have numbered about forty (*Bell.* 1.652; *Ant.* xvii.157). Herod had them tried before a public assembly, by which they were condemned (*Bell.* 1.655; *Ant.* xvii.164). No substantial demonstration either preceded or followed the execution. Only much later, after Herod's last days, death and burial, and Archelaus' mourning and visit to the Temple (when 'all the people vied with each other' in praising him, *Ant.* xvii.200; cf. *Bell.* ii.1-4) did his opponents succeed in preparing and putting on a hostile demonstration in Jerusalem.

to govern. His princely competitors were probably behind this, though Josephus chose not to mention the fact. When they and Archelaus took off for Rome to plead their cases, the weakness of the caretaker government invited disturbances all over the country. It is important to notice just what these were:

*In Idumaea*, two thousand of Herod's veterans (dissatisfied with their severance settlements?) revolted. By the end of the troubles their numbers had grown to 'ten thousand', a favourite Josephan round number; also some of the Herodian family had joined them, angling for military support. When it became clear that order would be restored all promptly surrendered and all but the ringleaders and the Herodians were pardoned (*Bell.* II.55, 76; *Ant.* XVII.270, 297).

In *Galilee*, the last hangers on of Aristobulus' party succeeded in getting control of the palace in Sepphoris and armed their followers from the weapons there. The leader may have had some connection with the royal line, since Josephus says he 'desired royal rank', but he seems to have got no following outside of Galilee. The governor of Syria, Varus, when he came south to suppress the troubles, was able to delegate the subjection of Galilee to an assistant. That Sepphoris was burnt and the inhabitants enslaved suggests that the *local* support was strong, which goes with the Hasmonaean connections (*Bell.* II.56, 68; *Ant.* XVII.271–2, 288–9).

*Samaria*, by contrast, cooperated fully with the Romans (*Bell.* II.69; *Ant.* XVII.289).

*In Peraea and rural Judaea* the chief troublemakers were two groups of bandits, one led by an ex-slave, the other by an ex-shepherd, who alike devoted themselves to plundering country-places and robbing travellers (*Bell.* II.57–65; *Ant.* XVII.273–84). Both affected royal regalia and this has made them 'messianic pretenders' to historians ignorant alike of ancient slave revolts and of Josephus' comment that 'whenever anybody found a gang to join him in making trouble he could set himself up as a king and go on to loot the public'.<sup>11</sup>

*In Jerusalem*, and only there, occurred the serious, general revolt which necessitated the intervention of Varus with his army. The occasion of this was the attempt by a procurator of Augustus to seize Herod's treasure – i.e. the funds necessary to support the incoming government. To have those taken by the Romans would necessitate severe taxation. Hence a massive revolt, in which nobody claimed to be a messiah. It collapsed at once when the governor arrived and the procurator fled the country (*Bell.* II.41–54, 66–7, 72–5; *Ant.* XVII.251–68, 286, 291–5).

<sup>11</sup> *Ant.* XVII.285. For the common usage of 'king' by robbers, see *bKetub* 51b end; for a slave who became a robber king, Diodorus 34/5.41.



In the above list, the most important element is the absent one: *what did not happen*. In spite of the breakdown of the government there was no country-wide rising. In different localities there were disturbances resulting from different local causes. These disturbances had no common basis, did not coalesce, and were put down individually by different means. When they were put down, the heirs appointed by Augustus took possession of their appointed territories without any general opposition. Except for the attack on the procurator and some highway robberies, the local fighting had not been primarily against Romans, but against Herodians.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, these troubles and the bitter family fight over the inheritance must have greatly weakened the Herodians' ability to rule. So did the loss of prestige. Herod died a king, Archelaus came back from Rome a mere ethnarch, with a diminished territory, a diminished income and a deeply divided party. In such a situation, to fill his father's shoes was impossible. So he failed.

### III THE *SICARII*

With his deposition and the Roman take-over of Judaea in CE 6 we first hear of a lasting, organized, anti-Roman party, not anti-Roman because the Romans were supporting the wrong local ruler, or insisting on some particular measure, but anti-Roman in principle (*Bell.* II.118; *Ant.* XVIII.4–10, 23–4; xx.102; Acts 5:37). Josephus does not tell us what the members of this movement called it or themselves; he refers to it as 'a fourth philosophy' in relation to the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, which he also terms 'philosophies' but describes sufficiently to show that in fact they were different schools of legal exegesis and observance; the claim that they were 'ways of philosophizing' was a ploy to recommend them to Roman readers.

Since the fourth school had resisted the Roman takeover, Josephus claimed in *Bell.* II.118 that the founder had been 'a sophist (teaching) his own peculiar theory with no resemblance to the others'. Fifteen years or so later, when war guilt was a less lively question, he admitted in *Ant.* XVIII.4 and 23 that the founder had had the help of a Pharisee and the

<sup>12</sup> The one serious piece of evidence against this interpretation is Tacitus' remark that after Simon was put down the Herodians ruled 'a cowed people' (*Hist.* v.9.2; text in M. Stern, *GLAJJ* II, pp. 21, 29). However, (1) Tacitus liked to be critical of Roman government (except when represented by his father-in-law, a shining exception), and (2) comparison with the details given by Josephus – who had no strong motive to misrepresent the seriousness of the troubles in Archelaus' territory – makes Tacitus' remark seem a generalization from hearsay.

members had ‘agreed with the opinions of the Pharisees in everything else’, but had ‘an invincible love of liberty, since they have taken it into their heads that their only leader and master is God’. This sounds more probable than the previous claim – originality is rare – and its probability is increased by his statement that people listened to them gladly, which would be unlikely if what they were saying was mostly novel. Hence ‘their plot for daring action became extensive’ (*Ant.* xviii.6). Its suppression, however, made no trouble Josephus thought worth reporting, though he liked to report Roman repression – it excused Jewish revolt. On the other hand, the High Priest who had backed the Romans soon became the object of popular protests that decided the Roman governor to remove him (*Ant.* xviii.3, 26). Acts goes further: The founder of this mysterious school (a certain Judas from Galilee or Gamala, *Bell.* ii.18; *Ant.* xviii.4 *vs.* xx.102) perished in or after the revolt ‘and all whom he had won over were scattered’.

Wherever Judas came from, the trouble he made was certainly in Judaea; that was the territory the Romans were at this time taking over. In spite of Acts 5:37, the school probably continued to annoy the Romans; forty years later two sons of Judas were brought to trial for reasons unspecified (at least, by Josephus) and were crucified by order of the Roman governor (*Ant.* xx.102). Even this did not end the sect’s history. The next generation took to training assassins, and came to be known as ‘the dagger men’ (*sicarii*). Their trainees could be hired, not only for public, but also for private, purposes; even a Roman governor was an occasional patron (xx.163–4). In *Bell.* ii, iv and vii, and *Ant.* xx Josephus sketches their contribution to the breakdown of political order in Judaea, their seizure of Masada and its arms, the re-entry of Jerusalem by one of their groups and its brief leadership there; the murder of most of these by the lower priesthood of the Temple, with popular help; then the escape of a few to Masada, where they sat out the war with their friends, occasionally looting Jewish towns in the neighbourhood, until Masada was taken by the Romans in 74 and they almost all (according to Josephus) committed suicide. A postscript (*Bell.* vii.409–19) records how some who escaped to Egypt were rounded up by the Jews there; a yet later reference (*Bell.* vii.437) claims that they were also behind the riots in Cyrene – a claim the story there following does nothing to justify. Josephus’ account of them has probably been shaped throughout, and especially in its later parts, by his attempt to exculpate the Jews and to blame their political disturbances, so far as possible, on a few small groups.

Since the last leaders of the *sicarii* in Jerusalem and Masada (Menahem and Eleazer ben Jair) are both described as descendants of Judas, the leadership would seem to have been hereditary. This was probably one

reason – along with political rivalry and religious disapproval of other people’s murders – which led the lower priests of the Temple to murder them once they were inside. Political rivalry is suggested by the fact that Menahem had come in royal costume. Hence many have supposed that he planned to become ‘the Messiah’ (*sc.* ‘the anointed’ king). In fact, whether or not he had planned to be anointed, and if so, by whom, is unknown; his followers had recently murdered the High Priest (*Bell.* II.441). With his own murder the question became academic and remains unanswerable. Of the theological opinions of the *sicarii* – except for their strict prohibition of service to alien rulers and their liberal attitudes about murder, robbery, blackmail, etc. – we know nothing to speak of, and too much has been spoken of it (see M. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, edn 2, Leiden 1976; ET *The Zealots*, Edinburgh 1989, in my view an outstanding work of creative theological imagination).

The importance of the beginning of the party, however, as the first essentially anti-Roman organization, did not escape Josephus – at least, not on second thought, after he had become familiar with Greek historians and their analyses of historical causation. In *Bell.* II.118 he passed over it without remark, but in *Ant.* XVIII.6–10 he was moved to rhetoric (I omit the trimmings): ‘There is no evil which did not grow from these men (Judas and Zadok) so that the people was inexpressibly filled with evils, with the bringing on of wars . . . deprivation of friends . . . attacks by great bands of robbers . . . destruction of leading men . . . factions . . . political murders . . . internecine slaughters, insanity . . . famine persisting (so as) to (compel) utmost shamelessness, capture and destruction of cities, until even the Temple of God was consumed by the fire of our enemies – (such have been the results) of this faction. Thus, indeed, changes of ancestral (ways) . . . are weighty for destruction . . . since Judas and Zadok, setting up a fourth philosophy, one brought in from outside, and providing it well with adherents, first filled the state at once with conflicts, and then planted the outlandish elements of this sort of philosophy as roots of the evils to succeed.’

As Judas and Zadok stand first in this initial diatribe, so their descendants, the *sicarii*, stand first in the list of *Bell.* VII.262–73, where Josephus reviews the leading revolutionary parties. The latest research dates this list from 80 or 81,<sup>13</sup> over a decade earlier than the passage just quoted from *Ant.* XVIII. Therefore we may reasonably read the *Ant.* XVIII passage as a reflective synthesis of the list of *Bell.* VII. In the list we have unmistakably a sequence of distinct parties, and Josephus’ history elsewhere tells us that they were often in conflict. The claim in *Ant.* XVIII that *all* subsequent

<sup>13</sup> Above, note 4. Schwartz thinks this one of the original elements of book VII.

troubles derived from the work of Judas and Zadok is to be discounted as rhetorical schematization and explained as meaning that the two of them set the example of resistance to Rome, not to local rulers, and also introduced a new interpretation of the Law, so as to make such resistance a permanent and pre-eminent religious duty.<sup>14</sup> When writing *Ant.* xviii Josephus claimed that this example and this legal teaching had been the source of the later disasters; he did not claim that the party then organized had been the sole agent in producing the disasters. As *Bell.* makes clear, Josephus believed that several other parties had been more important in the course of events. These other parties we shall discuss as they emerge. Here we must point out at once that the synthesis in *Ant.* xviii.6–10 is probably false in claiming that the prohibition of accepting any king but God was a motive common to all these parties. In fact, several of their leaders had royal pretensions. The *sicarii*'s own leader, Menahem, did, and they cost him his life (*if* we can trust Josephus' report of the remarks of his opponents before they murdered him, *Bell.* II.443–4). Other 'false Messiahs' also arose; Mark claimed Jesus had foretold their coming (13:22 = Matt. 24:24).<sup>15</sup>

#### IV GENERAL CONDITIONS AND BRIEF EPISODES,

CE 7–44

Non-theological factors in the formation of all the parties were the economic and social causes and conditions of the times, but our knowledge of these is so spotty that assurance about them is more easily expressed

<sup>14</sup> In both statements about Judas (*Bell.* II.118; *Ant.* xviii.23) Josephus describes his new interpretation of the Law as condemnation of Jews who accepted any master save God. This could have been derived from the Pentateuch as follows: Since God is King, 'Thou shalt have no other God' could be read as implying 'no other King'. This interpretation would make acceptance of human rulers tantamount to rejection of monotheism. Hence the duty of rejecting human rulers would, like that of adhering to monotheism, take precedence of all other commandments, including, 'Thou shalt not kill'. Revolt from Rome would follow. This exegesis and its consequences could be the 'change of ancestral rules' which 'filled the state with conflicts and then planted . . . roots of the evils to succeed thereafter', as *Ant.* xviii.9f declared, and this *may* have become the common principle of all the revolutionary parties – though this final development seems unlikely in view of the parties' diversities. It is easier to suspect Josephus of rhetorical schematization than to believe in such theoretical agreement by groups practically so diverse.

<sup>15</sup> Other theological motives occasionally reported are even more dubious. For instance, can the purification of the Temple and its cult have been a genuine concern of parties that filled the Temple with dead bodies, the most impure of all objects? Josephus, as a priest, repeatedly points out the inconsistency (*Bell.* II.210, 424; IV.150–1, 201; V.10, 19, 402; VI.126, 240; etc.).

than justified. For example, two recent books have assigned leading roles, one, to aristocratic disloyalty, the other, to peasant discontent.<sup>16</sup> Both books are one-sided, but each has much truth on its side; together they prove that, although the importance of religion in the society gave a religious colouration to all its elements, the moving considerations were often secular. However, social and political concerns are not always signs of social and political theories. In public life, as in private, Pascal's rule holds: 'The heart' (not to mention the stomach) 'has its reasons which the reason does not know.' To suppose that the Palestinian peasantry looted the estates of the rich because they were trying to restore a primitive 'egalitarian society'<sup>17</sup> (that never was) is absurd. Josephus knew better: they looted because they wanted the loot. Some of the aristocracy did likewise, and when the revolt came others were driven into it by local pressures and loyalties. Yet others, especially young men, were fired by thoughts of 'liberty', 'Yahweh's covenant', etc. But to suppose that most members of the upper class willingly risked their properties and lives to resist Roman rule, is also absurd. Josephus' works are dominated by his greatest experience, the War. In *Bell.* he is admittedly picking out the events that led to it; in *Ant.*, when treating the first century CE, he does the same. The peaceful continuity of ordinary, day-to-day life is hardly mentioned. So we hear of all the incidents that arose throughout the country after the strong, centralized government of Herod broke down; we do not hear of the times and places where incidents did not occur.

Consequently Josephus has little to say of the last half-dozen years of Augustus' reign and the times of the succeeding governors down to the forties, when he became old enough to notice and remember political events (he was born in 37/8). Besides lacking incidents, he may have

<sup>16</sup> Ruling class, Goodman, above, n. 8; peasants, Horsley and Hanson, above, n. 9. On the economic setting of the war see further: H. Kreissig, *Die sozialen Zusammenhänge des jüdischen Krieges* (Berlin 1970); 'A Marxist View of Josephus' Account of the Jewish War' and also S. Applebaum, 'Josephus and the Economic Causes of the Jewish War', both in *Josephus, the Bible, and History*, edited by L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Leiden 1989), pp. 237–77; S. Applebaum, 'Judaea as a Roman Province; the Countryside as a Political and Economic Factor' in *ANRW* II.8, edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin/New York 1977), pp. 355–96; S. Schwartz, 'Josephus in Galilee: Rural Patronage and Social Breakdown' in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period*, edited by F. Parente and J. Sievers (Leiden 1994), pp. 290–306.

<sup>17</sup> So Horsley and Hanson, above, n. 9, p. 116: 'The principal goal of these (peasant) movements was to . . . restore the traditional ideals of a free and egalitarian society.' The authors' attempts to demonstrate the past existence of such a society are utterly inadequate, and the text of the Bible fully demonstrates the opposite: the patriarchs are large slave owners; the heads of the tribes rule their descendants; Moses is *de facto* ruler of all Israel; the judges are rulers and soon begin to make themselves kings; Samuel was no egalitarian (ask Saull!); and from Samuel on, the kings rule.

lacked sources: for Palestine from CE 6 to 46 he seems to have been dependent chiefly on what his elders had told him, sometimes including episodes not significant for relations with Rome, e.g. the pollution of the Temple by the Samaritans (*Ant.* xviii.29f), probably irresponsible mischief, but, even so, indicative of increasing hostility between Gerizim and Jerusalem. The ‘union of the *Ioudaioi*’ which the Hasmonaeans had created, and Herod, by his generosity to Samaria and Samaritan marriage (and bequest of two-thirds of his territory to his children from it) had tried to preserve, was evidently going to pieces. It was perhaps after this that the Samaritans began to build fortified outposts in their territories near the Judaeen frontiers.<sup>18</sup>

From the reign of Tiberius (14–37) Josephus reports two massive protests by the Judaeans – one when Pilate had military standards with portraits of the emperor brought into Jerusalem (*Bell.* II.169–71 = *Ant.* xviii.55–8), the other when he used temple funds for an aqueduct (*Bell.* II.175–7 = *Ant.* xviii.60–2). Pilate settled the first without violence by having the standards removed, but dealt with the second by having the protesters in Jerusalem beaten up. Another such episode, perhaps a doublet of the first, showing how widely oral tradition can alter facts, is unknown to Josephus but reported by Philo (*Legatio* 299–305). According to this Pilate hung the Herodian palace with golden shields inscribed only with the names of the dedicator and the person on whose behalf they were dedicated. Such dedications were commonly ‘to’ a god (to get favour) ‘for’ a person; here the god’s name may have been implied.<sup>19</sup> This tactful silence did not suffice. Massive demonstrations demanded their

<sup>18</sup> See S. Applebaum, S. Dar and Z. Safrai, ‘The Towers of Samaria’, *PEQ* 110 (1978), 91–100 and pls. 10–12. I have not seen the follow-up article there promised.

<sup>19</sup> The dedicator will have been Pilate, the beneficiary Tiberius; therefore to remove them would have been *lèse majesté*. Dedication to a god was not necessarily implied; F. H. Colson, *Philo*, vol. x, LCL (London 1962), translated, ‘of him in whose honour’, *sc.* the shields were set up; E. M. Smallwood, *Philonis Alexandrini Legatio ad Caium*, edn 2 (Leiden 1970), followed Colson; A. Pelletier, *Legatio ad Caium*, Paris 1972, sidestepped: ‘à l’intention de qui elle (la dédicace) avait été faite’. In the Greek, both *hyper* and *anathesis* (both ‘setting up’ and ‘dedication’) are ambiguous. But had the shields been merely ‘set up in honour of’ the Emperor there would have been no ground for an outcry; if they were (or were thought to be) ‘dedicated (to god x) on behalf of’ the Emperor, they would have been considered objects used in worship, and the protest would have had a legal basis. (The possibility that they might have been dedicated to Yahweh does not seem to have been considered.) The protest therefore argues for the latter meaning. Cf. the analysis in P. S. Davies, ‘The Meaning of Philo’s Text about the Gilded Shields’, *JTS* ns 37 (1986), 109–14; and note the view that this is a doublet of the standards episode in D. R. Schwartz, ‘Josephus and Philo on Pontius Pilate’ in *The Jerusalem Catbedra* 3, ed. by L. I. Levine (Jerusalem/Detroit 1983), pp. 26–45. As to the standards there was of course no doubt; they themselves were objects of worship.

removal, and eventually the Emperor had them transferred to the temple of Augustus in Caesarea. Evidently the *Ioudaioi* of Caesarea made no protest; Philo thought this a fine solution.

None of these episodes is said to have been produced or affected by 'the fourth philosophy' or by any other organization. Josephus and Philo present them as spontaneous demonstrations by the the people, examples of their devotion to the Law and unanimity in protesting against any least violation. Nevertheless, such shows have to be organized, and the group most likely to have organized these was the one Josephus was least likely to accuse, i.e. his own – the younger and more fanatical members of the Jerusalem priesthood. Herod had made a practice of selecting his High Priests from families outside the old Jerusalem priestly aristocracy; its members presumably resented the new appointees, and also hated the Romans who had repeatedly exacted money from the Temple. The senior members will have had to maintain appearances, but some younger ones formed, as later events will show, an anti-Roman clique. The events in Tiberius' reign, however, show no trace of any plan to revolt; indeed, they indicate that none was brewing; no group plotting a revolt would have tried to block an increase of the city's water supply.

Two minor episodes of Pilate's time were mentioned by Josephus only in passing. While gossiping about Herod Antipas' love life he went on to tell of the defeat of his army by the Nabataean King (Aretas), and said that some Jews thought this defeat a divine vengeance for his execution of 'John, called "the Baptist" . . . a good man (who) had urged the Jews to live righteous lives and come together in "baptism" (i.e. immersion). For he thought immersion acceptable when people did not use it to escape the consequences of various sins, but for sanctification of the body, that is to say when the soul was already purified by righteousness.' He had such success as a preacher that Herod feared he might start some political trouble, and prevented this by timely execution (*Ant.* xviii.116–19). This agrees with the gospels' account of John insofar as it makes him a preacher of righteousness and advocate of baptism, not connected with any of the Jewish 'philosophies', but an independent who attracted a large following and whom Antipas therefore executed. By contrast, John's preaching of baptism as a means for forgiveness of sins, and his eschatological prophecies, are peculiar to the gospels.

The other of Josephus' asides on Pilate's time appears in *Ant.* xviii.63–4, just after the aqueduct affair: 'About this time was Jesus, a wise man . . .' The case for the authenticity of this reference is strengthened by what seems a cross-reference to it in *Ant.* xx.200: a Sadducean high priest secured the execution of James 'the brother of Jesus' for transgressing the Law. However, the texts of both passages have been so much doctored



that their *exact* recovery is hopeless, though the first passage probably reported the crucifixion, as ordered by Pilate, and ended as it now does: 'Even to the present the clan of Christians, named from him, has not died out.' Josephus liked to commemorate holy eccentrics; besides Jesus and John he told of Judas the Essene (*Bell.* 1.78–80), another Jesus, son of Ananias (*Bell.* VI.300–9), etc. Writing of such men gave him opportunities to report prophecies and he used them gladly, so his reduction of both John and Jesus to mere teachers of morality is puzzling.

We cannot suppose these were the only troubles Pilate had to deal with in his ten years of governorship (roughly 26–36). Luke 13:1 speaks of 'Galileans whose blood Pilate mixed with their sacrifices', but nothing more is known of them. When Jesus was about to be crucified and the crowd was demanding that a prisoner be released, Pilate reportedly made them choose between Jesus and a fellow named Barabbas, who was one 'of the faction' and 'had committed murder in the revolt' (Mark 15:7; Luke 23:19). The crowd chose Barabbas. We know nothing more about him. Others 'of the faction', not released, may have been the two 'bandits' with whom Jesus was crucified (Mark 15:27, etc.) Why 'the faction' had been formed and how many such cases there were, we cannot estimate, but we may suppose that of Barabbas was not of much importance, or Pilate would not have let him go.

Pilate himself finally came to grief as the result of a religious revival in the Samaritans' territory. A prophet appeared and urged them to go with him to Mount Gerizim; he promised to reveal the holy vessels Moses had ordered to be buried there. The Samaritans came armed and congregated at the foot of the mountain, but before they could go up Pilate's troops occupied the road. In the ensuing battle some were killed and many captured, but most fled. Of the captives Pilate had the most influential executed. Hence the governing council of the Samaritans appealed to the governor of Syria. He ordered Pilate to return to Rome to stand trial on their charges (*Ant.* XVIII.85–9). This, at last, looks like a gathering that might have led to a rising if some bogus relics had been dramatically unearthed and mass hysteria had ensued. To judge from Josephus' story the gathering was not produced by any organization, but by an individual 'prophet', perhaps with a circle of close followers. In any case the affair seems to have been limited to Samaritan territory. The entire period of Pilate's governorship was summarized by Tacitus with three words: *Sub Tiberio quies* – 'Under Tiberius, things were quiet' (*Hist.* v.9). Such were the standards by which a critical Roman senator judged Roman provincial government.

The 'quiet' did not last long. Three or four years later (i.e. c. 40) the Emperor Gaius decided to have a colossal statue of himself as Zeus set

up in the Jerusalem Temple. The governor of Syria was ordered to bring it down the coast with an appropriate military guard and install it. He was met by crowds of protesters. Reportedly they so impressed him that he temporized as long as possible, and sent a letter to Gaius asking him to change the plan. By good luck he lived to celebrate Gaius' assassination in 41. Both Philo (*Legatio* 225–7) and Josephus (*Bell.* II.192, 202; *Ant.* XVIII.263, 270–3, 279) emphasize the great numbers and variety of the protesters – men, women and children of all ages and social stations – and their pertinacity in continuing the protests for weeks. This again supposes organization, at the very least to provide food and water. Again the most likely organizers were the priests, the parties most concerned. Neither the lay aristocracy nor the peasant banditry are likely to have been the leaders, and neither they nor the ‘philosophical schools’ have left a trace in the reports of the events. Josephus says that the whole *ethnos*, by which he intends to suggest all the *Ioudaioi*, were involved, and he claims that a similar ‘ethnic’ reaction was feared a few years later, in the time of Agrippa I (41–4) when a statue of Claudius was set up by Gentiles in a synagogue in Dora (*Ant.* XIX.309). Here the exaggeration is probably greater, but in trying to estimate it we must keep in mind that he plausibly presents a serious dispute of the Peraean *Ioudaioi* with the Gentiles of Philadelphia as no more than a local quarrel (*Ant.* XX.2–4). Hence a reason is wanted for the exaggeration in XIX.309 and it may be, in part, the truth exaggerated.

#### V THE COMING OF THE MAGICIANS, AND OTHER UNDESIRABLES

Fadus (44–6) tried to rid the province of brigands, including one who had been using it as a base for robbing Idumaeans (*Ant.* XX.5–6); evidently the Judaeans–Idumaeans alliance was breaking down. Fadus likewise dispersed the following of a ‘magician’ named Theudas who also claimed to be a prophet and persuaded the populace to follow him. In spite of his Greek name (short for ‘Theodorus’) he promised to repeat Joshua’s miracle of dividing the Jordan, for which he and his followers were making when Fadus’ cavalry caught up with them, killed him and many others, and took many prisoners (*Ant.* XX.97–8). By the end of the century, when Luke wrote Acts, Theudas had so far receded into legend that Luke knew of him only as a fellow who ‘said he was somebody (great), was followed by about four hundred men, was killed, and all were dispersed’ (5:36). Luke dated this before the time of Judas the Galilean, i.e. about fifty years too early. Evidently Luke did not share Josephus’ notion that all these disturbances were consequences of the teaching of Judas.

Josephus distinguished Theudas from the preceding ‘bandits’ by calling him a ‘magician’, in Greek a *goēs*. The word primarily meant a singer of spells who enchanted and might deceive his hearers.<sup>20</sup> Hence it had come, in common parlance, to mean ‘fraud’ or the like and is commonly so translated by modern scholars who tacitly take for granted that magicians were never of any social importance.<sup>21</sup> Of course ‘magician’ and ‘deceiver’ are not mutually exclusive, and the arts of *goēteia* and magic had long been defined as those of causing errors of the soul and deceptions of the opinion,<sup>22</sup> so when modern usage forces us to choose between the two meanings, both should be considered. Here what seems decisive are the facts that Josephus has not used the term *goēs* for any of the bandits and/or revolutionists he has previously described, and that when he next uses it, in *Ant.* xx.160–72; *Bell.* II.258–65, he sharply distinguishes between the ‘magicians’ (who are also ‘deceivers’ and ‘impostors’) and the ‘brigands’. He writes, ‘Besides these’ (the brigands) ‘there arose another group of scoundrels, with cleaner hands but more impious beliefs . . . who, with pretence of divine frenzy, working for revolution . . . persuaded the mob that (they were) inspired by demons, and led the people out into the open country on the pretence that God would show them miracles of liberation’ (*Bell.* II.258–9; cf. *Ant.* xx.167).

They claimed that they themselves would bring about these miracles. Theudas promised his followers that the Jordan would divide *at his command* (*Ant.* xx.97). The next magician of whom Josephus gives us a detailed account, an Egyptian prophet, promised that at his command the walls of Jerusalem would fall down (*Ant.* xx.170). Later, when his followers were defeated, ‘he became invisible’ (*Ant.* xx.172, as did Jesus, Luke 24:31). A third promised ‘salvation and rest from troubles’ to those who would follow him into the countryside (*Ant.* xx.188). Like these, Moses is called by his detractors ‘a magician and deceiver’ (*Apion* II.145, 161). As against these there are only two passages in Josephus where *goēs* merely means ‘cheat’ (*Bell.* IV.85; v.317). Nor was the peculiarity of these *goētes* merely false prophecy, since Josephus tells of many false prophets whom he does not call *goētes* (*Bell.* VI.285–6; 15 times in *Ant.* VIII; *Ant.* IX.34, 133–7; X.66, 104, 111; etc.).

Fadus’ successor, Tiberius Alexander (46–8) ‘kept the people in peace’ (*Bell.* II.220). Among other means, he had two sons of Judas of Galilee

<sup>20</sup> W. Burkert, ‘Goēs. Zum griechischen Schamanismus’, *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 105 (1962), 36–55, is classic.

<sup>21</sup> E.g. L. H. Feldman, *Josephus* 9 (London 1965), p. 440 note *b*, arguing from the isolated uses in 2 Tim. 3:13 and Philo, *Spec. Leg.* I.315. The meaning of a word in an author who uses it often should be determined from *that* author’s works.

<sup>22</sup> Gorgias, *Helen*, 10 cd.

crucified (*Ant.* xx.102). This doubtless opened the way for new leaders to rise in ‘the fourth philosophy’ and they may have been responsible for its transformation into ‘the *sicarii*’ (‘dagger-men’) who became prominent a few years later (*Bell.* II.254–5). In these years Josephus was beginning to stock his own memory. He was ten or eleven years old when the next governor arrived (Cumanus, 48–52). Understandably, his account from here on is often more vivid than before, though the vividness may sometimes be due to a boy’s imagination of what he had heard tell, rather than to personal observation. Another factor is the change in the character of the events, for under Cumanus began the open breakdown of law and order.

A Galilean<sup>23</sup> going to Jerusalem was murdered in the *north* of the Samaritan territory. Josephus claims that the Jews reported the murder to Cumanus and he neglected to investigate it. Meanwhile (?) the Jerusalem crowd, led by one Eleazar ben Dinai, ‘a brigand who had been active in the mountains for many years’, took the opportunity to invade the *south* of the Samaritan territory. Evidently the Romans had not investigated ben Dinai’s crimes, either; he had been active for twenty years, had organized a company of brigands, and was nicknamed ‘the murderer’ (*Ant.* xx.121, 161; *Bell.* II.234–5, 253; *m. Sota* 9.9). Now he was charged with burning villages and massacring the inhabitants. Cumanus then came with his troops against the Jews, killed some and captured others. Both sides appealed to the governor of Syria, who impartially crucified both the Samaritans and the Judaeans mainly responsible for the trouble, and sent the leaders of both sides, with Cumanus, off to Rome. The side towards which he inclined may be indicated by the fact that he sent both the Jerusalem High Priest and the head of the Temple staff in chains. However, the Empress was a good friend of Agrippa II, so the Samaritans were executed, Cumanus was exiled, and the government of Palestine was entrusted to a freedman of Claudius named Felix, whose brother happened to be the Empress’s lover (*PIR* 3, edn 1, 1898 *s.v. Pallas*, no. 49, pp. 7f; *Bell.* II.238–47; *Ant.* xx.128–37).

After this demonstration of imperial justice it is not surprising that, as Josephus says, ‘Many’ (in Judaea) ‘turned to brigandage because of impunity and throughout the whole country there were robbers’ raids and acts of violence by the more daring’ (*Bell.* II.238). It would be foolish to suppose that only the poor used these opportunities; in fact we soon hear of gangs organized by the rich, among them the high priests who took the tithes away from the lower priests (*Bell.* II.275; *Ant.* xx.181, 206, 214). Felix (52–60?) initially undertook a ‘war against crime’ with numerous

<sup>23</sup> *Bell.* II.232; *Ant.* xx.118 says ‘many’ (an apologetic improvement). See also pp. 574–5 below.

executions (including Eleazar ben Dinai's, *Bell.* II.253) but the *sicarii* were now permitted to terrorize the city and their impunity was explained by the story that they had murdered the High Priest as a favour for Felix (*Ant.* xx.160–5; cf. *Bell.* II.254–7). Various magicians led flocks of gulls into the country; these were broken up by Felix's cavalry (*Bell.* II.258–63; *Ant.* xx.167–72). Magicians and brigands now (only now!) 'joined forces, brought many into the revolt and organized them . . . threatening death to those who obeyed the Roman government. Splitting up into bands throughout the country they plundered the houses of the powerful, killed their owners, and burned the villages, so that all *Judaea* was full of their madness' (*Bell.* II.264–5, my italics). The *sicarii* probably were involved in this, because later many of them came (back?) into Jerusalem with the country people (*Bell.* II.425). Here at last we see the beginnings of an organized revolutionary movement, now starting to take shape, but limited to *Judaea*. It certainly would not have succeeded in Samaria, and we hear nothing of it elsewhere. The conflict between Jews and Gentiles for control of Caesarea, growing up at this same time, is reported as if entirely independent of these up-country disturbances. Perhaps it was so (*Bell.* II.266–70; *Ant.* xx.173–8).

Matters continued thus under Felix's successor, Festus (60–2) and according to Josephus, who now intensifies his efforts to justify the revolt, they got worse under Festus' successors, Albinus (62–4), and Florus (64–6) under whom the revolt came. Presumably they did get worse, since the revolt did come. Hence Josephus' likewise presumable exaggerations cannot be, in general, wholly unjustified, as they cannot be, in particulars, completely substantiated. That Florus, for instance, regularly permitted brigandage in return for a percentage of the spoils (*Ant.* xx.255) is neither demonstrable nor impossible; consequently, since it serves Josephus' polemic, it can neither be asserted nor denied. Details that do not serve his purposes are more credible, but may be passing inventions. Major events (if carefully distinguished from statements about motives, agents, conditions, etc.) actually seem, as he reports them, to correspond roughly (in this part of his material) to what happened.

## VI THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR, CE 66

What happened? After a couple of severe fights between Florus' men and the people of Jerusalem, Florus left a garrison and himself withdrew to Caesarea. Anti-Roman elements controlled the city (*Bell.* II.293–407). Agrippa II was banished from it by the new government (406). Masada was seized by a pro-war group (408). Finally, the head of the temple priests persuaded his colleagues not to accept sacrifices from non-Jews.

This entailed rejection of the Romans' offerings; this rejection entailed war. It was also contrary both to priestly practice and to pharisaic tradition (*Bell.* II.409–17); perhaps the theological position, if any, of the anti-Roman clique in the temple priesthood had been influenced by the 'fourth philosophy'. Whatever the theory, the result was civil war.

Some leading men, including some high priests, and others of the peace party, with 2,000 soldiers sent by Agrippa II, managed to hold the upper city; the rebels held the lower city and the Temple; the Romans remained in the Temple fortress ('Antonia') and Herod's palace (*Bell.* II.419–24). A week later, on the feast of wood-carrying (about 1 August 66), the rebels were joined by many country people, including many *sicarii*. With these they captured the upper city and burned some palaces as well as the public archives, 'hoping to destroy the money-lenders' contracts and prevent collections of debts, so that they might win over the mass of the indebted' (*Bell.* II.427).<sup>24</sup> The Antonia was captured and the garrison killed; the remnants of the peace party scattered to hiding places or took refuge in Herod's palace (*Bell.* II.425–9), where they were soon caught and murdered (*Bell.* II.441).

Soon Menahem, leader of the *sicarii*, broke into Masada, got arms for his followers, came back with them to Jerusalem, and became leader of the revolt – until the temple priesthood got him and most of them inside the Temple and, with help from the common people (the *demos*), stoned the lot. The few who escaped fled to Masada where Eleazar ben Jair (another descendant of Judas the Galilean) became, according to Josephus, their 'tyrant' (*Bell.* II.441–8). In his *Vita* 20–1 Josephus tells us that, as one of the younger priests, he was in the Temple at this time. That he took part in the stoning may explain why he so emphasizes both Menahem's and Eleazar's 'tyranny' and prefaces the account of Menahem's death by a brief justification (*Bell.* II.442–7). Since the *sicarii* had entered Jerusalem from the countryside they probably had and continued to hold some hide-outs there, but Josephus says nothings of these.

With the *sicarii* out of the way, direction of the Jerusalem revolt seems to have returned to the young priests, including Josephus, who had started it. Their first coup was to get the Roman garrison out of the tower of Herod's palace by promising them a safe conduct, then murdering them when they came out. Josephus professes complete detestation for this treachery, which he found particularly shocking because the murders were done on a Sabbath. He describes it as if an eye-witness (*Bell.* II.449–56), but says nothing of participation which might have had unpleasant consequences if brought to Titus' attention. In the *Vita* he claims to have

<sup>24</sup> Against Goodman, *Ruling Class*, p. 18 etc.

left the Temple and joined 'the high priests and the leading pharisees' (21). Where?

On the same day the people of Caesarea massacred all the Jews who lived there, more than 20,000, Josephus says. He may, to palliate the revolt, have pre-dated what was actually a reaction to the massacre of the garrison, especially likely because many of the garrison had probably been Caesareans (*Ant.* xx.176). The following Jewish attacks on many gentile cities, mainly those of the Decapolis and the Palestine coast, and the capture of the fortresses of Cypros and Machaerus, are presented as revenge for the massacre in Caesarea, and as local actions without central direction, but the capture of the fortresses seems so closely connected to the coming war that it suggests planning, probably by the priestly clique, who must have foreseen the consequences of their refusal of the Romans' sacrifices. Again Josephus' apologetic concern may obscure causal connection. In any event, many cities of Palestine and Syria now retaliated against the Jews (*Bell.* II.457–86). The effect of all this was to transform the revolt in Jerusalem and conflict in Caesarea from incidents in a small province to a crisis in the south-eastern quarter of the Empire.

Consequently Cestius, then governor of Syria, came down with about 12,000 Roman legionaries, 5,600 Roman supporting troops, and over 14,000 auxiliaries furnished by neighbouring Roman 'allies'. With these he sacked the places he was told were likely to be centres of rebellion: Chabulon in Galilee, the district around Nabata (south of the upper Carmel), Joppa and Lydda. (In Galilee his forces were welcomed in Sepphoris, but some 2,000 'bandits' were killed in the hills.) Going up from Lydda he had a hard fight at Gibeon, but entered Jerusalem and found he had to besiege the Temple. After six days he gave up the siege and began a retreat which turned into a disastrous rout. Josephus' stories of failed attempts at negotiation and treason show that the war party were strong enough not only to hold the Temple (for a week) against such an army, but also to maintain discipline in such a time. Beyond this they would show more, had they not been intended to recommend to the Romans the people as a whole and particularly the descendants of the reported negotiators and would-be traitors. However, we can be sure that Cestius came, saw, tried to conquer, failed, retreated, and lost a lot of his army – Josephus says, about 6,000 (*Bell.* II.499–555) – and also certain that the reason for the disaster was the strength of anti-Roman elements in both the city and the countryside.

Just who the war party were, Josephus does not say, perhaps because he was one of them and some of the ringleaders were his friends. This we infer from his report that 'those who had pursued' Cestius returned to Jerusalem, won over many who had formerly been pro-Roman, assembled



in the Temple and appointed Governor-Generals for the coming war: two for the city, two for Idumaea, one for Jericho, one for the Peraea, one for the western foothills, Lydda and Joppa, one for the Samaritan frontier, and Josephus for Galilee (*Bell.* II.566–8). The *Vita*, however, in which the detailed account of Josephus' doings in Galilee now begins, knows nothing of this grand strategy, but says (in 28–9) that 'the leading men of Jerusalem' sent Josephus, as *one* of a committee of three priests, to persuade the Galileans *not* to revolt. Such contradiction calls into question all the interpretative side of his account of his own role. When he writes of other subjects he is often inaccurate but usually approximately right (as Cohen, *Josephus*, has shown, *passim* see above n. 3); but when he writes of himself he is always untrustworthy and often seriously deceptive.

## VII GALILEE

Of the little that can confidently be inferred from the contradictory texts of *Vita* and *Bell.* II and III, the matters most important for us are the facts of the social situation. The Herodian cities, Sepphoris and Tiberias, were, if not pro-Roman, at least opposed to the revolt. *Sepphoris* was steadfastly so. It had been burnt and its former inhabitants had been enslaved for a probably pro-Aristobulan revolt after Herod's death (above, p. 505). Rebuilt by Herod Antipas, it was presumably made over to Herodian soldiers, *Ioudaioi* by social status (p. 210, above) and loyal to their patron's patron, Rome (*Bell.* III.32). Josephus' claims to have fortified and later taken it are almost certainly lies (*Vita* 188 and 347 are contradicted by *Bell.* II.574; *Vita* 373–80, etc., and by the course of events).

*Tiberias*, also built by Antipas (*Ant.* XVIII.36–8), on land unclean by Josephus' (priestly?) standards, was also settled by Herodian *Ioudaioi* for whom such uncleanness was no problem. Josephus' claim that they included ex-slaves, liberated by Antipas to become citizens, shows his resentment of their rejection of him, but may be true. Antipas, like his father, built cities to be Herodian strong points. Herod had settled Gaba in south-western Galilee with his old soldiers; it remained loyal through the revolt (*Bell.* III.36; *Vita* 115–18). Now short of soldiers, Antipas had old slaves left from Herod's palmy days. Roman law required of liberated slaves lifelong loyalty and assistance to their former masters. Herod and/or Antipas had probably made many of these slaves *Ioudaioi* by circumcision and so attached them further to the Herodian party. Tiberias also had many Galilean and other settlers (*Ant.* XVIII.37); Josephus once has the Tiberians refer by dramatic exaggeration to the Galileans as 'of their own *ethnos*' (*Vita* 286). There were once some 'Greeks' (Greek-speaking, or pagan, or both?), but these had been killed by the party of the poor

(*Vita* 67). The same party had burned down, for loot, the Herodian palace decorated by carvings of animals. Josephus and his colleagues, Jerusalem priests, had complained of them as illegal, but the *Ioudaioi* of the city council had refused to remove them. Then the concerns of the poor for piety and loot prevailed (*Vita* 63–7). Their leader, Jesus the son of Sapphias, became the chief magistrate (*archon*) of the city and so remained until just before its capture by Vespasian. He and his followers were then leaders in the resistance to the Romans; when that failed they fled to Taricheae (*Bell.* III.450–7; this disposes of Josephus' yarn about capturing Tiberias and sending his leading opponents in chains to Jotapata, *Vita* 331–2). Jesus, according to Josephus, was 'a natural troublemaker, factional leader, and arch-revolutionist', who added to these loveable qualities the pretence of piety (*Vita* 134–5). Nevertheless, in Tiberias the big synagogue was used on Saturday mornings, as on other days, for public meetings to argue questions of politics. These were interrupted only for the noon meal, the Sabbath devotion that the people of Tiberias took so seriously that for its sake they would forgo even a riot (*Vita* 277–80). When a special fast was decreed there were more politics and an attempt at murder (*Vita* 290–303).

Josephus' claim that the respectable men were loyal to Agrippa, while the insignificant wanted war, is not unlikely as a generalization, but deliberately underestimates the importance and wealth of Jesus, who not only became *archon*, but also had a country house in the hills, near Gabarath, a building Josephus describes as 'like a great castle, no less than an acropolis' (*Vita* 246); leading a 'people's party' can be profitable. Not surprisingly, Jesus was soon allied with John of Gischala, on whom see below. Besides Jesus and the aristocratic advocates of Agrippa, there was another party headed by one Pistus and his son, Justus, evidently of considerable means. Justus was hated by Josephus not only as a personal enemy but, worse, a rival historian. Consequently, what Josephus writes of him is no more trustworthy than what he writes of himself (*Vita* 35–43). As a matter of fact, Justus seems to have been a local patriot who had led the town troops in some fighting against the cities of the Decapolis and also against the Galileans, not long before the revolt began (*Vita* 341f, 391f, 410). Such local wars were not rare in the eastern provinces and did not always signify hostility to Rome, though Rome disapproved and sometimes punished them. This fracas was mostly in the territory of a client king, so, in spite of Josephus' charges, Tiberias was spared by Vespasian and Justus was turned over for punishment to Agrippa, who made him (eventually) his private secretary.

By contrast to the Herodian cities, some native centres were more hostile. Those of which Josephus says most are Jotapata, according to

him the one town in Galilee that the Romans had to besiege for a long while, Gamala, the one town in Transjordan to ‘enjoy’ this same distinction, Taricheae, the city he used as base, and Gischala, the base of his chief rival, John, son of Levi. He says that a few others fought briefly or were centres to which insurgents fled, but even of ‘Gabara’ (Garaba?), one of the three ‘biggest cities of Galilee’ (*Vita* 123), the population is not described. (The two larger were Tiberias and Sepphoris as noted in *Vita* 346.)

For that matter, very little is said of the population of Jotapata, where Josephus starred (he claims) as leader of forty-seven days of resistance to Vespasian (*Bell.* III.141–391, 406–7). He says that more insurgents had fled there than anywhere else (*Bell.* III.141); if they took control of the city from the probably Galilean natives, that fact would explain both the unparalleled determination of the resistance, and Josephus’ consistent use of *Ioudaioi* for the defenders. On the other hand, he may have called them *Ioudaioi qua* fighters on the Judaean side, as opposed to the Romans; compare his similar use of *Ioudaioi* even for exceptional Idumaeans who distinguished themselves as fighters against the Romans (above, ch. 7, n. 58). Whatever sort of *Ioudaioi* these were, if they had a synagogue, neither it nor anything that happened in it during the forty-seven days of the town’s ordeal seemed to Josephus worth mention.

The other reported centre of resistance in the north, *Gamala*, on a precipitous mountain, is better known. It had been captured by Alexander Jannaeus (*Bell.* I.105; *Ant.* XIII.394, 396) and probably destroyed by him, since Gabinius found it in ruins and rebuilt it as a pagan city (*Bell.* I.166). By the end of the century it must have had some Jewish population, since Judas, the founder of the ‘fourth philosophy’ was thought by some to have come from it (*Ant.* XVIII.4). By CE 66 it was in Agrippa II’s territory and was a Jewish stronghold to which the Jews of Herod’s Babylonian colony fled for refuge when – on Josephus’ telling – a governor of Agrippa II, trying to curry favour with the local pagan population, plotted to massacre them (*Vita* 46–61). Presently a quarrel grew up between them and the natives of Gamala, and some murders ensued (*Vita* 177). Agrippa tried to calm matters by deposing the governor and sending the refugees back to their colony, but then a group of lower-class youths got control of the city, and both city and district revolted against the king (*Vita* 179–87). Agrippa’s generals tried, but failed, to recapture it (*Vita* 114). Although packed with new refugees, it had held out for seven months before Vespasian arrived, and after his arrival it continued to hold out for about forty-five days (*Bell.* III.542; IV.10, 63, 69). Whether this resistance was the work of the native ‘Gamalites’, or of refugee *Ioudaioi*, is not certain. Josephus, in his account of the siege, first refers to

the defenders as ‘Gamalites’ (*Bell.* iv.26, 29); next, in a speech by ‘Vespasian’, (i.e. by his own secretaries) they are thrice *Ioudaioi* (*Bell.* iv.41, 43, 45); finally, the last desperate defenders are *Ioudaioi* (*Bell.* iv.75), but this is not reliable, because the conclusion of the siege of Gamala is cut from the same pattern as that of the siege of Masada.<sup>25</sup> The pattern may have provided the terminology.

*Taricheae* was a big place on the Lake of Galilee, overshadowed by Agrippa’s creation of Tiberias, just south of it. A century earlier it had been held by the Aristobulan party, had joined in their revolt after Carrhae, and had been put down by Cassius who reportedly enslaved there 30,000 *Ioudaioi* (*Bell.* i.180; *Ant.* xiv.120). The city’s revival had been due to its importance as a harbour for fishing and a centre for fish drying, pickling and marketing. This attracted labour, from a wide area. Of the many rebels from Trachonitis, Gaulanitis and the territories of Hippos and Gadara, who were captured there (*Bell.* i.542), not a few may be supposed to have come because their friends and relatives had preceded them, some as hired labourers, others, after the wave of Jewish–Gentile fighting in the cities, as refugees. Here Josephus gives partially credible figures, of which at least the smaller may come from Vespasian’s records which he now begins to use (*Vita* 342): After the capture the aliens were segregated and 1,200 were executed as unusable, 6,000 were sent to work on the Corinth canal, and the rest (30,400) were sold, part by the Romans, part by Agrippa (*Bell.* iii.539–42). In the capture and the following battle on the lake 6,700 had been killed (*Bell.* iii.531). If half of these were aliens, the total of those in the city at the beginning of the siege was about 41,000. The fighting between these labourers-rebels-refugees, who were determined not to be surrendered, and the ‘Taricheans’, as Josephus calls them, the citizens of the town, who had hoped to save themselves and their homes by making peace, precipitated the fall of the city (*Bell.* iii.492–8). Many of the aliens must have come from rural Galilee, Josephus explicitly distinguishes Taricheans from Galileans (*Vita* 143), and although the distinction refers to political status it may also have had some ethnic justification. Not only did the city have many elements absent from the country, but the city people were, as citizens (*politai*, *Vita* 135, cf. *Bell.* ii.599), legally distinct from the rest of the Galilean *ethnos* (*Bell.* ii.510; iii.34; iv.105) whom Josephus calls ‘the country people’ or ‘the natives’ (*epichōrioi* *Bell.* ii.569–70, 593) and the like.

<sup>25</sup> The defenders’ defeat, in both sieges, was concluded by a wind which, just in time, blew against them (*Bell.* iv.76–7; vii.318) and was followed by general suicide (iv.79–80; vii.395–7), so that only two women who had gone into hiding survived (iv.81; vii.399 adds five children); etc.

Of all the cities (except, perhaps, Jotapata) Taricheae seems to have been the one most favourable to Josephus. He took a house there and repeatedly fled thither when things went badly elsewhere. Yet even in Taricheae he was not safe from his rivals. Jesus, the leader of the poor in the Tiberian murders and now (consequently?) chief magistrate of that city, evidently was on good terms with the workers-rebels-refugees of Taricheae. Josephus says he once came into the hippodrome there, waved 'the laws of Moses', accused Josephus of plotting to betray them, and almost got him lynched (*Vita* 134–6). Further to illustrate the people's fanaticism (and his own kindness to pagans) Josephus tells of two pagan nobles of Agrippa II who deserted and fled to Taricheae. The people demanded that they be circumcised, but Josephus saved their skins (*Vita* 113, 149–51). The demand had more than religious significance: circumcision had been the distinctive practice of the *Ioudaioi*, symbol of their hostility to the hellenistic settlements, and so the basis of their political union (see above, ch. 7). That union had brought to the rural Galileans the best times they had known in centuries, and they still remembered them. Devotion to 'the laws of Moses', by contrast, is surprising at Taricheae, given its history, makeup, and most famous citizen, Mary Magdalene. (Its Semitic name was Migdal or Magdala. Taricheae meant 'Fish drying works'; life there may have caused Mary's 'demonic possession'.) The *Vita*, in which (the scroll of?) the laws makes its only appearance, is one of Josephus' latest works; in his old age he loved to make much of the Jews' devotion to their 'ancestral laws'. The scroll as introduced has no connection to the narrative. Where did it come from? What effects – if any – did it produce? What happened to it? Nothing is said about such questions. Was it a Josephan invention?

Sepphoris, Tiberias, Jotapata, and Taricheae were all in southern and central Galilee; Gamala was in Transjordan. Gischala, identified above as the home of Josephus' rival, John, stood by itself at the very north of the Galilean territory, on the Tyrian frontier. When the revolt came and Jewish–Gentile fighting broke out all along the coast, the Tyrians<sup>26</sup> raided and burned Gischala. John, who evidently had some means, armed his men, drove off the assailants, and began rebuilding (*Vita* 45; 'on the instruction of Josephus' in *Bell.* 11.575 is mere pretence). He went on to recruit four hundred husky refugees from Tyrian towns. With these he was able to 'persuade' the wealthier citizens to pay him to fortify the town. Fortification gave the boys work by day; by night, Josephus says, they robbed (*Bell.* 11.585–9, far more hostile than the account in the *Vita*, twenty years later; in the meanwhile Justus of Tiberias had published his

<sup>26</sup> *Vita* 44. The other towns mentioned here are probably due to manuscript corruption.

history of the war – *Vita* 336–60 – which probably contained some data about Josephus’ early cooperation with John.) At all events, with a fortified base John was strong enough to seize the grain in the imperial granaries of the area (*Vita* 71–3). Next, with the proceeds of the grain (and/or the wall building?) he bought up a lot of Galilean olive oil and sold it at a much higher price to the Jews of Caesarea Philippi in Agrippa’s territory who had revolted and were under siege.<sup>27</sup> With the proceeds he was able to take on more men; eventually he had five or six thousand (*Bell.* 11.625, *vs.* *Vita* 371–2). With what his men brought in he was able to keep the gang together, dominate north Galilee,<sup>28</sup> make a firm alliance with Gabara (the biggest city after Sepphoris in the central area) and drive Josephus out of Tiberias.<sup>29</sup> He also had good connections with Jerusalem; an ‘old and close friend’ was Simon ben Gamaliel, head of the pharisees (*Vita* 190–2)<sup>30</sup> and through Simon John would later persuade the Jerusalem authorities to send a delegation to Galilee to put down Josephus.

<sup>27</sup> *Bell.* 11.587–94; *Vita* 70–6. The Jerusalem delegation of which Josephus was a member was somehow involved in the grain and oil deals – this is shown by the fact that Josephus is even more obviously apologetic and self-contradictory than usual.

<sup>28</sup> Josephus does not even claim to have ventured into north Galilee, except in *Vita* 67 and 70. It is not clear whether these were intended to be read as reports of two journeys, or of one interrupted. He says that his fellow delegates left him at Gischala, but *Vita* 77 need not imply that he himself stayed there. Thackeray mistranslates. Josephus claims that he joined in authorizing John’s actions because he was first misled and then overruled. ‘Authorizing’ is part of the ‘Governor-General’ pose. What authorizing power over the imperial granaries was possessed by a delegation of three priests? Besides pretending to authority, ‘authorize’ tries to separate the priests from the actual acts. It may have replaced a word meaning ‘join in’ – most likely as financial backers. If the priests were collecting tithes they might, by exchanging them for, or accepting them as, money, have accumulated a substantial sum, which would have been useful both to buy oil and to bribe the besieging officers to let it through.

<sup>29</sup> *Vita* 94–6; *Bell.* 11.614–23. Although in both texts, after being driven out, he goes from one victory to another, he does not in either come back soon to Tiberias.

<sup>30</sup> John’s friendship with Simon is amazing. Rabbinic traditions about the Pharisees before 70 tell of no significant legal teacher in Galilee except Yoḥanan ben Zakkai who lived there for eighteen years, during which only three cases were brought to him. When he left he foretold doom for the region because of its indifference to the law (*ṣ.Šabb* 16.8; 15d, end). Most of the Gospel stories of Jesus’ arguments with and sayings about pharisees seem to come from Jerusalem and date from the time of Agrippa I and later. See M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco 1978), Appendix A. Finally, Josephus knows of no Pharisees in Galilee except himself and the other visitors from Jerusalem, who were sent with the thought that the local yokels would admire them as curiosities. Perhaps John had been sent to Jerusalem for education, as had Paul, Acts 22:3.

## VIII JOSEPHUS IN GALILEE

Josephus had it coming. We have seen above that his claim to have been sent as *strategos* ('Governor-General') of Galilee is contradicted by his statement that he was sent there as one member of a commission of three priests (*Vita* 28–411; *vs. Bell.* II.566–646). Here preference for the *Vita* is recommended by Cohen's demonstration that *all* of *Bell.*'s list of generals is 'suspect' (*Josephus*, 197), by the comparative modesty of *Vita*'s claim, and by the fact that, when *Vita* was written, Justus' history was available as a check. But most important of all is the fact that Josephus' report of what he did is not the report of the *strategos*. Military and administrative matters rarely appear and when they do are usually false. He claims to have established a council of seventy (*Vita* 79; *Bell.* II.570–1) and to have fortified in less than six months(!) seventeen cities (*Vita* 187–9; *Bell.* II.572–5), but the 'council' were some town officials whom he led about with him 'as hostages, on the pretence of friendship' to have them participate in his decisions (*Vita* 79 – and thus share the guilt). In *Bell.* II.571–2 he reformed the laws and established petty claims courts of seven judges in each city – all unknown to *Vita*. Of the seventeen fortified cities only ten appear in both the *Bell.* and the *Vita* lists; of these ten, two are in Gaulanitis, where he never went, and two in upper Galilee, John's country, which he avoided; yet he claims that he himself directed the work on all in the *Bell.* list (and in *Vita* 188 he stocked them all with food and weapons). As a *strategos* he needed an army so in *Bell.* he levied, armed, officered and trained 'over 100,000' Galileans. He also gave them a moralizing speech, after which they numbered only 60,000. These he provided for easily by sending half home to work for the other half (*Bell.* II.576–84). In *Vita* 77–8, where he did not have to keep up his strategic pretensions, he merely recruited as mercenaries the most manly brigands he could get. Apart from these displays of governor-generalship, he tells of little save quarrels with rivals, mainly John, Jesus and Justus, and with towns that refused to accommodate him or tried to get rid of him when he intruded. No place of any size except Taricheae consistently received him and his men. In *Bell.* he says nothing (except in the siege of Jotapata) of military exploits against the Romans or Agrippa. Perhaps it was too early for such admissions; perhaps he had nothing to admit. In *Vita* he claims to have brilliantly avoided battle with a troop of horses from Gaba, by staying in the hills; when they got tired and went home, he and his men followed them and stole a lot of grain (*Vita* 115–21). Later he and his men were driven off by Roman troops after a sneak attack on Sepphoris had failed (*Vita* 396–7). Shortly before Vespasian's arrival he, with 5,000 men, finally did defeat a body of Agrippa's troops, but he was



robbed of the victory by falling off his horse and breaking a wrist (*Vita* 388–406).

This farrago cannot pass as the *acta* of a *strategos*. It practically proves that Josephus never held any such appointment. Consequently his story of the attempts to oust him from it, and of his final re-establishment, must involve misrepresentation.

What, then, did he actually do? To understand this we must begin, as he did, with the situation he found in Galilee. Agrippa was in trouble. Two thousand of his cavalry, sent to aid the Jerusalem government, had surrendered to the enemy (*Bell.* II.421, 437). He had contributed three thousand foot and almost two thousand horse to Cestius' campaign; a good many had probably been lost (*Bell.* II.500). Of his cities, Caesarea Philippi, Beth-Saida-Julias, Gamala, Sogane, and Seleucia were in revolt, and the remnants of his troops, divided among them, were not doing well.<sup>31</sup> Gischala, burnt by the Tyrians, was being rebuilt by John, who could be expected to make more trouble. Tiberias was appealing for aid against the rebels, but he had no troops to send (*Vita* 30; *Bell.* II.632–3). The situation was ideal for an enterprising young man with a little money to set up a private practice as a bandit. John – *if* we trust Josephus – had already done so.

At this point Josephus arrived on the scene in the delegation of priests. Since the High Priest in office and some other high priests had recently been killed, the delegation had probably been sent by the younger, revolutionary priests of the Temple with whom Josephus had stayed during the revolt (*Vita* 20, 21, above pp. 519, 520, etc.). The purpose of the delegation could well have been to raise money and get arms 'for the Temple'<sup>32</sup> – i.e. for the priests who had sent them – but according to Josephus the other delegates collected large sums for themselves by receiving tithes that had to be given to priests (*Vita* 63; were there no priests in Galilee?). They also took bribes from John of Gischala to approve his seizure of the grain in the imperial storehouses (*Vita* 73). Josephus says he himself refused both tithes and bribes (*Vita* 72, 80). (This may have been needed to contradict accusations.)<sup>33</sup> The delegates

<sup>31</sup> *Bell.* IV.10; *Vita* 74, 114, 117–87, 398.

<sup>32</sup> Josephus' claim in *Vita* 28–9, that they were sent by 'the leading men of Jerusalem' to persuade the Galileans to lay down their arms and save them for 'the best men of the nation' is deliberately deceptive, but perhaps the delegation was sent to collect arms as well as money.

<sup>33</sup> He does admit that later, 'having conquered the Syrians in the surrounding cities', he took 'a share of the spoils and sent it to Jerusalem to his relatives' (*Vita* 81). This looks like a reply to other accusations. As to his Syrian conquests, unmentioned elsewhere, see below.

went north to visit John. Simon ben Gamaliel may have given them an introduction, but anyhow John shared their readiness to revolt and had means to contribute to the cause. His position showed Josephus the possibilities of banditry based on a fortified city.

Josephus, however, could also see the dangers. He had been to Rome and had some idea of its power. He may also have had some idea of its weaknesses – especially if he had in fact become a friend of one of Nero's favourite comedians (*Vita* 16). How gossip flew among the show people attached to that court can be guessed from Tacitus and Suetonius. It concerned political as well as private matters; some memories of it appear in *Bell.* 1.5: revolts were brewing in Gaul and the Rhineland; Adiabene and perhaps Parthia might help Jerusalem; if Nero were to fall and the Roman armies should start fighting each other the empire might come apart and then . . . Who knows? As Tacitus said, 'Many believed the ancient books of the priests foretold that at this time the East would grow strong and men from Judaea would rule' (*Hist.* v.13; that Josephus shared this hope is not surprising, Vespasian did, too, and he was right).

If such were the speculations Josephus had heard, they were not far from the truth. Within a few years of his visit to Rome Nero was dead, the Roman armies were fighting each other, the Batavians revolted, there was a serious revolt in Gaul and a more serious one, eventually triumphant, in Palestine-Syria and Egypt; the troops in Rome revolted, the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol was burned before that of Yahweh in Jerusalem, and the city was taken and sacked by the army from Pannonia. In the cyclone of rumours that preceded these events Josephus, like many young men, will have been alternately excited and terrified by the possibilities and dangers before him. If he could build a military power in Galilee he might eventually get a minor principality (there had been such in Syria/Palestine),<sup>34</sup> or, by timely surrender, an affluent retirement (others had done so). But if he failed he might be crucified. How could he build a military power without becoming openly an enemy of the Roman people? John, as a bandit, was prospering, but if the Romans won . . . Perhaps the safest thing would be to sell protection from bandits and so become their master. If he went back to Jerusalem and the Romans won he would have walked into a trap. But even if they lost he would have better chances in Galilee. So he dropped out of the delegation and stayed in Galilee.

<sup>34</sup> Josephus elsewhere tells the stories of Hyrcanus of Araq el 'Emir (*Ant.* XII.190–236) and Jonathan the Hasmonaean (*Ant.* XIII.5–61, 83–105, 120–209). He mentions briefly Dionysius of Tripolis, Marion of Tyre, and an unknown Silas of an equally unknown Lysias (*Ant.* XIV.39–40, 297–9). Ptolemy, son of Mennaues, and Zenodorus of Trachonitis get somewhat fuller treatments (*Bell.* 1.115, 185–6, 238–9; *Ant.* XV.344–59).

Neither Greek nor Aramaic had a word for ‘gangster’, so Josephus, when writing his *Vita*, had to explain his idea. He did so with charming frankness: ‘Calling in the manliest brigands, I saw it was not possible to take their weapons away from them, so I persuaded the people to provide pay for them as mercenaries. I argued that it was better to give a little willingly than to see their properties plundered. Then, putting the bandits on oath not to go into the countryside unless they were sent for or did not receive their pay, I dismissed them with orders to attack neither the Romans nor the country people, for I wanted, above all else, that Galilee should be at peace’ (*Vita* 77–8). Of course he did. If he could keep the peace, the payments would keep coming, the number of his mercenaries would keep growing and the number of accusations against him would not. Of course he does not mention that the payments were made to him and that he paid the bandits. That might raise needless questions. But he makes it clear that they took his orders. The plan began to work.

Money must have been needed to hire the initial followers necessary to protect contributors and put the fear of banditry into those who would not pay. Once his ability to protect and punish were demonstrated, the payments would multiply. The accusations about tithes and bribes and the unexplained reference to loot from ‘Syrian’ (i.e. gentile) cities (above, n. 33) may reflect his initial difficulties. (That he said nothing more about his raids on the cities is understandable; such raids had nearly got Justus of Tiberias punished by Vespasian: *Vita* 343.)

Once he had the money there were bandits aplenty, the country had long been overrun by them (*Bell.* II.253; *Ant.* xx.121, 124, 161, etc.; *Vita* 28, 206). Banditry is sometimes dangerous and always work. Many preferred to be paid for doing nothing. A more difficult problem was that of public relations. To sell protection he had to stay on good terms with his employees (the bandits) and with his clients, but both their economic interests and their political positions differed. Luckily, however, politics does not seem to have been the bandits’ main concern.

*Palestinian banditry*, to judge from the reported cases, was mainly a rural occupation.<sup>35</sup> The cities and towns were expected to maintain order within their territories, but seem to have done little outside their walls. Travellers were relatively few, so all but the biggest places were small enough to recognize robber gangs, and all but the smallest were big enough to

<sup>35</sup> Josephus says that one of the things making the *sicarii* atypical (*beteron eidos*) was that they committed their murders in the cities (*Bell.* II.254). The other bandits mentioned in that context all operated in the countryside (*Bell.* II.253, 271). So, too, in Galilee, *Vita* 126–7. (And so, too, did the *sicarii*, *Ant.* xx.210.)

repulse them. Little villages<sup>36</sup> which were at their mercy, had to protect themselves by collusion (*Bell.* II.229, 253), but also by family connections; most of the gangs' members were the countryside's criminal drop-outs and had relatives in one place or another. Although generally hostile to government, they do not seem to have had firm political commitments, though, of course, there were exceptions. Josephus' worst trouble with them arose not from his political position (or lack of one), but from his expropriation of their loot. When he promised to use it for a potentially revolutionary purpose, walling Taricheae, the gesture did not much mollify them, though it pleased the Taricheans (*Bell.* II.595–613; *Vita* 126–48). When pro-Roman Sepphoris wanted Josephus killed, it had no trouble in hiring for the purpose a prominent bandit called Jesus of Ptolemais (though his base was not in the city, but the country nearby); Josephus claims he had 800 men also willing to work for a pro-Roman city (*Vita* 105). When the revolutionaries in Jerusalem wanted Josephus out of the way, they readily found a bandit – a Galilean who happened to be in Jerusalem and to have a company of 600 men; he undertook to protect their mission (*Vita* 200). In sum, the bandits were a labour supply available to any who could pay for them.

*The market* for Josephus' sale of their services consisted mainly of two groups: on the one hand, people of small towns who had tired of the bandits' exactions or hated them for particular, private reasons, on the other, *the urban rich* who had substantial property in the countryside where it might be looted. This was not uncommon – farm land was the most respectable form of investment. Many of these rich city dwellers were Herodian *Ioudaioi* who hoped Agrippa would regain control and, following Herod's example, exterminate the bandits. In Sepphoris, where they ruled the town, they refused to have any official dealings with Josephus, John or Jerusalem (*Vita* 346–7;<sup>37</sup> *Bell.* III.30–3). In Tiberias, where they were weaker, they pretended to go with the city, but kept up secret correspondence with Agrippa, hoped for help from him, and when things got dangerous, deserted to him (*Vita* 68–9, 381–90, 393). Elsewhere they were yet weaker, but in most of the bigger places a few were to be found; we hear of some in Taricheae (*Vita* 131) and in Gamala (*Vita* 46–7, 59–61, 79–86; *Bell.* IV.81). While waiting for the king they paid Josephus to

<sup>36</sup> Not the bigger ones. The population of the largest village in Galilee, Japha, is given as 17,130 in all, and it was prudently surrounded by a double wall (*Bell.* III.289–306; the number probably comes from Vespasian's records).

<sup>37</sup> The claim about the walls is false, cf. *Bell.* II.574, where 'he permitted' is equally laughable. The Jerusalem delegation seems to have been met outside Sepphoris, but never admitted to the city, *Vita* 232.

keep his men off their properties (*Vita* 77–8, above). He claims that he understood their position and assured them, when he thought he could do so safely, that he himself ‘was not ignorant that the Roman power exceeded that of all (other peoples), but (that he) said nothing about this because of the bandits, and would advise them to do the same’ (*Vita* 175). This hardly veiled threat was hardly justified; we have seen how adaptable the bandits could be for pay. Josephus is excusing himself, and the whole scene is probably fictitious. *Perhaps* more credit can be given to his claims that when large amounts of loot taken from royal or royalist property came into his hands he turned part of them over to friends of the king ‘for safe keeping’ (*Vita* 69, 131; *Bell.* II.597). These (verifiable?) gifts would have been *douceurs* to secure protection in case of Roman victory, and also to persuade the recipients to persuade their rich friends to employ his gang. He may even have tried to pass off on these employers the story that the ineffective priestly delegation of which he had been part had actually been sent to keep peace in the province (*Vita* 28–9). This claim he could have supported by the fact that the priests had done little or nothing; incompetence has often been passed off as intention.

The more numerous body of Josephus’ customers were *the Galileans*, the farmers and petty business men of the smaller towns, who wanted security for themselves, but were anxious to get rid of Agrippa (*Vita* 39, 52) whose tax gatherers they hated as much as, or more than, the bandits. The bandits, at least, were their disreputable kin. It was better to have them take to the hills and rob the neighbours, than hang around home and terrorize their families. And when Josephus began to pay them they tagged after him as a bodyguard (*Bell.* II.583). Good riddance! But the families left at home were none too peaceable. Most of them were probably descendants of those Hasmonaean *Ioudaioi* who had sided with Aristobulus and been subjugated by Herod and re-subjugated by the Romans. Inherited resentment had been kept alive by the re-establishment of Sepphoris and establishment of Tiberias as Herodian cities; Josephus repeatedly refers to the Galileans’ hatred of these towns (*Vita* 39, 99, 375, 384, 392). In this situation, when he came offering security from the bandits (at a price) and freedom from the king (as a hope) he got some financial help, some following, and a large body of sympathizers who could be called out in emergencies to become, for short periods, active supporters. Hence the considerable fluctuations of the forces reportedly at his disposal (well discussed by Cohen, *Josephus*, pp. 201–2).

As a Judaeon and a priest of the Temple of Jerusalem – not to mention his Hasmonaean ancestry (*Vita* 1–6) – Josephus was socially far above

all these ‘natives’ or ‘locals’, as he commonly calls them in *Bell.* II. His secretaries may have advised him that out-of-the-way geographic terms like ‘Galilean’ would carry little meaning to readers in the Diaspora; when writing *Against Apion* he saw fit to explain ‘Galilean’ (I.48), and elsewhere he used it only when occasion demanded, rarely in the *Antiquities*, never in *Bell.* I, in *Bell.* II only for Judas ‘the Galilean’, the fight between Galileans and Samaritans, a high priest’s contemptuous question, ‘Would you risk Jerusalem to avenge one Galilean?’ and finally in his story that, when he was forced to flee Herodian Tiberias, ‘many myriads’ of Galileans flocked to his support (*Bell.* II.118, 232, 237, 433, 622).

When Josephus’ narrative brought Vespasian to Ptolemais it seems to have brought a better-trained secretary to Josephus’ study. This one, whether inspired by the Muse or the Emperor, thought of writing a ‘Galilean War’ like Caesar’s *Gallic War*, with a geographic and ethnographic preface (‘All Galilee is divided into two parts’ *Bell.* III.35, etc.). Now the Galileans are presented as a great, warlike people (III.42) worthy of Vespasian’s attentions even though they did live in the country of the *Ioudaioi* (III.58) and Sepphoris had broken away from them (III.61). This experiment, however, was soon dropped. Can someone have dared to point out the absurdity of comparing Vespasian’s conquest with Caesar’s? Whatever the reason, the heroic introduction was succeeded by a ‘Jewish War’ in which the Galileans are not often mentioned.

In the *Vita*, by contrast, Galileans are consistently Josephus’ enthusiastic supporters (perhaps to refute John’s claim of the opposite?). Josephus’ chief difficulty is to restrain their revolutionary zeal and keep them from murdering his opponents (*Vita* 102, 125, 262, 306), and destroying the pro-Roman cities of Sepphoris and Tiberias (*Vita* 30, and often). As already pointed out, this is not entirely false. Most likely the Galilean country people did hate the Herodian cities, and Josephus stood to lose both reputation and fees if those cities were destroyed. The duplicity, dictated by his desire to exploit both urban and small-town employers, surfaces in contradictory sayings and reports which were originally intended to impress different groups. To keep both groups content Josephus, while protecting the properties of the royalists, had to use his troops for apparently anti-royalist expeditions. (More unspecified attacks on ‘Syrian’, gentile cities? They would explain the clamour for his punishment when Vespasian arrived at Caesarea, *Bell.* III.410.) He may also have invented for his Galileans the story that he had been chosen by the revolutionaries of Jerusalem – he doesn’t say just whom – as a ‘*strategos* of the war’ assigned to the two Galilees and Gamala (*Bell.* II.562, 568). Whatever his means, his followers seem to have been won. He says they so loved him that ‘when their towns were taken by storm and their wives and children

enslaved, they did not so much grieve for their own troubles as worry about my safety' (*Vita* 84).

Josephus' typical exaggeration does not prove his claim *completely* groundless. His project suited nicely the city/country hostility endemic in the Graeco-Roman Near East. In effect he was taxing the rich of the cities to relieve the pressure of the unemployable (bandits) on the countryside. The small farmers happily realized that their contribution to this relief programme had to be modest, so they at least helped to support his troops (*Bell.* II.584) and sometimes provided brief military support, as mentioned above.

A further complicating factor in the actual situation, though not in the terminology, were the masses of *itinerants* – labourers, idlers, refugees, revolutionaries – many of whom had fled to Galilee from Lebanon and southern Syria; these were now part of the actual population of Galilee, but not of Josephus' 'Galileans'.<sup>38</sup> To complete confusion, these distinctions are in *Bell.* concealed, as they may have been partially in real life, by references to all these elements alike as *Ioudaioi*. What does this mean?

For one thing it means that all the males of these groups were circumcised. Refugees who were not, and who would not submit to the rite, got into trouble (*Vita* 113, 149–51). What other Jewish observances were practised, and by whom, is uncertain. We have already mentioned the synagogue in Tiberias, a (dubious) book of 'the laws of Moses', observance of the Sabbath, proclamation of a fast, destruction (for loot) of a building decorated with carvings of animals, etc.; but all these occurred in cities, and these was as much violation as observance. What did the country people do?

Given this uncertainty, it is interesting that Josephus refers to the Galileans and also to the people of Gamala as *Ioudaioi* mainly when they are opposed to the Romans or to Roman adherents, i.e. when they are allies of the Judeans, the primary *Ioudaioi*.<sup>39</sup> Again one might think this partially due to secretaries conscious that they were writing of 'the Jewish war' and therefore steadily identifying the opponents as *Ioudaioi*. But if the

<sup>38</sup> The conflict between itinerants and natives which contributed to the fall of Taricheae has already been mentioned (above, p. 523), and we suggested that itinerants took control of Jotapata (above, p. 522). Similarly at Mount Tabor (*Bell.* IV.56, 57, 61) when the defenders were defeated the *Ioudaioi* fled for Jerusalem, the locals surrendered. In Gamala the natives reacted against the refugees (*Vita* 46–61, 177), but later the town was again full of them (*Bell.* IV.10). In Gischala John and his 2,000 Syrian refugees (*Bell.* II.625) fled for Jerusalem with all the natives they could muster, but a substantial number of the natives remained to surrender to the Romans (*Bell.* IV.113).

<sup>39</sup> So *Bell.* III.33, 113, 114, 130, 142–351 (19 uses), 359, 445–536 (11 uses, 536 dubious); IV.36–75 (6 uses). Exceptions are found in *Bell.* III.57, 355, 356; *Vita* 113, 221, 349, 382.



secretaries had this habit and also tended to replace unfamiliar local terms like ‘Galileans’ by the familiar *Ioudaioi*, then *Ioudaioi* should appear often in non-military passages, as well as in military. It does not. This suggests that Josephus’ usage may preserve the Hasmonaean-Herodian use of *Ioudaioi* to designate all circumcised members of the former military alliance, and their descendants.<sup>40</sup> The benefits that alliance had brought to Galilee (above, ch. 7), along with the country people’s fear of being left to the bandits (*Vita* 206) would help explain Josephus’ success.

Exaggeration helped, too (*Vita* 84, above). To attempt an accurate estimate we must first discredit the obvious exaggerations (to have ‘taken Sepphoris twice by attack, Tiberias four times, and Gabara once’, *Vita* 82; to have let his soldiers plunder Sepphoris and Tiberias and then ‘collecting all the loot, restored it to the citizens’, *Bell.* 11.646), and all such prodigies of cunning and prowess as had no reportable consequences (e.g. the capture of the council of Tiberias, *Bell.* 11.634–45; *Vita* 168–78; when the action returns to Tiberias in *Vita* 271 the town is controlled by the ‘captor’s’ enemy, Jesus).

When all such stuff is subtracted, the remainder seems to be: a short period of success based on Taricheae and the district around it, while John held the north directly and controlled Tiberias and Gabara by alliances, and Sepphoris remained pro-Roman. Into this situation came the delegation sent at John’s request from Jerusalem by Simon ben Gamaliel and Ananus the High Priest, who had influential roles in the government of the revolted city. Josephus says three of the delegation’s four members were pharisees and two were priests, one of high-priestly family (*Vita* 197), but he suggests that these relationships were effective only as matters of prestige (*Vita* 198). Consequently the delegation had to come with military support. In *Vita* they had the Galilean bandit with his 600 men, 300 citizens drafted from Jerusalem, and 100 heavy-armed soldiers led by John’s brother (*Vita* 200–1). Their orders were to bring back Josephus dead or alive. John and Sepphoris, Gabara and Tiberias were ordered to help them (*Vita* 202–3, but we were told above that Sepphoris refused to have anything to do with Jerusalem, n. 37). In *Bell.* 11.627–9 they have the same orders and 2,500 men, led by four distinguished orators (*sic*) whose names differ from those of the leaders in *Vita* (Josephus could not be bothered with such details). Both texts claim that, as *Bell.* concisely puts it, ‘by stratagems he quickly worsted the four leaders and sent them and the strongest of their forces back to Jerusalem’ (11.630). *Vita* explains this

<sup>40</sup> For the earlier military-political usage see above, ch. 7. The increase of *Ioudaioi* for ‘Galileans’ in non-military contexts in *Vita* may reflect the influence on Josephus’ vocabulary of twenty-some years’ life in the Diaspora, where all Jews by religion were *Ioudaioi*. *Vita* was written about 96–8.

brief claim in a long romance (204–332) ending with Josephus' triumphal entry of Tiberias at the head of ten thousand heavy armed troops. Pure wish fulfillment. Perhaps the funniest episode in the yarn is that of his confrontation with the delegates at Gabaroth (242–65) where his presentation of the evidence against them so outraged the myriads of Galileans who had come to support him that, in order to save *the delegates'* lives, *he* had to jump on his horse and gallop to the next town, thus distracting the crowd so that the delegates escaped (265).

Henceforth *Vita* and *Bell.* are even farther out of step than they were before, the narratives of both go to pieces, and (behind his braggadocio) we have only glimpses of him operating, with the men who still followed him, now here, now there, in the countryside of southern Galilee. The end came when Vespasian encamped on the Galilean frontier and Josephus' troops, 'when they heard that the war was coming near . . . before they even saw the enemies, scattered in flight' (*Bell.* III.129). Josephus himself 'judged it was best to avoid risks as far as possible', and himself 'fled' to Tiberias (III.131). Not well received, he soon went to Jotapata (III.142). In the *Vita*, however, he engaged Vespasian's army in a battle near Sepphoris and then withdrew directly into Jotapata (*Vita* 412).

## IX VESPASIAN'S CONQUEST OF PALESTINE

From *Bell.*'s momentary lapse into truth we may judge how deeply the fear and humiliation of those days had marked Josephus' memory. But he soon recovered his gift of invention. In III.143–4 he reports that Vespasian 'grasped at the news (that Josephus had entered Jotapata) as the greatest good fortune, and thought it was by divine providence that the cleverest of the enemy had of his own volition gone into a trap. So he at once sent Placidus with a thousand horse . . . to surround the city so that Josephus might not slip out and escape.' This probably reflects Josephus' own reflections when he found himself caught inside. Why did he ever go in there? But where else could he go? Whatever had happened to that delegation, he was evidently *non gratus* in Jerusalem. In Galilee he was too well known to escape notice. If he surrendered he would be denounced. So he inconsiderately chose Jotapata. Once inside, he tried to escape, but failed (*Bell.* III.193–201). He tells us that he was not permitted to leave because the people 'thought nothing bad would happen to them so long as Josephus was there' (202). Regardless of the flight of his followers he was immediately put in charge of the defence and proceeded to do marvels. Luckily these do not concern us, nor does his ultimate escape from death by cheating his partners in a suicide pact; this he boasts of (*Bell.* III.383–91).

With his capture, Josephus ceases for a while to be a primary source for the events of the revolt, except for the obviously dramatized, albeit basically true, stories of his prophecy and its consequences, and a few other details like his compulsory marriage to a captive from Caesarea (*Bell.* III.392–408; IV.622–9; *Vita* 414). As a secondary source he is somewhat more reliable than he was as a primary one, since, when merely retelling what others told him about the war, he had fewer occasions to lie about himself. Also he claims that, for the actions of the Romans, he later had access to a copy of Vespasian's records (*Vita* 342) with which he may have made his account agree so far as his slovenliness permitted. Consequently we can extract from *Bell.* III.30–IV.491 a loose chronicle of the Roman conquest of Palestine apart from Jerusalem.

In summary: Vespasian arrived at Ptolemais in May 67 and at once sent a thousand horse and six thousand foot to reinforce Sepphoris. *Bell.* III.59–63 reports that this force 'constantly fought with Josephus', so that 'all Galilee was filled with blood and fire' and 'the only refuge of the pursued were the cities fortified by Josephus'. Since Josephus' claims to have fortified Galilean cities were gross exaggerations (at best, above, p. 526) and his military encounters with Roman troops were next to nil (p. 527), this report is propaganda. Probably the Sepphoris garrison did no more than beat off a night attack and raid the area whence it came (cf. *Vita* 373–80).

Returning to the actual achievements of the Romans: all Galilee, and Gamala in Transjordan, were conquered between about 1 June and 1 December of 67 (*Bell.* III.132–IV.115). There was serious fighting only at Jotapata and Gamala (both of which had to be taken by month-long sieges) and at Japha, Taricheae and Mount Tabor (though each was captured in a single day). There was also a bloody one-day's battle on the Sea of Galilee, though the outcome was never dubious.<sup>41</sup> Gabara (John of Gischala's chief ally and Vespasian's first objective) was captured at the first assault because its defenders had fled – probably to Jerusalem, as did those of Mount Tabor and John's own gang (*Bell.* III.132–4; IV.61, 106). Whither the defenders of the other sites fled we are not told. All in Gabara and Gamala, and almost all in Japha and Jotapata were killed, and the towns and villages around Gabara were destroyed – the only instance of such treatment that Josephus reports in Galilee, where the war seems to have been against a floating population of *Ioudaioi* and a few places where they congregated or were in control. The rest of the population,

<sup>41</sup> Jotapata, *Bell.* III.141–339; Gamala, IV.11–70; Japha, III.289–315; Taricheae III.462–504; Mount Tabor, IV.54–61; Sea of Galilee, III.505–31.

the natives, were attacked only incidentally and, if they surrendered, usually let off. Hence most Galilean towns seem to have surrendered immediately (or, like Tiberias, after a brief scuffle, *Bell.* III.350–60) and been little damaged. Even the residents of some of those which resisted escaped severe punishment by blaming the resistance on alien elements (so Taricheae, Mount Tabor, Gischala – most of John's gang had been refugees from Tyrian territory).

Although short, the conquest was relatively easy. Vespasian took a twenty-day vacation in late August and early September to enjoy Agrippa's hospitality at Caesarea Philippi (*Bell.* III.443–4). Since the Galilean resistance was so limited, he had men to spare and was able to detach a legate with 3,600 troops to oversee the territories of Samaria and Shechem, which had already been garrisoned, apparently without resistance, probably by local loyalists (*Bell.* III.309–11). The legate put a stop to the one reported disturbance in Shechemite territory; he destroyed a mob of some thousands that assembled on Mount Gerizim.<sup>42</sup> Another detached force destroyed Joppa, which the Judaeans had rebuilt as a base for piracy. The pirates took to their ships and '4,200' perished in a storm (*Bell.* III.414–27). This being Judaea, a body of troops was left on the acropolis to harry the neighbouring towns (*Bell.* III.429–30). About the end of November the campaign of 67 was closed by establishment of bases in the south for next year's work: Jamnia and Azotus were captured and garrisoned (*Bell.* IV.130). The rains must have been late that year to make such a quick strike possible.

Through the rainy season (December to early March) Vespasian relaxed in Caesarea, but left one legion in Scythopolis to discourage disturbances in the upper Jordan valley (*Bell.* IV.87, 99–115). If Josephus heard of any, he reported none. Most likely there were none. The cities of the Decapolis, at least in that area, were both pro-Roman and prudent.

Therefore it is generally agreed that the first action in the 68 campaign was a strike in March across Palestine to take 'the capital of the Peraea' (*Bell.* IV.413), probably Gadora, in the south.<sup>43</sup> The city officials received

<sup>42</sup> *Bell.* III.307–10. Josephus puts the dead at 11,600; perhaps a MS error for 1,600. For prisoners, whom the Romans counted and sold, the numbers in this part of *Bell.* are mostly realistic, in the hundreds or low thousands; for the dead they are often in the tens of thousands and suspiciously round. For sea battles the suspicion is especially strong, but even on land, who bothered to count the dead? Estimates were probably based on spoils taken from them.

<sup>43</sup> MSS 'Gadara', politically and geographically impossible. The refugees from this town who drowned while trying to cross the Jordan were washed into the Dead Sea. Michel and Bauernfeind in their edition of *De Bello Judaico* (*ad loc.*) suggest Gadora, near es-Salt.

Vespasian and his army with acclamation; their anti-Roman opponents fled. The friendly citizens were promised security and given a garrison; the tribune Placidus was sent with 3,000 foot and 500 horses to pursue the fugitives who had friends at a neighbouring town. There Placidus defeated ‘the *Ioudaioi*’ and massacred all the inhabitants caught. Hence other fugitives, during the night, roused the country to flee for Jericho. ‘15,000’ were cut down in flight (next day?), an ‘innumerable’ multitude drowned in the Jordan – one could walk across it on the dead bodies! – and 2,200 were captured. (At last the secretary’s literary enthusiasm was checked by a hard Roman record, *Bell.* iv.435–7.) With his little force Placidus was able to capture and garrison ‘with suitable deserters’ all the towns of southern Peraea down to, but *not* including, Machaerus. Not much national resistance. Its absence is made the more striking by the fact that Vespasian could thus operate far from his base, in difficult country, without any attempt being made to cut his line of communications, or pin him down and starve him out in Transjordan. The hundreds of thousands of fighting men with whom Josephus populates Jerusalem apparently did nothing to field an army that could effectively interfere with the enemy’s movements around the outskirts of Judaea.

Again Vespasian was able to detach a force to hold down the country (it rejoined the main army in June, *Bell.* iv.450). He and the army had meanwhile gone back to Caesarea and thence, in late April, had subjugated the hill country inland from the coast (Antipatris, Lydda, Jamnia – evidently it had to be retaken – and Emmaus) and northern Idumaea (Bethabrin, Kefar Toba), devastating *the countryside* and settling garrisons of captives and deserters in the ruins (*Bell.* iv.443–6) and one legion in a camp near Emmaus. The Idumaeans had sent a force to Jerusalem to support the revolutionists against the peace party, so they got harsh treatment, though again statistics like ‘over 10,000’ killed are suspect (*Bell.* iv.447–8). In this, as in the preceding campaign, the devastation of *the countryside*, as well as the towns, is repeatedly mentioned (*Bell.* iv.443, 446, 448).

From Idumaea Vespasian returned via Emmaus and the Shechemite district to Jericho which he reached in June. Most of the people had fled to the hills; and, when the defending force was killed, the city was found empty (*Bell.* iv.451–52). Another camp, this one garrisoned by Romans and auxiliaries, was established there, and yet another at Adida, near Lydda. Finally an expeditionary force may have been sent to plunder and burn Gerasa which, though one of the towns of the Decapolis, had shown unusual friendship to *Ioudaioi* (*Bell.* ii.480) and was the home town of Simon ben Giora (‘the son of the proselyte’) who had raised an army with social revolutionary tendencies – he offered liberty to slaves who

joined him – and was looting the Judaeian and Idumaean countryside (*Bell.* IV.503–13),<sup>44</sup> but staying well away from the Romans.

Having left Caesarea in March of 68, Vespasian returned to it in June; in three months he had subjugated most of the outlying territories around Jerusalem. No major Judaeian resistance had been encountered; nevertheless, the treatment of these territories seems to have differed from that of Galilee. If Josephus' reports are reliable, the southern campaign was one of destruction, the northern, of pacification; and the southern population seems to have expected the treatment it received. Instead of coming out to surrender, the people of most towns fled. (Gadora, the first large place taken in 68, was an exception to this rule, and in the conquest of southern Peraea Josephus also mentions some surrenders; elsewhere rarely.) Moreover, in the south, but not in Galilee, devastation of the surrounding countryside is often recorded, and forts/garrisons/camps are said to have been established to continue it. Apparently this was a war against the entire population, by contrast with the Galilean campaign against subversives concentrated mainly in half a dozen cities and one rural fort. Josephus' probable use of Roman records for this material makes it likely that this difference existed in fact.

#### X EVENTS IN JERUSALEM: JOHN OF GISCHALA AND THE ZEALOTS

Much less reliable are his reports of Judaeian political and military events during his time in Galilee and in prison. The *Vita's* yarn about the delegation tells of Simon ben Gamaliel, head of the Pharisees, arranging to bribe the high priests, Ananus and Jesus ben Gamala, to join in sending the force charged to capture Josephus (*Vita* 189–210). This information, Josephus says, was sent him by his father, to whom it had been betrayed by Jesus ben Gamala who was one of Josephus' old cronies (though the head of the Pharisees and the high priest Ananus knew so little of Jerusalem that they never suspected this! *Vita* 204). Thus warned, Josephus sent a delegation of his own to Jerusalem whence it returned with news that the Jerusalem *demos* had been so angered by

<sup>44</sup> That a city of the Decapolis should have been so severely punished for the activities of a Jew who had emigrated to Judaea is amazing; nor was its reported kindness to the Jews at the time of the persecutions apparently sufficient to explain this raid. Something has been hidden. Perhaps it had been a go-between for Jewish intrigues with the Nabataeans. Or perhaps 'Gerasa' should be emended to 'Gazara' – though Gazara was out of Vespasian's way at the moment. Other conjectures are possible, but none convincing.

Ananus' and Simon's acting without approval of the popular assembly (*to koinon*) that they threatened to burn down their houses, but settled for a decree of 'the foremost citizens' (*hoi prōtoi*) confirming Josephus in his governorship of Galilee and ordering the delegates to come home (*Vita* 309–10). Since Josephus never had a governorship of Galilee (see above) this amazing development of Greek democratic procedure in Jerusalem seems secretarial.

In *Bell.*, at the end of the account of his Galilean career, Josephus adds a summary of what was and would be going on in the south (II.647–54). In this he anticipates events down to and after the death of Ananus in the winter of 67–8. At first Ananus, with the other leaders, prepared for war, but then, as unfavourable omens multiplied, he got the idea of gradually winning over the political revolutionists (*stasiastai*) and the religious cranks ('the so-called "zealots"') – clearly two different groups. But then he was killed. And meanwhile Simon the proselyte's son had assembled a gang in the hills between Judaea and Shechem, where he robbed and tortured the rich. When Ananus and the other rulers had sent an army against him, he had fled to Masada and stayed there until after Ananus' death. Josephus places Ananus' death about a month or two *after* the zealots at Jerusalem had organized as a party (*Bell.* IV.135, 316). Apart from this terminus, the summary in II.647–54 indicates only the sequence, not the dates, of the events it mentions. In that sequence the zealots appear last. It is therefore foolish to use this summary as evidence that they existed as an organized group in Jerusalem before the winter of 67–8, in which Josephus places their organization. Moreover, in the summary he never indicates that they *were* organized. The term 'ἑλεῖτες' was long and widely used as an honorific designation of religious fanatics.<sup>45</sup> That there were many such in Jerusalem at the outbreak of the war is the most likely explanation of why the party they and others eventually joined in forming was called 'the Zealots'. (We can easily distinguish it with a capital letter; ancient Greek had no such convenience.)

Comment on Josephus' summary has taken us, as the summary took him, ahead of his story. Apart from the beginnings of his remarks on Ananus and Simon, he says almost nothing of what happened in the south during the spring, summer and fall of 67. Why?

His reports on the area resume with the arrival of the refugees from Gischala about 1 December 67 (*Bell.* IV.121). From here on his work is

<sup>45</sup> Examples of this usage in Judaeo-Christian literature begin with Exod. 20:5 (of God, often); of men: 2 Macc. 4:2; 4 Macc. 18:12 Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13; etc. Epiphanius, *De prophetarum vita*, sec. 2, Elias. Josephus uses it 55 times in *Bell.* (all but four or five refer to the party or its members), 3 in *Ant.*, 1 in *Vita*, and 1 in *C.Ap.* The various meanings will be discussed below.



full of vivid portrayals of the political and psychological changes, and military manoeuvrings, in a city he never entered henceforth until its destruction. Between the vivid pictures and the obscure facts stand Josephus' unknown informants, Josephus himself and his nameless secretaries.

At best, some reports are likely. That the Gischala gang strengthened the war party is not surprising (*Bell.* iv.121–7). If the city surrendered, they would be picked out for punishment. Their only hope was war. The surprising thing is that, nevertheless, their leader, John, managed to make himself acceptable to Ananus and the other rulers. His old friend, Simon, son of Gamaliel, probably was his patron.

Likely, too, in spite of some Thucydidean touches by a secretary, is the following account of the origin of the Zealot party (*Bell.* iv.130–61): Understandably the capture of Jamnia and Azotus, about 1 December 67, had produced crises in the towns throughout the south. War would come in three or four months. Surrender, fight, or flee? Hence factional splits and chaos, in which the bandits looted their neighbours, then, with all they could get, fled to Jerusalem, where fighting men were welcome. Where else could they go? (*Bell.* iv.130–6). Josephus' report that the leaders of such gangs got together and formed 'a criminal union' before they entered the city (135) may be correct. Almost certain is his report that the influx of criminal and revolutionary elements led to shortage of supplies, inflation, and increase of crime (137–42). Strangers in the city, the small-town toughs would have recognized each other as fellow countrymen and, often, fellow criminals, and ganged up for self help, forming a band that later newcomers like themselves could thenceforth join (138). In justification of themselves they would of course have gone on using the traditional justification of violence as expression of 'zeal' for 'the Lord'/'the Law', and would probably have won members from the individual zealots in the city's population. That they either chose the name 'the Zealots' or had it imposed on them indicates the importance of this term and this ideal in their sort of Judaism.

As soon as the funds they brought with them were spent, poverty and numbers would have led to more daring crimes (139). That they tried to protect themselves by murdering influential opponents, then by kidnapping hostages and later murdering those, and that they tried to justify their crimes by charging their victims with 'treason' (pro-Roman sympathies, 139–43) are all expectable. (Very likely, some of those 'executed' *had* been in touch with the Romans, or would have been so if they could, but of course Josephus says nothing of this.) That finally the gang seized the temple as its fortress (after the towers of the Herodian palace, it was the strongest fortress in the city) and tried to legitimize themselves by engineering election to the high-priesthood of a countryman like themselves,

a nobody whom they could dominate (143–57), is not surprising. The temple had been seized as a fortress before (e.g. by the troops of Aristobulus) and we have seen that many of the younger priests were revolutionists; some may have had a hand in the coup. All this commentary has followed Josephus, who credibly tells the story in terms of avarice and sadistic violence, but does not mention the also credible (and not wholly incompatible) zeal for independence conceived as a duty to God. The name ‘Zealots’ does not appear in his defamation of the development. It carried connotations he wanted to avoid, so he introduces it later, as a final irony (160–1).

That the above passage (*Bell.* iv.130–61) describes the formation and rise to power of the Zealots as a political/military party, is clear. The ‘criminal union’, of which the formation is reported in 135, is followed through its entry of Jerusalem, growth there, crimes, election of a puppet high priest, and seizure of the temple, to the consequent report of the leading citizens’ attempt to rouse the people against these ‘zealots’ (161). Unfortunately this account was overlooked by early scholars writing panoramic histories of all Judaism. They hastily supposed that, since Judas the Galilean’s ‘fourth philosophy’ had begun the opposition to Rome, but disappeared from the later history, while the Zealots were not mentioned in the early events, but played a leading role at the end, the Zealots must have been a later form of the ‘fourth philosophy’.<sup>46</sup> This error still has defenders, still trying to prove that Josephus refers to ‘the Zealots’ *as a party* before the winter of 67–8.

They usually appeal to *Bell.* ii.651 without noticing that it is part of a proleptic summary, so that its reference to the Zealots merely places them before the death of Ananus in the winter of 67–8, and also gives no clear indication that they were organized. The ‘rioters’ (*stasiastai*) to whom it contrasts them were not an organized party, so it may be that both terms here refer only to the types of opponents Ananus had to deal with. See above, pp. 540–1.

This evidence failing, two other passages are commonly cited: first *Bell.* ii.444, reporting the expulsion of the *sicarii* from Jerusalem in August–September 66,<sup>47</sup> more than a year before the organization of the

<sup>46</sup> For the history of the discussion see M. Smith, ‘Zealots and Sicarii’, *HTR* 64 (1971), 1–19.

<sup>47</sup> The *sicarii* are not called so in this paragraph. ‘*Sicarii*’, meaning ‘dagger men’, was not the name of their organization, but a term of opprobrium, borrowed from Latin. Josephus uses it in *Bell.* ii.254 and later, and *Ant.* xx.186 and later (i.e. from the 50s on) to designate the followers of the descendants of Judas of Galilee (above, pp. 506–9); the connections are made plain only in his final review of the order’s history, *Bell.* vii.253–62, cf. 324.

Zealots. Josephus says their leader, Menahem, encouraged by his capture of the royal palace, 'had come into the temple in state, adorned with royal costume and bringing along with him *tous ζῆλότας*,' i.e. 'his fanatical adherents'. This is the plain meaning of the Greek and was therefore correctly understood by the fifth-century Latin translator and by Hegesippus, as by Thackeray.<sup>48</sup> The objections brought against it can best be buried in a footnote.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *Flavii Josephi . . . Opera*, ed. M. Weidmann (Cologne, 1691), *Bell.* II.17, p. 812, *studiosos sui in armis habebat*. So, with minor changes of wording, Hudson, Havercamp, Bauernfeind and Michel, and Thackeray, all *ad loc.*, and H. Drexler 'Untersuchungen zu Josephus und zur Geschichte des jüdischen Aufstandes 66–70', *Klio* 19 (1925), p. 286. The general accuracy of the translation was praised by J. von Destinon, *De Flavii Josephi Bello Iudaico recensendo* (Kiel 1889), p. 15. For Hegesippus see V. Ussani (ed.) *Hegesippi qui dicitur historiae libri V*, vol. I, CSEL 66 (Vienna 1932), book II.10.6, *stipatoribus . . . comitantibus*.

<sup>49</sup> The fullest collection of such objections is that in the *Nachträge* of M. Hengel's *Die Zeloten*, edn 2, Leiden (1976), pp. 387–412; ET *The Zealots*, Edinburgh, 1989, pp. 380–404. The arguments relevant to this point are on pp. 396ff (ET 388ff).

1. The notion that there were individual zealots *inspired by the legendary Phineas* is completely groundless because Josephus does not report any; in fact Josephus omits any reference to the *ζῆλος* of Phinehas (cf. T. Seland, *Establishment Violence in Philo and Luke*, Leiden 1995, pp. 59–62). This is a weak argument from silence. Josephus deals with major historical events; that no individual zealot had produced one is not surprising. From 4 Macc. 18:12 we know Phineas was used as a model in teaching children; from 2 Macc. 4:2, that adults were admired as zealots for the Law, like Phineas. In *Ant.* XII.271 Josephus makes Mattathias, the father of the Hasmonaeans, call on 'Anyone who is a zealot of our ancestral laws'; it is hard to believe he thought him calling on any member of a null class. But it is harder to think that an organization would be called 'the Zealots' unless there were zealots to be organized.
2. To answer this objection, Hengel argues, 'Phineas' exemplary action, that is, the eradication of transgressors of the law and the pagans who had led them astray . . . called . . . for a well organized group' (p. 396, ET p. 389). Therefore it could not have inspired individual imitators. This is false. Phineas' deed was merely a double murder; in an excess of piety he drove a spear through a copulating couple (Num. 25:6–8). This *alone* secured for him the promise of a perpetual priesthood (Num. 25:10–13). No organization is needed; Yahweh's yoke is easy and his burden light. His command to harass the tribe from which the murdered woman came was given later, and to Moses, not to Phineas.
3. Hengel therefore turns (on p. 397, ET p. 389) to *Bell.* II.564: In 66 Eleazar ben Simon was given no office because of his tyrannical temperament and because 'the "Zealots", who were devoted to him behaved like bodyguards'. Hengel declares these zealots cannot be merely his devotees (the Greek word's normal meaning) but must be members of the organized 'Zealots', because a year *later* Eleazar persuaded that organization to seize the temple, and a year after that led a group of its members in a revolt against its leader. But in the interim between autumn 66 and winter 67 occurred the organization of the Zealots, which Josephus describes in *Bell.* IV.130–61 (above, pp. 541–2). Obviously the fact that a man became prominent in an organization *after* it was formed does not prove that his adherents were members of it *before* it was formed.

4. Hence Hengel jumps back (on p. 398, ET p. 390) to *Bell.* II.444, whence this note began. He dismisses the consensus of early Latin and scholarly translations as contrary to Greek usage because, he declares, 'In Greek literature up to the second century AD . . . *zelōtēs* only appears in the sense of "follower" or "emulator". It is never used in the absolute sense, but always governed by an attribute in the genitive, that is, by a thing or a person or at least by a possessive pronoun, which is absent . . . here' to indicate the object of the devotion. In *Bell.* however the word is commonly used 'in the absolute sense' (i.e. without an attached genitive) to indicate party membership. Therefore it must have this sense here (since an author who commonly uses a word in one way can never use it is another!). This talk of 'absolute sense' is absolute nonsense. A devotee must always be a devotee of something; when the object of the devotion is not explicitly stated, the reader is expected to understand it. Wisely estimating his readers' abilities, Josephus after describing the formation of 'the Zealots', indicated the pretended object of their devotion: they 'called themselves "the Zealots" as if they were zealous for good practices' (a secretary's attempt to render *mā' asē torab?*) 'but were not devoted to the worst' (*Bell.* IV.161). The 'as if' clause gives the meaning that 'Zealots' was intended by the Zealots to carry, the 'but' clause gives the meaning Josephus wanted to attach to it; Hengel's 'absolute' uses were thus, in fact, doubly defined.
5. He also missed the possessives which are *not* lacking in *Bell.* II.444 and 564 to indicate the object of the followers' devotion. Greek often uses the definite article as a possessive. Thus 'He came bringing the devotees' may mean in Greek, 'He came bringing *his* devotees.' See H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar for Colleges* (New York 1916), 1121, citing Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.8.3; R. Kühner and L. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik*, edn 4, *Satzlehre 1* (Hanover, 1890, repr. Leverkusen, 1955), p. 556, sec. 454. In the Gospels 'the disciples' commonly means 'his disciples': Matt. 14:15; 15:12; 19:10; Mark 9:14; Luke 10:23; 16:1; 19:29, 37; Jn. 11:7. Similar use of the article in Josephus: *Bell.* I.150, 158, 211, 224, 239; II.461; IV.279; *Ant.* XIII.257. (The spotty distribution need not indicate differences in Josephus' usage; these are merely passages I happened to notice while I had the subject in mind. I have noticed similar ones in Appian, Diogenes Laertius, Galen, Lucian, 1 Macc., Papyri Graecae Magicae, Plutarch, Theophrastus and Xenophon.)

The frequent NT usage with 'disciples' prompts a further remark. Hengel did not notice that *Bell.* II.444 is Josephus' *first* use of *zelōtēs*. No Zealots, much less an association of them, have hitherto been mentioned. Josephus' Greek secretary should therefore have expected a Greek reader to understand the word in its normal Greek sense. But what Semitic word did Josephus have in mind? What Palestinian Jewish relationship between younger and older men would he have described by using or accepting a Greek word which spoke of the younger as devotees of the older? Obviously, the relationship of teacher and pupils; and in Polybius x.22.2 *zelōtēs* is used with the sense of 'student', 'disciple'. This fits with his or his secretary's description of Menahem, who led these disciples, as a *sophistes* (perhaps a pejorative rendering of *hakam*), *Bell.* II.433, 445. Josephus himself was a *zelōtēs* of Bannus, *Vita* 11.

Hengel goes on to try to explain away the other uses of *zelōtēs* that won't suit his theory, but his 'explanations' do not deserve discussion – still less his attempt to show that the Zealots were really *sicarii!* – and this note is already too long. I hope, at least, that its length may excuse my neglect of the 'learned' literature. Since all this was necessary to dispose of Hengel's errors on a single point (and Hengel is far from the worst) an attempt to deal with the whole literature would be impossible!

The other passage commonly appealed to is *Bell.* II.564, the story of the election of generals after Cestius' defeat in November 66. This has already been referred to in point 3 of note 49. Nothing in it suggests that the 'fanatical adherents' mentioned were members of any organization. The notion that they were so is imported from the later use of 'zealots', but the later usage is not good evidence for the period before the zealots were organized. If the text had said, 'The Galileans under him', no one would have supposed an organization of Galileans. Here, as in II.444, it seems likely that these 'fanatic adherents' were his disciples.<sup>50</sup>

By contrast, the Zealots, when organized, were not composed of any single man's disciples. They seem to have been individuals and groups united by (1) devotion to Yahweh and his Law (as they conceived it); (2) determination to get control of Jerusalem; (3) need of mutual protection and support. Other motives proposed for their union are at best indemonstrable. Their eschatological expectations are uncertain; the one thing certain is that they did not leave matters to Yahweh. That they all had the same expectations is not demonstrable. That they seized the temple does not prove they were priests (Aristobulus' soldiers had not been so; the temple was a good thing to seize – a great fortress.) They may have got help from some priests, but Josephus says nothing of it – he spared his old friends. Reports of arrangements made in the temple are hopelessly muddled by the contradictions between Josephus' description of it and that in *Mishnah Middoth*.

As to the Zealots' origin, Josephus says nothing of any connection with the Gischala gang. He distinguished the two groups' times of entry and original locations (*Bell.* IV.121–39). John does not appear in the Zealots' first adventures. Only when the public has been roused against them and they are besieged in the temple is he brought into the story, *not* as a Zealot, but as an outsider who has become a hanger-on of the public leaders and then tries to strengthen himself by betraying their plans to the Zealots (*Bell.* IV.209). They would not have trusted him had he been a Zealot or been known to have ties with them. Probably he did not. His betrayal is explicable by a shift from prudence to ambition. In a civil war of uncertain outcome, a prudent man will try to have friends on both sides, but an ambitious man may sacrifice friends for wealth and power, especially if he has a gang to support. If he can safely break down the police power his gang's 'muscle' will be more important and bring in more money more safely. Hence John's treason.

<sup>50</sup> See note 49. Josephus never used *mathētes* ('disciple') in *Bell.*; it is frequent in *Ant.* – another sign of his approximation, in later life, to the position of rabbinic Judaism.

Still less does Josephus give any ground for supposing a connection between the *sicarii* in Masada (and the countryside), and the Zealots in Jerusalem. The *sicarii* simply do not enter the picture.<sup>51</sup> This is not to deny that some individuals may have gone from one group to the other, but we hear of no significant relations and have no adequate grounds to conjecture any.

## XI THE IDUMAEANS AND SIMON

With these confusions cleared away, we can return to Josephus' story. He says that, once the people were roused to fight back, the Zealots were penned in the central court of the temple (*Bell.* iv.205). That John of Gischala then persuaded them to call on the Idumaeans (*Bell.* iv.216–228) may be an invention of Josephus due to his hatred of John. The appeal and the Idumaeans' response show that the Hasmonaeen-Herodian military alliance was still important. The Idumaeans thought themselves, as members of that alliance, *Ioudaioi*, and of a closely related *ethnos*; as such, when they came, they claimed access to their ancestral shrine (*Bell.* iv.273–9). However, the relations between the Idumaeen kings and the Judaeen aristocracy had not been consistently friendly and Herodion conspicuously commemorated Herod's defeat of his Judaeen enemies (*Bell.* i.265); so both the priests' refusal to admit them, and the savagery of the Idumaeans, especially to the high priests, once they got into the city, may to some extent have reflected that earlier hostility.

<sup>51</sup> On Hengel's prehistory of the Zealots and the *sicarii*, see n. 49, end. On credulity about *Abot R. Nat.* and the *Philosophumena* I shall not comment. While some priests may have been in cahoots with some *sicarii* before the revolt – the story of the 'kidnappings' of Eleazar's and his father's staff suggests this (*Ant.* xx.208–10) – the priests' murder of Menahem and his followers are practically decisive against any supposition of former or later union of the two groups. Moreover, Hengel's claim on p. 400 (ET) that the references to the *sicarii* in *Bell.* ii.425 and to the *zelotai* in ii.444 are 'evidently referring . . . to the same group following Menahem' is simply false. Nothing is said of Menahem in the 425 account of how *sicarii* entered the city and helped the war party. Then 433ff tells us that 'While' they were besieging the palace 'a certain Menahem, collecting his acquaintances, went off to Masada where he *broke into* the store of weapons . . . and armed, besides *his* townsmen (definitive article for possessive, as in 444) and other brigands (too) and came up to Jerusalem with these as a bodyguard'. This strongly suggests that the *sicarii* who first entered the city (in 425) were not the same band as that which went off with Menahem, much less the motley crew he brought back. The use of ii.444 to identify Menahem's adherents as Zealots has been refuted in n. 49. In sum, the whole argument is another confusion. Cf. R. A. Horsley, 'Menahem in Jerusalem: A Brief Messianic Episode Among the Sicarii – not "Zealot Messianism"', *Novum Testamentum* 27 (1985), 334–48.

That '20,000' came (*Bell.* iv.235) means that a lot did – the number is patently Josephan. Equally inventive and more rhetorical, but not therefore *wholly* false, are the following descriptions of the Zealot terror in Jerusalem and the raids by gangs of robbers in the countryside (*Bell.* iv.327–409). That in spring 68 the Idumaeans went home in disgust (*Bell.* iv.345–53), is probably malicious. More likely they were called home to help against the raids of the *sicarii* in Masada and the threat of invasion by Simon, the proselyte's son; but since the latter marked the beginning of Simon's success Josephus has postponed it to his account of Simon (*Bell.* iv.503–77). Here he inserts the record of Vespasian's spring campaign (*Bell.* iv.413–502, summarized above, pp. 537–9).

From Vespasian's return to Caesarea in June of 68 Josephus jumps back to the spring of that year when Simon, who had holed up for the winter with the *sicarii* of Masada, had heard all the fourth philosophy he could stomach and was anxious for something livelier. When the *sicarii* refused to raid far from Masada (*Bell.* iv.507 – they much preferred sneak attacks on Jewish villages to a possible encounter with a regular army, not to mention a Roman one) Simon took to the hills, offered freedom to slaves and booty to free men, so raised a considerable force, and went looting through eastern Judaea and Idumaea (508–11). Josephus says the Zealots went out to put him down, taking most of their troops (514 – if so, they must have had a firm control of Jerusalem!). He defeated them, then attacked Idumaea with 20,000 men (again Josephus' favourite number), but was beaten off (514–17). Helped by timely treason, he came back with more men, occupied Hebron, and then, with more than 40,000 (2 × 20,000!), devastated the country (518–37). Josephus says he particularly hated the Idumaeans (535), and we might suppose the hatred derived from Judaeans' reactions to Herodian (Idumaeans) tax collectors. However, in Josephus' later account of the defenders of Jerusalem, Simon has in his force a contingent of five thousand Idumaeans (*Bell.* v.249). Also, Josephus' story, that Simon's success was due to treason in the Idumaeans' army, throws doubt on his report of the *total* destruction of the country (*Bell.* iv.521–37) – we should expect that the lands of the traitors would have been spared. Finally, the report is a patch of purple rhetoric covering a topos. Perhaps, therefore, Josephus' explanation that Simon hated the Idumaeans was intended to obscure the social cause of the destruction that attended his invasion. Already in Judaea he had offered freedom to slaves and his robber band had approached the size of a peasant-and-slave revolt. If he found in Idumaea a similarly divided society he may have gone in as an ally of the freedom fighters and joined them in looting for liberty. He had also begun to attract free men from the towns, and to impose on his followers the sort of discipline and



respect required of the soldiers of a king (*Bell.* iv.510). As son of a proselyte, he could hardly have hoped to pass as the Jewish Messiah, but leaders of populist revolts often took the title 'king' (above, note 11; ch. 7 'Gentiles', note 137); two such 'kings' had arisen in Palestine after Herod's death. In Simon we have a third, much more successful.

Vespasian now, in late June, set out again (*Bell.* iv.550), overran northern Judaea, and sent a legate across northern Idumaea as far as Hebron, which was burned (554). Simon, meanwhile, made a second sweep through Idumaea. Most of the surviving population fled to Jerusalem (556). He followed and camped outside the city, killing those who escaped from it (557). He paid no attention to Vespasian, and Vespasian none to him. Vespasian had probably heard, from the friends and descendants of Palestinian refugees, that the root of the trouble there was the Judaeans, and only secondarily the members of the alliance they had formed, the *Ioudaioi*. Accordingly he had planned his campaign as a gigantic hunt. In the first year his army, acting mainly as beaters, would drive the militant *Ioudaioi* out of Galilee and Transjordan, into Judaea. In the second year he would use Jerusalem as a net, drive them and the Judaeans into Jerusalem, and destroy both it and the people in it. At least in Galilee, those who submitted promptly and promised obedience might be spared. With the Jews – the merely religious *Ioudaioi* scattered through the rest of the empire – he was not concerned. They would not interfere with his campaign, and their treatment was the emperor's problem, not his.

This plan was interrupted in July 68, by his opportunity to become emperor, but before that arose he had the quarry in the net. His army was stationed around Jerusalem like a noose; it could be left there until his son could be sent to finish the hunt. In this plan the bandits infesting the Palestinian countryside had a double role. They were not only quarry, but also assistant beaters. Let them drive the villagers to Jerusalem. When the noose tightened, they would be driven there, too. The sooner they all went in, the sooner the food in the city would be eaten. *Bell.* iv.306–76, though anecdotal, may be substantially a true report.

Thus it came about that the siege of Jerusalem was begun by Simon, the son of the proselyte, not by the Romans (*Bell.* iv.557). The horrors of siege warfare were an ancient and often justified rhetorical topos. Josephus' secretaries did not neglect such opportunities, so his funeral of Jerusalem is appropriately hung with purple passages. Often, however, it is hard to tell how much he himself may have contributed.

A favourite theme was the decay of morals during sieges. They did, indeed, decay. Consequently, when Josephus reports that John's Galileans now became, not only monsters of cruelty, but open homosexuals, going about in women's clothes, etc. (*Bell.* iv.558–63), his secretary may have

reworked a conventional theme, but he may have reported unconventional behaviour. In favour of the latter supposition: 1. Nothing like this passage appears elsewhere in his work; 2. John's Galileans were mostly refugees from Tyrian towns (*Bell.* II.588) – as boys they may have had the benefit of some contact with Greek culture; 3. their behaviour may explain the revolt of John's less sophisticated troops, especially those Idumaeans who had hitherto stayed with him. After about eight months of siege they went over to the civilians, with them killed many of the Zealots, and, to get help against the rest, opened the gates to Simon (in April/May 69). According to Josephus, this was a blunder. Simon's savages appropriately celebrated their success (*Bell.* IV.566–77).

During most of this same period – late summer 68 to spring 69 – the Romans merely held their positions. Vespasian was interested in Italian history. His interest was so influential that in July 69 he, himself, was hailed as emperor. He then solidified his hold on the eastern provinces by visits to Antioch and Alexandria (*Bell.* IV.602–56). At the start of these he liberated Josephus, in recognition of his true prophecy (622–9). Only in the spring of 70 did he send his son Titus back to Caesarea to take command of the Palestinian armies and resume the war (658–63).

## XII TITUS' SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

Titus' trip to the city was without incident until he rode ahead to reconnoitre and fell into an ambush (but escaped, *Bell.* V.54–66). Evidently the pacification of the countryside, a year and a half before, had been thoroughly done. No one in the countryside dared attack the Romans, and the men of Jerusalem were fighting each other.

One Eleazar ben Simon, with three distinguished associates, each having 'not a few disciples',<sup>52</sup> seized the inner court of the temple, and kept up missile warfare with John's followers (*Bell.* V.5–10). This encouraged Simon, who had now occupied the upper and much of the lower city, to attack John more strongly (V.10). What they were fighting about, apart from personal rivalries, is unknown. Perhaps there was not even any pretence of a 'higher' cause. Josephus does not notice the lack of one.

How much reliance should be placed on Josephus' hearsay accounts of such conflicts, is a problem. For instance: 'He', i.e. his text, says that the combatants admitted persons who wanted to offer sacrifices, but many of these were killed by accident; hit by missiles, 'they fell before' (or, 'before

<sup>52</sup> Here, as in II.444, *ouk oligoi tōn zēlōtōn ēkolouthēsān* probably means 'not a few of his adherents followed (him)'. These *zēlōtai* are apparently not just members of the party, but adherents (i.e. disciples) of these teachers.

offering’) ‘their sacrifices, and sprinkled with their life blood the . . . revered altar. And foreign (*allophyloi*) dead bodies were mixed with those of local men, and (those of) commoners with priests’ (*Bell.* v.15–18). How any sacrificers *except* priests could get near enough to the altar (of burnt offerings) to sprinkle it with their blood if they were struck by an arrow (or even a catapult ball) is puzzling, and what *allophyloi* (normally, ‘Gentiles’) were doing in the court of the priests is inexplicable.<sup>53</sup> This stuff seems to have been written up by a secretary from a few notes made from Josephus’ dictation.

From such rhetoric the account comes down to what look like Roman military approximations: in *Bell.* v.248–51 Simon has about 10,000 men, plus an Idumaeen contingent of 5,000; John has 6,000; and Eleazar, 2,400. Eleazar’s men were soon forced to rejoin John. They are described as ‘the Zealots’, by contrast to John’s men, and the terminological contrast is consistently continued even after the reported reunion. Why?

More important than the uncertain differences of the groups are their probable origins. Like the revolutionists of the Galilean cities, they seem to be mostly outsiders, not natives of the city in which they are fighting. The two most prominent leaders came from Gischala and Gerasa. Simon’s Jewish status, as son of a proselyte, is dubious. Many or most of John’s men came from Tyrian cities or from Galilee. Simon had a body of 5,000 Idumaeans, and probably more in his other recruits who had come from the outlying districts of Samaria, Judaea and Idumaea. The core of the Zealots came at first from towns outside Jerusalem, most of them probably adjacent to the coastal plain. Even those individual fighters on the Jewish side whom Josephus singles out for special mention have, as often as not, gentile names, and, when their origins are indicated, turn out to be non-Judaeen.<sup>54</sup> Where were the Jerusalemites?

This problem is partly obscured by Josephus’ practice of referring to all the Roman forces as ‘Romans’ and all the Jewish as ‘*Ioudaioi*’, regardless of the differences of their components. As observed above (pp. 533–4 and n. 40), he does this most often when reporting sieges or combats. For the Jewish side such situations brought to mind the terminology made current by the Hasmonaeen military union, and for both Jews and Romans the practice was a convenient shorthand device. His secretaries

<sup>53</sup> On the purification necessary for entrance of the temple, and the absolute exclusion of Gentiles from the inner courts, see, e.g. *Bell.* iv.205; v.194, 227–9; vi.126.

<sup>54</sup> I have counted three Idumaeans, a Nabataean, a runaway servant of Agrippa, a Galilean called *Cyphthaios* (= *Cypti* = Egyptian ?), and unidentified persons named Aeneas, Alexas, Castor and Archelaos son of Magadatos. Against these there are about nine recognizably Judaeen names. See *Bell.* v.290, 317, 326, 474, 552; vi.92, 148, 229. Contrast v.532, 534; vi.92, 148, 169, 229.

may have known the usage for Roman forces as part of the style of military historiography. Whatever the reasons, in his account of the siege of Jerusalem the two blanket terms are standard. Only when individuals or troops have to be identified do we learn that this 'Roman' was a Syrian or a Bithynian, and that '*Ioudaios*' a Galilean or an Idumaeen. Such glimpses, however, reveal the diversity of the *Ioudaioi*, as described above, and raise the question already asked: How far did the men of Jerusalem support the resistance to Titus?

According to Josephus, not far. He commonly distinguished the militant groups from the townspeople and even claimed that the revolutionists finally showed themselves contemptuous of 'the *genos* of the Hebrews in order to seem less impious, because (they practised their cruelty not against their own people, but) against aliens'.<sup>55</sup> He gladly draws the conclusion: 'Thus they admitted themselves to be what they really were, (*viz.*) slaves and jetsom and bastard corruptions of the *ethnos*' (*Bell.* v.443). The conclusion is obviously his own opinion as an aristocratic scion of the Jerusalem priesthood, but he tries to support it by saying that when they saw the city burning they showed no signs of grief (445).<sup>56</sup> Be that as it may, the rhetoric is not wholly groundless. Simon had, in fact, built up his force by giving liberty to fugitive slaves. John's men were primarily refugees from Tyrian towns, many had probably been slaves. That Simon's men were led in assault by a Galilean called 'Egyptian', a runaway slave(?) of Agrippa, and the son of a Nabataean (*Bell.* v.474) suggests that they did not attach much importance to Judaeen birth.

The converse position also found expression: The *sicarii* said that anyone who advocated submission to Rome differed in nothing from a Gentile and might therefore be plundered at will (*Bell.* VII.254f). Similar passages in the Dead Sea documents describe all Jews except members of their own sect as 'men to be slaughtered' (IQS IX.16, 22; X.19; CD. VI.15; XIII.4). Such replacement of the traditional bond of family and community relationship by that of party membership appears also in Christianity. Clearly it was popular, but an estimate of its importance in the revolt of 66–70 is made difficult by Josephus' determination to prove that the bulk of the people did not back the revolt, but were forced into it by the 'tyrants' (*Bell.* v.33, 439 and *passim*).

Perhaps the best way of evaluating this claim is to consider the practical problem: how could these 'tyrants' with adherents numbering about 23,400 dominate a civilian population of which the adult males were eight

<sup>55</sup> The sentence is elliptical, but implies something like the content of the clause here added.

<sup>56</sup> The example of hard-heartedness is somewhat misleading, since *Bell.* VI.364 explains that their satisfaction at the city's burning arose from the thought that they should leave nothing to profit the Romans.

or ten times that number? The militants had only hand weapons, bows, and the siege machines captured from the Romans. They had no means of rapid communication or transport. Besides, about a third of them were shut up in the temple. Only Simon's 15,000 were at large, and these had to guard their enemies in the temple as well as to hold down the city. On the other hand the civilians were mostly unarmed and militarily untrained, some were old, more were ill, blind, crippled, or the like, and many of their customary leaders had been murdered. Also, many of the living had ties with the militants. Judgement is difficult, but the probability seems to be that Josephus is grossly exaggerating the breach between the civilians and the militants. Evidence even of upper-class support of the revolt is given by his own reports of the large numbers of aristocrats who fled the city only in the last days of the siege, or survived and were captured there (*Bell.* v.567–95; vi.114–15, 231, 299, 366, etc.). Of course support was never unanimous and there were occasional attempts to surrender (*Bell.* v.534–40; vi.378–81). Josephus claims that the 'tyrants' had to suborn false prophets to keep up the people's courage, but he also tells of such prophets of salvation who arose voluntarily (*Bell.* vi.285–6).

As prophecies failed and the siege continued, support dwindled. Many fled, many tried to flee and were caught and killed. Perhaps most were deterred from flight by fear, first of the rebels, next of the Roman troops and, worse, their Near Eastern allies who ripped open captives to see if they had swallowed coins, and finally, of the Roman authorities who crucified those they thought dangerous (*Bell.* v.447–56, 523–33, 548–61, etc.). Death by starvation might seem preferable. Besides, if the city fell in time and one escaped the first slaughter one might be taken as a slave, and fed. In the last days of the siege, when the remaining food was monopolized by the combatants, who had most to fear from surrender, the rest were too weak to resist.

Consequently the defenders' refusal to surrender cannot confidently be taken as evidence either of unanimity or of religious conviction. The militants could expect, if they surrendered, at best slavery, which for many would amount to death by slow torture in the mines. Alternatives were death by beasts in the arenas, or crucifixion. Understandably, most preferred to do as much damage as they could to their enemies, and hope to win at most an opportunity to escape to the desert (*Bell.* vi.351). The hope reflects religion, but the history, desperation.

The picture of conditions in the city given by Josephus' secretary's text is obviously a literary write-up of a topos ('the famine in the besieged city'). Only occasional incidents and details (names, and the like) can be attributed to Josephus' informants. However, the conventional literary development was roughly true to the facts of such situations. This is the

best that can be said of the account of 'Josephus'. By contrast, for the military history of the siege he should have used the Roman records, so the seeming veracity of his report is probably not deceptive – except when he wants to conceal something, e.g. the Romans' burning the temple, or when his habitual inaccuracy has distorted his information.

The final proposal of the militants, to leave the city and go to the desert, probably reflected Hos. 2:14–23. Perhaps the earlier proposals of the 'deceivers' to lead their followers into or through the wilderness, showed the same influence (cf. *Bell.* VI.351 with II.261, 264; *Ant.* xx.97, 167, 188), as may the gospel stories of the feeding in the wilderness (Mark 6:32–44; 8:1–10; John 6:1–15; and parallels). The remarkable resilience of this hope in spite of repeated disappointments may result from its offer of immediate escape from the actual society.

A tantalizing problem is posed by John of Gischala's sentence to life imprisonment (*Bell.* VI.433–4). What did the Romans want him for? And what did their holding him in reserve have to do with the change of Josephus' attitude towards him, from patronizing neutrality to extreme hostility?<sup>57</sup> Was he a potentially hostile witness or, worse, a competitor? We shall never know, but the change and the likelihood that John was still in the offing – at least until the publication of *Bell.* – must be kept in mind when evaluating anything Josephus says about him.

Another puzzle are the two stories of the arrest of Simon, *Bell.* VI.433f and VII.25–36. In the first Josephus says that, 'After many conflicts with necessity . . . he turned himself in.' The three dots stand for 'as we shall recount in the following'. The promise was not kept. In the seventh book the 'many conflicts' are reduced to an unsuccessful attempt to burrow out of the temple mount. After this Simon decided to try a *coup de théâtre*. Swathing himself in white and pinning on a purple shawl, he rose from the ground on the site of the temple; probably by night. Did he hope to escape as a ghost? Or had he heard of Jesus' resurrection? According to the *Gospel of Peter*, 45, the body in Jesus' tomb walked out (with help) and the guards ran away. Simon may have thought, 'If that fellow could get away with it, so can I!' Josephus says the guards in the temple were terrified, but stood their ground (*Bell.* VII.30). Anyhow, Simon was taken.

### XIII AFTERMATH

Josephus accompanied Titus on his return to Rome (*Vita* 422). His information about events in Palestine, from then on, is second-hand. In

<sup>57</sup> *Bell.* II.575, 590; *Vita* 43–45, 73, 75–76. These sections of *Vita* are among the stronger reasons for thinking it in part a careless reworking of a much earlier text.

Rome he witnessed the joint triumph of Vespasian and Titus in 71, when Simon was executed as ‘the general of the enemy’ (*Bell.* VII.154 – a surprising end for a proselyte’s son). In the procession the war was represented as a series of actions against *cities*, i.e. as it had been during Vespasian’s campaign in Galilee and Titus’ siege of Jerusalem, on which the viewers’ attention was thus focused. The general of each city was presented in the attitude in which he had been captured. It would seem that Josephus did not qualify as general of Jotapata, but with unusual modesty he does not complain of having been overlooked. That ‘many’ *ships* also figured in the procession (*ibid.*) was not a reference to the battle of skiffs and rafts on the Sea of Galilee (*Bell.* III.505, 522–32), but indicated the importance attached by Roman shippers and investors to the destruction of the bases for Judaeen piracy; Josephus tactfully mentioned only the chief one, Joppa (*Bell.* III.414–31; cf. Strabo XIV.28).

That in the procession the spoils which got most attention were those of the Jerusalem temple (*Bell.* VII.148) is confirmed by their appearance on the arch of Titus, and is explained not only by secrecy and rumour – everybody had heard stories about them because nobody had seen them – but also by their being massive, solid gold, which the Romans valued. That a copy of the Law was carried last (150) may not have implied a claim to have conquered the Jewish god. The Romans were usually careful to avoid offending even foreign gods (you never could tell!). Most likely the scroll was paraded because, as a big, *de luxe* manuscript, it was a very valuable object, and as the official book of the mysterious Jewish law, it was a curiosity.

Machaerus was of strategic importance and legendary fame (Josephus knew and perhaps improved some of the legends, *Bell.* VII.164–89), and also the scene of a strange episode. ‘The *Ioudaioi* there separated themselves from the *xenoi* and, thinking them rabble, compelled them to stay in the lower city and endure the dangers (of the siege) while they (the *Ioudaioi*) held the higher fortress’, hoping to be pardoned in return for its surrender to the Romans (*Bell.* VII.191–2). In fact (after a melodramatic interlude) they were granted safe conduct to leave. Thereupon ‘the majority (*to plēthos*) of those in the lower city, learning of the agreement . . . decided to flee secretly by night. However, when they opened the gates, Bassus (the Roman commander) was alerted by those who had made the agreement’ (206–7). A few of the strongest (of the *plēthos*) escaped, all the rest of the men in the lower city (about 1,700) were killed, and the women and children enslaved. Those who had made the agreement and betrayed the majority were then allowed to leave safely (208–9).

The credible number and surprisingly specific information suggest that this probably came to Josephus from Bassus’ official report or from



someone on his staff. If so, who made up the ‘majority’ whom Josephus called *xenoi*? In military contexts the term *xenoi* normally means ‘mercenaries’, but no mercenaries have been mentioned in *Bell.* since those of Herod (I.290). Usually in the early books of *Bell.* *xenoi* has its classical sense, ‘guest friends’ – persons in another town with whom you occasionally exchange visits (I.187, 244; II.125, 132; III.436). In the later books it commonly means ‘people from a distance’ as opposed to ‘locals’ (*epichōrioi*): IV.643; V.15, 223; VII.47; cf. VI.125. In both these senses it refers sometimes to Jews, sometimes to pagans. None of these senses will do here, and here its use is particularly surprising because Josephus previously said that in 66–7 ‘The majority of the *Ioudaioi* in Machaerus persuaded the Roman garrison to leave the fortress and hand it over to them.’ Receiving it, ‘the people of Machaerus, having strengthened it with a garrison, kept a firm hold on it’ (*Bell.* II.485–6). It was the strong point at which Vespasian’s takeover of the Peraea was stopped (*Bell.* IV.439, 555).<sup>58</sup> These reports are confirmed by the fact that the people of the lower town shut out the Romans and did not try to surrender when they learned of the treason of the *Ioudaioi* in the upper fortress, but planned to flee. How can we explain the contempt of the *Ioudaioi* in the fortress for the *Ioudaioi* in the town? At least the military situation should have vivified the alliance which had united the *Ioudaioi* since Hyrcanus’ time.

Here conjecture is necessary. I conjecture that in mid 67, when it was clear that Galilee was lost and Roman operations in the Peraea would soon begin, the Jerusalem government sent a commander and troops to strengthen Machaerus. This would explain why, later in 67, it was able to hold out against Vespasian’s legate. By common Hellenistic military practice, the men of the new garrison will have been billeted on the townspeople. Thus both groups will have become each other’s *xenoi*.<sup>59</sup> This officially friendly relation will not have prevented the frictions customary in such situations, and these will have exacerbated the snobbishness of the Judaeans, of which we have an example in *Bell.* II.43, in which Josephus contrasts ‘the genuine people’ (i.e. the true *Ioudaioi*) ‘from Judaea itself’ to the ‘multitude from Galilee . . . Idumaea . . . Jericho (!) and the Peraea’. Political differences may also have played a part, as in the alleged contempt of the revolutionists for the people of Jerusalem (above, p. 551, the allegation was probably not entirely groundless). It is understandable that after Jerusalem had fallen the Judaeans alliance began to come apart. The

<sup>58</sup> That it was held ‘by the robbers’ is merely Josephus’ way of saying ‘by the revolutionaries’.

<sup>59</sup> For billeting see M. Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics* (New York 1971, London 1987), ch. 3, notes 54 and 55 and references there. *Xenos* is used of both the host and the guest, see *LSJ s.v.*

surprising thing is that the native *Ioudaioi* of Machaerus did not surrender at once, as those of Tiberias tried to.

With the capture of Machaerus and the extermination of the militarists in the forest of Jardes, Roman Palestine and Transjordan were, Josephus says, completely pacified (*Bell.* VII.252). Consequently Vespasian, a tight-fisted old man, expropriated ‘all the land of the *Ioudaioi*’ and had it leased to private contractors (*Bell.* VII.216). What was ‘all the land of the *Ioudaioi*’? Almost certainly, as Momigliano recognized,<sup>60</sup> an exaggeration, and, we should add, an exaggeration by Josephus. Vespasian’s order will have been specific. Josephus’ exaggeration must be corrected by omitting places friendly to Rome throughout, like Sepphoris, places allowed to surrender immediately, like Gadara (above, pp. 537–9), places in the territory of Agrippa II, like Tiberias (*Bell.* III.461). At this stage of his history Josephus would probably not have used *Ioudaioi* for Sebastenians, Shechemites or Idumaeans, so these should be left out of account. While campaigning, Vespasian, as *legatus* of the emperor Nero, his commander, will have acquired for him, by right of conquest, all the places he captured. These will have been reported to, and perhaps disposed of by, the appropriate imperial officials. Places which hastened to submit at his discretion may have been permitted to retain their status as towns of the province. Reports of the spring campaigns of 68 may never have been sent in, or, if sent, never attended to in the hurricane of revolutions that swept through Rome in that year. All in all it seems most likely that by ‘the land of the *Ioudaioi*’ Josephus here, as in *Ant.* xv.327; xviii.122, meant Judaea proper, probably with Jericho and *perhaps* with southern Peraea. This was approximately the opinion of Schürer, *Geschichte*, I, ed. 3/4, p. 650 (for which Momigliano contradicted him), and this, as seen above, was roughly what Josephus thought the area of the (*true*) *Ioudaioi* (see above, ch. 7 ‘Gentiles’ p. 242).

The one remaining stronghold of the militants was now the fortress of Masada, still held by the *sicarii*. They were unique among the trouble-makers we have reviewed in being adherents of a distinct, enduring legal school. The others seem to have been either *ad hoc* groups, formed and disintegrated within a single lifetime, or followers, not to say worshippers, of a single man (like Jesus or John the Baptist) bound together by his memory and practices, not by opposition to Rome. The *sicarii*, on the other hand, had begun as a legal school, Josephus’ ‘fourth philosophy’ (above, pp. 506–9) with the peculiar teaching that Jews should accept no ruler save God, and had developed this to justify murders of Jews whom

<sup>60</sup> A. Momigliano, *Ricerche sull'organizzazione della Giudea sotto il dominio Romano*, *ASNSP* 2, iii (Bologna 1934, repr. Amsterdam 1967), p. 86.

they thought collaborators with the Roman government. So, at least, the common theory goes. How, in fact, they selected their victims, and how it happened that no Roman governors or Hasmonaean kinglets were among their victims, while the women and children of small Judaeen towns were, has not been clearly explained. At any rate, for three or four generations the school and the family leadership of it had continued, and for eight years, since they were run out of Jerusalem in 66, many had held on in Masada and terrorized the surrounding countryside. Evidently neither Vespasian nor Titus nor any of the successive governors had found them of sufficient importance to justify a siege. Now, however, they were to get their deserts. A new governor took over in 73 and got around to them in 74.

Josephus prefaced the campaign with a brief review of the history of the sect and piquant characterizations of the other troublemakers most active in the fall of Jerusalem. Stripped of secretarial cosmetics, what he has to say runs as follows:

‘The *sicarii* first started this violation of the laws by attacking others of the same *genos*’ (*Bell.* VII.262. Attacks on Gentiles were a long-standing practice that required no comment.)

Next John went beyond the *sicarii*, for he not only tried to kill all those who advocated justice, but filled ‘the country’ (or, perhaps, ‘Jerusalem’) with the evils that result from atheism. ‘For he set forth a lawless table, and ate without regard for ancestral purity rules’, so that his guiltiness might explain his inhumanity (263–4). This recalls the attack on John’s followers for homosexuality, above, pp. 548–9, and also the charge that John melted down the temple vessels and used the sacred wine and oil for his men’s drink and ointment, v.562–6. Such peculiar charges appear only in the attacks on John. Perhaps his practices were atypical, or perhaps the fact that he was still alive made Josephus anxious to discredit him to Jewish readers. These crimes would not have interested Romans.

Next Simon treated atrociously even his closest friends and relatives (265–6). Next the Idumaeans butchered even the chief priests, so as to destroy both our worship and our polity (267; the rhetoric is now irresponsible; there were chief priests in Jerusalem at the time of the capture, VI.114–18, 278–80, 387, 390). Finally the Zealots ‘imitated every evil deed’ known to history ‘and yet took their name from those who had been zealots for good’ (VII.269–70).

The structure of the list, with its extended attacks on the *sicarii* and *John* at the beginning and its rhetorical conclusion about the Zealots, cannot be called climactic. Probably it is chronological, with Simon’s place determined by the date when he began to assemble his gang (late in 66?), long before he entered Jerusalem. If the structure is chronological, the fact

that the Zealots appear as the last group is noteworthy. Also notable is the fact that nothing is said of any close causal connection between one gang and another. The *sicarii* set an example, but no more. They are in this list (and evidently were in fact) distinguished from the following groups, each of which is presented as autogenous and independent (as all indeed seem to have been).

Of course Josephus has omitted the party that actually touched off the revolt, i.e. his own – that of the younger priests, whose refusal to accept the emperor's sacrifices precipitated the trouble. Also omitted are all figures and groups which did not become major factors in the revolt or defence of Jerusalem. Nothing is said of the Samaritans. They disappeared from the story after the massacre on Mount Gerizim in 67, but that must have had considerable consequences, for in 72 we find beside the site, and beside the ruins of Shechem, on land formerly Shechemite, a new city, Flavia Neapolis, minting coins stamped with the laureate head of Domitian (Y. Meshorer, in *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum. The Collection of the American Numismatic Society*, pt. 6, *Palestine–South Arabia*, New York, 1981, nos. 961ff). On the Judaean side, Eleazar ben Dinai's twenty years of lucrative patriotism (above, pp. 516–17) are unmentioned, as are the many 'robbers' and 'magicians', the organizers of the protests, and the leaders of the revolts of Gabara, Jotapata, Taricheae, Tiberias, Gamala, Joppa, etc. In sum, this overview is that of a man concerned almost exclusively about Jerusalem.

He is also concerned almost exclusively about intra-Jewish relations. The great sin of the *sicarii* was that they began the practice of violence against their fellow *Ioudaioi*. Violence to Gentiles and revolt against Rome are not mentioned. The great crime of John was neglect of the purity laws; his inhumanity resulted from this. Simon again outraged fellow *Ioudaioi*, the Idumaeans attacked the Jerusalem priesthood, so nothing was left for the Zealots but to be guilty of *all* crimes. Discounting this last bit of rhetoric, we have only the accusations from a family fight.

Turning to his narrative of the capture of Masada, Josephus has excellent information about the site and the siege works. He may have seen the governor's official reports, or have had a friend on his staff.<sup>61</sup> Here,

<sup>61</sup> For the archaeological finds and their (dis)agreements with Josephus' account see Y. Yadin, *Masada, Herod's Fortress and the Zealots' Last Stand* (New York 1966); (editor's note: and more recently *Masada I–V: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965, Final Reports*, 5 vols., Jerusalem 1989–95). The title of Yadin's 1966 volume contains the first two of the book's many errors: Masada was never held by the zealots, and it was not the last stand of the *sicarii*, who did hold it. Many got away to Egypt. Since the 'facts' reported by archaeologists often cannot be verified, because the evidence has been destroyed by the digging or is otherwise inaccessible we can only hope that Yadin's reports of his finds are more accurate than his reports of his books.

as at Jerusalem, the reliable record of the military procedures outside must be distinguished from the imaginative story of what happened inside. According to Josephus, all the besieged perished except for two women and five children who hid in the underground waterpipes – hardly a good place for eavesdropping (*Bell.* VII.399). Since these are not likely to have made good informants for more than the most basic facts, we may suppose that the dramatic scenes and rhetorical elaborations have been provided by Josephus and his secretary.

That the speeches are oratorically developed is in character. Eleazar, the speaker, is represented as a ‘sophist’, a skilled debater, like the earlier heads of the school (*Bell.* II.118, 433, 445). His skill, however, is here devoted to arguing Josephus’ case, to wit: The *sicarii* had got themselves into a situation in which the best thing they could do was murder their wives and children, and then commit suicide (*Bell.* VII.323–6). They should have had the sense to foresee this, and to judge God’s disapproval of their practices from the failures of their plans (327–8). They, however, thought that they alone, of all the *genos* of the Judaeans, could retain their freedom, because they alone were blameless in the sight of God, having kept his Law without any transgression (329). See, now, how God has refuted them (330). That the impregnable fortress failed to save them, that the wind changed to blow the flames, not against the Romans’ siege engines, but against their own fortifications, were clear signs of God’s anger at the many crimes they had committed against their own tribesmen (*homophylous*, 331–2). Since they had to take the penalty, the best they could do was to inflict it on themselves rather than leave it to the Romans. Apart from that, they might also destroy the property that the Romans would otherwise take as spoil, but they should leave the provisions, to prove that they died voluntarily, not from starvation (333–6).

The last note is false. Even if the food had been burned, the Romans could easily have seen from its (and their) remains that they had not died of starvation, and in any event they would have only the Roman forces to tell the tale. Even this oversight, however, like all the rest of the argument, is typical of Josephus. He had already used in his narrative the notion that divine providence changed the direction of the wind and the fire (VII.318). The crimes of the *sicarii* and the other revolutionists against their own people, and God’s consequent anger and determination to destroy them, were themes he often repeated (*Bell.* VI.109–11; VII.262, 271–2; *Ant.* XVIII.8; etc.). On the other hand, while Eleazar might conceivably have persuaded the rest to commit suicide (in their situation it was the sensible thing to do) he would probably not have begun by confessing that he and they had been too stupid to understand the manifest signs of God’s will shown early in the revolt, or to realize that their interpretation of the Law was mistaken and their treatment of their

fellow Judaeans sinful. No. Desperation and suicide (sanctified as righteous submission to the inscrutable will of God) are easily credible, but not such humility. This speech is merely Josephus' last insult to his dead opponents.

The following speech is also completely Josephan. He was much attracted by the theory of the immortality of the soul; he attributes it to the Essenes (*Bell.* II.154–8), and to Titus (VI.47), as well as to the *sicarii*, and he admires it especially as enabling its believers to endure martyrdom (*ibid.*). Martyrdom he may have admired because he had prudently avoided it – the need to justify his sensible life, and the fascination for fanaticism and suicide, make his work a psychopathological puzzle. Here the justification is found by blaming the disasters on God, as he did when justifying his own surrender (*Bell.* III.351–54). Developing this theme at length, he drew the conclusion: Who would want to live, now that God has ruined us? Providing a list of disasters, he let the secretary do the rest, perhaps with a reminder to write up the humiliations and sufferings that surrender would entail. This was standard stuff. If the secretary happened to be a Jewish slave (as is not unlikely) he could do it with feeling. He did, and in far better Greek than Josephus ever dreamed of.

Of course these rhetorical exercises are worthless as accounts of what actually happened. Even worse, if possible, is Josephus' story: the Romans, after their hard day's fighting, had a good night's sleep and never heard a sound from the 960 people killing and being killed in the fortress above (*Bell.* VII.400). Not even their watchmen noticed that the buildings containing the loot they wanted (and in clear sight from their camp) were burning. Next morning when, bright and early, they marched back up and found the place blazing, 'They were at a loss to conjecture what had happened' (*Bell.* VII.403) – as if 'the desperate defenders' suicide after firing the fortress' were not a threadbare theme of popular historiography.<sup>62</sup> And then, to explain it all to them, out of the drains came The Woman Who Escaped, with her amazing gift for total recall of what Josephus wanted to say. Does all this prove the story completely false? Unfortunately not. History, like nature, imitates art. Once a scenario becomes famous, people live it out, to appropriate something of its slightly shopworn grandeur. However, the possibility of imitation does not prove it occurred. Invention is easier, and the two can cooperate. In this case the archaeological evidence contradicts many of Josephus'

<sup>62</sup> For the long list of literary treatments of the theme, see S. Cohen, 'Masada: Literary Tradition, Archaeological Remains, and the Credibility of Josephus', *JJS* 33 (1982), 385–405. This also contains a review of the 'literature' as well as a discussion of the archaeological evidence and the problems it raises.

details. But two things are certain: the Romans took over Masada, and that ended the war.

#### XIV CONCLUSIONS

Viewed from Masada, the 78 years since Herod's death in 4 BCE seem a distinct period ended by the great revolt. To judge from the way they repressed the revolt,<sup>63</sup> the Romans blamed it chiefly on the Judaeans, with whom they associated most closely the Peraeans, Idumaeans, and the people of Jericho. The Galileans were also involved, but less deeply; the Gamalites and Shechemites were special cases (though Josephus' treatment of the Shechemites as a separate and minor episode may be misleading). In sum, the revolt was backed by important elements among all sections of the Palestinian *Ioudaioi*, but the southerners and especially the Judaeans were the heart of it.

Even in Judaea, however, there were important elements that favoured submission to Rome (among them the many who promptly fled or surrendered), and the great majority of the Jews outside Palestine did so. A few volunteers came to Palestine from the Mediterranean and Mesopotamian Diasporas (so Dio Cassius LXVI.4.3), some of the Adiabenean royal family were found in the city at the end of the siege (*Bell.* VI.356), but the army of Adiabene sent no detachment and the big centres of the Diaspora seem to have stayed quiet. From the Roman point of view it was a local, not an ethnic, revolt. Consequently we hear nothing of measures against the Jews in general.

The transfer of the Jerusalem temple-tax to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus might seem such a measure, but the Romans probably saw it merely as a transfer of captured property. It imposed no new financial burden, Jews simply had to go on paying what they had paid before. Taxes, in the Graeco-Roman world, were seen as assets of the persons or institutions receiving them; when the recipients incurred royal disfavour their taxes, like their other assets, were often reassigned.<sup>64</sup> The objection, that paying a tax which would go to a pagan temple was in effect committing idolatry, was probably rarely raised and never considered. Ever since Pompey's time the Jerusalem government, headed by the High Priest until Herod's time, had been paying annual tribute to Rome, and

<sup>63</sup> Evidence presented in the preceding sections of this chapter will not be cited.

<sup>64</sup> For examples: *Supplementum epigraphicum graecum* II (Leiden 1924–5), no. 580, lines 16–18 (p. 109); M.-T. Lenger, *Corpus des ordonnances des Ptolémées*, Académie royale de Belgique, Mémoires de la Classe des Lettres, ser. 2, 57, 1 (Brussels 1964), nos. 17–18 and 33, pp. 26–31 and 80–2.



Roman income was used in part to maintain the public cult, so this assignment was, in principle, nothing new.

Accordingly we hear of no interference with Jewish worship in the Diaspora, except for the closing of the temple in Leontopolis as a precaution against seditious assemblies (*Bell.* VII.420–35). In Judaea itself the study of the Law seems to have been permitted, and even protected, *if* we can trust the story of Vespasian's grant to Johanan ben Zakkai (*Abot R. Nat.*, text A, ed. Schechter, Vienna 1887, p. 12). If we cannot trust the story, we must admit that the Judaeian tradition survived and has nothing to say of such persecution as followed the rising of 132–4. Again, if we can believe Josephus, *Bell.* VII.40–62, 100–11, Titus saved the Jews of Antioch when they were endangered by an accusation of arson similar to that which had devastated the Christian community of Rome only seven years earlier.

Such tolerance is surprising, but not incredible. After all, the Diaspora was profitable, and Vespasian needed money. Nero's extravagances and the civil wars had left Rome in an economic crisis.<sup>65</sup> Vespasian found himself in a badly damaged city of which four emperors had been killed in the past two years, and where the Jewish population was more than fifty thousand – probably far more. He cannot have been happy to have begun his reign by destruction of the third richest city of the eastern empire. He would have been less happy to begin as the father of the man who burned the Jerusalem temple. A civil war with the Jewish Diaspora of the Roman world would have been ruinous, so he handled the Judaeian war with some restraint. Neither he nor Titus took the title *Judaicus* ('conqueror of the Jews'). The coinage celebrating their triumph refers to the conquest of the territory, not the people.<sup>66</sup> Titus patronized and Vespasian even financed (his greatest compliment!) Josephus' propaganda to pacify the Jews of both Diasporas.

This background makes it likely that Josephus' story of Titus' trying to save the temple is, although propaganda, basically true. Titus' effort may have been ordered by Vespasian, and was presumably seconded by Tiberius Alexander, Philo's nephew, the ranking officer in Titus' council when the

<sup>65</sup> M. Cary and H. Scullard, *A History of Rome*, edn 3 (New York 1975), p. 414.

<sup>66</sup> *Judaea capta* on all issues but one and a hybrid. The provincial mint of Lugdunum put out one aureus of which the reverse showed a trophy with the legend DE IVDAEIS, i.e. (Victory) 'over the Jews', and the same reverse was used in the same or the following year on a hybrid issue (made by using two old types) of the same mint, H. Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum* II (London 1930), pp. 62 and 82; discussion in H. St. J. Hart, 'Judaea and Rome: the Official Commentary', *JTS* ns 3 (1952), 172–198. There were few Jews at this time in the northwestern provinces. Frey's *CIF* I, has 465 pages from Italy and Sicily, 7 from all the Gallic provinces.

question was discussed.<sup>67</sup> While Josephus' account of that very privy council may be fiction (or from Titus' report?) the reported decision, that the temple should be spared, was practically dictated by the political and economic situation, though the 'philosophic', aesthetic, and propagandistic considerations Josephus alleges in vi.241 may have been mentioned.<sup>68</sup>

Admittedly the account of how the temple was fired is obviously fiction. (Few stone buildings, have been set afire by somebody's thrusting a torch into the bronze hinge of a gilt bronze door, *Bell.* vi.264–5.) Here fiction presumably indicates ignorance of what actually happened in a fierce, nocturnal battle. The culprits might have been Roman soldiers embittered by the war, or allied troops from Palestine or Syria, especially Sebastenians, whose hatred for the Jews was notorious. But to burn down a monumental stone building takes a lot of kindling carefully disposed. So the most likely suspects are the extreme anti-Roman clique of the temple priesthood, who foresaw the probable, prepared for it by placing the pyres, and lit them when the Romans poured into the court. They evidently had in mind the familiar scenario later carried through more fully at Masada. Josephus may have suspected their role, but, as heretofore, did not expose his old friends.

Since it thus appears that, from the Roman point of view, the war of 66–74 was never a war against Judaism, nor against all Jews, we must review the record of the troubles and troublemakers in Palestine to see how, when, and by whom was developed among them the notion of a war of all Jews against Rome.

Judgement of motives and purposes is notoriously difficult. When the leader of a gang of robbers sets up as a little king, is he consciously undertaking a war against Rome? Can we accept the argument that John 19:12 puts in the mouth of the Judaeans, 'Everyone who makes himself a king is an opponent of Caesar'? Evidently, as John argues, there are some cases in which the legal implications go far beyond the facts. And in most cases, those for which we have no evidence beyond Josephus' reports, we can judge only by the reported events.

<sup>67</sup> *Bell.* vi.237, cf. P. Hibeh 215b in *Hibeh Papyri* Part 2, ed. E. G. Turner, Egyptian Exploration Society Greco-Roman Memoirs 32 (London 1955), pp. 135–7; and *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* VII, ed. J.-P. Rey-Coquais, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 89 (Paris 1970), no. 4011, pp. 36–9.

<sup>68</sup> The contradictory report in Sulpicius, *Chronica* II.30, that Titus ordered the destruction as a first step towards the extermination of both Judaism and Christianity, stands in a context full of absurd inventions and is refuted not only by the practical considerations just reviewed, but also by the treatment of Jews and Christians under Vespasian and Titus, which showed no intention to exterminate. For the scholarly opinions see M. Stern, *GLAJJ* 2 (Jerusalem 1980), no. 282. Typically, they agree in neglecting the practical importance of the Diaspora.

Judging by these we should say that for the first fifty years and more the most important characteristics of the troubles and troublemakers were their independence and irregularity. When the government was weak, half a dozen would break out, each independently; when it was strong, they vanished. For instance, in the uncertainty following Herod's death there was a (probably) Hasmonaean revolt in Galilee, a rising by Herod's veterans in Idumaea, serious banditry by one gang in the Jordan valley and by another in Judaea (the leaders of both set up as kings), and a revolt in Jerusalem to prevent the seizure of Herod's treasures by a Roman procurator. The Hasmonaean, if at all realistic, may have been hoping either for Parthian support or for a little kingdom like Chalcis as a gift of Augustus. They were disappointed. Nobody should mistake a couple of megalomaniac robbers for 'messianic pretenders'. They were caught and killed. The Herodian troops were pacified (or cowed), and as soon as the legate of Syria got to Jerusalem the procurator fled and the rioting ceased. Only determined theological exegesis can turn this handful of disparate disturbances into a manifestation of Judaism's 'theocratic ideal and . . . eschatological expectations' (Hengel, *Zealots*, p. xiv, not in the German text). The significant fact is that while these local outbreaks were going on there was no sign of general, let alone organized, revolt.

Such teapot tempests continued to arise and blow themselves out from time to time, here and there, throughout the whole period. They were not peculiar to Palestine. Many provinces had local gentry whose recollections of earlier dignities got them into trouble. Military colonies, too, caused recurrent problems. Everywhere imperial (i.e. foreign) government, and especially imperial taxation, were unpopular, and rich landlords, both Jewish and pagan, were oppressive, hated, and robbed. Banditry was endemic throughout the empire. Josephus acknowledged the mutual hostility of rich and poor as one of the causes of the eventual war (*Bell.* VII.260). It afflicted all parts of the empire. In Palestine it was a favouring condition, rather than an active agent. It made for the formation and survival of gangs of robbers, but until the fifties these commonly did not cooperate. Josephus puts the change late in the procuratorship of Felix (*Bell.* II.264–5). Even then the cooperation seems to have been minimal until they were driven into Jerusalem in 67–8 and had to face, as enemies, first the citizens, later the Romans.

Nevertheless, Josephus reports brigandage as the major source of trouble, down to the eve of the war. (He writes as a landowner.) Near it, and finally ahead of it, he ranks the later Roman governors. But he frankly reports that in CE 7 an organized anti-Roman party was formed, 'the fourth philosophy', which introduced the legal teaching that Jews are prohibited to serve any ruler but Yahweh, and also introduced (rather,

developed) the practice of murdering not only Gentiles, but also Jews who collaborated with the Romans. The history of this party has been outlined above and the reported facts show nothing to indicate that it was behind *all* the anti-Roman actions of the period. On the contrary, they clearly indicate that it *cannot* have been, because it was actually a minor and usually peripheral factor in the troubles. Josephus, admittedly, tried to put more of the blame on it, but his description of it as the source of his people's disasters can be justified only as a claim that it set the example, particularly for attacks on fellow *Ioudaioi*. Otherwise, its legal teaching was never generally accepted, and its political role was never central except during the brief predominance of Menahem in Jerusalem (late August to early September of 66).<sup>69</sup>

Besides these *sicarii* (as they came to be called) there must – given the situation – have been other anti-Roman parties. One, probably the most important, has often been mentioned above, though not often by Josephus. It was the anti-Roman cabal among the younger priests, probably coached by some of the older ones. Josephus would seem to have got into it as a young man – if he truly claims to have been sent to Rome at twenty-six (about CE 64) to intercede for the release of some priests who had been sent there by the governor 'because of a trivial and everyday charge' (i.e. of subversion, *Vita* 13). As already seen, he was with the other priests in the temple during the beginning of the revolt and their massacre of the *sicarii*, and was sent by them as a member of their committee to raise funds and organize the resistance in Galilee.

Consequently in his history of the revolt he has generally kept his priestly friends in the background. We may reasonably suppose, however, that it was they who organized the protests in Jerusalem about minor if not imaginary religious offences, which repeatedly 'persuaded' the Romans to punish offenders or even change policies about procedural details, and which Josephus reported as if they were major crises. When they did concern a matter of real importance – the water supply of the city – the Romans had the protesters beaten up, and carried through the policy; no revolutionary rumblings ensued (*Ant.* XVIII.60–2). There had been no revolutionary intention.

This appearance is confirmed by the outcome of their greatest success, the huge protests which stopped Caligula's plan to erect his statue in the

<sup>69</sup> I pass over the question of whether Josephus uses the word *sicarius* in its primary sense, i.e. merely to designate an assassin who uses a dagger, without reference to membership in a group. On this see the observations of Y. Levine, 'Messianism in the Latter Days of the Second Temple' in *Messianism and Eschatology* (Jerusalem, The Zalman Shazar Center 1984), pp. 146–7 (Hebrew). In many respects this is the best paper I have seen on the political and ideological background of the revolt.

temple. Let us suppose that Josephus exaggerates the number of protesters and the length of their stay, and that most families brought their own tents, bedding and provisions; even so, getting them out and coordinating their movements must have entailed cooperation of supporters all over the country. But this organization produced no revolution. Having stalled the statue, the demonstrators did *not* go on to try to get rid of Roman rule. In part, no doubt, because the legate of Syria had been sympathetic. In part, perhaps, because they remembered that their parents had petitioned Augustus to be put under Roman rule rather than Herod's. Whatever the causes, the movement was not revolutionary in 41. In 66 the older generation was dead, and the younger had had more experience of Roman rule under worse rulers.

The crimes of the later governors (about whom Tacitus confirms Josephus, *Histories* v.9.3–x.1) may well have made the priestly party revolutionary. We now hear of their using their influence and money to secure the release of *sicarii* (*Ant.* xx.208–10); and they finally did precipitate the revolt. Once the revolt was going, they had to go with it, and it probably carried them farther than most foresaw. Fighting begets fanaticism, and at each step the certain penalties of surrender are apt to seem worse than the possible consequences of further resistance. About the *sicarii*, however, they recognized their mistake, murdered most of them, and drove the rest out to Masada. Clearer expression of disagreement would be hard to find. The one 'religious ideology that determined the Jewish freedom movement'<sup>70</sup> is an hallucination of romantic historians.

With the coming of the Baptist, Jesus, the Samaritan prophet who promised to reveal the tabernacle, and the later *goētes*, a new factor became important – miracle-workers who claimed supernatural powers, promised salvation, usually by miraculous means, and attracted large followings which they often led about, sometimes towards Jerusalem, sometimes into the wilds of Judaea or across the Jordan. The Roman governors repeatedly broke up such gatherings, often with large loss of the followers' lives. From the *Twelve Tables* on, illegal assembly had been forbidden by Roman law; no criminal intent had to be proved, assembly was a crime in itself.

Was the increase of miracle men absolute (an increase of abnormality due to increasing social tensions) or was it merely a consequence of the increase of population (itself a consequence of the long Herodian and Roman peace) which provided the followers who made the miracle men noticeable, and supplied the poor, the invalids, and the lunatics who made them wanted? Whatever the causes, there is no question about the

<sup>70</sup> M. Hengel, *The Zealots* (Edinburgh 1989), p. xv.

crowds. Not only are they constantly reported by the gospels and Josephus, but they are presupposed both by the gospels' teachings and by their stories. For the teachings they are the audience, the poor to whom 'the gospel is preached' (Luke 7:22), of whom is the kingdom (Luke 6:20), for whom gifts are solicited (Mark 10:21), and who are ready to leave everything and follow the Master (Mark 10:25). They were probably also the outsiders who thronged into the towns of Galilee and into Gamala and Jerusalem, and made up an important element of the bellicose. Above all, however, they were the crowds who by mob psychology often produced and always magnified the miracles, and disseminated and diversified the miracle stories. Finally, they were the crowds which frightened the priests (John 11:47–52; Mark 11:18), brought the Romans into action, and so produced the crucifixion and the resurrection.

Since the crowds were as various as the population of Palestine – *Ioudaioi* of all sorts, Greeks and all kinds of half-breeds, mainly from the pagan cities, Romans, Egyptians, and so on (cf. Acts 2:5–11) – the interpretations of these miracle men were as many and diverse as their hearers. Believing pagans thought them gods come down in human form (Acts 14:11–13), or sons of gods by mortal women (preferably virgins), or *daimones* of various sorts. Jews and Samaritans thought them teachers or prophets (often Moses or Elijah), or angels in disguise, or messiahs, or both.<sup>71</sup>

The common 'critical' procedure is to drop them all into the tub marked 'Messiahs' and concoct a 'Jewish messianic expectation' by blending their histories, and passages about messiahs from diverse Jewish, Samaritan, Christian and heretical works, into a single stew. The results, at best, are sometimes plausible. For instance, some of Josephus' miracle men may have gone into the wilderness to fulfil Hos. 2, but according to Mark Jesus originally went there because 'the spirit drove him out' (1:12). Others may have felt other compulsions. This is not to deny the importance of role playing *sometimes*, but to question it when the role is ill-defined ('the Messiah' had almost as many shapes as Jesus has since acquired), and when the adoption of it is late or hesitant (as Jesus' seems to have been, Mark 8:27–30). Y. L. Levine has shown, in the brilliant article cited above (note 69) that in Palestine at this time messianic expectations were not usually connected with revolutionary acts, nor revolutionary acts with messianic expectations.

<sup>71</sup> For sons of gods and virgins see G. Mussies, 'Joseph's Dream', *Text and Testimony*, Fs A. F. J. Klijn (Kampen 1988), pp. 177–86; for daemons, prophets, angels and messiahs, Mark 6:14–15 (with my comments in *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco 1978), ch. 3, sec. 4, end); Mark 8:28–29; Heb 13:2; and J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*, WUNT 36 (Tübingen 1985), chs. 3 and 4; for *goētes*, again *Jesus the Magician*, *passim*.

The gospels' reports of Jesus' crucifixion with the *titulus* (statement of the crime) reading 'King of the *Ioudaioi*' (Mark 15:26; John 19:19, and parallels), prove that, by Pilate's judgement, he belonged among the troublemakers. Reviewing the evidence about them, it is clear that the class to which he stands closest is that of the miracle men, the *goētes*. Josephus does not call him one, and dates their appearance slightly after his time,<sup>72</sup> but the general resemblances are clear – miracles, prophecy, connection with the desert, promises of signs and salvation – and are not found commonly, and never with such prominence, in the other classes of troublemakers.

This raises the question, Why, of all these similar groups, did only the followers of Jesus survive to become one of the world's largest religions? To say, 'Because only Jesus rose from the dead' begs the question, 'Why was only Jesus believed to have risen from the dead?' and the related question, 'Why did his followers survive, not as a political organization, nor as a school of Jewish legal interpretation, but as a cult of his worshippers, with an initiatory rite and a secret meal that were believed to unite them with him?' Obviously the answers to these questions are not to be found in the foregoing history of troublemakers. Other ideas and other practices were at work.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>72</sup> *Ant.* xx.97, Theudas, in the time of Fadus, CE 44–5; on these figures see R. Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: The Evidence from Josephus* (Oxford 1993). Whereas Jesus is placed in the time of Pilate, CE 26–36, *Ant.* xviii.63, and is praised (perhaps by a Christian interpolator), he was 'a wise man'; for literature on this passage in Josephus see in this volume Gabba, 'Palestine 63 BCE–CE 70', n. 225.

<sup>73</sup> These ideas and practices I have tried to identify in *The Secret Gospel* (San Francisco 1973), pp. 108–19, and more fully in *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, MA 1973), pp. 240–4.

This chapter has been read by Professor Shaye Cohen and Dr Seth Schwartz, and the references have been checked by Mr Gary Gordon. I am indebted to all of them for many corrections and suggestions, but the mistakes are all my own.



## CHAPTER 18

## THE SAMARITANS AND THEIR SECTS

The greatest problem in reconstructing the history of the Samaritans during the first centuries of Roman rule is the dearth of literary sources and the overtly hostile nature of those sources, both Jewish and Christian, which have survived.

Josephus was unwilling even to consider the Samaritans Jews: 'When the Jews are in difficulties, they deny that they have any kinship with them, thereby indeed admitting the truth, but whenever they see some splendid bit of good fortune come to them, they suddenly grasp at the connection with them, saying that they are related to them and tracing their line back to Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph' (*Ant.* XI.341).<sup>1</sup> The polemical tone of this passage is obvious. But even in Josephus' famous description of the Jewish sects (*Bell.* II.119–66), where the Samaritans do not appear at all, modern scholarship has detected anti-Samaritan motivation in his handling of his sources. It has been argued<sup>2</sup> that underlying both *Bell.* II.119ff and a similar description of the Jewish sects by the Patristic author Hippolytus (*Philosophumena*, Bk. 9, end) was a common literary source on the sects, which each writer abbreviated and expanded in a way independent of the other. The common source was an account of 'the three' Jewish sects, Pharisees, Sadducees and Samaritans. To this, before it came into the hands of Josephus and Hippolytus, an account of the Essenes had been added, and the passages on the Sadducees and the Samaritans had been condensed into one to keep the number of the sects at three. Hippolytus repeated this condensation by noting merely

<sup>1</sup> All Josephus citations are from *Josephus*, LCL, Thackeray, Marcus, Feldman (eds.), (Cambridge, MA and London 1926–65). On Josephus' bias against the Samaritans see also *Ant.* IX.291 referring to duplicity about their origins, and XII.257ff, where in the face of Antiochus IV's religious persecution they claim distinction from the Jews and express their willingness to adopt Greek customs and have the temple on Mount Gerizim become a shrine of Zeus Hellenios. See R. Hanhart, 'Zu den ältesten Traditionen über das samaritanische Schisma', *EVIS* 16 (1982) 106–15 on bias in Josephus, *Sir.* 50:25f, and 2 *Macc.* 6:1f; R. Pummer, 'Antisamaritanische Polemik in jüdischen Schriften aus der intertestamentlichen Zeit', *BZ NF* 26 (1982), 224–42.

<sup>2</sup> M. Smith, 'The Description of the Essenes in Josephus and the *Philosophumena*', *HUCA* 29 (1958), 273–313.

that Sadducean doctrine was prevalent in Samaria without distinguishing the Sadducees and Samaritans as separate social or religious groups. Josephus, who knew the facts better, but who hated the Samaritans, simply omitted all reference to them. Thus in his account the Essenes, whose peculiarities would interest a Hellenistic reading public, took the place of the Samaritans as the third important Jewish sect. Whatever material the original source might have contained about the Samaritans was lost through Josephus' suppression and Hippolytus' compression. Josephus and Hippolytus, or their source, had produced, in mid-twentieth-century jargon, a 'non-source' on the Samaritans.

The Rabbis, as we shall see, were more ambivalent than Josephus, treating the Samaritans sometimes as heterodox or heretical Jews, at other times not as Jews at all. In Christian literature, on the other hand, many Patristic lists of Jewish sects<sup>3</sup> include the Samaritans among the Jews (but see below on the exception of Epiphanius), as do even the Muslim religious historians<sup>4</sup> of the Middle Ages. The Samaritans, who considered themselves the descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim, certainly thought themselves a part of the people of Israel; it is unfortunate that none of their own literary sources from the early centuries of the common era remain to balance the partisan evidence that is extant.

A second problem arises out of the later Samaritan sources that *are* extant, beginning with fourth-century Aramaic liturgical and 'midrashic' texts; i.e. to what extent do they reflect Samaritan literature and beliefs of the first century? The issue is further complicated by the obvious reworking undergone by these texts during antiquity, the Middle Ages, and perhaps more recently. Muslim influence, conscious archaizing, especially in the use of Hebrew, and the merging or disappearance of dissenting Samaritan subgroups may also have left their marks on the transmission of the extant texts.<sup>5</sup>

The task, then, is to attempt a description of first-century Samaritanism from texts which are hostile, late or both.

## I HISTORICAL EVENTS AS REPORTED

*The destruction of the Samaritan shrine and centre* (Josephus, *Bell.* 1.62f, *Ant.* XIII.254ff). While Antiochus VII Sidetes was fighting in the east, or after he had already died, the Hasmonaean John Hyrcanus invaded northern

<sup>3</sup> For example, Hegesippus, Pseudo-Tertullian, Philaster; see discussion below.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Shahrastānī, *Religionspartheien und Philosophen-Schulen*, ed. T. Haarbrücker (Halle 1850), vol. I.

<sup>5</sup> T. H. Gaster, *IDB* 4 (Nashville 1962), s.v. 'Samaritans', pp. 190–7; Z. Ben-Hayyim (review), *BiOr* 23 (1966), 185–191.

Palestine and Syria (129–128 BCE). Among the places he captured were Shechem and Mount Gerizim, defeating the ‘Cuthaeans’ *genos* that lived near the temple which was, according to Josephus, modelled upon the one in Jerusalem and built two hundred years previously by Sanballat for Manasses, the brother of the Judaeans High Priest. The political ambitions of the conqueror, himself the High Priest in Jerusalem, were mingled with his religious policy: he destroyed the rival shrine on Gerizim. (Subsequently, during a victorious campaign in Idumaea, John Hyrcanus forced the inhabitants of that region to adopt circumcision and Jewish law.)

Later in his reign this same Hasmonaean ruler, now independent of the Seleucids, laid siege to the city of Samaria (109 BCE?) and took it after a year’s manoeuvring (*Bell.* 1.64ff; *Ant.* XIII.275ff). The hated city was utterly destroyed by undermining, literally allowed to be washed away.

Samaria, the main urban centre of the region, once inhabited by a largely non-Israelitish population, was now gone. The temple on Gerizim had been razed earlier. But what was the fate of the people we call the ‘Samaritans’, that is, the devotees of the Gerizim shrine, who lived in the captured town of Shechem, and who were styled ‘Cuthaeans’ by Josephus and his fellow Jews?<sup>6</sup> Shechem apparently was not destroyed along with the temple on Gerizim in 129 or 128; the evidence of coins and pottery indicates continued habitation for another two decades or so.<sup>7</sup> It is possible that Shechem was finally demolished during the later military activity against Samaria by the forces of John Hyrcanus. Josephus makes reference to an army encamped *near* Shechem during the reign of Jannaeus (about 88 BCE), but his geographic note may refer only to the vicinity of the old site of the town.

Although the general dispersal of the Samaritans (as we shall hereafter call the Samaritan sect, that is, the ‘Cuthaeans’) throughout Palestine probably did not yet occur, there must have been some dislocation and movement, if only for the fact that the Samaritan region was now part of the larger political and economic unit controlled by Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the Samaritans remained loyal to the Gerizim site, and a core of them took up residence nearby, particularly in the town of Sychar (‘Askar’) close to the reputed location of Jacob’s well.<sup>8</sup> Sychar may have replaced Shechem as the centre of religious authority – if we assume that the

<sup>6</sup> The term ‘Cuthaeans’ comes from the name of one of the towns from which the Assyrians took settlers to colonize the land of the former kingdom of Israel (2 Kgs 17:24).

<sup>7</sup> O. R. Sellers, ‘Coins of the 1960 Excavation at Shechem’, *BA* 25 (1962), 96; G. E. Wright, *Shechem* (New York 1965), pp. 172, 184; H. G. Kippenberg, *Gerizim und Synagoge* (Berlin 1971), p. 87. See also p. 202, above.

<sup>8</sup> Kippenberg, p. 94.

Samaritan high priesthood continued to exercise any authority at all after the fall of the Gerizim temple – and as the nearest base to the ruins on the holy mountain. The author of the Gospel of John 4:1ff felt that Sychar was the logical place for Jesus to meet a Samaritan woman.

*The beginnings of Roman and Herodian rule.* The conquest of Palestine by Pompey (63 BCE) ended Judaeian domination of Samaria (*Bell.* 1.155ff; *Ant.* XIV.86ff). The cities of Coele Syria which had been annexed by the Hasmonaeans were liberated and restored to their legitimate inhabitants. Samaria and other regions whose towns had been thus liberated were now joined to the Roman province of Syria which, together with Judaea and outlying areas, formed a large military district policed and defended by two legions. The city of Samaria had been levelled by John Hyrcanus; its former population either had been killed or was too dispersed or disorganized to return in great numbers. The Romans had to repopulate a newly built town of Samaria with fresh colonists (*Bell.* 1.166). Josephus reports that subsequently (57 BCE) Gabinius reorganized Jewish territory (i.e. Judaea and the Galilee) into five districts under aristocratic *synedria* or *synodoi* (*Bell.* 1.169f; *Ant.* XIV.90f); he gives no details about the region of Samaria, but we may assume from later narratives that it was subordinate to the city of Samaria.

Two years later (55 BCE) Gabinius had to quell an uprising by the Hasmonaeian pretender Alexander the son of Aristobulus during which Roman soldiers sought refuge and came under siege on Mount Gerizim (*Bell.* 1.175ff; *Ant.* XIV.100). Did they count on support from the local population against the Hasmonaeian? In 43 BCE after the death of Antipater and during the Roman civil war which followed the assassination of Julius Caesar, Cassius made Herod governor of all Syria. In this capacity Herod restored order in Samaria (*Bell.* 1.229; *Ant.* XIV.284). We do not know the nature of the trouble. Josephus' account in *Antiquities* says Herod found Samaria distressed (*kekakōmenēn*) and that he repaired the damage and put an end to the quarrels (*neikē*) among the people. *Bell.* mentions *stasis* and the return to order in the *city*. Whatever the conflict was about, it appears to have been confined to the city of Samaria, and probably would have had only minimal effect on the population of the surrounding area.

The Parthians and their ally, the Hasmonaeian Antigonos, occupied Syria and Judaea in 40 BCE (*Bell.* 1.248; *Ant.* XIV.330). Herod escaped to Rome and was there made King of the Jews; in 39 he returned to Palestine with troops to drive out the invaders and take actual possession of his domain. During this campaign the city of Samaria declared for him and the district of Samaria sent supplies to his forces (*Bell.* 1.299; *Ant.* XIV.408). His army wintered in the three districts friendly towards him, Idumaea, Galilee and Samaria (*Bell.* 1.302; *Ant.* XIV.411), and he placed

his mother and other relatives in the city of Samaria for protection (*Bell.* 1.303; *Ant.* XIV.413). The region of Samaria itself became a battleground for the armies of Herod and Antigonos (*Bell.* 1.314, 333f; *Ant.* XIV.431, 457).

After Actium Herod, who had been Antony's ally, went to Octavian to pledge his loyalty to the new master of the Mediterranean world. Octavian reportedly was impressed with the candour of the Jewish king. Whatever his reasons, he not only confirmed him in his throne, but also added to Herod's territory several Palestinian districts, among them Samaria (*Bell.* 1.396ff; *Ant.* XIV.217). Herod remade Samaria, its central *polis*, into a new city by extensive building and the addition of six thousand new colonists with allotments of land from the surrounding countryside, the richest farmland in the country. Among his motives was the need for a fortress in central Palestine and a base for the pacification of any uprisings in the area. He named his 'new' foundation Sebaste, in honour of Augustus (*Bell.* 1.403; *Ant.* XIV.295ff).

Thus, in the course of about a century, the Samaritans who lived in the district of Samaria and who held Gerizim holy went from Seleucid overlordship to Jewish control under the Hasmonaeans, to a liberation which meant Roman domination as part of the province of Syria, to temporary Parthian occupation, to Roman control again, and finally once more to Jewish rule from Herodian Jerusalem. The region had been under the political influence of the largely gentile population of Samaria at the beginning of this period, and again, under Herod, the imposing presence of the new Samaria-Sebaste with its substantially gentile population deeply affected the politics and economy of the entire district. How the Samaritans at Sychar and elsewhere fared during this period is difficult to ascertain. We may assume that they suffered along with others from the warfare and the armies quartered nearby; they may have prospered along with the new Sebaste during the Herodian peace. The certain fact is that, although the temple on Gerizim was gone, the self-conscious Samaritan sect maintained itself in the vicinity. After the death of Herod we find active hostility between Jews and Samaritans, springing, apparently, from religious enmities.

*Samaritan–Judaean hostility.* 'Formerly they (Jewish authorities) used to light signal fires (to announce the new moon), but after the Cuthaeans ruined (this system, apparently by lighting false fires) they enacted that (instead) messengers should go out' (*m. Roš Haššana* 2.2). The Rabbis do not say when these events took place, but they reflect the genuine hatred that existed between the two groups. An attempt by the Samaritans to disturb the Jewish calendrical announcements is no mere prank, but an attack by one sect upon another whose religious calendar differed from

its own.<sup>9</sup> The Mishnaic reference is, of course, no guarantee as to the historicity of the event described, but that such things could happen in the first century, or could be thought to happen, is supported by reports in Josephus. A similar theme can be seen in the incident Josephus says (*Ant.* xviii.29f) occurred during the procuratorship of Coponius (CE 6–9). It had been the practice to keep the gates of the Jerusalem temple open after midnight on Passover. A number of Samaritans secretly entered and scattered human bones throughout the precincts, rendering them unclean. The priests thereafter tightened up security procedures.

A far more serious incident occurred when Cumanus was procurator (CE 48–52). The narrative is first found in Josephus, *Bell.* II.232–45.<sup>10</sup> At a village called Gema in the ‘plain of Samaria’<sup>11</sup> one of a group of Galilean Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem was murdered, apparently by Samaritans. To restrain a Galilean mob that was about to take violent reprisals, Galilean leaders asked the procurator Cumanus to take some action; but they were rebuffed by Cumanus, who evidently did not think his intervention necessary. Meanwhile, an enraged mob of Jerusalemites which included local brigands raided the Acrabatene toparchy near Shechem, massacred its population, and burned it to the ground. Cumanus finally brought his forces into action and killed or captured many of the rioters. At this and the pleadings of the Jerusalem leaders, the mob dispersed, but several individuals continued their raiding and robbery. The leaders of the Samaritans now sought justice from Quadratus, the governor of Syria. They were joined before the governor by Jewish representatives, including the High Priest, who argued that the Samaritans were originally at fault, but that the real blame belonged to Cumanus, first for his failure to act and then for the brutality of his intervention. Quadratus went to Caesarea, where he crucified Cumanus’ Jewish prisoners, and then to Lydda, where, upon giving the Samaritans another hearing, he executed eighteen more guilty Jewish vigilantes. The matter was finally resolved in Rome; Agrippa interceded on behalf of the Jews and the result was the beheading of three Samaritans and the exile of Cumanus.

Josephus retells the tale in *Ant.* xx.118–36 with additional apologetic details which show his hostility towards the Samaritans. According to this version a virtual battle was fought between the Galilean pilgrims and the Samaritans at Ginae (*sic*) in which *many* Jews were killed. Cumanus did not act at first because he had been bribed by the Samaritans, and when

<sup>9</sup> The exact determination of sectarian calendars in antiquity is difficult; cf. J. Bowman, ‘Is the Samaritan Calendar the Old Zadokite One?’ *PEQ* 91 (1959), 23–37.

<sup>10</sup> For the dating of *Bell.* and *Ant.* see M. Smith, ‘Palestinian Judaism in the First Century’ in *Israel*, ed. M. Davis (New York 1956), pp. 74–7 (Smith Studies, 1, 109–12).

<sup>11</sup> That is, between Samaria and the Plain of Esdraelon to the north. See note in LCL edition of Josephus, *ad loc.*

he finally did attack the rioters, he also armed the Samaritans, who appear in *Antiquities* as the good friends of this corrupt official. The Samaritans not only asked Quadratus for the punishment of crimes against them, but also urged action against the Jews whom they charged with contempt for Roman authority. Quadratus, having decided that the Samaritans were originally responsible, crucified some of their number in addition to Jews. At Lydda the Samaritans accused the instigators of the Jewish mob of sedition against Rome. In Rome only Agrippa spoke for the Jews, while the Samaritans' case was amply supported by the emperor's freedmen and friends.

The last account, by Tacitus (*Annals* xii. 54), is rather confused. Here both Cumanus and Felix (Cumanus' successor according to Josephus) are pictured as equally rapacious Roman officials who held parts of Palestine and who used the booty from the Jews' and Samaritans' plunder of each other to enrich themselves. Only Quadratus averted a civil war. Jews were executed not for their attack on Samaritans but for killing Roman soldiers. Amid the rhetoric Tacitus notes that the Jews and Samaritans had long been feuding and needed only the encouragement of corrupt officials to break out in violence.

Although throughout the narrative Josephus always referred to Samaritans and never to Cuthaeans, the people involved here were presumably for the most part members of the Samaritan sect who bore religious animosity towards the Jews and the temple in Jerusalem. It may be supposed, however, that the gentile citizens of Sebaste, too, had no love for the Judaeans. First, the Jerusalemites were the traditional enemies of Samaria. Second, a good many of the new inhabitants probably came from Herod's troops and got their land as a reward for their support of him against the Hasmonaeans. Third, it is probable that the new inhabitants at once adopted the cult of the god of the land – in this case the one worshipped on Mount Gerizim. Such deference to local deities was particularly *de rigueur* in the ancient world. And some of the local people had supported Herod against the Hasmonaeans and probably had also been rewarded with citizenship in the new city. So the breach between city and countryside, never absolute, will have rapidly narrowed. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that they seem for the most part to have acted together, and Josephus therefore usually does not distinguish them, but uses *Samareis* (Samaritans) for all alike.<sup>12</sup> It is therefore not surprising that these Samaritans were relatively well organized, and that their leaders, whose status Josephus did not define, were in a position to represent them before the Romans.

<sup>12</sup> Suggested by the late M. Smith of Columbia University.



*Eschatological hopes.* An earlier affair under the procurator Pilate (CE 36) reveals that many Samaritans, like many Jews, looked forward eagerly to a new era (*Ant.* XVIII.85–9). Among the Samaritan *ethnos* (again not ‘Cuthaeans’) was a man Josephus describes as a liar and skilled rabble rouser who claimed that he would lead the people on to Mount Gerizim and unearth the sacred vessels Moses had buried there. These were evidently the vessels of the *mishkan*, the ancient tabernacle, whose restoration would signal the Era of Divine Favour,<sup>13</sup> to be discussed in greater detail below. An enthusiastic and growing crowd, receptive to his message, gathered in a village near the holy mountain in arms. But its ascent was blocked by a force of Pilate’s soldiers. A battle broke out, the Samaritans fled, and several of their leaders were executed. A council (*boulē*) of the Samaritans went to Vitellius, the governor of Syria, and accused Pilate of brutality and persecution, maintaining that those who were going to ascend Gerizim had no rebellious intent. Vitellius seems to have believed them, for he replaced Pilate and sent him back to Rome.

Two facts emerge from this account. First, many of the Samaritan religious community took seriously its eschatological traditions which involved the figure of Moses, the ancient tabernacle, and a restorer, all connected with Mount Gerizim. Secondly, ‘the Samaritans’ – clearly not only the residents of Sebaste – had a *boulē* which represented them and whose concern extended to religious affairs. The nature of this *boulē* and its place within the Roman governmental framework is not at all evident, and has been debated. Its role in this episode makes it appear as a group of spokesmen for the Samaritan sect, not the geographic unit of Samaria.

*The Christian mission.* Acts 8:4ff reports a successful mission of the preacher Philip among the Samaritans. He performed healings and exorcisms and baptized many in the name of Jesus. Subsequently Peter and John came from Jerusalem and bestowed on the new converts the Holy Spirit. So the account ends and nothing more is said about the Samaritan converts. We shall see below that Christianity had strong competition in native Samaritan sectarianism.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See discussion below; M. F. Collins, ‘The Hidden Vessels in Samaritan Traditions’, *JJS* 3 (1972), 97–116.

<sup>14</sup> Relations between the Samaritans and early Christianity are discussed in the Mediaeval Samaritan chronicles (see below, p. 531 and n. 31). Citing a text called Chronicle II, J. Macdonald and A. J. B. Higgins, ‘The Beginnings of Christianity According to the Samaritans’, *NTS* 18 (1971), 54ff, conclude that the earliest stratum of this text shows Samaritan neutrality to Jesus and the early Christians. S. Isser, ‘Jesus in the Samaritan Chronicles’, *JJS* 32 (1981), 166ff, rejects this analysis of the Chronicle II mss, and argues that the earliest stratum regards Jesus just as the chronicles do the biblical Israelite prophets – as false prophets.

*The Jewish revolt.* Although he offers no indications that the Samaritans were allied with the Jews during the upheaval of CE 66–73, Josephus relates that their hopes, too, were raised by the revolt. Despite Roman successes in CE 67 (*Bell.* III.307–15) large numbers of the Samaritan sect assembled on the sacred Mount Gerizim, prepared for war. Aside from this important pocket of resistance, the entire region of Samaria was already in Roman hands. The Romans feared a difficult ascent up the mountain in the face of opposition, but a combination of summer heat and a shortage of water on the summit made the Romans' work simple and fast. Death by thirst and desertion to the enemy thinned out the Samaritans' ranks, but those who remained spurned offers to surrender and died fighting. Josephus estimates their number at eleven thousand six hundred. This Jewish historian who hated the Samaritans makes as quick work of the defenders of Gerizim as he says the Romans did. In the hands of a Samaritan author their stand on Gerizim would certainly not have lacked the dramatic touches of heroism and martyrdom that we see in Josephus' accounts of the fall of Jerusalem and Masada.

As the war was drawing to a close, Vespasian founded, near the site of old Shechem, the new town of Flavia Neapolis (*Bell.* IV.449; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* V.13.69), later to be called Nablus by the Arabs. This settlement became the new centre for the now decimated Samaritans, whose traditions tell of greater suffering under Hadrian and his successors in the following century. But that cannot be covered in this chapter.<sup>15</sup>

## II THE LATER SOURCES

Any effort to study the internal history and religious development of the pre-70 Samaritans presupposes an assumption about post-70 literary sources: that, at least in part, they reflect actual events, practices, and beliefs of an earlier age. Even when this assumption has been made, there may be wide disagreement about the authenticity of particular passages and the accuracy of their transmission, a problem recognized by all text critics. The Palestinian Rabbinic sources were produced and compiled in an environment of Jewish–Samaritan contacts; they represent the resulting positive and negative reactions as well as old prejudices. They may also include preferences and prejudices of the later Rabbinic masters, compilers or redactors rather than the opinions of the first- and second-century figures they claim to cite. What the Church Fathers had to say about

<sup>15</sup> See M. Avi-Yonah, 'The Samaritans in the Roman and Byzantine Periods' (Hebrew) in *Eretz Shomron* (The 30th Archaeological Convention, Sept. 1972, IES) (Jerusalem 1973) 34–7.

Samaritanism was usually part of pro-Christian apology or anti-heretical polemic, and was somewhat stylized. The Samaritan Aramaic material from the fourth century (the manuscripts are much later) was the product of a Samaritan cultural ‘renaissance’ in Palestine. Although it is plausible that much of this Aramaic liturgical and homiletical material comes from the hellenistic and early Roman periods, plausibility is not proof. The sources, then, let us formulate only hypotheses.

After 70 the Samaritans and Jews may have found partnership in misfortune. Both had opposed the victorious Roman armies and had suffered serious losses. Both, now, had only ruins where temples once stood. Both were hard hit by the second Jewish revolt and the resultant Hadrianic persecution after which the temple mounts of both Jerusalem and Gerizim were occupied by shrines of Zeus Olympius-Jupiter Capitolinus.

In Judaea and Galilee the Pharisees, without competition from the Sadducees after 70, had become the recognized authorities of Jewish law. They had long claimed to be the bearers of the true traditions of Judaism, and now, with some political justification as well, they saw their law as representing not merely sectarian practice, but the mainstream of current Israelite development. The Samaritans were a dissenting group whose status had to be defined, and the Pharisaic masters were by no means in agreement. While (in an Amoraic text) Rabbi Akiba considered them true proselytes, though even he gave no credence to their claims to be descended from the Josephide tribes – Rabbi Ishmael called them ‘lion-proselytes’, a reference to the biblical tale of their conversion to Yahwism out of fear of lions (2 Kgs 17:24ff), and so thought their status as true Jews to be questionable.<sup>16</sup> At all events their ethnic make-up was disputed. Probably more important for the Pharisaic legal tradition was the certain fact that the Samaritans did not accept the Rabbinic interpretation of the Torah (the Pentateuch) although they were concerned with observing the law of the Torah and most likely had their own particular traditions about that law. It was the position ascribed to Rabbi Eliezer that the Samaritans were not scrupulous as to the details of the commandments<sup>17</sup> and therefore should fall under the presumption of non-observance, entailing exclusion from those areas in which only Pharisaically observant Jews might participate. On the other hand, according to the Mishnah Rabban Gamaliel validated a divorce writ bearing the signatures of Samaritan witnesses,<sup>18</sup> and the saying attributed to Rabbi Simon ben Gamaliel became popular: ‘Every commandment that the Cuthaeans do observe, they are more scrupulous concerning it than the Israelites.’<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *b. Qidd.* 75a–76b. <sup>17</sup> *b. Git.* 10a, *b. Hul.* 4a; *t. Pesab.* 2.2.

<sup>18</sup> *m. Git.* 1.5. <sup>19</sup> *t. Pesab.* 2.2; *b. Git.* 10a, *b. Hul.* 4a.

By the time the Mishnah was compiled, however, Rabbinic statements regarding the Samaritans, at least those adopted by the compiler, Judah the Patriarch, had taken a definitely hostile turn. L. Schiffman's analysis of the relevant Tannaitic literature traces this deterioration of rabbinic attitudes toward the Samaritans to the period immediately following the Bar Kochba rebellion.<sup>20</sup> 'The daughters of the Samaritans are deemed menstruants from the cradle'<sup>21</sup> (and therefore ritually impure and untouchable), is an example. Alon<sup>22</sup> has a social explanation for this renewed enmity: after 70 Jewish–Samaritan open hostility had ebbed. The Samaritans had participated in the war against the Romans and had suffered as did the Jews. Some Rabbis, like Akiba and Simon ben Gamaliel, were willing to accept, if not welcome, the 'Cuthaeans' as part of the people of Israel; others like Ishmael and Eliezer clearly were not. In general, the more friendly pronouncements came from the Rabbis more hostile to Rome, who hoped to have the Samaritans as allies in a future revolt. But after the Bar Kochba revolt had come and failed (132–4), the resultant Hadrianic persecution did great physical damage to the Samaritan community and the situation was altered. The party henceforth in control of the rabbinic academy was wholeheartedly committed to peace with Rome, and the Samaritans were no longer important as potential allies. Also they now began to disperse throughout the country. The wealthy ones were drawn to Caesarea and the coastland where business opportunities were numerous; others settled in villages throughout Palestine and there lived side by side with Jews. While the rabbis could tolerate a heterodox group whose communities were geographically separate from those of the Jews, the pernicious influence of sectarians living in close contact with Jews was something to be fought. The anti-Samaritan polemic increased and grew in intensity especially around CE 200 and after, when the Rabbinic goal became segregation.<sup>23</sup>

The pivotal period appears to be that between Rabbi Simon ben Gamaliel, just after the Second Revolt, and his son, Judah the Patriarch, at the end of the second century. The Tannaim saw some 'corruption' in the

<sup>20</sup> L. Schiffman, 'The Samaritans in Tannaitic Halachah', *JQR* NS 75 (1985), 323–50.  
<sup>21</sup> *m. Nid.* 4.1.

<sup>22</sup> G. Alon, *The History of the Jews in the Land of Israel in the Period of the Mishnah and the Talmud* (Tel Aviv 1970), vol. 2, pp. 248ff (Hebrew).

<sup>23</sup> M. Mor, 'The Samaritans and the Bar-Kokhbah Revolt' in A. D. Crown, *The Samaritans* (Tübingen 1989), pp. 19–31, agrees. The Samaritans also resisted Hadrian, but in a limited way and not in concert with the Jews. Their losses were light and they took over some Jewish territory after Bar Kochba's defeat. The subsequent closer proximity of the Samaritans and Jews also resulted in economic competition. Mor discounts the historicity of midrashim (Gen. R. 64.10, Lam. R. 2.2, 4) which indicate active hostility of Samaritans towards Jews before and during the revolt.

Samaritans' observance of the commandments and began to regard their status under the law as that of non-Jews. Schiffman explains that this period was significant in the development of Jewish self-identification. The differentiation between Jews and Christians was complete by the end of the Bar Kochba war. 'The Tannaim sought more and more to standardize Judaism under their banner', distancing themselves from non-conformists like the Samaritans, who may have also supported the Romans during the war. Thus in *Tos. Ter.* 4:12 and 4:14 Rabbi Simon ben Gamaliel said: 'A Samaritan is like a Jew in all respects', while the opinion of Rabbi Judah the Patriarch is, 'A Samaritan is like a non-Jew.'<sup>24</sup>

Aside from naming those legal observances for whose performance the Samaritans are considered reliable<sup>25</sup> or untrustworthy,<sup>26</sup> the Rabbinic sources tell us little about Samaritan theology and worship, only that they recognize Gerizim rather than Jerusalem as God's chosen place, and that they do not accept the Pharisaic doctrine of resurrection of the dead.<sup>27</sup> The Patristic heresiologists were more interested in questions of doctrine, but they, too, have little information. A typical product of the Christian tradition about the Samaritans is the following passage from the *De haeresibus* of Philaster (late fourth century):

Another (sect) are the Samaritans, so called from a king Samareus. But others say that it was from the son of Canaan, who was called by this name, 'Samareus', that the Samaritans are named. They accept the Law of Moses, that is, only four books (*sic!* Philaster's careless error, not made by other writers), not expecting future judgement, denying resurrection, not believing that the Messiah, as God and Son of God, was previously announced in the Law and the Prophets, not perceiving that according to the Law man has an immortal soul, but thinking that one should live only in this body, and that future resurrection will occur in the procreation of children, which takes place daily in this age. (*De haer.* 7)

Epiphanius, an older contemporary of Philaster who, as we shall see, was more acquainted with Samaritanism, has not much more to add on Samaritan beliefs.<sup>28</sup> He knows the Samaritans accepted the entire Torah of five books and he notes an alternate derivation of the name 'Samaritan': 'guardians of the Law', evidently from Hebrew *šmr*, 'guard'. This may have been how the Samaritans themselves understood their name.

<sup>24</sup> Schiffman, *ibid.*, pp. 348–50.

<sup>25</sup> *t. Pesah.* 2.2. (on Passover unleavened bread); *m. Nid.* 7.5 (on the burial of aborted fetuses); etc.

<sup>26</sup> *m. Nid.* 7.5 (on grave areas). This text adds the comment: 'In any matter concerning which they are under suspicion they may not be believed.' *t. Nid.* 57a explains this rule as including Sabbath boundaries (the law of the '*erub*', which the Samaritans do not follow) and wine of libation (which the Samaritans do not regard as forbidden).

<sup>27</sup> *Masseket Kutim* 2.7 (end). <sup>28</sup> *Panarion* 9.

Compared to this the Samaritan Aramaic material is a potential treasury of information. But the religious hymns of Amram Darah and the large *Memar Marqah* from the fourth century will provide source critics with problems for a long time to come. The earliest extant manuscript of the *Memar* is from the fourteenth century; the latest critical edition of the text by J. Macdonald is based, however, on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manuscripts.<sup>29</sup> Many passages of the later texts do not appear in the fourteenth-century version. Even that early manuscript shows reworking of its contents and the influence of Islamic literature.<sup>30</sup> Virtually every passage which refers to resurrection or the eschatological figure of the *Tabeb* is lacking in the fourteenth-century manuscript. The Samaritans may indeed have adopted the doctrine of resurrection during the Middle Ages, but to read this adoption back to the fourth century – even to suggest that its appearance in the fourth century was the result of a temporary ascendance of heterodoxy<sup>31</sup> – is to make unsafe assumptions about the textual evidence.<sup>32</sup>

Marqah's work is an interesting combination of liturgical and homiletical, or 'midrashic', pieces arranged as a running elaboration of the Pentateuchal narrative from the burning bush to the death of Moses. The annual pilgrimage festivals at Mount Gerizim, Passover and the feasts of Week and Tabernacles, have been identified by H. G. Kippenberg<sup>33</sup> as a likely *Sitz im Leben* for much of the liturgical material. Collections of such materials were eclectic to begin with, and the 'original' *Memar* may well have grown over the centuries by the addition of fresh pieces ascribed to Marqah. Although a case was once made for the pre-fourth-century date of the Hebrew material in another late Samaritan text,<sup>34</sup> it now appears wiser to consider such Hebrew passages as later consciously archaized interpolations.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, a core of the material must belong to the original, and certainly the *arrangement* of the contents seems to be very early (we shall return to this point below in connection with eschatological traditions).

<sup>29</sup> *Memar Marqah*, Berlin, 1963; discussion of MSS., pp. xxviff.

<sup>30</sup> T. H. Gaster, *IDB*, s.v. 'Samaritans'.

<sup>31</sup> As does J. Bowman, 'The Importance of Samaritan Researches', *ALUOS* 1 (1958–9), 43–54.

<sup>32</sup> It has been pointed out to me by J. Macdonald and others that the ideological content of the *Memar Marqah* fits the Roman period; it fits Jewish midrashic development as well. But despite the *plausibility* of the early appearance of resurrection passages in Samaritan texts, the manuscript evidence that they were present in Marqah's original material is not convincing, especially since external reports say that (the mainstream of) Samaritanism rejected the doctrine of resurrection at that time.

<sup>33</sup> Kippenberg, *Garizim*, especially pp. 201ff.

<sup>34</sup> By M. Gaster for the *Asatir*, *The Asatir* (London 1927). <sup>35</sup> See above n. 5.

The later Samaritan chronicles, written mostly in Arabic during the Middle Ages,<sup>36</sup> are notoriously inaccurate with respect to chronology and are rather polemical. They are helpful for the recovery of early Samaritan history only insofar as the chroniclers used at least some older sources, especially if their age can be verified through Rabbinic or Patristic parallels.

### III INTERPRETATION OF THE SOURCES: SECTARIANISM

Of all the Patristic authors who catalogued sects and heresies, only one, Epiphanius, knew of sectarian divisions *within* the Samaritan group.<sup>37</sup> Although his details may be far from accurate, there is no reason to doubt his testimony that fourth-century Samaritanism was not monolithic. The earliest of the Samaritan subgroups, he wrote (*Panarion* 10), called the ‘Essenes’, were conservatives who added nothing to ‘their original way of life’. But this sect had died out by Epiphanius’ time (*Pan.* 20). There is obvious confusion in this account, mixed with facts known to Epiphanius. Unlike other heresiologists who listed the Samaritans under the heading of Jewish sects, he knew that in his time the Jews had excluded the Samaritans; therefore, his Samaritan sects form a list separate from the Jewish sects which follow. But somehow the name ‘Essenes’, familiar from Josephus, Philo and Hippolytus, was understood to designate a Samaritan group, even though Epiphanius’ description of these ‘Essenes’ does not conform to the familiar one.

Here is a tentative explanation. The later Samaritan chronicles have a tradition that after disputes with the Jews in the hellenistic period, the Samaritans called themselves the *Ḥasidim* as opposed to the Jewish Pharisees

<sup>36</sup> The *Asatir* (= Chronicle I in Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans* (Philadelphia 1964); Chronicle II (in part available now in *The Samaritan Chronicle II: From Joshua to Nebuchadnezzar*, ed. Macdonald (Berlin 1969); Chronicle III, or the ‘Tolidah’ (‘Chronique Samaritaine . . .’, ed. A. Neubauer, *JA* 6th series, 14 (1869), 385–470); Chronicle IV, or the Book of Joshua (*Liber Josuae*, ed. T. Juynboll, Leiden 1848); Chronicle V, a chain of high priests; Chronicle VI = Abu’l Fath, *Annales samaritani . . .*, ed. E. Vilmar (Gotha, 1865); Chronicle VII (in Hebrew) = ‘Une nouvelle chronique samaritaine’, ed. E. Adler and M. Séligsohn, *REJ* 44 (1902), 188–222; 45 (1902), 70–98, 160, 223–54; 46 (1903), 123–46. See P. Stenhouse, ‘Samaritan Chronicles’ in A. D. Crown, *The Samaritans* (Tübingen 1989), pp. 218–65, on the chronicles in general and a source-critical analysis of Abu’l Fath. Stenhouse has completed a new critical edition, *The Kitāb al-Tarikh of Abu’l Fath* (Diss. Sydney 1980) and translation (same title), *Studies in Judaism* 1 (Sydney 1985).

<sup>37</sup> J. Fossum, ‘Sects and Movements’ in A. D. Crown, *The Samaritans* (Tübingen 1989) pp. 293–389, offers an exhaustive treatment of this subject. He is in general agreement with the historical reconstruction argued in this chapter, but has important criticisms of details regarding the religious practices of the Dosithean sects described below. For additional critique see also I. R. M. Bóid, *Principles of Samaritan Halachah* (Leiden 1989) pp. 12–14.



and Sadducees.<sup>38</sup> The term *Ḥasidim* is generic: it means ‘loyalists’ (to the tradition) in this context, and was used similarly by the conservative group that had sided with the Maccabees in the rising against the decrees of Antiochus IV. The Samaritan chroniclers may have known the three-sect pattern (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes) of Josephus and Hippolytus, and substituted their own sect *qua Ḥasidim* for the Essenes. If such a Samaritan version was current in the fourth century Epiphanius might have known and used it. Hence the Samaritan ‘Essenes’. Of course, in Epiphanius’ own day there was no such group, and the Jewish Essenes had also disappeared.

All the Samaritan sects agree ‘on circumcision and the Sabbath and other things in the law’, but ‘in some little thing or other’ the Sebuaeans and the Gorothenians differ (*Pan.* 11–12). The only area of disagreement discussed by Epiphanius is not such a small matter: the calendar. The Sebuaeans (joined by the ‘Essenes’), out of anger against the Jews,<sup>39</sup> changed the times of their festivals so that Passover fell in the autumn, after the New Year, instead of in the spring, and the rest of their calendar followed accordingly. The Gorothenians, however, kept the old calendar and celebrated festivals when the Jews do. The magnitude of the Sebuaeans’ alteration – turning the year upside-down, with spring festivals in the autumn and vice versa – is highly implausible, but some calendrical difference may well have been the major point at issue between the sects. Epiphanius has nothing else to say about the Sebuaeans and Gorothenians, but a Samaritan chronicle mentions the ‘Subuai’ as an independent group in the fourth century that opposed the recognized Samaritan leadership in Palestine.<sup>40</sup>

It is the last of the Samaritan sects, however, that is the most famous, and simultaneously the most problematic and revealing: the Dositheans, who, like the Gorothenians, observe the Jewish calendar (*Pan.* 12), but who differ from the other Samaritans in more than ‘some little thing or other’. The account is given in *Pan.* 13, but it is best to deal with it as part of a larger body of evidence on the Dositheans. This evidence is often contradictory and has been the subject of much scholarly disagreement. What follows is a summary of the major problems and some tentative solutions.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> ‘Une nouvelle chronique samaritaine’, ed. Adler and Sélignsohn, *REJ* 45 (1902), 74f.

<sup>39</sup> Their anger, according to Epiphanius, was against the biblical Ezra and against Jews travelling through their territory on the way to Jerusalem (an allusion to the incident under Cumanus?). One cannot establish a date for the schism from such a reference.

<sup>40</sup> Abu’l Fath, ed. Vilmar, p. 131. See J. Montgomery, *The Samaritans* (Philadelphia 1907), p. 253. J. Thomas, *Le mouvement baptiste en Palestine et Syrie* (Gembloux 1935), p. 42, derives the Sebuaeans’ name from Hebrew/Aramaic *šb*’, ‘baptize’. See p. 477, above.

<sup>41</sup> For a full analysis of Samaritan sectarianism and the literary sources see S. Isser, *The Dositheans* (Leiden 1976).

*Patristic sources.* The first reference to the Dositheans and their founder Dositheus appears in a sectarian list of the second-century Christian writer, Hegesippus, quoted in Eusebius, *HE* IV.22.4ff. From the 'seven sects' that corrupted the early Church came 'Simon, whence the Simonians' and others including 'Dositheus, whence the Dositheans'.

The early stratum of the Pseudo-Clementine literature counted Simon and Dositheus among the disciples of John the Baptist (*Homilies* II.23–24; there John is an evil force. The parallel and probably later account in *Recognitions* II.8–11 is more favourable towards the Baptist and refers to his death as an event merely contemporary with the sect of Simon and Dositheus). The position of Dositheus as leader of the group after the death of John was usurped by Simon, and Dositheus died shortly thereafter. This is not the place to discuss the textual criticism of the Pseudo-Clementine literature or its role among the Jewish-Christian Ebionites.<sup>42</sup> Important for the present subject is its agreement with Hegesippus' list in making Dositheus and Simon Magus contemporaries, and in associating the two heresiarchs with the same sect. This association is surely fictional. No other source links Simon and Dositheus although other writers do see them as contemporaries. Furthermore, the author of the Clementine story was obviously using Dositheus as a mere foil for the real villain of the tale, Simon, who appears throughout the narrative as the opponent of Peter. The takeover of the sect by Simon and the fall and death of Dositheus are also suspect, for later evidence attests the existence of a Dosithean sect long after the demise of Simonianism and with traditions that never refer to Simon but are completely independent of Simonianism. The two men were known to be of Samaritan descent by the author of the Clementine story, and so he used them as partners and rivals in heresy.

Origen saw Dositheus as a first-century messianic pretender ('the Christ prophesied by Moses') whose appeal was to the Samaritans and who fell into the same category as Judah the Galilean, Theudas<sup>43</sup> and Simon Magus (*Hom. on Lk.* 25; *Comm. on Mt.* series 33; *Comm. on Jn.* XIII.27; *C. Cels.* I.57 and VI.11). He adds (*De princ.* I.3.4) the interesting detail that the Dositheans were very strict concerning their interpretation of the law

<sup>42</sup> See O. Cullmann, *Le problème littéraire et historique du roman Pseudo-Clémentin* (Paris 1930); C. Schmidt, *Studien zu den Pseudo-Clementinen* (Leipzig 1929); H. Waitz, 'Die Lösung der pseudoclementinische Probleme', *ZKG* 59 (1940), 304–41; H.-J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen 1949); G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen* (Berlin 1958); A. Salles, 'Simon le magicien ou Marcion', *VC* 12 (1958), 197ff.

<sup>43</sup> On Judah and Theudas see Acts 5:33ff and Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII.3ff (parallel *Bell.* II.118) and xx.97ff.

against movement on the Sabbath. Although in one place Origen says the Dosithean sect has dwindled to less than thirty members (*C. Cels.* VI.11), some confusion is suggested by the fact that he says the same of the Simonians (*ibid.*, I.57), and by another passage which also contains important information:

From the Samaritans one Dositheus arose and asserted that he was the prophesied Messiah; there are Dositheans to this day who originate from him; they both preserve books by Dositheus and certain myths about him to the effect that he did not taste death, but is still alive somewhere.

(*Comm. on Jn.* XIII.27, on Jn 4:25)

Origen, then, writing in the third century, reports for Dositheus a first-century date, a messianic claim, and a body of tradition connected with him by his sect, still active at Origen's time.

An entirely different literary tradition appears in a series of Patristic writers: Pseudo-Tertullian (*Adv. omnes haer.* 1), a part of Epiphanius (*Pan.* 14),<sup>44</sup> and Philaster (*De haer.* 4). This tradition, which may have originated in the lost *Syntagma* of Hippolytus,<sup>45</sup> assigns to Dositheus the standard Samaritan rejection of the prophetic canon and of resurrection, but also makes him the forerunner of the Sadducees.

This anti-resurrectionist position of Dositheus, however, is contradicted in Epiphanius' account of the Dositheans as a Samaritan sect (*Pan.* 13). The Dositheans not only observe (as the Gorothenians) the Jewish calendar (*Pan.* 12) and accept resurrection, but, of all the Samaritan sects, they alone have more ascetic customs and, at least in the celebration of holidays, might be called Judaizers. The entire text is as follows:

The Dositheans differ from them (the other Samaritan sects) in many ways: for they admit resurrection, and they have (their own) communities; they abstain from (eating) animate things; moreover, some of them abstain from marriage after living . . . (? text unclear), while others remain virgins. As much as they observe circumcision and the Sabbath, they equally observe not touching anyone, on account of detesting every man. Their doctrine leads them to observe and practise the same fasts (as the Jews). And the reason that Dositheus thought up these rules is as follows: he, originally from the Jews, mixed with the clans of the Samaritans. Having advanced in learning of the law and in (the study of) their (the Jews') traditions, he sought to be among the foremost, but failed and was not thought worthy of any esteem among the Jews. (Consequently) he went

<sup>44</sup> Epiphanius' reference to Dositheus in connection with his account of the Sadducees (*Pan.* 14) evidently came from a different source than his full account of the Dositheans (*Pan.* 13).

<sup>45</sup> On the various solutions to the *Syntagma* problem see P. Nautin, *Hippolyte contre les hérésies* (Paris 1949).

over to the Samaritan people and founded this sect. Then withdrawing to some cave, on account of excessive desire for wisdom, foolishly and dramatically persisting in a fast, as the story has it, he died for lack of food and water – deliberately, forsooth. After a few days those who came to visit him found the body smelling, worms creeping out, and a cloud of flies settled on it. Thus foolishly having taken his own life, this fellow accordingly became responsible for the sect among them, and from him his imitators are called Dositheoi or Dosithenoi. (Pan. 13)

*Late Samaritan sources.* The mediaeval Samaritan chroniclers also deal with Dositheus (called ‘Dusis’ or ‘Dustis’). The most complete passage, in Abu’l Fath,<sup>46</sup> is too long to quote, but is here summarized:

Dusis ibn Fufily, who stemmed from the mixed multitude that left Egypt with the Jews, was sentenced to death by the Jews for the crime of adultery. He was spared on his promise to go among the Samaritans and create dissension among them by founding a new sect. In Samaria he contrived a false accusation of adultery against a Samaritan sage, but when his plot was discovered, he fled from punishment at the hands of the Samaritan high priest. He stayed at the house of a widow in Shuwaykah (Socho), where he did extensive writing. After a while he left for Anbata and hid in a mountain cave. There he died of hunger and the dogs devoured his corpse. A party of seven men led by the high priest’s nephew Levi was sent to find Dusis and bring him to justice. When they traced him to the widow’s house she told them that Dusis had gone, but she had received instructions from him that they might see his manuscripts if they first immersed themselves in a certain pool. Each one emerged from the water proclaiming his faith in Yahweh and in Dusis his Prophet. The manuscripts were found to contain what were apparently emendations of the text of the Pentateuch. On the feast of Passover, Levi was called to read from the Pentateuch, and when he insisted upon using one of Dusis’ emendations and then castigated the people for their unbelief in the new Prophet, he was stoned to death. The customs of the early Dusis sect are described; they include preparing dead bodies for imminent resurrection.

Subsequently several other sects arose from the writings and followers of Dusis: the *Ba’unay* who settled in Beisan or Bashan and of whom one *Ansami* wanted to abolish the feast days; the antinomian *Qilatay* who claimed Dusis as their authority for abolishing all religious duties; the *Şaduqay*, who believed the Serpent (the constellation Draco? demonic serpent of Eden?) would govern the universe until resurrection; the antinomian followers of *Abiyyah* and *Dosab* who intentionally violated the Sabbath; the sect of *Sbalib ibn Tīrūn*, who opposed imminent resurrection of the dead, claimed he would make the tabernacle reappear, and dealt seriously with the interpretation of the law; the legally strict *Banī Yaşdaq*; the followers of the Alexandrian *Aulianab* who believed that the eschatological era had already come; and the sexually libertine *Faşqutay*, who denied paradise and resurrection.

<sup>46</sup> Vilmar edition, pp. 151ff.

Abu'l Faḥ's account of Dositheus (Dusis) clearly depends on an earlier source which evidently came from 'official' Samaritan circles, since it is manifestly hostile to the sectarians; it makes the heresiarch a foreigner and besmirches his character and motivations.<sup>47</sup> The story, with slight changes in details, is the same as that used by Epiphanius, and agrees in making the Dositheans pro-resurrectionists in opposition to the other Samaritans.

What, then, of the Patristic tradition which classified Dositheus as a proto-Sadducee who rejected resurrection? That tradition has been given historical credence by many modern scholars, some of whom resolved the difficulty by positing the existence of *two* figures named Dositheus, one who accepted resurrection and another who did not.<sup>48</sup> But how can one be a *forerunner* of the Sadducees in the first century CE? Abu'l Faḥ, in another passage, does discuss an earlier Samaritan sect called 'Dustan', which should probably be dated around 100 BCE.<sup>49</sup> Can this be the time and milieu of the proto-Sadducean Dositheus? But Abu'l Faḥ's description of this sect's beliefs and practices, which include a *rejection* of a liturgical formula that was used to *deny* resurrection,<sup>50</sup> indicates a leaning in the direction of Pharisaism rather than proto-Sadduceeism.

The proto-Sadducean tradition, which may be traced ultimately to Hippolytus' lost *Syntagma*, is most likely a historical error, spawned by a stylistic lumping together of Samaritans and Sadducees (see discussion of Hippolytus' *Philosophumena* above) and by ignorance of Samaritan internal sectarianism, i.e. of the fact that quite different opinions were held by various Samaritan groups.

There are also later sources, both Christian (Photius' account of a Samaritan dispute before Bishop Eulogius in Alexandria)<sup>51</sup> and Muslim (e.g. Mas'ūdī, Shahrastānī),<sup>52</sup> which attribute to the Dositheans the denial of resurrection. But these accounts may either be influenced by Patristic traditions or may reflect the secondary developments of Dositheanism.

<sup>47</sup> The motif of the man frustrated among his own people who establishes a rival sect is quite common. Similar stories are told about Simon Magus (Acts 8, Irenaeus 1.23), Tatian, the disciple of Justin Martyr (Irenaeus 1.26), and elsewhere about Marcion and Anan the Karaite.

<sup>48</sup> See Montgomery, *The Samaritans*, pp. 261ff; T. Caldwell, 'Dositheos Samaritanus', *Kairoi* 4 (1962), 113.

<sup>49</sup> Vilmar edition, pp. 82f. Shahrastānī (Haarbrucker edition, vol. 1, p. 258) says the founder of the Dositheans, a certain al-Ilfan, appeared about a century before Jesus.

<sup>50</sup> Recognized by M. Appel, *Quaestiones de rebus samaritanorum sub imperio Romanorum peractis* (Göttingen 1874), p. 92.

<sup>51</sup> *Bibliotheca* Cod. 230, fol. 285a ff.

<sup>52</sup> Mas'ūdī, *Les prairies d'or*, ed. C. Pellat (Paris 1962), vol. 1, p. 48; Shahrastānī, Haarbrücker ed., vol. 1, p. 258.

Granting that Abu'l Fath's description of the sects derived from Dusis is schematic and not completely accurate, it still offers powerful evidence that several groups, all claiming to possess the correct interpretation of Dusis' teachings, achieved a wide range of disagreement, even on the question of resurrection. The 'Dositheans' known by Eulogius around CE 600 or by mediaeval Arabic writers may very well have been one of the anti-resurrectionist groups.

If we take Origen, Epiphanius, and Abu'l Fath together, we emerge with a clearer picture. Dositheus appears to have been a first-century CE claimant to the position of the eschatological 'Prophet like Moses' predicted in Deuteronomy 18. He may have performed miracles (Origen speaks of 'frauds'); he wrote books and proposed changes in the Pentateuch as well as legal and religious teachings; a body of legend about him grew among his followers, who said that he never died. The obviously hostile 'official' Samaritan account was to ridicule this story by depicting a particularly foolish and ignoble death for Dositheus, as well as to blacken the details of his earlier career. The initial Dosithean sect believed in resurrection and showed tendencies toward Pharisaic doctrines and observances and the more exotic practices of the baptist sects that inhabited the Dead Sea area and Transjordan. Dositheanism, like Christianity, diversified and produced a strange collection of sects who held in common only the claim to Dositheus as their authority.

The name 'Dustan' of Abu'l Fath's earlier sect makes no sense at all in his attempted etymology.<sup>53</sup> Its leader was a certain Zar'ah; no one with a name Dusis or Dustis appears. There does seem to be a connection, however, between this sect and the later followers of Dusis. The practices of Dustan are similar to those of the Dusis group; both tend toward Pharisaism and away from the Sadducee-like 'official' Samaritanism.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, in his account of the Dusis-derived sects, Abu'l Fath refers to them collectively as Dustan. Either the early Dustan sect itself is an anachronism (if not a fiction) or its name may be so. The destruction of the Samaritan temple on Gerizim in the late second century BCE may have stimulated varied ways of religious expression (that is, sects) among a people whose central shrine was gone. Sadduceeism and Pharisaism were at the same time crystallizing in Judaea. It is not implausible that a Pharisaizing group also developed among the Samaritans, and it was to this group that over a century later Dositheus (Dusis or Dustis) made a successful appeal. The group might then have taken the name of its new

<sup>53</sup> They were called 'Dustan' because they abolished the true holidays and traditions. Abu'l Fath does not explain why this was so; there is no etymological connection.

<sup>54</sup> See description of Dosithean customs below.

prophet, that is, Dustan (cf. Epiphanius' alternative 'Dosithenoi'), and this may later have been applied anachronistically to the original group (for example, by Abu'l Fath).

Whatever its origin, the Dosithean sect became the chief rival of 'official' (priestly?) Samaritanism. We have seen above the description of the sect written in the fourth century by Epiphanius; the accounts of both the 'Dustan' and 'Dusis' sects in Abu'l Fath are much later. It is impossible to be certain about which beliefs and customs the sect had at its inception and which were added in late antiquity or even in the early mediaeval period.

The Dustan sect, according to Abu'l Fath abolished the true holidays (that is, changed the calendar?), regarded a fountain in which there was a creeping thing unclean, had their own system for reckoning the unclean days during a woman's menstrual period, ate only those eggs found inside slaughtered fowl, and considered dead snakes unclean. They thought that a man became unclean if his shadow fell on a grave. They rejected the liturgical formula 'Blessed be our God *unto the world*' (that is, 'forever'), forbade pronunciation of the name *YHWH*, had a calendar of thirty-day months, abolished the obligation of fasting and self-mortification, and reckoned the Pentecost from the first day after Passover, 'like the Jews'. They had special practices in declaring an infected house unclean, used only earthenware vessels (no copper or glass) on the Sabbath, and prepared Sabbath food for their animals the day before.

The followers of Dusis, also according to Abu'l Fath, cropped their hair, prayed in water, would not go from house to house on the Sabbath, celebrated all festivals only on the Sabbath, and kept their hands in their sleeves. Dead bodies were dressed and shod in preparation for imminent resurrection, for 'they believed that as soon as a man is buried, he arises from the grave and goes to Paradise'.

Although one can find many parallels with various sectarian groups among the baptist sects (including Essenes) as well as the Ebionites, there are also notable similarities to Pharisaic rulings and customs, e.g. the prohibition on pronouncing the tetragrammaton (cf. *m. Sanb.* 10.1); the belief in resurrection; the reckoning of Pentecost from the first day after Passover as against counting from the first day after the first Sabbath after Passover, as the Sadducees and Samaritans did. The Pharisees also rejected the formula, 'Blessed be our God unto the world' (*m. Ber.* 9.5, *t. Ber.* 6.27) because their opponents cited it as proof that there was only one world; the Pharisees changed it to read 'from world to world', referring to this world and the world to come. Even the Dosithean procedure for declaring a house ritually unclean is like that of the Pharisees (cf. *m. Neg.* 12.5, 6).



In all these practices and others, Abu'l Faḥ said, the Dositheans differed from the other Samaritans. But the teachings of Dositheus also gave rise to subjects who disagreed among each other despite their claim to derivation from a common root. Ansami and the Ba'unay wanted to abolish the feast days (festivals?). The Qilatay formally renounced all religious duties on Mount Gerizim in expectation of God's revelation of the tabernacle. The Şaduqay said that people are resurrected because of the martyrdom of Dusis and Levi, and like the Ophite/Naasene gnostics, they apparently believed the world to be governed by the Serpent, probably the constellation Draco. Abiyah and Dosah intentionally violated the Sabbath in consequence of their antinomian assertion that religious duties had been abolished. Shalīh ibn Ṭīrūn, who called himself 'al-Muqīs' (The Mediator), made all sorts of new legal rulings, both strict and lenient, on subjects ranging from the celebration of festivals to ritual purifications and the manner of prayer. The Banī Yaşdaq emphasized the holiness of Gerizim and the uncleanness conveyed by corpses. The sect of Aulianah in Alexandria separated the sexes and encouraged divorce; after the death of their leader they thought they were already in the period of Divine Favour. Finally, the Fasqutay separated themselves from impurity through self-castration, but only after a 'test' which involved sexual abstention despite temptation, and which their enemies said led them to libertine excesses.

Some of these sects appear to fit the early Muslim period in which Karaite and other Jewish sects flourished. It is possible, however, that some differentiation within Dositheanism had begun before the end of the first century CE within the context of similar activity among Jewish, Christian, and gnostic groups in Palestine, Transjordan and Syria.

#### IV ANALYSIS OF THE ARAMAIC SOURCES: SOCIAL CLASSES AND ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPES

The only scholar who has attempted to apply source criticism to the Samaritan texts of the fourth century (especially the *Memar Marqah*) is Kippenberg.<sup>55</sup> According to his analysis the liturgical and midrashic materials demonstrate the existence of four Samaritan social groups whose writings and ideas were collected by Marqah: priests, Pentateuchal scholars (the two major sources of the material), lay officials, and judges. The contributions of these groups – most notably of the first three – are discernible especially in those passages which express eschatological hopes.

<sup>55</sup> Kippenberg, *Garizim*. On the subject in general see F. Dexinger, 'Samaritan Eschatology' in A. D. Crown, *The Samaritans* (Tübingen 1989) pp. 266–92 and *Der Tabeb, Ein 'messianischer' Heilsbringer der Samaritaner* (Salzburg 1986).

The expectation of one who will restore the ancient tabernacle (cf. the disturbance under Pilate) originated in the priestly class. That restoration will herald the return of the Era of Divine Favour (*rebutab*), gone since the days of the old tabernacle and replaced by the Era of Disfavor (*panutab*). The restorer will be a Moses *redivivus*. Kippenberg traces this tradition back to the fourth century BCE.

The 'Joseph Malkah', or 'King Joseph' tradition represents the early, anti-priestly claim of the Samaritan laymen (Josephides) to Gerizim, based on the previous possession (for *malkah* translate 'owner' rather than 'king') of the land by the descendants of Joseph. This claim is marked by emphasis on the grave of Joseph near Gerizim. While the pre-eminence of Moses in the field of law is conceded, Joseph is the prototypical secular leader and model for future political saviours.

The *Tabeb* is another apocalyptic figure associated with the Day of Judgement and the return of the Era of Divine Favour.<sup>56</sup> But the aim of *Tabeb*-eschatology is repentance, not cultic restoration. It is therefore to be seen as a tradition originating in the synagogal circles of the 'Schriftgelehrte', not in priestly circles. The *Tabeb* is a vague figure, at times similar to the pre-existent Son of Man; he is *not* a human prophet at first, but in the fourth century CE Marqah began to hint at the identification of the *Tabeb* with Moses, merging the priestly and synagogal traditions.

The development of the synagogue as the vehicle for Samaritan religious growth and diversification is important for Kippenberg. His interpretation of Josephus (*Ant.* XII.257–64) is basic to his understanding of all subsequent events.<sup>57</sup> In his view the hellenizing 'Sidonians in Shechem' who dealt with Antiochus IV were an actual Sidonian colony in the Samaritan town. These Gentiles gained control of the Gerizim cult and established syncretistic forms of worship which, in turn, angered the Jerusalem priesthood and led to John Hyrcanus' destruction of the shrine. Although the building was destroyed, this syncretistic cult continued at the site through the Roman period, and for this reason local synagogues, the preserve of Samaritan Pentateuchal scholars (cf. the Pharisaic teachers) and their lay supporters, became centres of influence in contradistinction to the Gerizim-based priesthood. The synagogues became not only the milieu for scriptural studies and liturgical growth, but also for ideological differences which gave rise to sectarianism. Whether or not this reading

<sup>56</sup> The *Tabeb* tradition and the apocalyptic-like Day of Vengeance tradition were originally independent of each other: Dexinger, 'Samaritan Eschatology', p. 286, and *Der Tabeb*, p. 133, n. 110.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77ff.

of history is entirely correct, it is certainly true that Samaritan synagogues multiplied in Palestine, as later literary references and inscriptions testify.

Even so, one must be careful about the attribution of material to a specific group, priests, or scholars. Jewish Rabbinic literature, originating from the interests of the synagogue-based Pharisees, produced a great deal of literature about the temple in Jerusalem, including hopes for its restoration. Similar hopes connected with Gerizim need not have been the sole property of the Samaritan priests.

There is yet another type of eschatology which is prominently *absent* from the fourth-century Aramaic texts but which is well attested as an important factor in first-century Samaritanism: the Prophet *like* Moses predicted in Deut. 18. A passage concerning this Prophet (Deut. 18:18–22) is even appended to the decalogue in the Samaritan Pentateuch (after Exod. 20:21a = MT 20:18): ‘I (God) shall raise up a prophet like you (Moses) from among their (the Israelites’) brothers for them, and I shall put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I shall command him.’ This prophet served as a model for Theudas and the pretender from Egypt described by Josephus,<sup>58</sup> and for Dositheus. Kippenberg argues that it was in reaction to the Dositheans’ pre-emption of the theme of the eschatological prophet and their arrogation of it to Dositheus, that the other Samaritans eventually abandoned it, and it is therefore absent from Marqah.<sup>59</sup> The expected prophet is not a Moses *redivivus*; he is *like* Moses, a wonder-worker and authoritative lawgiver. Kippenberg suggests no social class from which the ‘Prophet like Moses’ tradition arose. Pretenders to the title probably got support from the same type of people who supported Jesus and other first-century messianic claimants, that is, the lower (non-literature-producing) classes.

It may be that the growth of the Samaritan heroic tradition about Joshua was the result of anti-Dosithean polemic: Joshua, and not Dositheus, was the successor of Moses predicted in Deut. 18.<sup>60</sup> Similarly the great emphasis on the *uniqueness* of Moses, especially visible in Marqah, and in the late association of Moses with the *Tabeb*, may have been primarily anti-Dosithean in nature. In fact, in the (present form of the) work of Marqah, the vague *Tabeb*, identical with Moses or not, has replaced the prophet of Deut. 18 as the major eschatological theme.

Moses evidently was the most important figure in the Samaritan religion. Whether we are dealing with a Moses *redivivus*, a Moses-*Tabeb*, or a prophet like Moses, it is clear that the career and attributes of the biblical

<sup>58</sup> *Bell.* II.261ff; *Ant.* XX.97ff. <sup>59</sup> pp. 304, 323.

<sup>60</sup> Kippenberg, pp. 321ff argues that the Joshua tradition was not a messianic one, but a counter to Dosithean claims. Eulogius did not understand the implication.

lawgiver served as a model. The *Memar Marqah*, as noted above, is not a midrash on the entire Pentateuch; it begins with the inauguration of Moses' prophetic mission at the burning bush and ends with his death. The high point is Moses' ascent of Sinai, which is depicted as an ascent to the heavens.<sup>61</sup> Although it is impossible to state with complete certainty which parts of this text are from pre-Marqah traditions, which parts are from Marqah's period, and which are post-Marqah interpolations, the basic arrangement of the materials as a glorification of Moses must be a reflection of the centrality of the lawgiver in traditions that we can trace to the beginnings of the Roman period in Palestine and perhaps earlier. The Samaritans had never accepted any scripture but the Pentateuch as canonical. They rejected the historical and prophetic books which emphasized the Davidic monarchy and which made the Davidic king an eschatological model. Naturally Moses would be the Samaritans' greatest hero and archetype.

Aside from the Samaritan Pentateuch and perhaps the Pentateuch *targum*, there is no extant Samaritan literature from the Roman period before the fourth century. But we have seen above that the Dositheans were said to have possessed stories about their founder which included the legend that he did not die. The tales of his ignoble and foolish demise in a cave are probably conscious distortions by anti-Dositheans of what his followers were saying. We may assume that the death of Dositheus, in accordance with his claim to be the Prophet like Moses, was held by his sect to be like that of Moses: secret and mysterious. Did the Prophet really die or did he merely disappear, to return again soon in the eschatological future? One need only examine traditions about Moses (in midrashic sources), Elijah and Jesus to recognize the parallels. Although they are not attested in the meagre sources about Dositheus, the motifs of miracle-working and ascents (Elijah's chariot, Jesus' transfiguration in which he meets Moses and Elijah) are also shared by eschatological figures and ultimately go back to the story of Moses.<sup>62</sup> We may hypothesize the existence of some sort of religious aretalogical literature – or at least an oral tradition – in which the career of Moses was magnified and

<sup>61</sup> On the Moses traditions see H. M. Teeple, *The Mosaic Eschatological Prophet* (Philadelphia 1957) and W. A. Meeks, *The Prophet King, Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (Leiden 1967).

<sup>62</sup> On literary patterns in the life of Jesus in the Gospels, see H. D. Betz, 'Jesus as Divine Man' in F. T. Trotter (ed.) *Jesus and the Historian* (Philadelphia 1958), pp. 114–33; M. Smith, 'Prolegomena to a Discussion of Aretologies, Divine Men, the Gospels, and Jesus', *JBL* 90 (1971), 174–99. That Moses traditions underlie these patterns is argued by S. Isser, 'Dositheus, Jesus and a Moses Aretalogy' in *Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman Cults* (M. Smith Fs.) (Leiden 1975), vol. 4, pp. 167–89.

which served as a model for literary descriptions of claimants to eschatological prophethood. It is possible that this Moses tradition or literature originated among the Samaritans. If so, it would have been among the more important themes of the otherwise little known Samaritan literature of the early Roman period.

To this point nothing has been said about the gnostic or protognostic movement of Simon Magus and his successors, and little will be added here.<sup>63</sup> Despite Simon's prominence in Christian heresiological literature, nothing is related about him in Samaritan traditions except that he was a contemporary of Dositheus (Dusis) and Philo of Alexandria, and that he opposed Christianity. To the Samaritans Dositheus rather than Simon is the arch-heretic. Simon became more popular as a Christian heretic and gnostic forerunner than as a Samaritan leader and ought to be discussed in proper context elsewhere. Justin's comment (*1 Apol.* 26.3) that almost all the Samaritans recognized Simon as a god is surely an exaggeration.<sup>64</sup> His extremely hellenized behaviour and message may have appealed to the Gentiles of the Samaritan region, but the literature of the Samaritan sect shows no certain signs of Simonian impact. Important similarities to Simonian texts do exist, but it is possible that Simon may have adopted and reinterpreted traditional Samaritan forms. G. Widengren and J. Fossum have discussed, for example, the Samaritan equivalent of one of Simon's titles, 'The Great Power' (*hē megalē dynamis* = *hila raba*).<sup>65</sup> Simon (and Dositheus, too, according to the Clementines) also called himself 'The Standing One' (*ho bestōs*), signifying eternal endurance,<sup>66</sup> apparently a translation of Aramaic *qa'em*. We might suggest that this usage is a reinterpretation of the term *qa'em* which literally meant 'standing one' and was used in the Samaritan *targum* and in Marqah's summary of Moses' great experiences to describe Moses' standing before God (Deut. 5:28, cf. Exod. 33:21).<sup>67</sup> If Moses-imagery is behind this usage of Simon, perhaps the Simonian idea of the reappearing Messiah is also somehow dependent on the notion of the return of a Moses *redivivus* or the appearance of a prophet like Moses.

<sup>63</sup> See J. Fossum, 'Sects and Movements', pp. 357–89.

<sup>64</sup> See discussion in Kippenberg, *Garizim*, p. 123.

<sup>65</sup> G. Widengren, *The Ascension of the Apostle and the Heavenly Book* (Uppsala and Leipzig 1950), pp. 49f. See in general his chapter III on 'Samaritan, Jewish and Samaritan-Gnostic, and Jewish Rabbinic Evidence'; Fossum, 'Sects and Movements', pp. 363ff.

<sup>66</sup> On this meaning and its appearance in Philo see H. Leisegang, *Die Gnosis* (Stuttgart 1955), pp. 62f.

<sup>67</sup> Macdonald edition, iv.12. Fossum, 'Sects and Movements', pp. 384ff, similarly associates the term with the Prophet like Moses, but suggests it also implies divinity, perhaps an apotheosized Moses.

## V CONCLUSION

The sources for Samaritan political history in the first century and a half of Roman domination are few in number; practically all are short references in Josephus. The sources for the internal development of Samaritanism as a social and religious movement are more numerous, but the Rabbinic and Patristic texts are biased and often hostile, while the Samaritan materials are late and in need of extensive analysis before they can reveal anything concrete. Nevertheless, one fact emerges undisputed: Samaritanism, no less than Judaism and Christianity, was a multi-faceted phenomenon, of which the social and ideological divisions are only now beginning to be understood. The Aramaic literature of the fourth century may represent the beliefs and aspirations of priests, scholars and laymen. The often confused accounts of Samaritan sects, the Dositheans in particular, show us a religion rich in variety and controversy. At a time of Jewish sectarian struggles in Judaea and of Christian sectarian growth in Palestine and Transjordan, Samaria was no less a scene of vigorous religious development.

## CHAPTER 19

GALILEAN JUDAISM AND  
JUDAEAN JUDAISM

The possibility that the religion of Jews in Galilee differed markedly from that of their compatriots in Judaea has been of considerable interest to modern scholars for two reasons. First, any such distinction, if it existed, might have profound implications for the career and teaching of Jesus and for the development of the early Church. Secondly, understanding of any distinctive practices and beliefs in Galilee before CE 135 might throw light on the development of Judaism after that date, for in the middle and late second century CE, following the expulsion of all Jews from the area around Jerusalem, the main centres of rabbinic learning were to be found in Galilee.

I REASONS TO EXPECT A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
THE TWO AREAS

No literary evidence survives from Galilee to suggest that the inhabitants thought of themselves as Galileans rather than simply as Jews, and the detailed narrative set in Galilee by Josephus, the only contemporary author known to have been well acquainted with the region, singularly fails to mention anything special about the Judaism practised there.<sup>1</sup> However, later rabbinic texts preserve traditions that religious life differed from that in the south. These traditions can be tabulated under the following headings.

## 1 Family law

- (a) According to *b. Ketub.* 12a, pre-marital intimacy between a betrothed couple was permitted in Judaea but not in Galilee, and customs on the wedding night were different in the two areas.
- (b) According to *m. Ketub.* 4:12, a widow had the right in Galilee, as in Jerusalem, to stay indefinitely in her husband's house, whereas

<sup>1</sup> Revision of this chapter has been limited to minor bibliographical changes. On the rabbinic traditions, see now L. H. Schiffman, 'Was there a Galilean Halakhah?', not yet available when this chapter was first written but reaching conclusions similar to mine.



in Judaea she was supported only until the heirs fulfilled their duty to her by giving her the money stipulated in the marriage contract.

2 Funerary customs

- (a) In *b. Šabb.* 153a it is stated that people in Jerusalem and in Galilee would say, ‘Attain merit before your bier’, unlike those of Judaea, who said ‘Attain merit after your bier’, which may imply that it was customary in Galilee as in Jerusalem to recite funeral eulogies at the deceased’s house before burial, whereas in Judaea this took place after the burial at the grave.
- (b) It is implied at *y. Mo‘ed Qat.* 82d that the people of Sepphoris in the second century CE would not greet a mourner on the Sabbath, unlike the people of southern Judaea (the *darom*), who were prepared to do so.

3 Festival observance

- (a) *m. Pesah.* 4:5 has a tradition that Galileans would do no work on 14th Nisan, the eve of Passover, unlike Judaeans, who would work until noon.
- (b) According to *m. Hul.* 5:3, feasting on 9th Tishri, before Yom Kippur, was known only in Galilee.

4 Vows

In *m. Ned.* 2:4, the following statement is found attributed to R. Judah (mid second century CE): ‘If a vow was of undefined *terumah* (priest’s-due), in Judaea the vow is binding; but in Galilee it is not binding, since the people of Galilee do not know of the priest’s-due of the Temple-chamber. If the vow refers to undefined devoted things, in Judaea it is not binding, but in Galilee it is binding, since the people of Galilee know nothing of the things devoted to the priests.’

References to a few further rabbinic texts which may refer to differences between the two regions but may not can be found in L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees*, vol. 1, pp. 40–60. It will be seen that the explicit evidence does not amount to much. Moreover, although it must be considered most likely that the texts refer to customs common before CE 70, and although a first-century date is almost certainly presumed when Galilean practice is said to be the same as that of the people of Jerusalem, it should be noted that in theory some of the post-tannaitic texts may have been intended to contrast later Galilean customs with those of the quite numerous Jewish communities which appear to have existed south of Jerusalem at least from the fourth century CE.<sup>2</sup> The argument that the

<sup>2</sup> Note the evidence collected in J. Schwartz, *Jewish Settlement in Judaea: after the Bar-Kochba war until the Arab conquest, 135 CE–640 CE* (Jerusalem 1986) (in Hebrew).

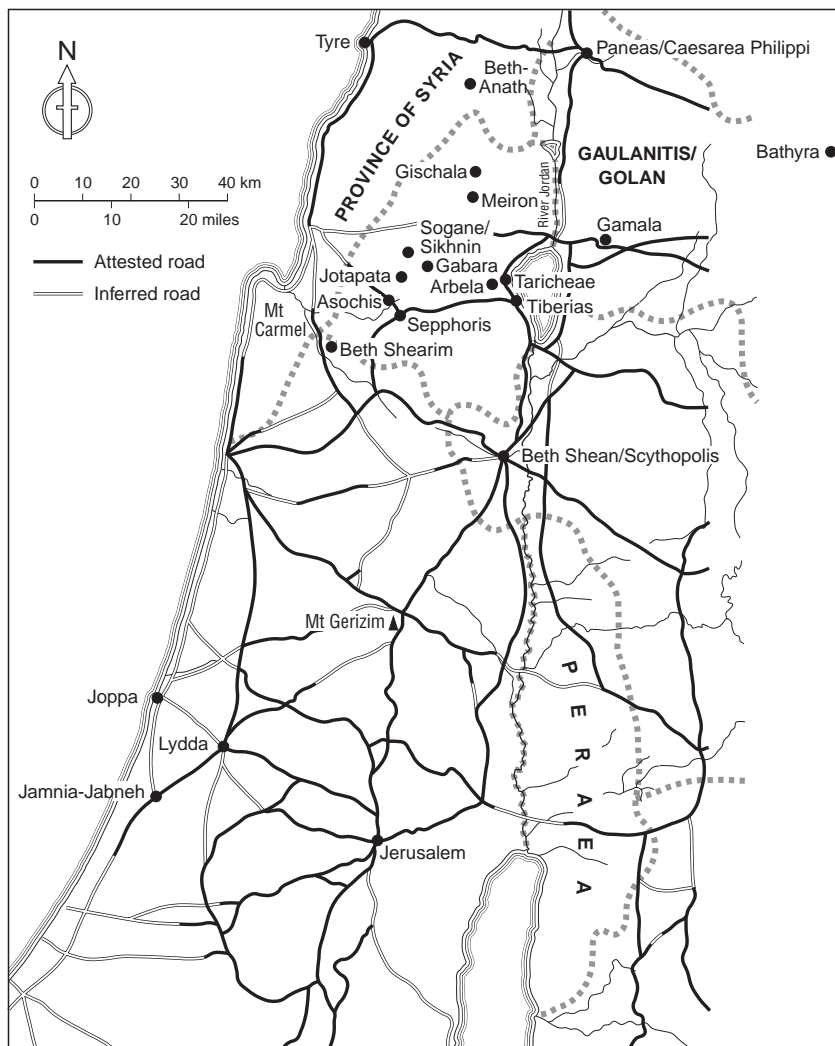


Fig. 19.1 Galilee and surrounding districts in the early Roman period.

Judaism of the two areas differed must therefore be founded very largely on more general considerations, of which a number may be reckoned quite strong.

First, the political and administrative history of Galilee in the first century was *sui generis*, and this may well have encouraged an awareness of their distinctiveness among Galileans. Unlike Judaea, Galilee, as a whole,

never came under the direct control of a Roman governor except from CE 44 to 66; even then part of the region was governed by Agrippa II from CE 54. Instead the area came under the rule of Herodian kings and lesser dynasts, whose preferences dictated both the administration of the country through newly founded cities such as Tiberias and the concentration of political power in the hands of their favourites, not all of whom were Jewish.

Secondly, it is possible, though disputed, that much of the population of Galilee was descended from the Ituraeans converted to Judaism by Aristobulus II in c. 104 BCE during the territorial expansion of the Hasmonaean dynasty into the north of Palestine. In Josephus, *Antiquities* 13.11.3 § 318–19, where Josephus quotes a citation of Timagenes by Strabo, this episode is described as the forcible circumcision of the Ituraeans in the north of the country. There is no good reason to doubt Josephus' report, but some have denied that it applies to inhabitants of Galilee rather than Ituraeans further north on the grounds that 1 Macc 5:14–15, 17 implies that there were already Jews in Galilee in the sixties of the second century BCE; some would add that it is unlikely that all ethnic Jews were deported from the area by the Assyrians in the seventh century BCE and that the report in Josephus *Ant.* XIII.12.1 § 322, that Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE) was educated in Galilee, suggests, if it is true, that Jews were already to be found there. However, the conclusion that Jos. *Ant.* XIII.11.3 § 318–19 does not refer to the conversion of pagans in Galilee raises more problems than it solves: if the converted Ituraeans did not live in Galilee, they must be presumed to have apostatized at some unrecorded juncture, for the hill country north of Upper Galilee, where Ituraeans are later still to be found, was obdurately pagan in the first century CE. It seems probable that the reference in 1 Maccabees to Jews already in Galilee by the sixties of the second century BCE is best taken to imply not a compact Jewish population but a Jewish Diaspora among the Gentiles there, for the Maccabees are said to have protected their Galilean brethren only by taking them to safety in Judaea (1 Macc. 5:23). The evidence is best explained by postulating that an existing small Jewish population in Lower Galilee was massively expanded by the forced conversion in c. 104 BCE of their Gentile neighbours in the north.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The argument that much of the population was only converted to Judaism in c. 104 BCE may be found in E. Schürer, rev. G. Vermes *et al.*, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (Edinburgh 1973–87), vol. 1, pp. 142, 217–18; against, see A. Alt, *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (Munich 1953), vol. 2, pp. 420–3. S. Klein, *Eretz ha-Galil*, 2nd edn (Jerusalem 1967), pp. 13–15; S. Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian, 323 BCE to 135 CE* (Notre Dame 1980), pp. 37, 43–4.

However, even if this hypothesis that first-century Galileans were mostly descended from proselytes of three or four generations back be accepted, its significance for the religion of Galileans in our period is still not obvious. It is true that the Hasmonaeans were more probably motivated by political than spiritual considerations in undertaking such an unusual type of missionary activity, perhaps with the religious justification that they were freeing the biblical land of Israel from idolatry, but this would not preclude the converts from adopting Jewish practices and identity with enthusiasm. Thus, for instance, the inhabitants of Asochis in Galilee were already during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus observing the sabbath sufficiently scrupulously to be the victims of a surprise attack by Ptolemy Lathyrus (*Ant.* XIII.12.4 § 337). Consequently, there is little justification to assume that later Galileans were still influenced by the customs of their pagan forebears. Indeed, it is striking that the quite considerable epigraphic and archaeological evidence for the survival in the Hellenistic and Roman periods of the old Canaanite Baal worship in Hellenized form in the regions immediately surrounding Galilee, especially Mt Carmel and Beth Shean (Scythopolis), is not replicated within Galilee itself.<sup>4</sup>

At any rate, according to Josephus, Galileans seem to have thought of themselves as entirely Jewish by the time of the revolt of CE 66–70 and there is no evidence for the old view that many Gentiles lived in their midst; the pagans in Tiberias massacred in CE 66 according to *Life* 12 § 67 were evidently exceptional, having been imported by Herod Antipas or his royal successors to fill the new city which he had founded as a sign of his Hellenistic culture. None of which would prevent Judaeans holding up Galileans' Gentile origins to scorn when it suited, just as the Hasmonaean Antigonus once slightlyingly described the Idumaeans, whose ancestors had been forcibly converted a little earlier than the Galileans, as 'half-Jews' unworthy of power in a Jewish state (*Ant.* XIV.15.2 § 403), although it should be noted that no trace of such insults has survived in any Jewish literature.

Thirdly, the distance of Galilee from Jerusalem might reasonably encourage a different attitude towards two of the central institutions of Judaism, the Temple and the priesthood, if only because the cult did not dominate economic and political life in Galilee as it did in Judaea. Geographical separation certainly led to other differences less obviously of religious significance, such as different standards for weights and measures (*m. Hul.* 11:2, etc.) and the distinctive dialect and pronunciation of Galilean Aramaic.

<sup>4</sup> On the survival of paganism in such places, see D. Flusser, 'Paganism in Palestine' in S. Safrai and M. Stern (eds.) *The Jewish People in the First Century* (Amsterdam 1976), vol. 2, pp. 1065–100.

## II COMMON GROUND BETWEEN GALILEANS AND JUDAEANS

While the reasons for postulating a difference between Galilean and Judaeon Judaism are thus not negligible, Galileans, like all other Jews, shared a considerable proportion of their religious heritage with their Judaeon compatriots. There were some religious attitudes that were so standard among Jews that both pagan and Jewish authors take them for granted when writing about them.

Both Galileans and Judaeans believed that God was best worshipped in the Jerusalem Temple and that the correct performance there of communal offerings was vital for the well-being of the nation. Galileans accepted the necessity of pilgrimage to the shrine, though doubtless distance made their visits less frequent than those of Judaeans. Galileans seem to have been adamant in their hostility to Samaritans and their temple on Mt Gerizim and to have experienced no desire to found their own temple like that in Leontopolis in Egypt, and Galilean pilgrims to Jerusalem were evidently quite numerous in c. CE 50 when the death of one of their number sparked off a riot (*Ant.* xx. 6.1 § 118–21). It is probable that Galileans paid the standard annual half-shekel offering for the provision of regular sacrifices (cf. *Matt.* 17:24), even though they, perhaps like most Judaeans, were apparently ignorant of the precise way it was administered by the priests once it had been collected at the Temple (cf. *m. Ned.* 2:4).

Galileans, like Judaeans, believed that the Torah enshrined divine law given to Israel for their guidance. Like all Jews they might differ among themselves on the precise interpretation of the Torah, but there is no reason to doubt that when the Gospels refer to teaching in Galilean synagogues on the sabbath (e.g. *Mark* 1:21), they imply the reading of the Pentateuch and prophets and discussion of the text (cf. *Luke* 4:15–21); if the public building dated to the first century BCE or later found at Gamala is a synagogue, as it may be, this also confirms the centrality of the written Torah for Galileans (or, more strictly, inhabitants of the Golan/Gaulanitis) as for Judaeans.<sup>5</sup>

Thus the basic laws derived from the Pentateuch were universally recognized. Galilean Jews were scrupulous not to eat unkosher food, even to the extent that John of Gischala sold kosher oil to the Jews in Syria or Caesarea Paneas (*Bell.* 11.2. 21.2 § 591–2, *Vita* 13 § 74–6). The sabbath was carefully observed, so that Josephus did not quarter his troops in Taricheae on a Saturday for fear of disturbing the repose of the

<sup>5</sup> See S. Gutman, 'Gamala' in E. Stern (ed.) *The New Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem 1993), vol. 2, pp. 460–1.

inhabitants (*Vita* 32 § 159). It can be assumed that all males were circumcised, since the enraged Galileans who captured two officers of Agrippa II early in CE 67 saw forcible circumcision as the way to convert them (*Vita* 23 § 113). Any differences which separated the Judaisms of these two areas of Palestine were as nothing compared with the gulf which divided all Jews from their Gentile neighbours.

### III THE NATURE OF THE DIFFERENCES

At least six almost wholly separate specific differences between Galilean and Judaeen Judaism have been asserted by modern scholars and it will be best to look at these assertions one by one. It has been claimed that Galilean peasants followed the religious rulings of the Shammaite aristocracy of Jerusalem in contrast to the artisans and traders of the city, who are said to have sided with the Judaeen peasants in such matters (see immediately below). It has been alleged that Torah scholarship was more limited in Galilee than in Judaea, that the Torah was less scrupulously observed in Galilee, and that honour was paid there to miracle-working *hasidim* (pious men). Some have thought that Galileans were more cosmopolitan and Hellenized than the southern Jews, while others have claimed the opposite. Finally, it has been widely believed that Galileans developed a distinctive religious ideology to justify political revolution against the Herods and Rome. The evidence for each of these notions will be examined below.

#### I GALILEANS AS SHAMMAITES<sup>6</sup>

The claim that Galileans and Jerusalem aristocrats followed the rulings of Shammai (c. 50 BCE–c. CE 30) and his disciples whereas the peasants of Judaea followed Hillel (early first century CE) is based on possible inferences from a few rabbinic texts (see below). Some customs peculiar to Galilee are also found in Jerusalem, such as the widow's indefinite right to support in her husband's house and the practice of speaking a eulogy before rather than after burial (if that is the meaning of the obscure reference in *b. Šabb.* 153a); the texts themselves do not distinguish the Jerusalemites involved as aristocrats. Less specifically, the attitude of the house of Shammai seems, perhaps coincidentally, in a few particulars to be sympathetic to Galilean customs – for instance, the strictness of Galileans in not working on 14th Nisan, unlike Judaeans, may be echoed

<sup>6</sup> See L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees. The Sociological Background of their Faith*, 3rd edn (Philadelphia 1962), vol. 1, pp. 40–60.

by the House of Shammai forbidding work even on the previous night (*m. Pesah.* 4:5).

Since there is no direct attestation to connect the House of Shammai either with Galilee or with the Jerusalem aristocracy, the hypothesis examined here can only be a double conjecture. However, two further considerations may bring it some slight support. It is plausible enough that the religious views espoused by the Hasmonaean aristocracy will have predominated in Galilee if the region had been converted to Judaism by that dynasty and their supporters owned large estates in the region in the first century BCE, as is possible, although the relationship between that aristocracy and the House of Shammai is unknown. Conversely it might be argued that if, as has been suggested, the anarchist Fourth Philosophy described by Josephus essentially enshrined the views of the House of Shammai in the first century,<sup>7</sup> it may be significant that at least one of the proponents of that philosophy in CE 6, Judas, derived from Galilee or Gamala, although how many other Galileans espoused the same ideology is not certain (see below).

## 2 TORAH SCHOLARSHIP IN GALILEE AND IN JUDAEA<sup>8</sup>

Five main pieces of evidence are regularly cited to suggest that the inhabitants of Galilee were less interested and involved in Torah scholarship than the Jews of Judaea. In the Gospels (e.g. Mark 7:1) it is stated on several occasions that the scribes and Pharisees who disputed with Jesus had come from Jerusalem, from which it has been deduced that they were not on the whole to be found locally. According to the Jerusalem Talmud (*y. Šabb.* 16. 15d), R. Yoḥanan b. Zakkai (first century CE) lived eighteen years in Lower Galilee during the existence of the Temple, and in all that time he was consulted on halakic problems only twice, so that he remarked in pique: ‘Galilee, Galilee, you hate the Torah’. According to *b. ‘Erub.* 53b the ignorance of Galileans was so proverbial that the expression ‘Foolish Galilean’ was standard. The statement by Josephus that Pharisees were to be found in towns (*Ant.* XVIII.1.3 § 15) is taken to suggest that they would rarely be found in Galilee, which was largely

<sup>7</sup> See I. Ben-Shalom, *The School of Shammai and the Zealots’ Struggle against Rome* (Jerusalem 1993) (in Hebrew), who argues that the Fourth Philosophy was really a branch of Pharisaism (cf. *Ant.* XVIII.1.6 § 23), and that Josephus misleads for apologetic purposes when he claims (*JW* 2. 8.1 § 118) that the philosophy introduced something novel into Judaism.

<sup>8</sup> For opposing views see e.g. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (London 1973), pp. 56–7; A. Oppenheimer, *The ‘Am Ha-Aretz. A study in the social history of the Jewish people in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Leiden 1977), pp. 210–13.



rural. The fact that R. Yose ha-Galili (early second century CE) was known by his region of origin is believed to imply that sages from Galilee were rare, since Yose itself is a common name.

Such evidence, though suggestive, is hardly conclusive. The Talmudic material was composed long after CE 70 at a time when memories of the first century were hazy. So, for example, the story about R. Yoḥanan b. Zakkai was transmitted in the name of R. Ulla (second half of third century CE), who lived at least one hundred and fifty years after Yoḥanan, and the legend can be plausibly assigned to the genre of homiletic fables, intended to encourage the Galileans among whom R. Ulla taught to preserve an interest in learning halakha. Similarly, the proverbial abuse of the Galileans for stupidity, preserved in the Babylonian Talmud, is likely to reflect the rivalry of Babylonian and Galilean academies in the Amoraic period. The New Testament undoubtedly preserves many historically valuable traditions about the society in which Jesus lived, but many have argued that it is unwise to rely too heavily on the evidence of Gospel writers who may have been too distant from Palestine and too involved in redactional editing within the Church to provide an accurate picture of Palestine in Jesus' day; the Gospels' portrait of the Pharisees is notoriously tendentious. Furthermore, it should be noted that Luke, who unlike the other evangelists appears to distinguish between scribes and Pharisees, may imply that, whereas scribes had to come from Jerusalem, some Pharisees were more permanently resident in Galilee (cf. Luke 7:36; 11:37; and possibly 13:31ff). The name of R. Yose may be rather more significant than some of the other evidence adduced for the scarcity of learning in Galilee, for, although nomenclature by place of origin is not uncommon in this period, the identifying place is usually a town or a village rather than a whole region.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the weakness of this evidence, the positive reasons proposed by recent scholars to show that the study of the Torah by sages before CE 70 was as intensive in Galilee as in Judaea are even weaker. For example, one Galilean expert in the Torah is mentioned by Josephus, a certain Eleazar, who persuaded the king of Adiabene to undergo circumcision (*Ant.* xx.2.4 § 43). But, although it is often assumed that the description of him as *akribēs* (exact) implies that he was a Pharisee, this is hardly the case; in context, such a description simply refers to Eleazar's insistence that conversion to Judaism be properly carried out. Furthermore, it is not clear to what extent, if any, this man's Galilean origins were significant for his teaching, since unlike most Galileans he had travelled far from

<sup>9</sup> See R. Hachlili, 'Names and nicknames of Jews in Second Temple times', *Eretz-Israel* 17 (1984), 188–211 (in Hebrew).

home. A series of stories refer to rabbinic activity in Galilee soon *after* CE 70: R. Ḥaninah b. Teradion (first half of second century CE) is associated with a rabbinic court which sat at Sogane in Lower Galilee (*b. Sanh.* 32b); ‘one of the pupils of Upper Galilee’ is said to have mentioned a halakha to R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus (fl. c. CE 100) (*t. Kelim B.Meṣ.* 2. 1 (Zuck. 579)); a series of Judaeen sages are said to have visited places in Galilee in the late first century (*b. Erub.* 29a; *y. Hag.* 2, 77b; *b. Sukk.* 28a), though for what purpose is not obvious. While there is no good reason to doubt these traditions, it would be rash to assume that rabbinic activity after CE 70 presupposes such activity before that date; on the contrary, a dramatic change after the destruction of Jerusalem is only to be expected. Almost no evidence refers to sages teaching in Galilee in the earlier period. According to *t. Sanh.* 2. 6 (Zuck. 416) and Midrash Tannaim on Deut. 26:13 (ed. Hoffmann, p. 176), messages about the separation of the tithes were sent to Galilee by Rabban Gamaliel (first half of first century CE) and his son Simon (mid first century CE), but it is not recorded how such messages were received. The stories about Yoḥanan b. Zakkai’s residence in Galilee do not involve any reference to the teaching of pupils or the existence of rabbinic-style academies. A connection has been suggested between Galilean Jews and the rather mysterious Bnei Bathyra, who crop up in Amoraic literature as proto-rabbinic sages of the first century in contact first with Hillel (*b. Pesah.* 66a) and later with Yoḥanan b. Zakkai in Yabneh (*b. Roš. Haš.* 29b). These sages may have been identical with the Babylonian Jews planted by Herod as mercenaries at Bathyra in Batanaea according to Josephus (*Ant.* xvii.2–3 § 26–31), in which case geography might have brought them into contact at least with Upper Galilee, but whether this was in fact the case cannot be discovered.

Judgement on this question must therefore rely on plausibility and on arguments based, rather precariously, on the silence of the early sources. It is probably significant that the earliest (i.e. Tannaitic) rabbinic material assumes that the main scholarly centres before CE 70 were in Judaea and especially in Jerusalem, particularly when the fact that the rabbis were themselves writing in Galilee might be thought to predispose them to locate their predecessors in their own familiar landscape. Rabbinic sources assume that even after CE 70 the main new centres for learning before CE 132 were to be found in Lydda and Yabneh in Judaea rather than in Galilee. One story may illustrate the assumption. According to *t. Kilaim* 1:4 (Zuck. 73) the people of Sepphoris between CE 70 and 132 were concerned whether it was legitimate to graft Crustumian pears on to ordinary pear stock. At first they appear to have followed the advice of a local scholar, who apparently acted in isolation. When they sought better counsel, they went to Yabneh.

The significance of the conclusion that there were probably not as many proto-rabbinic sages before CE 70 in Galilee as in Judaea is itself not certain. If the proto-rabbinic scholars before CE 70 were the recognized spiritual and religious leaders of Judaea, as their heirs in the next century and some modern scholars believe, it would be very important to establish whether their influence was predominant in Galilee. On the other hand, if most of these proto-rabbis are to be more or less equated with the Pharisees and therefore viewed as only one, rather small, group among a number professing expertise in the interpretation of Torah, as others have argued, their possible absence from the Galilean scene would not be so remarkable.<sup>10</sup> Since Galileans as much as Judaeans accepted the authority of the Torah in principle, they must have had *some* legal experts to deal with practical interpretation in civil cases, and, even if such experts were in effect ignored by the Judaeans as unsophisticated provincials, their teaching may not in fact have differed very greatly, if at all, from that of their contemporaries in the south.

### 3 OBSERVANCE OF TORAH IN GALILEE AND IN JUDAEA<sup>11</sup>

Often connected with the claim that Galilean Jews did not study the Torah is a separate assertion that they did not observe the halakha to the same extent as Judaeans. The text usually cited is *b. Hag.* 24b–25a, a commentary on *m. Hag.* 3:4, which preserves a tradition that in maintaining the purity of the wine used for libations on the altar in the Temple and the oil used in meal-offerings, Judaeans were to be believed but Galileans were not; Galileans were also not to be trusted to have preserved the purity of heave-offerings. According to *t. B. Qam.* 8.14 (Zuck. 362), R. Ishmael (first half of second century CE) (or R. Shimon Shezuri (c. CE 80–120), according to the Vienna manuscript) stated that his father's family in Galilee was destroyed because they adjudicated civil cases with only one judge (instead of the required minimum of three) and because they reared 'small cattle' (that is, sheep and goats, forbidden because of the damage they might do to trees). It is also sometimes hinted that acceptance in Galilee of the authority of charismatics such as Hanina b. Dosa (first century CE) (see below, p. 608) despite their lack of interest in purity and tithing is symptomatic of attitudes to such matters in the region.

<sup>10</sup> For opposing views on the influence of the Pharisees before 70 see, e.g. G. Alon, *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World* (Jerusalem 1977), pp. 18–47; J. Neusner, *From Politics to Piety* (Englewood Cliffs 1973), pp. 45–66.

<sup>11</sup> Oppenheimer, *Am Ha-Aretz*, pp. 200–10; Freyne, *Galilee*, pp. 305–43.

Again there has been more than a little debate about the significance of such evidence. The greater reliability of Judaeans with regard to produce intended for the Temple may be explained by the easier availability of teachers, or it might have been caused by their greater proximity to the sanctuary: wine and oil would rarely be imported for the Temple ritual from as far away as Galilee. Halakhot regulating the number of judges and forbidding small cattle may date to the period of Yabneh, that is, after 70. A belief that exceptional charismatics may ignore particular customs does not imply a belief that ordinary people may behave similarly; indeed, it is precisely because he is a charismatic that a holy man is able to act as he does. In general it should be observed that Josephus does not condemn Galileans as unobservant of Torah even though he himself is very insistent on the importance of keeping it with care.

The case put forward with greatest plausibility has been that Galileans were less concerned than Judaeans about purity and tithing rules, but it cannot have been the case that Galileans did not care about purity and tithing at all. Tithes were certainly paid by some Galileans in the first century, for Josephus wrote that his fellow priests, Joazar and Judas, who were sent with him to Galilee in CE 66, amassed much money from the tithes (*Vita* 12 § 62–3), while elsewhere he claims that despite his rights as a priest he did not take the tithes due to him (*Vita* 15 § 80). Nor were the laws of purity treated as negligible, for Josephus implies (*Ant.* XVIII.2.3 §§ 36–8) that the local peasants were unwilling to settle in the new city of Tiberias founded by Herod Antipas in CE 17 because it was built on the site of tombs. In the first-century sites which have been excavated in the region possible *mikvehs* (ritual baths) have been unearthed in Gamala on the Golan/Gaulanitis, where it may testify to a concern for the removal of pollution similar to that found in Judaea.<sup>12</sup>

So if Galileans were not trusted by rabbis on such matters, at issue was not any deliberate rejection of purity and tithing as important elements of Judaism but only a lack of sufficient care in such matters. In this divergence from the stricter standards of the proto-rabbinic *haberim* (associates) Galileans do not seem to be any different from the mass of Judaeans. There is no reason to suppose that the *ammei haaretz* (people of the land) – those insufficiently concerned with purity and tithing to be accepted as trustworthy in this respect by *haberim* – were a specifically Galilean phenomenon. It is probable that most Jews in Judaea also will have belonged to this group, which was defined simply by non-commitment to the self-regulations of the *haburah* (association). The *ammei haaretz*

<sup>12</sup> See S. Gutman, 'Gamala', in E. Stern (ed.) *The New Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem 1993), vol. 2, p. 461.

envisaged by the Tannaitic texts are admittedly mostly Galilean, but that is probably only because the Mishnah and Tosefta were redacted there in the second and third centuries CE; enough statements about the *ammei haaretz* are recorded in the name of Judean sages who taught before CE 70 for it to be clear that this distinction was considered by Judean *haberim* to be no less relevant to their society.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4 THE GALILEAN ḤASID<sup>14</sup>

A certain Ḥanina b. Dosa, who came from Arab (= Gabara) in Galilee, is described by the rabbis, in a few Tannaitic texts but mostly in Amoraic or later compilations, as a miracle worker who probably lived before CE 70 and was capable of healing and bringing droughts to an end. This power is ascribed to a piety rather different from that of other figures cited by the rabbis with approval. Ḥanina's lack of acquisitiveness is striking and the maxims attributed to him in the earliest rabbinic texts are noteworthy for their emphasis on ethical priorities. According to *m. 'Abot* 3:9–10, Ḥanina used to say as follows: 'He in whom the fear of sin predominates over his wisdom, his wisdom endures, but he whose wisdom predominates over his fear of sin, his wisdom does not endure. He whose deeds exceed his wisdom, his wisdom endures, but he whose wisdom exceeds his deeds, his wisdom does not endure. He in whom the spirit of mankind takes pleasure, in him the spirit of God finds pleasure, but he in whom the spirit of mankind finds no pleasure, in him the spirit of God finds no pleasure.' The fact that no rulings are attributed to Ḥanina on legal or ritual matters is taken to signify a lack of interest in such matters. He appears to have been unconcerned by contacts with women despite the danger that he might contract uncleanness thereby, and he was apparently quite prepared to raise 'small cattle' on the Galilean hills despite the (later?) prohibition on thus endangering the environment. The grudging approval accorded to Ḥanina by later rabbis who espoused quite different religious values has been taken as an attestation to the basic historicity of this tradition.

<sup>13</sup> See Oppenheimer, *'Am Ha-Aretz* for a collection and analysis of the texts; M. D. Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee, AD 132–212* (Totowa 1983), pp. 102–4 for a somewhat different view. See also the important observations by E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London 1985), pp. 174–211.

<sup>14</sup> A. Büchler, *Types of Jewish-Palestinian Piety from 70 BCE to 70 CE* (London 1922); S. Safrai, 'The teaching of pietists in Mishnaic literature', *JJS* 16 (1965), 15–33; G. Vermes, 'Ḥanina b. Dosa', *JJS* 23 (1972), 28–50; 24 (1973), 51–64; Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, pp. 58–82.

One, and possibly three, other Galilean parallels to this remarkable figure have been suggested. One is the picture of Jesus in the Gospels and Josephus (*Ant.* XVIII.3.3 § 63), where he is portrayed as a healer and miracle-worker among other things. The second is a Talmudic description of the powerful rain-maker, Abba Ḥilkiah (first century CE), the grandson of Ḥoni the Circle-drawer (first century BCE) (see below, p. 610). According to *b. Ta'an.* 23a–b, on one occasion two scholars were sent to him by the rabbis to ask him to pray for rain. When they eventually found him near his house, he refused to greet or speak to them, but in the evening he and his wife went up to the roof to pray, and the rains came. In the parallel passage at *y. Ta'an.* 64b the same story is given, but Abba Ḥilkiah is not named. Instead the miracle-worker is described as 'a *ḥasid* from Kefar Imi'. The location of Kefar Imi is not certain, but Neubauer tentatively identified it with the Kefar Imra mentioned in passing at *y. Ta'an.* 69a in the same context as other sites which are definitely Galilean. The *Abot de-Rabbi Nathan*, ch. 27, preserves a story about a *ḥasid* who, though a priest and pious, is said to have known nothing about the possibility of stoves and ovens becoming unclean, and if the one manuscript of version B is followed, according to which he lived in Ramath Beth-Anat, it is possible that he too derived from Galilee, although this episode has also been located on the basis of the other manuscripts in Peraea.

Given the nature of the rabbinic and early Christian sources neither the picture of Ḥanina nor that of Jesus can be treated as above controversy, and the existence of such pious miracle-workers in first-century Galilee can never be more than a very plausible hypothesis. The early (Tannaitic) rabbis mentioned Ḥanina but had little to say about him: according to *m. Ber.* 5:5 he used to pray successfully for the sick; *m. Sot.* 9:15 described him as a 'man of deed', an epithet open to various interpretations; *m. 'Abot* 3:10–11 contains Ḥanina's sayings about moral perfection. These traditions clearly presuppose the existence of some earlier stories about Ḥanina, but whether those earlier stories included any of the tales found in the later detailed portrait given of Ḥanina in the Babylonian Talmud cannot be known – the survival of traditions about Ḥanina despite rabbinic disapproval of his charismatic approach to Judaism does not strictly confirm the accuracy of those traditions but only their strength. It is quite possible that the striking abundance of material on Ḥanina in the Babylonian rabbinic corpus compared with the Palestinian tradition is the result not of censorship in Galilee but of invention in Mesopotamia.

The other evidence is no more secure. Many Gospel traditions about the historical Jesus are of uncertain value because the Gospel authors are likely to have changed so much for theological reasons, although, since

the theological motivation for emphasis on miracles such as we referred to is not entirely obvious, these traditions are among the stories about Jesus most likely to be true. The transference in the Jerusalem Talmud of the story about Abba Ḥilkiah to an anonymous *ḥasid* from Kefar Imi may reflect no more than the redactors' natural tendency to fit legendary events into the local geography, and it would be rash to assert on the basis of this evidence alone that Abba Ḥilkiah himself hailed from Galilee. It has been suggested that the pictures of both Ḥanina and Jesus owe much to the biblical prototype of Elijah, the miracle-working prophet of old, and that references to such a figure were more natural in Galilee because the prophet had originally operated in northern Israel, but the similar depiction of John the Baptist, if it was not the result solely of polemic between competing groups in the early Church, shows that Elijah's name was no less powerful in Judaea (Luke 1:17).

Despite such uncertainties it can probably be accepted that charismatic miracle-workers were indeed found in first-century Galilee, but less secure is the assertion that such men were more at home in Galilee than in Judaea. The assumption that such charismatic behaviour would appeal more to unsophisticated country-dwellers than to the urban proletariat of Jerusalem is not well founded. At least one other similar figure, Ḥoni the Circle-drawer, is recorded both by rabbinic sources and by Josephus to have operated in Jerusalem in the first half of the first century BCE (*Ant.* XIV.2.1–2 §§ 22–5; *m. Ta'an.* 3:8). On the other hand, Jesus is portrayed in the Gospels as attracting a much greater crowd of followers in Galilee than in Judaea or Jerusalem, and the early Christians were sometimes known as 'Galileans' (Acts 1:11; 2:7 etc.).

##### 5 THE EXTENT OF THE HELLENIZATION OF GALILEAN JUDAISM<sup>15</sup>

Arguments have been put forward by scholars both in favour of and against the proposition that Galilean Judaism was more pervaded by Hellenistic culture than that in Judaea. It seems sometimes to be implied further by proponents of the former view that greater receptivity to Greek culture was concomitant with a more syncretistic approach to Judaism, thereby explaining the universalism of Jesus' message.

<sup>15</sup> On the degree of Hellenization in Galilee, see, e.g. L. E. Elliott-Binns, *Galilean Christianity* (London 1956), pp. 20–2. Against much Hellenization having occurred, see Freyne, *Galilee*, pp. 138–45. See also many of the studies in L. I. Levine (ed.) *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York and Jerusalem 1992), especially by D. Edwards and S. Freyne.



The evidence to support both views is circumstantial. The main literary reference that may be relevant is of suspect value: in Josephus' description of Galilee at *Bell.* III.3.1–2 §§ 35–43 he pictures the region as a Jewish enclave surrounded by and therefore hostile to Gentiles, but since this evaluation appears in the context of the historian's attempt to magnify the importance of his command in the area during the revolt against Rome it cannot be regarded as objective (see also below, p. 614). Discussion has therefore tended to revolve around the topography, administration and archaeology of the region.

Those who claim that Hellenization was widely pervasive point to the ease with which Lower Galilee is traversed from the coastal plain, with the implication that Gentiles might often be seen passing through as a result. They note that the major geographical obstacles lie not on the borders of Galilee but within the region in the dramatic separation of Upper from Lower Galilee by the steep escarpment of Mount Meron, and that even Upper Galilee was easily reached from the north and west, as abundant finds in the area of Tyrian coins of the second and third centuries CE demonstrate.<sup>16</sup> Proponents of a more isolated Galilee can point out that the hills, though accessible, were not in practice particularly attractive to outsiders for trade or settlement or particularly suitable for Hellenization and that there is no evidence that any major trade route ran through Galilee in this period, although, since an important route from the plain to Damascus ran north of the lake of Tiberias in other times, its use in the first century CE is quite possible. Those who have in recent years advanced an intermediate view, that Hellenization may have been more advanced in Lower Galilee than further north, have based their argument on the grounds that in the late Roman and early Byzantine period the village culture of Upper Galilee appears from recent archaeological surveys to have had its closest affinities not with cosmopolitan Lower Galilee but with the western Golan/Gaulanitis; if this claim is correct, such cultural patterns will have been largely determined by the topography of the region.<sup>17</sup>

The administrative history of the area provides only a few more clues. Some have argued that, since some of the settlements in first-century Galilee, particularly Sepphoris and Tiberias, had the constitutional appearance of fully fledged Greek *polis*, a considerable degree of Greek culture must also have been taken for granted. Others note that these

<sup>16</sup> R. S. Hanson, *Tyrian Influence in the Upper Galilee* (Cambridge Mass. 1980).

<sup>17</sup> E. M. Meyers and J. F. Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity* (London 1981), pp. 31–47, esp. 41–2. For the Golan/Gaulanitis surveys, see C. M. Dauphin and J. J. Schonfield, 'Settlements of the Roman and Byzantine periods on the Golan/Gaulanitis Heights', *IEJ* 33 (1983), 189–206, and annual reports in *IEJ* (1980–).

cities were artificial creations by Herodian princes and had little effect on the surrounding countryside, as the rural career of Jesus as described in the Gospels has been taken to demonstrate.

Nor, despite the claims of some of its most proficient practitioners, is the archaeology much more helpful, for insufficient investigation has been undertaken on first-century Galilean sites for the extent of Hellenization in this period to be gauged. The city of Sepphoris had all the accessories of a Herodian capital, such as a theatre;<sup>18</sup> according to Josephus, Tiberias also had a stadium (*Vita* 17 § 92; 64 § 331) and Taricheae a hippodrome (*Vita* 27 § 132; 28 § 138). By contrast, the only public building discovered in extensive excavations at Gamala, which was not a *polis*, has been identified as a synagogue (see above, note 5). Archaeological material from the late-Roman period after the second century CE is far more abundant, which is in itself suggestive: Galileans in the first century were either poorer or, more probably, less interested in expending surplus wealth on public buildings; destruction of earlier evidence by later settlement can hardly provide a full explanation. The ornamentation and epigraphy of sarcophagi in the late Roman catacombs in Beth Shearim suggest a partial acceptance into normal use of the Greek language and Graeco-Roman artistic conventions, though the significance of this for Galilee is disputed because some at least of the deceased originated from outside Palestine.<sup>19</sup> More certain is the adaptation of Greek motifs for Jewish liturgical purposes by the architects and decorators of late Roman Galilean synagogues.<sup>20</sup> But it would be rash to project back on to the first century such evidence from the third century CE and later. It would hardly be surprising if cultural change in the intervening years had been extensive.

Such discoveries relating to later periods are most valuable for present purposes in their indication of a possible cultural divide between Upper and Lower Galilee. It is possible that in late Roman times Jews in Upper Galilee and the Golan/Gaulanitis were less Hellenized in language use and artistic taste than the inhabitants of Lower Galilee (see above, note 17), and, since the geographical distinction between the two Galilees is already noted by Josephus (e.g. *Bell.* III.3.1 § 35–9) and in the *Mishnah* (*m. Šeb.* 9:2, where the region of Tiberias is added as a separate area), it is possible, although still hypothetical, that a similar cultural difference was

<sup>18</sup> L. Waterman (ed.) *Preliminary Report of the University of Michigan Excavations at Sepphoris, Palestine, in 1931* (Ann Arbor 1937); for the more recent excavations at Sepphoris, see E. M. Meyers, E. Netzer and C. L. Meyers, *Sepphoris* (Winona Lake, IN 1992).

<sup>19</sup> B. Mazar *et al.*, *Beth She'arim; Report on the Excavations during 1936–40*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem 1974–6).

<sup>20</sup> See, e.g. L. I. Levine (ed.) *Ancient Synagogues Revealed* (Jerusalem 1981).

to be found in the first century also; at the least, this later evidence warns against confident generalizations about the culture of the whole of Galilee. Geographical differences within very limited areas in the period of our concern may have been more culturally significant than in modern societies where geographic isolation has often been overcome.

Whatever the best solution may be to such difficult questions of cultural influence, its significance in the search for possible theological differences between Galilee and Judaea is dubious. The reaction in religious terms to greater contact with Gentiles could have been either an increased chauvinism and protectiveness towards their own religious traditions or an increased openness to the universalist strand within Judaism. It would be a mistake to assume that acceptance of Greek artistic styles or language in any period implied acceptance or use of Greek philosophical or theological notions or religious practice.

#### 6 GALILEANS AS REVOLUTIONARIES<sup>21</sup>

The view that Galilee was a hot-bed of revolutionary fervour against Rome in the first century CE is based mostly on the writings of Josephus, although something has also been derived from one rabbinic text, *m. Yad.* 4:8, in which the following is found: ‘A Galilean heretic said, “I protest against you, O Pharisees, for you write in a bill of divorce the name of the ruler together with the name of Moses.” The Pharisees said, “We protest against you, O Galilean heretic, for you write the name of the ruler together with the Name (of God) on the same page.”’ Prime among the passages of Josephus cited is *Bell.* III.3.2 §§ 41–2, where the stubbornly martial and anti-gentile qualities of the Galileans are stressed, but other passages can also be brought in support: in particular, the historian describes various uprisings by ‘bandits’ in Galilee just before (see Gabba’s chapter above), just after and during Herod’s rule, while the anarchist so-called Fourth Philosophy (see chapter 17), which forbade obedience by any Jew to any human master, is ascribed by Josephus to the instigation in CE 6 of a certain Judas the Galilean (or ‘Judas of Gamala’). In general, an exceptionally large number of leaders of rebellion are portrayed as deriving from Galilee and it has been alleged by some that messianic expectation often lay behind their actions.

None of this evidence need be taken as a guide to the attitude of ordinary Galileans towards Rome. It is not clear that the Galilean origins

<sup>21</sup> See M. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, 2nd edn (Leiden 1976); for contrary arguments, see Freyne, *Galilee*, pp. 208–55; in general D. M. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution: 6–74 CE* (Philadelphia 1976) See U. Rappaport, “How Anti-Roman was Galilee” in Levine (ed.) *Galilee in Late Antiquity*, pp. 95–102.’

of the heretic cited in *m. Yad.* 4:8 are seen as relevant to his anti-Roman stance; furthermore, the Pharisees are depicted as accusing him in reply of also writing the Emperor's name on divorce documents, in his case with the name not of Moses but of God. Josephus' claim that Galilee was particularly bellicose is part of his self-portrayal in the *Jewish War* as a great general during his command there. The picture clashes directly with the account of the same events in the *Life*, where Josephus pretended that he had tried unsuccessfully, while in Galilee, to prevent war against Rome. But despite these separate tendentious motivations underlying each narrative, Josephus is quite unable to describe in either work any occasion on which more than a few Galileans actually carried out any hostile operation against Roman troops. On the contrary, the Galileans' role in the war, insofar as it can be reconstructed, seems to have been mostly passive. Their terrible suffering in the great sieges of Jotapata and Gamala and in the mass executions at Taricheae (*Bell.* III.10.10 §§ 532–42) may be evidence more of a Roman policy to terrorize the Jewish rebels in Jerusalem than of a particularly strong opposition to Rome by the Galileans themselves.

Uprisings in Galilee, from that led by a certain Pitholaus in *c.* 53 BCE to the revolts suppressed by Herod in *c.* 42 BCE and in 39–37 BCE and the rebellion on Herod's death in 4 BCE, reveal more clearly the intense opposition of some Galileans to a government backed by Rome, but it is quite likely that all these 'bandits', as Josephus described them, were impelled not by religious but by straightforward political motives:<sup>22</sup> the fact that Judas b. Hezekiah in 4 BCE wanted to be a king (*Jos. Ant.* XVII. 10.5 § 272) does not imply any messianic pretensions. The rule of the petty kings (first Hyrcanus, then Herod himself) whose power was maintained in Palestine by Rome was never secure, and local barons, probably the remnants of the aristocracy granted influence in the region by the Hasmonaean dynasty, may have tried to establish independence for themselves.<sup>23</sup> How many ordinary Galileans supported them, and for what reasons, is not known; Josephus, *Ant.* XIV.15.1 § 395; XV.4 § 417, suggests that some of the local people were not ill-disposed towards Herod in 39–37 BCE.

The likelihood that anti-Roman sentiment was widespread would be much strengthened if the common assumption could be accepted that the leader of the revolt of 4 BCE, Judas b. Hezekiah, was identical with

<sup>22</sup> On Josephus' use of the term 'bandits', see in general Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution*, p. 160; R. A. Horsley, 'Josephus and the bandits', *JSJ* 10 (1979), 37–63; 'Ancient Jewish banditry and the revolt against Rome, AD 66–70', *CBQ*, 43 (1981), 409–32.

<sup>23</sup> So Freyne, *Galilee*, pp. 63–8, 211–16.

Judas the Galilean, the originator of the Fourth Philosophy, but such an identity is not very probable. Both in the *Jewish War* and in the *Antiquities*, Josephus introduced Judas the Galilean into the narrative of CE 6 as a new character previously unknown to his readers. Moreover the revolt which this Judas instigated must have been centred in Judaea rather than Galilee, because the census to which he objected was not imposed in the northern region at this date; it can also be remarked that his soubriquet would only be appropriate if few Galileans were involved in the uprising, since Judas was a common name.

At least two of Judas' descendants, Menaḥem b. Judas and Eleazar b. Yair, are portrayed by Josephus as operating in Judaea rather than Galilee, although where Judas' two sons James and Simon were to be found before their execution by Tiberius Julius Alexander is not recorded. It is quite possible that most violence involving Galileans in the first century CE took place not in the home country but in Judaea, in which case the immediate cause of such violence may be best sought in the heightened religious enthusiasm of such peasants when on pilgrimage to Jerusalem (cf. Luke 13:1; *Ant.* xx.6.1 § 120).

In sum, insofar as the notion that Galileans were exceptionally disposed to revolution is not a modern myth or simply a reflection of the greater ability of Galileans to express discontent without the danger of interference by the central authorities, it may be no more than a Judaeans stereotype. It is inherently plausible that the significance of Galilee within Judaeans religious consciousness will have been different from the meaning of the place for its own inhabitants.

However, although there is evidence (see below) which might appear to show that Galilee was indeed viewed in one way by Galileans and in another way by outsiders, it is insufficient to make this distinction more than a reasonable hypothesis. Some have argued that Galilee was well established in the expectations of some Jews as the place destined for the messianic redemption. If this were correct, it would be significant that in practice the eschatological movements that caught the attention of the Roman authorities between CE 6 and 66 seem to have arisen not in Galilee but in Judaea. It might appear that a role for Galilee in the messianic drama was a Judaeans notion to which Galileans did not subscribe. However, the weak link in this chain of reasoning is the assertion that any Jews expected Galilee to be the place from which the Messiah would come. Such an assertion can only be supported by tortuous interpretation of the evidence: rabbinic texts make no connection between the Messiah and Galilee, so the thesis must depend on allusions to Damascus as the place for the ingathering of the exiles and other messianic events. Such allusions are clear in the texts from Qumran and may be found in

a few, mostly late, rabbinic sources,<sup>24</sup> but it is not evident that references to Damascus have anything to do with Galilee: it is conceivable that the land of Damascus could be taken in a very wide sense to include Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, which would therefore include Galilee, but it should be noted that according to the first-century witness of Josephus the northern geographical boundaries of Galilee were clearly defined and distinguished from the surrounding Gentile areas. At any rate, the possibility of a messiah coming from Galilee was a matter of amazement according to John 7:41, which would be peculiar if such an event were commonly anticipated among non-Galilean Jews.

At any rate, it can be firmly stated that there is no evidence that Galileans themselves espoused messianic notions with any greater fervour than other Jews. It is even probable that the first followers of Jesus found a more secure home in Judaea after the crucifixion than in Galilee, despite the location of Jesus' own ministry. Some have been tempted to explain the special and usually favourable role of Galilee in the literature of the early Church, particularly the Gospels, by postulating the existence of a flourishing Galilean Christianity rather different from that in Jerusalem throughout the first century and even beyond.<sup>25</sup> However, although the prominence of Galilee in the post-resurrection narratives of the Gospels does suggest that Jesus' home region may have been the first base for Christianity, all accounts of the subsequent spread of the Church, including the incidental reference in Josephus to the execution of James, the brother of Jesus (*Ant.* xx. 9.1 § 200), assume Jerusalem as the church's centre in Palestine. In contrast, there is no firm evidence, literary or archaeological, for Christianity in Galilee in this period. Arguments from silence cannot be considered totally compelling, since Jerusalem was likely to be the main focus of Christian activity even if many Christians were in Galilee, but they are sufficient to promote doubt. Patristic references to the flight to Pella are irrelevant, since Pella did not lie in Galilee, while references to the continued residence of Jesus' family in the region in the late first century (Eus. *HE* 3.19) do not imply a Christian community there. Claims that later Christian holy sites may have been used by so-called Jewish Christians as early as the first century should be treated with

<sup>24</sup> On Galilee and the Messiah, see N. Wieder, *The Judaean Scrolls and Karaism* (London 1962), with contrary arguments in Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, pp. 221–35.

<sup>25</sup> E. Lohmeyer, *Galiläa und Jerusalem* (Göttingen 1936); Elliott-Binns, *Galilean Christianity*; W. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist* (Nashville 1969); arguments against in G. Stemberger, 'Galilee – Land of Salvation' in W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land* (Berkeley 1974), Appendix IV. See also J. E. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins* (Oxford 1993).

caution,<sup>26</sup> as should the identification of such Christians with the *minim*, or heretics, of the rabbinic texts.

#### IV CONCLUSION

It seems certain that in at least a few respects the cultural and religious customs of the Galileans differed from those of the Judaeans, but the theological significance, if any, of such divergences cannot now be ascertained. If a distinctive Galilean Judaism existed in the first century CE, as is quite possible, its nature is likely to remain unknown.

<sup>26</sup> See the material in E. Testa, *Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana. Riti, iscrizioni, simboli* (Jerusalem 1969); V. Corbo, *The House of Saint Peter at Capharnaum: A Preliminary Report of the First Two Campaigns of Excavations* (Jerusalem 1969); E. Testa, *Cafarnaon IV: I Graffiti della casa di San Pietro* (Jerusalem 1972); B. Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision*, trans. E. Hoade (Jerusalem 1971).



## CHAPTER 20

JESUS: FROM THE JEWISH POINT  
OF VIEW

Of the religious groups in first-century Judaism dealt with so far it is the Pharisaic which has had the most lasting influence. It developed into Rabbinic Judaism and has persisted to the present. But one other contemporary Jewish group can be compared with it in continued influence. It is the one that arose in response to Jesus of Nazareth, his life, death and resurrection, and ultimately evolved into the Christian Church. The origins of Christianity are immensely complex. They have usually been approached in two main ways which, paradoxically enough, have not been mutually exclusive. One approach, not strictly historical, bearing the authority of a very long history and renewed with vigour in the first half of the twentieth century, has emphasized the radical newness of the Christian Gospel as a supernatural phenomenon breaking into the world with a startling discontinuity which defies rational analysis. The other approach, more characteristic of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has sought to understand the emergence of Christianity as a phenomenon to be interpreted within and over against the contemporary first-century religions. The second approach has generally forked in two directions, one leading to the Graeco-Roman world and one to the Jewish. The Christian movement has correspondingly been illumined mainly in terms either of Hellenistic syncretism or of the Judaism of the first century. Only in the twentieth century has the recognition grown that the Hellenistic and Judaic cultures and religions of the first century cannot be easily separated but reveal deep interpenetration (see herein pp. 680–1).

In these pages, while fully recognizing this interpenetration, the emphasis is on the Jewish connections of the early Christian movement and on the two figures who especially illumine these – Jesus of Nazareth, who initiated the Christian movement and is, in this sense at least, its founder, and Paul of Tarsus, who did most to ensure that a movement which began with Jesus within Palestinian Judaism spread beyond its confines to the larger world. While fully aware of the Jewish and Gentile approaches to both Jesus and Paul, in the present volume both are firmly rooted in Judaism: there is no separate treatment of them in the light of Hellenistic influences which might have formed them and the tradition about them.

However, certain factors make it necessary to offer a few remarks about the possibility of writing a chapter on Jesus 'from the Hellenistic point of view'. (1) The interpenetration of Judaism and Hellenism already referred to. (2) The nature of the Gospels, which are almost our sole source for a knowledge of Jesus (see pp. 621). They were aimed at propagating a faith and building Christian communities in the Greek-speaking world and so of necessity involved not simply the transmission of tradition but its adaptation, and to adapt is often to distort. Moreover since there was tension between the Christian communities and Jews, this tension, and even antithesis and conflict, came to be reflected in the sources. The Gospels often bear a polemical edge which often renders them of questionable historical value. (3) The Greek character of the Gospels involved the translation of an originally Aramaic or Hebrew tradition into another language. To some extent at least translation is always a betrayal and interpretation, and the Greek of the Gospels necessarily coloured the tradition they preserved and reinterpreted it. (4) Given the predominantly Classical Greek and Latin background of most New Testament scholars at the rise of the historical-critical method in biblical scholarship, it was natural that it was the Hellenistic affinities of the Gospels that often informed their exegesis; not surprisingly they saw them largely through Greek eyes.

The scholars who have emphasized the Hellenistic characteristics of Jesus as portrayed in the gospels have, of course, recognized that historically Jesus was a Palestinian Jew. He taught the imminence of the kingdom of God, interpreted the Torah in a highly original way, taught wisdom and morality in parables, often performed miracles and criticized the piety of his contemporaries, as a charismatic radical. But this very Jewish figure, it may be claimed, under the influence of Greek culture mediated through Hellenistic Judaism, came to be interpreted in the Greek Gospels in categories familiar and congenial to the Graeco-Roman world. Jesus, a wandering charismatic healer and teacher, can, on the basis of Mark in particular, be interpreted as a 'divine man', similar to other 'divine men'. The tradition about him adapted him to the Graeco-Roman cultural milieu and thus came to present the divine figure found in the Gospels.

It may, therefore, be proposed that Jesus was similar to a wandering Hellenistic philosopher and miracle worker, such as Apollonius of Tyana. It may be noted that Jesus' teaching was collected in forms familiar in the Hellenistic world and that his miracles were described in terms reminiscent of those found in Hellenistic religious literature. The pattern of the 'divine man' could hold together the two disparate aspects of the activity of the historical Jesus — the didactic and the miraculous — and combine

elements which, separately emphasized, could and did create friction and faction among believers. The pattern of the 'divine man' instigated and informed the formation of the Gospels, beginning with Mark's creative work and continuing in the other Gospels.

Similarly it is possible to emphasize some of the wisdom sayings and aphorisms that are attributed to Jesus in the Gospels, to note their similarity to Cynic or Stoic aphorisms, and to describe Jesus as a wandering Cynic or Cynic-like philosopher.

As will appear below, the authors of the present chapter, while aware of the parallels between the gospels and popular Greek religious or philosophical material, do not regard these parallels as determinative for understanding the historical Jesus. But the reader must be aware of other possibilities for the understanding of Jesus than those presented in the following pages.<sup>1</sup> With this warning we turn first to the founder of the Christian movement. It will be understood that the full historical process which led the movement initiated by Jesus, which constituted at first only a sect within Judaism, to develop into a distinct religion, Christianity, falls outside the primary concern of this history and is not here attempted.

## I INTRODUCTION

To discuss Jesus' relationship with his contemporaries in Judaism is one of the most difficult tasks that can be set the historian. It will be the purpose of this brief introduction to outline some of the problems and to indicate how they will be handled. This discussion will also provide the occasion for considering such questions as when Jesus lived, the date of his death and the length of his ministry. Most of the chapter, however, will be devoted to some of the most substantial issues of his teaching and activity.

The principal sources for the study of Jesus are the gospels of the New Testament, and primarily the first three – Matthew, Mark and Luke. The gospel of John is now generally recognized to contain more accurate historical information (such as on points of geography) than was once thought,<sup>2</sup> but it must nevertheless be recognized that the Jesus who speaks in the gospel of John has been thoroughly transformed by the creative theological treatment of the traditions on which the gospel draws. In place of parables concerning the kingdom of God and short, pithy

<sup>1</sup> See the following introduction and especially n. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 2 vols. (AB; New York 1966 and 1970), vol. 1, pp. xlii–xliii; C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge 1963).

replies to questions, often based on the quotation of Scripture, for example, one finds in the gospel of John long metaphorical and allegorical discourses about the person of Jesus himself. Any discussion of Jesus must depend primarily on the material in the first three ('synoptic') gospels.<sup>3</sup> Even these, as we shall shortly see, present intricate problems for the historian.

The information about Jesus which can be gleaned from sources other than the gospels – a few references in Josephus, one in Tacitus, and the information implicit in Paul's letters, for example – does little more than confirm the historical reality of Jesus and the general time and place of his activity.<sup>4</sup> He was a Jew who lived in Palestine during the first part of the first century of the common era. His dates are generally fixed, primarily on the basis of Luke 3:1f, 23, as *c.* 7 BCE to *c.* CE 32.<sup>5</sup> These may be considered the outside possibilities. The approximate period of his death (*c.* CE 30, plus or minus one or two years) is confirmed by the requirements of the chronology of Paul.<sup>6</sup>

Relatively little is known of the development or chronology of Jesus' life. He was a Galilean, and it is likely that his principal teaching and healing activity was in Galilee, but he was executed in Jerusalem. The synoptic gospels provide for only one trip to Jerusalem, the final one (Mk 11 and parallels), while John has three (John 2:13; 5:1; 12:1–5). It cannot be ruled out that Jesus went to Jerusalem more than once during his lifetime, but the synoptic connection of the 'cleansing' of the temple with Jesus' death seems more likely than John's separation of the two events by two years.<sup>7</sup> Thus it would seem that, somewhere around the year CE

<sup>3</sup> Some scholars, however, now hold that the extra-canonical Gospel of Thomas has as much to tell about Jesus as do the Synoptics; see, for example, John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco 1991). On this, see the thorough discussion in John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (New York, vol. 1 1991), pp. 121–41. He concludes (p. 139): 'The results of our survey have been negative and disappointing. The four canonical Gospels turn out to be the only large documents containing significant blocks of material relevant to a quest for the historical Jesus.'

<sup>4</sup> See W. D. Davies, *Invitation to the New Testament* (New York 1966), pp. 66–71; G. Bornkamm, *Jesus von Nazareth* (Stuttgart 1956), pp. 24–6, ET *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York 1960), pp. 27–9; E. Stauffer, *Jesus Gestalt und Geschichte* (Berne 1957), ET *Jesus and His Story* (London 1960), pp. 15f.

<sup>5</sup> See Stauffer, *ibid.*, ET, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> See J. Knox, *Chapters in a Life of Paul* (New York 1950), pp. 83–5, rev. edn Macon, 1987 (London 1989), pp. 68–71; G. Lüdemann, *Paulus der Heidenapostel 1* (Göttingen 1980), ET *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles. Studies in Chronology* (Philadelphia 1984); R. Jewett, *Dating Paul's Life* (London 1979).

<sup>7</sup> The place of birth is discussed just below. The gospel of John depicts Jesus as spending much of his career in Jerusalem, and there are other substantial differences with regard

30, Jesus went to Jerusalem at Passover time, fell into conflict about the temple (a conflict which will be described below), and was executed.

The difficulty about fixing the time and place of Jesus' birth may be used to introduce us to the difficulty of using the gospels as sources of information about him. According to Matthew 2 he was born shortly before the death of Herod the Great (2:1, 19). This is supported by Luke 1:5 (cf. 1:26–45). According to Luke 2:2, however, he was born while Quirinius was governor of Syria. Luke adds that the birth was at the time of a general census, which required everyone to return to 'his own town'. Joseph, being descended from David, went to Bethlehem. Luke's census will be explained just below. Now we note only that these bits of information do not harmonize. Despite valiant efforts by scholars, Quirinius' term as governor cannot be made to overlap with Herod's reign. Herod died in 4 BCE and Quirinius first served in Syria in CE 6–7.<sup>8</sup>

According to both Matthew 2 and Luke 2, Jesus was born in Bethlehem but grew up in Nazareth, in Galilee. They achieve this result in mutually contradictory ways. According to Luke, Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth, went to Bethlehem only because of the census, and after Jesus' birth there returned to their home (see Luke 2:39). According to Matthew, Mary and Joseph lived in Bethlehem, fled with Jesus to Egypt to escape King Herod's supposed slaughter of innocents, returned to their home in Bethlehem after Jesus' birth, and moved to Nazareth because of fear of Archelaus (Matt. 2).

We learn two things from these contradictions between Matthew and Luke. One is that on many points, especially about Jesus' early life, the evangelists were ignorant. There was no possible motive for either evangelist to have altered the date of Jesus' birth; they simply did not know, and, guided by rumour, hope or supposition, did the best they could. We shall later see other examples of ignorance, though few are as obvious. There is a different explanation for the contradictory ways in which the two evangelists place Jesus' birth in Bethlehem and his early life in Galilee. It was theologically desirable to have Jesus, whom both regarded as the Messiah, born in Bethlehem, David's city. Matthew explicitly quotes Micah 5:2 (Matt. 2:6), while Luke refers to the birth of the Messiah in the city of David (Luke 2:11). Theological considerations here create biographical 'facts', and also historical ones: Luke creates the story of a census in

to the course of his life. Those who prefer the Johannine chronology include for example Stauffer, *Jesus: Gestalt und Geschichte*, ET *Jesus and his Story*; J. A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (London 1985). Only the placement of the temple scene, which comes early in John, is of significance for this chapter. We accept the synoptic chronology. See R. E. Brown, *The Gospel of John I–XII* (AB 29; New York 1966), pp. 117f; and the convincing argument of D. Daube, *Civil Disobedience in Antiquity* (Edinburgh 1972), p. 102.

<sup>8</sup> See J. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I–IX* (AB; New York 1981), pp. 401–5.

everyone's ancestral home city, while Matthew creates Herod's slaughter of the innocents. Both serve the purpose of having Jesus born in Bethlehem and growing up in Galilee. Once we see that Bethlehem was named as Jesus' birthplace for theological reasons, we must conclude that we do not know where he was born, but Galilee seems the obvious place. What is most important is to see the way in which theology could influence the composition of the gospels.

Thus the difference between the synoptic gospels and John is not absolute: the synoptics are not straightforward historical accounts, but rather they offer 'kerygmatic history', history coloured by the intention to proclaim the saving significance of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the past century or more of study has correctly convinced scholars that they can be used as sources for the life and teaching of Jesus, provided that due caution is exercised and their nature borne in mind. The gospels proclaim Jesus; yet they do so not by sermons and homilies, but rather by accounts of his words and deeds.<sup>9</sup> These accounts can be shown to contain information about what Jesus said and did.

This can be done by employing the normal canons of historical analysis, enhanced by what is called in biblical studies 'form criticism', a study of each passage independently of its context.<sup>10</sup> Such study is based on the supposition that many of the passages ('pericopes') are earlier than the narrative contexts into which they have been placed – a supposition which itself is demonstrated by observing that the same passages not infrequently appear in different contexts in the gospels.

Historians also have at their disposal certain facts about Jesus which can be shown to be independent of the theological creativity of the early Christian movement and which provide a framework which helps interpret less certain material. We offer some of the most important facts.

1. We know with virtually complete certainty that Jesus began his work after he was baptized by John the Baptist. Not only do the synoptic gospels report this (Matt. 3; Mark 1:4–11; Luke 3:1–22), it is implied in the Johannine account, which, while avoiding saying explicitly that Jesus was baptized by John, emphasizes their relationship by having Jesus' first

<sup>9</sup> On the gospels as narrative stories, as well as proclamations of faith, see C. F. D. Moule, 'The intention of the Evangelists', *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of Thomas Walter Manson*, ed. A. J. B. Higgins (Manchester 1959), pp. 165–79. More recently J. Roloff (*Das Kerygma und der irdische Jesus*, Göttingen 1969) has argued for historical facts as essential to kerygmatic elements in the gospels. See also G. N. Stanton, *Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching* (Cambridge 1974); P. L. Shuler, *A Genre for the Gospels: The Biographical Character of Matthew* (Philadelphia 1982).

<sup>10</sup> See the brief account by K. Grobel, 'Form Criticism', *IDB* 2 (Abingdon 1962), pp. 320f.

disciples drawn from the Baptist's (John 1:35–37). Even more telling is the fact that Jesus' originally subordinate relation to John was embarrassing to the later Christian church, which generated sayings by John that explicitly make Jesus superior to him (Matt. 3:14; John 1:5, 19, 27, 30, 33f).<sup>11</sup>

We can be sure that John was a preacher of repentance in view of the judgement which he thought was imminent. Here the picture of the gospels and Acts is confirmed by Josephus, at least with regard to his emphasis on moral reform.<sup>12</sup>

Thus we can be confident that Jesus' work started within the context of Jewish eschatology – the expectation of and hope for the coming intervention of God which would transform history, destroy iniquity, vindicate the righteous and restore Israel.

2. We see the same general context after Jesus' death and resurrection, in the letters of Paul. Paul thought that the end was imminent (e.g. 1 Thess. 4:15; Rom. 13:11f), and he also looked for the restoration of Israel (Rom. 11:25f). His own career, which was to win Gentiles to his cause, was in accord with a major line of Jewish prophecy and hope, according to which Gentiles would be added to the people of God in the last days (e.g. Isa. 2:2–4; 56:6; and often).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Cf. also Acts 18:25, from which it should be inferred that John's movement was for a while a competitor of the early Christian movement. We employ here and a few times elsewhere the 'criterion of dissimilarity', according to which material is authentic which is against the grain of the early Christian movement. The criterion has numerous limitations, but it is nevertheless sometimes decisive. See the discussion with bibliography in E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London 1985), pp. 16f; 145; 174; 252f.

<sup>12</sup> Matt. 3:1–12 *et par.*; Mark 1:4–8; Acts 13:24; 19:4; Josephus, *Ant.* xviii.116–19. Josephus here as elsewhere plays down eschatological features.

<sup>13</sup> The approach to Jesus in terms of eschatology is not new: *mutatis mutandis* it is in line with the works especially of Johannes Weiss (*Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, 1892, 1900<sup>2</sup>; ET *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*, London 1971) and Albert Schweitzer (*Das Messianitäts- und Leidensgeheimnis*, 1901; ET *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, London 1925; *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, 1906; ET *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, London 1910), and it has been accepted by most scholars during this century, though the meaning and significance of Jesus' eschatology have been variously interpreted. C. H. Dodd in particular wished to define the eschatology of the gospels as 'realized eschatology' (*The Parables of the Kingdom* (revised edn London 1961 (1935))). Despite such revisions of Schweitzer, eschatology *in some sense or other* was almost universally accepted until the mid-1980s.

In recent years, however, several scholars have challenged the view that Jesus was an eschatological prophet, and they have endeavored in various ways to eliminate eschatology, often by redefining the evidence that is used. The most drastic proposals limit the best evidence for Jesus to the Gospel of Thomas (above, n. 2) and the supposed earliest layer of Q: a conjectural layer of a hypothetical document. Others either ignore the large body of eschatological material in the synoptic gospels or interpret the eschatological language in other ways. The principal books and authors who oppose viewing Jesus in the light of eschatology, in addition to Crossan (n. 2 above), are these: Richard Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence* (New York 1987); F. Gerald Downing, *Jesus and the Threat of Freedom* (London 1987); Downing, *The Christ and the Cynics* (Shef-



3. We know that Jesus was executed by the Romans as ‘king of the Jews’.<sup>14</sup> The gospels show clearly the tendency to shift blame for the execution from the Romans to the Jews. By the time the gospels were written, the Christian movement (which from the beginning was given difficulty by the Jewish hierarchy) was shifting further and further from its mother, and its members needed to live on good terms with the government of the Empire. They did not want to be understood as followers of a failed rebel against Rome. This apologetic tendency is clearest in Acts, but it is also visible in the accounts of Jesus’ trial and execution, especially in Matthew’s version (Matt. 27:15–25). Thus we may conclude that the crucifixion of Jesus by the Romans as a rebel or troublemaker is factual, since it goes against the tendency of the gospels.<sup>15</sup>

4. Yet it is also a fact that Jesus’ followers were not executed with him, nor were they troubled by the Romans for some decades. This is clear both from Acts and from Galatians. The Romans, in fact, may be seen as protecting them from the Jewish priesthood. According to Josephus, *Ant.* xx.199–203, the high priest Ananus, in the early sixties CE, had James (the brother of Jesus) executed before the arrival of the new procurator, Albinus. Herod Agrippa II, perhaps moved by Albinus’ wrath, deposed the high priest. Thus we see that, although Jesus was executed as a rebel, his movement as a whole was not seen as being a threat to the peace and security of the Empire.<sup>16</sup> The notion that he stood close to the later Zealots is seen not to stand scrutiny, and Jesus’ conception of the kingdom of God cannot be made into a programme of military and political revolt.<sup>17</sup>

field 1988); Marcus J. Borg, *Jesus: A New Vision* (San Francisco 1987); Burton Mack, *A Myth of Innocence* (Philadelphia 1988).

It is impossible in this chapter to do justice to these various works. There is a brief account in Sanders, ‘Jesus in Historical Context’, *Theology Today* 50 (1993), 429–48, and he will discuss them more thoroughly in a forthcoming volume on ‘the historical Jesus in recent research’. In the present chapter, we do not attempt to prove that Jesus was an eschatological prophet rather than a wandering Cynic-like teacher, though we briefly indicate the evidence that favours an eschatological interpretation.

<sup>14</sup> See especially P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus* (edn 2, Berlin 1974), ch. 12; N. A. Dahl, ‘The Crucified Messiah’, *The Crucified Messiah and Other Essays* (Minneapolis 1974), pp. 10–36.

<sup>15</sup> W. Horbury (‘The Passion Narratives and Historical Criticism’, *Theology* 75 (1972) 58–71) cautions against taking the tendency to incriminate the Jews and exonerate the Romans as having completely controlled the tradition of Jesus’ death. Cf. also C. F. D. Moule, ‘Some observations on *Tendenzkritik*’ in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* (ed. E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule, Cambridge 1984), pp. 91–100. We return to the question of the role of Jewish leaders in section IV below.

<sup>16</sup> See Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 228; 231; 285; 317f.

<sup>17</sup> For the view that Jesus was near the later Zealots, see S. G. F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots* (Manchester 1967). See the refutation by M. Hengel, *Was Jesus Revolutionär?* (Stuttgart 1970), ET *Was Jesus a Revolutionist?* (Philadelphia 1971).

There are other facts about Jesus which are equally certain, and some of these will surface in the subsequent inquiry.<sup>18</sup> These are given here as an indication that there is a controlling framework within which the sometimes difficult evidence of Jesus' sayings and deeds can be set. He was engaged in some sort of activity connected with some form of Jewish eschatology. He was not, in that connection, raising an army and attempting to take Jerusalem by storm. Some nuances about his life and work can never be clarified with assurance, although we shall see that a good deal more about him, and his relationship to his contemporaries, can be known than just these basic facts. The facts, however, must be respected. It must in particular be kept in mind that the ministry of Jesus led to two unquestionable results. First, he was put to death, and, secondly, the movement which issued in the Christian church began. Any account of Jesus which does not give some sort of explanation of these two results is inadequate. Thus the historian must not only work back through the text of the New Testament to Jesus, but also back from the facts of Jesus' death and his disciples' activity; and the resulting description of Jesus must make sense within the milieu in which he lived.

The description will be based on the most reliable material, but it will not consist simply of a summary of the material. The historian works in a circle from data to hypothetical reconstruction and back, and in this process the reconstruction plays a creative role. At the end, one wants a depiction of Jesus which accounts for the data, which makes Jesus a believable figure within first-century Judaism, and which explains something about why his followers eventually broke away from Judaism.

Before pressing on with our task, however, we should pay some attention to the history of research on Jesus' relationship to his contemporaries in Judaism.

## II JESUS AND JUDAISM IN SCHOLARLY RESEARCH<sup>19</sup>

Behind the general question of Jesus and Judaism there is always a master question: did the conflict which eventually resulted in the split between Judaism and Christianity basically go back to Jesus himself? Here there have been three principal views: Jesus' activity implied a break with

<sup>18</sup> For emphasis on the basic facts of Jesus' life, see M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (New York 1978), pp. 5, 17; A. E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History* (London 1982), pp. 5f; Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 1–13 and *passim*; cf. M. Wilcox, 'Jesus in the Light of his Jewish Environment', *ANRW* II.25.1, ed. W. Haase (Berlin 1982), pp. 131–7.

<sup>19</sup> On recent anti-eschatological publications, see n. 18 in the previous section. There is also now a large bibliography on Jesus and Galilee. See Sean Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels* (Philadelphia 1988) and the essay by Sanders in a forthcoming work (n. 13).

Judaism which, however, was actualized only in the later church, and especially through Paul's abrogation of the law;<sup>20</sup> Jesus intentionally opposed the fundamentals of Judaism;<sup>21</sup> Jesus was not in opposition to Judaism in any important way, and the break was entirely the work of the Christian community which sprang up after the resurrection appearances.<sup>22</sup>

How one answers this master question will be governed primarily by how one understands two facets of Jesus' teaching and deeds. They are (1) Jesus' attitude towards the Law, and (2) his relationship to and attitude towards messianic and other expectations current in Judaism. A third possible focus for discussing Jesus' relationship to his contemporaries is his connection with or attitude towards the major parties and sects. This question, however, is really bound up with the first two questions. If, for example, the study of the synoptic gospels led one to the conclusion that Jesus expected to accomplish the coming of the kingdom of God (or of Israel) by the armed overthrow of the Romans, one would conclude that Jesus was a zealot or had zealot tendencies.<sup>23</sup> To the degree that Jesus is seen as countering the oral law, he may be described as opposing Pharisaism.<sup>24</sup> We shall return to the question of conflicts between Jesus and certain groups among his contemporaries.<sup>25</sup>

A further substantial question which arises in any discussion of Jesus' relationship with Judaism is the cause of his death. Did his attitude towards the law or towards the expectations of Israel or towards the Pharisees lead to his death? Was he killed because he threatened the authority of the Jerusalem priests? Or could it be the case that his relationship to his contemporaries in Judaism did not lead to his death in any

<sup>20</sup> The view that Jesus unconsciously but implicitly acted in a way to lead to a break with Judaism relies on an assessment of his attitude towards the Mosaic law. See, for example, J. Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York 1925), p. 369; R. Bultmann, *Jesus* (Tübingen 1926), pp. 56f, 67f, ET *Jesus and the Word* (New York 1958), pp. 62f, 76.

<sup>21</sup> E. Käsemann, 'Das Problem des historischen Jesus', *ZTK* 51 (1954), 125–53, rpr. in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* 1 (Göttingen 1960), pp. 187–214 esp. pp. 206, 208–9; ET 'The Problem of the Historical Jesus' (1953), *Essays on New Testament Themes* (London 1964), pp. 15–47, at pp. 37, 40.

<sup>22</sup> G. Vermes (*Jesus the Jew*, p. 35) argued that Jesus did not disagree with his contemporaries on any substantial point. In *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (London 1983), he points out that opposition to Jesus on the part of Jewish religious authorities does not 'necessarily imply that in their judgment a religious or political crime has *actually* been committed. The offence may have simply been irresponsible behavior *likely* to lead to popular unrest' (p. viii).

<sup>23</sup> See the Introduction, n. 17.

<sup>24</sup> So J. Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, Gütersloh, 1971, ET *New Testament Theology 1: The Proclamation of Jesus* (London: SCM Press 1971), p. 211: Jesus criticized the written Torah but rejected the Pharisaic oral Torah.

<sup>25</sup> Below, p. 673f at n. 219.

way, but that he was executed entirely at Roman initiative because he posed a real or imagined threat to domestic security in Palestine? Or did he deliberately bring his death upon himself because of the dogmatic conviction that his sufferings would play a crucial role in bringing the kingdom?<sup>26</sup>

Scholarly views on all these interrelated questions have varied so widely that it is impossible here to give a complete catalogue, much less to describe the evidence and argumentation in favour of each view. We may, however, give some of the major attempts to answer each question, grouping them under large headings. We begin with Jesus' attitude towards the law:

1. Jesus consciously set himself against the Mosaic legislation in some particulars (the most commonly cited points of opposition are the legislation regarding food, the Sabbath and divorce), and thus opposed the law in principle, even though he himself intended to limit his opposition to the particular points.<sup>27</sup> A variant of this view is that Jesus did not intend to oppose the law at all; but, by appealing directly to the will of God, by implication he did so, an implication that his disciples saw after the resurrection.<sup>28</sup>

2. Jesus consciously set himself against the authority of Moses. Among those who hold this position there are several explanations as to why he did so: he intended to abolish the ancient separation of the sacred and the secular;<sup>29</sup> he intended to establish the new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah;<sup>30</sup> he wished to offer forgiveness and the promises of God even to those who did not obey the Torah.<sup>31</sup>

3. Jesus did not oppose the law either consciously or implicitly. Rather, he lived strictly within its confines. His difficulties with his contemporaries arose because of his harsh and unjustified criticism of many of them, especially the Pharisees (Matt. 23), and he died because the Jerusalem hierarchy thought it expedient to sacrifice a rabble-rouser rather than have him disrupt relations with the Roman overlords.<sup>32</sup> Two other major hypotheses which come under this head are that Jesus was seen by the

<sup>26</sup> These views are documented in the subsequent pages.

<sup>27</sup> See Bultmann, n. 20 above; see now Alan Watson, *Jesus and the Law* (London 1996).

<sup>28</sup> So R. Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge 1975), pp. 242, 249.

<sup>29</sup> Käsemann, 'Das Problem des historischen Jesus', pp. 206–8, ET 'The Problem of the Historical Jesus', pp. 38f.

<sup>30</sup> C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament* (3rd edn, London 1981), pp. 52–4; C. H. Dodd, *The Founder of Christianity* (London 1971), pp. 76–7.

<sup>31</sup> E. Schweizer, *Jesus Christus* (Munich 1968), edn 2 1970, pp. 32f, ET (London 1971), pp. 28f; W. G. Kümmel, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen 1969), pp. 38f, ET *Theology of the New Testament* (London 1974), p. 43.

<sup>32</sup> So Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, esp. pp. 322, 348; Vermes (n. 22 above).

Romans (not by the Jews) as a threat to domestic tranquility (either correctly<sup>33</sup> or because they misunderstood him)<sup>34</sup> and that Jesus intentionally forced his own death in order to fulfil his own view of his role in God's salvation history.<sup>35</sup>

Scholarly opinions on the relationship between Jesus' attitude towards the law and the cause of his death present even more complicated groupings of opinions. Some who have seen him as most vociferously opposing everything that contemporary Judaism held to be important have nevertheless seen no connection between Jesus' opposition to Jewish law and practice and his death. Bousset, for example, saw Jesus as being the very antithesis of Judaism, as representing the contrast of grace versus law; yet he saw Jesus' death as having been caused by his messianic claim in Jerusalem and his challenging the priests' authority, not by what he held to be Jesus' implacable hatred for Jewish legalism.<sup>36</sup> Others have found a direct line between Jesus' setting aside of the Mosaic legislation and his death,<sup>37</sup> while those who have seen Jesus as basically in agreement with the Jewish law have naturally not connected his attitude towards the law with his death.<sup>38</sup> The substantial discussion of this question will occupy us below; here we wish only to signal its significance for the topic of Jesus and Judaism: What was Jesus' attitude towards the law? Was this attitude one of the causes of his death?

It was once widely accepted that Jesus openly claimed to be the Messiah, and his claim was seen as the cause of his death.<sup>39</sup> In the last two or

<sup>33</sup> So Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*. <sup>34</sup> See P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, p. 69.

<sup>35</sup> A. Schweitzer, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* (Tübingen 1906), pp. 385f, ed. 2 *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (Tübingen 1913), pp. 433f, ET *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London 1910, p. 387). Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie* (*New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, p. 247) has the same view, but it is not as central to his overall account as it is to Schweitzer's.

<sup>36</sup> See W. Bousset, *Jesus* (Halle 1904), pp. 33f (ET London 1906; 2nd edn New York 1911), pp. 67–9, on the complete antithesis of Jesus and Pharisaic and scribal Judaism and pp. 8f, ET pp. 16f on the inconsequence of that opposition for Jesus' death. Similarly (but with less denigration of Judaism), Bultmann, *Jesus*, p. 106, ET *Jesus and the Word*, p. 124.

<sup>37</sup> M. Dibelius, *Jesus* (Berlin 1939), edn 2 1949, pp. 92, 120–3, ET *Jesus* (Philadelphia 1949), pp. 95, 124–6.

<sup>38</sup> E.g. Vermes, n. 22 above.

<sup>39</sup> E.g. Bousset, n. 36 above. More recently cf. D. R. Catchpole, *The Trial of Jesus* (Leiden 1971), p. 271: Jesus was condemned for claiming divine sonship (not the title 'Messiah' as such). That Jesus claimed divine sonship was earlier argued by O. Cullmann, *Christologie des neuen Testaments* (Tübingen 1957), edn 2 1952, pp. 281–97, (*The Christology of the New Testament* (Philadelphia 1959, edn 2 1963), pp. 275–90), but he did not directly attribute Jesus' condemnation to his making this claim. J. Blinzler (*Der Prozess Jesu*, edn 4 (Regensburg 1969), pp. 137–62; 447f, ET *The Trial of Jesus*, Cork 1959 of edn 2 (1955), pp. 90–112, 290f) still argues that Jesus' Messianic claim was one of the causes of his death.

three generations, scholars have become much more cautious about describing Jesus as consciously claiming to be the Messiah, preferring to speak of Jesus' claim in other terms. Thus, for example, Bultmann declined to discuss the question of whether or not Jesus thought that he was the Messiah, although he offered it as his opinion that he did not do so.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, Bultmann explained Jesus' death as resulting from his speaking 'as a Messianic prophet.'<sup>41</sup> Similarly Dodd hesitated to say outright that Jesus claimed messianic status, although he saw him as at least functioning as Messiah.<sup>42</sup> The charge on which Jesus was executed, according to Dodd, that of claiming to be 'king of the Jews', is simply the way in which the Jewish leaders put the matter to the Romans. The actual charge was that he claimed to be The Messiah. Jesus at least did not deny it.<sup>43</sup>

Not all scholars, however, have seen any connection between Jesus' personal claim (whether it is given the title 'messianic' or not) and his death. Vermes, for example, conceded that Jesus' denial of being the Messiah was not universally believed and that he was mistakenly executed by the Romans as a threat to the political establishment,<sup>44</sup> but proposed that nothing about what Jesus either taught or claimed actually stands as a reasonable cause of his death. Other scholars have more explicitly denied that Jesus made any self-claim which would have been offensive either to Jews or to Romans.<sup>45</sup> Even these, however, can see Jesus' activity as alarming the Romans and leading to his execution as an insurrectionist or potential insurrectionist.<sup>46</sup>

We should now make explicit a question which is simply implied in the entire discussion thus far: the question of Jesus' intention. Many have argued that he intended only to preach forgiveness and to call for repentance.<sup>47</sup> In the view of others he had in mind quite a definite programme, either of bringing in the kingdom of God, or at least of preparing for it by reconstituting Israel according to a new covenant.<sup>48</sup> We see, in fact, that four questions are inextricably bound together and must be answered

<sup>40</sup> Bultmann, *Jesus*, p. 12, ET *Jesus and the Word*, p. 9. <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p. 106, ET p. 124.

<sup>42</sup> Dodd, *The Founder of Christianity*, p. 102. <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 101f.

<sup>44</sup> Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, p. 154. <sup>45</sup> Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, pp. 206f.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 10, 69, 206f. For a fuller account of views on the trial and execution of Jesus, see below, section IV.

<sup>47</sup> Bultmann, *Jesus*, esp. pp. 181f, ET *Jesus and the Word*, esp. pp. 216f; Bornkamm, *Jesus von Nazareth*, pp. 48–57, ET *Jesus of Nazareth*, pp. 53–63. The equivalent position in recent works is to say that Jesus' aim was only to help people cope with a difficult world, to offer vague and imprecise social comment, and the like. See, for example, Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, p. 68.

<sup>48</sup> Dodd, *The Founder of Christianity*, esp. p. 102; Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 234f, 247, 299; B. F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus* (London 1979); N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis 1996).

coherently if one is to deal with the question of Jesus and Judaism. They are these: Jesus' intention or aim; his attitude towards the law; his attitude towards the expectations of Israel; and the cause of his death. We turn first to the question of the intention of Jesus, which will immediately lead into a discussion of his attitude towards the law and, in fact, towards the Jewish people itself.

### III THE INTENTION OF JESUS

Fundamental to the present description of Jesus' relationship to his contemporaries is that Jesus did intend something, and that he intended something which brought him into conflict with his contemporaries on an issue of fundamental significance. This is not a view on which there is universal agreement. The evidence on which it rests will be assembled as we proceed, but we should here offer some preliminary remarks in favour of the hypothesis.

A hypothesis which provides for a connection between Jesus' intention and activity and (1) his conflict with his contemporaries, (2) his death, and (3) the rise of the Christian church is preferable to one in which there is no connection. It has been argued, for example,<sup>49</sup> that Jesus' only intention was to proclaim the nearness of the kingdom of God, that he disputed with the Pharisees on individual points of law and that he opposed Pharisaic legalism, but that he was executed for creating a disturbance in the temple, while nothing in his life prepared for the rise of the church. The want of connection in such a hypothesis is notable. Jesus intended one thing, he fell into conflict about another, he died for still a third reason, and the rise of the church is entirely attributable to the resurrection experiences of the disciples. If the evidence does not indicate any connection between Jesus' intention, his activity, his death and the rise of the church, one should not be made up. It is not inconceivable that there is no causal connection in the sequence intention/conflict/death/church, but rather that all happened more or less accidentally. It is not inconceivable, but it is not likely. One of the first charges on the historian is to investigate the possibility of a causal connection which goes back to Jesus' own intention.

A preliminary remark should also be made about the second point of the position which is to be sketched here: the intention of Jesus brought him into a conflict with his contemporaries on a matter of fundamental significance. It is in the investigation of this point that an understanding

<sup>49</sup> What is described here is, in general terms, Bultmann's position, which has been widely influential. See the preceding section for references on particular points.



of first-century Judaism can play a decisive and even creative role in analysing the traditions about Jesus. It is unlikely, for example, that Jesus would have been engaged in a struggle to the death with his contemporaries on the question of God's forgiveness of sinners (all would have agreed), or on the question of whether or not he was the Messiah (a claim of Messiahship is not blasphemous or heretical), or even on the points of conflict over the law which are recorded in the synoptics (some particulars of sabbath observance, the possibility of divorce, the dietary code and purity rules, and the like). To all of these points we shall return in more detail, but it may be observed here that most Jewish scholars who have investigated the problem have found no life-or-death conflict between Jesus and his contemporaries.<sup>50</sup> None of the points just mentioned – and these have been the major proposals for the point of conflict between Jesus and his contemporaries in Judaism – actually qualifies as a matter of 'fundamental significance'. Thus Jewish scholars, and many Christian scholars, attribute Jesus' death to Roman suspicion of him as an insurrectionist.<sup>51</sup> As we previously pointed out, this is not satisfactory as the sole explanation of Jesus' death, because it does not explain why the disciples escaped unscathed. Now we also note that placing the issue entirely between Jesus and the Romans does not explain why the disciples formed a sect which was subject to *Jewish* persecution (Gal. 1:13, 23; 6:12 and elsewhere in Paul; Acts 7:58 and often in Acts; Matt. 10:23; Josephus, *Ant.* xx.199–203). We should repeat that continuity between Jesus and the church must not be forced if it did not exist, but a lack of continuity poses historical difficulties of its own. What gave the impulse for the rise of the Christian movement as a distinct movement within Judaism if there was no preparation for it in Jesus' lifetime and if his only real conflict was with the Romans? Thus the historian is obliged to open once more the question of Jesus' conflict with his contemporaries in Judaism: was a point of fundamental significance at stake? We begin our investigation with a consideration of the preaching of Jesus.

#### JESUS' INTENTION AND HIS PROCLAMATION

The surest of all the results of the study of the gospels is that Jesus preached the kingdom of God. That is the summary of his message given by the evangelists (Mark 1:15; Matt. 4:17), and many of the parables are

<sup>50</sup> See P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*; G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*; D. Flusser, *Jesus in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* (Hamburg 1968), pp. 43–56, ET *Jesus* (New York 1969), pp. 44–58.

<sup>51</sup> See Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, p. 69; D. Catchpole, *The Trial of Jesus* (Leiden 1971).

directed to the proclamation of the kingdom of God.<sup>52</sup> (They often have a hortatory purpose: ‘this is what the kingdom of God is like, therefore you. . .’)<sup>53</sup> The ‘kingdom of God’ is further mentioned in such diverse contexts as moral instruction<sup>54</sup> and the exorcism of demons.<sup>55</sup> The problems begin in trying to determine what the kingdom of God means in the teaching of Jesus.<sup>56</sup>

It seems, first of all, that Jesus expected the kingdom of God to arrive in the very near future. In the earliest surviving Christian document, 1 Thessalonians, Paul attributes to ‘the Lord’ the prediction that the Lord would ‘descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God’. Then, Paul himself predicted, ‘the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds’ (1 Thess. 4:15–17). This saying is closely related to passages attributed to Jesus in the gospels: Mark 8:34–9.1/Matthew 16:24–8/Luke 9:23–7; cf. Matthew 24:30f. The passage in the gospels is about the ‘day of the Son of man’, rather than the return of ‘the Lord’, but we may assume that Paul and probably other Christians before him equated the Son of man and Jesus. In Mark 13 and parallels there is further apocalyptic material concerning celestial signs and wonders and the like, which is probably later apocalyptic elaboration, but the basic idea that the redeemer would soon come from heaven probably goes back to Jesus.

<sup>52</sup> See, for example, Mark 4:26–9 (the kingdom is like a grainfield which will be harvested when it is ripe); Matt. 13:44, 45 (the kingdom is worth giving up everything for). See especially C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London 1935), rev. edn (London 1961); J. Jeremias, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (edn 6, Göttingen 1962); ET *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. edn (London 1963). But for the view that the link between the parables and the kingdom was the doing not of Jesus but of the Church, see W. Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions: The Creative Voice of Jesus* (Peabody 1994).

<sup>53</sup> See Matt. 24:43f (therefore be ready); 25:1–13 (therefore watch).

<sup>54</sup> Matt. 5:19: ‘Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.’

<sup>55</sup> Matt. 12:28: ‘If it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.’

<sup>56</sup> See the survey given by N. Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (London 1963). In one of Perrin’s last works (*Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom* (Philadelphia, 1976)), he sharply revised his former view. He had previously argued that Jesus proclaimed the ‘kingdom of God’ to be both present and future, partly agreeing with and partly helping to establish the present scholarly consensus. In the 1976 work he argued that it is not ‘legitimate to think of Jesus’ use of Kingdom of God in terms of “present” and “future” at all’ (p. 40). The reason for the ‘illegitimacy’ of this distinction is that ‘kingdom of God’ is not a conception, but a symbol, consciously employed by Jesus ‘because of its evocative power’.

With or without this saying and the related material, we can be confident that Jesus was an *eschatological prophet* and that he expected God to intervene in history in the near future. He taught his disciples to pray that the kingdom would come (Matt. 6.10; Luke 11.2), he expected his disciples to judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19.28), they discussed the question of their ranks in the coming kingdom (Mark 10.35–41), and Jesus expected them all to drink wine together in the kingdom (Mark 14.25 / Matt. 26.29; cf. 1 Cor. 11.26).<sup>57</sup> Jesus appears to have been more an eschatologist than an apocryptist:<sup>58</sup> he expected God to restore his people; but he only occasionally, if at all, spoke in the traditional apocalyptic manner, predicting celestial events, calculating the times, and revealing cosmic mysteries.

A distinctive note in the work of Jesus, and one that affords an entry to an understanding of the intention that motivated his activity, is the view that the kingdom was in some way already present in his own teaching and deeds.<sup>59</sup> 'But if it is by the finger of God that I drive out the devils, then be sure the kingdom of God has already come upon you' (Luke 11:20).<sup>60</sup> The saying is instructive. The casting out of demons is not in itself proof of the presence of the power of the kingdom. There were other exorcists and other miracle workers.<sup>61</sup> But in Jesus' own view, *his* exorcisms were indicative of the presence of the kingdom which was coming, but which was already 'breaking in' in his own ministry.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> On eschatology, note especially the argument from John the Baptist and Paul (above, pp. 623f). See further Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London 1993), ch. 11. On Mark 13, see G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days: The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse* (Peabody 1993). For a proposal about the literary integrity of Mark 13 and related material, see D. Wenham, *The Rediscovery of Jesus' Eschatological Discourse* (Sheffield 1984).

<sup>58</sup> For the distinction of terms, see C. C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven. A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London 1982), ch. 2.

<sup>59</sup> On this as an assured result of research, see Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 58–78, 89; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2, *Mentor, Message and Miracles* (New York 1994), pp. 398–506.

<sup>60</sup> The verb 'has come' in Luke 11:20/Matt. 12:28 is *ephthasen*. For the use of the aorist to mean 'has arrived', see Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 28, n. 1. Dodd further argues (p. 19) that *ēngiken* in Mark 1:15 has substantially the same meaning. The argument is based on the presumed Hebrew or Aramaic original (*nāga* or *meṭā*). In Mark 1:15, however, it is safer to follow the usual translation of *ēngiken*, 'draw near' (thus the RSV, 'the kingdom of God is at hand', *versus* the NEB 'is upon you'). See K. W. Clark, 'Realized Eschatology', *JBL* 59 (1940), 367–83.

<sup>61</sup> On exorcism among Jesus' contemporaries, see Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, pp. 63f. For literature on miracles among the Tannaim, see W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, edn 4 (Philadelphia 1980), pp. 374f.

<sup>62</sup> On miracles, see further pp. 658–62ff below.

One moves further into seeing Jesus' view of God's purpose and his role in it by considering the calling of the twelve. It is a well-known difficulty in gospel interpretation that the lists of the twelve vary slightly from gospel to gospel (see Matt. 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:14–16; John 1:40–51; Acts 1:13). It would be possible to argue from this that the number twelve is a later introduction and that Jesus was in fact surrounded simply by a handful of close followers, perhaps between ten and fourteen. But already by the time of Paul the number twelve was fixed as a special group (1 Cor. 15:5),<sup>63</sup> and the unanimous testimony of all four gospels (see John 6:67), Acts and Paul (explicitly citing the pre-Pauline Christian tradition as he had learned it) indicates that there were in fact twelve, even though the later tradition does not permit us to fix firmly the names of some of the lesser figures.<sup>64</sup> If, then, Jesus assembled around himself twelve, the number could not but have had symbolic significance. The readiest explanation is that the twelve represented to him the reassembly of the twelve tribes of Israel,<sup>65</sup> and it is most likely that this corresponds to a general Jewish expectation that the twelve tribes would be reassembled at the end time.<sup>66</sup>

If this is the explanation of the calling of the twelve (and corroborative evidence will shortly be cited to support the interpretation), one has an immediate grasp of Jesus' intention: he was preparing Israel for the impending eschaton. Whether the twelve should be considered a prophetic symbol or the representative nucleus of the true Israel which was to be redeemed is not yet clear, but here there is nevertheless given an immediate insight into the controlling intention which lay behind the work of Jesus.

It appears, however, from several sayings that more can be said. Jesus not only called the twelve but especially addressed himself to one 'group' within Israel and considered them his 'little flock'. That is, the twelve are not just a numerical symbol that Israel would be reassembled, but the

<sup>63</sup> It is best to see the variant 'eleven' in 1 Cor. 15:5 (D\*G lat sy<sup>hmg</sup>) as a correction to take into account Judas' death (Matt. 27:15; Acts 1:18) or defection. Cf. Matt. 28:16: 'the eleven'.

<sup>64</sup> See Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 232–4; R. P. Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve. Discipleship and Revelation in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids 1968).

<sup>65</sup> So also Matt. 19:28: the twelve disciples will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. On the twelve as symbolic, see also Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, p. 234; Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, pp. 100f; and many others.

<sup>66</sup> For the expectation of the reassembly of all twelve tribes at the end of time, see Sir 36:11; IQM 2.7; Philo, *Praem.* 164f; 2 *Baruch* 78.7; *T. Benj.* 9.2. Even if the last passage is a Christian interpolation, it still reflects the widespread expectation of the reassembly of the twelve tribes at the eschaton.

nucleus of a community.<sup>67</sup> The character of those whom Jesus especially addressed is explicit throughout the gospels: Jesus came to the 'sick'; to the poor, to the outcasts, and to those traditionally considered among the unrighteous.

The standard phrase for Jesus' followers (apparently as seen by those who opposed or resented him) is 'tax-gatherers and sinners' (especially Matt. 11.18f/Luke 7:33f), and once we read of 'tax-gatherers and prostitutes' (Matt. 21:32). It seems that at least one tax-gatherer became one of Jesus' disciples (Mark 2:13–17 *et passim*), and this doubtless gave substance to the charge. The gospels expand the theme in editorial remarks (Mark 2:15, 'many tax-gatherers'; Luke 15.1f, introducing a parable), but the fact that Jesus was especially known for associating with the disreputable seems to be firm.

The theme of the outcasts arises also in the parables, some of which focus on God's saving the lost (the Lost Sheep, Matt. 18:10–14; Luke 15:3–7; The Lost Coin, Luke 15:8f; cf. The Prodigal (or lost) Son, Luke 15:11–32).<sup>68</sup>

The significance of Jesus' mission to the 'sinners' is difficult to determine, but we should at the outset dismiss a popular view: Jesus believed that God would forgive repentant sinners, and this belief was in conflict with common Jewish opinion.<sup>69</sup> If Jesus had thought only that God forgives those who repent, there would have been nothing remarkable in his view, since no conception of God is more thoroughly embedded in the Tanak and in subsequent Jewish literature. We must seek elsewhere, and we begin by examining the word 'sinners.'

Perhaps the most frequently given definition has been that the 'sinners' of the gospels were those called in Rabbinic literature the '*ammê bā-'āreṣ*', literally 'the people of the land'.<sup>70</sup> If this identification be correct, the

<sup>67</sup> On Jesus' intentions with regard to the national entity of Israel, see below, pp. 664f. We shall see that he was concerned with the community of the people of Israel, not with the nation as a political entity.

<sup>68</sup> On the terms in the gospels, see Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, pp. 108–11. His proposal that many of Jesus' parables were constructed to defend his practice of associating with sinners against Pharisaic opposition, however, is not followed here. (Jeremias, *Die Gleichnisse Jesus*, ET *The Parables of Jesus*, pp. 124–46).

<sup>69</sup> The position of Jeremias, e.g. *New Testament Theology*, pp. 113–18, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, edn 3 (Göttingen 1962), ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (London, 1969), p. 267; see further Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 200–2.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, K. H. Rengstorff, '*hamartōlos*', *TWNT* (Stuttgart 1933), p. 303, *TDNT* 5, p. 331, ET (Grand Rapids 1964), p. 328 (section D.1.b.) ('For the Pharisee . . . a *hamartōlos* is . . . the so-called '*am bā-'āreṣ*'); V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London 1952, edn 2 1965), p. 205; by implication, P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, vol. 1, 2nd edn (Munich 1956), pp. 498f. Jeremias

implication would be that Jesus simply associated with the ordinary people in contrast to the rigidly scrupulous. It seems unlikely, however, that the identification is correct, and we must digress briefly to consider the question of the *'ammê hā-'āreṣ*. The term is used in Rabbinic sources to designate those who either are not scholars or who are not sufficiently rigorous in buying, selling and preparing food. The *'ammê hā-'āreṣ* are never paralleled with the 'wicked' (*rēšā 'îm*) and never contrasted with the 'righteous' (*šaddîqîm*).<sup>71</sup> They are contrasted either with the *ḥākāmîm* ('scholars') or with the *ḥābērîm* ('associates').<sup>72</sup> The latter insisted that food should be handled and eaten according to the laws of ritual purity which the Tanak specifies for priests, even when the food is handled or eaten by ordinary Israelites. In the Rabbinic period there are certainly derogatory remarks about the *'ammê hā-'āreṣ*. The remarks range from mild criticism<sup>73</sup> to bitter hostility,<sup>74</sup> and there is evidence that the common people in their turn often resented the scholars.<sup>75</sup> The cordiality or hostility of relations between the scholar class and the unlearned doubtless varied from time to time, and there have been several attempts to reconstruct the history of the relationship between the two groups.<sup>76</sup> There is nowhere any indication, however, that the *'ammê hā-'āreṣ* were considered 'sinners' in the sense of 'outcasts', those who were excluded from the covenant and its promises. The passage most commonly cited by those who assert that the Pharisees of Jesus' day regarded the *'ammê hā-'āreṣ* as 'sinners' and

sometimes apparently identifies the 'sinners' in Jesus' following as *'ammê hā-'āreṣ* (*Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ET *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, p. 112), but he also presents a more nuanced and more accurate position. See 'Zöllner und Sünder', *ZNW* 30 (1931), 293–300; *Die Gleichnisse Jesu*, ET *The Parables of Jesus*, p. 113.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees*, edn 3 (Philadelphia 1962), p. 757: 'The *'am ba-areṣ* did not accept the Hasidean norm requiring even profane food to be kept pure so far as possible and to be consumed only in a state of purity. The Hasideans themselves admitted that these norms were not "biblical" in the usual sense of the term; but regarding the world as a Temple they insisted that all normal life should be in a state of purity. This was a general commandment. The man violating it might not be a *ḥābēr*, but neither was he a transgressor.'

<sup>72</sup> Contrasted with *ḥābērîm*: *m. Dem.* 2:3 and very often; contrasted with scholars: *m. Hor.* 3:8; *b. Pesah* 49a and elsewhere. We leave aside the difficult question of the *ḥābērîm* and tithing. See recently S. J. Spiro, 'Who was the *Ḥaber*? A New Approach to an Ancient Institution', *JJS* 11 (1980), 186–216.

<sup>73</sup> *m. Abot* 5:10, quoted below.

<sup>74</sup> *b. Pesah* 49b: R. Eleazer (apparently the pupil of R. Akiba) said that an *'am hā-'āreṣ* could be stabbed even on the Day of Atonement when it falls on a sabbath. This is not a serious statement, to be sure, but the intense bitterness is evident.

<sup>75</sup> *b. Pesah* 49b: 'R. Akiba said: When I was an *'am ba-'āreṣ* I said: I would that I had a scholar before me, and I would maul him like an ass.'

<sup>76</sup> See Finkelstein, *The Pharisees*, pp. 754–61; E. E. Urbach, *Ḥazal* (Jerusalem 1969), ET *The Sages* (Jerusalem 1975), pp. 584–8; 632–9.

outcasts is John 7:49,<sup>77</sup> hardly the most reliable passage for the argument to stand on. From Jewish sources, however, there is no indication that the Pharisees or the Rabbis characterized the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’ as ‘sinners’, although they certainly thought that the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’ were wrong in not being more studious and in not being more scrupulous with regard to ritual purity.

A passage which might seem to categorize the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’ as outcasts is Hillel’s famous saying in *m. ‘Abot* 2:6(5) that an ‘*am hā-’āreṣ*’ cannot be a *ḥāsīd*, pious. This does not mean, however, that the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’ must be wicked, but simply that, in a book religion, those who do not know the book (the unlearned) cannot reach the highest attainments of the religion:<sup>78</sup> very few individuals were called *ḥāsīd*,<sup>79</sup> and the opposite is not ‘damned’ or ‘outcast’. The distinction of the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’ from the ‘wicked’ (which, as we shall see, is the Semitic word which lies behind the term ‘sinners’ in the gospels) is seen clearly in *m. ‘Abot* 5:10:

There are four types among men: he that says, ‘What is mine is mine and what is thine is thine’ – this is the common type (*bēnônūt*, ‘intermediate’) . . . (he that says,) ‘What is mine is thine and what is thine is mine’ – he is an ignorant man (‘*am hā-’āreṣ*’); (he that says,) ‘What is mine is thine and what is thine is thine own’ – he is a saintly man (*ḥāsīd*); (and he that says,) ‘What is thine is mine, and what is mine is mine own’ – he is a wicked man (*rāšā’*).

Here the ‘*am hā-’āreṣ*’ appears as more of a fool than anything else.<sup>80</sup> He is neither very pious (*ḥāsīd*; note the agreement with Hillel’s saying) nor wicked (*rāšā’*). We cannot here canvass every saying in Rabbinic literature concerning the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’, but we may briefly note the story of R. Gamaliel’s giving his daughter in marriage to an ‘*am hā-’āreṣ*’<sup>81</sup> and R. Judah’s explicit inclusion of the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’ in the Israel which receives God’s promise of salvation.<sup>82</sup> The priest who is an ‘*am hā-’āreṣ*’ may be ‘preceded’ by a bastard who is a scholar (*Horayoth* 3,8), but he is not

<sup>77</sup> See Rengstorff, *TWNT* 1, p. 327, ET *TDNT*, vol. 1, p. 323; Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ET *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, p. 119; J. Schmid, ‘Sünde und Sühne im Judentum’, *Bibel und Leben* 6 (1965), 18f (John 7:49 shows that the Pharisees regarded the ‘*ammê hā-’āreṣ*’ as ‘godless’.)

<sup>78</sup> Cf. S. Sandmel, *The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity* (Oxford 1969), p. 33. Urbach, *The Sages*, p. 585, takes Hillel’s statement to be directed against the Qumran sect.

<sup>79</sup> E.g. Jose the priest (*m. Abot*. 2:8) and R. Jose Katnutha (*m. Soṭa* 9:15), said to be the last of the *ḥāsīdīm*, but his dates are uncertain).

<sup>80</sup> Urbach, *The Sages*, p. 585, proposes that the saying attributed to the ‘*am hā-’āreṣ*’ reflects a belief in community property and that the ‘*am hā-’āreṣ*’ criticized here is a Qumran sectarian.

<sup>81</sup> *t. ‘Abod. Zar.* 3.10.

<sup>82</sup> *b. B. Mes.* 33b: R. Judah b. Ilai, the famous Tanna of the fourth generation.



considered a sinner and an outcast.<sup>83</sup> There are, it should be emphasized, no indications that *'ammê hā-'āreš* were so considered.<sup>84</sup>

A further observation regarding the common identification of the 'sinners' of the gospels with the *'ammê hā-'āreš* should be made: it does not actually account for the criticism which Jesus apparently received. There would be nothing particularly scandalous about Jesus' associating with the *'ammê hā-'āreš*. If he did so, that would make him one *'am hā-'āreš* among many,<sup>85</sup> and Jesus would simply have joined the majority of Israel.<sup>86</sup> This would not appear to be grounds for a serious charge. We must thus conclude that the 'sinners' of the gospels are not those called *'ammê hā-'āreš* in Rabbinic sources.

Rabbinic literature has been employed here, since it is there that the terminology appears. We assume, however, that the groups (the common people, the learned and the especially pious) were continuous. The attitude of the Pharisees (before CE 70) towards the common people cannot be determined with the precision which Rabbinic literature allows for a later period. We simply assume, in part, that the Pharisees were no harsher than the later Rabbis. There is, however, one strong supporting argument: the Pharisees accepted the common worship in the temple, even though it was conducted by priests, of whom many were less learned and pious than they: that is, who were *'ammê hā-'āreš*.

Jeremias has further suggested that the term 'sinners' was 'a specific term for those engaged in despised trades'.<sup>87</sup> While Rabbinic sources certainly offer numerous examples of 'despised trades', there seems to be no specific application of a term for 'sinners' to those who followed them.

To understand who the sinners in the gospels were, we must first make one more negative observation: they were not simply the average Jews

<sup>83</sup> Cf. *m. Yoma* 1:6 on the High Priest who might not be able to read the Scriptures. Scholars were brought in to read to him during the night before the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement. Such a priest is presumably an *'am hā-'āreš* according to the scholarly ideal, but he was not considered unfit to conduct the rites of the Day of Atonement.

<sup>84</sup> Despite the assertions of numerous scholars; see nn. 70, 77 above.

<sup>85</sup> According to Dibelius (*Paulus*, ed. W. G. Kümmel, Berlin 1951, p. 23, ET *Paul* (London 1953), p. 24) Jesus and his disciples were *'ammê hā-'āreš*. This may have been the case but it would not be a reason for Jesus to be singled out for fundamental criticism.

<sup>86</sup> Note *m. Dem.* 2:3, in which R. Judah proposed that a *hābēr* should not contract corpse uncleanness by caring for the dead (a prohibition otherwise laid on priests and Nazirites). For the proposal to be at all reasonable, it is necessary to assume that, at least in the second century, there were few *hābērīm*, and thus many *'ammê hā-'āreš*. Presumably the same situation prevailed earlier.

<sup>87</sup> Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, p. 109; *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, pp. 337–47, ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 303–12.

who inevitably, in the course of life, commit sin. That all sometimes transgress (and are in that sense ‘sinners’) is a Jewish commonplace, but occasional or even fairly frequent transgression would not suffice to label one a ‘sinner’ if he did not intend by his sin to cast off the yoke of the covenant.

The last phrase indicates the most probable identification of the ‘sinners’ of the gospels: those who, in the terminology of the Rabbis, ‘break off the yoke, annul the covenant between God and Israel, and misrepresent the Torah.’<sup>88</sup> That the term sinner refers to those outside the covenant can be seen in Paul’s usage: in Gal. 2:15 he contrasts himself and Peter, who are Jews, with ‘Gentile sinners’. Paul is not thereby denying that he and Peter ever transgressed,<sup>89</sup> he is indicating that they are members of the covenant between God and Israel and generally Torah-observant. It is those outside the covenant who are ‘Gentile sinners’.<sup>90</sup>

Assuming that the statement that Jesus associated with ‘sinners’ goes back to a charge actually made against him in his lifetime, which seems to be the case, it may be doubted that a Semitic word from the root *ḥṭ* was used. One can find in Hebrew the construction *ḥōṭ’im*, ‘sinners’, and in Babylonian Aramaic the term *ḥaṭṭā’im*,<sup>91</sup> but there is a far more common word for those called in Greek *hamartōloi*, ‘sinners’: *rēšā’im*, ‘the wicked’. There is a standard contrast in Hebrew literature between the *rēšā’im*, ‘wicked’, and the *ṣaddīqim*, ‘righteous’, and one of the standard translations of the terms in Greek is *hamartōloi*, ‘sinners’, and *dikaioi*, ‘righteous’.<sup>92</sup> The contrast between the *rēšā’im/hamartōloi* and the *ṣaddīqim/dikaioi* is very frequent in the Psalms, for example,<sup>93</sup> and both the contrast

<sup>88</sup> *Mek. Pisḥa* 5, quoted from Lauterbach’s edition, vol. 1, p. 37. The phrase is frequent in Rabbinic sources. This and similar phrases go back at least to the first century (see the references in G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA 1927–30), vol. 1, pp. 464–7; vol. III, p. 143), but we are not claiming here that any one of them was explicitly applied to Jesus’ followers. They simply indicate the character of the sin of those who qualify as ‘wicked’: wilful rebellion against God and renunciation of the commandments and thus of the covenant.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, ICC (Edinburgh 1921), p. 119.

<sup>90</sup> Paul’s use of ‘sinners’ here probably shows standard Jewish usage. It is uninfluenced by his view that all who are not in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, are slaves of sin (Rom. 6). Cf. also Rengstorf, *TWNT* 1, p. 332, ET *TDNT*, vol. 1, p. 328; in Gal. 2:15 ‘the antithesis to *physei Ioudaioi* shows that *ex ethnōn hamartōloi* is a single concept’. From an earlier period note *Jub.* 23:24, ‘the sinners, the Gentiles’.

<sup>91</sup> See M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim* (New York 1903), p. 447; Billerbeck (*Kommentar*, vol. 1, p. 498) proposes *ḥaṭṭā’im* as the equivalent of *hamartōloi*.

<sup>92</sup> See Rengstorf’s article on *hamartōlos*, *TWNT* 1, pp. 324–7, ET *TDNT*, vol. 1, pp. 320–4. *Asebeis*, ‘impious’, is also frequently used for *rēšā’im*.

<sup>93</sup> E.g. Pss. 37:12 (36:12 LXX). For statistics, see Rengstorf, *TWNT* 1, p. 324, ET *TDNT*, vol. 1, pp. 320f.

between the righteous and the wicked and the equivalence between the Hebrew  $r^e\check{s}\check{a}^c\acute{i}m$  and the Greek *hamartōloi* continue in intertestamental Jewish literature. Thus in Ben Sira, which survives in Greek and in very extensive Hebrew fragments, *hamartōlos* usually translates  $r\check{a}\check{s}\check{a}^c$ ,<sup>94</sup> and occasionally also  $ra^c$ ,<sup>95</sup> which serves as a synonym for  $r\check{a}\check{s}\check{a}^c$ . Other Jewish literature from the period does not exist in both Greek and Hebrew, and so the continued use of *hamartōlos* as the translation of  $r\check{a}\check{s}\check{a}^c$  cannot be so decisively proved, but the equivalence between the two terms remains highly likely. This can be seen in the continuation of the contrast of the righteous and the wicked. In the Jewish literature which survives only in Greek, the wicked are called ‘sinners’, *hamartōloi*, in contrast with the ‘righteous’ and ‘pious’ (*dikaioi* and *hosioi*, probably representing *ṣaddîqîm* and *ḥasîdîm*).<sup>96</sup> In the Tannaitic literature, which we have in the original Hebrew, the contrast of the  $r^e\check{s}\check{a}^c\acute{i}m$  and the *ṣaddîqîm* is standard.<sup>97</sup> In the light of the history of the terminology as it may be seen in the Psalms and Ben Sira, and in light of the continuation of the contrast between the  $r^e\check{s}\check{a}^c\acute{i}m$  and the *ṣaddîqîm* in Rabbinic literature,<sup>98</sup> it is likely that *hamartōloi*<sup>99</sup> in the Psalms of Solomon is the translation of  $r^e\check{s}\check{a}^c\acute{i}m$ .<sup>100</sup> Both the contrast of the righteous and the wicked and the frequent translation of the Hebrew ‘wicked’ by the Greek ‘sinners’ is consistent throughout the entire period from the Psalms to Rabbinic literature, as far as the evidence permits examination. One may thus infer that the saying recorded in Mark 2:17, ‘I came not to call the righteous but the sinners’ originally read (if it has a Semitic original) ‘but the wicked’.

<sup>94</sup> E.g. Sir 5:6; 8:10; 9:11; 13:17. <sup>95</sup> Sir 12:4, 6.

<sup>96</sup> Thus Pss. Sol. 2:34f (*dikaioi/hamartōlos*); 3:3 (*dikaioi*) and 3:9 (*hamartōlos*); 4:9 (*hamartōloi/dikaioi*). The *hamartōloi* are contrasted with the *hosioi* in 12:6 and with ‘those who fear God’ in 15:8–13. It should be noted that in the Psalms of Solomon there is a rich variety of synonyms in Greek for both the ‘wicked’ (‘sinner’, ‘lawless’, ‘unrighteous’, and the like) and the ‘righteous’ (especially ‘pious’). Some of the synonyms, particularly the alpha-privatives *anomoî* and *adikoi*, could not translate discrete Hebrew words, and some of the variety in vocabulary is doubtless the work of the Greek translator.

<sup>97</sup> See e.g. *Sifre Dt* § 307 (Finkelstein, p. 345). For further examples from Tannaitic literature, see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London and Philadelphia 1977), pp. 198–205.

<sup>98</sup> In contrast to Rabbinic literature, in the Qumran Scrolls the principal contrast is not  $r\check{a}\check{s}\check{a}^c/\check{s}addiq$ , although it does occur, especially in the Covenant of Damascus (CD 1:19f; 4:7; 20:20; see also IQH 4:38; 7:12). The authors of the Scrolls generally preferred more descriptive contrasts, such as sons of light/sons of darkness (IQM 1:1. and frequently); those who turn from transgression/the men of falsehood (IQS 10.20); and the like.

<sup>99</sup> And probably also *adikoi* and *anomoî*; n. 96 above.

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, W. Frankenberg’s retroversion (in *Die Datierung der Psalmen Salomos* (Giessen 1896)) of Pss. Sol. 2:34 ( $r\check{a}\check{s}\check{a}^c$  for *hamartōlos*; and so very frequently). See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p. 402, n. 45.

The importance of the lexical point is that one can be fairly certain in general terms who the *rēšā'īm*, 'the wicked,' were. They were not simply those who occasionally transgressed the law (even 'the righteous' committed transgressions), but those whose fundamental attitude towards the law was, in the view of the righteous, wrong. As Rengstorf puts it, referring to the 'wicked' in the Psalms, the *rēšā'īm* 'are a definite religious type . . . They are the opposite of the pious, righteous and godly, in short, of those who with the author of Psalm 1 have made it the goal and content of their lives to serve God in his Law day and night with all their heart and soul and mind.'<sup>101</sup> Applying his analysis of the term *hamartōlos* (which he also regards as the translation of *rāšā'*)<sup>102</sup> to the New Testament, he observes that 'the sinners' are to be differentiated not only from the Pharisees but also from 'ordinary people who maintain personal respectability' (citing Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34, 39; 19:7).<sup>103</sup> The *rēšā'īm* in Hebrew throughout this period, and consequently the *hamartōloi* in Greek which reflects Semitic idiom, are *either the Gentile enemies of Israel<sup>104</sup> or the Israelites who were seen as having a fundamentally wrong attitude towards God and his law*, as being, therefore, beyond the saving mercy of God.<sup>105</sup> The attitude and fate of the righteous and the wicked are well described in Pss. Sol. 3:3–12 (ET, 3:3–15). In this psalm we note that the righteous do transgress, but repent of transgression and are held guiltless, while the sinner 'adds sins to sins'. The 'sinners' are those who habitually disregard God and his law.

It thus appears that 'sinners' (= 'the wicked') is a technical term for those who, to all intents and purposes, are outside the covenant between God and Israel. Either they are Gentiles or they are Israelites who, by habitual disregard of God's commandments, place themselves outside the covenant. They do not fulfil its obligations by obeying the commandments, and they will not participate in its promises: 'the destruction of the sinner is for ever' (Pss. Sol. 3:11(13)). If this is what we may understand by the term 'sinner' in the gospels (and the contrast also there with the 'righteous' confirms the identification), the connection of 'sinners' and tax-gatherers makes sense; for the latter were considered to be habitually dishonest or were regarded as employees of an impious tetrarch (Antipas).<sup>106</sup>

<sup>101</sup> *TWNT* I, p. 325, ET *TDNT* I, p. 321.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* p. 327, ET p. 323: 'no Gk. term was so well adapted to render *rāšā'* as *hamartōlos*'.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.* p. 331, ET p. 327.

<sup>104</sup> Pss. Sol. 2:1 (*hamartōlos* referring to Roman invaders); see also Gal 2:15; *Jub.* 23:24.

<sup>105</sup> The 'wicked' or the 'sinners' suffer destruction (or, possibly, eternal punishment): *t. Sanh* 13:3; Pss. Sol. 3:11.

<sup>106</sup> See Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 110f. On Antipas as impious in the popular view, see Josephus, *Vita* 65f.

The accusation against Jesus (Mark 2:16; Matt. 11:19), then, would be that he associated with those who deliberately disregarded the covenant between God and Israel, and not only that he associated with such people, but that he promised them the inheritance of the kingdom of God (Matt. 21:32: 'tax-gatherers and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of heaven before you').

Here we have the basis for a real conflict between Jesus and the contemporary religious Jews; for, if the reconstruction thus far is correct, he was pressing the position that, in the coming kingdom, those would be redeemed who *disregarded* (not just *transgressed*) the covenant with Moses. If there was a debate about authority between Jesus and the leaders of Judaism, it may not have been merely about who had the right interpretation of the Mosaic law (the sort of debate that separated the Pharisees from the Sadducees), but about whether or not obedience to the Mosaic law was the necessary and sufficient condition for 'entering the kingdom of Heaven'.

We have thus far described primarily how Jesus' activity must have looked to his opponents: as a promise of the kingdom to those who deliberately ignored the law given by God to Israel through Moses. Assuming that Mark 2:17 is authentic, it would appear that Jesus could accept his opponents' own term for those to whom he primarily addressed himself: the 'wicked' or 'sinners'. The gospels also contain, however, traditions which indicate that Jesus thought of those to whom he especially came in other terms, and we also learn how Jesus viewed his mission to the outcasts: as representing the supreme expression of God's grace, in that he would save especially those who lived in such a way as ordinarily to be counted beyond his saving mercy.

Jesus seems to have thought of those to whom he especially addressed himself as 'the little ones' (Matt. 10:42; 18:10; 18:12-14; Mark 9:42) and as 'all whose work is hard; whose load is heavy' (Matt. 11:28).<sup>107</sup> He looked with pity, not judgement, on those who could not or did not bear the yoke of the covenant, and promised that God would seek and save them especially (the parables of the lost, Luke 15). Further, his preaching to them the good news that they would inherit the kingdom he saw as the chief proof that the kingdom was in fact at hand (Matt. 11:2-6). If the saying on the sign of Jonah (Matt. 16:4) is authentic, it would fit here: the sign of the kingdom is that outsiders were preached to and repented.

It is important to attain a clear perspective on what the dispute, as thus far described, was about. As we stated above, it was not about whether or not God was merciful. No ordinary Jew who read the Tanak, or heard

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 108-13.

it read in the synagogue, could doubt for a minute the mercy of God. The dispute was over the condition to which God's promise of mercy was attached. It seems that Jesus extended God's mercy even beyond the broad bounds of Judaism – which always emphasized the greatness of his mercy. In the normal Jewish view, God would be merciful, and endlessly forgiving towards those who intended to stay in the covenant, despite their transgressions, provided only that they repented, made compensation, and brought a sacrifice to accompany their confession (see just below). Many Jews would include within the bounds of God's mercy the Gentiles who obeyed some of the main elements of the law.<sup>108</sup> In Jesus' view, God showed his mercy to those who heard and responded to him and his message, even while they lived outside the framework of at least some of the Mosaic ordinances; that is, while they were still 'tax-gatherers and sinners'.

Thus on the issue of the sinners there turned an important question which we shall phrase in two ways: Who speaks for God? Or, Is observance of the commandments the necessary condition of 'entering the kingdom'? That is, the issue was whether or not the Mosaic covenant was the full disclosure of the will of God to Israel.<sup>109</sup> In rejecting Jesus' claim, his contemporaries were not rejecting the grace of God, they were rejecting his claim that the grace of God was directed to those who accepted him rather than (or as well as) to those who were faithful in observing the commandments of the covenant.

This brings us to the question of whether Jesus intended to make an exclusive claim, that the kingdom would be inherited *only* by his 'little ones', or whether the intention was only to offer inclusion to those otherwise considered outcasts, without, however, rejecting those whose loyalty to the covenant was not in question. Jeremias has argued that the implication of Jesus' language is exclusivist: the kingdom would consist only of the 'sinners' or the 'poor'. He cites the first beatitude (Luke 6:20; Matt. 5:3), which promises the kingdom to 'the poor', and argues that it implies that 'the reign of God belongs *to the poor alone*'. 'Semitic languages often omit a qualifying "only," even where we feel it to be indispensable; it must therefore often be supplied in translation. So too here; the first beatitude means that salvation is destined *only* for beggars and sinners.' The same implication is found in Mark 2:17, *not* the righteous *but* sinners.

<sup>108</sup> This was the dominant Rabbinic view, but we cannot say what view prevailed in Jesus' day. Rabbinic passages are summarized in Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 206–12; and the harder view of the Dead Sea Sect in *ibid.*, pp. 243, 247–9, 252–4. For the Psalms of Solomon, see *ibid.*, pp. 400f, 404–6. On the Gentiles in Jewish eschatological expectation, see Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 216–18.

<sup>109</sup> Similarly, J. Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees* (Cambridge 1973), pp. 43–5.

Similarly Matt. 21:31 (tax-gatherers and prostitutes will *precede* the righteous) is understood to mean that “Publicans and prostitutes will enter the *basileia* of God, and not you”.<sup>110</sup> Somewhat curiously, then, Jeremias concludes that in these sayings there is implied ‘the unlimited sovereignty of God’ and also his ‘unbounded mercy’.<sup>111</sup> As he later puts it: ‘Because God is so boundlessly gracious, because God loves sinners, Jesus does not gather the holy remnant, but the all-embracing community of salvation of God’s new people.’<sup>112</sup>

The difficulty with the argument is apparent. The community cannot be all-embracing if it excludes precisely those who, in obedience to the will of God as made known through the Torah, have been loyal and faithful to the covenant. Probably indicative of Jesus’ attitude are the parables of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32) and the lost sheep (Matt. 18:12–14/Luke 15:4–6). The focus of the parables is on the saving of the lost, but the elder son and the sheep who stayed within the fold are not cast out in favour of the formerly lost.<sup>113</sup>

One might offer the hypothesis that Jesus was so engrossed in his mission to those who usually counted outside the covenant that he could, in hyperbolic language, talk as if only they would inherit the kingdom, without actually intending that those who were normally Torah-obedient would not. The issue here is this: did Jesus demand loyalty to himself and his calling as the *necessary* and *exclusive* condition for receiving the kingdom, or as a *supplementary* condition, one which would permit those to be included who could not otherwise be? There is solid evidence which points towards seeing Jesus as having intended the call of ‘all Israel’, not just the outcasts who are so prominent in the gospels. In the first place, the call of the twelve disciples is to be seen as a symbolic call of all the descendants of Jacob. Secondly, we note that Jesus did not lead his followers into the wilderness to constitute a reduced ‘true Israel’, as did, for example, the leader of the Dead Sea Sect. Thirdly, Jesus’ followers did not intentionally create a sect. Even as late as Romans (c. CE 64), Paul still hoped that all Israel would come in (Rom. 11:25f), and the universal thrust of the early Christian mission was almost certainly true to Jesus.

Thus Jesus saw his mission as being to all Israel, but he especially emphasized the outcasts and promised them inclusion. This seems to have been a ground of offence, and many of his contemporaries probably saw him as threatening the sufficiency of the observance of the Mosaic covenant as the condition for entering the kingdom. In his preaching and

<sup>110</sup> Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 116f.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* p. 117. <sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* p. 177.

<sup>113</sup> The sayings to the effect that the ‘sons of the kingdom’ will be cast out (e.g. Matt. 8:12) are best seen as later Christian polemic against Judaism.



in his association with 'tax-gatherers and sinners', he proclaimed that even those normally counted 'wicked' were to inherit the promised kingdom, and that it began to be present among them in his words and deeds.

What mode of life was followed by the 'wicked' who responded to Jesus' call? There is no indication that Jesus expected them to be righteous by the law. This would have involved bringing a sacrifice and confessing the sin before the priest; and, in the case of those who had defrauded others, repaying the money with an added fifth (Lev. 6:1-5 (Heb. 5:20-6); Num. 5:5-7).<sup>114</sup> Further, those engaged in a profession widely considered sinful in and of itself, such as collecting taxes for Antipas or the Romans, would normally be expected to show their repentance by leaving their business. Jesus seems to have required neither a change of occupation nor the formal acts of repentance.<sup>115</sup> That is not to say that he tolerated immorality on the part of those who followed him. Both the gospel traditions and the subsequent history of the early Christian movement reflect a stringent morality, a life characterized by 'blamelessness' (e.g. 1 Thess. 5:23), complete commitment and the willingness to give up all for the sake of the kingdom (see for example the parables of The Hidden Treasure and The Pearl, Matt. 10:44-6). Those who followed or accepted the message of the wandering Galilean, who 'had not where to lay his head' (Matt. 8:20), must have accepted the implicit demand for self-sacrifice and a new moral existence.<sup>116</sup>

Finally it must be asked whether or not Jesus, in extending God's promises to those in Israel who did not keep the covenant as it was traditionally understood, also extended them to those who were from birth outside the covenant: the Gentiles. It should first of all be observed that in the Judaism of Jesus' day there was no one dogmatic position on the fate of the Gentiles. In the apocalyptic literature of the preceding decades the Gentiles are seldom mentioned, but contrasting attitudes may nevertheless be seen. The Dead Sea War Scroll presupposes that at the eschaton all the Gentiles will be destroyed,<sup>117</sup> while 1 Enoch 90:30 represents some as repenting. There are also indications of divergent views

<sup>114</sup> On confession as required in sacrifice, see *Sifre* Num. 2 (to Num. 5:7); A. Büchler, *Studies in Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinic Literature of the First Century* (London 1928; New York 1967), pp. 410, 416f.

<sup>115</sup> See O. Michel, 'Telōnēs', *TWNT* 8, p. 105, ET *TDNT* 8 (Grand Rapids 1972), p. 105; C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, edn 3 (London 1981), p. 24; Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 206-8.

<sup>116</sup> See W. D. Davies, 'The demand of Jesus in its setting', *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 425-35; *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia 1984), pp. 393f, nn. 28, 29. See IQM 1:1f, 5-7.

<sup>117</sup> See IQM 1:1f, 5-7.

among Rabbis of the period of R. Johanan b. Zakkai.<sup>118</sup> The debate among the Rabbis in the period immediately after the war of 66–70, when anti-Gentile feeling might be expected to be strongest, is represented by the dispute between R. Eliezer, who maintained that there were no righteous Gentiles, and R. Joshua, who held that there were some, and that they would have a share in the world to come.<sup>119</sup> Eventually, it should be noted, R. Joshua's opinion prevailed.<sup>120</sup>

Whatever the views of his contemporaries, it seems that Jesus limited his own preaching and mission to Israelites, and, as we have indicated, primarily to the 'poor' and 'sinners': 'I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and to them alone' (Matt. 15:24). The evidence of the gospels as they stand is mixed, and the divergent statements on the Gentiles are doubtless to be explained by the history of the debate within the church. An exhaustive treatment would have to take account of the exclusivist statements of Matt. 10:5, 23; the stories of Jesus healing Gentiles (Matt. 8:5–18; 15:21–8 and parallels); the reported journey to Tyre and Sidon (Mark 7:24, 31); the reference to making the temple a house of prayer for all the nations (Gentiles) (Mark 11:17); and many others. It will suffice here to quote Jeremias' summary of his convincing treatment of these passages:

If we leave out of account quotations, summaries, and allegorical interpretations of parables, we find that Matthew yields the same results as Mark and Luke: the only solid evidence which the evangelists possess for Jesus' activity among the Gentiles consists of the accounts of the two cases of healing at a distance (Matt. 8:5–13 and parallel; Mark 7:24–30 and parallel), alongside of which the story of the Gadarene demoniac may perhaps be placed. That is all.<sup>121</sup>

Jeremias then concludes that 'the earthly ministry of Jesus had not yet embraced the Gentiles',<sup>122</sup> and this conclusion seems well founded.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>118</sup> See the tradition in *b. B. Bat.* 10b and the explanations by Neusner, *Life of Yohanan ben Zakkai* (rev. edn Leiden, 1970), pp. 183f, 246–9; and by Morton Smith in Neusner, *Development of a Legend* (Leiden 1970), pp. 102f. It is best to follow Smith in seeing R. Johanan as taking a favourable position towards the Gentiles and the others as disagreeing.

<sup>119</sup> *t. Sanh.* 13:2. Jeremias (*Jesu Verbeissung für die Völker*, Stuttgart, 1958, ET *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, (London 1958), pp. 40f), in arguing for the view that 'the attitude of late Judaism towards non-Jews was uncompromisingly severe', cites only the opinion of R. Eliezer from *t. Sanh.* 13:2. But see Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, pp. 63–7, on Judaism's "uneasy conscience" on the Gentile question.

<sup>120</sup> See the general survey by B. W. Helgott, *The Doctrine of Election in Tannaitic Literature* (New York 1954).

<sup>121</sup> Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, p. 35. <sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* p. 39.

<sup>123</sup> The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29–37) does not provide information about Jesus' view of his own mission.

Jeremias also argues, however, primarily on the basis of Matt. 8:12 and related passages (Matt. 12:41f; 11:22; 10:15; 25:31–4), that Jesus did promise eschatological salvation to the Gentiles, and predicted the destruction of the present generation of Israel.<sup>124</sup> He properly appeals to the biblical picture of the pilgrimage of the Gentiles to Zion.<sup>125</sup> But a difficulty is apparent; why does Jesus limit himself to ‘the lost sheep of the house of Israel’, only to promise the kingdom to the Gentiles, possibly to the exclusion of Israel? Jeremias proposes that the principle is ‘to the Jew first’.<sup>126</sup> The reason, in his view, for Jesus’ call to Israel is ‘in order that the incorporation of the Gentiles into the Kingdom of God might be possible’.<sup>127</sup>

Convincing as is Jeremias’ demonstration that Jesus’ mission was limited to Israel, it is difficult to follow him in his complete acceptance of Matt. 8:12. Firstly, ‘the place of wailing and grinding of teeth’ is a Matthaean phrase.<sup>128</sup> Secondly, the entirety of verse 12 is hard to reconcile with the primary place given to the patriarchs of Israel in verse 11. Is it intended that only the patriarchs will enjoy the fruits of the kingdom, but none of their descendants? This seems unlikely. Thirdly, on *a priori* grounds it is hard to imagine that Jesus directed his entire energy towards calling the ‘poor’ of Israel, only to predict that they would have no place in the kingdom, but would be expelled in favour of the Gentiles. Even Jeremias’ principle of ‘to the Jew first’ would hardly account for this. On the other hand, it is quite reasonable to see such passages as Matt. 8:12 arising in the sometimes bitter debates between Jews and Christians. If Christians were persecuted as early as Paul (Gal. 1:13), it is reasonable to think that they would retaliate and threaten ‘those who were born to the kingdom’ with perdition. On all counts, then, it is unlikely that Jesus predicted or threatened the exclusion of Israel from the coming kingdom.

What about Jeremias’ positive point, that Jesus envisaged the inclusion of the Gentiles at the eschaton? It is difficult to accept Matt. 25:31f as going back to Jesus, and the statement in Matt. 8:11, that many would come from east and west, may not refer to Gentiles (if, as proposed here, we reject 8:12). ‘From east and west’ most naturally indicates Jews from the dispersion, as in Baruch 5:5: ‘Arise, O Jerusalem . . . and see your

<sup>124</sup> Jeremias, *Jesu Verbeissung für die Völker*, ET *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations*, p. 51: ‘Mercy will be extended to the Gentiles, and *Israel will be excluded*, at any rate the living generation of Israelites.’ The last phrase is based on Matt. 12:41f.

<sup>125</sup> *Jesu Verbeissung für die Völker*, ET *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations*, pp. 57–62.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71. The quotation is from Rom. 1:16.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>128</sup> See Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, p. 352, ET *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 326.

children gathered from west and east.<sup>129</sup> On the other hand, Jewish eschatology frequently included the Gentiles, and after Jesus' death the apostles were open to the possibility that Gentiles would be included, as the career of Paul makes clear (see also Acts 10). The evidence that Jesus ever had the Gentiles in mind is by no means so clear as that his mission was to the lost of Israel, but it remains as a possibility, and it would help to account for the willingness of the Jerusalem apostles to accept missionary activity among the Gentiles, just as his own restriction of his activity to Israel helps to account for the early lack of initiative towards a Gentile mission.

While Jesus seems not to have gone directly to Gentiles, we should recall that the 'sinners' to whom he directed his ministry would have been regarded by the pious as being as far removed from the covenant as Gentiles. Thus it can be said that Jesus pushed the proclamation of the kingdom to the farthest edge of Judaism.<sup>130</sup>

#### JESUS' INTENTION AND THE ACTUALITIES OF JUDAISM

To see how well the proposal about Jesus' intention and the point of dispute between him and his adversaries will stand testing, we should consider the conflicts reported between Jesus and the actualities of Judaism: the temple, the sabbath and the Torah. It should be noted that all the reported conflicts actually fall under the heading of conflicts over the Torah, for the conduct of the temple sacrifices and the observance of the sabbath are commanded there. As a matter of convenience, however, we shall separate the discussion of the conflicts over the temple and the sabbath from the conflicts over the Torah which are more general in nature.

The synoptic gospels all connect the 'cleansing of the temple' with the death of Jesus in an intimate way. In Mark and Luke the explicit statement is made that, after Jesus' disruption of the temple affairs, the chief priests and scribes considered how they might be rid of him (Mark 11:18/Luke 19:47). The connection is not so explicit in Matthew (21:12f), but the 'cleansing' of the temple is still placed in the context of the strife

<sup>129</sup> See Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, p. 220, who cites Isa. 49:12; 43:5; Pss. 107:1-3 (LXX: 106:1-3); Pss. Sol. 11:3-7. See also D. C. Allison, *The Jewish Tradition in Q* (Valley Forge, 1997), ch. 8.

<sup>130</sup> The 'publicans' or 'tax gatherers' in the gospels are Jewish, as is shown by the fact that the question of circumcision does not arise. On the minor farmers of indirect taxes, who were ordinarily natives, see O. Michel. 'Telōnēs', *TWNT* 8, pp. 88-106, ET *TDNT* 8, pp. 88-105, esp. 102f; Jeremias *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, pp. 337-355, ET *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, pp. 303-12.

that led up to Jesus' death. The word 'cleansing' goes in inverted commas, because it is dubious as a description of what Jesus did or of what he could have been understood as doing. The term 'cleansing' as the traditional title of the pericope rests either on the supposition that there was dishonesty involved in the changing of money and selling of pigeons (assuming the authenticity of the 'den of thieves' saying, Mark 11:17)<sup>131</sup> or on the assumption that any commerce in connection with the worship of God is necessarily befouling, so that 'cleansing' was required.<sup>132</sup> In this view, Jesus quite rightly, in the name of purifying the worship of God, cast out the money-changers and pigeon-sellers from the temple precincts so that prayer would not be besmirched with commerce. It is unlikely, however, that any serious dispute would have resulted if Jesus had merely protested dishonesty in trading, and, in fact, the verse which implies dishonesty is probably a secondary addition to the passage.<sup>133</sup> Nor is it likely that either Jesus or his contemporaries would have seen commerce as such as befouling the temple service. Here we should consider how the matter would actually have looked to any Jew, including Jesus, in the first century.<sup>134</sup>

Those who were required by law to bring a sacrifice, or those who wished to bring a voluntary sacrifice, could of course provide their own bird or animal, which, after being inspected, could be offered. In most cases, however, this would prove so impracticable that it would be

<sup>131</sup> Cf. A. Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Grand Rapids 1883), vol. 1, p. 370: 'most improper transactions were carried on, to the taking undue advantage of the poor people. . . .' Jeremias (*New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, p. 145) continues the view that Jesus charged the priests with profiteering. Most recent scholars, however, consider Mark 11:17 *et parr.* ('den of thieves') not to be original. See Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, p. 36, *ET History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 36; Boismard, *Synopse des quatre Evangiles* (Paris 1972), vol. II, pp. 334–6; J. Roloff, *Das Kerygma und der irdische Jesus*, p. 93; M. Trautmann, *Zeichenhafte Handlungen Jesu* (Würzburg 1980), pp. 87–90; Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History*, p. 132 and notes.

<sup>132</sup> Essentially, this is a nineteenth-century view, resting on the assumption that 'externalism' is corruptive of true religion. See, for example, I. Abrahams, 'The Cleansing of the Temple', *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, ser. 1 (Cambridge 1917), p. 88: 'When Jesus overturned the money-changers and ejected the sellers of doves from the Temple he did a service to Judaism.' This view is still continued in recent literature, even when Mark 11:17 is dropped: Jesus was purifying the temple so that it could truly serve as a house of worship. See Roloff, *Das Kerygma*, pp. 96f; similarly E. Trocmé, *Jesus de Nazareth vu par les témoins de sa vie* (Neuchâtel 1971), p. 134; *ET Jesus as Seen by His Contemporaries* (London 1973), p. 118.

<sup>133</sup> See n. 131 above.

<sup>134</sup> On the conduct of the temple, with special reference to the synoptic passage under consideration, see Abrahams, *Studies* 1, pp. 82–9. We need not here decide some points of detail, such as precisely where the buying and selling were conducted. See on this W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land* (Berkeley 1974), pp. 349–52 and notes, where there is also a general discussion of the historicity and significance of the event.

impossible. What if someone from an outlying area brought a sacrifice which did not pass inspection? It was simplest at or near the temple to buy a sacrifice which was previously inspected and to offer it. We need not argue that there was absolutely no dishonesty on the part of those in a position to profit from the Mosaic ordinances concerning sacrifices. The point is that, for the Mosaic ordinances to be observed, some such system had to be in effect. Otherwise the sacrifices commanded by God through Moses (as they were universally perceived to be) could not be offered. Thus if the trafficking in the temple was disrupted, the sacrifices were disrupted, and the Mosaic code was openly breached. Interfering with what was necessary for the maintenance of the temple sacrifices would not have been seen as 'cleansing' the worship of God, but as interfering with the observance of the Mosaic ordinances concerning the offering of sacrifice.

It is very unlikely that Jesus' action seriously disrupted the actual functioning of the temple. A serious disruption would have attracted the attention of the Roman garrison, and an effective disruption would have required an army.<sup>135</sup> Jesus' disciples are not even named as being present when he attacked the money-changers, and we have already seen the significance of the fact that they were not rounded up and executed. It is evident that the action, while offensive to common Jewish piety and regard for the temple, was not seen as constituting a threat to take over the temple or to replace the priesthood. Jesus' action, rather, must be regarded as symbolic.<sup>136</sup> But precisely what does the action symbolize? The sayings of Jesus about the temple seem to indicate that he thought that the temple would be shortly destroyed, and it is probable that his action was symbolic of the coming destruction of the temple by God.

The saying that the temple would be destroyed is preserved both in the form of a prediction and a threat. The prediction appears in Mark 13:2/Matt. 24:2; while the trial scene represents 'false witnesses' as saying that Jesus threatened the temple. As analysis of the tradition behind John 2:18–22 shows that the tradition that Jesus threatened to destroy the temple and promised to rebuild it was deeply implanted. If we could be absolutely sure of the historicity of the threat to destroy the temple and the promise to rebuild it (Mark 14:58), one aspect of Jesus' intention

<sup>135</sup> M. Hengel, *Was Jesus Revolutionär?*, ET *Was Jesus a Revolutionist?*, pp. 16f. Cf. Dodd, *The Founder of Christianity*, pp. 144f: Jesus did effect a disruption of the trade, but it was by the force of his personal authority. He was temporarily obeyed, and there was no resistance, for resistance would have called forth the Roman garrison.

<sup>136</sup> Daube (*Civil Disobedience in Antiquity*, pp. 101–9) correctly emphasizes that saying that Jesus' action was symbolic does not make it non-violent. Some physical demonstration must have been made, but understanding the intention of Jesus requires interpreting the symbolism.

would become luminously clear. Within three days God would bring in the kingdom, which would include a new, pure temple. Such an expectation (in general, not with the urgency implied by 'in three days') is not unparalleled in more or less contemporary Jewish literature.<sup>137</sup> Jesus would then have seen the 'cleansing' of the temple as symbolizing the destruction of the old temple to make ready for the new one which God would bring when he came to judge Israel and establish the true Israel in the land.

If we could be absolutely sure of the historicity of the threat to destroy the temple, but not necessarily the prediction of rebuilding, we would have this: Jesus' 'cleansing' of the temple was a prophetic act symbolizing the destruction of the temple, probably to prepare for the new one, and he explicitly either predicted or threatened the destruction of the temple. Jesus' positive intention was to symbolize and predict the coming of the kingdom.<sup>138</sup> He made, however, a negative thrust against the present temple, which all agreed had been established by God through Moses. Thus the conclusion of considering the question of Jesus and the temple is the same as the conclusion of considering his proclamation of the kingdom to 'tax-gatherers and sinners'. His own intention was positive: to prepare for the coming of the kingdom of God; but he was seen as threatening the essence of Judaism: the adequacy of the Mosaic ordinances. There is a real sense in which he did what his adversaries saw him as doing, but he acted with an intention which they either failed or refused to recognize.

<sup>137</sup> On the basis of present evidence it cannot be said how widespread was the expectation that at the end God would build a new and perfect temple, which implies the destruction of the standing temple. The direct prediction is made in *1 Enoch* 90:28f and possibly in 4QFlor. 1:1–2 (see D. Flusser, 'Two Notes on the Midrash on 2 Sam.vii', *IEJ* 9 (1959), 99–104), although the continuation makes it possible that the reference is to the community as temple. More dramatic is the evidence from the Temple Scroll, 29:8–10, where God is represented as saying that, 'on the Day of Blessing', 'I will build my sanctuary to establish it for myself forever ("all the days"), according to the covenant which I made with Jacob at Beth-el.' (For the text, see Yigael Yadin, *M'gillat ha-Miqdāš*, vol. II (Jerusalem 1977), pp. 91f, ET *The Temple Scroll*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 1987), pp. 128f). If the Temple Scroll is judged not to be sectarian in the strict sense, but only a work kept in the sect's library, it would stand with *1 Enoch* 90:28f as evidence that the view was held outside the Qumran sect. It should also be noted that there is some evidence for the existence of the contrary view: in the world to come there would not be a temple. This seems to be the point of *1 Enoch* 93:7 (see Charles's note in *APOT* 2, p. 273), and it is unambiguously expressed in Rev. 21: The new Jerusalem will come down out of heaven (21:10), but it will contain no temple (21:22). But this may be polemic against a Jewish view that there would be a new temple. On the temple and the Land, see Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, pp. 150–4.

<sup>138</sup> See R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple. The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford 1969), pp. 66, 71f; J. D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (London 1977), p. 324; Trautmann, *Zeichenhafte Handlungen Jesu*, pp. 124, 126f, 129, 386; Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus*, pp. 180–202.



Conflicts over the sabbath are also recorded in the gospels, and many have seen sabbath controversies as one of the most reliable points of dispute between Jesus and his opponents.<sup>139</sup> The situation, however, is not quite so clear.<sup>140</sup> As Bultmann pointed out, the story of the disciples' plucking grain on the sabbath (Mark 2:23–28 *et par.*), as it stands, has its setting in the life of the church (the disciples, representing the church, come under criticism from the Pharisees = the Rabbis, and are defended by introducing a general saying by Jesus).<sup>141</sup> Jesus' healing on the sabbath (Mark 3:1–6 *et par.*) itself may not have been in contravention of the sabbath law as generally understood and interpreted. All would probably have agreed that saving of life overrides the sabbath. Jesus might well have been faulted for healing on the sabbath when life was not at stake, since the cure could have waited until the next day. Even so, however, the cure was performed verbally and no work was done.<sup>142</sup> The gospel accounts may reveal a general reminiscence that Jesus was not strict with regard to the sabbath, but there is no clear-cut challenge to the sanctity of the sabbath.<sup>143</sup>

There are stories and sayings which require leaving everything for Jesus and the kingdom, even what is morally required (e.g. Matt. 19:29/Mark 10:29). Of these, at least one can be shown to be authentic, and it involves a question of law: the passage about the would-be disciple who wished first to bury his dead father but was commanded to 'let the dead bury their dead' and to follow Jesus (Matt. 8:21f; cf. Luke 9:59f).<sup>144</sup> There

<sup>139</sup> See, for example, Dibelius, *Jesus*, p. 111, ET *Jesus*, p. 114; Kümmel, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, p. 46, ET *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 51; Käsemann, *Exegetische Versuche* I, pp. 206–7, ET *Essays*, p. 38; and especially Roloff, *Das Kerygma und der irdische Jesus*, pp. 63–9, 82f; S. Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority* (Lund 1978), pp. 92–103; Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History*, pp. 36–9 (his conduct at least raised questions of legality).

<sup>140</sup> All of the synoptic passages that deal with the law are assessed in Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (London 1990), ch. 1.

<sup>141</sup> Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, pp. 14f, ET *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, pp. 16f.

<sup>142</sup> See Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, p. 25. The conflict over the sabbath law is sharper in Mark than in Matthew, for there a halakhic argument justifying the healing is introduced (Matt. 12:11f). Vermes's point, however, is that in any case there is no infringement of the sabbath law.

<sup>143</sup> The summary in Mark 3,6/Matt. 12:14, that healing on the sabbath led to a plot against Jesus' life, is probably a later interpretation.

<sup>144</sup> In recent years only M. Hengel has seen the significance of the pericope. See his detailed analysis in *Nachfolge und Charisma* (Berlin 1968), 1, ET *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* (Edinburgh 1981), ch. 1. Earlier Schlatter (*Der Evangelist Matthäus*, Stuttgart 1929, edn 5, 1957, p. 288) saw the importance of the negative thrust of the saying. Most exegetes have seen the call to discipleship as overriding even filial duty, without noting that filial duty is commanded in the Torah. See, e.g. Dibelius, *Jesus*, p. 59.

are two elements which deserve emphasis. One is that this summons requires the transgression of a commandment which was doubtless considered to be biblical and which was greatly emphasized: the commandment to care for the dead. This is an instance in which the ‘criterion of dissimilarity’ establishes the authenticity of the saying. The idea that the dead should be left unburied would be impious in the eyes of both Jew and Greek, and the saying could not be a later fabrication.<sup>145</sup> The obligation to bury dead relatives is indicated in Gen. 23:3f (Abraham’s request for a burial place for Sarah), but the Rabbis read Deut. 21:23 (‘you shall bury him the same day’, referring to the corpse of a man executed by hanging) to be a general commandment concerning the dead: they should be buried the same day (*b. Sanh.* 46b, R. Johanan on the authority of R. Simeon b. Yohai). The fifth commandment (to honour father and mother) was certainly understood to include burying them. The seriousness with which the requirement to care for dead relatives was taken is seen clearly in *Ber.* 3:1, where the obligation is said to override the obligation to recite the *šema* and wear phylacteries. Similarly in Tobit, Tobias protests against marrying a woman who had lost seven husbands on her wedding night, on the grounds that if he, Tobias, were killed by the demon who guarded the woman, the tragedy would also bring his parents to the grave, and ‘they have no other son to bury them’ (Tob. 6:13–15). Here the obligation to bury one’s parents is the ground for backing out of a betrothal. It thus becomes clear that the requirement to care for the dead relatives, especially parents, was held very strictly among Jews at the time of Jesus. In addition to the obligation to bury one’s parents, the general obligation to care for the dead was very strong. Even the High Priest and a Nazirite, ordinarily forbidden to contract corpse-uncleanness, should do so in the case of a neglected corpse (*m. Nazir* 7:1).

The second point is that we see here, as in a few other passages, the call to be a personal disciple of Jesus. The theme of commitment to Jesus appears most noticeably in the narratives of the call of the disciples (see, for example, Matt. 4:20–2), but it is also present in such sayings as the following: ‘no man is worthy of me who does not take up his cross and walk (literally, follow) in my footsteps’ (Matt. 10:38). Even if the reference to the cross be considered a later insertion, the attitude and demand seem characteristic. One may also cite Matt. 19:27f/Mark 10:28 as indicative of the requirement of such commitment. However, it was not expected that everyone who heard Jesus and accepted his message would

<sup>145</sup> See Hengel, *Nachfolge und Charisma*, pp. 9–17, ET *Charismatic Leader*, pp. 8–15. Vermes (*Jesus and the World of Judaism*, p. 167, n. 57) takes ‘let the dead . . .’ to be rhetorical exaggeration. But it is too impious for this interpretation, as also for the interpretation that it is metaphorical (which Vermes correctly rejects).

follow him, and so we cannot regard the passage as indicating a general requirement.<sup>146</sup>

For the question of Jesus' attitude towards the law, the present passage is not decisive, despite its striking character. It appears that Jesus did not feel entirely bound by the normal requirements of piety and the law; but this commandment to the would-be follower is not formulated as a thrust against the law, and there is no generalization of it. Jesus did not issue a general appeal to leave the daily round and the established mores and to follow him instead.

Other proposed conflicts between Jesus and the Jewish law are less persuasive. In the long passage Mark 7:1–23/Matt. 15:1–20, which is composed of diverse traditions with additions and commentaries, the problem of eating with unwashed hands arises.<sup>147</sup> If historical, this is a minor conflict,<sup>148</sup> since the requirement to wash hands before eating is not biblical. We do not know the history of the view that hands should be washed before eating, but it may reasonably be supposed that it is connected with the programme of the *habērim*. Whatever its history, it is doubtful that many lay people in the time of Jesus observed handwashing as a religious requirement and highly improbable that it could have become the source of a major conflict.<sup>149</sup>

In the passage as it stands, there is another food issue. Mark 7:15, with an expansion in verses 17–23, indicates that all food can be eaten.<sup>150</sup> This is quite a different matter from eating with unwashed hands, since the Bible explicitly forbids Israelites to eat certain foods. If Jesus actually declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19), he consciously and blatantly contravened the

<sup>146</sup> Hengel, *Nachfolge und Charisma*, pp. 54–70, ET *Charismatic Leader*, pp. 49–62.

<sup>147</sup> See the excellent survey of problems and the history of scholarship by J. Lambrecht, 'Jesus and the Law. An Investigation of Mark 7, 1–23', *ETL* 53 (1977), 24–83, and also Roger P. Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7* (Sheffield 1986).

<sup>148</sup> It is often taken to be one of Jesus' major disputes over the law, along with the supposed disregard of sabbath observance. See Kümmel, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, p. 46, ET *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 52; Käsemann, *Exegetische Versuche* I, pp. 206–7, ET *Essays*, p. 38.

<sup>149</sup> There is a large literature on the question of the development of laws of purity and their extension to the laity outside the temple, and we cannot go into the question here. For the point that, in any case, not many Jews in the time of Jesus accepted the extension, see J. Neusner, *From Politics to Piety* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1973), pp. 83f. On the history of handwashing, see Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah*, pp. 39f, 203f, 228–31, 260–3.

<sup>150</sup> The saying in Mark 7:15 necessarily refers to food: H. Räisänen, 'Zur Herkunft von Markus 7:15', *Logia. Les Paroles de Jésus – The Sayings of Jesus*, ed. J. DeLobel, BETL 59 (Leuven 1982), pp. 477–84; 'Jesus and the Food Laws: Reflections on Mark 7:15', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 16 (1982), pp. 79–100.

law of Moses. It is unlikely, however, that the material from verse 15 on goes back to Jesus. It seems to stem, rather, from the Gentile church, where the various dietary laws were confused, the only thing certain being that none were observed.<sup>151</sup>

There is strong evidence from the early church that Jesus was not known to have explicitly contravened the laws of food and sabbath. These are two of the three major issues about the law which figure in Paul's letters (the third is circumcision). Paul's advice to the Romans about the sabbath and food (Rom. 14:2–6), and more especially the controversies recalled in Galatians (Gal. 2:11–24; 4:10), make it impossible that he and Peter had a firm tradition from Jesus on precisely the two major topics which appear in the gospels. Further, according to Acts 10:9–16, Peter first learned that all foods were clean through a vision. It is evident that he had no explicit word from Jesus which 'made all foods clean' (Mark 7:19). Even if it could be shown that Jesus on some occasion transgressed the sabbath or food laws, we would still have to conclude that he did not directly indicate that the law could be set aside.<sup>152</sup>

Other evidence on Jesus' attitude towards the Mosaic ordinances is somewhat mixed. There are no other accounts of actions or words which necessarily imply opposition to the authority of Moses, although some passages do reveal Jesus' willingness to apply a radical interpretation of the law on his own authority. We may briefly consider, for example, the most famous of the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, the saying on divorce, which is often taken to be a direct contradiction of the Mosaic law (Matt. 5:31f; cf. Matt. 19:1–12 *et par.*).<sup>153</sup> It appears that Jesus prohibited divorce on any grounds but adultery.<sup>154</sup> He appealed to Gen. 2:24 (presumably on the basis that in the new age which was being inaugurated the primal conditions would be restored)<sup>155</sup> and thus opposed the Mosaic permission of divorce in Deut. 24:1. This is not actually a direct challenge to the authority of the Mosaic legislation. It is to be noted that Moses *permitted*, not *commanded* divorce (cf. Matt. 19:8),<sup>156</sup> and Jesus' restrictive pronouncement, while radical, does not have the

<sup>151</sup> Cf. K. Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu. Ihr historischen Hintergrund im Judentum und im Alten Testament*, Teil I: *Markus und Parallelen* (Neukirchen 1972), pp. 476f, 507.

<sup>152</sup> Räisänen, 'Zur Herkunft von Markus 7:15', n. 97; Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, ch. 9.

<sup>153</sup> Kümmel, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, pp. 46f, ET *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 52; E. Schweizer, *Jesus Christus*, pp. 35f, ET *Jesus*, p. 32; Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, I, p. 207.

<sup>154</sup> See the discussion by D. L. Dungan, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Churches of Paul* (Philadelphia 1971), pp. 102–25.

<sup>155</sup> Dungan, *ibid.* p. 117.

<sup>156</sup> Dungan, *ibid.* p. 121; citing D. Daube, 'Concessions to Sinfulness in Jewish Law', *JJS* 10 (1959), 10.

same force as would permitting what Moses prohibited. It is noteworthy that the Zadokite document contains the same prohibition of divorce and on the same grounds.<sup>157</sup> Surely the authority of Moses was not in question there, although the interpretation of the law differed from that of the Jerusalem authorities. Jesus' statements on divorce do not go outside the limits of debate which took place within Judaism.<sup>158</sup>

The same is true of many other controversies reported in the gospels. The debate on the resurrection (Matt. 22:23–33) and the discussion about the great commandment (Matt. 22:34–40), for example, show that Jesus debated questions of interest during his time.<sup>159</sup> It is noteworthy that, like the Pharisees, he proves the resurrection by quoting from the Tanak (Matt. 22:32, quoting Exod. 3:6).<sup>160</sup> We should finally note the saying on the law in Matt. 5:17–20 ('not to abolish but to fulfil'). Both the authenticity and the meaning of the passage have been strenuously debated, and both are so dubious that the passage cannot be decisive for determining Jesus' intention towards the law.<sup>161</sup>

Thus we see that following or accepting Jesus did not require transgression of the law.<sup>162</sup> To this statement there is only one known exception: the would-be disciple who wished first to bury his own father. This, as we saw, did not lead to the generalization that followers of Jesus could transgress the law. It is a mistake to make controversy about the law a central point in the study of 'Jesus and Judaism', if by 'controversy' one understands debates which arose because Jesus broke the law or encouraged his followers to do so. The synoptic gospels, in couching the matter in these terms, are probably reflecting debates within the early church or between the church and the synagogue. The question of whether or not

<sup>157</sup> CD 4:10f; cited by Dungan, p. 116.

<sup>158</sup> On the other antitheses, which are not discussed individually here, see W. D. Davies, 'Matthew 5:17, 18' in *Christian Origins and Judaism* (Philadelphia 1962), pp. 44f. The genuine antitheses radicalize the law. Those which contravene the law are later developments. See also J. P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel* (Rome 1976) and W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to St Matthew*, vol. 1, 3, C. C. (Edinburgh Clark 1988), pp. 505–64.

<sup>159</sup> The question of the resurrection was a central point of controversy between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. For discussions of the 'great' or 'central' commandment behind the many commandments, see e.g. *Sifra Qedoshim Perek 4:12* (to Lev. 19:18, love thy neighbour as thyself): 'R. Akiba said: This is the most important principle in the law.' See further Moore, *Judaism*, vol. II, pp. 83–8.

<sup>160</sup> See *m. Sanh* 10:1: those who say the resurrection is not provided for in the Torah have no share in it.

<sup>161</sup> See especially Davies, 'Matthew 5:17, 18', n. 158 above.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 428; Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History*, p. 55: Jesus did not 'annul' the law, and following him did not require breaking it.

following Jesus allows one to break the sabbath commandment, for example, appears to arise after the resurrection (see e.g. Rom. 14:1–6). On the other hand, Jesus seems to have challenged the law in another way: he challenged the adequacy of the Mosaic dispensation to provide the complete frame of reference for relations between God and humans. God, in his view, would extend his mercy to include outsiders. Thus the church, in producing stories in which Jesus is called to account for not being strictly observant, was not being altogether untrue to him. He does seem to have challenged the authority of Moses, even while he honoured it, though he did so in a more profound and subtle way than the stories about sabbath transgression and handwashing indicate.

The ground of the challenge was almost certainly his view that he was the final messenger before the eschaton. He intended to prepare his hearers for the coming kingdom, an intention which is especially clear in the prohibition of divorce, where he appealed to the order of creation and looked forward to the new age, which would partially duplicate it. The focus on the new age quite understandably relativized the importance of the institutions of this age, such as the law. While he appears not to have directly taught *about* the law a great deal, his personal engagement with it is clear.<sup>163</sup> His attitude towards it can probably be best inferred from his view of the sinners, the saying on divorce, and the command to one would-be disciple to follow him even though it meant transgressing one of the firmest obligations: honouring his father by burying him. In his view the law was neither the final nor the completely adequate expression of the will of God.<sup>164</sup> Whereas for Judaism the law did express the will of God, for Jesus his immediate awareness of the will of God became law.

#### JESUS' INTENTION AND HIS MIRACLES

One of the prominent aspects of Jesus' activity was that he healed. Other miracles than healing miracles are also attributed to him in the gospels,<sup>165</sup> but the healings and exorcisms are most frequent, and they are most

<sup>163</sup> This judgement would have to be modified if one accepted as authentic all the details of the passages on oaths, fasting, praying and giving alms (Matt. 5:33–6:18), according to which Jesus gave detailed rules on various aspects of life (e.g. to anoint one's head while fasting, Matt. 6:17).

<sup>164</sup> On Jesus' attitude towards the law, see Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 427–35; above, pp. 12–15 and notes; G. Aulén's discussion in *Jesus in Contemporary Research* (London 1976), pp. 17–54; Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority*; Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition*.

<sup>165</sup> E.g. the stilling of the storm, Mark 4:35–41 *et passim*.

securely based as the miracles which Jesus performed. The miracles have attracted an enormous amount of attention in subsequent centuries. Some Christians have taken them as proof of Jesus' divinity; critics who have held miracles by definition to be impossible have taken the miracle stories to show the fraudulent or deluded nature of the accounts;<sup>166</sup> the rationalists tried to attribute them all to natural causes;<sup>167</sup> Strauss mythologized them;<sup>168</sup> Bultmann attributed the majority to a Hellenistic (that is, non-original) environment;<sup>169</sup> Morton Smith has argued from them that they show that Jesus was what he appeared to some to be – a magician.<sup>170</sup> In the midst of so many competing views it is difficult in short compass to do miracles precise justice, to set them properly in Jesus' own milieu, and to determine what they have to tell us about Jesus' relationship to his contemporaries and his own view of his mission.<sup>171</sup>

The environment in which healing miracles took place has been well described by Smith:

... we must remember that ancient Palestine had no hospitals or insane asylums. The sick and insane had to be cared for by their families, in their homes. The burden of caring for them was often severe and sometimes, especially in cases of violent insanity, more than the family could bear – the afflicted were turned out of doors and left to wander like animals... Also, since rational medicine (except for surgery) was rudimentary, lingering and debilitating diseases must have been common, and the victims of these, too, had to be cared for at

<sup>166</sup> One may recall the charges of Hume, which evoked numerous replies, of which one of the most notable was that of W. Paley. On the debate, see M. L. Clarke, *Paley. Evidences for the Man* (London 1974), pp. 101–3. Neither side understood the historical context of the miracles, and their significance was misconstrued by both critics and apologists.

<sup>167</sup> See the summary by A. Schweitzer, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, pp. 27–37, 48–52, edn 2 *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, pp. 27–37, 49–58, ET *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, pp. 27–37, 48–57.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 78–83.

<sup>169</sup> Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, pp. 254–6, ET *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, pp. 239–41; cf. p. 244, ET p. 228 (corrected): 'The less the miracle stories as such are historical reports the more we need to ask *how they have found their way into the Gospel tradition*. Even if historical events underlie some healing miracles their narrative form is still the work of tradition.'

<sup>170</sup> M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (New York 1978).

<sup>171</sup> There is an enormous bibliography on miracles in the ancient world and in the gospels. A good overview is given in the collection of essays edited by C. F. D. Moule, *Miracles: Cambridge Studies in their Philosophy and History* (London 1965). See also J. M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (London 1974); R. M. Grant, *Miracle and Natural Law in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Thought* (Amsterdam 1952); M. Grant, *Jesus* (London 1977), pp. 30–44, and, with abundant comparative materials, Bernd Kollmann, *Jesus und die Christen als Wundertäter* (Göttingen 1996).



home. Accordingly, many people eagerly sought cures, not only for themselves, but also for their relatives. Doctors were inefficient, rare, and expensive. When a healer appears – a man who could perform miraculous cures, and who did so for nothing! – he was sure to be mobbed. In the crowds that swarmed around him desperate for cures, cures were sure to occur.<sup>172</sup>

We can improve our understanding of the environment in which miracles were expected, and also of the range of significance which they might be expected to have, by briefly considering three passages from Josephus' work *The Jewish Antiquities*. Josephus reports on Theudas, who claimed to be a 'prophet' and who persuaded many to sell their possessions and follow him across the Jordan river, which he promised to part. The plan was stopped by action by Fadus (*Ant.* xx.97). We can only speculate on Theudas' self-conception and plan, but 'messianic prophet' may possibly be a fair designation for him. Josephus says that he claimed to be a prophet but was a *goēs*, a sorcerer or deceiver.<sup>173</sup> There are similar stories in *Ant.* xx.127–9,<sup>174</sup> prominent among which is the narrative about a 'prophet' from Egypt who promised that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down, but whose activities were also stopped by prudent Roman action. Josephus does not say that any of those who in his own time claimed to be 'prophets' and who promised miracles in fact performed any. It must be remembered, however, that Josephus had the tendentious desire to show that real or potential rebels against Roman order, while they might temporarily delude some of the masses, were not representative of Judaism at its best.<sup>175</sup> Thus in his account they could not be said to have performed miracles, which might be seen as authenticating them.

On the other hand, Josephus claims for Jews of his own time in general, who had access to the legendary secrets of Solomon, and for one in particular, the power to exorcize: 'I have seen a certain Eleazar, a countryman of mine, in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, tribunes and a number of other soldiers, free men possessed by demons . . .' (*Ant.* vii.46; see vii.42–9). Apparently, in Josephus' mind, this sort of exorcism is to be distinguished from prodigies promised by (false) prophets. The exorcisms themselves, when not accompanied by other pretensions, simply show that Jews maintained the secret lore of Solomon.

Still in connection with clarifying the setting in which the miracles of Jesus took place should be noted the gospel accounts which acknowledge that others performed miracles. Thus Jesus is reported to have replied to

<sup>172</sup> Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, p. 9.

<sup>173</sup> On the term *goēs*, see the note by L. H. Feldman in the LCL edition of Josephus, vol. 9, p. 440; on Theudas, see Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 117–20.

<sup>174</sup> Cf. also *Bell.* ii.259. <sup>175</sup> Cf. W. R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots and Josephus*, p. 18.

the charge that he exorcized by the power of Beelzebul with the question, 'And if it is by Beelzebub that I cast out devils, by whom do your own people drive them out?' (Matt. 12:27). There is also the striking story of John's question to Jesus concerning what attitude should be taken towards an exorcist who casts out demons in Jesus' name but is 'not one of us' (Mark 9:38–41; Luke 9:49–50). The story indicates that healings and exorcisms – however they may be explained in terms of modern medicine and psychology – were part and parcel of what went on in ancient Palestine. This is not to say that they were common: their performance attracted attention, but they were known to take place. The real question is that of their significance. What did they signify, and to whom?

From Josephus' account of prophetic pretenders in his own day, as well as from other more or less contemporary literature, it is seen that one of the main functions of a miracle was to authenticate a prophetic message.<sup>176</sup> A prophet could help establish the validity of his prophecy by performing miracles. We need not insist exclusively, however, on the adjective 'prophetic'. Presumably one who claimed to be a magician could prove that he was a true magician only by delivering the goods: performing magic. One who claimed to have the secrets of Solomon relating to demon expulsion could prove that he did so by expelling demons. There has been a long but inconclusive debate on whether or not the Messiah was expected to perform miracles.<sup>177</sup> Some have argued, with considerable force, that, although God would produce miracles enough in the messianic age, there is no firm evidence that the Messiah himself was expected to perform miracles. Others have argued the contrary case. This is not the place to try to settle the issue, nor is there need to be dogmatic. 'Messianic expectations' appear to have been sufficiently diverse that hard and fast categorization is not called for.<sup>178</sup> Can we be

<sup>176</sup> On miracles as providing authentication in the gospels, see Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, pp. 234, 241, ET *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, pp. 219, 226; for references to Rabbinic passages in which miracles serve to authenticate a prophet, see E. Bammel in C. F. D. Moule (ed.), *Miracles*, pp. 189–91.

<sup>177</sup> It is typical of the difficulty of the question that Bultmann at different times stated different views: 'the Messiah himself was not thought of as a miracle-worker' (*Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, edn 3, p. 29, ET *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 27); 'the expectation (was) that the Messiah would work miracles' (*Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, p. 235, ET *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 229). For arguments *pro* and *con* and lists of names on each side, see Bammel in Moule (ed.), *Miracles*, pp. 188f; J. L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (2nd edn, Nashville 1979), pp. 95–100; D. M. Smith in Hamerton-Kelly and Scroggs (eds.), *Jews, Greeks and Christians* (Leiden 1976), pp. 172f; John J. Collins, 'The Works of the Messiah' in *Dead Sea Discoveries* 1 (1994) pp. 98–112.

<sup>178</sup> Cf. Martyn, *History and Theology*, pp. 99f.

sure that in everyone's view Elijah would only perform miracles (as he had of old) and herald the Messiah, while the Messiah himself would stick to his Davidic task of restoring the kingdom?

The view that the miracles either did authenticate or should have authenticated Jesus' work is well attested in the gospels (Matt. 11:20–2; 11:2–6; Luke 11:14–20). The same view is repeated in the mission charge which Jesus is said to have given to the disciples: 'And as you go proclaim the message: "The kingdom of Heaven is upon you." Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out devils. You received without cost; give without charge' (Matt. 10:7f).

It would be precarious indeed to suppose that in these passages we have strictly accurate accounts of what Jesus did, who was looking on, and who said what to whom. There are reasons, however, for thinking that they present a generally accurate picture of the sort of thing Jesus did, the range of reactions, and how he himself viewed his miracles. The reasons are these: the stories – both the healing actions and the issues raised in the verbal exchanges and statements – fit well in the general environment which we have described; more important, there are very significant interrelationships between the issues raised in the passages and other key aspects of Jesus' teaching and work. In the passage about Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt. 11:20–2), we see the message of the need for repentance, the pivotal role of Jesus' own message and work in bringing about repentance, and the implication of the proximity of the kingdom and the judgement – when will Chorazin and Bethsaida repent before the judgement if not now! In the passage about Jesus' reply to John the Baptist (Matt. 11:2–6) we see the typically indirect answer concerning who he is and the appeal to his work instead, as well as the very important link of his healing with the message of salvation ('the good news') for the 'poor'.<sup>179</sup> Both the Beelzebub passage (Luke 11:14–20) and the quotation from the mission charge (Matt. 10:7f) indicate again the link between healing and one of the main themes of Jesus' preaching, the nearness of the kingdom of Heaven. The miracles and the message thus form a unity. The kingdom is near, the need for decision is pressing, the kingdom is especially for the 'poor', and everything hinges on immediate response to Jesus.

<sup>179</sup> Morton Smith (*Jesus the Magician*, p. 24) correctly sees the connection between the healings and the proclamation of salvation to the poor, but this does not lead him to analyse what it must mean for the interpretation of Jesus to say that he offered the kingdom to the 'poor'. On this, see above, pp. 643–5.

## SUMMARY: JESUS' INTENTION

The conflict, the teachings and the activities which we have described are marked by two characteristics. On the one hand, they lie wholly within the context of first-century Judaism. On the other hand, it seems that on crucial issues Jesus pushed beyond the fairly broad bounds of what Judaism could accommodate in terms of viewpoint and practice. We have seen that he thought that it was up to him, and not to the generally recognized Jewish leaders, to demonstrate and predict the coming destruction of the temple, presumably in order to make way for the new and perfect temple. He felt not only the freedom, but the obligation to extend the bounds of the 'kingdom' to the 'poor' or the 'sinners', those who did not bear the yoke of the law. He placed discipleship to himself above the commandment to honour one's father and mother (by burying them). And he claimed that his miracles authenticated his message and proved that he had the Spirit of God. While it is true that at one level it is impossible to ascertain another person's true motives, on another level the inference as to what lay behind Jesus' words and deeds seems fairly clear: he believed that he had God's mandate to prepare Israel for the coming kingdom. He fulfilled his mandate by calling all Israel to the kingdom, by promising inclusion in it to the 'wicked', by proclaiming and demonstrating the coming renewal of the temple, by calling as his disciples twelve to represent Israel, and by healing and exorcizing in the name of the God who would authenticate his words and deeds by actually bringing the kingdom.

We shall add a few final words on the most crucial questions to show how Jesus stood wholly within Judaism and dealt entirely with the issues of Judaism and yet, in the eyes of many, transgressed its normal boundaries.

With regard to the law, it may be seen that in many, indeed most, ways he lived the life of an observant Jew: he attended the synagogue (Matt. 13:54–8 *et passim*), he observed the dietary laws, and he observed the sabbath.<sup>180</sup> Here we should emphasize again the point that the Jerusalem apostles after Jesus' death did not understand him to have abrogated the law. On the other hand, he proclaimed the presence of God's kingdom to the 'poor' or the 'sinners', who did not or could not accept the obligation to obey the commandments of the covenant; he threatened and at least symbolically disrupted the sacrificial system which is commanded in the law; and at least once he placed discipleship to himself above one of the commandments. Did Jesus understand himself to be

<sup>180</sup> See the discussions of the latter two points above.

introducing a new Torah for the Messianic period? It is dubious that there was a general expectation that the Messianic era would bring a new Torah,<sup>181</sup> and in any case that would not seem to be precisely the correct formulation to describe Jesus' action and intention. He did not set out to replace the Torah of Moses with a new set of ordinances as such. As we wrote above, he appears to have been generally Torah-observant, and he appealed to the Scriptures too often for it to be thought that he intended to set them aside.<sup>182</sup> On the other hand, he did radicalize the law, partly by appealing to Scripture itself,<sup>183</sup> but also partly by appealing directly to the will of God;<sup>184</sup> he did consider that his mission was so urgent that it justified overriding the fifth commandment (as it was then understood, Matt. 8:21f); he did promise inclusion in the kingdom to the wicked, apparently without requiring the signs of repentance required by the law; and he did symbolically demonstrate the overthrow of the temple to make ready for the new. Thus Jesus does not seem to have had a systematically worked out intention towards the Torah as such. He could both appeal to it and press a demand that required contravening it. This is revealing for the question of how he saw himself and his mission. What he had to proclaim was, in his own view, greater than the temple and greater than the Torah (cf. Matt. 12:6; 12:38–42): Jesus considered himself the proclaimer of the nearness and even presence of the kingdom of God in the most concrete sense. The kingdom which he proclaimed was not simply the rule of love in men's hearts,<sup>185</sup> nor the existential call to a decision *vis à vis* a kingdom which remains ever future,<sup>186</sup> but the actual coming of God to judge and restore Israel.

With regard to the community of Israel, it appears that he intended to establish a representative Israel (the twelve disciples representing the twelve tribes) in preparation for the coming kingdom. The peculiar characteristic of his community was that it included those generically described as 'tax-gatherers and sinners', those who were considered by the Jewish leaders to be cut off from Israel, and very likely those who themselves may have felt little loyalty to the Mosaic covenant. Thus Jesus

<sup>181</sup> See W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come* (JBL MS7, Philadelphia 1952), enlarged in *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge 1963), pp. 156–90.

<sup>182</sup> See e.g. Matt. 12:4 *et par.*; 12:39 *et par.*; 22:32 *et par.*

<sup>183</sup> See the discussion of divorce above.

<sup>184</sup> Jesus' radical call for obedience to the immediately known will of God might conceivably have appeared to his contemporaries as an implicit attack on the Mosaic code, but there is no evidence that it did so. See n. 226 on the unavoidable neglect of Jesus' ethical teaching in this chapter.

<sup>185</sup> This was the general view of nineteenth-century liberalism. See Schweitzer, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, pp. 192–220, edn 2 *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, pp. 193–221, ET *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, pp. 193–221.

<sup>186</sup> R. Bultmann, *Jesus*, pp. 46f, ET *Jesus and the Word*, pp. 51f.

appears to have answered both 'yes' and 'no' to the traditional Jewish aspirations concerning the re-assembly of the twelve tribes and the establishment of the nation in peace in the land, free of foreign subjugation. God *would* establish Israel as a community of his own people. But the people to be included are not just the Torah-observant, but also those who could not bear the yoke of the law but who responded to Jesus' call.<sup>187</sup> Further, no word is said about national sovereignty, the restoration of the throne of David, and the like.<sup>188</sup> Jesus seems to have focused his attention purely on God's action in establishing a community of those faithful to him, especially consisting of those who responded to the call of Jesus himself.<sup>189</sup> In this sense he personalized the Torah.<sup>190</sup>

Thus it is seen that Jesus was dealing with one of the most thoroughly Jewish of all questions: the question of who is in and who is out of the *covenant*. It has often been noted as a striking fact that Jesus did not (as far as we know) use the word 'covenant' (except in the words of institution, 1 Cor. 11:25; Luke 22:20; cf. Matt. 26:28/Mark 14:24),<sup>191</sup> but this lexical point should not be interpreted to mean that Jesus was not concerned with membership in the covenant people. In much of contemporary Jewish usage the word 'covenant' had come to have the restricted meaning of 'circumcision', a meaning which developed from its particular reference to the covenant with Abraham.<sup>192</sup> For membership in Israel

<sup>187</sup> It is possible that the Gentiles should be included here. See the discussion of Matt. 8:11 above, pp. 648f.

<sup>188</sup> The question of Jesus and Jewish nationalism has been very frequently discussed. See especially W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, pp. 336–54.

<sup>189</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 352: 'The aim of Jesus was neither non-political nor directly political; rather, it was focused on the creation of a community worthy of the name of the people of God within Israel.'

<sup>190</sup> See Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 432.

<sup>191</sup> See Banks (*Jesus and the Law*, pp. 253–5) on the absence of direct discussion of the covenant and the exodus by Jesus.

<sup>192</sup> This does not give the entire range of meaning of the Hebrew word *b'rith* in the literature which is more or less contemporary with Jesus. As far as we know, no full word study has been done since the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls. There the word *b'rith* is often used as the term which indicates the basic relationship between God and his elect. See, for example, IQS 1:7: 'to bring all who volunteer to perform the ordinances of God into the covenant of grace'. Here we see a more or less 'classic' use of the term. It refers to the gracious relationship between God and his elect (= 'the volunteers'), a relationship which entails as its consequence obedience to God's commandments. In rabbinic sources, the term generally does not have this broad meaning. In rabbinic usage the phrase 'to annul the covenant' often means 'to hide circumcision'. Note, for example, 'one who annuls the covenant of the flesh', *Sifre Num.* 112 (to 15:31); cf. *m. Abot* 3:12. Rejection of the basic relationship with God often requires a triple phrase: breaking off the yoke (of the Torah), annulling the covenant, and misrepresenting the Torah. Compare 2 *Baruch* 41:3, 'withdrawn from Thy covenant and cast from them the yoke . . .' See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 134–6.

Philo did not use ‘covenant’, *diathēkē*, but ‘commonwealth’, *politeia*.<sup>193</sup> Paul does not often use the term ‘covenant’. He discusses extensively the question of who are ‘in’, who are the ‘elect’, who are the true ‘sons of Abraham’, ‘inheritors of the promises’, and the like (see Rom. 8:33; 11:7; Gal. 3:7; Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:18,29; Rom. 4:13–16). In comparison *diathēkē* is a minor term and, again apart from the words of institution, appears primarily with a different meaning: a will in a legal sense (Gal. 3). In rabbinic usage one of the principal words which indicates the concept of the covenant is ‘kingdom’.<sup>194</sup> God is described as king and his people as his subjects. This is one of the nuances of Jesus’ use of the word ‘kingdom’. It refers primarily, as is well known, to God’s coming reign. But it is a crucial question who will be ‘in’ the kingdom. The topic of being ‘in’ or ‘out’ may fairly be called a covenantal topic, and that topic is one of the main ones of Jesus’ preaching.

Many of Jesus’ contemporaries must have seen primarily the negative thrust of his mission, as especially exemplified by the interference with the temple trade. He probably appeared to them as one who denied the validity of the ordinances given to Israel by God through Moses, and that view would have been reinforced by his association with those who were counted among the ‘sinners’. The covenant itself would thus be seen as being called into question,<sup>195</sup> for the explicit condition of inheriting the promises of the covenant is the observance of its ordinances.<sup>196</sup> Thus, from the point of view of his opponents, Jesus did far more than challenge their interpretation of the law: he challenged the adequacy and consequently the authority of the law itself. Since the law was given by God, he would have been seen as setting himself in opposition not only to the Pharisees and not only to Moses, but to God. Only thus can we explain a hostility between Jesus and the Jerusalem authorities which would have led to his death. Simply playing his ‘authority’ off against the way in which the scribes and Pharisees taught (Mark 1:22) is by no means sufficiently serious to account for the result. In the eyes of many, if not all, pious Jews, Jesus must have been seen as opposing the Mosaic covenant, and thus by implication God himself.<sup>197</sup>

<sup>193</sup> E.g. *Virt.* 219. See Sanders, ‘The Covenant as a Soteriological Category’ in *Jews, Greeks and Christians*, ed. Hamerton-Kelly and Scroggs (*Festschrift* for W. D. Davies) (Leiden 1976), pp. 30–2.

<sup>194</sup> Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 236f.

<sup>195</sup> Since Jesus confined his own mission to Israel, the broad intention of the covenant would seem to be confirmed, but certain of Jesus’ actions might have appeared to call it into question.

<sup>196</sup> E.g. Deut. 11:26–32.

<sup>197</sup> One may presume that there was a socio-political threat implied in the challenge to the adequacy of the Mosaic covenant: a challenge to the covenant threatens the existence



It is equally apparent that Jesus intended his appeal to be precisely to the will of God. His most radical action, the ‘cleansing’ of the temple, must have been seen by him as the response to the will of God and, like the call of the twelve, as the preparation for the coming kingdom. It cannot be simply a one-time ‘prophetic’ protest against a bit too much commercialism, as a devout and angry Christian might disrupt trade in a large store at Christmas time. The temple was not a store, and disrupting the sacrifices required by God could not be seen as an act of social and economic protest. Vermes has argued, and argued well, that the appeal to the immediately known will of God can be paralleled in the lives of other Jewish charismatic teachers and healers.<sup>198</sup> Jesus went further than they, however, and much further, when he said or implied by his actions that the kingdom would include those who did not keep the covenant and when he disrupted the sacrifices of the temple. He could only have done so, we repeat, if his actions were dominated by the conviction that he was acting in accord with God’s will with regard to the kingdom, and that the kingdom was coming soon.

#### IV THE DEATH OF JESUS

It is impossible to sort out with anything like confidence the events which immediately led to Jesus’ death. The general difficulties which the gospels present to the historian become especially marked here. This is true for several reasons: (1) The gospels present divergent accounts of the cause of Jesus’ death and the events that led to it. Matthew and Mark are in general agreement with each other (with one or two notable exceptions), but Luke differs substantially.<sup>199</sup> Further, the Johannine account

of the people of the covenant as a socio-political entity. Cf. Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 376; Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, p. 346. It is not clear that Jesus himself saw this implication (he could not have, if he expected the imminent coming of the kingdom), and it does not emerge as a charge against him, but the implied threat might have been sensed and responded to.

<sup>198</sup> Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, pp. 80–2.

<sup>199</sup> Scholars are divided as to whether or not Luke had a source independent of the Matthew/Mark tradition, but current opinion seems on the whole to favour use of both an independent tradition and that common to Matthew/Mark. For Luke’s differences, see J. M. Creed, *The Gospel According to St Luke*, pp. 238f, 261f, 275f. Creed doubts the theory of a separate source. In favour of an independent tradition (in part possibly known also to John) see J. A. Bailey, *The Traditions Common to Luke and John* (Leiden 1963), pp. 32–63; R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, pp. 790f; Catchpole, *The Trial of Jesus*, ch. 3; Catchpole, ‘The Problem of the Historicity of the Sanhedrin Trial’ in *The Trial of Jesus* (ed. Bammel; London 1970), 47–65; Joel Green, *The Death of Jesus: Tradition and Interpretation in the Passion Narrative*, WUNT 2/33 (Tübingen 1988).

seems to rest on an independent source which commands attention.<sup>200</sup> Part of the Johannine account shows a close similarity to the Matthew/Mark tradition,<sup>201</sup> but again there are substantial differences. (2) Internally, the account in each gospel either lacks consistency or fails to carry conviction at crucial points, especially those at which Christian theological interests come most strongly to the fore. (3) Each of the accounts contains statements and events which are intrinsically improbable. (4) The gospels all show the tendency to incriminate the Jews and exculpate the Romans.<sup>202</sup>

It would be beyond the bounds of the present chapter to lay out in full all the difficulties and to argue each disputed point in detail; for virtually every line in the 'passion narrative' is in dispute.<sup>203</sup> We must restrict the present discussion to some of the main lines of interpretation. It is possible to make four principal divisions.<sup>204</sup>

(1) Many scholars have followed the Matthew/Mark account and maintained that the Jewish leaders convicted Jesus of blasphemy, accused him to Pilate of being politically dangerous, and stirred up the crowd to demand his execution when Pilate was reluctant.<sup>205</sup> There are many variations within this view, but the essential points are that the Jews bear prime responsibility for Jesus' death, that they acted against him for religious reasons, and that they pressured or persuaded Pilate to execute him on a political charge.<sup>206</sup>

(2) Many have argued that the Jewish leaders initiated proceedings against Jesus, but that no formal trial was held and no conviction passed. Some have argued for this position on the ground that Luke's account (supported in part by John) is preferable to that of Matthew and Mark. It

<sup>200</sup> See the preceding note.

<sup>201</sup> I. Buse, 'St. John and the Markan Passion Narrative', *NTS* 4 (1957–8), 215–19.

<sup>202</sup> These points are illustrated below.

<sup>203</sup> A convenient and cautious survey of problems and proposed solutions is provided by G. Sloyan, *Jesus on Trial* (Philadelphia 1973); Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 2 vols. (New York 1994).

<sup>204</sup> Cf. Brown, *John XIII–XXI*, pp. 792f. Compare pp. 138–9, above.

<sup>205</sup> For a thorough-going defence of the historicity of the Markan account see the encyclopedic study of J. Blinzler, *Der Prozess Jesu* edn 5 (Regensburg 1969), ET of ed. 2 (1955), *The Trial of Jesus* (Cork 1959). See further A. Strobel, *Die Stunde der Wahrheit. Untersuchungen zum Strafverfahren gegen Jesus* (Tübingen 1980); O. Betz, 'Probleme des Prozesses Jesu', *ANRW*, II.25.1 (Berlin 1982), pp. 565–647.

<sup>206</sup> Compare, for example, the view of Dodd: Jesus was viewed as posing a threat to Jewish nationalism, but he was also accused of blasphemy. His activity led to an alliance of the Pharisees and the 'worldly hierarchy' against him. In Jewish eyes he was guilty on two counts, but it was the claim of kingship (=Messiah) which was put to Pilate to obtain his execution. See *The Founder of Christianity*, pp. 77–9; 148–58.

is frequently argued that, although Jesus' teaching may have made him unpopular with those in authority, there was no religious issue behind the execution.<sup>207</sup> The Jewish leaders, rather, were moved to take action by Jesus' threat to the temple, which either made them fear that he had a revolutionary intent or that his actions would lead to Roman reprisals against the community. In any case, in this view the Jewish leaders took the initiative, but they did not interrogate Jesus or convict him of blasphemy.

(3) Some have seen the Romans as initiating the action and the Jews as acquiescing and collaborating in order to prevent wider Roman action.<sup>208</sup> Winter, for example, has argued that Jesus was executed by the Romans as a revolutionary or potential revolutionary, but mistakenly so.<sup>209</sup> Their apprehensions, in his view, were aroused not by warnings against Jesus originating with Jewish leaders, but by Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom, which they misconstrued as constituting the threat of sedition and rebellion. Thus Jesus' teaching was only indirectly responsible for his death.<sup>210</sup> Winter saw the account of the Sanhedrin trial as at most indicating a preliminary hearing which approved a writ of indictment.<sup>211</sup>

(4) Others, noting that the Romans executed Jesus as they would a rebel, by crucifixion, and that the final charge was that he was 'king of the Jews', have concluded that he was indeed a revolutionary, one who had much in common with the later Zealots. The gospel accounts of Jewish activity are then viewed as complete fabrications, motivated by the obvious Christian desire to shift the blame to the Jews and to avoid trouble with the Romans.<sup>212</sup>

The last position is the one which has gained least support and which is easiest to dismiss.<sup>213</sup> We noted above that the disciples were not

<sup>207</sup> So, for example, W. R. Wilson, *The Execution of Jesus* (New York 1970). See pp. 125f. Bornkamm's position is similar. See *Jesus of Nazareth*, pp. 163f.

<sup>208</sup> Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, p. 175.

<sup>209</sup> Winter, *ibid.* p. 69 and n. 21 (1st edn, pp. 50, 148), where further literature is also cited.

<sup>210</sup> Winter, *ibid.* p. 181: 'Whatever the precise character of Jesus' teaching, it could hardly have been the ground for his condemnation to death. Apostasy from Judaism, and blasphemy, would have carried such a sentence, but the New Testament records no case of blasphemy by Jesus and makes it abundantly clear that he never preached apostasy. The grounds for his condemnation were of a political character.' Cf. p. 189: 'Rather than the content of his teaching, it was primarily the effect which his teaching exercised on certain sections of the populace that induced the authorities to take action against him.'

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 39f.

<sup>212</sup> S. G. F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots; The Trial of Jesus of Nazareth* (London 1968).

<sup>213</sup> Cf. Brown, *John XIII–XXI*, p. 793.

arrested, either at the time or later, which indicates that the Romans did not see the movement as posing a substantial military and political threat. Further, the entire teaching material which is attributed to Jesus points away from his being a revolutionary in a way that would actually have threatened Rome. Either the evangelists have not only invented the Jewish trial scenes, but also an enormously rich body of teaching material, while completely hiding Jesus' true views, or he was no revolutionary in the political sense of the word. The latter seems overwhelmingly the more likely hypothesis.

Granting then, that both the Romans and the Jews were involved in some way, how will one strike the balance between them and decide on the motives which lay behind Jesus' execution? Before offering our views of what can be said with some assurance, it is necessary to make preliminary observations about the evidence and the reasoning that lie behind the views presented here. In the first place, we should probably disregard the details of the interrogation before the high priest and the Sanhedrin. On form-critical grounds the interrogation in Matthew and Mark seems to be an expansion of the general statement which appears in Mark 15:1 and Matt. 27:1 that the Jewish leaders took counsel against Jesus and turned him over to Pilate. Although Luke avoids the double trial scene before the Sanhedrin, his account of the interrogation itself seems dependent on the Mark/Matthew tradition.<sup>214</sup> There are also incongruities within the interrogation in Matthew and Mark – the shift from the charge that Jesus threatened the temple, to the question about his being the Messiah, to the pronouncement of blasphemy. While it is possible to find connections, it is difficult to do so, and it is best to see this line of questions and answers as being a Christian composition. The statement about the temple, as we have seen, was well-lodged in the tradition, while Christians were sure that Jesus was the Messiah, as well as the Son of God and the Son of man, and later controversies between Jews and Christians would have made it clear that those claims were considered blasphemous.

<sup>214</sup> Several scholars have argued for the independence of Luke's interrogation scene: n. 199 above. The question cannot be discussed in full here, but the view which is taken is that Luke's divergence from Mark/Matthew can be attributed to the evangelist's own rewriting. Luke would have wanted to avoid explicit charges which would make Jesus appear irreligious: thus the references to the destruction of the temple and to blasphemy are deleted. Cf. Creed, *St Luke*, p. 276; H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit*, (Tübingen 1954), pp. 67–9, ET *The Theology of St Luke* (New York 1960), pp. 83–7 ('The train of thought is compressed and typically Lucan. The question is formulated in two parts, which is to be explained not by reference to any sources, but to Luke's Christological terminology . . . ' p. 84).

Secondly, we should note another tendency on the part of the synoptic evangelists in addition to the desire to shift blame from the Romans to the Jews: the desire to isolate the leaders of the Jews as the culprits.<sup>215</sup> The crowds are depicted as being ardent followers of Jesus until the trial before Pilate, when they force the decision for execution. The early Christians, engaged in dialogue with Jews and perhaps still trying to convert them, may well have disguised the degree to which Jesus offended not just the Pharisees on points of the law and the priests because of the temple, but the populace.

Deleting the interrogation by the high priest and the Sanhedrin does not necessarily mean deleting the entire content of the charges represented as being made during it. The accusation that Jesus threatened the temple stands quite independently of the interrogation scene. Further, it is not so easy to dismiss the entire question of whether or not Jesus stirred up messianic fervour. There is no good evidence that he himself claimed to be 'the Messiah'. The charge on which he was executed, however, of claiming to be 'king of the Jews', may be seen as arising from discussions of whether or not he was the Messiah.<sup>216</sup> Even if he never made the claim, his followers may have made it for him; and the populace may have been excited by the hope that the Galilean teacher would lead a revolt against Rome.<sup>217</sup> It should also be remembered that he preached

<sup>215</sup> The situation in John is different. There one also sees the desire to shift blame from the Romans to the Jews (see Brown, *John XIII–XXI*, pp. 791, 794f), but John's usual description of the opponents of Jesus as simply 'the Jews' also predominates in the passion narrative (see e.g. John 18:31, 36; 19:7). John 18:3, 'the chief priests and the Pharisees', is an exception to the rule; see earlier John 7:32, 45; 11:47, 57.

<sup>216</sup> Cf. Brown, *John XIII–XXI*, pp. 86of; Dodd, *The Founder of Christianity*, p. 159; C. K. Barrett, *Jesus and the Gospel Tradition* (London 1967), pp. 23f. On the charge 'king of the Jews', see especially Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, pp. 153–7; on the connection of 'Messiah' and 'king', see *ibid.* p. 63, n. 9.

<sup>217</sup> It is now impossible to judge the degree to which the populace in general took an interest in Jesus one way or another. As noted above, the gospels depict 'the crowd' as first following Jesus and hailing him as king (see Mark 11:1–10 *et passim*) and subsequently as demanding his death. It would appear that both descriptions are exaggerated. The best evidence that there was *some* messianic expectation aroused by Jesus' activity is that he was crucified on the charge of claiming to be 'king of the Jews'. Trocmé has proposed that Jesus became a public figure only by his action against the temple (E. Trocmé, 'L'expulsion des marchands du temple', *NIS* 15 (1968–9), 1–22, esp. 20–2; *Jesus as seen by his Contemporaries*), while Morton Smith has attributed the public notoriety which eventually led to his death to his miracles (*Jesus the Magician*, p. 16). Each view has something to be said for it, and both may be partly right. The precise impact of Jesus on the populace, however, cannot be securely recovered from the gospel accounts.

the kingdom and was the leader of at least a small band of disciples. In the political climate of the day, these facts, which now appear so innocuous, probably loomed much larger.<sup>218</sup> It is only the charge of blasphemy which seems to come from nowhere and leads nowhere. Nothing attributed to Jesus seems likely to have resulted in such a charge, and the Jewish leaders are not said in the synoptics to have represented to Pilate that Jesus broke a principal Jewish commandment.<sup>219</sup>

Saying, however, that the question about the temple and possibly even the Messiahship of Jesus stand independently of the Jewish trial scene does not mean that disputes on those points necessarily led to his death. The question of what actually led to Jesus' death is too complicated to be answered by merely settling on the residue which remains after sifting the gospel accounts. The historian's dilemma may perhaps best be put by posing the principal alternatives. Once we doubt the detailed reliability of the Jewish interrogation scene but accept as accurate the statement that Jesus was crucified by Pilate's soldiers and, further, crucified on the charge of claiming to be 'king of the Jews', we are left with basically two possibilities. Either the formal charge tells the whole story or it does not. If it does tell the whole story, the two principal options are those connected with the names of Winter and Brandon respectively: Jesus was crucified because the Romans mistakenly thought him to be a revolutionary; he was crucified because he was a revolutionary. In either case there was no substantial Jewish opposition which led to his death. If, however, one wishes to argue that the formal charge does not give a full account of why Jesus died, it is necessary to offer a hypothetical reconstruction. The denial of historicity to the Jewish trial scene – at least as it is

<sup>218</sup> On the preaching of the kingdom leading to discussion of Jesus as 'king' (or Messiah), see Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 307f. On the political climate of the day as a major factor in Jesus' death, see especially E. Rivkin, *What Crucified Jesus?* (Nashville 1984).

<sup>219</sup> By contrast, note Acts 24:6, which depicts the Jewish leadership as charging Paul before the Roman governor with having profaned the temple. From this it would seem that a charge of transgressing the Jewish law could be presented to the Roman authorities, especially if the transgression led to civil turmoil. It is often said that Pilate could not have tried Jesus on a charge of violating the Jewish law (e.g. Wilson, *The Execution of Jesus*, p. 124), but this seems not to be correct. See A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Oxford 1963), pp. 35, 46f. John, it should be noted, does represent the Jewish leaders as pressing an accusation before Pilate that Jesus broke the Jewish law. See 18:30 ('an evil-doer'); 19:7 ('We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God'). John's formulation, like the charge of blasphemy in the synoptics, seems best explained as coming from later Jewish/Christian disputes. Cf. Brown, *John XIII–XXI*, p. 891. While it may have been possible for Jesus to have been charged before Pilate for an offence against Jewish law, the only firm evidence of what the charge was indicates that it was sedition.

presented in the synoptic gospels – means that the opposition to Jesus cannot be grasped by analysing the terms (Christ, Son of the Blessed, Son of man) and the judgement (blasphemy) which are recorded there.

We have indicated in the Introduction that in giving an account of Jesus it is necessary to make hypothetical reconstructions, and nowhere is that truer than in discussing his execution. What is in favour of attempting a reconstruction is that it offers the possibility of making coherent sense of Jesus' teaching, his miracles, his death, and the subsequent rise of the Christian movement. It must be granted that one can never exclude completely the possibility of sheer accident: it may be the case that Jesus taught about God's grace and the kingdom and that he was executed by the Romans for creating a disturbance at a sensitive time, and that the Christian movement was based solely on the resurrection experiences of the disciples – but there is no intrinsic connection among these. We think it preferable, to seek an explanation which will connect Jesus' life, his death, and the origin of the Christian movement historically.

As a second caveat it must be granted that, when we enter into questions of historical causality – why did the Romans execute Jesus? why did the Jewish leaders either instigate the execution or cooperate in the proceedings? – no finally decisive answers can be given. The historian can isolate factors that appear to be causes, but no one can ever know beyond doubt what motivates behaviour. It would appear to be relatively certain that Pilate either saw or was influenced to see Jesus as a real or potential disturber of the public order. It appears from Josephus that at the time of Passover and the other great gatherings in Jerusalem it would not have taken much to cause the Romans to intervene to ensure quiet.<sup>220</sup> But this means that Jesus constituted a real or perceived threat to public peace: there must have been a dispute or a tumult or a display that was the occasion of the Roman execution. On the other hand, the conflict was of such a nature that the Romans did not see his followers as constituting a threat.

We have previously proposed that Jesus was in conflict with his contemporaries on issues basic to Judaism: the limits of the covenantal community and his own authority *vis à vis* that of Moses. Further, he seems to have climaxed his public ministry by a disruption in the temple precinct by which he intended to indicate the nearness of the kingdom and to signal that the new (or renewed) and perfect temple would soon be established by God. A dispute about the adequacy of the Mosaic ordinances and of the present temple would not have been just with the

<sup>220</sup> Josephus, *Bell.* II.2.24: 'a body of men in arms invariably mounts guard at the feasts, to prevent disorders arising from such a concourse of people'.



Pharisees or the priests, and it is likely that the picture, easily derived from the synoptics, of Jesus as debating the law with the Pharisees and offending the priests by threatening the temple is oversimplified.<sup>221</sup> Most, if not all, religious Jews, except those who accepted Jesus' claims and his message, would be outraged at a challenge to Moses' authority and at any disruption of the temple sacrifices. Since we have seen good reason to think that Jesus was in dispute with his contemporaries on such essential points, it is also reasonable to propose that this dispute was the ultimate cause of his death.

It is precarious to try to distinguish between a 'religious' and a 'political' dispute once we argue that the basic dispute was between Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries.<sup>222</sup> Questioning the authority of Moses and demonstrating a coming disruption of the temple service would have been seen as threatening both the Jewish people as an entity and the religious principles on which the community was based. Torah and temple, it is often correctly said, were the two foci of Judaism, and Jesus either threatened or was perceived as threatening both. This provides a dispute serious enough to lead to death, and we propose that the issues on which Jesus based his teaching and his final acts in Jerusalem were the issues which resulted in his execution.

The precise mechanics can no longer be retrieved, and there is insufficient evidence to allow reasonable reconstruction of numerous details. Did the Jewish leaders hold a formal interrogation? Was the crowd so offended that it clamoured for Jesus' death? Did Pilate act because of a dispute which became public and which threatened to be disruptive, or because action was more privately urged by the Jewish leaders? These questions find no sure answer. The charge 'king of the Jews' seems to

<sup>221</sup> This distinction is made by scholars of all schools. See, for example, Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, pp. 200f; Wilson, *The Execution of Jesus*, pp. 97, 101; Sloyan, *Jesus on Trial*, pp. 45, 131; Boismard, *Synopse des quatre Evangiles* II, p. 408. Morton Smith has now proposed that almost all the references to the Pharisees in the gospels 'can be shown to derive from the 70s, 80s and 90s . . .' (*Jesus the Magician*, p. 29; cf. pp. 153–7). It seems relatively certain that the role of the Pharisees was expanded in the gospel tradition. See also W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 106, 225, 315. Jesus' position would seem to deal with Judaism at a very basic level and by no means to be aimed simply at the Pharisees.

<sup>222</sup> Wilson, *The Execution of Jesus*, pp. 97, 101–3: the temple authorities sought Jesus' life, but for non-religious motives: his action against the temple led to the fear of public disturbance. But the temple was a national/religious institution, and it is hard to exclude a 'religious' dimension from a threat to such a central institution. Cf. the careful statement by Brown, *John XIII–XXI*, pp. 799f. The correct distinction is whether the primary dispute was between Jesus and his compatriots or Jesus and the Romans. A serious dispute between Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries would have both 'religious' and 'political' dimensions.

indicate that Pilate learned at least enough to know that Jesus was engaged in a contest for the allegiance of the nation. Whether this came from public discussion of whether or not Jesus was 'the coming one', or from a private charge by Jewish leaders that Jesus was making seditious claims, or from a formal 'writ of indictment' passed by the Sanhedrin cannot be determined. The synoptic gospels make the chief priests the principal actors, and that seems to have been the case. Certainly it is they who had access to Pilate.<sup>223</sup> In any case, we have seen that Jesus, in effect, appealed to Israel to follow him even if it meant disobeying Moses. It appears that he was executed as one who bid for the people's allegiance and failed to gain it.

We may now summarize the factors which contributed to Jesus' death: (1) There was a substantial dispute: who speaks for God? (2) Jesus made a self-claim which could be presented as a claim to be king: he proclaimed the kingdom; he was leader of 'the twelve', who represented Israel; some discussed whether or not he was the Messiah. (3) The political situation was one in which charismatic leaders constituted a danger. (4) There was an explicit occasion which could be made the subject of a charge: the incident at the temple. Despite the last two points it appears that no one thought that Jesus was the leader of a band of insurgents: he was crucified while the disciples went free. This, however, is compatible with the fear that his message might provoke serious trouble.

## V JESUS' SELF-CONCEPTION AND THE OUTCOME OF HIS MINISTRY

The question of Jesus' conception of himself has already been substantially answered: he was the personal herald of the coming kingdom, and in him the kingdom was actually being realized: the deaf heard, the lame walked, and the 'poor' heard the good news. Further, Jesus could equate accepting him with responding to the call of God; and he was prepared when necessary, in the name of God, to challenge the adequacy of the commandments given by God through Moses. It should be re-emphasized that on this last point reasonable people might differ. Christians have often depicted Jews who rejected Jesus' claims and call as rejecting the call and grace of God, but this was just the point at issue. Those who rejected Jesus surely saw themselves as thereby following the will of God as it was revealed in the Torah. Jesus had on his side his own certainty as to what the will of God was; against him was not only the weight of centuries of sacred tradition, but perhaps the Torah itself. But

<sup>223</sup> Rivkin, *What Crucified Jesus?*; Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 315–17.

who was this Jesus who made such claims? There is no particular reason to say that Jesus thought of himself as ‘Messiah’: indeed, in the eyes of very many scholars the weight of the evidence is against it.<sup>224</sup> Even ‘Son of man’, a phrase which Jesus apparently used of himself, may not have been employed as a title.<sup>225</sup> There is no adequate title from Jewish history for a person who claimed what Jesus claimed, and it is likely that he gave himself none. He spoke not for himself nor of himself, but of God and the kingdom. It seems likely that the one who urged others to give up everything for the kingdom claimed for himself no title or position, except the position of the one who bore a message from God, the acceptance or rejection of which would be crucial when the fullness of the kingdom arrived.

The outcome of Jesus’ life is well known and is not properly the subject of this chapter. The kingdom did not come, and Jesus died, in apparent defeat. The resurrection experiences of the disciples, however they may be understood, were the motivating power behind the formation of the Christian movement.<sup>226</sup> But that movement already had a

<sup>224</sup> See the discussion by Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, pp. 129–59; see also above, pp. 629f and notes.

<sup>225</sup> Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, pp. 160–91. It was long thought that by using the phrase ‘Son of Man’ Jesus referred to a well-known end-time figure of apocalyptic speculation, a figure otherwise principally known from 1 *Enoch* 37–71. The debate was then over whether Jesus spoke of himself as that figure or not. Recent doubts about the dating of that section of 1 *Enoch*, however, as well as studies of Aramaic terminology (see Vermes), have caused many to doubt whether or not the phrase is a title at all. One of the most recent proposals, and the most satisfying, is that of C. F. D. Moule: Jesus used the phrase of himself, recalling thereby the figure of the Son of Man in Dan. 7. The phrase as used by Jesus was not a title, ‘but a symbol of a vocation to be utterly loyal, even to death, in the confidence of ultimate vindication in the heavenly court’ (Moule, *The Origin of Christology*, pp. 11–22; the quotation is from p. 14).

<sup>226</sup> There is no consensus among New Testament scholars on how the resurrection experiences of the disciples should be understood. The view that they rested on a deliberately planned hoax (see Schweitzer’s chapter on ‘Imaginative Lives of Jesus’ in *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* and H. Schonfield, *The Passover Plot* (London 1965)) has nothing to be said for it. A positive statement of what led to the resurrection experiences, however, is harder to arrive at. Among the difficulties are these: (1) It is not clear that, in the earliest passage listing the appearances of the risen Jesus (1 Cor. 15:3–8), Paul had in mind the sort of physical resurrection which is described in the gospels. He distinguishes the appearance to him from the other appearances only in terms of time, not type. Further, he never makes the distinction, known from Luke–Acts (Luke 24:50f; Acts 1:9) between the resurrection and the ascension (see Rom. 1:4; Phil. 2:9). (2) Paul’s list of resurrection appearances is appreciably different from that of any of the gospels; it includes some not mentioned by them and it does not have some mentioned there. (3) The accounts of the gospels themselves are by no means in agreement. To name only the most obvious discrepancy: in Matthew (and implicitly in

focus given to it in the teaching of Jesus: there is an appeal to the will of God which is not known just through exegesis of the Scriptures, although the Scriptures may be made use of: God intends to include even those outside the normal definition of the covenant community. It may thus be that, even though Jesus himself never had the Gentiles in mind, Paul was in fact the true heir of the spirit of Jesus.<sup>227</sup>

Mark) the appearances are in Galilee, while in Luke they are limited to Jerusalem and its environs. (4) The general problem of knowing how to understand ancient statements about supernatural events (e.g. the miracles of Apollonius of Tyana and the *bat qol* of Rabbinic literature) confronts the modern scholar in its sharpest form in the accounts of the resurrection appearances. The most that can be said here – but also the least – is that the early Christians were absolutely convinced that Jesus of Nazareth had been raised and was Lord and that numerous of them were certain that he had appeared to them. For a recent survey of the problems and approaches to solving them, see C. F. D. Moule (ed.) *The Significance of the Message of the Resurrection for Faith in Jesus Christ* (London 1968). See also Gerd Luedemann, *The Resurrection of Jesus* (Minneapolis 1994).

<sup>227</sup> In accordance with the purpose of this chapter, to describe Jesus as a figure in Jewish history, and especially to describe the most crucial aspects of his relationships to his contemporaries, other aspects of his life and work have been treated very briefly. Thus we have barely discussed Jesus' ethical teaching and its relation to Judaism, which has been treated elsewhere (above, see esp. pp. 646f). On the agreements and disagreements between Jesus' ethical teaching and that of the Rabbis, see especially J. Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, pp. 381–98. Klausner finds no substantive new concentration on ethics nor strikingly unique contents. The traditional term 'ethics' is here understood to refer to statements about humans' relations to one another. It is generally realized that Jesus' ethics do not constitute a system or a part of a systematic theology. See W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 425–35.

## CHAPTER 2 I

PAUL: FROM THE JEWISH POINT  
OF VIEW

If any one were to be singled out as having done most to ensure that the movement inaugurated through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth became predominantly Gentile in a few decades, it was a Jew. He did so with no intention that it should thereby be divorced from Jews; the threat of its becoming so caused him great agony. His Jewish name was Saul and his Roman, Paul, which in his extant works written in Greek he naturally preferred. We know of him from letters which he wrote to churches, usually those which he himself had founded. We shall here use those letters which are generally agreed to be Pauline – 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, Philemon – but also more cautiously 2 Thessalonians<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> E. Best, *A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (London 1972), p. 58, favours a probably Pauline authorship (or that of Silvanus or Timothy) for 2 Thessalonians. W. Trilling, *Untersuchungen zum zweiten Thessalonicherbrief* (Leipzig 1972) takes it to be deutero-Pauline. His most important objection to its authenticity is that the apocalyptic parts especially lack a christological shaping (p. 130). The method of dismissing certain theologoumena as un-Pauline because his other letters do not contain them, however, does not take sufficiently into account that Paul's views may have changed. Usually this issue has been dealt with under the heading 'development in Paul'. See C. H. Hunzinger, 'Die Hoffnung angesichts des Todes im Wandel der paulinischen Aussagen' in *Leben angesichts des Todes. Beiträge zum theologischen Problem des Todes*. FS H. Thielicke. B. Lohse and H. P. Schmidt (eds.) (Tübingen 1968), pp. 69–88; C. Buck and G. Taylor, *St. Paul: A Study of the Development of his Thought* (New York 1969), and the critique of this by V. P. Furnish, 'Development in Paul's Thought', *J.A.A.R.* 38 (1970), 289–303, and that in the review by J. Koenig in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* (1969–70), 368–71; W. Wiefel, 'Die Hauptrichtung des Wandels im eschatologischen Denken des Paulus', *TZ* 30 (1974), 65–81; W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and The Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (henceforth *GL*; Berkeley 1974), pp. 208–20. G. Lüdemann, *Paulus der Heidenapostel. I: Studien zur Chronologie* (FRLANT 123; Göttingen 1980), pp. 213–71 (ET, *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles. Studies in Chronology* (London 1984), pp. 201–61) deals with the development from 1 Thess. 4:13ff to 1 Cor. 15:51ff and thinks that it is not until the time of writing 1 Cor. 15:51ff that Paul conceived of the resurrection of Christians as the normal position. The term 'development' is itself misleading because it is (and has been) too easily associated with evolution towards perfection (as Furnish rightly emphasizes, pp. 292f, against Buck and Taylor). Perhaps one should replace it by 'shift'. See further J. W. Drane, *Paul, Libertine or Legalist? A Study*

Colossians<sup>2</sup> despite the doubts cast upon their authenticity. Unfortunately, none of them is addressed to a purely Jewish or to a Palestinian church. Acts, devoted for the greater part to Paul, is a secondary source, whose historical value cannot be casually dismissed, but must, however, be subordinated to that of the explicit and implicit history in the Epistles. The strictly Jewish sources, the Mishnah, the Midrashim and the Talmud, do not refer to Paul directly: cryptic references to him testily uncovered in these add nothing of significance.<sup>3</sup> This almost total silence points to the intensity of Jewish opposition to Paul from the very beginning. Other apostates from Judaism such as the Tannaite Elisha ben Abuyah (Aḥer) continued to be referred to by the Sages; Jesus found a place in the Talmud.<sup>4</sup> But the name of Paul became unspeakable. Among Jews there was reserved for him that ferocity of hatred usually concentrated on menacing renegades down to such as Trotsky in more recent times (whose name was almost erased from Russian dictionaries). The reasons for this will emerge as we look at Paul as a Jew among Jews. Since it is his

*of the Major Pauline Epistles* (London 1975) and 'Tradition, Law and Ethics in Pauline Theology', *NovT* 16 (1974), 167–78; H. Hübner, *Das Gesetz bei Paulus. Ein Beitrag zum Werden der paulinischen Theologie* (Göttingen 1978); ET, *Law in Paul's Thought: A Contribution to the Development of Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh 1984).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. C. F. D. Moule, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Cambridge 1957); and J. Lähnemann, *Der Kolosserbrief: Komposition, Situation, und Argumentation* (Gütersloh 1971). Otherwise: E. Lohse, *Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon*. (MeyerK 9. Göttingen 1968; ET, *Colossians and Philemon*. Hermeneia. Philadelphia 1971). The polemic against Catholic interpretations of Colossians 'as a work of the aging Paul, who had developed his theology further and now, in Colossians, ponders the mystery of the divine plan of salvation' (ET, p. 180, n. 9, with reference to A. Wikenhauser) obviously does not allow Lohse to concede the possibility that Colossians reflects a shift in Pauline theology evoked mainly by his changing circumstances (cf. Lähnemann, *passim*). See also E. Schweizer, *Der Brief an die Kolosser* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1976; ET, *The Letter to the Colossians*. London 1982). See on all of the above, W. G. Kümmel, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 17th edn (Heidelberg 1973); ET, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville, New York and London 1975).

<sup>3</sup> G. Kittel, 'Paulus im Talmud', *Rabbinica*, Arbeiten zur Religionsgeschichte des Urchristentums 1.3, pp. 1–16 (Leipzig 1920). Kittel, however, holds that Abot 3:12 (R. Eleazer of Modiim) contains an allusion to Paul. So E. E. Urbach, *The Sages, Their Concepts and Beliefs*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem 1975), vol. 1, pp. 295f; see for another alleged allusion to Paul (*b. Pesahim* 118a) p. 304; W. D. Davies, 'Reflections on tradition: the Abot revisited', *Christian History and Interpretation: Festschrift. J. Knox*, W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, R. R. Niebuhr (eds.), pp. 127–59 (Cambridge 1967), pp. 152ff, where also Abot 6:2 and 6:11b are discussed: 'If anti-Paulinism be present at all in the passages indicated . . . it is so by implication only' (p. 154).

<sup>4</sup> R. T. Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (London 1903); H. L. Strack, *Jesus, die Häretiker und die Christen nach den ältesten jüdischen Angaben* (Leipzig 1910); T. W. Manson, 'The Life of Jesus: a Study of the Available Material', *BJRL* 27 (1943), 3ff; and, more negative, J. Maier, *Jesus von Nazareth in der Talmudischen Überlieferung* (Darmstadt 1978).

interaction with Jews (the distinction between Jewish-Christians and Jews in this context is not always easy to maintain or significant) that concerns us, we do not attempt yet another biography of Paul.<sup>5</sup> But we concentrate on him rather as a figure in the history of Judaism.

## I HIS JEWISH BACKGROUND

Saul is usually referred to as Saul of Tarsus, and the assumption has often been that he came from Tarsus in Asia Minor and was greatly influenced by the rich cultural life of that city, which was particularly connected with Stoicism.<sup>6</sup> But only Acts makes explicit Saul's connection with Tarsus and it does not make clear what that connection was. Neither the fact that he was called Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:11), nor that he was brought from Tarsus to Antioch by Barnabas (Acts 11:25), nor the reference to his work there as a Christian missionary in Galatians 1:21,<sup>7</sup> prove that Paul was either born or had been brought up there. A statement modelled after Hellenistic biographical usage, in Acts 22:3, states that he was born in Tarsus but brought up and educated in Jerusalem,<sup>8</sup> perhaps having been taken at an early age from Tarsus, where his home, transcending the customary but now outmoded scholarly distinction between Hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism,<sup>9</sup> is likely to have been a bit of Palestine outside

<sup>5</sup> See for example, A. D. Nock, *St Paul* (London 1946); G. Bornkamm, *Paulus* (Stuttgart 1968; ET, *Paul*. New York 1971).

<sup>6</sup> H. Böhlig, *Die Geisteskultur von Tarsos im augusteischen Zeitalter mit Berücksichtigung der paulinischen Schriften* (Göttingen 1913), pp. 107–28. But Böhlig regarded the influence of Stoicism on Paul as insignificant (p. 168).

<sup>7</sup> The question whether 'Syria and Cilicia' includes or excludes a mission in Macedonia cannot be dealt with here. J. C. Hurd's statement goes too far ('Thus the argument from silence is exceedingly feeble with respect to the western mission.' *The Origin of 1 Corinthians*, New York 1965, p. 22) because he himself argues from silence when asserting a missionary activity in Macedonia during Paul's 'silent years'.

<sup>8</sup> See W. C. van Unnik, *Tarsus of Jerusalem*, Amsterdam, 1952: ET, *Tarsus or Jerusalem: The City of Paul's Youth* (London 1962); reprinted in *Sparsa Collecta: The Collected Essays of W. C. van Unnik* I (NovTSup 29; Leiden 1973), pp. 259–320. But van Unnik has only proved that Acts followed a Hellenistic formula. From that alone Paul's upbringing in Jerusalem cannot automatically and certainly be concluded (*contra* J. Jeremias, *Der Schlüssel zur theologie des Apostels Paulus*. Calwer Hefte zur Förderung biblischen Glaubens und christlichen Lebens 115; Stuttgart 1971, pp. 9f).

<sup>9</sup> The emphasis in W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (henceforth *PRJ*, London 1948, 4th edn 1980), pp. 1–16 has been confirmed in recent scholarship. See further, Davies, 'Reflections on tradition', p. 138, n. 1; J. N. Sevenster, *Do you know Greek? How Much Greek Could the First Jewish Christians Have Known?* (Leiden 1968); R. Meyer, *Hellenistisches in der rabbinischen Anthropologie* (Stuttgart 1937); E. P. Sanders, *The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge 1969), pp. 190ff; H. A. Fischel, *Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy* (Leiden 1973); M. Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus* (Tübingen 1969, 2nd edn



Palestine. Probably born in Tarsus, Paul developed into a Palestinian Jew. This did not mean that he was not open to Hellenistic influences. These were everywhere around him, inside and outside Palestine, and in the literary forms he used, but these influences do not concern us here, although it must never be overlooked that Paul's missionary activity in the eastern Mediterranean, as the titles of his epistles indicate, meant that those influences on Paul must have been ubiquitous.<sup>10</sup>

Of his upbringing, either in Tarsus or Jerusalem, he himself says nothing. But he does refer to his life before his encounter with the Christian movement. He recognizes himself as having been of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, filled with 'zeal', who had persecuted the Church (Gal. 1:13–14, 1 Cor. 15:9, Phil. 3:4–7). These data are of fundamental significance.

Paul's use of the terms 'zeal' and 'zealot' to describe himself has been taken to point to membership in a Zealot Party which led to the revolt against Rome in CE 66.<sup>11</sup> But no such 'party' existed in his day.<sup>12</sup> We can only ask whether Paul once shared the 'zeal' for the violent overthrow of Rome of the kind of revolutionaries who later came to constitute the Zealot Party. The terms 'zeal' and 'zealot' can mislead. 'Zeal' on the model of that of Phineas,<sup>13</sup> who slew the Israelite and the Midianite woman whom he had brought with him into the congregation of Israel (Numbers 25:7ff), could inspire the killing of offenders against the Law, who polluted the land. Such killing could be regarded as offering a sacrifice to atone for the sins of Israel and to safeguard the Law.<sup>14</sup> But 'zeal' could also denote intense loyalty to the Law, and a defence of it, unrelated to violence and killing.<sup>15</sup> The picture of a violent persecutor

1973), pp. 191–5 (ET, *Judaism and Hellenism*. 2 vols. (Philadelphia 1974), 1:103–6); J. A. Fitzmyer, 'The Languages of Palestine in the First Century AD', *CBQ* 32 (1970), 501–31, esp. 507–18. The critique by S. Sandmel in *The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity* (New York 1969), p. 127, is not convincing. But that Palestine was Hellenized does not annul the 'theological' distinction drawn by pious Jews between life in the land and 'outside' is clear. See W. D. Davies, *GL*, pp. 54–74.

<sup>10</sup> See especially H. D. Betz, *Der Apostel Paulus und die sokratische Tradition: Eine exegetische Untersuchung zu seiner Apologie 2 Korinther 10–13* (Tübingen 1972) and the article by the same author, 'The literary composition and function of Paul's letter to the Galatians', *NTS* 21 (1974–5), 353–79.

<sup>11</sup> J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians: A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes, and Dissertations* (London 1865), pp. 81f.

<sup>12</sup> See the references in *GL*, p. 93, n. 38 and p. 333, n. 3; D. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution 6–74 CE: A Political History Based on the Writings of Josephus* (Philadelphia 1976).

<sup>13</sup> W. R. Farmer, 'The Patriarch Phineas', *ATR* 34 (1952), 26–30; M. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, (Leiden 1976), pp. 154–81, ET, *The Zealots* (Edinburgh 1989), pp. 169–77.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. 1 Macc. 2:23–8, 44, 48; 3:5–6; W. R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus: An Inquiry into Jewish Nationalism in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York 1956), pp. 60–5.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 65–8.

supplied by Acts must be questioned in the light of the evidence of Galatians. Paul there defines the nature of his 'zeal'. Not directly political, it was concentrated on loyalty to the traditions of the fathers (Gal. 1:14).<sup>16</sup> In Phil. 3:6 he mentions his 'zeal' immediately after his status as a Pharisee: it was Pharisaic.<sup>17</sup> And Pharisaism, by the time of Paul, had probably become more pacific<sup>18</sup> and highly missionary.<sup>19</sup> The movement had also shed its earlier political interests,<sup>20</sup> so that it is unlikely that Saul could have excelled in Judaism above his contemporaries if he had been pre-occupied with violent revolution. On the contrary, he may have been a

<sup>16</sup> Cf. P. H. Menoud, 'Le sens du verbe *πορθεῖν* (Gal. 1, 13, 23; Actes 9, 21)' in W. Eltester, ed., *Apophoreta*: Fs E. Haenchen (Berlin 1964), pp. 178–86, who thinks that Paul's persecution consisted in preaching against the new faith; otherwise it is amazing that in his Christian days Paul was never accused of having shed the blood of anybody.

<sup>17</sup> Some have even found a past glance at Paul's early Pharisaism in the use of the phrase *aphorisas me* in Gal. 1:15 ('who separated me'): so H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* (MeyerK 7; Göttingen 1971), p. 53. Compare K. L. Schmidt, 'ἀφορίζω,' *TWNT* 5 (Stuttgart 1954), pp. 454–6; ET, *TDNT* 5 (Grand Rapids 1967), pp. 454–5. Paul is here contrasting his 'separation' as a Pharisee with his 'separation' for the Gospel. But to connect *aphorisas* with *pharisaïos* because of the alleged similarity in their sound is to go too far. Moreover, notice should be taken of another interpretation. W. R. Farmer argues that Phineas must have been known to Paul in his pre-Christian days ('The Patriarch Phineas', p. 28; *Maccabees*, p. 178, n. 6). He points to 'the fact that the phrase "and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" was associated not only with the name of Abraham but with that of Phineas as well' ('The Patriarch Phineas', p. 27; cf. Pss. 106:30–1). According to Farmer, Paul was inspired by the Phineas tradition when persecuting the Christians, but deliberately dismissed it in his letters. 'Paul's teaching of justification by faith was partly rooted in his reaction against a theology which regarded a zeal for the Law as redemptive – a theology which stemmed in part from the traditions concerning the patriarch Phineas' ('The Patriarch Phineas', p. 30). In this view, Paul was, in fact, fighting against his own pre-Christian shadow. Gal. 1 does recall the Maccabean period, for example, the term *Ioudaïsmos* in Gal. 1:14.

<sup>18</sup> See D. Daube, *Civil Disobedience in Antiquity* (Edinburgh 1972), pp. 84ff; J. Neusner, *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1973); contrast chapter 19, n. 7, above.

<sup>19</sup> *PRJ*, pp. 63f; J. Jeremias, *Jesu Verbeissung für die Völker* (Stuttgart 1956); ET, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations* (London 1958). The denial of Jewish missionary activity in the first century CE by H. Kasting, *Die Anfänge der urchristlichen Mission: Eine historische Untersuchung* (Munich 1969) is not convincing. See M. Hengel's review of Kasting, *TLZ* 96 (1971), cols. 913–15 (Hengel points to Matt 23:15 and John 7:35), and 'Die Ursprünge der christlichen Mission', *NTS* 18 (1971/2), 15–38; F. Siegert, 'Gottesfürchtige und Sympathisanten', *JSJ* 4 (1973), 109–64. For more recent discussion of Jewish missionary activity, see L. H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton 1993); M. Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1994); S. McKnight, *A Light Among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis 1991) J. Carleton Paget, 'Jewish Proselytism at the Time of Christian Origins: Chimeria or Reality?', *JSNT* 62 (1996), 65–103.

<sup>20</sup> J. Neusner, *From Politics to Piety*. Compare G. Bornkamm, *Paul*, p. 12.

Jewish missionary to Gentiles (Gal. 5:11), and developed missionary skills before his 'call'.<sup>21</sup>

So, too, the verbs *diôkein* and *porthein* used in the Epistles to describe Paul's activity as a persecutor must not be over-translated to indicate violent or murderous activity (Gal. 1:13).<sup>22</sup> *Diôkein*, usually translated 'to persecute', could mean simply 'to annoy' or 'to harass verbally'. When in Gal. 5:11, Paul refers to his being constantly persecuted, he can only mean that he was open to hostility, not to danger of death. So, too, in Gal. 1:13 *porthein*, usually translated as 'to ravage', is in the imperfect, conative tense to denote, not necessarily the physical ravaging of Christian believers, but the intention of Paul to destroy the Church (the collective term is here important). Paul's references to his extraordinary 'zeal' for the Law imply that his opposition to the Church was not typical of the Jewish community, and not organized or authorized, as Acts holds (9:1f; 22:4f; 26:10), but highly individual. A single Pharisee could hardly have exercised physical violence against the Church. His attacks were more likely to have been in the form of theological argument to overthrow its faith (compare *diôkô* in John 5:16). Such argument could ultimately have ravaged the Church more than physical violence. The utmost violence in which Paul is likely to have participated was that to which he himself was later subjected as a Christian<sup>23</sup> and this, in the perspective of his time, was not severe and did not seriously obstruct his work (2 Cor. 11:24ff). On the other hand, that he had been very 'violently engaged' against the Church, whether physically or orally, is clear from the emphasis with which he referred to his persecution of Christians (1 Cor. 15:9; Phil. 3:6).

The references to persecution, whether physically or just orally violent, then, point us to a Paul belonging to an extremely devoted wing of the Pharisees and revealing what was possibly a peculiarly individual intensity of dedication which led him to seek to destroy the emerging Christian movement. His intense opposition to it was known, and since the pressures of the Gentile world and the political temper of the times demanded the closing of the ranks among Jews, the activity of Paul,

<sup>21</sup> N. Perrin, *The New Testament, an Introduction: Proclamation and Parenthesis, Myth and History* (New York 1974), p. 90; edn 2 with D. C. Duling (New York 1982), p. 138, writes on Gal. 5:11: 'Paul had been an active missionary for Judaism in the Hellenistic world.' That accounts for 'the readiness and skill with which he took to Christian missionary work'. Compare Bornkamm, *Paul*. Contrast F. Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief* (Freiburg 1974), pp. 359ff.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Menoud, 'Le sens du verbe *πορθεῖν*'.

<sup>23</sup> Similarly C. Burchard, *Der dreizehnte Zeuge: Traditions- und kompositionsgeschichte. Untersuchungen zu Lukas' Darstellung der Frühzeit des Paulus* (Göttingen 1970), p. 50, n. 37.

though not itself politically motivated, would have gained the benediction of political extremists who would welcome his loyalty to the Law in furthering national solidarity. Doubtless the searing character of Paul's later struggles with Jewish opponents, in part at least, is to be seen in this light.

The cautious sobriety of Paul in the attitude which later, as a Christian, he took towards the civil authorities was Pharisaic.<sup>24</sup> Such sobriety and even quietism do not ordinarily coexist with 'zeal'. But in Judaism they often did in a strange, unexpected quarter, that is, in circles which might be expected to exclude quietism, the apocalyptic.<sup>25</sup> First-century Judaism was often moved by intense eschatological expectations. Sporadically these instigated activist messianic contenders, but more often, precisely because these expectations were so fantastically glorious that they could only be realized by God himself, they induced political quietism. Apocalyptists confined bloody armageddons to their dreams, their wars to their writings: it was for God not man to bring in the End. Although not exactly popular, their visions were not confined to esoteric circles and schools, but were in the first-century Jewish air and often shared by Pharisees. Paul's designation of himself as a Pharisee by no means implies distance from eschatological speculation: his use of such terms as 'the fullness of time' (Gal. 4:4), 'the resurrection of the dead' (Rom. 11:15), 'the mystery' (1 Cor. 2:7; 15:5; Rom. 11:25; 16:25) or 'the mysteries of God,' the trumpet announcing the end (1 Tim. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:5), indeed the whole structure of his thinking, bears witness to this. His interpretation of Christ can only be understood against a background of Jewish Apocalyptic, which has been called the mother of his theology.<sup>26</sup>

In this connection, the manuscripts discovered at Qumran are important. The terminology of Paul finds illumination from parallels found in these. It is unlikely that 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1 was borrowed directly from the Qumran literature,<sup>27</sup> but the central elements in Paul's thinking, even the doctrine of justification by faith, have been illumined from the sectarian

<sup>24</sup> See for example, *Abot* 3:2: 'Pray for the peace of the ruling power'; *Str-B* 3:303ff. For Paul's view, see 1 Thess. 4:11–12; 2 Thess. 2:6–12; Rom. 13:1ff.

<sup>25</sup> On quietism in Apocalyptic, see especially D. Daube, *Civil Disobedience*, pp. 99–133. But note also the hatred in apocalyptic circles towards outsiders, discussed in J. Marcus, 'Modern and Ancient Jewish Apocalypticism', *JR* 76 (1996), 1–27.

<sup>26</sup> E. Käsemann, 'Zu Thema der christlichen Apokalyptik', *ZTK* 59 (1962), 257–84; ET, 'On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic' in *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia 1969), pp. 108–37; J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle* (Philadelphia 1980) emphasizes apocalyptic as the matrix of Paulinism.

<sup>27</sup> J. A. Fitzmyer regards the passage as a 'Christian reading of an Essene paragraph which has been introduced into the Pauline letter.' ('Qumran and the interpolated paragraph 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1' in *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (London 1971), pp. 205–17); similarly J. Gnilka, '2 Cor. 6:14–7:1 in the light of the Qumran texts and

sources.<sup>28</sup> There can be little question that Paul shared much in the sectarian terminology<sup>29</sup> and ideology. We cannot be sure whether he was ever in direct communication with the sect before or after he became a Christian. But the Judaism he knew was open to eschatological ideas not entirely dissimilar to those cherished at Qumran, although as a Pharisee, and later as a Christian, he would have rejected the formulation or systemization of them given by the Teacher of Righteousness. The point is that the Qumran sect reveals the same combination of utter devotion to or 'zeal' for the Law with intense eschatological speculation and quietism such as we find in Paul. The War Scroll<sup>30</sup> was written by passive sectarians who had escaped to live quietly in the desert. So too Paul's 'zeal' for the Law and his eschatological hopes, as a Jew, equally allowed for political quietism.

One other aspect of Paul's life suggests his connection with a visionary-Apocalyptic Pharisaic tradition. Before his conversion and after, he was probably, unusually liable to extraordinary religious experiences. He was often subject to visions. The abundant evidence of Acts (the vision of Ananias, 9:12; of a Macedonian man, 16:9ff; of the Lord in the Temple, 22:17; of the Lord at Corinth and again at Jerusalem, 18:9, 23:11; of the angel in a shipwreck, 27:23) cannot be pressed in proof of this because its author had a predilection for visions. But in addition to the vision of the Risen Lord (Gal. 1:15; Phil. 3:12, also reported in Acts 9:3ff; 22:6ff;

the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs' in *Paul and Qumran*, J. Murphy-O'Connor, ed. (Chicago 1968), pp. 48–68. H. D. Betz, '2 Cor. 6:14–7:1: An Anti-Pauline Fragment?' *JBL* 92 (1973), 88–108, thinks that this passage has its origin in circles which can be compared to Paul's opponents in Galatia. In favour of authenticity, see N. A. Dahl, 'A Fragment and Its Context: 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1' in *Studies in Paul* (Minneapolis 1977), pp. 62–9; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (London 1973), pp. 192ff; and already, H. Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief* (Göttingen 1924), pp. 211–19. Further, 2 Cor. 6:14ff may have belonged to the 'Previous Letter'; see J. C. Hurd *The Origin of First Corinthians*, table on p. 45; 215, 235ff.

<sup>28</sup> See H. Braun, *Qumran und das Neue Testament*, 2 vols. (Tübingen 1966), *ad loc.*; E. Käsemann, *An die Römer* (HNT, 8a; Tübingen 1974), pp. 26–9; ET, *Commentary on Romans* (London 1980), pp. 25–32; J. Murphy-O'Connor (ed.) *Paul and Qumran*; H. Thyen, *Studien zur Sündenvergebung im Neuen Testament und seinen alttestamentlichen und jüdischen Voraussetzungen* (FRLANT 96; Göttingen 1976), pp. 77–98. J. Jeremias, *The Central Message of the New Testament* (New York 1965), pp. 66–70, rejects the identification of the notion of justification by faith in Paul with that of the Qumran sectarians.

<sup>29</sup> W. D. Davies, 'Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Flesh and Spirit', chap. in *Christian Origins and Judaism* (Philadelphia 1962), pp. 145–77.

<sup>30</sup> For the difficulty if not impossibility of separating Apocalyptic and Pharisaism, see W. D. Davies, 'Apocalyptic and Pharisaism', chap. in *Christian Origins and Judaism*, pp. 19–30; A. Nissen, 'Tora und Geschichte im Spätjudentum', *NovT* 9 (1967), 241–77, in confutation of D. Rössler, *Gesetz und Geschichte: Untersuchungen zur Theologie der jüdischen Apokalyptik und der pharisäischen Orthodoxie* (WMANT 3; Neukirchen 1960).

26:12ff, in accounts embellished by the communities whence they are derived), which he set apart from all other visions, in 2 Cor. 12:7 Paul refers to an abundance of visions, and in 1 Cor. 14:18 claimed the ecstasy of speaking with tongues more than all others. To judge from this, the Pharisaism out of which he came was not arid and legalistic but open to visionary ecstasy. In certain circles there was a pattern of experience, usually referred to as Merkabah mysticism, associated particularly with the study of Genesis 1 and Ezekiel 1, 2. That Paul may have known the mystic way of the Merkabah is possibly suggested by his reference in 2 Cor. 12:1ff to his transport to the third heaven and his hearing things that could not be uttered.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, he knew violent changes of mood, depths of despair and hope. He was nothing if not passionate. He is best understood as a Jew rooted in an Apocalyptic-Pharisaic tradition which had combined Halakhic and Scriptural concentration with deep mystical, emotional experiences often arising out of this.

Can we pin down more precisely the nature of the Halakhic Pharisaism, impregnated as it was with apocalyptic visionary ideas, and experience and sectarian terminology, in which Paul had been fostered? Since there were at least seven different kinds of Pharisees,<sup>32</sup> this is extremely difficult. Paul himself never refers to his teachers in his epistles. According to Acts 22:3, he had been trained at the feet of Gamaliel, who must have been Gamaliel the Elder.<sup>33</sup> Gal. 1:13, 14 could be taken to support this: it would be natural to conclude from them that Paul had had the best teachers of his day. That he did not mention Gamaliel to the Galatians and especially to the Philippians, in Phil. 3:4ff, may be due simply to his awareness that the name would convey nothing to them. In writing to Theophilus, presumably an informed Roman (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1), the author of Acts would assume that, since a Gamaliel had recently visited Rome on behalf of his people,<sup>34</sup> a reference to another Gamaliel would

<sup>31</sup> J. W. Bowker, '“Merkabah” visions and the vision of Paul', *JSS* 16 (1971): 157–73. Critical of Bowker's conclusions is E. E. Ellis, '“Spiritual” Gifts in the Pauline Community', *NTS* 20 (1973/4), 142, n. 9. C. C. Rowland, 'The Influence of the First Chapter of Ezekiel on Judaism and Early Christianity' (Diss., Cambridge University 1975), explores the relationship between Merkabah mysticism and Colossians. See also *idem*, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London 1982), esp. pp. 269–441.

<sup>32</sup> S. Lieberman, 'The Discipline in the so-called Dead Sea Manual of Discipline', *JBL* 11 (1952), 199–206. He finds seven groups of Pharisees. According to *y.Sanb.* 10:5, there were 24 sects in Israel at the time of the destruction of the Second Temple.

<sup>33</sup> See A. T. Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (London 1974), pp. 196f.

<sup>34</sup> See *Deut. Rab.*, ch. 2, section 24 (Soncino translation, pp. 51f); *Exod. Rab.* ch. 30, section 9 (Soncino, pp. 355f); *Lam. Rab.* ch. 5, section 18 (Soncino, p. 242); *Sifre Deut.*, section 43 (ed. Finkelstein, p. 94); *b. Mak.* (24a); and my *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (henceforth *SSM*, Cambridge 1964), p. 295.



have meaning. There is no more justification for the scepticism often applied to Paul's education by Gamaliel than for the credulity even more often applied to the immense influence of Tarsian Hellenistic culture upon him.<sup>35</sup> He was not an 'ordained Rabbi', formal ordination having emerged only after CE 70,<sup>36</sup> but he was a cultured Pharisee trained in the Law.

We can assume that Paul as a Pharisee studied the Scriptures in Hebrew. That he respected and generally cited the Septuagint in his epistles does not gainsay this. From as early as the middle of the second century BCE, the Septuagint was used as a matter of course in Palestine itself by people who knew Hebrew.<sup>37</sup> Paul's epistles reveal constant and profound engagement with the Scriptures, probably with the Midrashim and Targumim, and a familiarity with the contemporary Jewish exegetical methods. The allegorical method more typical of Hellenistic circles, but not unknown in Jewish, Palestinian circles, including the Pharisaic, he less frequently employed (possibly in Gal. 4:21ff; 1 Cor. 9:8–10; Rom. 11:17–24).<sup>38</sup>

What did it imply that he was a pupil of Gamaliel the Elder? Traditionally, on the basis of Mishnah Aboth 1:16, this Gamaliel has been taken to have been a son or grandson of Hillel. With this as a starting point it was concluded that Paul, his pupil, belonged to the School or House of Hillel. Traditionally again, Hillel was understood to have been peace-loving and patient, open to receive Gentiles as proselytes, and the formulator of famous rules – seven in number – for the interpretation of Scripture.

<sup>35</sup> See W. M. Ramsay, *The Cities of St Paul: Their Influence on His Life and Thought* (London 1907).

<sup>36</sup> For the rabbinic material see *Str-B.* 2:647–61; D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London 1956), pp. 224–46. Otherwise, A. Oepke, 'Problem der vorchristlichen Zeit des Paulus', *TSK* 105 (1933), 387–424, p. 389 (reprinted in *Das Paulusbild in der neueren deutschen Forschung* (K. H. Rengstorf, ed., Darmstadt 1964), pp. 410–16, p. 412); E. Lohse, *Die Ordination im Spätjudentum und im Neuen Testament* (Berlin and Göttingen 1951). For a criticism and development of Lohse's book, see A. Ehrhardt, 'Jewish and Christian Ordination', *JEH* 5 (1954), 125–38 (reprinted in Ehrhardt, *The Framework of the New Testament Stories* (Cambridge, MA 1964), pp. 133–50); E. Ferguson, 'Jewish and Christian Ordination', *HTR* 56 (1963), 13–19; and G. Kretschmar, 'Die Ordination im frühen Christentum', *FZPhTh* 22 (1975), 35–69.

<sup>37</sup> See N. Walter, 'Jewish-Greek Literature of the Greek Period', *CHJ*, vol. 2, p. 386.

<sup>38</sup> See J. Bonsirven, *Exégèse rabbinique et exégèse paulinienne* (Paris 1939); E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh 1957), pp. 51–4; U. Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* (Munich 1968), pp. 61–4. In 1 Cor. 9:8–10, Paul interprets Deut. 25:4 according to the Hellenistic-Alexandrian rule, that God cares for the higher. See H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia 1975), pp. 154f. Cf. P. Vielhauer, 'Paulus und das alte Testament' in *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie der Reformation*. Fs E. Bizer. L. Abramowski and J. F. G. Goeters (eds.) (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1969), pp. 33–62. On Rom. 10:5ff, see W. D. Davies, *PRJ*, pp. 153ff; M. J. Suggs, "'The word is near you": Romans 10:6–10 within the purpose of the letter' in *Christian History and Interpretation*, pp. 289–312; Luz, *Geschichtsverständnis*, pp. 91f. On Paul's exegesis, see A. T. Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique*.



Elements reminiscent of Hillel reappear in Paul. The alleged Pauline parallels can be divided theologically and exegetically.<sup>39</sup>

First, theologically, Paul's view that the Law can be summed up in one sentence (Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:8, compare with T. B. Shabb. 31a); his emphasis (throughout his epistles) on baptism (1 Cor. 10:1ff: compare for Hillelites T. B. Ker. 9a–81a; T. B. Yeb. 46a; and compare also 1 Cor. 10:12 with Aboth. 2:5). The openness of Hillel to Gentiles need not be commented on.

Secondly, exegetically, Paul in his interpretation of Scripture employs at least five of the seven rules traditionally derived from Hillel. Thus:

- 1st *Qal waḥomer*: (literally, light and heavy; easy and strict), inference *a minori ad maius*, from the less important to the more important: see Rom. 5:15, 17; 11:12; 2 Cor. 3:7ff, 9, 11. The opposite of this rule, that is, *a majori ad minus*, also occurs in Rom. 5:6–9, 10, 8:32, 11:24; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3.
- 2nd *Gezerah Shavab*: (literally, similar injunction or regulation), inference by analogy, by virtue of which, for example, because in two pentateuchal passages words occur which are similar or have an identical connotation, the laws in both passages, however different they may be in themselves, are subject to the same regulations and applications: compare Rom. 4:1–12 with Gen. 15:6 and Pss. 32:2ff.
- 5th *K'lal weberat we pberat we k'lal*: (literally, the general and the particular, the particular and the general), the detailed determination of the general by means of the particular, of the particular by means of the general: see Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14.
- 6th *Keyōse bō bemâkôm aḥēr*: (literally, to which something similar in another passage), exposition by means of another similar passage: see Gal. 3:16.
- 7th *Dâbâr hâ-lâmēd min'inyano*: (literally, something that is deduced from the context), the consequences for the text of its context: see Rom. 4:10–11a; Gal. 3:17.

These traditional positions which are still held by most scholars, however, have all now been questioned.<sup>40</sup> Any genealogical connection between Gamaliel the Elder and Hillel cannot be proved. In Mishnah Aboth 2:16, as in T. B. Shabb. 15a, where Gamaliel's name occurs in the same context as that of Hillel, no genealogical connection between them

<sup>39</sup> For the following see J. Jeremias, 'Paulus als Hillelit' in *Neotestamentica et Semitica*. Fs M. Black, E. E. Ellis (ed.) (Edinburgh 1969), pp. 88–94. For a convenient presentation of Hillel's hermeneutic rules, see M. Mielziner, *Introduction to the Talmud*, edn 3 (New York 1925), pp. 123f (see also pp. 124–97); H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich 1982; ET, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, Edinburgh 1991), pp. 19–23 (ET).

<sup>40</sup> Especially by K. Haacker, 'War Paulus Hillelit?' *Das Institutum Judaicum der Universität Tübingen in den Jahren 1971/1972*, pp. 106–20, p. 115.

is asserted. In ARN 15, a proselyte gained by Hillel named his sons Hillel and Gamaliel: he would hardly have done so had Hillel and Gamaliel belonged to the same family. The Rabbinic sources do not suggest any connection between Gamaliel and the House of Hillel. As for the seven rules (*middotb*) ascribed to Hillel, they were not invented by him, but were a compilation of the main kinds of methods of exegesis customary from his time on. Many of these rules are universal in literature: in the Rabbinic sources they have been traced to an originally Hellenistic usage.<sup>41</sup>

As the stories about Hillel now stand, they are not necessarily historical. The tradition about Hillel's patient gentleness has doubtless been emphasized by his School, which preserved the tradition.<sup>42</sup> In any case, while Hillel's temperament differed from that of the irascible Shammai,<sup>43</sup> the latter shared with the former a concern to gain proselytes, however unfortunately he reacted to some of them, and an emphasis on the resurrection, so that at these points Paul's affinity with Hillel cannot be contrasted with his distance from Shammai.<sup>44</sup>

In fact, the connection between Paul and the gentle Hillel never rang quite true to the fiery character who wrote the epistles. The tolerant Gamaliel of Acts 5:34ff, although probably his mentor, can hardly have been a formative influence on the 'zealous' Paul.<sup>45</sup> It has even been suggested that the slow caution of the tolerant Gamaliel might have helped to drive a distracted Paul to persecute Christians.<sup>46</sup> The caricature of Judaism attacked in his epistles, it has also been urged, he cannot have learned at the feet of a Hillelite Gamaliel.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>41</sup> D. Daube, 'Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric', *HUCA* 22 (1949), 239–64; and 'Alexandrian Methods of Interpretation and the Rabbis', *Festschrift Hans Levald* (Basel 1953), pp. 27–44; reprinted in *Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature*, H. A. Fischel (ed.), 165–82 (New York 1977); S. Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine* (Philadelphia 1942); D. Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis Before 70 CE* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 30; Tübingen 1992).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. J. Neusner, *From Politics to Piety*, pp. 35ff.

<sup>43</sup> *M. Abot* 1:15 shows how precarious it is to contrast Hillel and Shammai in these terms.

<sup>44</sup> Cf., for example, *b. Shab.* 30b–31a; see further J. Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70* (Leiden 1971), vol. 1: *The Masters*, pp. 303–40.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. H. Conzelmann, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (HNT 7; Tübingen 1963), p. 42; ET, *Acts of the Apostles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia 1987), p. 42.

<sup>46</sup> T. R. Glover, *Paul of Tarsus* (New York 1925), p. 57.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. C. J. G. Montefiore, *Judaism and St Paul: Two Essays* (London 1914), p. 90; similarly M. S. Enslin, 'Paul and Gamaliel', *JR* 7 (1927), 360–75, p. 371: 'If Paul sat at Gamaliel's feet even for a short period of time, either he was an unusually unresponsive pupil or else the type of instruction received was more like that of the modern so-called "Bible-school", with curriculum restrained to fanciful and flighty exegesis.' S. Sandmel, *The First Christian Century*, p. 9; p. 54, n. 65. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London 1977) has radically reopened the question how far Paul's attacks on the Law bypass the Jewish understanding of it.

But was Gamaliel a Hillelite?<sup>48</sup> There are texts which point to a close connection between Gamaliel and Shammai (Mishnah Orlah 2:11, 12; Betzah 2:6), and Gamaliel was not unacquainted with 'zeal' and not unprepared to justify it (Mekilta de R. Simeon b. Yoḥai on Exod. 20:5). Paul's training under Gamaliel might, then, have been as much Shammaite as Hillelite. Their two houses were, in fact, not totally isolated from each other.<sup>49</sup> And not only Paul's temperament, but his practice points to Shammai. Like Shammai (Mishnah Sukkah 2:8; Shekalim 6:1; Betzah 2:6), Paul insisted on stricter standards for himself than for his followers and for the generality (1 Cor. 7:7–9; 9:5). His extreme devotion to the Law (Gal. 1:13ff; Phil. 3:6) and his asceticism (1 Cor. 1:27) find a parallel among Shammaites. In particular, at one point, Paul may directly reflect the House of Shammai. Galatians 3:10 has occasioned difficulty because it presents a view of the Law contrary to that generally held in Pharisaism. The only group that seems to have sponsored the view to which Paul refers was the House of Shammai.<sup>50</sup>

The upshot of all this is that, until the Rabbinic sources have been more critically sifted, redacted as they were under the dominance of the School of Hillel, it is impossible to pin down Paul certainly to any one Pharisaic school, although his affinities with that of Hillel cannot be overlooked. The criticisms of the traditional position that Paul was a Hillelite, taught by a Hillelite, Gamaliel, have not been sufficiently cogent to be convincing. They tend to simplify the complexity of first-century Judaism. In particular, they ignore the very important fact that it is impossible rigidly to separate the House of Hillel and Shammai.<sup>51</sup> What can be said is that most probably Paul came from fervent Pharisaic circles familiar with apocalyptic and mystical speculation and probably with the ideology of the covenanters of Qumran. It is tempting to claim that he belonged to the kind of extremists who, although Pharisaic, later developed into some of the revolutionaries of the fifties and sixties.<sup>52</sup> It is certain that his epistles reveal that he drew upon the conceptual world of

<sup>48</sup> Cf. J. Neusner, *Rabbinic Traditions 1: The Masters*, pp. 341–76.

<sup>49</sup> See n. 51, below.

<sup>50</sup> H. Hübner, 'Gal. 3, 10 und die Herkunft des Paulus', *KD* 19 (1973), 215–31, who also states that Gamaliel does not necessarily belong to Hillel. Recently, N. T. Wright has argued that Paul was a Shammaite: *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis 1992), pp. 192, 202; 'Paul, Arabia and Elijah (Galatians 1:17)', *JBL* 115 (1996), 685–6.

<sup>51</sup> See E. E. Urbach, *The Sages*, vol. 1, pp. 252ff, 591, 598 (see especially *m. Git.* 4:5).

<sup>52</sup> During the years leading up to the rebellion of CE 66, it was the more intolerant Shammai, with whom Paul may also have been connected, who was the leader among the Sages. See *PRJ*, p. 9; compare K. Haacker. 'Die Berufung des Verfolgers und die Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen: Erwägungen zum Zusammenhang zwischen Biographie und Theologie des Apostels Paulus,' *TBei* 6 (1975), 1–19.

Pharisaism, Apocalyptic, and other aspects of Judaism in the exposition of his faith in Jesus Christ. His doctrines of the last Adam, the flesh and spirit, the suffering of Christ, and the Resurrection as well as his moral teaching all reveal this. At this point it is necessary to refer to the seminal work of Richard B. Hays.<sup>53</sup> His emphasis is summarized by himself as follows:

A brief survey of previous investigations concludes that most have been pre-occupied with technical questions about the textual form of Paul's citations or about the historical background of Paul's interpretive techniques. Often such studies have been marked by polemical or apologetic concerns, contending for or against the legitimacy of Paul's hermeneutical practices. This is particularly true of studies that have sought to characterize Paul's method as 'midrashic'. In contrast to such methods, I propose to investigate Paul's use of Scripture using an approach to 'intertextuality' derived from literary criticism, particularly John Hollander's work, *The Figure of Echo . . .*<sup>54</sup> This reading demonstrates Paul's use of the rhetorical figure of *metalepsis*, a device that requires the reader to interpret a citation or allusion by recalling aspects of the original context that are not explicitly quoted.<sup>55</sup>

The intertextuality to which Hays refers in terms of *metalepsis* has been scrutinized by C. A. Evans and others in the same volume and its possible connection with previous biblical and Pharisaic methods of interpretation recalled. But Hays has significantly and very richly illumined the role of Scripture and its interpretation in the mind of Paul.<sup>56</sup>

## II PAUL'S CALL

The course of Paul's life as a zealous Pharisee, and probably as a missionary for Judaism who sought to bring god-fearers fully into Israel was

<sup>53</sup> R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven 1989).

<sup>54</sup> J. Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley 1981).

<sup>55</sup> R. B. Hays, 'Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul: Abstract' in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (eds.), 42–6 (JSNTSup 83; Sheffield 1993), pp. 42–3.

<sup>56</sup> I have elsewhere suggested that Christ for Paul had become the new Torah (see *PRJ/SSM and Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come* (JBLMS 7; Philadelphia 1952)). This notion of Christ as the new Torah in Paul has been widely criticized. See e.g. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p. 479; and the studies by S. Westerholm in P. Richardson and S. Westerholm (eds.) *Law in Religious Communities in the Roman Period: The Debate over Torah and Nomos in Post-Biblical Judaism and Early Christianity* (Studies in Christianity and Judaism 4; Waterloo, Ont. 1991), pp. 54–5, 80–5; and F. Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework or Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans* (NovTSup 61; Leiden 1989), p. 11. But cf. D. C. Allison, Jr in *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis 1993).

abruptly changed through an experience usually referred to as his ‘conversion.’<sup>57</sup> He refers to this in Gal. 1:12, 15; Phil. 3:5ff; 1 Cor. 15:8f and possibly in 1 Cor. 1:17, 2 Cor. 4:6, and less probably 12:2ff.<sup>58</sup> It is described three times in Acts – an indication of its fascination for Gentile Christians to whom Luke wrote – at 9:3–19a; 22:3–16, 26:4–18. These passages were an elaboration of a tradition which owed its origin to what Paul himself had recounted – with more reticence to judge from Galatians – in his churches.<sup>59</sup> Not only the portions of Acts dealing with Paul’s conversion but also the statements in Gal. 1:11–2:14, despite Gal. 1:11 (contrast Gal. 1:11 with 1 Cor. 15:1),<sup>60</sup> were written not primarily to provide historical data, chronologically and otherwise verifiable, but to respond appropriately and, therefore, tendentiously to the demands of specific circumstances and challenges. The accounts of the conversion in the epistles and Acts cannot be taken as preserving unbiased statements.

The term ‘conversion’ can be itself misleading.<sup>61</sup> Paul was not rescued from a life of immorality to one of virtue (and not, in his mind, from one

<sup>57</sup> See J. Dupont, ‘La conversion de Paul et son influence sur sa conception du salut par la foi’ in *Foi et Salut selon S. Paul*, Barth *et al.*, eds., AnBib 42 (Rome 1970), pp. 67–88, discussion pp. 88–100. An English version of this article appeared in *Apostolic History and the Gospels*. FS F. F. Bruce, W. W. Gasque and R. F. Martin, eds. (Grand Rapids 1970), pp. 176–94.

<sup>58</sup> That 2 Cor. 12:2 refers to Paul’s conversion is held by Buck and Taylor, *Saint Paul*, for example, p. 222; M. S. Enslin, *Reapproaching Paul* (Philadelphia 1972), p. 53; J. Knox abandoned this interpretation, *Chapters in a Life of Paul* (New York 1950), p. 78, n. 3; 2nd edn (London 1985), p. 36, n. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. J. Roloff, *Apostolat – Verkündigung – Kirche: Ursprung, Inhalt und Funktion des kirchlichen apostelamtes nach Paulus, Lukas und den Pastoralbriefen* (Gütersloh 1965), p. 42; K. Lönig, *Die Saulustradition in der Apostelgeschichte* (Münster 1973), p. 53, makes the interesting though uncertain point that in Gal. 1:23 Paul possibly quotes the ‘Chorschluss’ which lies behind Acts 9:21.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. J. T. Sanders, ‘Paul’s “Autobiographical” Statements in Galatians 1–2’, *JBL* 85 (1966), 335–43.

<sup>61</sup> On the conversion as a ‘call’, see K. Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia 1976), pp. 7–23. On the conversion as a call to the apostolate, see P. Stuhlmacher, ‘“Das Ende des Gesetzes.” Über Ursprung und Ansatz der paulinischen Theologie’, *ZTK* 67 (1970), 14–39, especially p. 20, n. 15, with reference to U. Wilckens, ‘Die Bekehrung des Paulus’, *ZTK* 56 (1959), 273–93 (= *Paulusstudien*, Neukirchen 1974, pp. 19–21). However, as E. Käsemann (*An die Römer*) saw, the self-understanding of Paul at the time when Romans was written seems hardly to fit in with that of the time when Paul was a delegate of the Antioch mission (pp. 3f; cf. also p. 379). (On the meaning of the apostolic meeting, cf. T. Holtz, ‘Die Bedeutung des Apostelkonzils für Paulus’, *NovT* 24 (1974): 100–48.) From this it follows that the self-understanding of Paul at the time of Romans cannot go back to the Damascus-event. A distinction must be made between the early and late years of Paul as a Christian. Neither the term ‘conversion’ nor ‘call’ is without difficulty. See B. Gaventa, ‘Paul’s Conversion: A Critical Sifting of the Epistolary Evidence’ (Ph.D. diss., Duke University 1978); *idem*, *From Darkness to*

religion, Judaism, to another called Christianity) but from one kind of devotion, that to the Law, to another, that to Christ. Both the Law and Christ he understood as expressions of Judaism. The form of all the accounts recalls the descriptions of the call of major Old Testament figures, Isaiah,<sup>62</sup> Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Servant of the Lord (see Judg. 16:17; Isa. 6; 49:1–6; Jer. 1:4–10; Ezek. 1–2:8; Pss. 21:10–11) and later Enoch (1 Enoch 14:8–16:4), and again that of Abraham (Gen. 12:1ff; 18:1ff).<sup>63</sup> But this formal similarity must not be allowed to dictate our understanding of the ‘conversion’ as simply the call of another prophet: for Paul, the Risen Lord was the Messiah of the End Time. Three motifs appear implicitly, if not explicitly, in all the accounts. First, Paul became convinced of the reality of the Risen Jesus. His ‘vision’ on the road to Damascus was deemed by him to be qualitatively different from all other visions he had himself experienced (for his evaluation of these, see 2 Cor. 12:1ff) and comparable to that vouchsafed to Peter, James, the Twelve and the five hundred brethren (1 Cor. 15:3–10), on which the preaching and faith of the Church was based (1 Cor. 15:14). Secondly, Paul realized that, when Christians were persecuted, the Lord himself suffered; this he later expressed by asserting that the Church was the Body of Christ. (In Acts, when Paul is persecuting Christians, the voice of the Risen Lord

*Light: Aspects of Conversion in the New Testament* (Philadelphia 1986). See especially the rich volume by, A. F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven 1990). Segal finds Paul to be an apostate: his call a conversion. Contrast the work of Segal with that of D. Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley 1994), who describes ‘Paul’s discourse as a vitally important chapter in the cultural poetics of Judaism’ (p. 12). For Boyarin, Paul is not an apostate but ‘a radical Jew’ engaged in an intra-Jewish theological project of criticism and redefinition of the people of God. According to Boyarin, Paul is not concerned primarily with the question, ‘How can I find a gracious God?’ but, ‘How can the One who created the world exclude Gentiles from His mercy?’ (p. 39). His immensely learned and subtle presentation can only be mentioned here, but it deserves continued engagement. See the review of Boyarin by R. Scroggs in *The Princeton Theological Seminary Bulletin* NS 17 (1996), 101–3 and the unpublished assessment by R. B. Hays (delivered at the AAR/SBL 1994 Annual Meeting). On the whole question of Paul and the Gentile world, see now J. M. G. Barclay, ‘Paul Among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?’ *JSNNT* 60 (1995), 89–120.

<sup>62</sup> T. Holz, ‘Zum Selbstverständnis des Apostels Paulus’, *TLZ* 91 (1966): 331–340, thinks that Paul refers to Deutero-Isaiah. O. Betz, ‘Die Vision des Paulus im Temple von Jerusalem Apg 22, 17–21 als Beitrag zur Deutung des Damaskuserlebnisses’ in *Verborum Veritas*, Fs G. Stählin. Eds. O. Böcher and K. Haacker (Wuppertal 1970), pp. 113–23, underscores the importance of Isa. 6 for Paul’s conversion; cf. further, and especially J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (London 1959), pp. 24–33; P. Stuhlmacher, *Das paulinische Evangelium* (FRLANT 95, Göttingen 1968) I. *Vorgeschichte*, p. 73, n. 1.

<sup>63</sup> F. J. Leenhardt, ‘Abraham et la Conversion de Saul de Tarse’, *RHPR* 53 (1973), 331–51.



asks him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?').<sup>64</sup> Thirdly, Paul knew that necessity was laid upon him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles (Gal. 1:15, cf. 1 Cor. 9:16; compare Acts 9:15, 22:15, 26:17ff).

The accounts of the conversion suggest that all this matured quickly in Paul's mind. But that he became immediately aware of the significance of Christ for the Gentiles is open to doubt. His life for thirteen or fourteen years after his conversion must be a matter of conjecture.<sup>65</sup> After his conversion he went off alone to Arabia (the Nabataean kingdom). Whether he preached to Gentiles there we cannot know. According to Acts, when he returned to Damascus, he preached in the synagogues of the city: no mention is made of any direct appeal to the Gentiles. Although the extreme steps taken by the local Jews to destroy him might be taken to point to such an appeal, the mere fact of his conversion might sufficiently account for their enmity. On the basis of Acts 22:17 it has been argued that Paul received the specific call to preach to the Gentiles in a special vision which he experienced in the Temple at Jerusalem three years after the conversion (Gal. 1:18), it being implied that, before this, Paul had confined his preaching to Jews and god-fearers.<sup>66</sup> On this view, while the passage (like Phil. 3:7–11, which apparently refers to the conversion as a single event) does not suggest a second conversion,<sup>67</sup> it would indicate that Paul's full realization of the meaning of his call for the Gentiles came, not at once, but after some time. But attempts to harmonize the epistles and Acts are at best precarious. Acts 22:17ff may point to a distinct tradition which connected the conversion closely with the call to the Gentiles; to interpret the vagueness of Acts 22:17 (which does not connect the vision in the Temple with any three-year interval) in terms of Gal. 1:18 is highly questionable.

We do, however, know that when Barnabas had visited Antioch to inquire into the results of the preaching to the Gentiles there, and approved of it (Acts 11:22–6), he turned for help in such work to Paul, who was at Tarsus. Possibly the latter had already gained some kind of reputation in work connected with the Gentiles and was known for his preoccupation with this problem. Again it is possible that it was Barnabas' invitation to work at Antioch and the developments there that brought

<sup>64</sup> See J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* (London 1952), p. 58; J. Jeremias, *Der Schlüssel* (see n. 8), p. 27; W. D. Davies, 'The Apostolic Age and the Life of Paul' in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, M. Black and H. H. Rowley (eds.) (London and New York 1962), p. 873 (=763c).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. R. E. Osborne, 'St Paul's Silent Years', *JBL* 84 (1965), 59–65.

<sup>66</sup> N. Perrin, *The New Testament* (2nd edn, New York 1892), p. 94.

<sup>67</sup> On this term, see J. W. Fraser, 'Paul's Knowledge of Jesus: 2 Corinthians 5:16 Once More,' *NTS* 17 (1970/1), 301–2 *et passim*.



Paul's resolution to go to the Gentiles to the boil. At any rate the Epistles and Acts reveal that Paul came to regard himself, whether immediately at his conversion or more probably gradually through meditation upon its significance, as *the* Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:12, 15:15) and was so regarded by others.

The church at Antioch,<sup>68</sup> formed by Hellenistic Christians, was one in which Jewish and Gentile Christians were united in a common life untrammelled by the separation demanded by the observance of the Law. After beginning at Antioch, Paul preached in season and out of season throughout the eastern Mediterranean world. Only his death prevented him from doing so in Spain. But a community such as that at Antioch, sitting loose to the Law, invoked the wrath of extremely conservative Jewish-Christians. Some of these from Jerusalem invaded the church at Antioch to oppose its free development, demanding that Gentile Christians should observe the Law as did Jewish-Christians. The issue raised was fundamental.

A meeting was held at Jerusalem. (The description of this as a 'Council' is misleading because that term evokes later gatherings in the history of the Church convened under a central authority.)<sup>69</sup> Paul and Barnabas represented the church at Antioch in order to clarify the situation. According to Galatians, this visit of Paul to Jerusalem was his second. Does it correspond to the second visit referred to in Acts 11:29–30, or to that described in Acts 15:1–29? We cannot achieve certainty on this point, although Acts 11:29–30 has been dismissed as a Lukan construction.<sup>70</sup> We can be certain that Paul and Barnabas laid before the leaders of Jerusalem the gospel which Paul proclaimed among the Gentiles, lest he should have laboured in vain (Gal. 2:2);<sup>71</sup> and that these leaders, who are to be clearly distinguished from the extremist Jewish-Christians who were Paul's opponents, saw nothing lacking in his gospel and did not insist on circumcision and the Law for Gentile converts. They gave Paul

<sup>68</sup> On Antioch, see G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria* (Princeton 1961); C. H. Kraeling, 'The Jewish Community at Antioch', *JBL* 51 (1932), 130–60; W. A. Meeks and R. L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch* (Missoula 1978). On the direct and dominant influence of the Hellenists on Paul, see J.-F. Collange, in an unpublished thesis at Strasburg University, 1979. Collange's claim that Paul was fundamentally influenced by the Hellenists is too exaggerated. On the whole problem of the division of the early church into 'hellenist' and 'hebrew' factions, see now C. C. Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews: Reappraising Division within the Earliest Church* (Minneapolis 1992).

<sup>69</sup> Rightly G. Bornkamm, *Paul*, p. 35.

<sup>70</sup> G. Strecker, 'Die sogenannte zweite Jerusalemreise des Paulus (Apg 11, 27–30)', *ZNW* 53 (1962), 67–77.

<sup>71</sup> The same expression occurs in Phil. 2:16; similarly 1 Thess. 3:5; Gal. 4:11. All the passages are more or less allusions to Isa. 49:4.

and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. A division of labour was adopted, but not precisely defined: the mission to the Gentiles was entrusted to Paul and Barnabas, and that to the Jews to Peter. According to Galatians, the Jerusalem leaders made one request, namely, that the poor of the mother-church should be remembered. To this Paul and Barnabas agreed. If Gal. 2:1–10 and Acts 15:1–29 refer to the same event, presented from different points of view, the Jerusalem leaders also made a demand upon Gentiles – one that is not referred to in Galatians – that they should observe certain prohibitions, that is, they were to abstain from the pollution of idols, unchastity, what is strangled, and blood.<sup>72</sup> Paul never refers to these prohibitions, and so cannot have explicitly demanded them of his churches, although he was prepared to lay down a minimum of moral demands as in 1 Corinthians.

For our purpose what is important is threefold. First, as a result of his faith in the risen Jesus, Paul, whether immediately or gradually we cannot be certain (was it at his election to represent the church of Antioch at Jerusalem or at the actual meeting there or later when he separated from Barnabas to go his own way?), preached his faith to Jews and Gentiles and welcomed the latter into the Church ‘in Christ’ without demanding of them the observance of the Law. (We postpone consideration of the logic which led from the vision of the risen Jesus to this position.) Secondly, the leaders of the Jerusalem church, having faced the issue raised by the gospel preached to Gentiles by Paul, endorsed it: Paul was not a solitary colossus in the early Church, not a striking peculiarity but a profundity. But, thirdly, the terms in which the leaders did endorse Paul’s gospel were vague enough to allow Jewish-Christians to continue to harass him and to defy their leadership at Jerusalem in this matter. Despite the agreements made, although the acceptance of Gentiles into the Church could henceforth, in principle, go on unhindered by the demands of the Law and circumcision, the question of the terms on which Jewish-Christians, who continued to keep the Law, could associate with Gentile Christians still remained a bone of contention, and Paul’s opponents still persisted. To the end of his life he was subject to bitter attacks from Jewish-Christians and Jews.

One thing is certain. The reaction of Jews to the change in Paul wrought by his encounter with the risen Jesus was sharp. That Jews persecuted Paul with vigour in various places is clear from 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2:2; 2:14; Gal. 5:11; and especially 2 Cor. 11:24ff. Acts abundantly confirms this. The opposition to Paul came also from Jewish-Christians.

<sup>72</sup> On the ‘Apostolic Decree’ see *PRJ*, pp. 117ff; A. Strobel, ‘Das Aposteldekret in Galatien’, *NTS* 20 (1973/4): 177–90.

The Epistles suggest that the Pauline churches at first were enthusiastic,<sup>73</sup> spirit-filled communities in which, as at Thessalonica, observance of the Law was not a burning issue. But there developed in most of them opposition to Paul's attitude to the Law which influenced Peter and others (Gal. 2:11ff). There emerged in most, if not all, Paul's churches Jewish-Christians who constantly sought to undermine his influence. It would be erroneous to think of them as a homogeneous group. Some, though not under the blessing of the leaders of the mother-church in Jerusalem, were connected with it. So strong was this Jewish and Jewish-Christian opposition and so effective that the majority of Jews came to reject the Christian faith as Paul understood it. Why?

It was not because Paul was at any time indifferent to his own people. Despite his assertion that there was no distinction between Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 1:24; 7:19), he ascribes priority in judgement, as in grace, to the Jews (1 Cor. 1:24; 10:32; 12:13; Rom. 1:16; 2:9–10; 10:12). Acts is not misleading when it presents Paul in every place as having begun his work with the local synagogue,<sup>74</sup> and throughout his life as having sought to keep open the channels between him and the Jewish-Christians of Judaea. He kept in touch with the persecution of Christians there and could appeal to this in writing to the church in distant Thessalonica: that church does not need to be told that Christians in Judaea were suffering.<sup>75</sup> Similarly after the meeting in Jerusalem, a great part of his energy was devoted to gathering a collection for the church there.<sup>76</sup> To do so he had constantly to appeal to the churches of his care to remember their spiritual indebtedness to that first church in Jerusalem. He undertook the actual delivery of the collection fully aware of the risk involved to his person. In fact, it led to his arrest and imprisonment. To the end he yearned for the salvation of his kinsmen after the flesh and agonized over their rejection of Jesus (Rom. 9:1–3; 11:1). Both his written words and his practice underline the very important place that his own

<sup>73</sup> For Galatians, cf. H. D. Betz, 'Spirit, freedom and law. Paul's message to the Galatian churches', *SEÅ* 39 (1974), 145–60 (German, 'Geist, Freiheit und Gesetz', *ZTK* 71 (1974), 78–93).

<sup>74</sup> Acts 13:5 (at Salamis); 13:14 (at Antioch in Pisidia); 14:1 (at Iconium); 17:1 (at Thessalonica); 17:7 (at Athens); 18:4 (at Corinth); 18:24ff (at Ephesus). See also Acts 13:46. E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia 1983), 179–90, expresses scepticism that Paul regularly evangelized in the synagogue as Acts suggests. But see J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE)* (Edinburgh 1996), p. 395, n. 28.

<sup>75</sup> 1 Thess. 1:14f. Here the work of J. Jervell, *The Unknown Paul: Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History* (Minneapolis 1984) is a very significant corrective, especially chapters 2 and 3, 'The Mighty Minority' and 'The Unknown Paul', pp. 26–51 and 52–67.

<sup>76</sup> On the collection, see *GL*, pp. 200ff; 214ff and bibliography there given.

people had in his thinking as in his emotions. But he had come to recognize that Gentiles were more ready to accept the Gospel than Jews: only a remnant of Jews became believers and, in time, he was driven to despair of the mission to the Jews in which he himself and especially Peter had engaged. Other versions of the Gospel than his would be necessary to appeal to Jews: Paul's understanding of it cut no ice with the majority of them.<sup>77</sup> The intense opposition that he provoked among Jews and Jewish-Christians later reduced the Sages of Judaism to a resounding silence about him. Why was this?

Fortunately the encounter of Paul, as a Christian with his own people is vividly, if fragmentarily, reflected in his epistles. But since the content of his epistles is largely defined by their context, we must first consider how the historical situation contributed to the opposition to him.

### III THE HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

By the middle of the first century the fires of Jewish revolt against Rome were already being set and even lit in Palestine. Certain Jews were sensitive to all currents that would tend to break down the separation between them and the Gentiles. When Paul preached a gospel which was inducing Jews and Gentiles to fraternize, the extremists who had previously looked upon him with favour, devoted Pharisee as he was, would have turned against him with bitter ferocity. Revolutionaries would have found the Paul who persecuted Christians an unwitting ally: the same revolutionaries would have found his activity after his 'call' anathema. It was breaking down the barriers which they saw as necessary to national political solidarity. Paul's activity against Christians had no political aim, but that it had political implications in the sight of extremists is probable. So when Paul later, as his epistles reveal, responded negatively to the Messianic-political aspirations and activity of some Jewish-Christians, who were under pressure from Jewish revolutionaries,<sup>78</sup> he would naturally

<sup>77</sup> See W. D. Davies, 'Paul and the People of Israel', *NTS* 23 (1977/8), 1–35.

<sup>78</sup> R. Jewett, 'Agitators and the Galatian Congregation', *NTS* 17 (1970/1), 198–212. His thesis is that 'Jewish Christians in Judaea were stimulated by zealous pressure into a nomistic campaign among their fellow Christians in the late forties and early fifties' (p. 205). This unprovable thesis is attractive: it would help to explain the intensity of Paul's reactions in Galatians. See W. D. Davies, *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (henceforth *JPS*, Philadelphia 1984), pp. 183–4. It gains support from K. Haacker, 'Paulus und das Judentum im Galaterbrief' in E. Brocke and J. Sein (eds.) *Gottes Augapfel. Beiträge zur Erneuerung des Verhältnisses von Christen und Juden* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986), pp. 95–111. Dismissing the claims of those who find 'antisemitism' in Paul (see below n. 140), Haacker urges that before his conversion Paul may have shared in a revolutionary zeal, with all that this implied, and that throughout Galatians he is battling, not with the mainstream of Judaism but with an extremely fanatic, violent, revolutionary wing which after the revolts of 70 and 135 CE ceased to be significant. The main emphases

incur the wrath of the latter. As noted earlier, this in part accounts for the bitterness of his opponents. Early Jewish-Christians were not immune to and could easily be accused of having succumbed to the influence of the revolutionary political enthusiasm of extreme Jewish nationalists (Acts 1:6). Paul had to counteract this enthusiasm. This is why probably he seldom used the phrase 'the Kingdom of God', which might evoke it, in his interpretation of the Gospel.<sup>79</sup>

It is difficult to assess the degree to which the opposition he encountered at the hands of Jewish-Christians and Jews was rooted in the political-nationalist-messianism to which we refer. It has been urged that in the Thessalonian churches Paul had to deal with the agitation of extreme nationalists who had materialistic political notions of the imminent Kingdom of God,<sup>80</sup> and that in the Galatian churches the excessive eagerness of some Jewish-Christians to insist on circumcision was born of their anxiety, possibly under threat of death, to convince extreme Jewish nationalists of their unquestioned loyalty.<sup>81</sup> Among such Jews circumcision had often become the outward sign of zeal for the Jewish cause. The evidence for revolutionary political influences in Thessalonica is less convincing than that for their presence in Galatia. But even though we cannot be sure that political Messianism was an ingredient in the troubles dealt with by Paul in Thessalonica and Galatia, in the epistles which he sent to the churches there, Paul counsels quiet and diligence and the avoidance of all divisive social conduct such as characterized many agitators of the period.

In Romans, Paul's political stance becomes explicit. It is possible that actual conditions in the Roman church or churches prompted him to

and summary formulations of Paul's theology: the righteousness of God, justification by faith (not by violence), freedom (compare *JPS*, pp. 175, 203–12), and the need not to demand circumcision from Gentile converts, Haacker regards as direct reactions to emphases among the zealots whose ideology Paul had once probably shared but after his 'conversion' had deliberately rejected. Haacker's tempting thesis faces two difficulties. First, Paul unmistakably refers to himself as a Pharisee (see herein, p. 681). Do we know enough about his Pharisaism (which we must take seriously) to be able to assert that it could have co-existed with the *violent* stream of zealots which Haacker refers to? Second, there is always the danger of pre-dating the zealots and lending them a significance as a specific group before any party as such emerged. (See here pp. 681ff)

<sup>79</sup> Cf. W. D. Davies, *PRJ*, p. 295f; it should also be noted that the term would not convey to Gentiles what it did to the hearers of Jesus and was, therefore, inappropriate for Paul's purposes.

<sup>80</sup> B. Reicke, *Diakonie, Festfreude und Zelos in Verbindung mit der altchristlichen Agapenfeier* (UUÅ 1951: 5, Uppsala 1951), pp. 240ff. Reicke speaks of 'Materialisierung der Eschatologie' (p. 243) or 'anarchische Einstellung' (p. 244).

<sup>81</sup> See R. Jewett 'Agitators and the Galatian Congregation', and B. Reicke, 'Der geschichtliche Hintergrund des Apostelkonzils und der Antiochia-Episode, Gal. 2, 1–14', *Studia Paulina*. Fs J. de Zwaan, J. N. Sevenster and W. C. Van Unnik (eds.) (Haarlem 1953), pp. 172–87.

discuss the attitude to be taken to the state in 13:1ff.<sup>82</sup> There were many Jewish-Christians among the Christians at Rome, who doubtless remained in constant touch with their own people, not only in that city but also in Palestine. Jews in Rome numbered possibly as many as 50,000; they annually paid the Temple-tax and undertook pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and continued to be interested in the politics of Palestine and to influence them. Anti-Roman sentiments would constantly be spurred not only by events in Palestine but by the imperial treatment of Jews elsewhere. Under Tiberius and Caligula Jews had suffered, and an edict by Claudius finally expelled many of them from Rome in CE 49, their exile apparently lasting until the beginning of the reign of Nero. Events in Rome and Palestine evoked revolutionary bitterness. Claudius' edict according to Suetonius was occasioned by disturbances caused by 'Chrestus' – possibly a reference not to Christ but to Jewish Messianic agitation in Rome.<sup>83</sup> Some Roman Christians probably shared in the anti-Roman sentiments of Jews and would be tempted to join them in political opposition. To dissuade such, Paul evokes the words of Jesus on the treatment of enemies (Rom. 12:18ff) and counsels submission to the powers that be as ordained by God (12:1ff). Whether prompted by actual revolutionary tendencies among Roman Christians and directed to these, or expressing his attitude towards civil authorities in general, as a statement of principles of universal application, Paul's position is clear. He advises against conflict and rebellion. Political sobriety stamps everything he wrote: he unequivocally rejected that conduct which characterizes the political agitators of the period, both Jewish and Gentile. His attitude towards slaves is in character: Onesimus is not advised to take advantage of his illegally gained freedom.<sup>84</sup> The controversial verse in 1 Cor. 7:21 is best understood in the same light.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> That chapter 13 is an interpolation is unlikely (*contra* J. C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, Harmondsworth 1975, *ad loc.*). See J. Friedrich, W. Pöhlmann and P. Stuhlmacher, 'Zur historischen Situation und Intention von Römer 13, 1–7', *ZTK* 73 (1976), 131–66; A. J. M. Wedderburn, *The Reasons for Romans* (Minneapolis 1991), pp. 62–3, on the possibility that Paul knew of the tax unrest in Rome under Nero (Rom. 13:6–7).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. M. Borg, 'A New Context for Romans XIII', *NTS* 19 (1972/3), 205–18; S. Benko, 'The Edict of Claudius at AD 49 and the Instigator Chrestus', *TZ* 25 (1969), 406–18.

<sup>84</sup> It has been rightly emphasized that Paul had no idea of freeing slaves. See G. Strecker, *Handlungsorientierter Glaube: Vorstudien zu einer Ethik des Neuen Testaments* (Stuttgart 1972), p. 30. See also S. S. Bartych, *ΜΑΛΛΟΝ ΧΡΗΣΤΑΙ: First Century Slavery and the Interpretation of 1 Cor. 7:21* (SBLDS 11; Missoula, MT 1973).

<sup>85</sup> See C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (BNTC; London and New York 1968), p. 170; also Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, p. 127; Bartych, *ibid.* The whole question whether Onesimus was a runaway slave or had simply offended Philemon is still open; it is sensitively discussed by P. V. Kea, 'Paul's Letter to Philemon: A Short Analysis of Its Values' in *Perspectives on New Testament Ethics* (FS D. O. Via), P. V. Kea and A. K. M. Adam (eds.), 223–32 (NABPR Festschrift Series 14; Macon, 1996 (= *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 23 (1996), 223–32)).



Equally significant is Paul's attitude to the land of Israel. Judaism recognized an indissoluble connection between Yahweh, Israel and that land. Devotion to the land and to life in the land in accordance with the Law was a deep-rooted, though often unexpressed, cause of the revolt against Rome. But despite his continued concern for the Christians of Jerusalem, the quintessential city, Paul ignored the preoccupation with and struggle for the land. In 1 Thess. 4:17, when the Lord comes, believers who are alive will be brought to meet him 'in the air' to be always with the Lord; this points away from earth to another sphere. In Gal. 4:16, Paul contrasts the earthly with the heavenly Jerusalem: the Messianic significance of the earthly city he seems already to have cast off intellectually, though not always emotionally; so is it also in Romans, which is more attuned to Jewish sensitivities than Galatians. His treatment of Abraham in Romans, as in Galatians, ignores the territorial aspect of the promise to the patriarch; and in 11:25–7, which expressly deals with the future of Israel, there is no reference to the land. Again, later in Phil. 3:20, the commonwealth of Christians is in heaven. This imagery is most probably derived from notions of the heavenly Jerusalem in Judaism<sup>86</sup> (though the word *polis* is not used): the Christian salvation for Paul is not to be identified with any condition on earth. Throughout his epistles, Paul is far removed from the territorial political concerns typical of much of the Messianic speculation of his contemporaries. Where he does express his hopes for the future he does so with an increasing restraint and in a cosmic dimension which depresses the national.<sup>87</sup> His attitude to civil authority is well expressed in the saying of the later Rabbinic (Pharisaic) leaders: 'The Law of the land is Law.'<sup>88</sup> Their sobriety in predictions of the future he would also have shared. But Pharisaic sobriety would not endear him to revolutionary enthusiasts.

Finally, there is a more tangible political aspect to Paul's attitude. Judaism, under the Romans, enjoyed well-defined privileges, the price of which was eternal vigilance on the part of Jews, as was later the case for Christians. Paul's insistence that Christians were the sons of Abraham had an unexpressed legal aspect: it implied that they could enjoy the same

<sup>86</sup> W. D. Davies, *GL*, p. 197. It has been pointed out that Paul in Phil. 3:20 is quoting a tradition similar to that in Phil. 2:5ff. Cf. the survey of J. Gnilka, *Der Philipperbrief: Auslegung* (HTKNT 10; Freiburg 1968), pp. 208ff.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. W. D. Davies, 'Paul and Jewish Christianity in the Light of Cardinal Daniélou', *RSR* 60 (1972), 69–80 (reprinted in *JPS*, 164–71); Davies, *GL*, pp. 208–20. Contrast E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p. 432.

<sup>88</sup> The principle was *dīna' demalkuta'dīna*. (The exact date for this explicit expression is not certain.) See *m. Abot* 3:2; *b. Ned* 28a; *b. Git* 10b; *b. B. Qam* 113a–b; *b. B. Bat.* 54b. See further E. E. Urbach, *The Sages*, vol. 1, 'On Redemption', pp. 649–92, especially p. 679: "'The End at its due time" is something different from liberation from the servitude of the kingdoms, and cannot be attained by rebellions.'



privileges as Jews. The situation could become delicate and legal difficulties might arise over the status of either or of both in the eyes of Rome. It was advantageous for Jews to avoid any possible confusion in the Roman mind between a Messianic (revolutionary) movement and Judaism, as it was for Paul to claim that Christians belonged to Israel: apart from all else, their good conduct was a political necessity.<sup>89</sup>

#### IV THE MESSIAH AND THE LAW

To a Paul engaged in bringing Jews and Gentiles together without distinction in the same community, then, there would inevitably have been a politically motivated opposition, difficult though it is to document. Far more significant and obvious was the opposition inspired by those Jews and Jewish-Christians who were devoted to the Law, whether they were politically active or not. In the eyes of these, Paul constituted a menace to the very existence of Israel as they understood it. Why?

Paul was not the first to be persecuted. The Christians with whom he first came into contact so suffered: they were Hellenists, Greek-speaking Jews from the Diaspora who had settled in Jerusalem. The experience of such Jews can be conjectured. Many had been drawn to settle in the land of Israel, and especially in Jerusalem, from religious motives, life in the land being considered a spiritual advantage.<sup>90</sup> But, much like Luther in Rome, they would be repelled by the moral turpitude of much in Jerusalem – the commercialization of the worship of the Temple and the political machinations of priests, mostly Sadducees.<sup>91</sup> Often accustomed to a more simply ethical approach to the Law and to a greater readiness to come to terms with Gentiles, they found the scrupulosity of the Pharisaic observance unattractive. So too the hatred of Jews towards Samaritans would have appeared to them provincial. Many such Jews would have found the attitude of Jesus to the Temple and to the Law attractive, and they became believers.

<sup>89</sup> On the term *religio licita*, see F. C. Grant, 'Religio licita', *Studia Patristica* 4, F. L. Cross ed. (=TU 79, Berlin 1961), pp. 84–9. The term *religio licita* usually used to describe the status of Judaism is anachronistic: the term only emerges in the sources of the third century CE.

<sup>90</sup> *b. Ket.* 110b–111a: 'Whoever walks four cubits in the land of Israel is assured of a place in the world to come.' See *GL*, pp. 3–158.

<sup>91</sup> M Hengel, 'Die Ursprünge der christlichen Mission', p. 28; *idem*, 'Zwischen Jesus and Paulus: Die «Hellenisten», die «Sieben» und Stephanus. Apg 6, 1–7, 5', *ZTK* 72 (1975), 151–206. Conversely, immigrants from the East in the first century often reacted unfavourably to the assimilated ways of Hellenistic Jews in the great cities of the western Diaspora; see M. Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates* (Jewish Apocryphal Literature; New York 1951), p. 65.

Acts presents the attacks of Stephen, one of these Hellenists, on these two essential pillars of Judaism – the Temple and the Law – as provoking violent opposition from the Jewish leaders.<sup>92</sup> Thus have been pin-pointed the essential areas of immediate friction in the earliest days. Samaritan influences may have stimulated an emphasis on opposition to the Temple in the early Christian movement to an exaggerated degree.<sup>93</sup> In the case of Paul, it was the question of the Law that most moved his opponents. To judge from his epistles, his understanding of the Church as the temple of God<sup>94</sup> did not produce a radical re-orientation away from Jerusalem and its Temple. But it was otherwise with the Law: Paul's teaching about the Law touched the nerve of Judaism. The violent reaction of Jews was predictable, as both his epistles and Acts reveal.

In the earliest of his epistles, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Paul bitterly attacks certain Jews but condemns their opposition in general terms only. Fortunately in his epistles to the Galatian and Roman churches, he deals directly with the cause of opposition to his work. In both Galatians and Romans the immediate cause of the opposition of Jewish-Christians, and *ipso facto* of Jews, to Paul centred in the Law. The extreme sensitivity over the Law arose from two inseparable convictions shared by religious Jews: first, that the Law was the perfect and therefore unchangeable, final and eternal revelation of God's will; secondly, that in obedience to it rested the survival and well-being of Israel. One's attitude and obedience to the Law was the acid test of one's membership in the people of God. While many groups in first-century Judaism were divided over the interpretation of the Law,<sup>95</sup> they did not question its finality or its indispensability for Israel. Paul's treatment of the Law, in the light of the advent of the Messiah in whom he now believed, could not but alienate those who rejected his interpretation of Jesus as the Messiah.

It has been easy to regard his criticism of the Law as the ultimate ground of the persecution of the Apostle.<sup>96</sup> Jews did not stumble at his doctrine of a Messiah, even a crucified one, in itself (Jewish-Christians

<sup>92</sup> Although Acts has probably softened the tensions between the Hebrews and the Hellenists, reducing them to an understandable matter of linguistic difference, it was not inventing material but drawing on a tradition probably derived from the Antiochian church, which was founded by Hellenists who had fled under persecution to Jerusalem.

<sup>93</sup> O. Cullmann, *Der johanneische Kreis: Zum Ursprung des Johannesevangeliums* (Tübingen 1975); ET, *The Johannine Circle* (London 1976); M. Scharlemann, *Stephen: A Singular Saint* (AnBib 34; Rome 1968).

<sup>94</sup> See *GL*, pp. 185ff.

<sup>95</sup> One must always be aware of the variety of Judaism in the period prior to CE 70: it partly accounts for the variety of Christianity prior to CE 70 and later.

<sup>96</sup> See W. D. Davies, 'Paul and the People of Israel', for bibliographical details.

also believed in such an one):<sup>97</sup> Judaism was hospitably tolerant of Messianic claimants.<sup>98</sup> But Paul's acceptance of Gentiles as members of the people of God without the observance of the Law passed the possible limits of Jewish tolerance: it was scandalous. But to state the matter thus unqualifiedly is misleading. Certainly the immediate cause for Jewish opposition to Paul centred on the Law. But his controversial understanding of the Law was inextricably bound up with the significance which, through his experience on the road to Damascus, he had come to ascribe to Jesus as the Messiah, and with the challenges that this had issued to all the fundamental symbols of Jewish life – the Temple, the city, the land, the Sabbath, as well as the Law. To isolate the criticism of the Law from the total Messianic situation, as Paul conceived it, is both to exaggerate and to emasculate it. That criticism is, in fact, derivative; it is a consequence of the ultimate place which Paul ascribed to Jesus as the Messiah in the purpose of God throughout history.

The Messiahship of Jesus was crucial for Paul. He most frequently referred to Jesus as the Lord and usually used the term 'Christ' in such combinations as Christ Jesus, Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, in a personal and not in a titular sense. But he did not therefore empty the term 'Christ' of its Messianic connotation;<sup>99</sup> as especially in Rom. 9:5, probably Rom. 1:2–4 and possibly 1 Cor. 1:23; Rom. 15:7; Gal. 3:16, 6:2. That Jesus had come to be the Messiah for Paul had momentous consequences which were not annulled by Paul's use of other terms for him. In interpreting Jesus as the Christ, Paul could draw upon long-standing categories of thought expressed in words and vivid symbols which the Jewish masses and many Sages, despite the frowns of others, took literally. The content of these symbols gave them immense evocative powers. Their impact on Paul can be traced particularly in three ways.

<sup>97</sup> This may be used as an argument in favour of the contention that there was in Judaism a notion of a suffering Messiah. See *PRJ*, pp. 274ff.

<sup>98</sup> The best-known example has generally been taken to be that R. Akiba considered Bar Kokhba to be the Messiah and yet remained within the Jewish community. But it is now questioned whether Akiba did so (P. Schäfer, 'Rabbi Aqiva and Bar Kochba', in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, vol. 11., ed. W. S. Green (BJS 9; Chico 1980), pp. 113–30).

<sup>99</sup> Cf. N. A. Dahl, 'Die Messianität Jesu bei Paulus' in *Studia Paulina* (FS J. de Zwaan), J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik (eds.) (Haarlem 1953), pp. 83–95; ET, in N. A. Dahl, *The Crucified Messiah and Other Essays* (Minneapolis 1974), pp. 37–47; A. T. Hanson *Studies in Paul's Technique*, pp. 13ff. Contrast E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 495ff. On the significance of the term 'messiah' in Paul, see N. T. Wright, 'The Messiah and the People of God: A Study in Pauline Theology with Particular Reference to the Argument of the Epistle of the Romans' (D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University 1980); Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh 1991), pp. 18–55.

First, on the way in which he conceived of his own work. He became convinced that, now that the Messiah had come, he himself had been called especially to bring the Gentiles into the Israel of God according to the Messianic expectation of his people. To this end a divine necessity had been placed upon him to press on with his work to the limits of the earth, because the End was at hand.<sup>100</sup> This can be given an unjustifiable rigidity. Did the eschatological expectation that, now that the Messiah had come, he would soon reappear at Jerusalem, the centre of the Messianic Age, where the Gentiles would come to worship Yahweh, dictate Paul's concern to take the collection at the risk of death to Jerusalem? Did those Gentiles who accompanied him in taking the collection represent in his mind the procession of Gentiles to Jerusalem which was part of the Messianic hope of Judaism? Was his life governed by an eschatological dogma about the centrality of Jerusalem? These questions have sometimes been answered in the affirmative.<sup>101</sup> But Paul was not rigidly tied down to an eschatological geography, even though he did live in the conviction that the End was at hand. As time went on, it was the building up of the Christian community in which was neither Jew nor Greek that was his chief concern even as he waited for the End.<sup>102</sup> Paul illustrates the essential irrationality of eschatological types who can hold in tension a vivid anticipation of an imminent end of all things and intense activity.

The second way in which the Messianic tradition has an impact is in the enthusiasm which accompanied Paul's preaching, as other early Christian preaching, an enthusiasm which because of the nature of Messianism often had a revolutionary character.<sup>103</sup> When we tap his preaching as early as we can, in 1 Thessalonians, its Messianic, eschatological framework is evident. The Thessalonian Christians had not only been asked to turn from idols to serve the living and true God (1 Thess. 1:9), but were now God's elect (1:4), called into his Kingdom and his glory (2:12); they knew the power of the Holy Spirit, a sign of the End (1:5, 5:19). Delivered from

<sup>100</sup> O. Cullmann, 'Le caractère eschatologique du devoir missionnaire et de la conscience apostolique de S. Paul sur le *κατέχων* (-ων) de 2 Thess. 2:6-7', *RHPR* 16 (1936), 210-45.

<sup>101</sup> J. Munck *Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte*, but see criticisms in *GL* pp. 201ff and in M. Smith, 'Pauline Problems. Apropos of J. Munck, *Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte*', *HTR* 50 (1957), 107-131.

<sup>102</sup> D. Georgi, *Die Geschichte der Kollekte des Paulus für Jerusalem* (Hamburg 1965), pp. 40, 85ff.

<sup>103</sup> See especially G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays in Jewish Spirituality* (New York 1971) and *Shabbatai Tzevi* (Hebrew; Tel Aviv 1957); ET, *Sabbatai Tzevi: The Mystic Messiah 1626-1676* (Littman Library of Judaism; Princeton 1973); and also W. D. Davies, 'From Schweitzer to Scholem: Reflections on Sabbatai Svi', *JBL* (1976), 529-58.

the wrath to come by God's Son, raised from the dead, they now awaited his return from heaven (1 Thess. 1:10, 2:19, 3:13, 4:13ff, 5:25; 2 Thess. 1:7ff). The life demanded of the elect was unmistakably moral (1 Thess. 4:1ff; 2 Thess. 3:13), but under the influence of a feverish expectation of an imminent end of the present order, some among them had become indifferent to the legitimate demands of that order, immoral, disrespectful of the rights of others, unruly, meddlesome and lazy (1 Thess. 4:3–14, 5:12ff; 2 Thess. 3:6ff), although others among them abounded in charity (2 Thess. 1:3). In the enthusiasm of the Spirit extremes of brotherly love and ecstatic social irresponsibility existed side by side, all arising from the conviction that in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the End had begun. Paul was constrained to interpret the signs of the End to them and to check their eschatological misconceptions so that they might live more soberly. Although Paul did not discuss the Jewish Law with them and counselled them not to quench the Spirit (1 Thess. 4:13ff, 5:19; 2 Thess. 2:1ff), he urged them to follow the tradition of conduct which he himself had both taught and exemplified (2 Thess. 3:6ff, 2:15). The apostle of liberty<sup>104</sup> must have appeared to the Thessalonians as the apostle of discipline.

Paul was to encounter the same Messianic, enthusiastic irresponsibility in the Spirit later at Corinth. There the enthusiasm expressed itself in unrealistic claims that the End had begun; already Christians were living in an unrestrained Messianic euphoria beyond good and evil. This enthusiasm Paul sought to correct by insisting that the End had not yet fully come. Whereas the Thessalonians were disturbed by the immediate future, some of the Corinthians were unconcerned with this. To them Paul recalled the futuristic element in the faith in Jesus Christ: all was not yet accomplished. And at Corinth also the marks of licence were evident and the Spirit misunderstood as unrestrained freedom. As in his Thessalonian correspondence, Paul wrote to the Corinthians also as a moral guide who urged restraint, although without discussion of the Jewish Law. That the same spiritual enthusiasm and lawlessness again marked Galatian and Roman Christians we shall indicate later; and in writing to them Paul was compelled to deal directly with the Jewish Law.

This leads us naturally to the third area where the Messianic tradition informs Paul. The immorality and antinomianism of many of the enthusiasts in his churches constituted an embarrassment on two fronts. They drew the criticism of outsiders: 'Christian' unruliness could easily be

<sup>104</sup> The titles of R. Longenecker, *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* (New York 1964), F. J. W. Drane, *Paul, Libertine or Legalist?* (London 1975), and F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* (Exeter 1977) are significant.

confused with civil disobedience. But more important, they antagonized sober, observing Jews, and raised the question of the Law. It is fundamental to recognize that a Messianic movement inevitably had to come to terms with the Law. In dealing with it Paul was no novice but informed by the apocalyptic-Pharisaic tradition. In that tradition, despite the firmly entrenched doctrine that the Law was perfect, unchangeable and eternal, some expected that Elijah would be a Messianic forerunner who would explain obscurities in the Law; that in the Messianic Age or in the Age to Come difficulties in the Law would be explained; that certain enactments would cease to be applicable; and that there would be changes in the commandments concerning things clean and unclean. But more than all this, there are late passages where a New Torah for the Messianic Age is envisaged<sup>105</sup> and others where the Law is to be completely abrogated at that time. As before and after, but especially in the first century when Judaism was more varied than at a later time, the content and character of the one perfect Law was a matter of intense debate. How was it to be interpreted? The answers were many. The Temple Scroll reveals some circles even prepared to add to the Law in the name of Yahweh himself.<sup>106</sup> The Dead Sea sect – awaiting its Messiahs – reveals a Judaism at boiling point over the question of the Law, demanding total obedience to a particular interpretation of it and expecting new commandments.<sup>107</sup> The Houses of Hillel and Shammai understood the Law so differently that some feared that two Laws might emerge in Israel.<sup>108</sup> When Paul, therefore, dealt with the question of the Law in relation to Christ, he was not alone but was part of a world in which the interpretation of Torah for the present and the future was a burning issue. Belief in the advent of the Messiah inevitably brought up acutely the question of the Law. The discussions of it in Paul are necessarily integrally related to his belief that in Jesus, crucified but raised from the dead, the Messianic Age had begun. As indicated, it is in two epistles especially that these discussions occur.

<sup>105</sup> On all this, see W. D. Davies, *SSM*, p. 109, on the Law in the Messianic Age; J. Jervell, 'Die offenbarte und die verborgene Tora. Zur Vorstellung über die neue Tora im Rabbinismus,' *ST* 25 (1971), 90–108; P. Schäfer, 'Die Torah der messianischen Zeit,' *ZNW* 65 (1974), 27–42; H. Schürmann, 'Das Gesetz Christi (Gal. 6:2): Jesu Verhalten und Wort als letztgültige sittliche Norm nach Paulus, Neues Testament und Kirche,' *Pastorale Aufsätze* 6 (Leipzig 1974), 95–102.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Y. Yadin, 'The Temple Scroll,' in *New Directions in biblical Archaeology*, D. N. Freedman and J. C. Greenfield, eds. (Garden City 1969), pp. 139–48.

<sup>107</sup> See W. D. Davies, 'Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Flesh and the Spirit' in *The Scrolls and the New Testament*, K. Stendahl, ed. (New York 1957); repr. in *Christian Origins and Judaism* (London 1962), pp. 144–77, see p. 176, no. 86.

<sup>108</sup> *t. Sota* 16,9.

In Galatians, Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as having appeared in the fullness of time (1:4) to effect deliverance from 'this present evil age' (1:5). The same crucified Jesus who had appeared risen from the dead to Paul induced him 'to die to the Law' (3:18) and wrought deliverance from its curse (3:13). He had introduced the gift of the Spirit (3:2, 4:6, 5:6,16), associated in Judaism particularly with the time of the End. The promises of God to Abraham were fulfilled 'in Christ' (3:16). Paul distinguishes three phases in the history of his people: (1) from Abraham to Moses, a period which he counts as 430 years; (2) from Moses, when the Law was given, to the coming of the one true seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ, in whom the promise to Abraham was fulfilled and faith in whom confers the blessing of being among the sons of God (Gal. 3:16, 19); (3) a new epoch, introduced by Jesus, of true sonship in liberty (4:4f, 5:13), a new creation (6:15). This treatment of history in Galatians in terms of the distinction between the promise to Abraham and the Law given to Moses, and the culmination of the former in Jesus Christ is Paul's own. It gives an eschatological significance to Jesus of Nazareth from which Paul interpreted the Law. This is the force of the statements in 1 Cor. 10:11: 'For upon us the fulfilment of the ages has come,' and in 2 Cor. 5:17: 'When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world, the old order has gone, and a new order has already begun' (NEB).

In the epistle to the Romans Paul reveals even more directly how he understood Jesus as Messiah within the history of the people of Israel. He adopts an interpretation of that history not altogether unlike that proposed in the *Tanna debe Eliabu*, a compilation of the third-century CE probably containing materials taken from the first century CE. The passage reads:

The world is to exist six thousand years. In the first two thousand years there was desolation (anarchy): two thousand years the Torah flourished; and the next two thousand years is the Messianic era. (T. B. Sanhedrin, 97a–b)

Compare this with Paul's division in Rom. 4:15, 5:13, 10:4. He conceives of: (1) a period from Adam to the giving of the Law; this was lawless (in that period men sinned but transgression was not imputed to them – Rom. 4:15, 5:13ff); (2) a period from Moses to Christ during which the Law reigned and men's sins were imputed as transgressions (4:15); and then (3) a new period inaugurated by Christ in which the writ of the Law no longer ran. Christ is the 'end of the Law'.<sup>109</sup> In Rom. 10:4 this phrase

<sup>109</sup> On Rom. 10:4, see especially C. F. D. Moule, *Essays in New Testament Interpretation* (Cambridge 1982), pp. 273–5; J. A. Sanders, 'Torah and Christ', *Int* 29 (1975), 372–90, p. 382; and 'Torah and Paul' in *God's Christ and His People*. Fs N. Dahl. Eds. J. Jervell and W. A. Meeks (Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø 1977), pp. 132–40.



refers to a false understanding of the Law. But, as earlier in Galatians, where Paul was more categorical and extreme in claiming that Christ by taking upon himself the curse of the Law had delivered us from it, so in Rom. 7:6 he writes: 'But now, (in Christ) having died to that which held us bound, we are discharged from the Law, to serve God in a new way, the way of the spirit, in contrast to the old way, the way of a written code.'

Paul, a Pharisee convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, because of this astounding fact, could not but regard the Law in a new light. We cannot connect Paul with any one Jewish doctrine of the place of the Law in the Messianic Age, but his understanding of Jesus Christ in terms of the eschatological expectations of Judaism is unmistakable. This demanded a reorientation amounting to a radical criticism of the Law which led to his persecution at the hands of the Jews. The proximate cause of that persecution, then – his treatment of the Law – points to an ultimate cause, his Christology, which was at its beginning a Messianology.<sup>110</sup>

From this point on it will be best to look at the way in which Paul deals with the question of the Law in his correspondence with the various churches.

#### A PAUL AND THE GALATIAN CHRISTIANS

Paul first deals directly with the Law from the point of view of one accepting Jesus as the Christ in Galatians, where he confronts Judaizers, and behind them the Jews. He writes polemically and looks at the Law with the cold eyes of an antagonist. To those who demanded the observance of the Law, he asserts that to be under the Law was to be under a curse (Deuteronomy 27:26; Gal. 3:10); that since the Law was given later

<sup>110</sup> Compare Leo Baeck, *Judaism and Christianity* (Philadelphia 1958), pp. 161–3. For a criticism of this position, see now E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. For criticisms of the position advocated here, see E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia 1983). See also H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (Tübingen 1983) and 'Legalism and Salvation by the Law' in *Die Paulinische Literatur und Theologie: Skandinavische Beiträge*, ed. S. Pedersen, pp. 63–83 (Århus and Göttingen 1980). Räisänen finds Paul's statements about the Law so full of contradictions as to be totally incoherent, and the contradictions are undeniable. But was so incoherent or self-contradictory a person as Räisänen takes Paul to have been likely to have engendered 'the uncritical praise of Paul', amounting, as the scholar puts it, to 'the theological cult of the apostle'? Must we not assume some 'method in his madness' to account for this? We suggest that the revolutionary messianic situation in which Paul stood is likely to have produced responses that would appear chaotic. The fluid volcanic messianic context within which the early Christians lived cannot be overemphasized. See C. C. Rowland's emphasis on this in *Christian Origins* (London 1986), pp. 111ff, *et passim*.

than the promise to Abraham, which required faith and not works, it was inferior. It was inferior also because of its origin: it had not come directly from God but had only been mediated by angels and through a human Moses (3:10–20). Moreover the Law was morally weak, unable to give righteousness (3:21). Later in the epistle Paul goes even further. To obey the Law was to submit to the elemental spirits of this evil world of which the Law was one (4:3, 9).<sup>111</sup>

True, Paul does allow a temporary, preparatory role for the Law. It served as a tutor (custodian) unto Christ (3:24). Unless 3:19 be taken to imply that sin is revealed by the Law, through the inner awareness of transgression which the coming of the Law brings, Paul does not clarify how exactly the Law fulfils this role: he does so later in Romans. He simply states that under the Law, until the coming of Christ, the whole world was prisoner to sin (3:22–3). His recognition of any positive function for the Law is extremely grudging. In any case, now that Christ has come, it is no longer necessary. Those who are ‘in Christ’, through the Spirit of the Son sent into their hearts by God, have achieved a maturity which transcends the tutelage of the Law (4:1ff). The role of the Law was at best that of a beggarly, passing phenomenon. With the cross of Christ the writ of the Law came to an end (2:21, 3:13, 19, 5:11). Paul is at his coarsest in dismissing those who oppose this view (5:12).

Even though it was clear to him that some Christians in Galatia took his emphasis on freedom from the Law as an excuse for licence, enthusiasm in the Spirit bringing its own dangers, this did not frighten Paul into a retreat back to the Law. Rather he reaffirmed the sufficiency of the Spirit in Christ to bring forth moral fruit without any guidance from the Law. The emphasis of Paul on freedom is unrestrained: he does not balk at its risk (5:13ff). Nevertheless even in Galatians he does not entirely forsake the imposition of a demand. He finds a substitute for the Law that he denounced in the law of the Messiah: the bearing of one another’s burdens, *agapē* (6:2). It is where he introduces this notion that his epistle becomes warmest. That the term ‘law’ in the phrase ‘the law of the Messiah’ in Gal. 6:2 is not to be radically differentiated from the concept of the command, *mitzvah*, of Torah, as if it means simply principle or norm rather than a demand,<sup>112</sup> appears from the way in which later in a calmer mood Paul went on to deal with enthusiasts at Corinth. We take Galatians to precede the Corinthian epistles chronologically.

<sup>111</sup> On these, see the commentators and B. Reicke, ‘The Law and This World according to Paul’, *JBL* 70 (1951), 259–76. Some prefer to see in the reference to the *stoicheia* here an indication, as in all of Gal. 3, not of the inferiority of the Law but of its character as enslaving.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. W. D. Davies, *SSM*, pp. 353ff.

## B PAUL AND CORINTHIAN CHRISTIANS

At that city also Paul was opposed by Jewish-Christian opponents<sup>113</sup> who favoured the retention of the Law of Moses, and by others who were moved by an enthusiasm leading to a licence which early accompanied revolutionary Messianism.<sup>114</sup> To counter this, the apostle of liberty was constrained to call for restraints, for a behaviour among Christians governed by the example of Paul's own life (1 Cor. 4:16, 11:1) and that of Christ Himself (2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:4–11). In 1 Cor. 4:17 Paul refers to his 'ways' in Christ, 'moral standards expressed to some extent in recognized patterns of behaviour . . . which can be taught'.<sup>115</sup> which he urged in every church. As in Galatians, despite his attacks on the Law, so here there *is* a Christian 'way', or 'law' for Paul. This way was to be informed by the universal practice of Christian congregations (1 Cor. 4:17, 11:16, 14:34). So too in 1 Cor. 6 and 8 the liberty of the Christian is to take external circumstances into consideration. Whereas at Antioch (Gal. 2:11ff) Paul had not hesitated to ignore the scruples of Peter and others, thus ignoring the claims of the weaker brethren, in 1 Cor. he himself urges the opposite – consideration for them. In 1 Cor. 6:12 he qualifies the freedom urged in Galatians. In 1 Cor. 7:19, while reiterating the principle declared in Gal. 5:6 (compare 6:15), he makes the, for him, astounding statement: 'keeping the commandments of God is *everything*.'<sup>116</sup> Paul is not thinking here of the Mosaic commandments; his exact reference is not clear. What is clear is that he refuses to give unfettered sway to the notion that, because they were in the new creation effectuated by Christ, Christians were free from commandments. And in 2 Cor., where however he may have been facing different opponents from those he deals with in 1 Cor., he came to recognize the Christian life as a life in covenant – and a covenant always implies demand or Law (2 Cor. 3). In 2 Cor. 3:17 he reiterates the principle that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom, but he now defines this freedom not as the end of demands but as liberty to conform to Christ, to substitute new loyalties for old. The Christian is to be under the constraint of the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5:14f), and this leads him to live no longer for himself. The constraint of Christ's example constitutes also the ground of Paul's appeal to the collection for

<sup>113</sup> Despite H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians, passim*. Cf. P. Vielhauer, 'Paulus und die Kephaspartei in Korinth', *NTS* 21 (1974/5), 341–52.

<sup>114</sup> See G. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi, the Mystic Messiah*, pp. 163–6, 403; *The Messianic Idea*, pp. 6, 78–82, 100–8.

<sup>115</sup> C. K. Barrett, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 8.

<sup>116</sup> The translation is that of C. K. Barrett. The REB less forcefully renders, 'What matters is to keep God's commands.'

the 'poor' of Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:8ff). The constraint of the love of Christ is not a commandment but it *is* a modification of unqualified freedom. Paul would have appeared very differently to Christians in Galatia and in Corinth, doubtless by the former accused of anti-nomianism, by the latter of disciplinarianism or at least incipient legalism.

### C PAUL AND THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS

But it is in Romans 6:15–7:6ff that the nature of the life 'in Christ' is most directly expressed, and it is in the same epistle that Paul presents his further critique of the Mosaic law. As over against Galatians, Paul here is careful to recognize that the Law is 'holy, righteous and good' (Rom. 7:12, 16); it is spiritual (7:14); its source is in God (7:22, 25; 8:2, 7); it is designed for life (7:10); it is authoritative (7:19); it is among the privileges accorded to Israel (9:4). Elements of the critique of the Law offered in Galatians are repeated, but in Romans Paul approaches the Law, not externally as in the former epistle, as if it were an object of his dispassionate or clinical theological reflection, but from within – that is, as experienced. From this point of view he finally asserts in 10:4 that Christ is the end of the Law, by which he means not that the Law is now abolished but that the attempt to obey the Law as a means of salvation ends in failure. That attempt was mistaken in its understanding of the intent of the Law. But before he reached that climactic statement, Paul had earlier given reasons for his conclusion.<sup>117</sup>

Reiterating that the Law was powerless to effectuate the life that it demanded and promised (Leviticus 18:5), Paul adds to Psalm 143:2 ('against Thee no man on earth can be right') the words '*by observance of the Law*' (Rom. 3:20, cf. Gal. 2:16). Supposed to bring life, the Law was unable to do so (Rom. 3:23). In fact, it had a result opposite to that which it intended (7:13): it brought the wrath of God (4:15) and death (1 Cor. 15:56; Rom. 7:9ff) upon men. And yet, although the Law is the *power* of Sin (1 Cor. 15:56), Paul refuses to equate it with Sin (Rom. 7:7): Rom. 7 may, in fact, be a defence of the Law.

He describes what seems to be his understanding of the condition of all men. The exact reference in Rom. 7 has been disputed; it probably describes Paul's own experience, as that of all men, but in the light of Christ.<sup>118</sup> The Law usually confronts us as prohibition, expressing simply

<sup>117</sup> But see E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* and *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People*.

<sup>118</sup> The classic treatment of Rom. 7 is that of W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7 und das Bild des Menschen im Neuen Testament* (Munich 1974), pp. 1–160; see C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1 (ICC, Edinburgh 1975), pp. 340–7; N. M. Watson, 'The Interpretation of Romans VII,' *AusBR* 21 (1973), 27–39.

the negative aspect of God's will. It reveals sin to man, giving him a profound knowledge of it (3:20). It does this not simply because it incites man to break its prohibition and thus becomes an occasion (*aphormē*) of sin (7:5, 8, 11), on the principle that 'forbidden fruit is sweetest'. Man's encounter with the commandment of God uncovers what lies behind all sin, that is, the desire to reject the rightful claim of God upon him. The rebellious character of man in his desire to be free from God's constraint and from the covenant with Him is exposed by the commandment. This is why Paul can say: 'Sin indeed was in the world before the Law was given, but sin is not imputed where there is no Law' (5:13). Only with the coming of the Law does man's sin take on the character of open rebellion. 'Where there is no Law, there is no transgression' (5:14), 'apart from the Law Sin lies dead; I was once alive apart from the Law, but when the commandment came Sin revived and I died' (7:8b–9a). Thus the Law, intrinsically good, subserves the ends of Sin, which is intrinsically evil, but is also, apart from the opportunity provided by the Law, impotent. What was in itself good, the Law, has become a power for evil. While Sin is in man – in a dead or dormant state – before he encounters the Law, it is the latter that brings it to life by presenting the possibility of transgression and appealing to man's rebelliousness (7:7–11).

But how is it that what was intrinsically good, the Law, has been thus diverted to the service of evil? Earlier in Galatians (4:9f), Paul had connected, indeed seemed to identify, the Law with 'the elemental spirits of this world', but in Romans he does not mention these. Instead, he connects the weakness of the Law with 'the flesh'. Not the Law was weak, but man in his character as made of flesh (*sarkinos*), that is, directed against God. Because Sin dwells in man, he cannot do what is right, although he wills it. The force of evil which Paul calls *Hamartia*, Sin, making the flesh its base of operations, makes the demand of the Law powerless (Rom. 7:13–24) and even claims man.

Paul's treatment of the Law in Romans, then, differs from that in Galatians. In Galatians it is almost unrelievedly pejorative. Was this simply because that epistle offers what was only Paul's first serious attempt at dealing with the Law? Or was it due to an untempered, polemic reaction to Jewish-Christians who had been as extreme as he himself had been? In Galatians Paul's anger is at white heat against these opponents, who in his view, now that the Messiah had come, were unnecessarily re-imposing a yoke of bondage upon his churches, and also against those zealous Jews who were urging them on with threats. Had Paul's violent reaction to them, sometimes coarsely expressed, been to no avail? Had his opponents in Galatia prevailed, and, in the light of that failure, was the Apostle led to contemplate the possibility that a more conciliatory

treatment of the Law might be more effective in explaining his position to the Romans, whose support he cherished as he faced the journey to Jerusalem where a confrontation with Jewish-Christians again awaited him?<sup>119</sup> No certain answers are possible. But, for whatever reason, Paul was not content simply to repeat the passionate words he had written to the Galatians. In Romans he presents a more positive estimate of the Law even while he still strikes against it. A more restrained and subtle Paul emerges. In Galatians he had treated the Law with a clinical, almost impersonal, detachment difficult to reconcile with his Pharisaic past. In Romans, critical as he still seems to be, he is more circumspect and sensitive in his treatment of it. The subtle variations in his discussion of the Law militate against any simplistic dismissal of his criticisms of it. It was not that as a Diaspora Jew he had an attenuated understanding of the Law as simply ethical and divorced from the rich matrix of the covenant;<sup>120</sup> nor that he had mistaken the Law to be a means to justification and salvation rather than a sign of the possession of these as it was in Palestinian Pharisaism so that it could be opposed to faith;<sup>121</sup> nor that as an Apocalyptic extremist who regarded the Law as a simple monolithic totality, he could easily dismiss it *in toto* –<sup>122</sup> it was not from any of these positions that Paul criticized the Law. The one essential clue to his criticism of the Law was that the Messiah had come in a crucified Jesus who had died under the curse of the Law. Paul saw the confirmation of the Messiahship of that Jesus in his power to draw those outside the Law, even Gentiles, to himself.<sup>123</sup> In him the people of God could be constituted and in terms other than that of Torah.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. J. Jervell, 'Der Brief nach Jerusalem. Über Veranlassung und Adresse des Römerbriefes', *ST* 25 (1971), 61–73; U. Wilckens, 'Über Abfassungszweck und Aufbau des Römer-briefes', *Rechtfertigung als Freiheit; Paulusstudien* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1974), pp. 110–70; on the other hand, K. P. Donfried thinks that Romans was written by Paul to deal with a concrete situation in Rome ('False Presuppositions in the Study of Romans', *CBQ* 36 (1974), 332–55; repr. in *The Roman Debate* (rev. edn, Peabody, MA 1991), pp. 102–25; see also P. S. Minear, *The Obedience of Faith* (London 1971).

<sup>120</sup> C. J. G. Montefiore, *Judaism and St. Paul*, pp. 92–112.

<sup>121</sup> H. J. Schoeps, *Paulus, Die Theologie des Apostels im Lichte der jüdischen Religionsgeschichte* (Tübingen 1955, ET, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (Philadelphia 1961); see my review in *NTS* 10 (1963/4), 295–305. Compare how some Roman Catholic scholars assert that had Martin Luther become acquainted with the substance of a Catholicism such as that represented by, let us say, Thomas Aquinas, he would never have become a reformer.

<sup>122</sup> U. Wilckens, 'Die Bekehrung des Paulus', *ZTK* 56 (1959), 273–93 (= *Paulusstudien* (Neukirchen 1974), pp. 19–21). His view rests on the untenable position taken by D. Rössler (*Gesetz und Geschichte*), and his view falls with it.

<sup>123</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 495–7, 511–15, concurs in what I here reject but criticizes what I affirm, that is, the significance of the Messiahship of Jesus for Paul. Messiahship and Lordship are not to be as sharply distinguished as they are by Sanders.

## V PAUL AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

And so the battle over the Law, on which the opposition to Paul concentrated, is not to be isolated. Behind it were two fundamental questions. With one of these, the issue of the Messiahship of Jesus, we dealt above. The Pauline understanding of the Law rested on his conviction that with the resurrection of Jesus the Messianic Age and, indeed, the Age to Come, had dawned and placed the Law in a new light: the Gentiles who were not under the Law were now entering the people of God. And so another second question was inseparably linked with the first. It was whether the believers who accepted the Messiahship of Jesus and were, as Paul put it, 'in Christ', now constituted the people of God. Ultimately the struggle over the Law, which otherwise might seem pettifogging and hairsplitting, was concerned with the central question as to who constituted 'Israel', the people of God; and, in turn, if it were granted that those 'in Christ' were now 'Israel', what was the relationship between them and Jews, Israel after the flesh, their continuity and discontinuity? Three considerations justify this emphasis on the centrality of the question of 'Israel' for Paul.

First, although the Law and justification by faith alone have and must loom large in any treatment of the relationship between Paul and Judaism, in fact, in the apostle's writings it is only in the most polemical ones that the struggle over their relative importance emerges. In his very first epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul presents his gospel without reference to the Law and justification by faith. There he is concerned with a people 'in Christ', having a self-consciously independent life.<sup>124</sup> In one of his last epistles, where he refers in strong terms to the Law and its works as that which he has left behind, the centre of his life is clearly, not justification by faith, but the knowledge of Christ and his resurrection (Phil. 3:7ff).<sup>125</sup> To die and rise with Christ so as to be 'in him', in an act of cosmic significance, is the heart of Paulinism, that is, to be incorporated in the redeemed Messianic people of God in a new creation.

In the second place, it agrees with this that the understanding of justification by faith in Paul has itself been diluted by concentration on its individual aspect, after the pattern of Luther's wrestling with the introspective conscience, that is, on its concern with allaying the fears of the individual sinner before the just and holy God.<sup>126</sup> That there was such a

<sup>124</sup> Cf. 1 Thess. 1:2; 3:8; 4:16; 5:18.

<sup>125</sup> Rightly J. Gnllka, *Der Philipperbrief: Auslegung*, p. 192.

<sup>126</sup> K. Stendahl, 'The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West', *HTR* 56 (1963), 199–215, repr. in *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia 1976), pp. 78–96; *GL*, pp. 217ff. Stendahl is right in what he affirms – the communal dimension of justification by faith – but probably wrong in what he denies: its individual reference also.



personal dimension to the doctrine need not be denied, but it existed within and not separated from a communal and, indeed, a cosmic dimension. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith was not solely and not primarily oriented towards the individual but to the interpretation of the people of God. The justified man was 'in Christ', which is a communal concept. And, necessarily because it was eschatological, the doctrine moved towards the salvation of the world, a new creation.

Thirdly, it is a fact that in both Galatians and Romans the discussion of justification by faith is immediately followed by that of the constitution of the people of God. The struggle over the Law seems to find its *raison d'être* in that over the meaning of 'Israel', which Paul had come to understand as made up of those who knew the grace of God in Christ. And this understanding was ultimately related to his call because, as we noted above, three main impressions seem to have been made on Paul by that event on the road to Damascus: that the Risen Christ was real, that he suffered in the persecution of Christians, and that Paul was to preach to the Gentiles. These motifs are intimately connected, as follows:

(1) Paul understood his experience of the Risen Lord as an act of the sheer grace of God (1 Cor. 15:9ff): Jesus had appeared to *him*, the arch persecutor. (2) This did not only justify the preaching of Christians, that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth was Messiah and Lord, a claim which in the eyes of Paul had been an accursed one (Gal. 3:13). The Risen Lord had identified himself with his own, that is, with 'the second-rate Jews' (for that is how those who believed in Jesus must have appeared to Pharisees) who constituted the Church. Thus he had also validated their claim to be the Messianic community, the people of God. But it was this last that had infuriated Paul, the Pharisee. That 'sinners' (*hamartoloi*) should presume to be the people of God was to him intolerable. At his call the Lord himself revealed his error to him. (3) But, if Paul had been wrong about Jewish sinners, was it not possible that he was also wrong about the Gentiles? Would not the Risen Lord identify himself also with them, and had he not already called them? Paul's call thus came to spell mission: the barriers were down.

The constitution of the people of God had now to be defined. Paul faces this task especially in four epistles, 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 2 Corinthians and Romans. We shall not deal with epistles whose Pauline authorship has been seriously questioned nor, for obvious reasons, with Acts.

## VI 'ISRAEL' IN 1 THESSALONIANS

In his earliest epistle, Paul presents the bitterest indictment of the Jews. In 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 we read:

You have fared like the congregations in Judaea, God's people in Christ Jesus. You have been treated by your countrymen as they are treated by the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and drove us out, the Jews who are heedless of God's will and enemies of their fellow-men, hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles to lead them to salvation. All this time they have been making up the full measure of their guilt, and now retribution has overtaken them for good and all. (*Ephthasen ep' autous hē orgē eis telos*). (NEB)

To judge from Acts, on Paul's first visit to Thessalonica, although some had accepted the gospel, the majority of the Jews there had strongly resented his success. The Thessalonian Christians had nobly endured much suffering at their hands (1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14f). Paul is grateful. In expressing thanks to them, he refers to their Jewish opponents. In doing so, he combines traditional Christian (both Jewish and Gentile) criticism of the Jews, for having crucified Christ and persecuted the prophets (compare Matt. 5:12, 23:29–39; Luke 11:47–51), with typical Gentile polemic against the Jews as displeasing to God and enemies of the human race: 'who are heedless of God's will and enemies of their fellow men'. As a result of their conduct, the wrath of God has fallen upon them, either fully or at the End. Here, apparently, no hope is extended to the Jews. They have failed to accept the final challenge of history presented to them in the gospel.

Many have regarded the whole passage, 1 Thess. 2:13–16, as a later non-Pauline addition.<sup>127</sup> Elsewhere, Paul never accuses the Jews of having crucified Jesus (1 Cor. 2:8); specific passages usually cited from Matthew and Acts as Christian parallels to the notion that Jews have slain the prophets are later than Paul and date from after CE 70. The use by Paul of the typical Gentile slanders against Jews is unthinkable; and structurally the whole epistle, it is asserted, would be better without 1 Thess. 2:13–16, 2:12 being more naturally followed by 2:17 than by 2:13. But, attractive as is this dismissal of the passage as non-Pauline, there is no textual evidence for the omission of 1 Thess. 2:13–16, and the structural argument is not certain. The claims that Jews had crucified Jesus and murdered the prophets cannot be neatly postponed to a date after the fall of Jerusalem. As for the severity of the criticism, Jews have often been their own most severe critics. Apart from the Prophets, the Chronicler, for example, can regard the wrath of God as having fallen upon all his people without the possibility of appeasement (2 Chr. 36:15ff). Although in the light of 1 Corinthians and Romans, the accusation on Paul's lips

<sup>127</sup> B. A. Pearson, '1 Thessalonians 2:13–16: A Deutero-Pauline Interpolation', *HTR* 64 (1971), 79–94; D. Schmidt, '1 Thess. 2:13–16: Linguistic Evidence for Interpolation', *JBL* 102 (1983), 269–79.

that it was the Jews who crucified Christ is difficult, and although this unqualified attack on the Jews runs counter to Paul's later practice, all this warns against a too ready dismissal of 1 Thess. 2:13–16. On the whole, it is more justifiable to regard it as Pauline than otherwise. Here the Apostle castigates the opponents of his mission in the context of a Gentile church suffering persecution directly or indirectly from Jews. In expressing his bitter disappointment, he used traditionally formulated materials.<sup>128</sup> A comparison of Mark 12:1b–5, 7, 8, 9 with 1 Thess. 2:15, 16 reveals a common sequence of thought.<sup>129</sup> Both passages draw upon tradition formulated in the Hellenistic churches. This means that it is not necessary to explain the notion that 'the wrath has fallen upon the Jews finally or fully' in terms of any extraordinary contemporary event.<sup>130</sup> Mark 12:9 can be used to illumine 1 Thess. 2:16. It reads: 'What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and put the tenants to death and give the vineyard to others.' Here the End has come fully or finally: the Jews, as such, are no longer entrusted with the vineyard of the Lord.

But Mark 12:9 must not be taken to dictate the interpretation of Paul's thought as implying that now the Jews have no hope. For Paul they can still hear and respond to the gospel, if they so choose. That the apostle regards their destiny as still an open one appears later from Rom. 9–11. Moreover, there is one striking difference between Mark 12 and 1 Thess. 2:15–16. In the latter the motif of the hindering of the gospel is given explicit attention; it is implied in Mark 12:7 but not expressed. The determinative words in 1 Thess. 2:13–16 are those that refer to hindering the preaching of the gospel to Gentiles: this indicates heedlessness of God's will and animosity to men. This is Paul's own indictment and is not simply traditional. The anticipation of the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God in 'the end of the days' was well marked in the eschatological thinking of Judaism: Paul shared in it. To hinder the preaching to the Gentiles was to hinder the very purpose of God. For Paul those Jews who were guilty of this had added the last drop to the cup of their evil deeds: they had now to drink it. The wrath of God has expressed itself finally for this reason. The refusal by Jews to receive the gospel constitutes apostasy (2 Thess. 2:3): it is a rejection of God's will and is the work of Satan (2:9). But are we to conclude that *all* Israel has been denied the

<sup>128</sup> O. Michel, 'Fragen zu 1 Thessalonicher 2,14–16: Antijüdische Polemik bei Paulus', *Antijudaismus im Neuen Testament*, W. P. Eckert, N. P. Levinson, M. Stöhr, eds. (Munich 1967), pp. 50–9. Michel rightly says that our passage reflects certain experiences Paul had when a missionary to the Jewish Diaspora (p. 58).

<sup>129</sup> Cf. O. H. Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten* (WMANT 23; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1967), pp. 267f.

<sup>130</sup> See also E. Bammel, 'Judenverfolgung und Naherwartung', *ZTK* 56 (1959), 294–315.

election and the promise because of this? Paul is not thinking of all Jews, or of Israel as a totality, from whom the election and the promise have been taken away. The term he uses is Jews (*Ioudaioi*). The point is that he does not use the term 'Hebrews' with the ethnic or familial connotation of a people of a Palestinian origin, culture, tradition and religion, nor the term 'Israelites' with the connotation of a people of the Jewish faith particularly; but he uses the more generalized term 'Jews'. (But was his pride in his descent from the tribe of Benjamin one reason why he avoids using the term *Ioudaios* – a man of Judah – for himself?) The general Jewish failure did not include all Israel, and does not imply that the church has taken over the function of Israel. Paul is thinking not of the Jewish people as a whole but of unbelieving Jews who have violently hindered the gospel. Certainly he does not distinguish between Jewish and Gentile-Christians, so that he cannot be thinking of a Gentile church taking over the prerogatives and responsibilities of Jews as a people. It is to go too far, then, to make Mark 12 determinative for the interpretation of 1 Thess. 2:15–16. When he wrote to the Thessalonians, Paul had not made up his mind on the final destiny of Israel, and his later epistles reveal his further wrestling with this question. That the failure of the mission to the Jews within an eschatological movement constituted a very serious check to the divine purpose, he did not doubt. Paul did not cease to ponder this, but in his very first epistle he deals with the Jewish hindrance to the gospel in largely traditional terms. This first response of his to Jewish opposition in 1 Thess. 2:14–16 was unsophisticated perhaps, the unreflecting (and impetuous?) reaction of an early Paul, not to the Jewish people as a whole but to Jews who by violently opposing the preaching of the gospel to Gentiles were hindering the divine purpose. Clearly Jews at Thessalonica were alarmed that some of their members and god-fearers in their synagogues were being attracted by the Christian movement. There is no direct indication in the Thessalonian correspondence that they attacked either Paul or the churches over the question of the Law. In Thessalonica, perhaps, Paul had not yet begun to welcome Gentiles into the church without demanding circumcision and the Law. Possibly he had simply appealed to Jews and god-fearers to believe in the messiahship of Jesus, and in their enthusiasm those who had believed had become unruly and antinomian. As we indicated, it is in Galatians and Romans that the question of Jewry, the meaning of 'Israel', is more deliberately dealt with.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>131</sup> On all the above and on what follows, see for a more detailed discussion and for bibliography, W. D. Davies, 'Paul and the People of Israel'.

## VII 'ISRAEL' IN GALATIANS

In Galatians, after having stated the principle of justification by faith and not by works (2:15–21), Paul assumes the Jewish conviction that Abraham is the father of Israel, and turns to define Abraham's sons, who constitute 'Israel'. He is in debate, among others, with Gentile Christians who could not claim physical descent from Abraham. The opponents of Paul in his own churches, themselves threatened by fanatic nationalistic Jews, urged these Gentile Christians to give up Paul's advice and, in order to ensure that they partook in the heritage promised to Abraham, to observe the Law and circumcision (sonship to Abraham being possible only in terms of circumcision and the Law). Paul, on the other hand, claimed that just as Abraham himself had been justified on account of his faith, so those who were to be his sons were to be similarly justified, while those under the Law were under a curse. Moreover, the promise to Abraham concerned not simply Jews but all people (*ethnē*, 3:8). In a way which Paul does not explain, Christ by his cross had opened the promise to Abraham to the Gentiles (3:14). In fact, the only true seed of Abraham was Christ himself and those baptized into him (3:16ff). 'In Christ' the distinction between Jew and Gentile is annulled: it is necessarily annulled if salvation is to be achieved by all, because all – Jews and Gentiles – have been unable to fulfil the Law. This is implied in Gal. 3: the theme is taken up at more length later in Romans.

Paul demands that the people of God, belonging to Abraham, be defined in a new way. The meaning of 'descent' from Abraham has to be radically reconsidered: it no longer has a 'physical' connotation. Christian believers, Jewish and Gentile, are the sons of God; they can now cry 'Abba' and are the heirs of the promise to Abraham. They do not need to observe the Law in order to be sons of God (4:1–12). Paul, possibly using the terms of his opponents, appeals to the Law itself to point out that Abraham had two sons – the one born, according to the promise, of Sarah, and the other born, by physical descent, of the slave-woman Hagar. These two entities persist in the heavenly Jerusalem and the earthly Jerusalem, respectively. The heavenly Jerusalem (the sons of Sarah) is constituted in part of living Christians so that it already has, so to speak, a bridgehead in this world. Who exactly are the sons of Hagar? Are they Jews or are they Jewish Christians? If Jews, then Gal. 4:30, quoting Genesis 21:10, 12, implies that Paul is here separating Jews as a totality, that is, the people of Israel, from believers in Christ. But does the context of Gal. 4:21–31 point to Jewish Christian Judaizers as the children of the slave-woman from whom the believers are to be separated (so that Gal. 4:30 is comparable with 1:9 earlier in the epistle)? The attempt to make a

distinction between Jews and Jewish Christians here is to split hairs: the latter would encompass the former. The point is that in Galatians Paul is uncompromising, radically insisting on a parting of the ways: as in his discussion of the Law, so in his treatment of 'Israel'. Even when he most forcefully presents the doctrine of justification by faith, Paul, then, is essentially concerned with establishing who constitute the true people of God. Here that doctrine is ultimately part of an attempt to define 'Israel': it is part of Paul's uncompromising statement of the case why, now that the Messiah had come, and Jews and Gentiles were to be in a new relationship, the latter should not be asked to observe nor, indeed, should they observe circumcision or the Law. In the light of justification by faith alone, Galatians seems unequivocally to demand a clean repudiation of the dominant traditional understanding of 'Israel'. Stendahl has put it another way: 'Paul's doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the Law was primarily a scriptural argument according to the exegetical principles of Judaism in defence of his mission to the Gentiles.'<sup>132</sup> And yet there is even in the uncompromising epistle to the Galatians an insinuating ambiguity. Nowhere in it does Paul refer to a new Israel. In Gal. 6:15 circumcision is nothing. But neither is uncircumcision: what matters is a new creation. This is the shadow of things to come. And is there also another foreshadowing in the same verse? This verse, written in Paul's own hand and probably summing up his position (and recalling the *Shemoneh Esreh*), ends with a prayer for and a declaration of peace and mercy on the Israel of God, which may refer to the Jewish people as a whole.<sup>133</sup>

### VIII 'ISRAEL' IN 2 CORINTHIANS

In his correspondence with the Corinthian churches Paul reveals deep concern with the meaning of the Corinthian community but does not directly deal with the people of Israel as such. One section, 2 Cor. 3, concerns us because it has been taken to set the Christian dispensation so radically over against Judaism. For our purposes we only deal with it briefly. The opponents of Paul in 2 Corinthians included Jewish Christians. It is important to recognize that in 2 Cor. 3, Paul is concerned essentially with the contrast between two ministries, not with that between two covenants on which two distinct religions were founded. Paul

<sup>132</sup> K. Stendahl, 'Judaism and Christianity: Then and Now', *New Theology* No. 2, M. E. Marty and D. G. Peerman (eds.), pp. 153–64 (New York 1965), p. 161. See especially his 'The Apostle and the Introspective Conscience of the West'; also G. S. Duncan, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (London 1934), p. 7.

<sup>133</sup> See especially P. Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Age* (Cambridge 1969), p. 79.

contrasts the ministry of the covenant of the letter or of death, drawn on stone with Israel at Sinai, which fails, with the ministry of the new covenant, which through the Spirit is internal, just, permanent and life-giving (2 Cor. 3:6–11). The ministry of the old covenant, and by implication the old covenant itself, had its glory (2 Cor. 3, 7). Moreover, just as the new covenant conceived by Jeremiah, Jubilees and the sectarians at Qumran did not unambiguously envisage a radical break with the Sinaitic covenant but a reinterpretation, so Paul's new covenant. Thus Jer. 31:3 does not look forward to a new law but to 'my law', God's sure law, being given and comprehended in a new way. And the adjective *padasab* in Jer. 31:33, translated *kainē* by Paul, can be applied to the new moon, which is simply the old moon in a new light. The new covenant of Paul, as of Jeremiah, finally offers reinterpretation of the old. This is not immediately clear because Paul has expressed himself so obscurely. Especially at 3:14, he does refer to the 'Old Covenant', but his meaning has to be carefully disentangled. In 2 Corinthians 3 he has still not resolved his attitude to his own people as the people of the covenant and his confusion has invaded his text. The best interpretation of that section is that the children of the old covenant, the Jews, when they read the *narrative* of the covenant at Sinai, carry a veil which blinds them to the true meaning of what they read. But those who turn to the Lord, the Spirit or Christ (these being virtually identified and at the same time differentiated) find that the veil is removed. They discover the true meaning of the covenant, a new light has been thrown upon it: it is in this sense that it has become new. The terms *to katargoumenon* and *to katargoumenou* in 2 Cor. 3:11, 13 do not refer to the passing away of a 'whole religious system based on the Law',<sup>134</sup> but to the ministry of Moses and to the glory on Moses' face respectively. The stark antitheses of the early part of the chapter, which can be so easily misunderstood, are illumined by the discussion of the veil. Its outcome is to indicate that Paul as minister of the new covenant was not founding a new religion or a new people, and not dismissing the old covenant but revealing a new meaning and character in it. Through Christ, Paul does not oppose Sinai, but a particular understanding of it. Other passages in Paul indicate what that new meaning in Christ was; it was the revelation of the purpose of God to include all, both Jews and Gentiles, in his promise. What was fundamental was not that the new covenant was wholly other than the old covenant, but that through Christ, the Spirit, Christians penetrated more deeply into the meaning

<sup>134</sup> C. K. Barrett, *From First Adam to Last: A Study in Pauline Theology* (London 1962), p. 522, n. 1; *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York 1973), pp. 110–26, 118–19. Is it possible that 2 Cor. 3:14, the only place where Paul uses the expression 'the old covenant', is an interpolation?



of the latter by universalizing it. 2 Corinthians seems to stand half-way between Galatians and Romans. In the latter condemnation and contrasts do not occupy Paul so much as the need for reconciliation.

### IX 'ISRAEL' IN ROMANS

The outcome of Paul's appeals to the Galatians is not known. One thing points to his failure among them. When later Paul wrote or compiled his epistle to the Romans, although he does not depart from the fundamental understanding of the Gospel revealed in Galatians, an almost conciliatory note has entered into his writing. He faced the ordeal of taking the collection to Jerusalem. He was probably aware that the opposition to him in Galatia was succeeding, and that his Jewish opponents in Jerusalem, who were particularly antagonistic, would certainly be encouraged in their hostility by his failure in Galatia. It was, therefore, a matter of anxious urgency for him to gain the understanding support of the Roman Christian community – Jewish and Gentile – for his position as he went up to the Holy City. Although the reasons proposed for the writing of Romans have been multiple, the most likely occasion for it is the one indicated: it was the necessity to sum up for the Roman church his understanding of the Gospel as he faced the opposition of Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, the failure of the mission to the Jewish people, and the encroachment of the Parousia. Each of these factors impinged upon his writing, and it is the failure to recognize this by the over-exaggeration of one over against the others that has led to inadequate interpretations of Romans as a totality. Paul presents the quintessence of his gospel at the very beginning of his epistle in Rom. 1:16–17: it is the power of God unto salvation for everyone – Jew and Greek – who should believe. In it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith irrespective of ethnicity. The rest of Romans is an exposition of what this means: Paul understands the Gospel as for the world, and immediately sets forth its universal dimension in terms of God's wrath against sin among Greeks and, no less, among Jews (1:18–3:20). There follows the assertion of God's relation to humankind – the revelation of his 'righteousness' in response to this human plight, and the response of faith which this demands (3:21–4:25) and the freedom that God's grace ensures (5:1–8:39), that is, freedom from sin (6:1–23), from the Law (7:1–25) and in the Spirit (8:1–39). The cosmic and universal scope of the Gospel is unmistakable: it is a gospel for the world.

But the very validity or efficacy of the gospel which he preached was poignantly, even agonizingly, challenged for Paul by the refusal of his own people to accept it. Their rejection of Jesus as the Christ called into

question for him and for his readers what must have sounded like exaggerated claims for the power of God unto salvation through Christ. This was particularly and immediately present to Paul's mind as he wrote Romans. If God who had made the promise to the Jewish people had failed to bring his salvation in Christ to them, what guarantee was there that he would complete the work of the believers' salvation? The failure of the mission to the Jews raised acutely the question of the faithfulness or the reliability of the very God who, Paul had claimed, justified even the ungodly. And so Paul devotes Rom. 9–11 to this question. On this view those chapters can be regarded as Paul's justification of God. But it is also important to recognize in the understanding of Romans 9–11 the more immediately historical situation with which Paul was faced. The logic of Paul's argument in 1–8, as it would be understood by Jews, would be that justification before God for all mankind was only possible by faith in Christ. Jews were no less sinners than Gentiles: there was no distinction between them. It was impossible for all to render obedience to the Law which was the sign of election in Judaism. By faith 'in Christ' alone was it possible to belong to the people of God. And from this angle, the question was inevitable: what then of those who still retained the Law? What is the nature of the discontinuity and continuity between the Jewish people and those 'in Christ'? To this question also, which was inextricably bound up for him with that of the justification of God himself, Paul turns in 9–11.

As in Galatians, so in Romans, Paul, while he also exploits Hellenistic literary forms and genres, takes seriously the scriptures of his people and seeks to deal with the problem in their terms – employing rabbinical and other methods to do justice both to this new emergence, the Christian community, and its matrix, the Jewish people. For him the gospel provides a particular way of understanding and interpreting his own Jewish tradition.

After stating in Rom. 9:1–3 his intense concern for Jews and recognizing their many and great advantages, Paul urges that they have a continued place in the purpose of God. It is incredible that God's declared purpose for them should become a dead letter (9:6). Is the Jewish people replaced as the people of God? In answering this question, Paul has recourse to two concepts: that of the remnant, and that of God's sovereignty, which he assumes and refuses to impugn (9:14–29). Throughout history a principle of selection has been at work. This has issued in an ever-emerging remnant. God has 'chosen' some, such as Isaac (9:7) and Jacob (9:13), and 'hated' or rejected others such as Esau (9:13). In the time of Elijah, 7,000 did not bow the knee to Baal (1:1ff). So too in the time of fulfilment there are those among the Jews who hear and accept

the gospel and those who do not. (9:24; 11:17, 25). In Rom. 10:1ff (compare 11:30–1) Paul recognizes that it is the Gentiles who are now ready to accept the gospel and are being incorporated into ‘Israel’, while Jewish people are being disobedient. He implies that the mission to the Jews has failed: they have ‘heard’ the gospel, but they have rejected it (10:16–21). But it cannot be said that the Jewish people as a totality has been disobedient and has, therefore, been replaced as the people of God by a Gentile community, the Church. A remnant has believed and it remains true that the nucleus of the people of God, the Church, is still Jewish – as Jewish as Paul himself! God has not rejected his people (11:1). He has been, is and will be faithful to his promise.

Moreover, the Jews who have refused the gospel may change. Under a divine necessity Paul regards his own work as directed especially to the Gentiles. But indirectly, not by any frontal attack, it would also be a means (if Cullmann and Munck are right, *the means*)<sup>135</sup> of bringing about that change. Possibly, although this is not explicitly stated, its results among the Gentiles would show his fellow-countrymen what they were missing by rejecting the gospel and spur them to emulation and to the acceptance of Christ, although this last is left unsaid (11:11ff). The precise nature of these results, which were to inspire this emulation, Paul does not indicate: did they include the superior moral and spiritual fruits to be revealed by the Gentile Christian community? If so, Paul does not say so. What is explicitly stated is that when the fullness of the Gentiles had come to believe, then Paul looked forward to a time when all Israel would be saved.

The Jews’ rejection of the gospel for Paul, then, was a Pyrrhic rejection: it was temporary. Through their very rejection, they themselves would ultimately be reconciled and thereby bring to completion the reconciliation of the world. That event – the reconciliation of the unbelieving Jews to ‘Israel’, the Church, and *ipso facto* of the world to God – would be ‘the resurrection of the dead’. This enigmatic phrase must not be diluted to mean merely the greatest moral and spiritual blessings in a general way: it denotes rather the inauguration of the End (11:15). This recognition of this role for the Jewish people – it must be emphasized – is in the context of an almost immediate expectation of the end. Paul was not thinking in terms of centuries or even probably of decades during which he contemplated the independent persistence of the Jewish people into an indefinite future, as in fact has historically happened (Rom. 13:11–14). But this must not minimize the significance of the recognition of that

<sup>135</sup> O. Cullmann, ‘Le caractère eschatologique’, followed by J. Munck, *Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte* (Copenhagen 1954), ET, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (London 1959).

separate existence as continuing to the very threshold of the end which Paul did not feel called upon to resist. Related to this is that in Rom. 15:1–12 he insists that Jewish Christians who observe various demands of the Law ‘have a place in the church and can stand before God and be accepted by him.’<sup>136</sup> Within and without the church the practising Jew has his place.

All this Paul can believe because for him the whole process of history, past, present and future, is under the mysterious and sovereign control of God, who is reliable. This does not mean that the apostle is committed to determinism, because the challenge of God’s word is always near (10:8) and can win response. God has consigned all men (including the Jews) to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all (including the Jews) (11:32). Thus Paul holds that within God’s purpose the Jewish people always remain the chosen people: their rejection of the gospel has affected only part of Israel and is temporary. The apostle seems to leave their reconciliation to the infinite wisdom of God and no longer regards it as a direct task laid upon him to confront them with the necessity to accept Jesus as the Christ. But that acceptance is finally assured and will prove to be the prelude to the age to come when God’s supreme and infinite mercy will be shown to all, Jews and Gentiles. The salvation of the whole Gentile world is to precede, but is not be apart from, that of Israel. In the meantime, it is implied, the continued existence of the Jewish people as an ethnic or ‘national’ entity is affirmed within the context, finally, of a cosmic hope.

This is why the tortuous discussion in Romans 9–11 ends in a paradox: in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek and yet a continued place for the Jewish people as such. This paradox has its basis in the stubborn stuff of history itself. As a matter of simple fact, a remnant of the Jewish people was in the Church – supplying a solid continuity between those ‘in Christ’ and the Jewish past, rooting the gospel in Judaism, despite its transcendence of the ethnic limitations of the latter, and thus preserving it from the perils attendant upon its too rapid expansion into the Graeco-Roman world. Paul’s insistence on the continued significance of the Jewish people was historically grounded and historically necessary. He refused to follow what his Christological ecclesiology seemed logically to demand, that is, a concentration on the body of Christ, *sôma Christou*, with its possibility of exclusivity, that is, of drawing a rigid line between those within and those outside the Church. Instead he retained the eschatological hope for the Jewish people contained in the promise to Abraham. In true rabbinic fashion he was content to rest in a paradox – a paradox which

<sup>136</sup> C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (New York 1957), p. 257.

was of the same order and related to (if not specifically referred to as) the paradox of the justification by faith, that is, the paradox of the justification of the ungodly. But Paul himself was aware of the tensions and ambiguities of this paradox: the complexities of Rom. 9–11 testify to this. And he grounded this paradox finally, in 11:28–32, not only in history, but in the unfathomable grace of God, whose wisdom is past finding out, but which forbids God to cast off his ancient people or to revoke his covenant with them: ‘For the gracious gifts of God and his calling are irrevocable.’ In this way he ties the historical priority and significance of Israel inextricably to his understanding of the faithfulness of God. It is that faithfulness, indeed, that had finally secured the historical significance of Israel. And the same divine grace which Paul saw saved Gentiles in Christ will also save all Jews. Hence the conclusion of Rom. 11 in a grand doxology, which recalls Deutero-Isaiah and Job and the Psalms, is inevitable. And although Paul’s Christology cannot be rigidly set against his theology, it is not an accident that this doxology, uniquely in Paul, is not Christological but strictly theological (Rom. 11:33–6). Paul’s very experience in Christ, interpreted in the light of the scriptures of his people, leads him to rest in an over-arching monotheism of grace which can embrace the differences that now separate Jews and Christians and hold them together. The outcome of Paul’s position in Romans 11 is that the God of Abraham now revealed in Christ, the God of grace, in whom both Jews and Christians share an immemorial faith, encompasses them in a unity which their present non-negotiable differences over the significance of Jesus as the Messiah must not be allowed to destroy, even though they will not be resolved before the end of history. It is not surprising that to characterize the place of Jews in the Christian dispensation Paul, as we emphasized above, employed the term *mustērion*. The NEB very inadequately renders this term as ‘a very deep truth’. Behind Paul’s *mustērion* stands the Aramaic *rāz*. It is an eschatological mystery. Paul recognizes that the role of the Jewish people in the future, as in the past, is not comprehensible apart from the mysterious purpose of God, which is full of grace. For him the existence and continuance of Israel up to the limit of the historical process is grounded in the mysterious divine purpose and is, as such, a source of ultimate blessing. For him, there is no ‘solution’ to the Jewish question until we are at the very limit of history and at the threshold of the age to come, when God will be all in all and the distinctions of this world even between Jew and Gentile transcended and even Christ himself made subordinate to the Father. Till that end comes, even when taken up into the life in Christ, Israel remains identifiably Israel. Some have urged that all this involved the apostle in theological inconsistencies which cannot from a strictly logical perspective be

ignored.<sup>137</sup> But we may ask: can grace, can the justification of the ungodly, Jews and Gentiles, ever be logically expressed? Again, it has been claimed that to discuss the question of Israel and call it a 'mystery' as Paul does is ultimately to say nothing about it, and to cloak ignorance in an appeal to an inscrutable divine wisdom.<sup>138</sup> But this is not so. Paul at least provides a basis for the mutual respect and the mutual recognition of Christians and Jews as they co-exist in history.

If what we have written above be accepted, Paul is more mellow and sensitive in his treatment of his own people and their Law in Romans than in his earlier epistles, especially 1 Thessalonians and Galatians. Not only with the Law does he deal more restrainedly and subtly but with the people of Israel, their present and their future. Is there then a development or a shift in the Apostle away from an early intolerance to a more benign patience with and appreciation of the role of his own people? This can be maintained despite Rom. 16:17–20 and Phil. 3:2. These are best understood as generalizing warnings probably against Judaizers and possibly in Phil. 3:2ff against Jews.<sup>139</sup> The shift was partly prompted by an emerging anti-Judaism which he faced among Gentile Christians but also by Paul's own growing awareness of the depth of the grace of God as revealed in Christ, which for him embraced all – Jews and Gentiles – and indeed the totality of the universe.<sup>140</sup>

This last sentence recalls us to what in this chapter may easily be missed. Our concentration has been on the more directly and outwardly tangible Jewish aspects of Paul's concern – the Law and the People of Israel. But his engagement with these, which we have traced, was always informed by the eschatological figure of Jesus of Nazareth, who was for him Messiah and Lord. Paul dealt with the Law and the People of Israel (and by implication the Land) within the context of the Messianic End. These entities, to which we have given so much space, were for him always under the burning light of the final consummation. To that degree they were less central for him than our preoccupation with them suggests. The preoccupation of Paul was with Christ, and although he drew upon the eschatological tradition of his people for his imagery (so that in

<sup>137</sup> C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London 1936), pp. 174, 182.

<sup>138</sup> E. Dinkler, 'Prädestination bei Paulus' in *Festschrift für Günther Dehn zum 75. Geburtstag*, W. Schneemelcher, ed. (Neukirchen 1957), pp. 81–102; reprinted in E. Dinkler, *Signum Crucis: Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament und zur christlichen archäologie* (Tübingen 1967), pp. 241–66; especially p. 260 and pp. 266–9.

<sup>139</sup> A. F. J. Klijn, 'Paul's opponents in Philippians III', *NovT* 7 (1964), 278–84. See also J. W. Drane, *Paul*, pp. 132–6 on development in Paul.

<sup>140</sup> On this emerging anti-Judaism among Gentile Christians, which Paul combated, see W. D. Davies, 'Paul and the Gentiles: A Suggestion concerning Romans 11:13–24', *JPS*, 153–63.

this sense he was an apocalypticist) and dealt faithfully with them and their Law, his horizons were now governed by Christ and the new creation he had inaugurated.<sup>141</sup>

Paul was, in fact, a transitional figure, a man of torn consciousness. For him the life in Christ brought to their utmost meaning and limits the categories and symbols of his ancestral faith and constituted a new creation.<sup>142</sup> At the same time his loyalty to and rootedness in that ancestral faith in the living God and in its eschatology made it painfully difficult for him in the actualities of his moment to draw out the logical consequences of that new creation. These were so revolutionary that even the great apostle of liberty drew back. There is an example of a similar withdrawal from the logic of his position in Paul's treatment of marriage.<sup>143</sup> Logically his doctrine of the new creation demanded the abandonment of old ties even within marriage. Because there was a new creation, *everything* would be new! But as 1 Corinthians shows, Paul's dedicated common sense (no, it would be better to say his human sensitivities rooted in Christ) refused to allow him to follow that logic. So was it in his treatment of Israel and the Law.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia 1980), p. 361. But see also W. D. Davies, *JPS*, 361ff.

<sup>142</sup> Compare R. M. Grant, *St Paul* (London 1976), p. 197.

<sup>143</sup> See W. D. Davies, 'Paul and the People of Israel'.

<sup>144</sup> Many recent studies ascribe 'anti-Semitism', implicit if not explicit, to Paul. We reject this ascription as utterly inappropriate for many reasons. First, although the writer on 'Anti-Semitism' in the *EncJud* points out that the term is now popularly applied loosely to all forms of criticism of Jews, and, therefore, justifies its use for antipathy towards Jews in ancient and modern history, this is academically unacceptable. The term emerged in the late nineteenth century to denote radical antipathy to or hatred of Jews on *racial* grounds, and it is best reserved for the belief (and its consequent horrendous outcome) that Jews are genetically different from non-Jews and constitute an inferior 'race'. To apply such a nineteenth-century term to any first-century figure is highly anachronistic. Marcel Simon concluded that antiquity knew nothing of such ethnic or racial hatred of Jews (*Vetus Israel* (Paris 1948), p. 239, ET (Oxford 1986), p. 202). Morton Smith pointed out to me that since the basis of antisemitism is the Noachic family tree, which was hardly known outside Jewry until the rise of Christianity, there could have been no such thing. But even if the first-century Graeco-Roman world had known such, is Paul, a Jew, likely to have been guilty of it? There is such a thing as Jewish self-hatred (such self-hatred as is found often among ethnic groups), but this hardly qualifies as 'anti-Semitism'! In any case, Paul clearly knew no such thing as self-hatred. As we saw above, he proudly proclaimed his Jewishness and his concern for his own people. Nor again, like other Christians, was he likely to have impugned the race to which his Saviour, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, belonged. The phenomena on the grounds of which some scholars ascribe 'anti-Semitism' to Paul and, indeed, to the whole of the New Testament, are to be understood not racially but sociologically. It is significant that the recent sociological study of *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles* by F. Watson does not need to refer to 'anti-Semitism' at all. It is as unreasonable to apply



Paul's approach to his own people was governed by a past promise and an eschatology informed by the grace of Christ. To dismiss the eschatological speculation of Paul as an unimportant apocalyptic remnant of his outgrown past and to reinterpret it in terms of anthropology or, again, of some fairly simple, comprehensible interpretation of a contemporary crisis is not enough. Paul took seriously the Old Testament and Judaism. He challenged Marcion before Marcion. For him the particularity of Christ is bound up with the particularity of Abraham and the chosenness of his descendants, because it was the same God who was active in and through them all. Some readers of this volume may find it surprising that a history of Judaism should include a chapter on Paul: was it not he who most furthered the understanding of Christianity as a religion distinct from Judaism? But although in the light of the history of Jews and Christians since his day, a *Paulus redivivus* might have been surprised at his inclusion, he would also have welcomed it. As J. M. G. Barclay has pointed out in his brilliant study, Paul was anomalous among Jews and Christians.<sup>145</sup> To Jews and Jewish Christians he doubtless appeared as an apostate from Judaism, but he himself thought of himself as a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He bestrode Judaism and Christianity as a colossus, and he, like Jesus, belongs to the history of his own people.

the term anti-Semitism to early Christians as it would be to apply it to the sectarians at Qumran. To claim that the New Testament, including the epistles of Paul, can be, and has been, used for anti-Semitic purposes is one thing; to assert that that document is by its very nature anti-Semitic is a wholly different matter. To ascribe the absurdity of 'anti-Semitism' to Paul is itself absurd. The Talmud itself has been used by antisemites for their purposes! On various attitudes towards Judaism in the New Testament, see W. D. Davies in *SSM*, pp. 400–2. Does not even the interpretation of Paul offered by R. Hamerton-Kelly in his much-discussed and provocative study of the Apostle, in the light of the Girardian understanding of the human condition, overlook that anomalous character of Paul's thought to which we refer above and overemphasize its antithesis to Judaism? See R. Hamerton-Kelly, *Sacred Violence: Paul's Hermeneutic of the Cross* (Minneapolis 1992).

<sup>145</sup> Barclay, 'Paul Among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?'

I am indebted especially to Drs J. Ross Wagner and James Fodor, and also to Professor Richard B. Hays, Professor E. P. Sanders and Ms Sarah Freedman, all of Duke University; and to Professor D. C. Allison, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA, and my old friend Professor Douglas Hare for very helpful assistance in the revision of this chapter. To them all I tender my most grateful acknowledgement.

## CHAPTER 22

## JEWISH CHRISTIANITY

## I INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

The term 'Jewish Christianity', in German 'Judenchristentum', was current in the eighteenth century, but was brought to prominence by Ferdinand Christian Baur. He used it to describe what he took to be an important phenomenon within the Christianity of the first two centuries CE.<sup>1</sup> On this at least most scholars can agree. But here perhaps agreement can be said to cease, for, in spite of a history of investigation stretching back to the early 1830s, many questions relating to Jewish Christianity, its history, origins and social and religious profile, remain matters of controversy.<sup>2</sup>

There are a number of reasons for the confused state of scholarship on this question. First, insofar as we know, no one in the ancient Church or synagogue referred to themselves, or were referred to, as Jewish Christians.<sup>3</sup> This gives rise to a number of problems, not least that of defining the term. Secondly, we have to contend with the inadequacy of the relevant primary sources. These are few in number, and nearly all written by those who were opposed to Jewish Christians, and had an incomplete

<sup>1</sup> For Baur's earliest essay on the subject see, 'Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christenthums in der alten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom', *TZTb* (1831), 61–206, which is reprinted in *Ferdinand Christian Baur: Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben*, vol. 1, *Historisch-kritische Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*, ed. K. Scholder with an introduction by Ernst Käsemann (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1963). Further relevant publications by Baur are listed in G. Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul in Jewish Christianity* (ET Minneapolis 1989), 321.

<sup>2</sup> For summaries of research, see G. Hoennicke, *Das Judenchristentum im ersten und zweiten Jahrhundert* (Berlin 1908), 1–19; G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen* (2nd edn Berlin 1981), 1–34; A. F. J. Klijn, 'The Study of Jewish Christianity', *NTS* 20 (1974), 419–31; Luedemann, *Opposition*, pp. 1–32.

<sup>3</sup> Jerome, *Comm. in Zech.* 3.14.9, uses *iudaei christiani* in a sense approaching 'Judaeo-Christian', according to S. C. Mimouni, 'Pour une définition nouvelle du Judéo-Christianisme', *NTS* 38 (1992), 178–9; but this seems doubtful, for the passage deals with those who hope for the restoration of sacrifice, in order that (Jerome says mockingly) instead of Jews becoming Christians, Christians may become Jews: *ut non iudaei christiani sed christiani iudaei fiant*.

and/or confused knowledge of what Jewish Christians might have thought.<sup>4</sup> Those apparently written by Jewish Christians are often preserved in fragmentary form (this particularly applies to the Jewish Christian Gospels), and in complex corpora like the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* and *Recognitions*, which present literary-critical problems of an almost insurmountable kind. Moreover, while we may be in a position to know what some Christians thought about Jewish Christians and how they described them, we appear to be much less well informed about what Jews thought about Jewish Christians. Here we rely almost exclusively upon rabbinic evidence, about whose representative character we cannot be certain, and where tracing references to Jewish Christians, and indeed Christians, is, for a variety of reasons, very difficult. This makes a thorough and rounded study of Jewish Christianity still more difficult, and has had the consequence that, with some notable exceptions, this religious phenomenon has generally been studied within the context of histories of Christianity, and not of Judaism.<sup>5</sup> And yet we should ask, particularly within a volume concerned with the history of Judaism, whether such an assumption is correct. Thirdly, and related to the question of sources generally, we have now, it seems, to accept that the claims made by a body of mainly Italian scholars to have found archaeological remains of Jewish Christian communities in Palestine, were in the main ill-founded. No such archaeological evidence appears to exist.<sup>6</sup>

Our aims in this essay will be modest, for, in the face of the difficulties outlined above, they can be little else. An attempt will be made to define the term 'Jewish Christian', and to present a skeletal reconstruction of the history of Jewish Christianity. This will be followed by an examination of individual Christian and Jewish sources which concern themselves with

<sup>4</sup> A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden 1973).

<sup>5</sup> For exceptions to this general tendency see H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. iv; S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. II (New York and London 1952), pp. 71f; H. J. Schoeps, *Die Theologie des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen 1949); J. Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ* (London 1954), pp. 146–200; G. Alon, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age (70–140 CE)* (ET Harvard and London 1989), pp. 288–307.

<sup>6</sup> This thesis was presented in its boldest form by B. Bagatti and E. Testa, who produced a series of publications on the subject especially from the 1950s onwards. Some of these supposed findings are summarized in the former's, *The Church from the Circumcision* (ET Jerusalem 1971). The fullest refutation of their thesis is to be found in Joan Taylor, *Christian and Holy Places. The Myth of Jewish Christian Origins* (Oxford 1993), who provides an extensive bibliography of Bagatti's and Testa's and others' work on the subject. For an attempt to support at least one of Bagatti's assertions about the existence of supposedly Jewish Christian inscriptions, here located at the Dominus Flevit necropolis in Jerusalem, see Irina Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in its Diaspora Setting* (Carlisle 1996), pp. 44–6, with further bibliography at nn. 22 and 23. On Capernaum in this regard, see p. 72 and n. 58, above.

Jewish Christianity, as previously defined. In this section an attempt will be made to highlight something of the diversity of the phenomenon at which our sources do in fact hint, and ask to what extent it is legitimate to understand Jewish Christianity as a phenomenon *within* Judaism.

## II ON DEFINING JEWISH CHRISTIANITY<sup>7</sup>

As we have already noted, the term 'Jewish Christian' or 'Jewish Christianity' is a neologism. In the ancient sources no one refers to himself, or is referred to, as a Jewish Christian. Admittedly, from the late second century onwards, some Christian writers refer by name to groups of Christians whom we might term 'Jewish Christian' (Ebionite, Nazarene, Elchasaite), and some of them explicitly highlight these groups' combined Jewish and Christian character (cf. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 29.7.1–2; Jerome, *Ep.* 112.13), but even then they do not use the term 'Jewish Christian' or 'Jewish Christianity' to describe the groups about whom they write. What then have modern scholars understood by the term?

### A AN ETHNIC DEFINITION

Some have wanted to define Jewish Christianity in an exclusively ethnic way. In this definition, a Jewish Christian was a Jew who became a Christian. Such a definition perhaps best reflects the meaning of the German word 'Judenchristentum', where 'Jude' is the usual noun used to refer to a Jew. But it is questionable whether such a definition defines anything specific at all, for we know that Jews who became Christians

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of the definition of Jewish Christianity, see, inter alia, F. J. A. Hort, *Judaistic Christianity* (London 1904), p. 5; G. Hoennicke, *Judenchristentum*, p. 18; Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel. A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire AD 135–425* (ET London 1996), pp. 237–40; Simon, 'Problèmes du Judéo-Christianisme' in *Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme* (Paris 1965), pp. 1–17; Simon, 'Réflexions sur le Judéo-Christianisme', in ed. J. Neusner, *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults. Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty. Part Two, Early Christianity* (Leiden 1975), pp. 53–76; R. A. Kraft, 'In Search of "Jewish Christianity" and its Theology, Problems of Definition and Methodology', *RSR* 61 (1972), 81–96; Robert Murray, 'Defining Judaeo-Christianity', *Heythf* 15 (1974), 303–10; Murray 'Jews, Hebrews and Christians: Some Neglected Distinctions', *NovT* 24 (1982), 194–208; Bruce J. Malina, 'Jewish Christianity or Christian Judaism: Toward a Hypothetical Definition', *JSJ* 7 (1976), 46–57; S. K. Riegel, 'Jewish Christianity: Definitions and Terminology', *NTS* 24 (1978), 410–15; G. Strecker, 'Judenchristentum', *TRE* 17 (1988), 310–11; Burton L. Visotzky, 'Prolegomenon to the Study of Jewish-Christianities in Rabbinic Literature', *AJSR* 14 (1989), 47–70; Joan E. Taylor, 'The Phenomenon of Early Jewish Christianity: Reality or Scholarly Invention', *VC* 44 (1990), 313–34; Mimouni, 'Définition' (see n. 3 above).

represented a variety of opinions, not least in relation to their attitude to their Jewish heritage. In this context one might do no better than refer to the differences on this matter between Paul, Peter and James.<sup>8</sup> To accept a purely ethnic definition of Jewish Christianity is not really to define anything meaningful at all.<sup>9</sup>

#### B A PRAXIS-BASED DEFINITION

A praxis-based definition, simply stated, defines a Jewish Christian as someone who accepts the messianic status of Jesus (the bare minimum required of someone wishing to be a Christian) but feels it necessary to keep, or perhaps adopt, practices associated with Judaism such as circumcision, in the case of males, the sabbath, the food laws and other related practices. In such a definition it is assumed that the fundamental and most unambiguous way in which one's Jewishness could be expressed in the ancient world was in terms of orthopraxy, that is, through the adoption of certain practices commonly associated with Jews.<sup>10</sup> Here a Jewish Christian is only to be differentiated from a non-Christian Jew by the fact of his acceptance of Jesus' messianic status (see Epiphanius, *Pan.* 29.7.2 and *Rec.* 1.43.2).

Such a definition has a number of things in its favour. First, in the ancient world most people defined Jews in terms of their practices, although they obviously took an interest in their beliefs as well.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, Christian writers often associated the Jewishness of those sects we often term 'Jewish Christian' precisely with their practices. Thirdly, a praxis-based definition allows the scholar to narrow the term down to something which is manageable, and up to a point at least, unified.

<sup>8</sup> See below and our discussion on pp. 743–6. Note should also be taken of Origen's statement at *c. Cels.* 2.3 about the diverse responses to the question of observing the law on the part of ethnic Jews who have become Christians.

<sup>9</sup> See Strecker, 'Judenchristentum', 311.

<sup>10</sup> For various forms of this view see Harnack, Hoennicke, Hort, Simon, Strecker, Taylor, and Mimouni as cited in n. 6.

<sup>11</sup> The question of defining what made a Jew in the ancient world has been much discussed, and some helpful observations can be found in Shaye D. Cohen, 'Crossing the Boundary and becoming a Jew', *HTR* 82 (1989), 13–33. Cohen shows that association with Judaism could take place at a number of levels culminating in full conversion which involved circumcision. He notes that a sense of someone's Jewishness was not restricted to the practices they adopted, but also extended to their beliefs. This view is confirmed if one peruses M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vols. 1–3 (Jerusalem 1974–84), where the Jews are often portrayed as believing distinctive things, and not just doing distinctive things. But I would still contend that practices loomed larger in people's understanding of Jewishness, and that it was essentially the adoption of certain practices, in particular circumcision, which made someone a Jew.

But this definition raises a number of problems. The first of these relates to what Marcel Simon has termed ‘la dose’ of Jewish praxis required to make someone a *Jewish* Christian.<sup>12</sup> After all, we can be clear about the minimum ‘dose’ required to make someone Christian (a conviction about the messianic status of Jesus), but can we be so clear on the minimum ‘dose’ required to make someone a *Jewish* Christian? So, for instance, is it acceptable to call someone a Jewish Christian because he observed the sabbath, but did not observe the Jewish food laws?<sup>13</sup> This is a very difficult question to answer. Marcel Simon, already referred to above, believes that any Christian who decided to go beyond those things labelled as necessary observances (ἐπιβάσεις) in the so-called apostolic decree of the Apostolic Council, described in Acts 15.28–9), should be termed a Jewish Christian.<sup>14</sup> More recently, S. G. Wilson has somewhat vaguely stated that a Jewish Christian is a person who has enough relation to Torah as covenant and commandments to label them a Jew;<sup>15</sup> and F. Stanley Jones has required that a Jewish Christian must do one or more of the following things, namely observe the sabbath, observe the commands relating to sexual purity, observe circumcision, or attend the synagogue, though we should note that Jones also requires that such a person have some sort of a ‘genetic relationship to earliest Jewish Christianity’.<sup>16</sup> All this raises a number of problems to which we shall return below.

A second and related problem with a praxis-based definition of Jewish Christianity concerns the relationship between those designated Jewish Christians on the basis of such a definition, and those designated Judaizers. This latter group has been variously defined, but is usually taken to refer to Christians, more often than not of Gentile origin, who chose to adopt a Jewish lifestyle understood in terms of praxis. Should Judaizers also be designated ‘Jewish Christian’? Some scholars, such as S. G. Wilson, have argued for the exclusion of such people from the group designated Jewish Christian precisely because they were not ethnically Jews or people who had been proselytized by Jews.<sup>17</sup> But there is little attempt to justify such an ethnic distinction between Jewish Christian and Judaizer. Simon,

<sup>12</sup> See ‘Problèmes’, 7–8; and ‘Réflexions’, 56f.

<sup>13</sup> See Visotzky, ‘Prolegomenon’, 56f.

<sup>14</sup> See Réflexions, 57: ‘Sera judéo-chrétien celui qui ira au delà de ce minimum indispensable (the prescriptions of Acts 15:28) et se pliera à d’autres de la Loi rituelle juive.’ For the general importance of the prescriptions of the Apostolic Decree in Gentile Christianity, see Simon, ‘The Apostolic Decree and its Setting in the Ancient Church’, *BJRL* 52 (1969–1970), 437–60.

<sup>15</sup> S. G. Wilson, *Related Strangers. Jews and Christians 70–170 CE* (Minneapolis 1995), p. 143.

<sup>16</sup> F. Stanley Jones, *An Ancient Jewish Christian Source, Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions 1*, 27–71 (Atlanta 1995), p. 164, n. 21.

<sup>17</sup> *Strangers*, p. 160.

on the other hand, seems willing to accept that Judaizers be designated Jewish Christians, although in *Verus Israel* he appears in two minds on the matter. So, for instance, at one point he accepts that Judaizers are in fact Jewish Christians,<sup>18</sup> but then devotes a separate chapter of the book to Judaizers, at the beginning of which he states: ‘This phenomenon (that is, Judaizing) is a much more varied and complex one than ordinary Jewish Christianity. It is a more diffuse, less well-defined phenomenon, for it represents not a sect beyond the boundaries of the Church, but merely a tendency within the Church, a direction in which Catholic Christianity felt itself drawn.’<sup>19</sup> Here then Jewish Christians are to be separated from Judaizers on the grounds that the former appear to form a more coherent phenomenon that is clearly ‘extra ecclesiam’.<sup>20</sup> But such a view hints at another potential problem with the praxis-based definition. If Jewish Christians are to be distinguished from Judaizers on the grounds of their greater coherence, in what does that greater coherence consist if they share with Judaizers some sort of a commitment to Jewish practices?

This third problem can be stated in another way. Is it adequate to define Jewish Christianity simply in terms of practices or can we broaden the definition to take into account other theological or ideological characteristics? And if so, what might these be? After all, it is clear that when heresiologists came to discuss groups that clearly adopted Jewish practices, they often also discussed their theological opinions.

### C IDEOLOGICAL AND DOCTRINAL DEFINITIONS

In 1949 the Jewish scholar, H. J. Schoeps, published his *Theologie des Judenchristentums*.<sup>21</sup> Schoeps sought to achieve a number of things in this book, the most important of which was to demonstrate that those dubbed Jewish Christians had a coherent and consistent theology whose roots lay

<sup>18</sup> *Verus*, p. 239: ‘This is surely a second form of Jewish Christianity, more difficult by nature to pin down and define than the preceding one.’

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.

<sup>20</sup> The extra-ecclesial dimension of Jewish Christianity is also noted by Jones, *ibid.*, 164, n. 21. For further discussion of the differences between Judaizers and Jewish Christians, see W. Kinzig, ‘Non-Separation: Closeness and Cooperation between Jews and Christians in the Fourth Century’, *VC* 45 (1991), 27–53, esp. 44–5. He notes, and in this he appears to follow Simon, that ‘on the institutional level the Jewish Christians and the Judaizing Christians were clearly distinct’, but as far as religious practices were concerned, ‘there was a wide overlap’. Interestingly, Kinzig sees Judaizing as a direct consequence of the decline of Jewish Christian groups.

<sup>21</sup> A much shorter and less technical version of the arguments of this book can be found in the same author’s *Jewish Christianity* (ET Philadelphia 1969); see also his ‘Ebionite Christianity’, *JTS* NS 4 (1953), 219–24.



in the very beginnings of Christian history.<sup>22</sup> For Schoeps the term 'Jewish Christianity' was synonymous with the Ebionites, a group first mentioned by Irenaeus, but with a history which stretched back to a period before 70. In reconstructing their views, Schoeps relied heavily upon the so-called *Pseudo-Clementine* literature which, following some references found in Epiphanius, he thought to contain genuine evidence of Ebionite theology. In wishing to define Jewish Christianity in terms of its theology, Schoeps did not deny that Jewish Christianity was characterized by the wholesale adoption of Jewish practices. He simply wished to show that a definition exclusively in terms of practices was inadequate because it failed to take sufficiently seriously the genuinely theological aspect of Jewish Christianity, which, when examined closely, betrayed a considerable Jewish influence, which had parallels with some pre-Christian Jewish sectarian theology.<sup>23</sup>

Schoeps's magnum opus came in for considerable criticism. Most importantly, scholars pointed out that the theology he had dubbed 'Jewish Christian' was a false construction based upon a highly questionable use of the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature.<sup>24</sup> It was also pointed out that by limiting Jewish Christian theology to Ebionite theology, Schoeps had created a false impression of theological unity amongst Jewish Christians when the sources themselves made it clear that such theological unity was an illusion. The Ebionites were but one Jewish Christian sect amongst many.

A scholar who worked upon not dissimilar lines to Schoeps, but sought to produce a much broader theologically based definition of Jewish Christianity was Jean Daniélou. In his work, published in 1958 as *Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme*,<sup>25</sup> a title obviously inspired by the title of Schoeps's own book,<sup>26</sup> Daniélou argued for the existence of three types of Jewish Christianity. The first type was represented by those who accepted that Jesus was the Messiah but did not accept his divinity (the Ebionites). The second was represented by the circle centred around James, the brother

<sup>22</sup> No reader of Schoeps's book could fail to be aware of its strongly apologetic character. His aim is to show that Jewish Christianity was a creative theological movement, worthy of study in and of itself. See in particular, *Theologie*, pp. 4–5, especially the words: 'In manchem werden unsere Bemühungen die späte Rehabilitierung eines geläuterten Tübinger Standpunktes darstellen, um so ein altes Unrecht gutzumachen.'

<sup>23</sup> A more detailed summary of Schoeps' argument is found in reviews by E. Benz, *TLZ* 1950, cols. 484–7; T. W. Manson, *JTS NS* 2 (1951), 96–9 and Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, pp. 23–6 and *passim*.

<sup>24</sup> Subsequently Schoeps became much less optimistic about refinding the Ebionite substratum of the *Pseudo-Clementines*.

<sup>25</sup> Translated as *A History of Early Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicea. Volume 1: The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (ET London 1964).

<sup>26</sup> Daniélou actually stated that he was going to do for orthodox Jewish Christianity, what Schoeps had done for the heterodox variety.

of Jesus, and could be designated Nazarene. These people had an orthodox christology while living a Jewish lifestyle. But both of these forms of Jewish Christianity were not of particular significance. The first was only ever a fringe movement and the second disappeared after the events of 70. For Daniélou it was the third type of Jewish Christianity which was the most important. This third type he described as a form of Christian thought ('pensée chrétienne') which did not imply any relationship ('lien') with the Jewish community but which was expressed in thought forms ('cadres') borrowed from 'late Judaism', characterized in particular by apocalyptic. These thought forms are, of course, present in the first two forms of Jewish Christianity but they are also found in works not associated with them. Indeed for Daniélou they are essentially the thought forms characteristic of Christianity up to the end of the Bar Cochba revolt in CE 135, and are to be distinguished from a later stage in Christian history, namely the Hellenistic stage.<sup>27</sup>

Daniélou's broad definition of the term 'Jewish Christianity' has had a considerable influence on the study of the subject.<sup>28</sup> It has led many to question the appropriateness of the term 'Jewish Christianity' as a description of a narrowly praxis-based 'Jewish' movement within Christianity,<sup>29</sup> and has driven scholars to think more precisely about the polyvalent character of Christianity's Jewish heritage, and as a consequence, to appreciate how far-reaching that heritage was.

But Daniélou's definition is in the end open to too many criticisms to be truly helpful. First, we should note that he has quite arbitrarily excluded from consideration important strands of Jewish and Christian literature, not least the writings of Philo and the New Testament.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, on the basis of his definition one could argue that texts well beyond the chronological limits set by Daniélou are themselves Jewish Christian. Indeed, his schematization of the history of Christian doctrine into three periods is arbitrary.<sup>31</sup> Thirdly, at the end of his book Daniélou states that he hopes that he has shown that the theology of Jewish

<sup>27</sup> Summaries and criticisms of Daniélou's work on Jewish Christianity can, inter alia, be found in Simon, 'Réflexions', 61–6; Kraft, 'Jewish-Christianity'; and Murray, 'Recent Studies in Early Symbolic Theology'; *Heythj* 6 (1965), 414f; *idem*, 'Defining', 307–9.

<sup>28</sup> In 1989 Luedemann noted: 'Unless my impression is mistaken, at the moment Daniélou's understanding of the matter, despite some sharp criticisms, enjoys the greatest success' (*Opposition*, 29). Particular attention should be drawn to R. N. Longenecker, *The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity* (London 1970), who sought to define Jewish Christianity in terms of its christology.

<sup>29</sup> On this see in particular Malina, 'Jewish Christianity', preferring the term Christian Judaism; and Riegel, 'Jewish Christianity', preferring the term 'Judaistic Christianity', the term which Hort had used to describe Christians who observed the Jewish law.

<sup>30</sup> See Murray, 'Recent Studies', 418f. <sup>31</sup> See especially Kraft, 'Definition', 83f.

Christianity is a distinct entity.<sup>32</sup> But this is precisely what he has not done. He has not introduced us to a movement on the basis of a reading of texts, but has assumed a movement or an entity and read it into these texts.<sup>33</sup> Fourthly, and most importantly, the sheer breadth of Daniélou's definition makes the study of Jewish Christianity almost impossible, for it would include under its umbrella texts of a vastly different character, some of which are quite obviously anti-Jewish. In this respect the term simply becomes unwieldy and meaningless. As an example we might point to *The Epistle of Barnabas*. As far as Daniélou is concerned this is a Jewish Christian text, and it is certainly true that in many respects the author of the epistle owes much to the Jewish conceptual world.<sup>34</sup> But in the radical attitude that its author takes to the Jewish law, regarding it as something that should never have been understood literally, its claim to being a Jewish Christian text in any meaningful way is surely lost.<sup>35</sup>

In the end any exclusively theological definition of Jewish Christianity is going to be inadequate. It will either, as in the case of Schoeps's definition, be too narrow and systematic to take into account the theological diversity of the phenomenon, witnessed to not least in the evidence we possess for Jewish Christian sects, or it will be too broad, as in the case of Daniélou's definition, and will fail to refer to any recognizable entity called Jewish Christianity, but will rather indicate, at best, something closer to an atmosphere or mentality.

#### D TOWARD A WORKING DEFINITION

We have seen that the term Jewish Christianity is more complex than might at first seem the case. Can any definition truly reflect the complexity of the term? Or does it defy definition?

<sup>32</sup> Note his conclusion on p. 405 of *Theology*: 'That the theology of Jewish Christianity did exist as a distinct entity will by now, it may be hoped, have been established to the reader's satisfaction.'

<sup>33</sup> On this see esp. the criticisms of Kraft, 'Definition', 85–7. Note also Murray, 'Recent Studies', 420–1, who observes that it is no surprise that Daniélou can describe the identifiable Jewish Christian sects clearly. After all, the sects actually existed in a way these other more nebulous Jewish Christians did not. He continues: 'Daniélou's Judaeo-Christianity (his third type) is not a thing but a way of thinking, common to Jews and Christians, to Philo and the Qumran covenanters... It is the Semitic tradition of symbolic expression. It has served many theologies, but it is not, and has not, a theology.'

<sup>34</sup> This point is made at considerable length by W. Horbury, 'Jewish-Christian Relations in Barnabas and Justin' in (ed.) J. D. G. Dunn, *Jews and Christians* (Tübingen 1992), pp. 323f.

<sup>35</sup> See Simon, 'Réflexions', 64.

(i) It is clear that Christianity owed much to the Judaism out of which it emerged, and it expressed that heritage in a diversity of ways.<sup>36</sup> The problem raised by the term Jewish Christianity relates to defining the degree of Jewishness required for something to be dubbed *Jewish* Christian. Moreover for any such definition to be meaningful, it must be sufficiently narrow to refer to something we can call an entity, and sufficiently broad or open-ended to take account of a range of evidence, almost all of which is literary.

(ii) A praxis-based definition seems to fulfil these conditions in the most satisfactory way. First, we should note that in the ancient world Jewishness was often associated with certain practices, and it was the adoption of these practices, in particular circumcision, which were seen to make a non-Jew Jewish. Secondly, it is precisely Jewish practices which groups such as the Nazarenes, Ebionites, Elchasaites, have in common, and, as we will show below, not theology. Thirdly, a praxis-orientated definition is sufficiently narrow to mean that we are dealing with a manageable entity, capable of meaningful definition. We should note that, because of their commitment to the continuing observance of Jewish prescriptions, many Jewish Christians expressed a hostility to Paul. But, as we will show below, this should not be taken as a *necessary* defining feature. To believe such a thing is to make the same mistake as Baur.<sup>37</sup>

(iii) Many people who subscribe to our definition of Jewish Christianity believe that the adjective Jewish Christian can only refer to *Jews* who became Christians. This need not be the case, though the onus is upon those who would argue for the presence of Gentiles amongst Jewish Christians to prove their case.<sup>38</sup>

(iv) Attempts to go beyond this basic definition and seek a common theology or ideology amongst groups defined as Jewish Christian are bound to fail. Attempts to formulate such a definition are either too narrow to take sufficient account of the diverse character of the available evidence; or too broad to enable us to speak of something we might call an entity. We should also note that it is no more illuminating to speak with Strecker of a common Jewish structure in Jewish Christian theology.<sup>39</sup> This is too

<sup>36</sup> See R. A. Kraft, 'The Multifform Jewish Heritage of Early Christianity' in (ed.) J. Neusner, *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults. Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty. Part 3. Judaism Before 70* (Leiden 1975), pp. 174–99.

<sup>37</sup> For the place of anti-Paulinism in Jewish Christianity, see Luedemann, *Opposition*.

<sup>38</sup> Richard Bauckham, 'James and the Jerusalem Church' in (ed.) *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting. Volume 4. Palestinian Setting* (Grand Rapids and Carlisle 1995), pp. 473–5, argues that there is almost no evidence for any interest on the part of Jewish Christians in converting Gentiles to their particular practices. For problems with this position see n. 51 below.

<sup>39</sup> Strecker, 'Judenchristentum', 311.

vague a concept to be of any help. The quest for theological unity among Jewish Christians is doomed to failure. We must, on account of this, be prepared to speak of Jewish Christianities, and not of a monolithic Jewish Christianity in which individual Jewish Christian sects were related.<sup>40</sup>

(v) If we agree with the definition set out above, we have to concede that we still face a number of questions. First, it is difficult to be clear about the 'dose' of Jewish observance required to make someone a Jewish Christian. In the course of our discussion, we will meet some texts where it seems likely that circumcision, for instance, was not observed. In these instances we may be forced to look for: (a) evidence for the observance of other Jewish prescriptions; and (b) other signs of affiliation to Judaism.<sup>41</sup> Secondly, we still face the problem of differentiating between Jewish Christians and Judaizers. Perhaps here we should highlight the organized and structured character of Jewish Christianity, however manifested, over against the more haphazard and unstructured character of Judaizers. That is, Jewish Christians formed coherent groups, potentially with their own organizational and liturgical structure, perhaps with their own canon of literature, and perhaps separated from both church and synagogue, whereas Judaizers were Christians who, for whatever reason, felt the need to adopt a Jewish lifestyle, without at the same time forming a separate and self-contained body of believers separate from the church. To understand what is suggested here, one might consider the difference between those dubbed Ebionites by Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius and Epiphanius and others, and those individuals with a penchant for Judaism lambasted by Chrysostom in his eight sermons against the Jewish Christians. But it should be noted that such a distinction is only valid from perhaps the latter part of the second century onwards. Before that time it is by no means clear that Jewish Christians, as defined, were always 'extra ecclesiam', or indeed, for that matter, 'outside Judaism'. In this context, when questions of self-definition, certainly amongst Christians, were matters of dispute, it is probably wrong to distinguish between Judaizers and Jewish Christians.

<sup>40</sup> This tendency is seen throughout scholarship where the term 'Jewish Christian' is often used as if it referred to a movement which was in some way unified. For a view, however tentative, that there was a relationship between Jewish Christian sects, see Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity* (Leiden 1988), p. 38, here positing a relationship between Nazarenes and Ebionites, and 83f, here arguing for an original Jewish Christian gospel to which all other Jewish Christian gospels are related.

<sup>41</sup> See in this respect O. Skarsaune, who, in dismissing a doctrinally based definition of Jewish Christianity, goes on to state that 'In my opinion a Jewish Christian has not abandoned his Jewish identity' (*The Proof from Prophecy. A study in Justin Martyr's Proof Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (Leiden 1987), p. 247), though the phrase 'Jewish identity' perhaps raises a number of questions.

Jerome judged that the Nazarenes wanted to be both Jews and Christians (*Ep.* 112.13). But we should ask whether such a judgement in any way reflects the self-understanding of those whom we have called Jewish Christians. Is it not more likely that these so-called Jewish Christians held themselves to be either Jews or Christians, but never a combination of the two? Hence, when we use the term Jewish Christian, we should do so provisionally, with full recognition that it is a modern description of people who would probably not themselves have chosen this name.

### III THE HISTORY OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY

We cannot write the history of Jewish Christianity, at least in any detailed way.<sup>42</sup> The fragmentary and tendentious sources available to us make such a task impossible. Moreover, if we are right in our contention that Jewish Christianity should be considered an umbrella term covering a variety of movements, bound together, indirectly at least, by a general commitment to a Jewish lifestyle, but which developed in different ways, our task becomes still more difficult.

However, in spite of these problems, an attempt will be made to give the bare bones of a reconstructed Jewish Christian history. Much of what is said will be provisional, and will, on account of the lacunose state of the sources, focus on Palestinian Jewish Christianity. A number of the issues referred to in this section will be discussed at greater length in subsequent parts of the discussion.

#### JEWISH CHRISTIANITY AND CHRISTIAN ORIGINS

In the beginning all Christianity was Jewish Christianity. The first Christians were practising Jews operating within the sphere of Judaism. All that separated them from non-Christian Jews was their conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was Messiah. At that early stage there was no sense on their part that a commitment to Jesus implied anything negative about their continuing commitment to their inherited faith.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> For divergent accounts of Jewish Christian history, both in terms of their length and their assertions, see A. von Harnack, *The History of Dogma, Vol. 1* (ET Edinburgh 1894), 287–317; Schoeps, *Theologie*, pp. 256–342 (summarized in *Jewish Christianity*, pp. 118–40); J. Munck, 'Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic Times', *NISG* (1959–60), 103–16.

<sup>43</sup> See especially in this regard the opening five chapters of Acts. Though Jesus asserts that the message of the Gospel will be spread to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), implying a Gentile mission, and though there is antagonism between the followers of Jesus and the authorities (Acts 2:23; 4:1), there is no sense of hostility towards Jewish institutions such as the Temple (cf. 3:1 and 5:42).

But signs of tension within the community are already hinted at by Luke, albeit in an oblique way, in the so-called dispute between the Hellenists and the Hebrews and the subsequent martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6:1f).<sup>44</sup> If we accept that Stephen's speech in Acts 7 gives us the substance of some of the convictions of the Hellenist group, then we see that already some Christians were beginning to question the pre-eminent place of the temple within Judaism, and perhaps more than that.<sup>45</sup> The fact that in the persecution which followed Stephen's martyrdom, it was precisely the followers of Stephen, and not the Apostles, who suffered, may give further evidence of a growing inner-Christian division, though this thesis is by no means proven.<sup>46</sup>

It is, however, to the decision, perhaps initiated by some of Stephen's followers, to missionize the Gentiles, that we can trace the end of what we might term the Jewish Christian consensus within the burgeoning messianic movement. The question raised by the entry of Gentiles into the movement can be simply stated. Should such people be circumcised and adopt other distinctive Jewish practices? Some thought that they should and others thought that they should not.

Evidence of dispute on this matter can be found in the Acts of the Apostles (see Acts 11:1f; 15:1) and Paul's letters (see Gal.3–6; and perhaps Phil. 3:6f). From this evidence we can perhaps make the following observations:

(i) The dispute may have been initiated some time after the Gentile mission had got under way.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Discussions of Acts 6–7 and the issue of the identity of the Hellenists and the Hebrews are numerous. For two contrasting interpretations see M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity* (ET London 1979), pp. 71–80; and Craig C. Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews. Reappraising Division within Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis 1993). Hill argues strongly against the view, associated with Baur, and at least in part endorsed by Hengel, that we should see Hellenists and Hebrews as distinct entities at odds with each other, whose subsequent history can be seen as continued in the histories of Gentile and Jewish Christianity respectively.

<sup>45</sup> Hostility to the Temple is implied in Acts 7:47 and the quotation from Isa. 58 in 7:49f. Opposition to the law in general is thought to be evident in the accusation brought against Stephen, which he apparently does not rebut, that he was saying that Jesus would destroy this temple, *and change the customs of Moses* (Acts 6:14). But 'kai' here could be used exegetically (that is, the phrase 'and change the customs of Moses' could relate exclusively to what Jesus will do to the temple), and Stephen's speech itself gives no warrant to the charge of antinomianism.

<sup>46</sup> This view is upheld by many scholars, including Hengel, *Acts*, 74–5, but has recently come under attack from Bauckham, 'James', 429 who argues that 8:1–3 does not imply that the leaders of the church escaped persecution, and that we can therefore distinguish them very clearly from the Hellenists.

<sup>47</sup> This view is supported by, amongst others, Paula Fredriksen, 'Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles, and Apocalyptic hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2', *JTS* NS 42 (1991), 533f.



(ii) Some sort of resolution, however uneasy, may have been reached on the matter at the so-called Apostolic Council,<sup>48</sup> referred to in Acts 15 and Gal. 2:1–10.<sup>49</sup> Here Gentiles entering the church were asked to observe certain legal prescriptions which did not include circumcision and sabbath observance, but did include adherence to one aspect of Jewish law concerning food, namely the abstention from meat with blood in it (Acts 15:28–29).<sup>50</sup> But however we assess the historicity of the so-called Apostolic Decree, we cannot be certain that it led to a resolution of the difficulty it sought to solve.<sup>51</sup>

(iii) Amongst those who were broadly in favour of a conservative approach to the question, i.e. an approach which favoured the Christian movement remaining within the bounds of Judaism, there were grad-

<sup>48</sup> The historicity of Luke's account in Acts 15 has been questioned on a number of grounds. The present writer accepts its basic historicity, i.e. that there was an event at Jerusalem concerning the matter of the entry of the Gentiles into the Christian community, but would be circumspect about going much further than that. For a robust defence of its historicity, see Bauckham, 'James', and the relevant literature cited there.

<sup>49</sup> In spite of the presence of discrepancies between these two accounts, most scholars agree that they do in fact refer to the same event. For a recent attempt to argue that they do not and that we should see Gal. 2:1–10 as referring to Paul's and Barnabas' visit to Jerusalem described in Acts 11:30, see Bauckham, 'James', 462–75.

<sup>50</sup> On the decree and its purposes see Pierre-Antoine Bernheim, *Jacques, frère de Jésus* (Paris 1996), pp. 225f (ET, *James, Brother of Jesus* (London 1997), pp. 170f).

<sup>51</sup> We should note that it is not clear that Paul himself adhered to the decree, and that even if he did, his communities still appear to have been confronted with Jewish Christians demanding an adherence to the Jewish law which went beyond the requirements of the decree (see especially the epistle to the Galatians). Bauckham, 'James', 473–5, has an altogether more optimistic view of the decree's effectiveness, but this view is in part determined by his own view that Paul's Epistle to the Galatians was written before the so-called Council of Jerusalem (Gal. 2:1–10 refers to a meeting briefly recorded at Acts 11:30); that Paul's opponents in 2 Corinthians and Philippians 3:2f are not Judaizers; and that subsequent Jewish Christian groups showed little or no interest in converting Gentiles to their practices. While Bauckham has certainly made a robust case for not assuming the ineffectiveness of the Apostolic Decree, his case remains a controversial one. It still seems more convincing to argue that Gal. 2:1–10 corresponds to the events recorded in Acts 15, rather than to the entirely unreconstructable events of Acts 11:30. Phil. 3:2f can be taken to be referring to non-Jewish Christians, but this seems unlikely. Finally, in relation to the third of Bauckham's points, we should note that Justin in *Dial.* 47 seems to assume that some Jewish Christians did wish to persuade Gentiles into observing the Jewish law (Bauckham dismisses this reference as not necessarily referring to actual realities), that a text like the *Epistula Petri*, which we find attached to the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*, seems to imply that Gentiles should observe the Jewish law (see esp. 2:3), as do the teachings of the Elchasaites. Bauckham is aware of both of these last two examples, but interprets the *Epistula Petri* to imply something different, and dismisses the Elchasaite teaching as 'very distinct'. To say that anything 'Jewish Christian' is 'very distinct' is to assume a knowledge of the phenomenon which we simply do not have.

tions of opinion. Here one might note in particular the apparent difference of opinion between Peter and James, and Peter and James and those who 'Judaized' Paul's communities, who may well be related to those referred to in Acts 15:1 and 21:21.<sup>52</sup> So Peter appears to have responded positively to the Gentile mission and to have accepted that the laws of *kasbrut* no longer applied within the Christian community (Acts 10.1f; Gal. 2:11f), and this in the face of opposition (Acts 11:2f), though according to Paul he reneged on this view later under pressure from 'those from James' (Gal. 2:11f), and subsequent tradition was to place him, at least in part, in the anti-Pauline Jewish Christian camp.<sup>53</sup> James himself appears to have accepted the legitimacy of the Gentile mission and to have been party to the compromise on the issue of the entry of Gentiles into the church referred to in Acts 15.<sup>54</sup> However, his position on this matter was more conservative than Peter's, a fact which is indicated by the so-called incident at Antioch (Gal. 2:11, 14), already referred to above,<sup>55</sup> by his associations with those who, according to Acts 21, were zealous for the law, and, to a less easily determinable extent, by the subsequent portrayal of James in some Jewish Christian tradition, where he is depicted as the law-abiding ('just') leader or bishop of the community.<sup>56</sup> The hint at confusion or compromise which is detectable in Peter and probably in James in relation to the question of the entry of Gentiles, is entirely absent from those who opposed Paul in Galatia and elsewhere, and who may well be related to those who appear to have precipitated the crisis

<sup>52</sup> It should be noted that those referred to in Acts 15:1 and 21:21 are not claiming the same thing. The former are concerned that Gentiles entering the Christian community should be circumcised, while the latter are concerned that Paul is forcing Jews to apostatize from the law.

<sup>53</sup> One thinks in particular in this context of the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature.

<sup>54</sup> To what extent James was in fact party to the agreement in Acts 15 has been open to debate. For a defence of the view that he was wholeheartedly behind it, see Bauckham, 'James', 452f; and for an expression of scepticism, Luedemann, *Opposition*, pp. 35f.

<sup>55</sup> For divergent interpretations of this incident see Pratscher, *Herrenbruder*, pp. 77f; and Bernheim, *Jacques*, pp. 231f (ET, 175f). The latter seeks to play up the difference between James and Paul. Martin Hengel, who sees James's part in this incident as influenced by political considerations, portrays James as in general a man of compromise and not of a dogmatic character ('ein Mann des Ausgleichs'. See *idem.*, 'Jakobus der Herrenbruder – der erste Papst?', in ed. Erich Grässer and Otto Merk, *Glaube und Exchatologie. F/S für Werner Georg Kimmel um 80 Geburtstag* (Tübingen 1985), p. 90).

<sup>56</sup> See the *Epistle of James* and the *Epistula Petri*. What is interesting to note is that apart from these references, in subsequent tradition, James is only rarely associated with a law-observing group, and is, of course, depicted as a hero of the orthodox and gnostic church alike. See Hengel's comments, 'Papst', 90: 'Auffallend bleibt, daß die Auseinandersetzung um die Gesetzesfrage zurücktritt.' On the position of James in the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature, and in Jewish Christian literature in general, see W. Pratscher, *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus und die Jakobustradition* (Göttingen 1987), pp. 102–50, esp. 121f.

recorded in Acts 15. These people who did not restrict their activity to Palestine insisted that Gentiles entering the messianic community should be circumcised and obey other distinctive Jewish practices. Peter and James seem not to have done and they should not be linked with this group of people. All this implies considerable diversity in early 'Jewish Christianity'. Note should be taken of Hill's provocative observation that the complex and pluralistic perspective is as true to early Jewish Christianity as it is to first-century Judaism generally.<sup>57</sup>

#### IV FROM THE DEATH OF JAMES TO THE BAR COCHBA REVOLT

The first significant event for which we have information in this period is the death of James, the brother of Jesus, who had become leader of the Christian community in Jerusalem. In *Ant.* xx.197–203, Josephus tells us that in CE 62, during an interregnum in the governorship of Judaea, James was put to death by Ananus the High Priest, though the precise reasons for this decision, which was opposed by some Jews, and which led to the High Priest's downfall, remain unclear,<sup>58</sup> and Christian sources which refer to the event (see Hegesippus in Eusebius, *HE* 2.23.8–18; *Second Apoc. Jak.* v.44.11–63.2; *Rec.* 1.66–70) are clearly of too hagiographic and legendary a character to help us any further.<sup>59</sup>

It is possible that the death of James may be related to the next significant event in the history of Jewish Christianity in Palestine for which we have evidence, namely the flight of members of that community to the Transjordanian town of Pella. Our earliest undisputed source on this matter is Eusebius (*HE* 3.5.3),<sup>60</sup> who appears to be the source for Epiphanius' account of the same event in *Pan.* 1.29.7–8; 30.2,7, and *Mens.* 15.<sup>61</sup> Eusebius records how just before the revolt of the Jews against the

<sup>57</sup> Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, p. 4.

<sup>58</sup> For a recent discussion of this passage see Pratscher, *Herrenbruder*, pp. 229–38; Hill, *Hellenists*, pp. 186–91; and Bernheim, *Jacques*, pp. 325–32, and ET (London 1997), pp. 247–53; and our more detailed discussion below.

<sup>59</sup> For an assessment of the Christian sources, which are probably interdependent, see Hengel, 'Papst', 75–9, Pratscher, *Herrenbruder*, pp. 103–21; 238–63; and Luedemann, *Opposition*, pp. 171–7.

<sup>60</sup> Some scholars such as C. Koester, 'The Origin and Significance of the Flight to Pella Tradition', *CBQ* 51 (1989), 97–105, have argued that references to this event can be found in two sources that are earlier than Eusebius, namely Luke 21:20–2 and *Rec.* 1.37 and 39. But as J. Verheyden, 'The Flight of the Christians to Pella', *ETL* 66 (1990), 369f, has shown, such a conclusion is unwarranted. Jones, *Jewish Christian*, pp. 158–9, supports Verheyden's reading of the source from *Rec.* See also Luedemann, *Opposition*, pp. 206–9.

<sup>61</sup> This against Koester, 'Origin', 92–7.

Romans in CE 66, the Christians in Jerusalem were privy to an oracle which ordered them to leave the city and go to Pella in the Decapolis. Some scholars have argued that the story is entirely legendary on the grounds that (a) our earliest source, Eusebius, is both late and tendentious; (b) one would expect that such an important event would have been referred to more frequently in Christian literature; (c) it would be difficult to imagine a scenario during the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans in which a flight from the city would have been possible; (d) Pella was an unlikely place to flee as it was sacked by the rebels in the revolt (Josephus, *Bell.* II.458); and (e) Eusebius elsewhere in his *Ecclesiastical History* (*HE* 4.5.3) implies that Christians remained uninterruptedly in Jerusalem until the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt some sixty years later, a problem which Epiphanius seeks to solve by assuming a return of some of the apostles to Jerusalem after the revolt (*Mens.* 15).<sup>62</sup> None of these arguments seems to be decisive. The lateness of Eusebius' account need not of itself be a relevant point; the tendentiousness of his account is unproven;<sup>63</sup> the lack of references to the event need not be telling – this period in Christian history is a scantily chronicled one; the practical argument against the possibility of flight is circumvented if we note that Eusebius states that the oracle came before the outbreak of the revolt, or we assume a flight after the death of James in 62;<sup>64</sup> and the presence of Christians in Jerusalem after 70 can be explained in a variety of ways, not least by the idea of a return to the city. But the principal problem with the arguments of those who would deny much historical worth to the Eusebian tradition of a flight to Pella is that they cannot explain in a convincing way the quite specific reference to a flight to Pella. Why Pella of all places?<sup>65</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Luedemann, *ibid.*, p. 210. All these arguments are helpfully summarized by Wilson, *Strangers*, pp. 145–6; and are found in various forms in G. Luedemann, 'The Successors of Pre-70 Jerusalem Christianity: A Critical Evaluation of the Pella Tradition' in ed. E. P. Sanders, *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition* (Philadelphia 1980), pp. 161–73, whose arguments are extended in *Opposition*, pp. 200–13; and J. Verheyden, *De vlucht van de christenen naar Pella. Onderzoek van het Getuigenis van Eusebius en Epiphanius* (Brussels 1988), partially summarized in 'Flight', where in n. 3 the reader will find further bibliography.

<sup>63</sup> Verheyden argues strongly for the tendentiousness of the account, but is refuted at some length by J. Wehnert, 'Die Auswanderung der Jerusalemer Christen nach Pella – historisches Faktum oder theologische Konstruktion? Bemerkungen zu einem neuen Buch', *ZKG* 102 (1991), 231–55.

<sup>64</sup> Wehnert, 'Auswanderung', 248–9, assumes a time between 62 and 66. Wilson, *Strangers*, pp. 146 and 354, n. 18, following others, notes that according to Josephus, it was possible for sizeable groups to flee from Jerusalem up until even the end of the siege. The examples he chooses, however, are almost all of unsuccessful attempts to escape, or desertions. See *Bell.* v.42of, 446f, 511f; 6.352, 383–6.

<sup>65</sup> Luedemann, *Opposition*, pp. 212–13, tries to explain this problem away by arguing that Jewish Christians at Pella sought retrospectively to legitimate themselves by inventing the story of origins recorded in Eusebius.

The importance of the truth or falsity of traditions relating to the flight to Pella is not purely academic. If we can think of the tradition as in part historical, then we are in a better position to assume some continuity in the history of Jewish Christianity, for it is precisely in Transjordan and the border regions of Syria that later Christian heresiological writers locate a number of the sects we would call, on the basis of our own definition, Jewish Christian.<sup>66</sup>

We should not, therefore, assume, as some scholars have, that the Jewish Christian community in Palestine, especially around Jerusalem, disappeared as a result of the Jewish revolt. Admittedly, hostility towards Jewish Christians may have increased after this event, and in this respect we might point to the *Birkath ha-minim* (pp. 772–3, below). But such hostility did not extinguish a Jewish Christian presence. Eusebius, who is probably reliant upon Hegesippus, informs us that James was succeeded as leader of the community in Jerusalem by his relative Symeon, who appears to have held sway into the 90s (*HE* 3.11; 4.22.4), and that he was succeeded by a further thirteen bishops until the Bar Cochba revolt in CE 132 (4.5). While the number of bishops between the death of Symeon and the revolt seems implausible, there is no reason to doubt the basic purport of these traditions, namely that there was an organized presence of Jewish Christians in or near the city until the Bar Cochba revolt.<sup>67</sup>

Evidence also points to a Christian mission in Galilee during this time. Particular attention has been focused on Eusebius' report of relatives of Jesus, the so-called *desposynoi* (Eusebius, *HE* 1.7.14, quoting Julius Africanus);<sup>68</sup> on (debatable) archaeological evidence of Christian buildings in Capernaum;<sup>69</sup> and a rabbinic anecdote of R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus (end of first century), said to have heard with sympathy a teaching of Jesus from Jacob of Kepharsikhnin in Sepphoris.<sup>70</sup>

The Bar Cochba revolt seems to have been a turning point in the fortunes of the Jewish Christian community in Palestine. Not only do

<sup>66</sup> The thesis that there was no relationship between the Jewish Christianity of the pre- and post-70 periods was put forward most forcefully by J. Munck, 'Jewish Christianity', and 'Primitive Jewish Christianity and Later Jewish Christianity'.

<sup>67</sup> For investigation of the list of bishops see R. Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church* (Edinburgh 1990), 70f.

<sup>68</sup> See Bauckham, *Relatives*, 60f; and Taylor, *Christians*, pp. 31–36, who argues that we should not see the 'desposynoi' as Christians (Africanus never explicitly states that they were), but simply as those who claimed Davidic descent and were hence related to Jesus.

<sup>69</sup> See Taylor, *Christians*, pp. 268f.

<sup>70</sup> Tos. Hullin ii 24 and parallels, discussed by Hezser, *Social Structure*, p. 76; see also p. 773, n. 174, below.

Christians seem to have suffered persecution in the war from Jewish supporters of Bar Kokhba (*I Apol.* 31), but the forced abandonment of Jerusalem by Jews meant that the most important centre of their activity was no longer available to them. Some may have become members of the Gentile Christian church, while others may have joined some of those already in the Transjordan. Some may have abandoned their Christian identity altogether and simply become non-Christian Jews. Evidence, either literary or archaeological, for a Jewish Christian presence in Palestine after this point is negligible.<sup>71</sup>

We may have evidence for Jewish Christian communities in other parts of the Empire during this period. Ignatius, for instance, may hint at the existence of Jewish Christians in Syria and Asia Minor, and the writer of the *Epistle of Barnabas* may provide evidence of the existence of the same phenomenon in Egypt.<sup>72</sup>

#### V FROM BAR COCHBA ONWARDS

For this final period of Jewish Christian history (running from approximately the middle of the second century to the end of the fifth), our sources are even less helpful, and it is interesting to note that we struggle to discover any named Jewish Christians.<sup>73</sup> Justin (*Dial.* 47 and 48) indicates that at the time he was writing, in about CE 160, there were Jewish

<sup>71</sup> See Taylor, *ibid.*, 18f.

<sup>72</sup> For evidence of Jewish Christians in Ignatius see *Magn.* 8.1–2; 9.1; 10.1–3; *Philad.* 6.1, and Judith Lieu's discussion of the material in *Image and Reality. The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh 1996), pp. 23–56. For *Barnabas*, see 3.6, and especially 4.6, though we should note that, as with Ignatius, it is difficult to be certain that we are dealing with a Jewish Christian group. For the more general contention that the whole of Egypt was Jewish Christian until at least the outbreak of the Trajanic revolt, and perhaps for a longer period, see Joseph Méléze Modrzejewski, *The Jews of Egypt. From Rameses II to Emperor Hadrian* (ET Edinburgh 1995), pp. 227–31; and, more extravagantly, M. D. Goulder, *A Tale of Two Missions*, p. 182. There can be little doubt that Christianity in Egypt originated within the synagogue in Egypt, but less certainty perhaps about its character, especially in the undocumented early period. For discussion see A. F. J. Klijn, 'Jewish Christianity in Egypt' in (eds.) Birger Pearson and James A. Goehring, *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity* (Philadelphia 1986), pp. 161–75.

<sup>73</sup> Ariston of Pella, Hegesippus, and the biblical translator Symmachus, have variously been held to be Jewish Christian. In the case of Symmachus, we have the testimony of Eusebius that he was an Ebionite (*HE* 6.17; cf. *Dem.* 7.1.33), which is apparently contradicted by Epiphanius, probably reliant upon Origen, who thought him to be a Samaritan who converted to Judaism (*Mens.* 16). In modern scholarship, Schoeps, amongst others, has supported Eusebius (*Theologie*), while Alison Salvesen has supported Epiphanius (*Symmachus in the Pentateuch* (Manchester 1991), pp. 283–97).

Christians within what some have termed ‘the greater church’, though in precisely what part of the Empire is unclear.<sup>74</sup> Justin’s willingness to accept that such people, at least in one form, had a legitimate place within the Christian community seems to have been somewhat controversial. The amount of space which Justin devotes to discussing them would imply that they were very much a minority within the church, though his attitude of compromise, particularly in relation to law-observing gentile Christians, might imply a greater presence. When Irenaeus described the Ebionites some twenty or thirty years later (*Adv. haer.* 1.26.2), he certainly perceived them as ‘extra ecclesiam’, and it is only as ‘heretics’ that we hear of them subsequently. This is not, of course, proof positive that they were perceived in such a way everywhere – as we will see, it is quite possible that the so-called Nazarenes might in certain quarters have been regarded as orthodox even up to the middle of the fourth century – and it is not unlikely that in certain places such as Syria they continued to form significant communities.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, our sources seem to indicate a relatively broad displacement of Jewish Christian communities with a concentration in the east.<sup>76</sup>

In essence, then, we know little about the historic fate of Jewish Christianity. What is clear is that, excluded from both Church and synagogue (its exclusion from the latter had much to do with the growing power of the rabbinate),<sup>77</sup> it declined dramatically. The existence specifically of Jewish Christian sects from the late second century onwards is perhaps a consequence of that dual exclusion. Evidence for the existence of such sects beyond the fifth century is almost non-existent and attempts

<sup>74</sup> Harnack, *Judentum und Judenchristentum in Justins Dialog mit Trypho* (Leipzig 1913), p. 90, assumed that they were either to be located in Palestine or Syria.

<sup>75</sup> See G. Strecker, ‘On the Problem of Jewish Christianity’ in W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (ET Philadelphia 1971), pp. 241f, who, in Bauresque fashion, argues that both *Didascalia* and the *Kerygmata Petrou* (a source of the basic writing of the *Pseudo-Clementines*) give evidence, indirectly and directly, for the predominance of Jewish Christianity at the end of the second century in parts of Syria.

<sup>76</sup> So, for instance, while there seems to have been a concentration of communities in the Transjordan region, Irenaeus seems to imply that Ebionites were in Rome, and Epiphanius speaks of the same group being in Asia, Rome and Cyprus (*Pan.* 30.18.1). Jerome states that Nazarenes are to be found in the east wherever there are Jewish synagogues (*Ep.* 112.13). Mention of Jewish Christians in Origen may imply a presence in Egypt, although this is by no means certain.

<sup>77</sup> On this see P. Alexander, ‘The Parting of the Ways from the Perspective of Rabbinic Judaism’ in (ed.) J. D. G. Dunn, *Jews and Christians. The Parting of the Ways AD 70 to 135* (Tübingen 1992), pp. 19–25. See also Alon, *History*, pp. 305–6, who attributes the split to Christian failure to participate in nationalist causes, and a growing exclusion programme in Judaism after 70.



to discovers such evidence, particularly in Arabic sources, has in general found few supporters.<sup>78</sup>

## VI SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS ON THE HISTORY OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY

Much of nineteenth-century study of early Christianity was taken up with examining the strengths and weaknesses of F. C. Baur's contention that the first two centuries of Christian history played host to a battle royal between Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity.<sup>79</sup> The battle, so Baur maintained, did not end in victory for either side, but in a compromise which he termed 'early catholicism'. In such a bold thesis Jewish Christianity was to be considered a major influence in the early history of the church. But Baur's thesis did not stand up to close inspection, not least because on many occasions he was building on a paucity of evidence. Indeed towards the end of the nineteenth century, Harnack was able to argue with apparent confidence that a discussion of Jewish Christianity should form no part of the history of Christian dogma.<sup>80</sup>

Harnack's view is probably too negative. The influences of Jewish Christians upon the burgeoning church are difficult to assess precisely because their form of Christianity did not become the standard form, and because we do not know enough about their theology.<sup>81</sup> Writers like Justin hint at a more significant presence within the church, not only in what he says about Jewish Christians, but also indirectly, through some of the traditions to which he was privy, and their influence may have varied from place to place. The writer of the *Didascalía*, for instance, seems to imply a considerable influence of Jewish Christians in the Syrian community for which he wrote. What is clear, however, is that the form of

<sup>78</sup> For this argument see Schoeps, *Theologie*, pp. 334f. For an attempt to argue that the tenth- to eleventh-century anti-Christian treatise of 'Abd al-Jabbar' relies for some of its arguments upon a Jewish Christian source of the fifth or sixth century, see S. Pines, 'The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity according to a new source' in *Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Proceedings* 2.13 (Jerusalem 1966). Pines's arguments are refuted in detail by S. M. Stern, 'Abd Al-Jabbar's Account of how Christ's Religion was falsified by the Adoption of Roman Customs', *JTS* NS 19 (1968), 128–85, who attempts to show that 'Abd al-Jabbar' is in fact reliant upon Muslim sources for his ideas; and E. Bammel, 'Excerpts from a new Gospel?', *Nov.T.* 10 (1968), 1–9, who argues that the author had knowledge of anti-Christian Jewish sources.

<sup>79</sup> This thesis has been revived, in an admittedly new form, by M. D. Goulder, *Tale. History*, p. 294.

<sup>81</sup> See John Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism*, who wants to speak of the lost voice of Jewish Christianity within the church's history.

Christianity which had begun in the early 30s as the standard form, by the 160s had become a minority.

## VII JEWISH CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING TO GENTILE CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH CHRISTIAN SOURCES

### A THE NEW TESTAMENT

Discerning texts in the New Testament which we might, on the basis of our own definition, call Jewish Christian is a difficult task. First, we should note that the New Testament canon is essentially a product of the Gentile Christian Church of the second century. Where we seem to have unambiguous evidence of people whom we might term Jewish Christian, these are often the opponents of New Testament authors, whose opinions, for a variety of reasons, are difficult to reconstruct;<sup>82</sup> or personalities who are not portrayed in a clearly negative way, but are certainly not given the prominence they in fact enjoyed.<sup>83</sup> Secondly, reconstructing the attitudes of individual writers to issues we might term 'Jewish Christian', for instance, the Jewish law, is sometimes impossible because they do not make any comment upon the subject. Too often we assume, on the basis of a variety of preconceptions, that such individuals adopted a negative attitude.

In this section I will examine two books in the New Testament, one a Gospel and the other a letter, which, in spite of the difficulties referred to above, I take to be Jewish Christian. I will conclude with a few comments on the types of Jewish Christianity for which they give evidence.

#### (i) *Matthew's Gospel*

For a variety of reasons Matthew's Gospel has been regarded as the most Jewish of the Gospels. In part this judgement emerges from Matthew's concern with showing quite explicitly how the Christian message of which Jesus is the centre is the fulfilment of Old Testament promises; in part

<sup>82</sup> On this see J. Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter. Galatians as a Test-Case', *JNT* 31 (1987), 73–93.

<sup>83</sup> In this context we might point to the figure of James, the brother of Jesus. The New Testament clearly hints at his considerable importance – he is one of those named people who experienced a post-resurrection christophany (1 Cor. 15:7); he became leader of the Jerusalem church which wielded considerable influence in the first thirty years of the church's history; and subsequent tradition, orthodox and heretical, accorded him an important place. And yet the New Testament, while hinting at his significance, gives over very little space to him. This point is powerfully made by Hengel, 'Papst', 71–2.

from his emphasis upon Jesus as the new David and the new Moses,<sup>84</sup> and in part from his conservative attitude to the Jewish law.<sup>85</sup>

In relation to the last of these we should note a number of things. First, Matthew is the only evangelist to have Jesus say that he has not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, and to extend this injunction by stating that not one jot or tittle will fall away from the law (5:17–20). We should not see the absolutism of this statement as compromised by its eschatological setting, or by the ill-named antitheses which follow.<sup>86</sup> Secondly, while Matthew's Jesus is deeply critical of the Pharisees (23:3f *passim*), he still maintains that they sit on Moses' seat with the consequence that people should listen to what they say (23:2). Thirdly, there are other statements in the Gospel which imply a reverence for the law, in particular the injunction not to flee on the sabbath (24:20),<sup>87</sup> and implicitly at least, the call not to missionize the Gentiles (Matt. 10:5, 6; 15:24). Fourthly, and perhaps most significantly, if we examine the way in which Matthew has edited a number of Markan pericopes connected with the law, we note a tendency to play down Jesus' potentially critical remarks or actions in the Markan account, or at least seek to justify them halakhically.<sup>88</sup>

Whether we can discern from this that Matthew's community, if we can assume the existence of such an entity, would have insisted that its members should obey Jewish legal prescriptions, is not easy to say. Some have wanted to argue that Matthew's openness to Gentiles, which has become explicit by the end of the Gospel serving to cancel out any of Jesus' negative comments on this subject referred to earlier (28:19–20. See also 21–43), and his apparent rejection of the Jewish people (21:43; 27:25) make this unlikely, in particular when we note that the ritual requirement for those wishing to enter the community is baptism (28:19). Others have pointed to the hostility shown by Matthew to the Pharisees and Jewish leaders,<sup>89</sup> and the way Jesus is presented as a new law-giver

<sup>84</sup> See in particular Dale Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Edinburgh 1993).

<sup>85</sup> On this see S. G. Wilson, *Strangers*, p. 47, and for further bibliography, p. 319, n. 44.

<sup>86</sup> For a summary of the various positions taken on this complex passage see W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh 1988), pp. 481–503.

<sup>87</sup> On this verse see Graham N. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People. Studies in Matthew's Gospel* (Edinburgh 1992), pp. 192–203.

<sup>88</sup> See in particular Matt. 12:1–14 and its parallels in Mark 2:23–3:6; Matt. 15:1–20 and its parallel in Mark 7:1–23; Matt. 19:3–9 and its parallel in Mark 10:2f.

<sup>89</sup> The anti-Judaism and its implications are discussed by, amongst others, Stanton, *Gospel*, pp. 113–68, 232–56; and Wilson, *Strangers*, pp. 50f, both of whom address the question as to whether Matthew rejects the Jewish people.

who transcends Moses in the substance of what he says, and most obviously in who he is.

But none of these points proves that Matthew's community is uninterested in observing the Jewish law. It is perfectly possible, as we will show below, for a Jewish Christian community to be open to Gentiles, to be hostile to some non-Christian Jews, and to have an elevated view of Jesus which sees him as an altogether greater figure than Moses, without that community abandoning the observance of Jewish prescriptions which make them Jewish Christian. Subsequent Jewish Christians who attributed a special place to the Gospel of Matthew in their affections were not perhaps as tendentious as some have wanted us to believe, however they may have edited that work.

(ii) *The Epistle of James*

The Epistle of James was probably not written by James, the brother of Jesus.<sup>90</sup> It is testimony rather to a growing tradition within the church which attributed a role of considerable importance to James in its history. This tradition, which, as we have seen, built upon and took further the *fact* of James's importance in the early church in Jerusalem,<sup>91</sup> was to find its most exaggerated expression in Jewish Christian circles.<sup>92</sup>

This fact of tradition history does not of itself prove that the epistle is Jewish Christian. Nor, for instance, does its apparently minimalist christology,<sup>93</sup> nor its moralistic/parenetic tone which appears to draw much inspiration from so-called 'Q' material, particularly as that manifests itself in Matthew's Gospel.<sup>94</sup> Much more significant in this respect are its attitude to the Gentiles, the Jewish law and its apparent anti-Paulinism. On the first, we should note to whom the letter is addressed ('the twelve tribes scattered abroad'), and the absence of any reference to Gentiles in the text. On the second, one is immediately struck by the positive attitude that James takes towards the law, speaking of it as 'royal' (2:8), 'perfect' (1:25) and a 'law of liberty' (2:12), and not seeking in any way to criticize it. His belief that the law is summarized in terms of the law of love (2:8, citing Lev. 19:18), need not indicate that James understood

<sup>90</sup> See Pratscher, *Herrenbruder*, pp. 209–13; and Bernheim, *Jacques*, pp. 298–9 (ET 224f).

<sup>91</sup> On this see Bauckham, 'James', 427, n. 37.

<sup>92</sup> This evidence is brought together by Pratscher, *Herrenbruder*, pp. 102–50, who, amongst other things, highlights the episcopal position often attributed to James in the relevant sources.

<sup>93</sup> This is discussed by Andrew Chester, *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude* (Cambridge 1994), pp. 43–4, who helpfully refers to other relevant bibliography.

<sup>94</sup> See P. Hartin, *James and the Q Sayings of Jesus* (Sheffield 1991).

the law in purely moral terms, and that we can therefore assume that he thought observance of the sabbath, circumcision etc. no longer relevant. His positive belief that every part of the law should be observed (2:10), a point with which Paul himself agrees, though in a negative way (Gal. 3:10), may indicate precisely what it says, and therefore imply the continuing relevance of precisely those Jewish laws Paul deems are superseded.<sup>95</sup>

The subject of the epistle's anti-Paulinism has generated considerable debate, much of which has been helpfully summarized elsewhere.<sup>96</sup> What seems clear from the relevant passage (2:15f) is that (a) Paul's letters are being alluded to, either indirectly or directly; (b) Paul's position on the relationship between works and faith has been simplified or even caricatured; and (c), in spite of (b), James and Paul hold a different position on the relationship between works and faith. It seems to me very difficult not to see this as an anti-Pauline position, to be developed in slightly different directions in later Jewish Christian tradition, however distorted a picture it may give of Paul's theology.<sup>97</sup>

### (iii) Conclusion

The Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew can be taken as examples of Jewish Christian texts which somehow slipped into the New Testament. They witness, however, to different types of Jewish Christianity. The former, with its apparently limited christology, its seeming indifference to the Gentiles, and its anti-Paulinism, appears to be a text locatable more on the fringes of what, retrospectively, we might call the catholic church. It may well be that the early Jacobite circles from which the epistle's author came, were the direct ancestors of later Jewish Christian sects of a perhaps more conservative kind, such as the Ebionites and the community associated with the *Anabathmoi Jakobou*.<sup>98</sup> Matthew, on the other hand, seems to be a text of a more orthodox kind, especially in terms of its christology and its attitude to the gentile mission. Groups of Christians like the Nazarenes may well have emerged from the type of atmosphere associated with this text.

<sup>95</sup> See Chester, *James*, pp. 36–7.

<sup>96</sup> See Chester, *James*, pp. 46–53; Bernheim, *Jacques*, pp. 313–20 (ET, 238–44).

<sup>97</sup> Such a view, which represents a summary of Chester's position, is opposed by many scholars, but seems to me to take account of the evidence as it stands.

<sup>98</sup> For the idea of a Jacobite tradition within Jewish Christianity, see Wilson, *Strangers*, pp. 152–5, though, like Schoeps before him (*Theologie*, pp. 343–9), he sees it as distinguishable from the Ebionites.

## B PATRISTIC SOURCES

For information about Jewish Christian groups in the post New Testament period, we are heavily reliant upon sources written by those who were not Jewish Christians, and were, more often than not, their opponents. Moreover, it is not always clear that those who wrote about Jewish Christians were acquainted with them except in a rather fleeting and superficial way, e.g. through another non-Jewish Christian source. This means that they sometimes possess a tendentious, derivative and garbled character which makes their interpretation as sources of information for Jewish Christianity a complex and approximate art.<sup>99</sup> Where we do possess texts which appear to be from the hand of Jewish Christians, these are often embedded either in the works of their opponents, or in composite corpora about whose interpretation there remains much debate.

*(i) Justin Martyr*

In his *Dialogue with Trypho*, written in approximately 160, Justin makes his opponent, Trypho the Jew, ask him whether Jews who convert to Christianity but continue to observe the Jewish law will be saved (*Dial.* 47.1). Justin replies that in his opinion such people will be saved as long as they do not attempt to force other Gentile Christians to adopt Jewish practices, and that they do not choose not to associate with Gentile Christians, obviously on the grounds that such Christians are not obeying Jewish laws. He also concedes that those Gentile Christians who have been persuaded to observe the Jewish law will also be saved as long as they remain Christians.

There are a number of things of interest in this passage.<sup>100</sup> In particular one might want to highlight the implication that Justin's inclusive attitude to the Jewish Christian presence in the church is a minority one. But more significant in relation to our present task is the implication that within the church two types of Jewish Christian existed, those who observed the Jewish law but felt at ease mixing with their non-observant fellow Gentile Christians, and those who did not and were keen to compel the non-observant to observe.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>99</sup> This point is made at considerable length by Klijn and Reinink, who conclude their review of the sources with the words; 'As a general conclusion we may say that Patristic observations on Jewish Christianity have no great historical value' (*Patristic*, p. 67).

<sup>100</sup> For discussions of the passage and its implications see, Harnack, *Judentum*, pp. 84–90; *History*, pp. 296–8; Strecker, 'Problem', pp. 273–5; Pritz, *Nazarene*, pp. 19–21; Bauckham, 'James', 473; and Lieu, *Image*, 138–9.

<sup>101</sup> The claim that in this passage Justin is not referring to Jewish Christians known to him has to answer the question why in that case Justin referred to these people at all.

This observation may be taken a step further in the following chapter of the *Dialogue*. Here Justin refers to those either of 'your (Trypho's) race', or of 'our (Christian) race' who admit that Jesus is the Christ, but believe him to be 'man of men', which seems to imply that they entertain a low christology which excludes any understanding of Jesus' pre-existence. If we read 'your race' with some manuscripts, then these individuals may well be connected with one of the Jewish Christian groups referred to above, though it is possible that such an opinion could have been entertained by members of both groups, or different members of both groups.<sup>102</sup>

Justin does not in the end give us much information about the Jewish Christians to which he refers. But we may well be able to connect what information he does give us, however tentatively, with the views of named groups of Jewish Christians.<sup>103</sup>

(ii) *Ebionites*

In *Adv. haer.* 1.26.2, Irenaeus refers to a group to whom he gives the name Ebionite. He states that they use only the Gospel of Matthew, and repudiate the Apostle Paul, who they claim was an apostate from the law. They expound the writings of the prophets diligently, practise circumcision and lead a Jewish way of life ('et iudaico caractere vitae'), even to the extent of 'adoring Jerusalem as if it were the house of God'. Their opinions concerning Jesus are not dissimilar to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates i.e. a form of adoptionist christology in which the figure of Christ is perceived as descending upon Jesus at his baptism (*Adv. haer.* 1.26.1).<sup>104</sup>

There is little reason to doubt the basics of Irenaeus' account of Ebionite belief, though his statement that members of the group only use the Gospel of Matthew needs to be partially revised in the light of the statement that Irenaeus makes about them later on, namely that they deny the validity of the virgin birth (*Adv. haer.* 3.21.1), something which is clearly affirmed in that Gospel. What emerges from the brief account is a Christian group with a heterodox christology, committed to maintaining

<sup>102</sup> The textual problem is discussed by Harnack, *History*, pp. 297–8, n. 3; and Pritz, *Nazarene*, p. 20, n. 4. See also Harnack's assertion that while we cannot know whether all Jewish Christians entertained these christological opinions or not, we should note that Justin discusses them in proximity to his discussion of Jewish Christians, and appears not to attribute such views to gentile Christians (*Judentum*, 89).

<sup>103</sup> This is what Pritz, and others, attempt to do.

<sup>104</sup> Irenaeus' view that the Cerinthians are Jewish Christians is false (see Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic*, pp. 3–19).



a Jewish way of life, perhaps outside the parameters of the church (their christology; their denunciation of Paul; and their use of only one Gospel and not four), with a strong commitment to the exegesis of the Old Testament, in particular the prophets. Interestingly nothing is said about their relationship to the synagogue.

Subsequent reports concerning the Ebionites are more difficult to assess. Tertullian's claim that their name derived from their founder Ebion (cf. *de carne Christi* 14; *de praesc. haer.* 32.5), a claim found in much subsequent anti-Ebionite literature, seems entirely spurious, and may have arisen from the desire to see all heresies as connected with individual heretics. The origins of the name may in fact be connected with the Aramaic word for poverty, a point made in polemical vein by Origen with reference to the 'poverty' of the Ebionites' understanding of the law (*de princ.* 4.3.8; *c. Cels.* 2.1), though whether we should, therefore, connect Ebionite origins with the earliest Christian community in Jerusalem whose poverty we hear of in Acts and Paul's epistle remains a question.

Origen himself confirms much of what Irenaeus records, and provides us with some additional information. So, for instance, he notes that they celebrate Easter on the same day as the Jews and eat unleavened bread (*in Matth. comm. ser.* 79), and, interestingly, he affirms that there were two types of Ebionites, those who believed in the virgin birth, and those who did not (*c. Cels.* 5.61), a point repeated by Eusebius (*HE* 3.27.2–3), who is probably reliant upon Origen and others.<sup>105</sup> Origen also hints at the Ebionite penchant for Matthew's gospel when he states that they understand Matt. 10:5, 6 literally, implying that they were opposed to a Gentile mission (*de princ.* 4.3.8).

The most extensive, and most polemical,<sup>106</sup> discussion of the Ebionites occurs in Epiphanius' *Panarion* 30.<sup>107</sup> In describing the sect, the heresiologist repeats many of the observations made by his predecessors, but he adds quite considerably to these. In relation to the history of the sect, he places its origins with the group of Christians who fled to Pella in the aftermath of the Jewish revolt (30.2.7–9), positing some sort of a relationship between the fictional Ebion and the Nazarenes, though of precisely what character is not clear.<sup>108</sup> Following Eusebius, he holds one of the Greek

<sup>105</sup> On Eusebius' use of sources in his reference to the Ebionites, see Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic*, pp. 25–6.

<sup>106</sup> See especially his opening words about Ebion in *Pan.* 30.1.1f.

<sup>107</sup> Epiphanius' account of the Ebionites is discussed by Glenn Alan Koch, *A Critical Investigation of Epiphanius' Knowledge of the Ebionites* (unpublished dissertation, University of Pennsylvania 1976). The author has not been able to consult this work.

<sup>108</sup> See Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic*, pp. 28–9. See also Pritz, *Nazarene*, p. 38, referred to in n. 116 below.

translators of the Hebrew Bible, Symmachus, to be an Ebionite. He attributes three contrasting christological beliefs to the sect (30.3.5–6),<sup>109</sup> notes that they possess a falsified copy of Matthew's Gospel (30.13.2), and that they justify their adoption of circumcision by reference to Christ's own circumcision (30.26.2). Epiphanius also notes that they refuse to associate with Gentiles, practise daily purifications, and celebrate the eucharist annually with unleavened bread and water only (30.16.1). He draws attention to their anti-cultic attitude (30.16.5), and notes that they exclude certain pericopes from their copy of the Old Testament. In passing, he states that they have *archisynagogoi*, and synagogues in which they worship (30.18.2).

Epiphanius' account of the Ebionites is full of difficulty. Not only is it uncertain that he had any personal association with the sect, even though he maintains that they had a presence on the island of Cyprus where he was Bishop, but also much of the additional information he gives us is gleaned from sources which he assumed to be Ebionite. But it is by no means clear that these sources were in fact Ebionite, and this is particularly the case with the *Periodoi Petrou* (30.15.1) and the *Anabathmoi Jakobou*, both of which bear a close resemblance to sections of the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature, and both of which differ from each other. Epiphanius seems to have recognized this problem, and sought to explain the differences between his own account of the Ebionites and earlier accounts by positing an association of the Ebionites with the so-called Elchasaites. But such an association raises a whole host of difficulties, not least those relating to the complex character of the sources which speak of the Elchasaites.<sup>110</sup> If anything it seems likely that members of this latter group, whom we first meet in the writings of Hippolytus in connection with the arrival in Rome of a certain Alcibiades of Apamea,<sup>111</sup> and who probably originally took their name from the Aramaic title of an early second-century Jewish apocalypse,<sup>112</sup> may themselves have been influenced

<sup>109</sup> Some claim that Adam was Christ, others that Christ was a spirit, the first creation, and others that Jesus was a man upon whom Christ descended.

<sup>110</sup> Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic*, pp. 32f; and most recently, and at considerable length, Gerard P. Luttikhuisen, *The Revelation of Elchasai* (Tübingen 1985), pp. 41f.

<sup>111</sup> Hippolytus, *Ref.* ix.4; 12.20–6; 13–17; x.29. See also Eusebius, *HE* 6.38, apparently quoting from Origen's *Hom. in Pss.* 82; and Epiphanius, inter alia, *Pan.* 19 and 53.

<sup>112</sup> This is the thesis of Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 179f. He argues that the mooted founder of the sect, Elxai/Elchasai, never existed, and differentiates between groups of Elchasaites who made use of the book of revelation, witnessed in the passages from Hippolytus and Eusebius/Origen, and those for whom the book was of no significance, and where major importance was attached to the mythical figure of Elchasai/Elxai. For a different view, which posits an exclusively Christian origin for the Elchasaites, see Luedemann, *Opposition*, pp. 129–39.

by the Ebionites and those Jewish Christians responsible for parts of the *Pseudo-Clementine* writings.<sup>113</sup>

(iii) *The Nazarenes*<sup>114</sup>

Epiphanius is the first Christian writer to refer explicitly to a Christian sect called the Nazarenes (*Pan.* 29). He claims that their name was the one by which the Christians were originally known, and that it was derived from the name of Jesus' town of origin, Nazareth (29.1.6; Matt. 2:23).<sup>115</sup> He associates the beginnings of what he calls 'their heresy' with the flight to Pella during the first Jewish revolt (29.7.8), and states that they live 'in the neighbourhood of Coele Syria and the Decapolis in the region of Pella and in Basanitis in the so-called Kokaba' (29.7.7). Concerning their beliefs and practices, he states they use both the Old Testament and the New (29.7.2), that they have a good knowledge of Hebrew (29.7.4) and that they read the Old Testament and at least one Gospel in that language, that they believe in the resurrection and in one God and in Jesus Christ. He notes that they observe the Law of Moses (29.7.2), and interestingly goes on to write that they are in everything Jewish and nothing else (29.7.1), even though the Jews curse them in their synagogues (29.9.2). He also claims, with much less justification, that Ebion arose from their midst (30.2.1),<sup>116</sup> and that they were joined by Elxai and later adopted his book.

<sup>113</sup> On this see Luttikhuisen, *Revelation*, pp. 212–13. He notes that 'the combination of circumcision, a life in conformity with the law, and the rejection of the apostle Paul (witnessed only in Origen) suggests that the Judaeo-Christianity of the religious propagandists was related to that of the Ebionites'. But he also notes that other features such as speculations on the frequent manifestations of Christ in human bodies and the view of Jesus as one out of many incarnations of Christ (see *Ref.* ix. 14.1b and x.29.2), their selective use of the Old Testament, and their baptism of initiation suggest an association with the *Pseudo-Clementines*.

<sup>114</sup> For the most extensive discussion of the Nazarenes, see Pritz, *Nazarene*; and Kinzig, 'Non-Separation'.

<sup>115</sup> Epiphanius' assertion that this was the earliest name by which Christians were known may be supported by Acts 24:5 where Tertullus accuses Paul of being the ringleader of the Nazarenes, where 'Nazarenes' appears to be a way of referring to all Christians. But if it was the earliest name by which Christians were collectively known, we are left with the problem of explaining why we only hear about it again in the late fourth century. See Pritz, *ibid.* 11–18 for a discussion of the evidence relating to the origins of the name. He believes that the name was originally derived from the Hebrew word 'nezer' as it appears in the messianic passage of Isa. 11:1.

<sup>116</sup> Pritz, *Nazarene*, 38–9, argues that while the reference to Ebion is obviously fictitious, there may lie behind this tradition some ancient recollection of a split in Nazarene ranks, perhaps over the question of christology, which led to the formation of the Ebionites.

Jerome confirms much of what we read in Epiphanius about the Nazarenes, though he makes no connection between them and the Ebionites (except perhaps in *Ep.* 112.13), and seems to imply that they could be located not only in Transjordan, but all over the East where there were Jewish synagogues (*Ep.* 112.13). He also seems undecided about whether or not to dub them heretics. So while in the passage from epistle 112 referred to above, Jerome implies that in his opinion they are not Christians at all ('While they want to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither Jews nor Christians'), in his commentary on Isaiah, he quotes from some of their works as if they were genuine authorities.<sup>117</sup> Jerome also adds some quite important new information, nearly all of which we glean from quotations he gives us from the Nazarene commentary on Isaiah. From these quotations we learn that the Nazarenes conducted a mission amongst the Jews,<sup>118</sup> that they were involved in an ongoing dispute with the Pharisees/rabbis,<sup>119</sup> whose halakhic traditions they rejected, and to whom they referred as the 'deuterotai';<sup>120</sup> and that they approved of the mission to the Gentiles<sup>121</sup> and entertained no negative feelings about Paul.<sup>122</sup>

Jerome's unembarrassed use of the Nazarene commentary on Isaiah is perhaps an indicator of the basically 'orthodox' stance of this sect. Indeed the only sign of apparent heterodoxy appears to lie in their adherence to Jewish laws, and even in this context, it should be noted that they did not insist that Gentiles should observe such laws – in this they correspond to Jewish Christians whose presence in the church should be tolerated (*Dial.* 47). It is quite possible that this group represented an ossified form of the type of Jewish Christianity associated with Peter and James.

#### C THE PSEUDO-CLEMENTINES

The *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* and *Homilies*, which tell the story of Peter's preaching of the Christian Gospel along the Mediterranean seaboard in the company of Clement of Rome, and the miraculous reunion of the latter with his two brothers and mother and father, are, most scholars agree, independent of each other, and probably reliant upon earlier sources. Scholars call the most important of these sources the *Grundschrift* or basic writing, and are generally agreed that it, too, is a

<sup>117</sup> This observation applies in particular to the Nazarene commentary on Isaiah. The relevant passages are discussed by Pritz, *Nazarene*, pp. 57–70.

<sup>118</sup> In Isa. 31:6–9; PL 24:357.

<sup>119</sup> In Isa. 8:14; PL 24:119; 8:20–1; PL 24:123; 9:1–4; PL 24:125; 29:20–1; PL 24:336.

<sup>120</sup> In Isa. 8:14. <sup>121</sup> In Isa. 9:1–4.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* For a discussion of these references see Pritz, *ibid.*, 57–70.

composite document.<sup>123</sup> Much time has been spent trying to establish the character of the *Grundschrift*'s sources. The job of literary reconstruction is obviously a precarious one, and some, on quite reasonable grounds, not least, stylistic ones, would deny its validity.<sup>124</sup> But in conventional *Pseudo-Clementine* scholarship some optimism still prevails on this point, and at least two sources, presumed to be a part of the *Grundschrift*, are relevant to our discussion.

(i) *The Ascents of James* (*AJII* – *Rec.* 1.27–71)

The title *The Ascents of James* is based upon the description that Epiphanius gives to what he took to be an Ebionite source at *Panarion* 30.16.7–9, the contents of which seem close to what we find in this section of the *Rec.* 1.27 (33)–71, a passage preserved in both Latin and Syriac, and partially in Armenian. But controversy rages over such an identification, and some more recent scholarship on the subject has suggested that the existence of a separate source at this point in the *Recognitions* be justified solely on literary grounds.<sup>125</sup> Even when this principle is agreed upon, scholars still disagree on the extent of the source, many, following Strecker, arguing that it should be taken to begin at *Rec.* 1.33, not 1.27.<sup>126</sup> The source should probably be dated between CE 173 and 220.<sup>127</sup>

In essence the source appeared to offer an account of salvation history from the creation through to the foundations of the Christian community in Jerusalem. In his account of salvation history, the author judged the sacrificial cult negatively, arguing that it was only set up to accommodate the Jewish proclivity for idolatry manifested in the incident of the golden calf (Exod. 32; *Rec.* 1.35.1f). Jesus is seen as the true prophet, prophesied by Moses, who has come to bring the cult to an end (1.39.1f). The community in Jerusalem, under the undisputed leadership of the Bishop James (1.66.2, 5; 70.3),<sup>128</sup> while affirming that the only difference between

<sup>123</sup> For the most accessible account of research into the *Pseudo-Clementines*, see F. Stanley Jones, 'The Pseudo-Clementines: A History of Research', *The Second Century* 2 (1982), 1–33, 63–96.

<sup>124</sup> See most recently, J. Wehnert, 'Literarkritik und Sprachanalyse: kritische Anmerkungen zum gegenwärtigen Stand der Pseudo-Klementinen Forschung', *ZNW* 74 (1983), 268–301.

<sup>125</sup> See Jones, *Jewish Christian*, pp. 146–9.

<sup>126</sup> See Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, p. 221. This is directly refuted by Jones, *Jewish Christian*, pp. 132f.

<sup>127</sup> See Jones, *ibid.* 163, who, on good grounds, argues against the earlier date suggested by Arnold Stötzel, 'Die Darstellung der ältesten Kirchengeschichte nach den Pseudo-Clementinen', *VC* 36 (1982), 32.

<sup>128</sup> See Pratscher, *Herrenbruder*, pp. 126f.

the Jews and themselves is that the Christians hold Jesus to be the Messiah (1.43.2. See also 1.50.5; 68.2), sees Jewish rejection of the Christian message as necessarily leading to the entry of the Gentiles into the community (1.42.1f; 63.2; 64.2), of which he approves without appearing to require circumcision.<sup>129</sup> The community, however, continues to dispute with the Jews, in particular the Jewish sects, and James, in a discussion with the High Priest, appears to convert many to his cause (166.2f). But this debate is broken up by the arrival of someone who appears to resemble Paul (1.70.1). He initiates a persecution against the Christians, which leads to the death of James (1.70.8).

Some have disputed whether this source should be termed Jewish Christian.<sup>130</sup> But, while its attitude towards the law, in particular circumcision, remains unclear, the desire of its author to stress Christianity's proximity to Judaism, to see Christianity as the true expression of Mosaic Judaism, his sense of himself as a legitimate tradent of earliest Christianity in Jerusalem under the leadership of James, and his antipathy to Paul, though not on this occasion to the antinomian Paul, all point in a Jewish Christian direction.<sup>131</sup>

### (ii) *The Kerygmata Petrou*

The term '*Kerygmata Petrou*' is taken from a reference to a document called the 'Preachings of Peter' in the 'Epistula Petri' (1.2) and 'Contestatio' (1.1), both of which form a part of the introduction to the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*.<sup>132</sup> The thesis that *KP* was a separate source used by the author of the *Grundschrift* has a long pedigree,<sup>133</sup> as does the belief that its author was a Jewish Christian.<sup>134</sup> Needless to say, both of these contentions have been disputed.<sup>135</sup>

The author of the mooted source *KP* emphasizes the idea of the true prophet, but here the true prophet is not a figure predicted by Moses and

<sup>129</sup> See Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, 251, who thinks that the reference to circumcision in 1.33.5 implies a positive evaluation of the rite. Others see this reference as no more than a historical report and therefore of no significance in determining the author's attitude to circumcision. It is baptism to which the author seems to attribute major significance (see 1.39.2).

<sup>130</sup> See Stanley Jones, *Jewish Christianity*, pp. 1–38.

<sup>131</sup> These points are made by Jones, *ibid.*, 164–5, who also mentions in the same context the writer's concern for Jews who are Christians but remain within the fold of Judaism (see 1.66.4, especially in the Syriac).

<sup>132</sup> Further assistance with the reconstruction of the source seems to be offered by *Rec.* 3.75, but this is now generally regarded as a fiction.

<sup>133</sup> See Jones, 'Pseudo-Clementines', 14–18.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 84f. <sup>135</sup> See in particular J. Wehnert, 'Sprachanalyse'.

exclusively to be identified with Jesus, but the bearer of divine revelation, who from the beginning of time has manifested himself in a variety of figures, beginning with Adam, and culminating in Jesus (see *Hom.* 3.17–28). This true prophet is perceived as masculine, and his appearance has always been accompanied by a feminine counterpart who stands opposed to him and his revelation. That revelation concerns the eternal law which is identical with the law of Moses (*Hom.* 3.47.1), but this law has been contaminated by the addition after the time of Moses of false pericopes (associated with passages which speak of many gods (*Hom.* 16.5f), some statements made by the Old Testament prophets (Ep.Pet. 1.4; *Hom.* 3.53.2), cultic commands (*Hom.* 2.44; 3.52), and those concerning the temple (*Hom.* 2.44), and kingship (*Hom.* 3.52; 53.2)). It is the role of Jesus, as the manifestation of the true prophet, to point out where those false pericopes are (*Hom.* 3.18f). Other significant aspects of its theology concern its anti-Paulinism and its preaching on baptism.<sup>136</sup>

The author of *KP* shares, in at least broad terms, some of the interests of the author of *AJII*. One might highlight in particular the idea of Jesus as the true prophet and the anti-cultic tendency of both works, though these are developed in quite different ways by *KP*, and *AJII* contains nothing equivalent to the idea of false pericopes.<sup>137</sup> Whether we should include *KP* in works we might designate Jewish Christian is very difficult. It does not seem that those entering the community had to be circumcised<sup>138</sup> and the attitude of the author to other Jewish practices is difficult to determine. The anti-Paulinism of the text, the acceptance of the legitimacy of the Jewish covenant, the strong emphasis on the law, and some of the attitudes present in the ‘epistula Petri’ might point us in a Jewish Christian direction. But certainty cannot be reached on this question, not least because of the genuine problems in the suggestion of the existence of a separate source with such a name.

#### D THE JEWISH CHRISTIAN GOSPELS

It is now generally accepted, on the basis of a series of complex and, at times, contradictory, patristic witnesses, that we possess fragments from

<sup>136</sup> Both discussed by Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, 187f.

<sup>137</sup> We should not posit any kind of a relationship between them.

<sup>138</sup> On this see E. Molland, ‘La circonsion, le baptême et l’autorité du décret apostolique (Actes xv, 28f) dans les milieux judéo-chrétiens des Pseudo-Clémentines’, *StTh* 9 (1955), 1–39 (= *Opuscula Patristica* (Oslo 1970), 25–59). She argues that baptism is described in such a way in *KP* as to exclude circumcision, and that considerable importance is attached to the so-called Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.28 (see esp. *Hom.* 7.4, 8; *Rec.* 4.36).



three different Jewish Christian gospels.<sup>139</sup> Two of these, the gospel of the Ebionites<sup>140</sup> and the gospel of the Nazarenes,<sup>141</sup> appear to bear a direct relationship to the sects of that name which we have discussed above, while a third, the gospel of the Hebrews,<sup>142</sup> does not, at least explicitly.

The fragments themselves do not extend our knowledge of Jewish Christianity in any significant way.<sup>143</sup> The gospel of the Ebionites,<sup>144</sup> which appears to make harmonizing use of the synoptic gospels,<sup>145</sup> seems to have been written by a Jewish Christian with vegetarian (*Pan.* 30.13.4f; 22.4) and anti-cultic tendencies (30.16.4f), both of which bring it into close proximity with some of the characteristics of the Jewish Christian sources of the Pseudo-Clementines.<sup>146</sup> The gospel of the Nazarenes, thought

<sup>139</sup> See P. Vielhauer and G. Strecker, 'Jewish-Christian Gospels', in *New Testament Apocrypha*; rev. edn, ed. W. S. Scheemelchor (ET Cambridge 1991), 134–78, R. Mcl. Wilson, 'Judenchristliche Evangelien' in *TRE* III, 328–9; and A. F. J. Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition* (Leiden 1992), 27f. The three-gospels theory has been questioned by Mr David Chapman in an as yet unpublished seminar paper. While Chapman accepts the arguments for a separate gospel of the Ebionites, he is unsure about the validity of the arguments in favour of separating testimony to a gospel of the Nazarenes from a gospel of the Hebrews, a separation which Jerome appears to negate. Chapman argues that scepticism about the witness of Jerome is perhaps exaggerated, and, more importantly, that the thesis that a passage from Eusebius (*HE* 4.22.8) should be taken to imply that Hegesippus knew two gospels, one a gospel of the Hebrews, and one a gospel from the Syriac (the originally semitic gospel of the Nazarenes), is based upon some dubious syntactical judgements. So the lone phrase *kai tou Syriakou*, following on from *ek te tou kathi Hebraious euangelion*, need not refer to a gospel in Aramaic but to a competency in the language attributed by Eusebius to the supposedly Jewish Hegesippus, or, alternatively, could be understood as following an exegetic *kai*, and referring to a gospel of the Hebrews in Aramaic. None of these arguments is overwhelming but they are a helpful challenge to the consensus.

<sup>140</sup> For a discussion of the Gospel of the Ebionites see P. Vielhauer, 'Judenchristliche', 100f; M. A. Bertrand, 'L'évangile des Ebionites. Une harmonie évangélique antérieure au Diatessaron', *NTS* 26 (1980), 548–63; and G. Howard, 'The Gospel of the Ebionites', in *ANRW* 25.2 (Berlin, New York 1988), 4034–53.

<sup>141</sup> See Vielhauer, *ibid.*, 90f; and A. F. J. Klijn, 'Das Hebräer- und das Nazaräerevangelium', *ANRW* 25.5 (Berlin and New York 1988), 3997–4033.

<sup>142</sup> See Vielhauer, *ibid.*, 104–7; Pritz, *Nazarene*, pp. 83–94; and Klijn in n. 123 above.

<sup>143</sup> On the basis of the fragments and nothing else, it would be very difficult to classify the gospels as Jewish Christian. The only fragment which makes direct reference to the law is found in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* (see Klijn, *Jewish-Christian*, pp. 134–5), a doubtful fragment, preserved in Coptic and first attested in the seventh century. Interestingly, the fragment talks about Jesus changing the customs of the Jewish law (see Acts 6:14). The same gospel, as we will note, attributes an important place to James.

<sup>144</sup> Our information for this gospel is found only in Epiphanius. *Panarion* 30.

<sup>145</sup> On this see Bertrand, 'L'Évangile'.

<sup>146</sup> See Jones, *Jewish Christian*, pp. 148–9, who on the basis of supposed parallels between the gospel of the Ebionites and *AJII*, one of which is the anti-cultic tendency of both, supposes that the former was a source of the latter.

by many commentators to be broadly based upon Matthew's gospel, seems to have contained little within it that might have been deemed heretical. In this aspect and in its strong condemnation of the Jewish authorities (Origen, *Comm. in Matt.* 15.4), it seems to bear a close relationship to the Nazarene sect discussed above.<sup>147</sup> The gospel of the Hebrews seems to be reliant upon non-canonical sources. It affirms the pre-existence of Jesus, and describes the Holy Spirit as the mother of Jesus (Origen, *Hom. in Jer.* 15.4), an observation which has led some to speak of its gnosticizing tendency.<sup>148</sup> Its claim to be a Jewish Christian gospel seems to emerge from the fact that it attributes considerable importance to James (Jerome, *de viris ill.* 2), who, as in the *Gospel of Thomas* (12), appears to be a follower of Jesus before the resurrection, and to have been present at the last supper.

#### E JEWISH CHRISTIANITY AND GNOSTICISM

In the history of the study of Jewish Christianity, the spectre of gnosticism has (inevitably perhaps) raised its head in a variety of forms. A number of brief points can be made.

(a) Much of the debate hinges on how we define gnosticism, and what we see as distinctively gnostic characteristics. Debate on this matter has been extensive.

(b) It is not *prima facie* unlikely that some Jewish Christians may have been influenced by certain gnostic ideas,<sup>149</sup> however we may define these, though it is unlikely that Jewish Christianity was the means by which gnosticism was mediated to the church.<sup>150</sup>

(c) The importance of the figure of James and of distinctively Jewish Christian traditions concerning James in some gnostic texts is an indication, of whatever kind, of an interconnection between Jewish Christianity

<sup>147</sup> For its preoccupation with Jewish themes see Klijn, *Jewish-Christian*, p. 40.

<sup>148</sup> In particular see Vielhauer, *ibid.*, 105. Klijn, *Jewish-Christian*, pp. 39–40, prefers to see the christological background of the gospel in Jewish Christian wisdom theology.

<sup>149</sup> For a strong endorsement of this view, see Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, pp. 145f; and O. Cullmann, *Le problème littéraire et historique du roman pseudoclémentine. Étude sur le rapport entre le gnosticisme et le judéo-christianisme* (Paris 1930), both arguing with reference to the *KP* source. Schoeps, *Theologie*, on the other hand, saw no sign of gnosticism in Jewish Christianity.

<sup>150</sup> This is the view of Daniélou, 'Judéo-Christianisme et Gnose' in *Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme* (Strasbourg 1965), 139–66, which is discussed and summarized by R. McL. Wilson, 'Jewish Christianity and Gnosticism' in *RSR* 60 (1972), 267–9.

and gnosticism, and, perhaps more interestingly, an indication of the importance of earlier groups revering James.<sup>151</sup>

#### G SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

(i) The pieces of literary evidence we have discussed above have hinted at the complex character of Jewish Christian communities and their theology. We have seen, for instance, that some Jewish Christian communities produced their own Gospels, their own aetiologically orientated histories (*AJIII*), and their own commentaries on biblical books (the Nazarene commentary on Isaiah). Some, furthermore, developed their own distinctive hermeneutical positions (*KP*'s theory of false pericopes), and some appear to have had their own officers and church buildings in which sacraments of a distinctive kind were administered (e.g. the Ebionites). We have also found evidence of the differing Jewish Christian christologies. But these remain hints at complexity and not much more than that.

(ii) The individual groups whom we have discussed above had in common a combined commitment to the observance of instinctively Jewish laws and to the worship of Christ. They usually expressed this commitment beyond the bounds of both church and synagogue, in self-contained groups, though such a judgement is perhaps less applicable to the Nazarenes.

But these groups differed from each other on a variety of significant issues. One might mention in this respect, the issues of the law, christology, the Gentiles and Paul. With regard to the law, Nazarenes, Ebionites and Elchasaites, appear to have adopted all the distinctive Jewish identity markers, while the position of the authors of *AJIII* and the *Kerygmata Petrou* on this issue seems more complex. With regard to Paul, while most appear to have taken a hostile view, though for perhaps different reasons, the Nazarenes expressed no hostility towards him. An open attitude to the Gentile mission is witnessed in equal measure to a negative attitude,

<sup>151</sup> See in particular, *Gospel of Thomas* 12; *Apoc. Ep. Jak.*; 1 and 2 *Apoc. Jak.*, and Pratscher, *Herrenbrüder*, pp. 151–77. In these, and other texts, considerable significance is attached to James as the mediator of revelation, as the prototype gnostic, precisely because of his close relationship to Jesus. It should be noted, however, that the Torah-observing James of Jewish Christian tradition seems to have disappeared altogether. As Pratscher states: 'Der Jakobus der Gnosis ist gegenüber dem des nomistischen Judenchristentums ein durchaus anderer geworden' (*ibid.* 177). On the relationship between gnosticism and Jewish Christianity in these texts see A. Böhlig, 'Der judenchristliche Hintergrund in gnostischen Schriften von Nag Hammadi' in (ed.) *Mysterion und Wahrheit. Gesammelte Beiträge zur spätantiken Religionsgeschichte* (Leiden 1968), pp. 102–11.

and we find a variety of christologies, both low and high, adoptionist and orthodox. In the face of this diverse evidence, some scholars have wished to construct taxonomies of Jewish Christianity. S. G. Wilson, for example, wants to speak of three types – Nazarene (an open-ended Jewish Christianity in support of Paul and his mission), Jacobite (Jewish Christianity associated with James, including the Epistle of James and *AJII*, which was not opposed to the Gentile mission, though opposed to Paul), and Ebionite (opposed to Paul and the Gentile mission).<sup>152</sup> Here we might discern, in broad terms at least, the continuation, directly or indirectly, of groupings already present in the New Testament, though on this point we must show a degree of caution. Wilson admits that his taxonomy is an approximation,<sup>153</sup> and it might be argued that it is too neat to fit the evidence, not least because it is too narrow in the selection of the subject matter on the basis of which the groupings are made, and too broad in the categorizations it makes. So when Wilson points out that there are a number of things held in common between Ebionites and Jacobites, is it really justifiable to maintain that the affiliation to James on the part of the latter is sufficient to maintain the separate groupings?

(iii) The term Jewish Christian implies a certain relationship of the groups under discussion to Judaism.<sup>154</sup> Apart from their varied endorsements of Jewish legal prescriptions, what other evidence do we have of their attitudes to Judaism? Again, although we are ill-informed on this matter, we can make some general observations. In a number of our sources we encounter negative attitudes. In this connection we might point to the condemnation of the Jewish cult in *AJII* and elsewhere, the accounts of hostility towards Christians on the part of some Jews, most notably in the various accounts of James's martyrdom, and the condemnation of the Pharisees, found in the *Kerygmata Petrou* and, in particular, the Nazarene commentary on Isaiah (here specifically aimed against the rabbis). But these polemical comments, none of which are aimed against the entire Jewish nation, should be balanced by noting a series of more positive observations. First, in a number of the sources, a genuine interest is shown in missionizing non-Christian Jews.<sup>155</sup> Secondly, some sources

<sup>152</sup> *Strangers*, pp. 148–59. <sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>154</sup> Note the comments of patristic authors. At one place Origen describes the Ebionites as Jewish ('*ioudaios*') (*Comm. in Luc.* 14.18). Epiphanius describes the Nazarenes as 'in everything Jews and nothing else' (*Pan.* 29.7.1), and Jerome states that the same group want to be both Jews and Christians (*Ep.* 112.13). Note should also be taken of the connection Justin makes between becoming a Jewish Christian and becoming a Jew at *Dial.* 47.4.

<sup>155</sup> This applies in particular to Hegesippus' account of James's death in Eusebius, *EH* 2.23; *AJII*; and the Nazarenes.

seek to minimize the differences between Jewish Christians and Jews. Here particular attention ought to be drawn to the comment in *Rec.* 1.43.2 that the difference between Jewish Christians and Jews is simply the former's confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Such a statement seems to add some substance to Jerome's claim, admittedly made in relation to the Nazarenes, that they wish to be both Jews and Christians (*Ep.* 112.13). Even more appealing in tone is the statement, found at *Hom.* 8.6–7, and in a modified form in *Rec.* 4.5, in which the independent legitimacy of the two covenants between the Jews and Moses and God, and the Christians and Jesus and God, is affirmed. A precise parallel to this idea is found in the *Epistula Petri* where the followers of Moses become models for the followers of Christ.<sup>156</sup> These are necessarily fragmentary remarks and no detailed canvas can be painted. Attitudes to Jews varied, and were no doubt affected by the reaction of Jews to Jewish Christians.

#### VIII JEWISH CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING TO JEWISH SOURCES

How did Jews perceive Jewish Christians? And how did they react to them? These are questions which the extant Jewish sources barely allow us to answer, and this for at least two reasons. First, we are generally ill-served by Jewish sources for the period from the writing of Josephus' *Contra Apionem* (about CE 90) to the beginning of the third century and the publication of Mishnah. Secondly, from that period to the fourth century and beyond, we are restricted in the main for our knowledge of Judaism to rabbinic sources and some inscriptions. While the rabbis make reference to other groups of Jews and non-Jews, it is often very difficult to determine to whom precisely they are referring.<sup>157</sup> In this respect we need only examine their profligate use of the term 'minim', usually translated as 'heretics' or 'apostates'. With regard to our own investigation, our situation is made even more difficult because even if on occasions we accept that the term 'minim' may refer to Christians, it is often almost impossible to go further and say it refers unambiguously to Jewish Christians.

<sup>156</sup> See Wilson, *Strangers*, pp. 152 and 155, who notes a possible parallel with *Barnabas* 4.6; and Strecker's discussion of the same passage in *Judenchristentum*, pp. 164–5, who argues that affirmation of the parity of the two revelations is a consequence of the theory of the true prophet who bears the true revelation through different people throughout time.

<sup>157</sup> On this see Visotzky, 'Prolegomenon', 63–4.

A JOSEPHUS (*ANT.* XX.197–203)

The first non-Christian Jew to refer to those whom we might call Jewish Christians is Josephus. In *Ant.* xx.197–203, he gives us a very brief account of the execution by order of the High Priest, Ananias, of ‘James, the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ, and some others’ on the charge of lawlessness (*ὡς παρανομησάντων κατηγορίαν ποιησάμενος . . .*, 200).<sup>158</sup> He goes on to record how some Jews, who were strict in the interpretation of the law, objected to this action and succeeded in having the High Priest deposed by King Agrippa II, under some pressure from the incoming governor, Albinus.

There are a number of things to note about this passage. First, it is very difficult to conclude anything on the basis of it about Josephus’ attitude to Jewish Christians. He appears to pass no judgement himself upon the incident, in part because his main concern is to tell us about the deposing of Ananus.<sup>159</sup> Apart from stating that James was the brother of Jesus, ‘the so-called Christ’, he shows no awareness that James belonged to what he termed elsewhere ‘the tribe of the Christians’ (*Ant.* xviii.64). In fact he shows no knowledge of James apart from this incident, and it is not at all clear that those ‘some others’ executed with James were themselves Jewish Christians. Secondly, if we accept that Josephus’ account of the incident is basically accurate, it still presents many problems of interpretation, particularly in relation to understanding the nature of the reaction to James and those executed with him. What we seemed to be faced with, at least *prima facie*, is a hostile reaction on the part of some to an illegal use of power on the part of a leading official. But to what extent was that reaction motivated by a desire on the part of those who were probably

<sup>158</sup> See n. 58 above and the references to the discussion of this passage in Pratscher and Bernheim, and also Hengel, ‘Papst’, 73f.

<sup>159</sup> We should note the tradition found in Origen, *c. Cels.* 2.13 and *Comm. in Matt.* 10.17, and Eusebius, *HE* 2.23, that Josephus attributed the fall of Jerusalem to the death of James. Such a claim is found in no extant manuscripts of Josephus, and has generally been dismissed by scholars. Bernheim, *Jacques*, 328–31 (ET 250–3), has sought to defend the evidence of Origen and Eusebius, arguing that such a tradition would have been offensive to a Christian for whom the fall of Jerusalem was directly attributable to the death of Jesus. Hence the omission of this passage from the original text of Josephus by a Christian scribe becomes understandable if one appreciates its potential to offend. Moreover, if one accepts that Josephus saw James as a decent person in favour of peace, then it is not unlikely that the former would have seen the death of the latter as causing the wrath of God. But Bernheim’s thesis seems unlikely not least because he has to assume a positive attitude on the part of Josephus to James.

Pharisees to get rid of a despised High Priest?<sup>160</sup> And if we reject the political explanation, can we say anything more generally about the actual attitudes of ‘those strict in the interpretation of the law’ to Jewish Christians?<sup>161</sup>

Briefly stated, I do not believe that these questions can be answered with any degree of certainty. At its most basic the incident tells us that the Jewish Christian James was regarded as a Jew by other Jews, and that his execution caused the downfall of a High Priest. This could mean that there were some non-Christian Jews, perhaps of the Pharisaic party, who sympathized with him and even his movement. But it need not mean that. Little that is certain can be learnt from this incident about Jewish reaction to Jewish Christians in the pre-70 period.

#### B THE RABBINIC EVIDENCE

Assessments of rabbinic evidence relating to Jewish Christians have varied considerably. While Herford,<sup>162</sup> writing at the beginning of this century, saw a number of references to Jewish Christians in the Talmud, Tosefta and Midrash, a more recent scholar such as Maier<sup>163</sup> is much more sceptical about the matter, without, however, being utterly dismissive. Most recently Visotzky<sup>164</sup> has appeared altogether more sanguine, and sought to extend Herford’s and others’ list of references.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>160</sup> This view has been argued by E. Mary Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule* (Leiden 1976), pp. 279–80 and tentatively endorsed by Hengel, *ibid.*, 74, but rejected by both Pratscher, *Herrenbrüder*, pp. 232–3 (in part), and Bernheim, *Jacques*, pp. 326–7 (ET 248–9). The latter argues that it would be unlikely for people strict in the interpretation of the law to support a man who apparently had transgressed the law. It is more likely that he had not transgressed the law, and that they did believe that his death was genuinely unjust. But as Hill, *Hellenists*, p. 188, has argued, *Ant.* xx.201 would seem to make it clear that the issue centred on the legality of Ananus’ actions, not the innocence of James.

<sup>161</sup> Pratscher, *ibid.*, 237f, suggests that the Jewish Christians were potentially closer to the Pharisees than were the Sadducees. For a not dissimilar suggestion, see Hengel, *ibid.*, 74, who sees the Hillelite wing of the Pharisees as more sympathetic towards the Jewish Christians than they were towards the Sadducees. Hill, *Hellenists*, following Martin Goodman, argues that the opponents of Ananus should not be seen as exclusively pharisaic as the pharisees were not the supporters of one party in this period.

<sup>162</sup> R. T. Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (London 1903).

<sup>163</sup> Johann Maier, *Jüdische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Christentum in der Antike* (Darmstadt 1982).

<sup>164</sup> ‘Prolegomenon’, esp. 63–70.

<sup>165</sup> For a recent bibliography on the question of Jewish Christians in rabbinic literature, see S. Mimouni, ‘La Birkat Ha-Minim: une prière juive contre les judéo-chrétiens’, *RSR* 71 (1997), 275–98, esp. 276, n. 3 (the first part of a two-part article).



One of our major difficulties in assessing rabbinic evidence for Jewish Christians lies, as stated above, in the less than clear way in which the rabbis in general refer to their opponents. Often these people are simply referred to as ‘minim’ or heretics, and yet the accusation of minuth or heresy could apply to a variety of things. This problem looms large in discussion of the so-called ‘cursing of the heretics’, or the twelfth Benediction of the Eighteen Benedictions or *Amidah*.

There is not sufficient space to discuss this problem at any length here.<sup>166</sup> A number of things seem clear, however. First, it is very difficult to establish the original reading of the twelfth benediction and the original context in which it was promulgated. In relation to the former, most seem agreed that the word ‘noserim’ was not a part of the original.<sup>167</sup> Secondly, even if it is clear from patristic evidence that the curse was applied to Christians,<sup>168</sup> the term ‘minim’ is not confined to Christians, and so the curse could have applied to others as well. Thirdly, as Kimelman and Alexander have argued, ‘The term (*min*) marks a significant attempt to draw a distinction between orthodoxy and heresy. In Rabbinic terms a *min* was basically a Jew who did not accept the authority of the Rabbis and who rejected Rabbinic Halakah.’<sup>169</sup> If this is a correct interpretation of the term,<sup>170</sup> then insofar as the curse applied to Christians, it would have applied to Jewish Christians, i.e. Christians who still attended the synagogue, and still led a Jewish way of life. This is the implication of at

<sup>166</sup> A helpful summary of recent work on the twelfth benediction is found in P. W. van der Horst, ‘The Birkat ha-minim in recent research’ in *Hellenism-Judaism-Christianity* (Kampen 1994), pp. 99–111. Amongst the articles and books he cites, particular importance should be attached to R. Kimelman, ‘The Birkath ha-minim and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity’ in ed. E. P. Sanders, *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, II: Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman World* (London 1981), pp. 226–44; J. Maier, *Auseinandersetzung*; W. Horbury, ‘The Benediction of the *Minim* and Early Jewish-Christian Controversy’, *JTS* NS 33 (1982), 19–61; and Lawrence Schiffmann, *Who was a Jew? Rabbinic and Halakic Perspectives on the Jewish Christian Schism* (Hoboken 1985). Also of help is P. Alexander, ‘Parting’, 6–11.

<sup>167</sup> See Alexander, *ibid.*, 7.

<sup>168</sup> The evidence here is ambiguous. Justin, *Dial.*, speaks of the cursing of Christ and Christians (16; 47; 93; 95; 96; 108; 123; 133; 137), but never unambiguously connects this with a prayer (in 137 he speaks about cursing *after* a prayer). Jerome (*Ep.* 112.13) and Epiphanius (*Pan.* 29.9.1) speak of the cursing of the Nazarenes i.e. the sect of that name, but Jerome speaks elsewhere of the cursing of Christians under the name of the Nazarenes (*Comm. in Isa.* II on 5:18–19; XIII on 49:7; XIV on 52:4–6).

<sup>169</sup> Alexander, *ibid.*, 9.

<sup>170</sup> On the different applications of the term ‘min’ in the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmud, see Kimelman, *ibid.*, 228–32. The latter seems to imply an external referent for the term.

least some of the statements about the curse made by Epiphanius and Jerome, though Justin, writing some two hundred years before, seems to imply a more general application of the curse to all Christians.<sup>171</sup> Fourthly, if the curse was introduced by rabbis at Jamnia, we should assume that it was only uttered in those synagogues over which the rabbis had control, which at least until the third century must have been quite a small number. This last point is a salutary reminder that it is easy to overestimate the importance of the Birkath ha-minim in assessing the nature of relations between Jews and Jewish Christians, and indeed of Jews and Christians in general.

Other rabbinic evidence seems to confirm the impression given us by the Birkath ha-minim of a generally negative response on the part of the rabbis to Jewish Christians. We might, in this respect, point to evidence concerning the 'sifrei minim' and 'gilyonim' or Gospels,<sup>172</sup> and the prohibition, found in the Tosefta, against having any kind of social contact with a min.<sup>173</sup> Stories relating to Jacob of Kefar Sama and his contact with various rabbis seem to convey the same impression of a strongly negative response.<sup>174</sup>

However, some of the same evidence can implicitly be seen as pointing to a positive response on the part of some Jews to Jewish Christians. The stories relating to Jacob indicate that some rabbis could hold positive opinions about Jewish Christians, even if they found themselves subsequently admonished by their colleagues. Further evidence for the ambivalent attitude of some Rabbis towards Jewish Christians is presented by Marmorstein<sup>175</sup> and Simon.<sup>176</sup> They claim that the term *Poshe Israel*, which they argue is a less harsh term than *minim*, can be taken on many occasions to refer to Jewish Christians, and that some of these references are of a positive character. But their case for such an identification is far from proven.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>171</sup> See n. 156 above. The evidence from Justin is often dealt with by arguing that he mistook a curse aimed at Jewish Christians for one aimed at Christians in general. Of the scholars mentioned above Horbury is keenest to take the references in Justin at face value.

<sup>172</sup> See inter alia *Tos. Yad.* 2.13; *Tos. Shabb.* 13 (14).5, and Alexander, *ibid.*, 12–15, but these need not be Jewish Christian gospels.

<sup>173</sup> *Tos. Hull.* 2.20–1, and Alexander, *ibid.*, 15–16.

<sup>174</sup> See *Tos. Hull.* 2.22–4. These stories and their parallels are discussed at some length by Bauckham, *Jude*, 106–21.

<sup>175</sup> 'Judaism and Christianity in the middle of the third century', *HUCA* (1935), 223f.

<sup>176</sup> *Verus*, 256f.

<sup>177</sup> So, for instance, there is absolutely no evidence to certify the view that the *Poshim* who are described as prevented from the fire of Gehenna because they are so full of *mizwoth* (b. Hagig. 27a), are Jewish Christians.

In the end the rabbinic material affords us very little new unambiguous evidence about Jewish Christianity. Probably many rabbis found themselves opposed to Jewish Christians as they found themselves opposed to other groups which sought to propagate their opinions amongst their fellow Jews. And no doubt the nature and effectiveness of their opposition increased as, first Christianity become a predominantly Gentile movement, and then the official religion of the Empire, and secondly the Rabbis became a dominant force within Judaism. But the rabbinic evidence does hint at a more complex reaction to Jewish Christians on the part of Jews more generally (not least by the fact of the existence of a *Bikath ha-minim*), a reaction which perhaps depended upon the individual set of circumstances which prevailed in individual Jewish and Jewish Christian communities.

## IX JEWISH CHRISTIANITY WITHIN ANCIENT JUDAISM

When Jerome noted, polemically, that the Nazarenes wanted to be both Jews and Christians, but ended up being neither (*Ep.* 112.13), he was giving voice to an unfortunate reality which beset Jewish Christian groups. In wanting to be both Jewish and Christian, they found themselves excluded, on the one hand, by an ever-increasingly Gentile church, and on the other, by a Judaism which was becoming dominated by a rabbinic intolerance of the presence of groups which diverged from its opinions. For Christians, Jewish Christians were intolerably Jewish, and for Jews they seemed intolerably Christian. And yet it would be wrong to dismiss them from an account of the history of Judaism or Christianity.

In relation to their place within the history of Judaism, we can only make comments of a general kind. First, some of the evidence we have alluded to implies an acceptance on the part of some Jews that Jewish Christians need not be excluded from Judaism, and we do know of Jews even into the fourth century who remained within Judaism while secretly being Christians.<sup>178</sup> Secondly, it is perfectly reasonable to see Jewish Christianity as a messianic sect within Judaism. The polemic can be seen to reflect an internal debate on a par with other forms of sectarian debate within Judaism, as seems to be reflected in *AJIII*. Thirdly, and perhaps most speculatively, aspects of the various Jewish Christianities' theology which we have examined, can be seen, as Schoeps indeed saw them,<sup>179</sup> as

<sup>178</sup> See Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.4.1f. and his discussion of the life of Joseph of Tiberias; and for further evidence of so-called secret Christians, see Jones, *Jewish Christian*, pp. 165–6.

<sup>179</sup> *Theologie*, esp. pp. 247f.

developments of trends already present within certain strands of pre-70 Judaism. In this respect Schoeps and others have pointed to parallels between Jewish Christian groups, especially the Ebionites, and the Essenes and the sect of the Dead Sea Scrolls. While these parallels are not that striking,<sup>180</sup> it is not unreasonable to see aspects of Jewish Christian theology, for instance, the anti-cultic stance of some of the texts we have discussed, as continuations of trends already present within non-Christian Judaism. Here certain forms of Jewish Christianity, especially those which engaged with other Jews, might have perceived themselves as forming a reform movement within Judaism.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>180</sup> J. L. Teicher, 'The Dead Sea Scrolls: Documents of the Jewish-Christian Sect of Ebionites', *JJS* 2 (1951), 65–77, discussed (with other studies by Teicher) by G. R. Driver, *The Judaean Scrolls* (Oxford 1965), 158–67; see also Bauckham, 'Jewish Christians', in *Encyclopedia of Qumran*.

<sup>181</sup> See Schoeps, *Theologie*, pp. 247f.

## CHAPTER 23

APOCALYPTIC: THE DISCLOSURE  
OF HEAVENLY KNOWLEDGE

## I DEFINING APOCALYPTIC

Much of the material in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha dealt with in chapter 12 in volume II is concerned with what is referred to as apocalyptic. This is an aspect of Judaism over which there has been much dispute as to its interpretation and significance, and it is appropriate at this point in the history to attempt to assess it. This is not because, as has sometimes been erroneously asserted, apocalyptic became a spent force after the Roman period: it continued, and broke out with volcanic intensity in the Sabbatianism of the seventeenth century and is still alive. An assessment is necessary here for another reason. The increasingly dominant Rabbinic form of Judaism, which gained ascendancy after the collapse of the revolts against Rome in the first century, overshadowed apocalyptic, sometimes aggressively rejected it and often came to regard concentration upon it as a menace. Perhaps particularly under the vast influence of the great work of G. F. Moore, who had reacted against what he considered an over-concentration on apocalyptic to the neglect of Rabbinic sources, the view became common that, like Seventh Day Adventism, for example, within contemporary Christianity, apocalyptic belonged to the fringes of Judaism. As a result it was urged that apocalyptic materials should not be taken as representative of essential Judaism: this distinction was reserved for more strictly Rabbinic sources.

This view was contested by W. D. Davies and others who rejected any sharp distinction between Pharisaic or Rabbinic Judaism and apocalyptic. And in recent years there has been renewed interest in apocalyptic and in its place in Jewish and Christian theology.

There are Jewish works from the Second Temple period which offer revelations of divine secrets and are similar in form and content to the New Testament apocalypse, from which they derive their generic description 'apocalypse' (Rev. 1:1). The use of ἀποκάλυψις/ἀποκαλύπτω to describe a revelation of God or of divine secrets is relatively rare in Jewish literature written round about the time of Revelation<sup>1</sup> and includes

a work probably heavily interpolated by a Christian editor, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and Joseph and Aseneth.

The words are more common in the New Testament. In the gospels ἀποκάλυψις is found at Luke 2:32 in a context where already the revelation of a mystery, which angels desire to look upon had been celebrated as part of the immediately preceding context (2:13, cf. 1 Peter 1:11f). ἀποκαλύπτω appears in contexts dealing with the eschatological revelation of human secrets (Matt. 10:26/ Luke 12:2 and Luke 2:35), divine secrets (Matt. 11:25/ Luke 10:21; Matt. 16:17, and in the quotation of Isa. 53:1 in John. 12:38. The Fourth Gospel uses φανερώω in 1:31; 2:11; 7:4; 9:3; 17:6; 21:1) and of the day of the Son of Man in Luke 17:30. Although the Gospel of John does not use the language of the apocalyptic tradition, it has recently been described as ‘an apocalypse in reverse’.<sup>2</sup> In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus is presented as one who came to utter revelation (13:35). The way of God comes through dreams (Matt. 1:20; 2:13; 2:19; 27:19). The disciples are among those ones to whom divine insight has been given (16:17). Children understand and respond to Christ (cf. 11:25f). They along with the lame and blind recognize Jesus in the Temple (21:15). The angels of ‘the little ones’ are those closest to God and are vouchsafed the supreme privilege of a vision of God (18:10). Apocalyptic terminology is central to Paul’s self-understanding (Gal. 1:12). It is something past for him but a future hope also (1 Cor. 1:7, cf. 2 Thess. 1:7; cf. 1 Peter 1:7, 1:13 and 4:13). The gospel is that which is made manifest, a mystery of hidden things (Rom. 3:21; Col. 1:26; Romans 16:25). The opening chapters of 1 Corinthians reflect a wisdom which is not attainable merely by the exercise of reason, though it may be supported by the conventional use of scriptural reasoning. The gospel is a mystery hidden from the rulers of the present age (1 Cor. 2:6f). The divine wisdom, to which the true apostle has access and of which he is a steward (1 Cor. 4:1), is a mystery taught by the Spirit. It can only be understood by others who themselves have the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10). The divine wisdom manifests itself in surprising turns in salvation history (Rom. 11:25, 33) but pre-eminently in the mystery revealed in Christ (Col. 1:26; 2:3).

The word apocalypse is used to refer to literary texts which offer revelation specifically divine. In the modern period apocalyptic has been used as a heuristic device which serves as a generic label for a collection

<sup>1</sup> The evidence is set out in M. Smith ‘On the History of ἀποκαλύπτω/ἀποκάλυψις’ in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and Near East* (ed. D. Hellholm) 2nd edn (Tübingen 1989), pp. 9ff and M. N. A. Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery* (Tübingen 1990).

<sup>2</sup> J. Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford 1991), p. 405; *Studying John* (Oxford 1994); J. A. Bühner, *Der Gesandte und sein Weg* (Tübingen 1977); and Kanagaraj *Mysticism in the Gospel of John* (Sheffield 1998).

of revelatory, symbolic and eschatological ideas.<sup>3</sup> Interest in apocalyptic and its place in Jewish and Christian theology has been widespread over the last eighty years or so as New Testament commentators have been wrestling with the implications of the work of Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer, both of whom made apocalyptic central to their discussion of Christian origins. Much of this discussion, however, has oscillated between using the words apocalyptic and eschatological. Consequently, treatment of apocalyptic has, perhaps inevitably, ended up as a discussion of eschatology, with well-defined characteristics: the imminent end of this world; a deterministic view of history; a message couched in extravagant symbolism; and the introduction from above, amidst cataclysmic disorders, or a transcendent realm.<sup>4</sup>

This eschatological orientation of the understanding of apocalyptic demands a little explanation. A concern throughout the book of Revelation is with a future hope for a better world, expressed in imagery similar to that found in other apocalypses (e.g. Dan. 2:31ff, 7:1ff, 8:3ff and 1 Enoch 85ff) and with a belief in the irruption of God's way into the historical process (Rev. 6:1ff, 19:11ff, 22:20). The use of the word apocalyptic to describe this cluster of ideas is widespread, and it is important to recognize this semantic development, in order to understand how apocalyptic has come to be used virtually as a synonym for eschatology. A distinction is often made, however, between the literary genre, the apocalypse, apocalyptic eschatology, which may be characterized as a religious perspective in which divine plans are viewed in relation to mundane realities, and apocalypticism, 'which refers to the symbolic universe in which an apocalyptic movement codifies its identity and interpretation of reality'.<sup>5</sup>

One of the features of this approach to apocalyptic is a clear distinction between the apocalypse and the cluster of ideas known as apocalyptic, or apocalypticism. As a result it is sometimes suggested that apocalypses may not always be the best witnesses to the religious outlook which we designate apocalyptic. Indeed, an apocalypse may, in theory at least, offer no evidence of apocalyptic whatsoever.<sup>6</sup> The distinction between the apocalypse as a literary genre and apocalyptic as a type of eschatological thought has led to considerable confusion. When we find that the religious

<sup>3</sup> J. Schmidt, *Die jüdische Apokalyptik* (Neukirchen 1969).

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. the discussion of apocalyptic in E. Henneke, rev. edn W. Schneemelcher, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* (Tübingen 1989), vol. 2, pp. 516–47; ET *New Testament Apocrypha* (London 1992), vol. 2, pp. 569–602.

<sup>5</sup> 'Apocalypticism' in *IDBSup*, pp. 28–39.

<sup>6</sup> So M. E. Stone 'Lists of Revealed Things in Apocalyptic Literature' in ed. F. M. Cross, *Magnalia Dei* Fs G. E. Wright (New York 1976), especially pp. 439–43 and J. J. Collins *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* vol. 1 (New York 1998).



beliefs of the apocalypses do not conform to the apocalyptic type as usually defined, and the eschatology of the apocalypses only occasionally evinces what are considered to be the characteristic features of apocalyptic eschatology, our understanding of the pattern of ideas usually identified as apocalyptic may be better categorized by some other term, say, transcendent eschatology, thus reserving the word apocalyptic to describe the distinctive religious outlook of the apocalypses themselves.

The approach to apocalyptic colours the way in which the origins of apocalyptic are often outlined. When the heart of apocalyptic is its distinctive eschatology, there is a search for eschatological passages in the Old Testament (e.g. Isa. 24–7, Joel, Trito-Isaiah and Zechariah)<sup>7</sup> which seem to provide the antecedents of an eschatology which is regarded as the focal point of apocalyptic. The preoccupation with certain Old Testament passages which evince an eschatology of a particular type reflects the extent to which investigation has been dominated by the eschatological orientation to apocalyptic. This widely accepted definition of apocalyptic which stresses its eschatological characteristics at the expense of other elements must be questioned because it has scarcely done justice to the religious perspective of the apocalypses.

The discovery of the Enoch fragments in Cave 4 at Qumran has pushed back the origin of this work well into the third century BCE.<sup>8</sup> The question arises, therefore, of the relationship between the later biblical material and the earliest parts of 1 Enoch. The two important areas for understanding the origin of apocalyptic, prophecy and wisdom, both have considerable affinities with this early apocalypse. It is not just the eschatological teaching of the prophetic literature which is important, therefore, but the conviction, inherent in Ezek. 1 and elsewhere, that God is revealed to certain chosen agents. The mode of revelation found in the prophetic literature was one, which according to Jewish tradition passed into oblivion with the last of the prophets (Tos. Sotah 13:2). But with Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi did prophecy finish or did it carry on in one form or another? Hints like Zech. 13:2ff suggest that it did. What is more, the visionary character of Zech. 1–8 already points in the direction of later apocalyptic visions.<sup>9</sup> Thus, that quest for higher knowledge so characteristic of apocalyptic, can be grounded in scripture in the claims

<sup>7</sup> See O. Plöger *Theokratie und Eschatologie* (Neukirchen, edn 2, 1962; 1959), ET *Theocracy and Eschatology* (Oxford 1968), P. D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia 1975), edn 2 1979, cf. J. Barton, *The Oracles of God* (London 1986).

<sup>8</sup> J. T. Milik, *The Book of Enoch* (Oxford 1976) and C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (Atlanta 1985).

<sup>9</sup> C. Jeremias, *Die Nachtgesichte des Sacharja* (Göttingen 1977); Barton, *Oracles*.

of the prophets to direct, visionary experience and to knowledge of the debates in the heavenly court.

When we attempt to ascertain the religious outlook of the apocalypses, it becomes difficult to place such great weight on eschatology as the key to our interpretation of these texts. An interest in the future is found in most apocalypses, but the character of this interest and its relationship to other features demand careful consideration.<sup>10</sup> When one investigates the eschatology of the apocalypses, what are often regarded as typical features of apocalyptic (imminent expectation of the end of the world, symbolism, historical determinism and a transcendent hope) are by no means common. What is more, actual teaching about the content of the future hope, e.g. the character of the new age, the origin and activity of the Messiah, the organization of the messianic community etc., is frequently passed over with hardly a mention. While the apocalyptists may devote much attention to the progress of history leading up to the new age, there is an evident reluctance to speculate about its character. The conviction about a glorious future for the people of God is there, but as an outline which is rarely elaborated in detail, a strange phenomenon for works whose primary interest is supposed to be in the future.

A survey of the contents of the apocalypses would reveal a wide range of topics. Important in many apocalypses is an interest in details of the heavenly world (Dan. 7:9, 1 Enoch 14:8ff, 71, Apoc. Abraham 18ff, Test. Levi 2f, Greek Baruch, Rev. 4, Ascension of Isa. 6ff), astronomy (1 Enoch 72ff, Slav. Enoch 23), the course of Jewish history (Dan. 8, 1 Enoch 85ff, 91:12ff, 93, Test. Levi 16ff, 4 Ezra 11f, Syr. Baruch 36ff, 53ff and Apoc. Abraham 27ff) and human destiny (Apoc. Abraham 20ff, 4 Ezra 3.2ff, 7, Syr. Bar. 48). All these issues correspond roughly with 'the lists of revealed things' which, M. Stone has argued, constitute the heart of apocalyptic.<sup>11</sup> Interest in history, eschatology, astronomy and cosmology is by no means confined to the apocalypses only. What is distinctive about the use of this material in the apocalypses is that it is offered to the apocalyptic seer as *a revelation direct from God through vision or through divine emissary*. It is not the product of human observation, or even of the application of the exegetical techniques of the scribal tradition to scripture (at least in the form in which it is presented). The divine truth is apprehended by the seer, and by all those to whom the seer chooses to make known this knowledge, as the result of angelic pronouncement or the mysteries opened up as the result of a heavenly ascent.

<sup>10</sup> See further C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven* (London 1982).

<sup>11</sup> Stone, 'Lists of Revealed Things', and *Scriptures, Sects and Visions* (London 1980).

The lack of detail about the hope for the future, an interest in other subjects, and an emphasis on the revelation of divine mysteries, suggest that apocalyptic cannot be regarded as merely a 'science of the End', in which heavenly journeys and other revelations serve only as a convenient back-drop for eschatological information. The emphasis throughout on the revelation of God and the divine purpose for the cosmos as a whole *may* have been an attempt to answer the crisis facing the Jewish tradition at the time of the apocalyptists. While it would be wrong to play down the speculative interest in the descriptions of the heavenly world, the revelation of God enthroned in glory and the divine purposes may be seen as an appropriate way of reassuring those whose historical circumstances might indicate that the God of the Jewish tradition no longer cared for God's people. The detailed demonstration of divine foreknowledge of Israel's plight and of the divine plan for human history could enable a beleaguered religious group to have confidence in its traditional affirmations and hopes. The reader then sees the totality of human history from the divine perspective, thereby ensuring that the, perhaps inevitable, preoccupation with the present plight does not detract from belief in God's saving purposes, which, according to some apocalypses, were on the point of being realized (Dan. 12:6, 4 Ezra 14:10, Syr. Baruch 85:10). Apocalyptic thus provides an authoritative context for belief which, while rooted in scripture, avoided the shortcomings of conventional exegesis by recourse to the direct disclosure of heavenly knowledge.

Apocalyptic was a religious current in Judaism (and for that matter in the Hellenistic world generally) which spans a long period of time. Even if we date the earliest parts of 1 Enoch to the third century BCE<sup>12</sup> (and they are probably much older) and the latest apocalypses at the end of the first century CE, we are speaking of a period of three hundred years or more. It is unlikely that the interests over this period remained the same and that circumstances did not affect the choice of material for inclusion in the apocalypses. For example, it is in the three apocalypses written in the aftermath of the First Revolt (4 Ezra, Syr. Baruch and Apoc. Abraham), that we find a particular concern for the destiny of Israel, together with impassioned pleas for an explanation of the suffering and eclipse of

<sup>12</sup> See further J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch* (Oxford 1976), H. S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic. The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and the Son of Man* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1974), J. C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (Washington 1984), C. Rowland, 'Enoch' in K. van der Toorn, B. Becking and P. W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden 1995), cols. 576–81; J. C. VanderKam and W. Adler, *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, CRINT v.4 (Assen 1996); and M. E. Barker *The Older Testament* (London 1987).

the people of God.<sup>13</sup> Concern with astronomical data is manifested in the Enochic literature (e.g. 1 Enoch 72ff), though there is occasional evidence that other apocalyptists may also have been interested in this subject (Syr. Baruch 48:1ff). Likewise the dominant concern with eschatology in parts of Daniel and Revelation is not typical of all other apocalypses. The origin of Daniel in its present form during the religious crisis provoked by the action of Antiochus Epiphanes probably explains the single-minded preoccupation with suffering, martyrdom and eschatological vindication.<sup>14</sup>

Apart from the circumstances affecting the interests of the apocalyptists, we may also see change and development in the form in which revelation is delivered.<sup>15</sup> Not all apocalypses describe heavenly ascents and visions of the heavenly world; some like 4 Ezra and Syr. Baruch prefer the revelatory angel or the divine voice as the means of communicating the divine mysteries. One common feature is the fact that all the Jewish apocalypses are pseudonymous. Pseudepigraphy is certainly not peculiar to the apocalypses. The practice probably had a long history in the prophetic tradition. It is difficult to believe that the authors were chosen at random; the enigmatic reference to Enoch in Gen. 5:24, for example, and the high opinion of him in some strands of Jewish tradition (e.g. Jub. 4:17ff) made him a prime candidate as a recipient of divine knowledge.<sup>16</sup> Whereas Enoch and Abraham, Levi and Isaiah are allowed to ascend to heaven during their lives and return to tell of their experiences, the same cannot be said of Ezra and Baruch in 4 Ezra and Syr. Baruch respectively, though Greek Baruch does speak of Baruch's heavenly ascent and the disclosures which result from it (1:8).<sup>17</sup> The choice of Baruch and Ezra as recipients of divine revelation is entirely appropriate as they had either lived through the catastrophe of the destruction of the First Temple, or participated in the rebuilding afterwards, and so could speak for those going through similar experiences after 70 CE. The reluctance in both works to speak of heavenly ascents during the lifetime of the seer

<sup>13</sup> On 4 Ezra see M. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Philadelphia 1990).

<sup>14</sup> On this theme see G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Judaism* (Cambridge, MA 1972).

<sup>15</sup> J. J. Collins, *Apocalypse. Morphology of a Genre* (Semeia 14) (Missoula 1979); J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity* (New York 1984); J. J. Collins and J. H. Charlesworth (eds) *Mysteries and Revelations* (Sheffield 1991); and D. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids 1983).

<sup>16</sup> See I. Gruenwald, 'Jewish Apocalyptic Literature' in ed. W. Haase, *ANRW*, II.19.1 (Berlin 1980), p. 105.

<sup>17</sup> M. E. Stone, 'Paradise in 4 Ezra', *JJS* 17 (1966), pp. 85ff.

contrasts with the extensive account of a heavenly journey in the contemporary Apocalypse of Abraham (15ff).

Pseudepigraphy was a very common literary convention,<sup>18</sup> and may have served as a means of enhancing the authority of the revelations committed to writing. It is an open question whether the apocalypses are merely literary creations following a conventional pattern or may include the relics of actual experiences by unknown visionaries. There was a growing concern with the mystical and magical in late antiquity, and apocalyptic may be a Jewish form of what Hengel has described as the quest for higher wisdom through revelation.<sup>19</sup>

## II APOCALYPTIC: THE ESOTERIC TRADITION OF SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION

To recognize the importance of the visionary or imaginative element in the religion, not only of Hellenism,<sup>20</sup> but also Judaism, is not to imply that apocalyptic religion was somehow antithetical to Torah study. The choice of Enoch rather than Moses as the apocalyptic seer need not be taken as a rejection of the Torah and the tradition of its interpretation. There is much in the apocalypses to suggest that there is no fundamental opposition to the Torah. Indeed, in a work like 4 Ezra obedience to the Law is a constant preoccupation of the writer (e.g. 3:19, 7:17ff and 9:31ff) and similar interest in the Law is found in other apocalypses (e.g. 1 Enoch 93:6, 99:14, Syr. Baruch 38:2, 59:2 and Jub. 23:26ff). Apocalyptic is a basic component of engagement with the Scriptures.<sup>21</sup> It took its start from precisely those passages which deal with hidden mysteries of heaven and earth rather than the application of biblical principles to everyday concerns as set out in the Torah (cf. Luke 11:52).<sup>22</sup>

Because of the esoteric character of the apocalypses it is tempting to suppose that apocalyptic is the product of a movement or groups

<sup>18</sup> On pseudepigraphy in the Old Testament and Judaism see M. Hengel and M. Smith in ed. K. von Fritz, *Pseudepigrapha 1: Pseudopythagorica, Lettres de Platon, Littérature pseudépigraphe juive* (Geneva 1972), pp. 231–308, J. Duff *A Reconsideration of Pseudepigraphy in Early Christianity*, Diss. Oxford 1998, and D. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon* (Tübingen 1986).

<sup>19</sup> See M. Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus* (Tübingen 1969), pp. 381–94, ET *Judaism and Hellenism* (London 1974), vol. 1, pp. 210–18, E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951), and A. F. Segal, 'Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and their Environments' in *ARNW*, W. Haase edn II. 23.2 (Berlin 1980), pp. 1333–94.

<sup>20</sup> R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (Harmondsworth 1986).

<sup>21</sup> See C. Rowland, 'Apocalyptic Literature' in *It is written. Scripture citing Scripture*, Fs B. Lindars, ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge 1988), pp. 170–89.

<sup>22</sup> See D. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot* (Tübingen 1988).

removed from the mainstream of Jewish interpretation of scripture.<sup>23</sup> From time to time it has been asserted that there was a polarization in Judaism between apocalyptic and pharisaism.<sup>24</sup> But there is evidence to suggest that apocalyptic may well have been the esoteric tradition of the scribes and nascent rabbinic Judaism.<sup>25</sup> That such interests did in fact form part of later rabbinic tradition is widely accepted. There is a hint in the Mishnah that speculative interests, perhaps of an esoteric character, already existed in the tannaitic period, in m. Hagigah 2.1:

The forbidden degrees may not be expounded before three persons, nor the Story of Creation before two, nor the (the chapter of the) Chariot before one alone, unless he is a Sage that understands of his own knowledge. Whosoever gives his mind to four things it were better for him if he had not come into the world – what is above, what is beneath, what was beforetime, and what will be hereafter. And whosoever takes no thought for the honour of his Maker, it were better for him if he had not come into the world.

(Translation from H. Danby *The Mishnah* (Oxford 1933), pp. 212–13)<sup>26</sup>

In the second part of the Mishnah we find a dire warning against those who would occupy themselves in subjects which are difficult for humans to comprehend. The four prohibited topics represent the major concerns of the apocalyptists. The Jewish apocalypses contain speculation about heaven, hell and human destiny, as well as the mysterious workings of

<sup>23</sup> P. R. Davies ‘The social world of the apocalyptic writings’ in R. E. Clements *The World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge 1989).

<sup>24</sup> E.g. D. Rössler, *Gesetz und Geschichte* (Neukirchen 1960). Contrast W. D. Davies, ‘Apocalyptic and Pharisaism’ in *Christian Origins and Judaism* (London 1962).

<sup>25</sup> J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, edn 3 (Göttingen 1962), pp. 265–78, ET *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (London 1969), pp. 233–5.

<sup>26</sup> On the origins of Jewish mysticism see I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden 1980), G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (London 1955), *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkavah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (New York 1965), E. E. Urbach, ‘Ha mesorot ‘al torat ha-sod bitequpat ha tannaim’ (‘The Tradition about Merkavah Mysticism in the Tannaitic Period’) in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion, FS Gershom Scholem* (Jerusalem 1967), pp. 1–28, G. A. Wewers, *Geheimnis und Geheimhaltung im rabbinischen Judentum* (Berlin 1975), D. Halperin, *The Merkavah in Rabbinic Literature* (New Haven 1980); D. Halperin *The Faces of the Chariot* (Tübingen 1988); C. Morray-Jones *Merkavah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition*, Diss. (Cambridge 1988); C. Morray-Jones, ‘Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition,’ *JJS* 43 (1992), 1ff; P. Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God* (New York 1992); P. Schäfer, ‘New Testament and the Hekhalot Literature: The Journey into Heaven in Paul and in Merkavah Mysticism’, *JJS* 35 (1984), 19ff; P. S. Alexander, ‘A Sixtieth Part of Prophecy. The Problem of Continuing Revelation in Judaism’ in J. Davies, G. Harvey and W. G. E. Watson, *Words Remembered Texts Renewed* (Sheffield 1995), pp. 414ff; M. Lieb *The Visionary Mode* (Ithaca 1991), and G. Stroumsa, *Hidden Wisdom: Esoteric Traditions and the Roots of Christian Mysticism* (Leiden 1996).

human history as it moves toward the New Age. The final threat in the mishnah is a thinly veiled warning to those whose theological interests led them to speculate in such a way that they would dishonour God, particularly in the speculation on the form of God (*shi'ur qomah*).<sup>27</sup>

What is of particular interest, however, is the list of restrictions placed on scriptural exposition. Earlier in the Mishnah, in m. Megillah 4:10 a ban is placed by some sages on the reading of the first chapter of Ezekiel (the *merkabal*). m. Hagigah 2:1 extends the restriction to the exposition of the chapter in the academy. In the case of Ezek. 1 this is a complete prohibition, except when an individual has shown himself to be mature enough to embark on such study (cf. Tos. Megillah 4:34). In j. Hagigah 77a (lines 45ff, cf. 77c, lines 67f) cautionary stories may be found which are intended to deter the amateur and uninitiated from such a dangerous exercise.

Two of the restrictions mentioned in the Mishnah concern Gen. 1 and Ezek. 1. Here are two passages from scripture which inevitably open the door to speculation about the creation of the world and the God who created it. They are passages which the *talmid* studied regularly and which pointed him not so much to his obligations and how they could be fulfilled but to the nature of God and God's creation. In the light of the sophistication of the exegetical methods applied to the scriptures in order to enable the will of God in specific situations to be discerned we can imagine that the hints found in passages like Gen. 1 and Ezek. 1 could lead the expositor to untold extravagances as he sought to understand the process of creation and the immediate environs of the Creator. These passages (to which we might add others like Isa. 6:1ff) offered the exegete a glimpse into another world, a disclosure of the way things were before the universe existed and the nature of God who sat enthroned in glory on the cherubim-chariot above the firmament.

We know from later Jewish texts that cosmogony and theosophy played a very significant part in rabbinic theology. A glance at b. Hagigah 12a ff indicates that by this time the mystical lore based on Gen. 1 and Ezek. 1 was fairly extensive. The work of Gershom Scholem has done much to expose the history of Jewish mysticism from its obscure beginnings during the period of the Second Temple through the age of the *bekaloth* texts (which speak of the mystic's ascent through the heavenly palaces) to the Kabbalah itself.<sup>28</sup> While the literary remains are extensive enough to

<sup>27</sup> See Gruenwald *Apocalyptic*, p. 213, and M. S. Cohen, *The Shi'ur Qomah: the Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (New York 1983).

<sup>28</sup> On the heavenly ascent material see M. Dean-Otting, *Heavenly Journeys: A Study of the Motif in Hellenistic Jewish Literature* (Frankfurt 1984) and M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford 1993).



establish the contours of this speculative interest in the Amoraic period, the precise character of the mystical lore in the age of the Tannaim is unclear. Certainly we find that names like R. Yohanan ben Zakkai (b. Hag. 14b) and R. Akiba (e.g. in b. Hag. 14b–15b) are linked with it, which suggests, at the very least, that later interpreters considered that the mystical tradition should be associated with the heart of early rabbinic Judaism rather than be regarded as the interest of a peripheral group. It is possible that this interest did form part of the religious beliefs of the main academies in the tannaitic period, a fact which seems to be presupposed by the necessity for the regulation in the Mishnah. But even if this be the case, the paucity of information about the mystical involvement of R. Yohanan b. Zakkai and his pupils R. Eleazar b. Arak, R. Joshua, and of R. Akiba, and his contemporaries, Simeon b. Azzai, Simeon b. Zoma, and Elisha b. Abuyah, does not allow us to reconstruct with any degree of certainty the character of this mystical interest. There are certainly hints that visions of Ezekiel's chariot may have been involved (Tos. Megillah 4.28 b. Megillah 24b), though it has to be admitted that the evidence does not allow us to do any more than put this forward as a tentative suggestion.<sup>29</sup>

The interest in passages of scripture which might enable the expositor to gain further information about God and his ways is not confined to the rabbinic tradition. In several places in apocalyptic literature there is evidence that the apocalyptists were also interested in the first chapter of Ezekiel (Dan. 7:9, 1 Enoch 14:20, Rev. 4, 4Q 405 20 ii. 21–2, Apocalypse of Abraham 17f)<sup>30</sup> and the first chapter of Genesis (*Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 28, 4 Ezra 6:38ff, Jub. 2:2ff and Slav. Enoch 25f). Consideration of the use made of Ezek. 1 in the apocalypses leads to the suggestion that these passages, one of which (1 Enoch 14.8ff) may go back at least to the beginning of the second century BCE, already evince an extensive speculative, visionary interest in Ezek. 1. Here is evidence that apocalyptists were not merely interested in eschatology, nor did they regard the throne-vision merely as a convenient back-drop for eschatological teaching. Rather the interest in God's throne is already a matter for study in its own right. In these cases the basis of the apocalyptic vision is scripture itself. The

<sup>29</sup> This matter is explored further in C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 269–348.

<sup>30</sup> On early evidence of merkabah speculation see also C. Rowland, 'The Visions of God in Apocalyptic Literature', *JSJ* 10 (1980) 138ff, C. Newsom, 'Merkabah Exegesis in the Qumran Community', *JJS* 38 (1987); J. J. Collins, 'A Throne in Heaven: Apotheosis in Pre-Christian Judaism' in J. J. Collins and M. Fishbane, *Death, Ecstasy and Otherworldly Journeys* (New York 1995), pp. 41ff; A. Segal 'Paul and the Beginning of Jewish Mysticism' in J. J. Collins and M. Fishbane, *Death, Ecstasy and Otherworldly Journeys* (New York 1995).

vision takes its origin from the insight already communicated in the biblical passage, however further it may take it. Examples of scripture being the basis for apocalyptic visions and pronouncements can be found elsewhere, e.g. Dan. 7 in 1 Enoch 46, 4 Ezra 12 and 13, Rev. 13, Jer. 29 in Dan. 9 and Gen. 6 in 1 Enoch 6:1ff.<sup>31</sup>

To do justice to apocalyptic, however, we cannot ignore that quest for knowledge of things earthly and heavenly which in part at least is characteristic also of the Wisdom tradition.<sup>32</sup> The links are particularly close in parts of 1 Enoch which evinces a definite interest in the created order e.g. 1 Enoch 2–5. The information in 1 Enoch 72:2 comes *through revelation* rather than human observation, however. No doubt there *are* significant differences between the apocalypses and the Wisdom literature. Nevertheless recent study has pointed out the affinity of certain parts of the apocalypses, particularly Daniel, not with the wisdom of the book of Proverbs, but with mantic wisdom which was concerned with the mysteries of the stars, the interpretation of dreams and divination.<sup>33</sup> Even within the biblical tradition, however, there is a closer link with the wisdom tradition than is often allowed. As has already been pointed out, one group of apocalypses includes an intense questioning of the human predicament, particularly as it affects the righteous in Israel. Parts of 4 Ezra have close affinities with the book of Job.<sup>34</sup> The contrast between human and divine wisdom in the dialogue between Ezra and the angelic intermediary is stark. Even those who are the most righteous of humanity are unable to comprehend the ways of an inscrutable divinity. Ezra's words express the common-sense position with regard to the lot of humanity, the injustices of the world, and perplexity at the fate of Jews in the wake of the destruction of the Second Temple. The uncompromising divine/angelic perspective echoes themes from the book of Job. The message is that the righteous need to view all things in the light of the eschatological resolution when the messiah comes. Attempting to understand the apparent injustices of the present (4 Ez. 7:16) is futile, because, despite being given a mind to understand, humanity's sin makes it difficult to do so, and so they await eternal torment (4 Ez. 7:71). What is required is not knowledge of the 'whys and wherefores' of human history but obedience.

<sup>31</sup> Other passages are investigated by L. Hartmann, *Prophecy Interpreted* (Lund 1966).

<sup>32</sup> In addition to the works of Stone and Gruenwald already cited see G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, vol. II (Munich 1960), pp. 314f, ET *Old Testament Theology* (Edinburgh 1965), vol. II, pp. 301ff, but note the criticisms of P. von der Osten-Sacken, *Die Apokalyptik in ihren Verhältnis zu Prophezie und Weisheit* (Munich 1969).

<sup>33</sup> See H. P. Müller, 'Mantische Weisheit und Apokalyptik', in *Congress Volume VT Sup* 22 (Leiden 1972), pp. 268ff.

<sup>34</sup> See Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, pp. 4f and Stone, 'Lists of Revealed Things', p. 421.

The mystery of the reign of God is that the one who endures to the end will be saved. Like the apocalypses Job is offered an answer through divine revelation (Job 38f). The questioning spirit of the biblical wisdom tradition and the interpretation of dreams and visions are antecedents which should not be ignored in our attempt to elucidate apocalyptic origins. Thus it would be wrong to assert that apocalyptic has its origin either in prophecy or in wisdom; both have contributed much to apocalyptic. Rather it is a case of elements of prophecy and wisdom contributing to an outlook which set great store by the need to understand the ways of God. Apocalypticists approach scripture with the conviction that the God who is revealed in the pages of the sacred writings may be known by vision and revelation. The interpretation of scripture offered the opportunity to plumb the depths of some of the most profound divine mysteries, often only hinted at darkly in the sacred text. The yearning for this knowledge is akin to some of the passionate searching apparent in the book of Job, but also to the revelation of God to chosen agents which lies at the heart of the prophetic experience. The apocalypticists were not content with answers to mundane questions but pressed on in search of divine knowledge. Indeed, they were probably the ones castigated in Sirach 3:2ff (a passage quoted in part in *j. Hagigah* 77c, lines 18ff and *b. Hag.* 13a):

Do not pry into things too hard for you or examine what is beyond your reach. Meditate upon the commandments you have been given; what the Lord keeps secret is no concern of yours. Do not busy yourself with matters that are beyond you; even what has been shown you is above human grasp. Many have been led astray by their speculations, and false conjectures have impaired their judgement (cf. 34.1ff. Translation from the New English Bible).

In contrast with the material in the apocalyptic literature the warning in Ben Sirach sets a limit on the extent to which the religious traditions offer opportunities both to seek for, and find, an answer to the most pressing problems of human existence, as well as on human curiosity about God and the divine purposes.

In most of the apocalyptic tradition visions and myths serve to disrupt readers' expectations of what is normal rather than offering the definitive pronouncements about what is demanded. Readers are often tantalized and perplexed into thinking and, above all, behaving differently. The texts carry them to the brink of something different without actually informing them in any prescriptive way about the new that is offered. The book of Jubilees is rather different. It has an angelic revelation to Moses on Sinai: a retelling of biblical history which conforms largely with

what is found in Scripture but diverges from mainstream practice on the calculation of the calendar, which has an impact on the days one should celebrate the major festivals, and on the character of Sabbath, and anathematizes opponents and their behaviour. In Jubilees it is made quite clear that the calendar laid down by the angelic revelation is not only different from what applies elsewhere but that deviation involves a complete repudiation of the Law of God. Here revelation is used to exclude and anathematize, to vindicate one side in what were contentious matters in Second Temple Judaism. In such a use of apocalyptic there is no sense of human fallibility. Wisdom is offered and received which in effect removes any possibility of discussion of the subject. The text's meaning is transparent and is the final, authoritative pronouncement.

While all apocalypses offer revelation, much of which is in effect confirming what was traditionally believed already, most do not offer an unambiguous answer to questions. Indeed, there is frequently need for angelic interpretation of enigmatic dreams and visions. Even these interpretations are not without their ambiguities. It proved necessary for revelations coined in one era to be the basis of 'updating' and application in the different political circumstances of another. Thus the symbolism of the fourth beast in Dan. 7 is given a new lease of interpretative life in the Roman period when it is made to refer to Rome. Despite its authoritative claim in 22:18, Revelation does not offer unambiguous and exclusive answers. Its apocalyptic symbols can produce as much mystification as enlightenment. So some apocalypses do not provide 'answers' through revelation and offer nothing more than the refusal of a complete answer as being beyond the human mind to grasp. Instead, there is a plethora of imagery or enigmatic pronouncement which leaves the reader either with no possibility of ever knowing fully the mind of God or tantalizing glimpses of God in the enigmatic symbols of dreams and visions.

Apocalyptic can seem to offer easy answers through divine intervention and insight to unfathomable human problems. 'Higher wisdom through revelation' can be an antidote to the radical pessimism whose exponents despair of ever being able to make sense of the contradictions of human existence. The bleak national prospects in the second half of the Second Temple period might be expected to breed a mood of acute despair and depreciation of the ability of the practice of human rationality to answer the problems of existence. Those who had resort to the apocalyptic tradition were not content with the world as it appears to 'normal' perception. By means of 'the door open in heaven' they are offered a challenge to the works and wisdom of this age. For most ancient apocalypists the time of complete knowledge is still in the future.

In the present age, to use Paul's words, 'we know in part' and 'see in a glass darkly' (1 Cor. 13:9, 12).

### III APOCALYPTIC AND GNOSIS

Concentration on the eschatological characteristics of apocalyptic has not prevented commentators from noting the similarities which exist between the apocalyptic literature and gnostic texts.<sup>35</sup> The relationship between apocalyptic and gnosticism is a very complex one. That links exist cannot be doubted, particularly since the discovery of the Nag Hammadi texts. The Nag Hammadi texts include several apocalypses as well as many other points of contact with the apocalyptic tradition. It is not clear whether apocalyptic has contributed substantially to the gnostic spirituality or has merely provided certain components from its own range of imagery to an eclectic religious system. In the light of what has already been said it will be apparent that the interest in what may be called the heavenly dimension in apocalyptic literature is one important link. Nevertheless the preoccupation with the whole of human history and with eschatology in the apocalypses, the historical/horizontal rather than the heavenly/vertical dimension, suggests that a significant shift has taken place from the former to the latter in the gnostic texts. As a way of pointing out how an apocalypse, albeit a Jewish Christian one, can easily drift in a gnostic direction, some consideration will be given to the Ascension of Isaiah.

<sup>35</sup> On the links between apocalyptic and gnosticism R. M. Grant, *Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (London 1959), G. Quispel, 'Christliche Gnosis und jüdische Heterodoxie', *EvTh* 14 (1954), 474–84; 'Gnosticism and the New Testament' in J. P. Hyatt (ed.) *The Bible and Modern Scholarship* (London 1966), pp. 252–71; 'The Origins of the Gnostic Demiurge' in P. Grenfield and J. A. Jungmann (eds.) *Kyriakon FS Quasten* (Münster 1970), pp. 271–6, M. Friedlander, *Der vorchristliche jüdische Gnosticismus* (Göttingen 1898), A. Böhlig, 'Der jüdische Hintergrund in gnostischen Texten von Nag Hammadi' in *Mysterion und Wahrheit* (Leiden 1968), G. Macrae, *Some Elements of Jewish Apocalyptic and Mystical Tradition and their Relation to Gnostic Literature*, Diss. (Cambridge 1966), R. M. Grant, 'Les êtres intermédiaires dans le judaïsme tardif' in ed. U. Bianchi, *Le Origini dello Gnosticismo* (Leiden 1967), K. Rudolph, 'Randerscheinungen des Judentums und das Problem der Entstehung des Gnostizismus', *Kairos* 9 (1967), 105–22, I. Gruenwald, 'Knowledge and Vision', *IOS* 3 (1973), 63–107; *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden 1978); F. T. Fallon, *The Enthronement of Sabaoth* (Leiden 1978); I. Gruenwald, *From Apocalyptic to Gnosticism: Studies in Apocalypticism, Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism* (Frankfurt 1988); and N. Deutsch, *The Gnostic Imagination. Gnosticism, Mandaeism and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden 1995).

I THE ASCENSION OF ISAIAH<sup>36</sup>

This apocalypse is a work of considerable importance in understanding the link between apocalyptic and gnosticism. It exhibits most of the typical features of an apocalyptic, namely, the revelation of the heavenly world, the heavenly ascent and an elaborate cosmology. The apocalypse proper (6ff) is almost completely devoid of eschatological material (but note 9:13), though futurist eschatology is to be found earlier in the work at 4:14ff. The main topics are the world above, the descent of the redeemer, and human destiny in this world of light (e.g. 9:9f).

The gnostic proclivities are particularly marked in the section which describes the descent of the redeemer (the Beloved) from the seventh heaven to earth.<sup>37</sup> First of all the successful descent to earth depends on his escaping the notice of the lower heavenly powers. Although it does not appear that the powers in the lower heavens are hostile when Isaiah first ascends to the seventh heaven, they present a considerable threat to the Beloved as he descends to earth (10:8ff). Indeed, he is forced to give the appropriate password to the door-keepers of each of the lower heavens before he is allowed through.<sup>38</sup> An incipient dualistic theology becomes explicit in 10:13 where the prince of the world and his angels set themselves up as dominant figures in the cosmos uttering the cry found in other gnostic texts: 'We alone are, and there is none beside us' (Isa. 45:22, Hypostasis of the Archons 141:22f and Apocryphon of John 59:20). While there is no doubt about the subordination of the powers in the first five heavens to God (7:16, 8:8, 10:1), the dualistic strain is quite marked. Here then within the framework of a Jewish Christian apocalypse we have signs of that dualism which was to become characteristic of the fully fledged gnostic systems of the second and third centuries CE.<sup>39</sup>

There is some other evidence of an affinity with gnostic ideas in the Ascension of Isaiah, as the christology is apparently docetic, e.g. 9:13, 11:7f, 11:14, 11:17. It seems likely that the docetism is the result of the doctrine of pre-existence and the descent-ascent pattern of a heavenly

<sup>36</sup> Translation and brief introduction in E. Hennecke rev. ed. W. Schneemelcher, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* (Tübingen 1989), vol. 2, pp. 547–62: ET *New Testament Apocrypha* (London 1992), vol. 2, pp. 603–20.

<sup>37</sup> On this work see J. M. Knight, *The Ascension of Isaiah* (Sheffield 1995) and *Disciples of the Beloved* (Sheffield 1996), R. Hall 'The Ascension of Isaiah: Community, Situation, Date and Place in Early Christianity', *JBL* 109 (1990), 289–306 and R. Bauckham *The Fate of the Dead* (Leiden 1998) pp. 363–90.

<sup>38</sup> On the passwords see Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, pp. 32f and Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, p. 106f.

<sup>39</sup> See Grant, *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*, p. 56.

redeemer.<sup>40</sup> It can of course, be argued that the gnostic tendencies which we find in the Ascension of Isaiah are the result of infiltration of gnostic ideas into apocalyptic thought. There is, however, a good reason for rejecting this suggestion and instead explaining its character by reference to developments in the apocalyptic *merkabab*-tradition.

No mention is made of the throne of God in this apocalypse, though it may be implied in 11:32. Isaiah does not disguise the fact that he is unable to look upon the glory of God, but little is said about a throne in the highest heaven. The situation is very different when Isaiah describes what he sees in the five lowest heavens, for in each of these there is a figure seated on a throne surrounded by angels (e.g. 7:13–15, 18f). We are not given detailed descriptions of these thrones in the lower heavens, but such information as we do possess would suggest some connection with the apocalyptic throne theophanies of Dan. 7:9f and 1 Enoch 14:20f. Like both these passages we have in the Ascension of Isaiah a throne surrounded by angelic beings singing praises. There is no question here of any dualistic contrast between those who occupy the thrones in the lowest heavens and the invisible God in the seventh heaven as 7:16, 8:8 and 10:1 make plain. The description of the lowest heavens resembles in many ways that found in the later Jewish Hekaloth text, *The Visions of Ezekiel*.<sup>41</sup> The picture here suggests an apocalypse moving in the direction of gnostic dualism rather than one which has incorporated gnostic elements. But it would seem that there are sufficient hints for us to suppose that the divine throne and its occupant have been linked with lower divine beings rather than with God in the highest heaven.

Isaiah is told not to worship these figures even though he feels compelled to do so (7:21 and Rev. 19:10).<sup>42</sup> The seer considers that these figures have sufficient signs of divinity to warrant worship. Such a compulsion would be understandable if a link had been made between these lower divinities and the vision of God of Isa. 6:1ff. There are indications that such a connection may have been made in 7:2. A contrast is implied in this verse between the glorious angel who appears to the prophet at the beginning of his ascent to heaven and less glorious heavenly beings which he was wont to see. The most obvious way of taking this is as a deliberate contrast with the call-vision reported in Isa. 6, where God had appeared to the prophet surrounded by seraphim singing his praise. Compared with the figure revealed to the prophet in the call-vision the God

<sup>40</sup> On the descent/ascent theme see C. H. Talbert, 'The Myth of a Descending Ascending Redeemer in Mediterranean Antiquity', *NTS* 22 (1976), 418ff.

<sup>41</sup> See further I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, pp. 134ff.

<sup>42</sup> See further L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology* (Tübingen 1995).



who dwells in the highest heaven is a mysterious, invisible figure (11:32) without a name (8:7).

The separation which seems to be hinted at in the Ascension of Isaiah between the throne of glory and God is one which appears to be present already in certain Jewish apocalypses. Indeed, it is possible to detect a bifurcating tradition in apocalyptic theology with regard to the throne of God.<sup>43</sup> On the one hand there was a tendency to link the throne of glory with another figure, so that, for example, in the Similitudes of Enoch (ch. 71), the Testament of Abraham and 11Q Melchizedek the throne is not inhabited by God but by an exalted human (Enoch, and Abel Melchizedek respectively). On the other hand there seems to have been a growing reluctance to describe the figure on the throne. So in the Qumran *merkabab*-fragment (4Q 405 20 ii. 21–2), Apoc. Abraham 18 and Rev. 4 the throne is mentioned in the briefest of terms and in the first two works little or nothing whatever is said of a figure upon the throne. In both of these trends there is possibly reflected a tendency to make ‘a fundamental distinction between the theophanic appearance and the indefinable essence of God’.<sup>44</sup> That is not to suggest that there is anything approaching a radical dualism here. Rather the point is that there exists in this division the possibility for a complete separation which we find in gnosticism between the demiurge and the invisible, transcendent God. We can see from the Ascension of Isaiah that an extended cosmology and a distribution of divine authority through various heavens could lead to an incipient theological dualism. Thus the Ascension of Isaiah bears witness to the way in which an apocalypse from Jewish Christian circles began to manifest some of the classical features of gnosticism. In this work the vertical/heavenly dimension is pre-eminent, with the motif of ascent/descent (of the prophet) and descent/ascent (of the Beloved) imposing itself on the work as a whole.

<sup>43</sup> On this see Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 103f; R. Bauckham, ‘The Worship of Jesus in Apocalyptic Christianity’, *NTS* 27 (1981), 322–41, A. Chester, ‘Jewish Messianic Expectations and Mediatorial Figures and Pauline Christology’ in M. Hengel and U. Heckel (eds.), *Paulus und das antike Judentum* (Tübingen 1991); L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology* (Tübingen 1995); J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord* (Tübingen 1985); J. Fossum, *The Image of the Invisible God. Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christology* (Göttingen 1995), C. Rowland, ‘The Vision of the Risen Christ’, *JTS* 31 (1980), 1ff, A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven* (Leiden 1978); *Paul the Convert. The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven 1990), pp. 34–71; S. Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel* (Tübingen 1981); C. Newman *Paul’s Glory-Christology: Tradition and Rhetoric* (Leiden 1992); J. Ashton, *Studying John* (Oxford 1994), but note the cautionary comments in L. W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord* (London 1990).

<sup>44</sup> See the comments of Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 65 and H. R. Balz, *Methodische Probleme der neutestamentlichen Christologie* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1967), pp. 79ff.

## II THE NAG HAMMADI TEXTS

The contribution of Jewish ideas to gnostic literature has long been recognized. There is a sophisticated use of scripture to argue for a position radically at odds with the received wisdom, a kind of deconstructive reading of the Hebrew Bible reminiscent in some ways of examples in the Pauline corpus in the New Testament. But the hostility to the God of Israel which is manifest in many of the gnostic systems (e.g. in the Apocryphon of John) has persuaded many that it is impossible to find the origin of gnosticism within Judaism. It cannot be argued convincingly that Judaism by itself formed the dominant religious tradition for the gnostic systems. Any glance at the gnostic texts now available to us reveals a wide spread of sources of the ideas used by the writers. Nevertheless the Nag Hammadi discoveries have confirmed that the debt owed to Judaism is considerable. One example of this is the way in which the divine-throne chariot figures in some of the gnostic cosmologies, e.g. Excerpta ex Theodoto para. 37, Apocryphon of John 58:15ff, the Hypostasis of the Archons 143:20ff, and particularly the Untitled Work (given the title *On the Origin of the World* in J. M. Robinson's edition of the Nag Hammadi texts) 150:11ff and 152:31ff.

The cosmology which is described in Untitled Work 150:11ff<sup>45</sup> is similar to the cosmology of the Ascension of Isaiah, where there are seven heavens, in the first five of which are thrones and angelic powers. In each heaven there are thrones *and* chariots. According to Asc. Isa. 8:26 and 9:10 (cf. Rev. 4:4) there are many other thrones in the seventh heaven belonging to the righteous. In certain later Jewish mystical texts mention is made of a number of chariots belonging to God (e.g. Visions of Ezekiel, Heb. Enoch 2f).<sup>46</sup> Although there does appear to be a hint of knowledge of passages like Col. 1:16,<sup>47</sup> Eph. 1:21 and 1 Pet. 3:22 in the reference to the armies of 'divine and lordly' powers, the large numbers of these angels, actually referred to as 'myriads without number', has affinities with Dan. 7:10 and 1 Enoch 14:22.

Links with Jewish apocalyptic are far more evident in the following paragraphs. Sabaoth is said to have created a throne for himself *in front of* his dwelling. This arrangement is rather like Heb. Enoch 10 where God made for the angel Metatron a throne similar to the throne of glory and

<sup>45</sup> See further Fallon, *The Enthronement of Sabaoth* and Gruenwald *Apocalyptic*, pp. 115ff.

<sup>46</sup> Further Gruenwald *Apocalyptic*, p. 137.

<sup>47</sup> On the connections of Colossians with Jewish apocalypticism see C. Rowland, 'Apocalyptic Visions in the Letter to the Colossians' in ed. Rowland and Horbury, *Essays for Ernst Bammel*, 1, *JSNNT* 19 (1983), 73ff.

placed it at the door of the seventh hall.<sup>48</sup> The throne-chariot itself is undoubtedly the *merkabab* of Ezekiel. As in the Hypostasis of the Archons the throne is described as a chariot with four faces. But the description of the chariot is much more extensive than that found in the Hypostasis of the Archons. Here the faces of the living creatures are mentioned (cf. Ezek. 1:5–12). The order in which the figures are mentioned differs from Ezek. 1, something which is characteristic of several of the throne-visions of the apocalypses. As in Rev. 4:7 the reference to the human is placed after the lion and the ox. Such a variation points to dependence on a tradition of the interpretation of the first chapter of Exod. rather than on Ezek. 1 itself. It could be argued that the author is dependent on Rev. 4, but this appears unlikely in view of the other differences as compared with Rev. As elsewhere in the visions of God in the apocalypses, we find that Isa. 6 is combined with Ezek. 1 (Apoc. Abr. 18, Rev. 4:8f and 1 Enoch 14:18ff). Unlike these other passages Isa. 6 is not woven into the description of the chariot and the creatures. Instead we find an additional reference to the seraphim, dragon-like in their appearance, which praise God continually (cf. Isa. 6:3).

The description of the cherubim is without parallel in the Jewish literature. As in Ezek. 1 mention is made of the four 'forms', but instead of each corner of the chariot and its creature having four faces each, the writer asserts that each corner had eight forms. This makes a total of sixty four forms in all. This is difficult to reconcile with a belief that the chariot had four corners with a cherub at each corner with eight forms each. One must assume that, in order to obtain a total of sixty-four forms, the author thinks of a throne in the shape of a cube with eight corners, thus making a total of sixty-four forms in all. It is important for the author to have a total of sixty-four, in order to achieve a grand total of seventy-two forms (including Sabaoth and the seven archangels) as the pattern for the angels of the nations. Here too we have an idea familiar to us from apocalyptic literature (Dan. 10:13 and 21, Heb. Enoch 30, cf. 1 Enoch 89:59).

This survey of the presence of one particular feature of Jewish apocalyptic in certain of the gnostic texts indicates that a component of gnostic works is derived from Jewish apocalyptic. We have suggested that the descriptions of the throne of the lower divine being derive from developed traditions about Ezekiel's chariot rather than the original chapter itself. The kind of developments which we find in these gnostic texts point to an origin within Jewish circles developing the understanding of

<sup>48</sup> Macrae, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, pp. 104ff thinks that dualistic myths of the kind we get in these texts may have influenced Elisha ben Abuyah. See also H. Graetz, *Gnosticismus und Judentum* (Krotoschin 1846) and A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven* (Leiden 1978).

Ezek. 1. The Ascension of Isaiah and the angelology of apocalyptic suggest that certain forms of Judaism contained within them the seeds of later gnosticism. Apocalyptic never explicitly offers salvation based on knowledge, though its emphasis on its revelatory insight as a necessary pointer to the way of salvation is part of the function of this type of piety. The revelation of God's will which comes through the disclosures given to the apocalypticist is a means whereby the readers can ascertain the divine purposes and be better equipped to continue in the way of faithfulness to the divine commands. So, for example, in Rev. 2–3 the revelation of the contents of the heavenly letters is a means of enabling the community to see the true way to salvation. Knowledge of God's perspective is close to becoming the essential prerequisite to the understanding of what is required for salvation.

In one respect apocalyptic allows no concession to gnostic theology. There can be little doubt that at all times it keeps a very firm grasp on the completeness of divine control. Nowhere do we find that there is any suggestion that God has lost control of the course of this world. But there are elements in apocalyptic which make its religious outlook susceptible to a gnostic form of dualism. Firstly, there can be no doubt about the way in which God delegates authority to other angelic beings, however temporary that devolution of power might have been (*though it has to be stressed that a radical theological dualism is never found in the apocalypses*). Nevertheless, if the Tripartite Tractate is to be believed, there were Jews who accepted a form of dualistic theology which ascribed the creation of the universe to angelic beings (112.35).<sup>49</sup> Secondly, the hope for the future in the apocalypses necessarily has an implied contrast between the glory of the future age and the miserable circumstances of the present. Although there is no reason to suppose that the apocalypticists thought of matter as inherently evil, in certain circumstances it is conceivable that they could be so disillusioned with any hope for the present that they retreated totally to the world of light which was unsullied by the vicissitudes of the present creation.

The common ground between apocalyptic and gnosticism lies in the concern of both movements to make sense of existence by reference to the world beyond. While it may be true to speak of gnosticism as essentially non-historical and non-eschatological, it is not correct to put gnosticism at the other end of the religious spectrum from apocalyptic. It is tempting to accept the view that the dualism of apocalyptic literature is

<sup>49</sup> Translation of the Tripartite Tractate in ed. J. M. Robinson *The Nag Hammadi Library* (Leiden 1977), pp. 54ff and see also Grant 'Les êtres intermédiaires dans le judaïsme tardif' and A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, pp. 121ff.

eschatologically conditioned, whereas the dualism of the gnostics is cosmologically conditioned. While the apocalyptic literature does demonstrate a keen interest in history as the arena of divine activity, part of the reason for this interest resembles the concern of the gnostics to know whence one has come and whither one is going (cf. *Aboth.* 3.1). The total view of human history found in the apocalypses functions as a means of explaining the human situation, in a perplexing world. The ultimate solution may differ from the gnostic, but the quest of the apocalypticist and his reliance on divine revelation as the basis for his answer is akin to gnostic spirituality. We should recall, therefore, that apocalyptic is not directed solely towards the future, and there is an important 'vertical' dimension to apocalyptic thought. The knowledge of what already exists in heaven, whether it be the secrets of the future or of God, is a way of giving significance to life in the world below. So differences should not blind us to a similarity of outlook which makes it difficult to see them as anything other than related religious streams.

## CHAPTER 24

## THE QUMRAN SECTARIAN WRITINGS

## I THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) from Qumran comprise a corpus of nearly 800 ancient Jewish documents written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. The texts were recovered in varying states of repair between 1947 and 1956 from eleven caves around the site of Khirbet Qumran on the north-western edge of the Dead Sea.<sup>1</sup> On the basis of the general results of palaeography, carbon dating and archaeology, it became clear that the writings stemmed from the last three centuries of the Second Temple period. Although much important material was published in the first two decades after the discovery, it was not until 1991 that numerous outstanding texts from Cave 4 were released.<sup>2</sup> This event led to a revival of interest in the DSS, as well as the official publication of works previously available only to a small coterie of scholars.<sup>3</sup>

To aid discussion, it is possible to divide up the DSS collection in several ways. One fruitful approach is to split the manuscripts into three categories: (a) books in use among all Second Temple Jews and later forming the Hebrew Bible defined by the rabbis after CE 70, (b) other works, including several Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, also circulating beyond the confines of the Qumran group, and (c) the so-called sectarian DSS apparently composed by the religious community behind the corpus. It is worth defining each class a little more carefully.

The first comprises biblical books which are written in Hebrew – either in the palaeo-Hebrew characters of the pre-exilic period or, more

<sup>1</sup> See Fig. 24.1. Several other bodies of ancient Jewish literature found in the same vicinity – including Masada, Murabba'at and Nahal Hever – can also be referred to as DSS. For an introductory overview of all these collections, see J. Campbell, *Deciphering the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London 1996) and, for more detail on the Qumran texts, G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective* (London 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Three major English translations of the non-biblical Qumran texts now exist: F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated* (Leiden 1994); G. Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London 1997); M. Wise, M. Abegg, E. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco 1996). All citations in this chapter are from Vermes.

<sup>3</sup> See recent volumes in the series *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (Oxford 1955–).

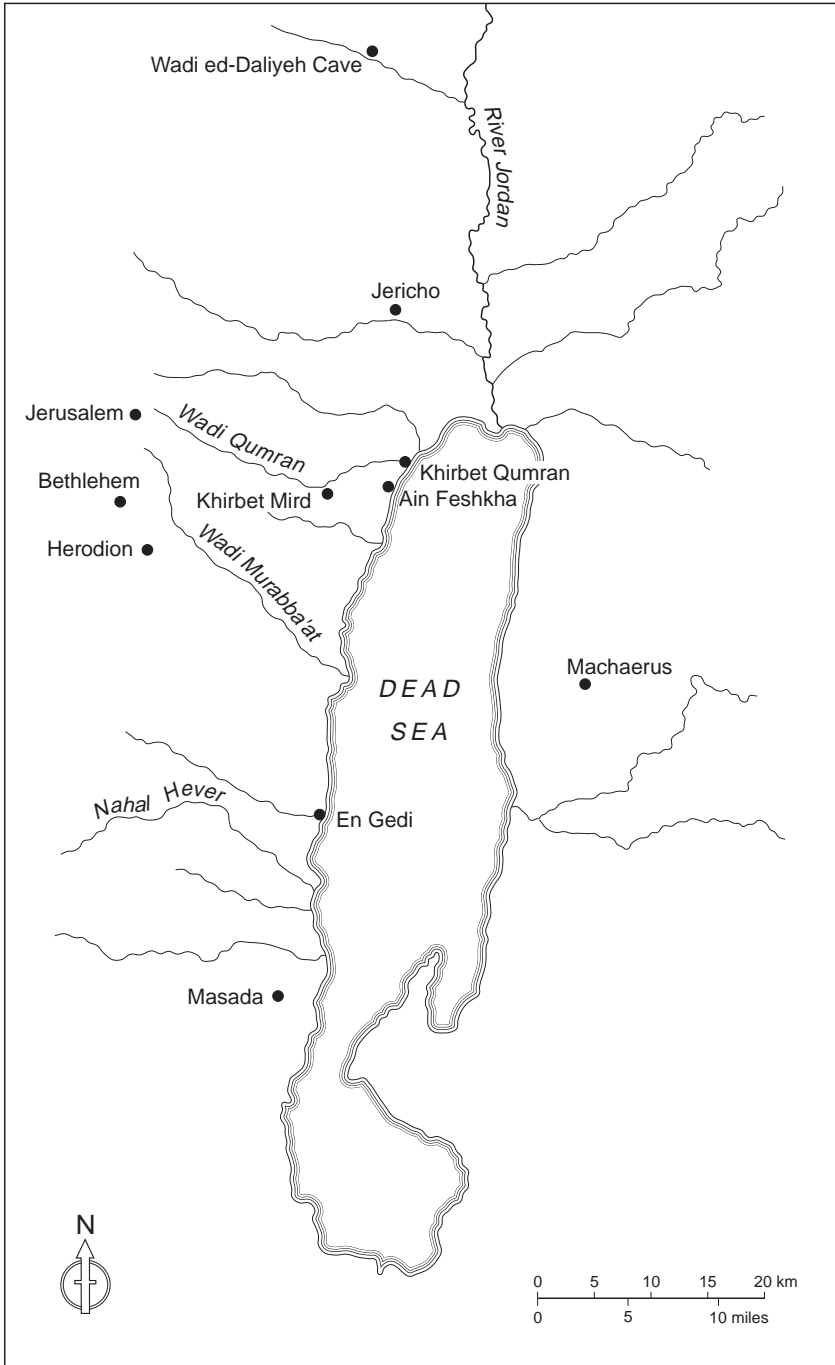


Fig. 24.1 The Dead Sea and surrounding districts.



normally, the square script that predominated from post-exilic times.<sup>4</sup> Their main contribution has been to provide copies of biblical writings which are some 1,000 years older than anything previously available, transforming scholars' understanding of the state of the biblical text in late Second Temple times.<sup>5</sup>

The second class includes works from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Material from both collections was preserved through the centuries by the Christian churches, usually in secondary translation, but the DSS have provided us with copies of books like Tobit (4QTob<sup>a-c</sup> or 4Q196–200) and Jubilees (4QJub<sup>a-i</sup> or 4Q216–24) in their original Hebrew and Aramaic. These manuscripts have shown beyond doubt that at least some works from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha were read by Palestinian Jews in late Second Temple times. Moreover, now that the whole DSS corpus is accessible, it is clear that other previously unknown compositions were circulating alongside them, although they fell out of use after CE 70. Like apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works, they contain nothing of an obviously sectarian nature and usually purport to stem from one of the heroes of ancient Israel – Moses in Moses Apocryphon<sup>a</sup> (4Q375), for example, or Ezekiel in Second Ezekiel (4Q385–91). Most compositions in this second category, therefore, were probably treated as scripture by Jews who had access to them in Second Temple times, although in cases like Reworked Pentateuch (4Q158, 364–7) the boundaries between scripture proper and scriptural interpretation seem blurred.<sup>6</sup>

The third category of Qumran literature is usually referred to as the sectarian DSS. Its contents are thought directly to reflect the religious group behind the collection and were completely unknown before 1947.<sup>7</sup> Many, if not all, of these works were copied or composed at Qumran, if the location known as Room 30 is rightly designated a 'scriptorium'.<sup>8</sup> A distinctive terminology, coupled with certain ideological features, is the essential characteristic of the sectarian documents (e.g. 1QS, 1QPHab, 4QMMT), although scholars disagree as to the sectarian status of some which contain the latter without the former (e.g. portions of CD, 4QCalendar, 11QT). Despite such uncertainties, it still makes sense, notwithstanding recent contrary hypotheses, to link the sectarian DSS with the Second Temple religious group known from the classical writers Philo, Josephus and Pliny as the Essenes. We shall return to this identification later.

<sup>4</sup> However, remains of Daniel (1Q71–2, 4Q112–16, 6Q7) and Ezra (4Q117) mix Hebrew and Aramaic, like the Masoretic witnesses, while some fragmentary biblical texts in Greek were recovered from Caves 4 and 7 (4Q199–22, 7Q1–2).

<sup>5</sup> See E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis 1992).

<sup>6</sup> On the canon, see J. Barton, *Oracles of God* (London 1986), 13–95.

<sup>7</sup> For the only exception, see below note 10.

<sup>8</sup> R. Reich, 'A Note on the Function of Room 30 (the "Scriptorium") at Khirbet Qumran', *JJS* XLVI (1995), 157–60, has re-affirmed this identification.

## II SECTARIAN AND NON-SECTARIAN TEXTS

In the early decades of Qumran research, individual DSS seemed to divide naturally into books of the Hebrew Bible and sectarian documents. The resultant allocation of virtually all DSS to either the first or third categories described above meant that any previously unknown composition was almost automatically assumed to be sectarian. The release in 1991 of fresh Cave 4 texts, however, has rendered this neat distinction problematic, especially given the extent of material now belonging to a second category which is neither straightforwardly biblical nor obviously sectarian. The ideological overlap between some documents in the second and third categories further complicates the matter, making it difficult to view the sectarian literature in isolation. In what follows, therefore, we shall consider together all substantial non-biblical DSS in the second and third categories, the majority of which were unknown before the Qumran discoveries.

There are several fruitful ways of organizing generically the material in these two categories. Vermes, for example, arranges the texts across eight genres. For the sake of convenience, this approach is adopted here, coupled with Dimant's distinction between works with and without sectarian terminology.<sup>9</sup> The latter division, although difficult to determine in some instances, corresponds to our second and third classes of DSS. A brief description of each genre is in order.

(i) Rules: Some sixteen texts can be classed as rules and appear to have regulated the life of the community behind the documents. Several express something of its origins and most reflect a partisan or, for want of a better word, sectarian outlook. Those exhibiting the latter contain terms which help determine whether other non-biblical DSS should be designated sectarian. Such terminology includes 'Community (*yahad*)', 'Teacher of Righteousness (*moreh ha-sedeq*)', 'Scoffer', 'sons of Zadok', 'sons of Light', 'messiah of Aaron', 'Overseer (*mevaqger*)', 'Master (*maskil*)', 'interpretation (*pesher*)', and 'the Many (*ha-rabbim*)'.

Two important rules are the Community Rule (1QS, 4QS<sup>a-j</sup> or 4Q255–64, 5QS) and Damascus Document (CD/4QD<sup>a-h</sup> or 4QD266–73) which have featured prominently in all attempts to understand the DSS group.<sup>10</sup> Both contain legal material, whether biblical interpretation or special

<sup>9</sup> See the list of non-biblical DSS in Table 24.1, based, with modifications, on G. Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London 1997), and D. Dimant, 'The Qumran Manuscripts: Contents and Significance' in D. Dimant, L. H. Schiffman, *Time to Prepare the Way in the Wilderness* (Leiden 1995), 23–58.

<sup>10</sup> The Damascus Document was first discovered in Cairo in 1896 in a copy known as CD (C=Cairo, D=Damascus), before turning up in a fuller edition at Qumran in Caves 4–6 (4QD<sup>a-h</sup>, 5QD, 6QD).

Table 24.1. *The Non-biblical Dead Sea Scrolls*

This list records all substantial non-biblical DSS across the eight genres highlighted by Vermes, with some modifications and additions. Following Dimant's distinction, those in bold contain 'community terminology', while those in italics use no such terminology; the more fragmentary a text, however, the less reliable this distinction. All works are in Hebrew, except those marked by an asterisk (\*), denoting an Aramaic document, or by a dagger (†), showing a text in Greek.

## RULES

- 1 **Community Rule** (1QS, 4QS<sup>a-i</sup> or 4Q255–64, 5Q11)
- 2 **Damascus Document** (4QD<sup>a-h</sup> or 4Q266–73, 5Q12, 6Q15, CD)
- 3 **Damascus Document-Community Rule Hybrid** (4QSD or 4Q265)
- 4 **Messianic Rule** (1QSa)
- 5 **War Scroll** (1QM, 4QM<sup>a-f</sup> or 4Q491–6)
- 6 **Rule of War** (4Q285, 11Q14)
- 7 **The Wicked and the Holy** (4Q181)
- 8 **Exhortation by the Master to the Sons of Dawn** (4Q298)
- 9 **Remonstrances** (4Q471a)
- 10 **Register of Rebukes** (4Q477)
- 11 **Some Precepts of the Law** (4MMT<sup>a-f</sup> or 4Q394–9)
- 12 **Rule concerning Impurities** (4Q284)
- 13 **Purities G** (4Q284a)
- 14 *Temple Scroll* (11QT<sup>a-b</sup> or 11Q19–20)
- 15 *Purities A* (4Q274)
- 16 *Purities B–C* (4Q276–8)

## HYMNS and POEMS

- 17 **Thanksgiving Hymns** (1QH)
- 18 **Apocryphal Psalms (III)** (11Q11)
- 19 **Lamentations** (4Q179, 4Q501)<sup>1</sup>
- 20 **Songs for the Sabbath Sacrifice** (4Q400–7, 11Q17)
- 21 **Wisdom Poem** (4Q444)
- 22 *Apocryphal Psalms and Hymns (I)* (11Q5)
- 23 *Apocryphal Psalms (II)* (4Q88)
- 24 *Non-canonical Psalms* (4Q380–381)
- 25 *Jerusalem and King Jonathan Text* (4Q448)
- 26 *Song of Praise* (4Q443)

## CALENDARS, LITURGIES, PRAYERS

- 27 **Words of the Heavenly Lights** (4Q504–6)
- 28 **Blessings** (1QSB)
- 29 **Liturgical Prayer** (1Q34bis)
- 30 **Prayers for Festivals** (4Q507–9)
- 31 **Daily Prayers** (4Q503)
- 32 **Morning and Evening Prayer** (4Q408)
- 33 **Benedictions** (4Q280, 286–90)

Table 24.1. (*cont.*)

34	<b>Confessional Ritual (4Q393)</b>
35	<b>Liturgical Work (4Q392)</b>
36	<b>Thanksgiving or Marriage Ritual (4Q502)</b>
37	<b>Purification Ritual (4Q512)</b>
38	<b>Purification Liturgy (4Q414)</b>
39	<b>Phases of the Moon (4Q317)</b>
40	* <i>Zodiacal Calendar with Brontologion (4Q318)</i>
41	<i>Calendrical Signs (4Q319)</i>
42	<i>Calendar of Priestly Courses (4Q320–330)</i>
43	<i>Order of Divine Service (4Q334)</i>
44	<i>Calendrical Liturgy (4Q409)</i>
45	* <i>Horoscopes (4Q186, 561)<sup>2</sup></i>
46	* <i>Incantations (4Q560)</i>
<b>APOCALYPTIC WORKS</b>	
47	<b>Triumph of Righteousness or Mysteries (1Q27, 4Q299–301)</b>
48	<i>Apocalyptic Chronology or Apocryphal Weeks (4Q247)</i>
49	<i>Conquest of Egypt and Jerusalem or Acts of Greek King (4Q248)</i>
50	<i>Messianic Apocalypse (4Q521)</i>
<b>WISDOM LITERATURE</b>	
51	<b>Parable of the Tree (4Q302a)</b>
52	<b>Sapiential Work (I) (4Q413)</b>
53	<b>Sapiential Work (II) (1Q26, 4Q415–18, 4Q423)</b>
54	<b>Sapiential Work (III) (4Q420–I)</b>
55	<b>Sapiential Work (IV) (4Q424)</b>
56	<b>Bless, my soul (4Q434–7)</b>
57	<b>Songs of the Sage (4Q510–11)</b>
58	<b>Beatitudes (4Q525)</b>
59	<i>The Seductress (4Q184)</i>
60	<i>Exhortation to Seek Wisdom (4Q187)</i>
<b>BIBLE INTERPRETATION</b>	
61	<b>Genesis Commentaries (4Q252–4)</b>
62	<b>Commentary on Isaiah (4Q161–5, 3Q4)</b>
63	<b>Commentary on Hosea (4Q166–7)</b>
64	<b>Commentary on Micah (1Q14, 4Q168)</b>
65	<b>Commentary on Nahum (4QP<sup>Nah</sup> or 4Q169)</b>
66	<b>Commentary on Habakkuk (1QP<sup>Hab</sup>)</b>
67	<b>Commentary on Zephaniah (1Q15, 4Q170)</b>
68	<b>Commentary on Psalms (1Q16, 4Q171, 173)</b>
69	<b>Commentary on Unidentifiable Text (4Q183)</b>
70	<b>Midrash on the Last Days or Florilegium (4Q174)</b>
71	<b>Messianic Anthology or Testimonia (4Q175)</b>
72	<b>Ordinances or Commentaries on Biblical Law (4Q159, 4Q513–14)</b>

Table 24.1. (*cont.*)

73	<b>Heavenly Prince Melchizedek (11Q13)</b>
74	<b>Consolations or Tanhumim (4Q176)</b>
75	<b>Catena or Interpretation of biblical Texts on Last Days (4Q177, 182)</b>
76	<i>Reworked Pentateuch (4Q158, 4Q364–367)</i>
77	<i>Paraphrase of Genesis–Exodus (4Q422)</i>
78	* <i>Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen)</i>
79	<i>Legal Commentary on the Torah (4Q251)</i>
80	* <i>Biblical Chronology (4Q559)</i>

## BIBLICALLY BASED APOCRYPHAL WORKS

81	<b>Ages of Creation (4Q180)</b>
82	† <i>Letter of Jeremiah (7Q2)</i>
83	<i>Targum of Job (11Q10, 4Q157)</i>
84	<i>Targum of Leviticus (4Q156)</i>
85	<i>Jubilees (1Q17–18, 2Q19–20, 3Q5, 4Q216–24, 228, 11Q12)</i>
86	<i>Pseudo-Jubilees or Jubilees-like Text (4Q225–7)</i>
87	<i>Prayer of Enoch and Enoch (?) (4Q369)</i>
88	* <i>1 Enoch (4Q201–2, 204–12)</i>
89	* <i>Book of Giants (1Q23, 2Q26, 4Q203, 530–2, 6Q8)</i>
90	<i>Admonition associated with Flood (4Q370)</i>
91	* <i>Book of Noah (1Q19, 4Q534–6, 6Q19)<sup>3</sup></i>
92	* <i>Words of the Archangel Michael (4Q529, 6Q23)</i>
93	* <i>Testament of Levi (4Q213–214, 1Q21)</i>
94	* <i>Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Levi (4Q537–41)</i>
95	<i>Testament of Naphtali (4Q215)</i>
96	<i>Joseph Apocryphon (4Q371–2)</i>
97	* <i>Testament of Qabat (4Q542)</i>
98	* <i>Testament of Amram (4Q543–8)</i>
99	<i>Text mentioning Hur and Miriam (4Q549)</i>
100	<i>Words of Moses (1Q22)</i>
101	<i>Sermon linked to the Exodus and Conquest (4Q374)</i>
102	<i>Moses Apocryphon<sup>a</sup> (4Q375)</i>
103	<i>Moses Apocryphon<sup>b</sup> (4Q375–6, 1Q22, 1Q29)</i>
104	<i>Moses Apocryphon<sup>c</sup> (4Q377)</i>
105	<i>Pseudo-Moses<sup>e</sup> (4Q390)</i>
106	<i>Moses or David Apocryphon (4Q373, 2Q22)</i>
107	<i>Samuel Apocryphon (4Q160)</i>
108	<i>Divine Plan for Conquest of the Holy Land (4Q522)</i>
109	<i>Joshua Apocryphon (I) or Psalms of Joshua (4Q378–9)</i>
110	<i>Paraphrase of Kings (4Q382)</i>
111	<i>Elisha Apocryphon (4Q381a)</i>
112	<i>Zedekiah Apocryphon (4Q470)</i>
113	<i>Historico-theological Narrative (4Q462)</i>
114	* <i>Tobit (4Q196–200)<sup>4</sup></i>
115	<i>Jeremiah Apocryphon (4Q384–5b)</i>

Table 24.1. (*cont.*)

116	*	<i>New Jerusalem Text</i> (1Q32, 2Q24, 4Q232, 554–5, 5Q15, 11Q18) <sup>5</sup>
117		<i>Second Ezekiel</i> (4Q385–91)
118	*	<i>Prayer of Nabonidus</i> (4Q242)
119	*	<i>Pseudo-Danielic Writings</i> (4Q243–5)
120	*	<i>Four Kingdoms</i> (4Q552–3)
121	*	<i>Aramaic Apocalypse</i> (4Q246)
122	*	<i>Proto-Esther</i> (?) (4Q550)
MISCELLANEA		
123		<b>Entering into the Covenant</b> (4Q275)
124		<b>The Four Classes</b> (4Q279)
125		<b>The Two Ways</b> (4Q473)
126		<b>Hymnic Fragment</b> (4Q255 recto)
127		<i>Ostraca</i>
128		<i>Copper Scroll</i> (3Q15)
129	*	<i>Lists of False Prophets</i> (4Q339)
130		<i>List of Netinim</i> (4Q340)

<sup>1</sup> According to Dimant, only 4Q501 contains community language.

<sup>2</sup> Only 4Q561 is in Aramaic.

<sup>3</sup> 1Q19 is in Hebrew.

<sup>4</sup> One of the Tobit manuscripts (4Q200) is in Hebrew.

<sup>5</sup> 4Q232 is in Hebrew.

community rules, while Register of Rebukes (4Q477) seems to list individuals breaching these laws. Strict regulations surrounded this discipline:

If he has spoken in anger against one of the priests inscribed in the Book, he shall do penance for one year and shall be excluded for his soul's sake from the pure Meal of the Congregation. (1QS 7:2–3)

There are, however, noticeable variations between the rules of 1QS and CD, while 4QSD (4Q265) appears to be a kind of hybrid version of the two compositions. CD, furthermore, contains narrative portions which recount the formation of a faithful remnant and refers obliquely to 'Damascus' (CD 6:5, 7:19). The work seeks to show its group alone represents the true Israel living in the final age:

For when they were unfaithful and forsook Him, He hid His face from Israel and His Sanctuary and delivered them up to the sword. But remembering the Covenant of the forefathers, He left a remnant to Israel and did not deliver it up to be destroyed. And in the age of wrath, three hundred and ninety years after He had given them into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, He

visited them, and He caused a plant root to spring from Israel and Aaron to inherit His Land and to prosper on the good things of His earth. And they perceived their iniquity and recognized that they were guilty men, yet for twenty years they were like blind men groping for the way.

And God observed their deeds, that they sought Him with a whole heart, and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart. (CD 1:3–11)

The Messianic Rule (1QS<sub>a</sub>) looks to the conversion of outsiders in the last days, when both a priestly and Davidic messiah will arrive. In the War Scroll (1QM, 4QM<sup>a-f</sup> or 4Q491–6), a final forty-year battle will be fought between the forces of good and evil. In the climax to this war, God will ensure that goodness and the community are victorious, as is also emphasized in the Rule of War (4Q285).<sup>11</sup>

Some Precepts of the Law or *Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah* (4QMMT<sup>a-f</sup> or 4Q394–99) is an important treatise seeking to persuade an external leader ('you') of legal positions taken by the author's group ('we') in opposition to a third party ('they'). These points of law centre on the purity of the Temple and its priesthood. Part of the document's final portion is especially interesting:

We have also written to you (sing.) concerning some of the observances of the Law (*miqsat ma'ase ha-Torah*), which we think are beneficial to you and your people. For [we have noticed] that prudence and knowledge of the Law are with you.

Understand all these (matters) and ask Him to straighten your counsel and put you far away from . . . the counsel of Belial. Consequently, you will rejoice at the end of time when you discover that some of our sayings are true.

(4QMMT C, 26–30)

Although the personal references here remain unclear, 4QMMT – like parts of 1QS and CD – probably reflects the formative stages of a pietistic religious group in the mid- to late second century BCE.<sup>12</sup>

Several rules contain none of the sectarian terminology listed above, the most important being the Temple Scroll (11QT<sup>a-b</sup> or 11Q19–20). It interprets pentateuchal laws about the Temple, purity, apostasy and the king, placing everything directly on God's lips. Despite its lack of distinctive terminology, 11QT's halakhic links with CD have convinced many that it is in fact a sectarian work, as the following arrangement demonstrates:<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> 4Q285 probably constitutes the missing end of 1QM and, despite contrary claims, does not envisage the death of a messianic figure but his victory over God's enemies.

<sup>12</sup> See E. Qimron, J. Strugnell, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert X: Qumran Cave 4 V: Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah* (Oxford 1994).

<sup>13</sup> See G. J. Brooke (ed.) *Temple Scroll Studies* (Sheffield 1989) for a variety of views.



11QT 45:11–12

No man who has had sexual intercourse with his wife shall enter anywhere into the city of the sanctuary where I cause my name to abide, for three days.

CD 12:1–2

No man shall lie with a woman in the city of the Sanctuary, to defile the city of the Sanctuary with their uncleanness.

Certainly, this comparison highlights the difficulty in determining the sectarian status of some works in our second and third categories, thereby justifying our inclusion of writings from both in this generic survey.

(ii) Hymns and Poems: The Qumran caves yielded considerable hymnic material, much of it akin to the biblical Psalms.<sup>14</sup> This applies to the sectarian compositions Apocryphal Psalms III (11Q11) and Lamentations (4Q501), as well as to the Hymns Scroll (1QH).<sup>15</sup> The latter emphasizes divine grace, both for the whole group and from the viewpoint of one of its leaders:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord,  
 God of mercy [and abundant] grace,  
 for Thou hast made known [Thy wisdom to me  
 that I should recount] Thy marvellous deeds,  
 keeping silence neither by day nor [by night]!  
 (1QH 18:14–16)

More distinctive are the *Shirot 'Olat ha-Shabbat* or Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4QShirShab<sup>a–h</sup>, 11QShirShab or 4Q400–7, 11Q17) which, outlining the angelic liturgy for the first quarter of the solar year, imply that those who follow it participate in the worship of heaven:

For the Mas[ter. Song of the holocaust of] the twelfth [S]abbath [on the twenty-first of the third month.]

[Praise the God of . . . w]onder, and exalt Him . . . The [cheru]bim prostrate themselves before Him and bless. As they rise, a whispered divine voice [is heard], and there is a roar of praise. When they drop their wings, there is a [whispered] divine voice. (4QShirShab 20, ii. 21–2, lines 6–9)

Non-sectarian poetic texts from Qumran include material known in secondary translation before the discovery of the DSS. For instance, 11Q5 contains Hebrew versions of Psalms 151–5, known from the Syriac Bible, as well as previously unrecorded Davidic psalms. Non-canonical Psalms (4Q380–1) similarly consists of previously unknown psalms ascribed to

<sup>14</sup> See further B. Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (Leiden 1994).

<sup>15</sup> Infrared technology has recently aided the decipherment of 1QH fragments, as explained in M. Morgenstein, E. Qimron, D. Sinan, 'The Hitherto Unpublished Volumes of the Genesis Apocryphon', *Abr-Nahrain* 33 (1995), 30–52.

biblical heroes, including the repentant ‘Prayer of Manasseh, King of Judah when the King of Assyria gaoled him’ (4Q381, fragment 33).

Also unknown before the discovery of the DSS is the poem praising King Jonathan in the Jerusalem and King Jonathan Text (4Q448). Released in 1991, scholars disagree about whether the figure concerned is Jonathan Maccabee or Alexander Jannaeus (whose Hebrew name was Jonathan) but, in either case, the piece contains no community language.

(iii) *Calendars, liturgies and prayers*: Numerous non-biblical DSS concern themselves with liturgy and prayer (see chapter 26, below). Some are clearly sectarian, like the curses against Satan found in Benedictions (4Q280, 286–90), as well as Blessings (1Qsb). The latter, originally appended to 1QS, contains blessings directed at different sections of the community, as the following shows:

Words of blessing. The M[aster shall bless] the sons of Zadok the Priests, whom God has chosen to confirm His Covenant for [ever, and to inquire] into all His precepts in the midst of His people, and to instruct them as He commanded . . .  
(1Qsb 3:22–24)

Others, however, such as Order of Divine Service (4Q334), may have originated outside the sect. For the community, nevertheless, proper worship required the observance of a correct solar calendar, and this concern features prominently in works like Phases of the Moon (4Q317), Calendrical Signs (4Q319) and Calendar of Priestly Courses (4Q320–30).<sup>16</sup> Between them, these and other documents seek to correlate several factors in a manner rejected by most other Jews: a dominant solar calendar with a 364-day cycle, a lunar calendar of 354 days, the twenty-four priestly courses assigned duty in the Temple week by week, and the dates of religious festivals. Calendar of Priestly Courses C (4Q322–4), it should be pointed out, mentions several first-century BCE persons as part of its calculations, including Salome Alexandra, a Jewish queen who ruled Judaea (76–67 BCE), and Aemilius Scaurus, the first Roman governor of Syria (65–62 BCE). Phases of the Moon (4Q317) records the moon’s phases in fourteen stages:

[On the f]ifth (day) of it (the month), [tw]elve (fourteenths of the moon’s surface) are covered and thus it [enters the day. On the sixth (day) of it] thir[teen] (fourteenths of it surface) are covered and thus it enters the day.  
(4Q317 2:2–4)

<sup>16</sup> See B. Z. Wacholder and M. G. Abegg, *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls*, fascicle 1 (Washington 1991), pp. 104–18, for a tabular arrangement of the Qumran calendar.

This document is one of several penned in a cryptic script which, despite the lack of distinctive terminology in this case, is usually thought to denote a sectarian origin. Whether or not this is correct, all these calendrical compositions must have been central to the community's ideology and, once more, we must acknowledge the difficulty in demarcating sectarian and non-sectarian boundaries. Indeed, such documents mirror the calendrical emphasis found in both 1 Enoch and Jubilees, on the one hand, and obviously sectarian works like Liturgical Prayer (1Q34) and Words of the Heavenly Lights (4Q504–6), on the other. A related calendrical interest presumably informs non-sectarian documents like Brontologion (4Q318) and Horoscopes (4Q186).<sup>17</sup>

(iv) Apocalyptic works: Of four texts isolated by Vermes, only Triumph of Righteousness (1Q27, 4Q299–301) might be deemed sectarian. As for the Messianic Apocalypse (4Q521), it portrays God's kingdom in terms of healing and resurrection in a manner echoing Isaiah 61:1 and Psalm 146:7–8. Especially since a messianic figure also features, there is a real, if general, parallel here with the allusion to Isaiah 61:1 in Matthew 11:4–5 and Luke 7:22 (and to the explicit citation of Isaiah 61:1 in Luke 4:18). Turning to Apocalyptic Chronology (4Q247), which divides history into 'weeks of years', and to Conquest of Egypt (4Q248), they both likewise contain nothing obviously sectarian.

(v) Wisdom literature: Those DSS best deemed Wisdom texts are generally close to biblical antecedents. The work known as Seductress (4Q184), for example, uses the familiar image of the harlot to warn against folly, while the language of Beatitudes (4Q525) is modelled on Psalm 1:1. Some, like Exhortation to Seek Wisdom (4Q185), give no hint of a sectarian origin, whereas others, such as Sapiential Work II (1Q26, 4Q415–8, 423), reflect familiar community terminology. The following excerpt has linguistic parallels with 1QH:

And then you will know everlasting glory  
and His marvellous mysteries, and the might of His deeds.  
And you will understand the beginning of your reward  
at the memorial of the time that has come.  
Engraved is the decree and all the visitation is determined.  
(4Q417, 2 i. 13–14)

The overlap with the language and style of biblical Wisdom, however, makes it difficult to determine the status of other works like Bless my Soul (4Q434–7).

<sup>17</sup> The former predicts blessings or woes by correlating thunder on a given day with the position of heavenly bodies, while the latter matches a person's character to physical characteristics and the configuration of the stars at birth.

(vi) Bible interpretation: Much of the literature surveyed so far draws on the Bible. The documents here, however, are concerned with overt Bible interpretation.<sup>18</sup> Some have been at the centre of Qumran studies for up to fifty years, especially the Commentaries or Pesharim on Habakkuk and Nahum (1QP<sup>Hab</sup> and 4QP<sup>Nah</sup>) which mention cryptically persons and events in the history of the community behind the DSS – utilizing a distinctive language in the process, including the Hebrew noun *pesber* ('interpretation'). 1QP<sup>Hab</sup> 7:3–5 (citing Habakkuk 2:2), for instance, explains the inspired role of the Teacher of Righteousness:

*That he who reads may read it speedily*: interpreted this concerns the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of His servants the Prophets.

More concretely, 1QP<sup>Hab</sup> and 4QP<sup>Nah</sup> elsewhere refer to the persecution of the Teacher of Righteousness, the fall of the Wicked Priest from grace, and the execution of some of the Seekers of Smooth Things.

Among texts released in 1991, Genesis Commentary A (4Q252) correlates the chronology of the biblical Flood with the community's solar calendar. It also seems to interpret Jacob's blessing of Judah (Genesis 49:10) as implicit criticism of the non-Davidic Hasmonaean authorities in Jerusalem:

*The sceptre [shall not] depart from the tribe of Judah . . . [xliv, 10]. Whenever Israel rules, there shall [not] fail to be a descendent of David upon the throne* (Jer. xxxiii, 17). For the ruler's staff . . . is the Covenant of kingship . . . until the Messiah of Righteousness comes, the Branch of David. For to him and his seed is granted the Covenant of kingship over his people for everlasting generations . . .

(4Q252 6:1–5)

Another important composition is Ordinances (4Q159, 513–14), interpreting pentateuchal laws, rather than biblical narrative, in a sectarian manner. As such, for instance, it interprets the Temple tax (Exodus 30:11–16, Nehemiah 10:32) as payable once in a lifetime, unlike the community's contemporaries who contributed to its upkeep every year.

Non-sectarian interpretative works include the Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen), imaginatively paraphrasing portions of Genesis into Aramaic, whilst the fragmentary Reworked Pentateuch (4Q158, 364–7) may originally have been the longest of all DSS.<sup>19</sup> Neither contains the community terminology familiar from other compositions interpreting the Bible,

<sup>18</sup> A useful discussion is G. J. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran: 4QFlorilegium in its Jewish Context* (Sheffield 1985).

<sup>19</sup> For Reworked Pentateuch, see H. Attridge *et al.*, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XIII: Qumran Cave 4 VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1* (Oxford 1994).

although Reworked Pentateuch does mention the 'Festival of Oil' familiar from some halakhic and calendrical documents (e.g. 11QT21:12–16).

(vii) Biblically based apocryphal works: Now that the whole DSS corpus is in the public domain, the largest non-biblical grouping is that under this heading, although many of the manuscripts are fragmentary.<sup>20</sup> With one exception, none contains sectarian language. Rather, they comprise long-known writings from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, as well as previously unknown compositions of a similar nature. Among the former are copies of Tobit, in both Aramaic (4Q196–9) and Hebrew (4Q200). Among the latter is a damaged Jubilees-like text which enlarges on the Sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22) in a manner reminiscent of both Jubilees and the later rabbinic Targums:

And Isaac said to Abraham, [his father, 'Behold there is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb] for the burnt-offering?' And Abraham said to [Isaac, his son, 'God will provide a lamb] for himself.' Isaac said to his father, 'T[ie me well] . . . the holy angels standing and weeping over [the altar] . . . And the angels of M[astema] . . . were rejoicing and saying, 'Now he (Isaac) will be destroyed . . . [we shall see] whether he will be found weak and whether A[braham] will be found unfaithful . . .

(4Q225, 2 ii. 1–8)

Equally interesting are numerous copies of a description of the New Jerusalem (1Q32, 2Q24, 4Q232, 554–5, 5Q15, 11Q18), based on Ezekiel 40–8, and the Testament of Qahat (4Q542), from as early as *circa* 300 BCE according to carbon dating results.<sup>21</sup>

Multiple copies of works like Jubilees, 1 Enoch, New Jerusalem and various new Moses pseudepigrapha show that these texts were popular at Qumran, even though they contain no specifically sectarian language. It seems safe to conclude that, given their association with the heroes of ancient Israel, many were treated as scripture.<sup>22</sup>

(viii) Miscellaneous documents: A number of works do not fit into Vermes' genres outlined so far. The Copper Scroll (3Q15), for instance, lists various riches deposited in numerous Palestinian locations. Lacking sectarian terminology, it comprises a register of sixty-four sites containing treasure, although it remains unclear whether the list was intended literally. It is also a matter of dispute whether this unusual text should be excluded from the Qumran DSS inasmuch as it was found in Cave 3 away from other documents and could even have been placed there after CE 70.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See D. Dimant, 'Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha at Qumran', *DSD* 1 (1994), 150–9.

<sup>21</sup> See G. Bonani *et al.* 'Radiocarbon Dating of Fourteen Dead Sea Scrolls', *Radiocarbon* 34 (1992), 843–9.

<sup>22</sup> See above note 6.

<sup>23</sup> For a variety of views, see G. J. Brooke, P. R. Davies (eds.), *Copper Scroll Studies* (Sheffield 1999).

Finally, several miscellaneous fragments can be classed here, including Entry into the Covenant (4Q275). The remains of this document are clearly sectarian and appear to mirror the initiation traditions known from other works like CD/4QD and 1QS. More controversial is one of two damaged ostraca found in early 1996 beside an outer wall of the Qumran ruins. The original editors proposed that their restored fifteen-line text reflects the practice of transferring property from new members to the 'Community' (line 8: *yahad*), a distinctive procedure outlined in 1QS. Yardeni, however, has cast doubt on this reconstruction, arguing that the ostrakon is best understood alongside other deeds of conveyance recovered from the Judaean desert and in fact contains nothing specifically Qumranic.<sup>24</sup> The debate surrounding this new piece of evidence will doubtless continue.

Meanwhile our overview of the non-biblical DSS has shown the size and diversity of the collection. It is difficult to deny that the manuscripts must, at least in part, be viewed as a cross-section of the religious literature of late Second Temple Palestine.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, additional to that cross-section are writings which appear to have been the sole preserve of a particular religious community. Although scholars are correct to be more cautious than they used to be about deciding what should be isolated here, they are right to note the partisan nature of many texts. The latter is manifest in their ideology and, more particularly, in a distinct vocabulary. It can also be seen in an idiosyncratic interpretation of scripture, which aims to establish an exclusive link with ancient Israel's faithful remnant.<sup>26</sup> Now that all manuscripts in our second category are available, it is clear that other documents, though not sectarian in the same way, reflect parallel ideological concerns, especially zeal for a correct calendar. The DSS collection, therefore, can be viewed loosely as a partisan library, within which hermeneutic control was presumably exercised by a minority of sectarian documents. The contours of that library are constituted not only by what it includes but also by what is excluded in that, for example, there is no obvious piece of Hasmonaean propaganda.<sup>27</sup> To the identity of those responsible for the corpus we may now turn.

<sup>24</sup> See F. M. Cross, E. Eshel, 'Ostraca from Kh. Qumrân', *IEJ* 47 (1997), 17–28, and A. Yardeni, 'A Draft of a Deed on an Ostrakon from Khirbet Qumrân', *IEJ* 47 (1997), 233–7.

<sup>25</sup> This has been argued by M. Wise, 'Accidents and Accidence: A Scribal View of Linguistic Dating of the Aramaic Scrolls from Qumran' in *Thunder in Gemini* (Sheffield 1994), pp. 103–51.

<sup>26</sup> Fuller discussion of this aspect can be found in J. G. Campbell, *The Use of Scripture in the Damascus Document 1–8, 19–20* (Berlin 1995).

<sup>27</sup> An exception might be the Jerusalem and King Jonathan Text (4Q448), if the Jonathan praised therein could be shown to be Alexander Jannaeus rather than Jonathan Maccabee.

## III THE QUMRAN-ESSENE HYPOTHESIS

On the basis of the texts then published, around half of those just surveyed, the 1960s and 70s saw the establishment of a Qumran-Essene hypothesis which linked the DSS both with the site of Qumran and with the Essenes described by Philo, Josephus and Pliny. Central was the correlation between the Qumran site and Pliny's description of an Essene settlement near En Gedi.<sup>28</sup> Equally important were agreements between a small number of sectarian documents and what is said about the Essenes by Philo and Josephus.<sup>29</sup> The sect's historical reminiscences, moreover, as described especially in CD and 1QPHab, seemed to slot neatly into what was known of late Second Temple Palestine.

A scholarly consensus emerged, therefore, mainly on the basis of 1QS CD, 1QPHab, 4QPNaH, 1QH and 1QM in combination with the classical sources. Accordingly, when Jonathan Maccabee scandalously assumed the High Priesthood in 152 BCE, the Essenes broke away from the Hasidim, a group that had hitherto supported the Maccabean movement. Thereafter, they dubbed him the Wicked Priest and his fall from grace is recounted in 1QPHab 8:3–13. Under their founder, the Teacher of Righteousness, the Essenes absconded to Qumran, where they flourished as a Jewish sect for some two hundred years. With their leaders, the priestly Sons of Zadok, the sectarians lived a celibate, communal life according to the rules of 1QS 5–9, shunning the Jerusalem Temple and awaiting God's dramatic intervention in history as the decisive climax to the final battle between good and evil. They not only studied the Bible, but also wrote sectarian documents which reveal something of their origins and aims. Less strict Essenes lived in Judaeen towns and, following the variant rules of CD 9–16, were allowed to marry and have limited dealings with the Temple and outsiders, looking to Qumran as a kind of headquarters. The sect's enemies included the Hasmonaean establishment, as well as the Sadducees (nicknamed 'Manasseh' in 4QPNaH 3:9), representing the errant Temple authorities, and Pharisees (dubbed 'Ephraim' and 'Seekers of Smooth Things' in 4QPNaH 2:2), comprising those Hasidim who rejected the Teacher of Righteousness. With the Roman advance against the First Jewish Revolt, the Qumran site was overrun around CE 68, just before which the sectarians secreted their texts in the surrounding caves. The Essene movement failed to survive this disaster, although it is not known what happened to the secondary settlements elsewhere.

<sup>28</sup> See *Natural History*, 5.73 in H. Rackham, *Pliny: Natural History*, vol. II (Cambridge, MA 1942).

<sup>29</sup> G. Vermes, M. Goodman, *The Essenes according to the Classical Sources* (Sheffield 1989) collates the relevant passages.



This synthesis gained widespread assent in the course of the 1960s and 70s, albeit with disagreements over innumerable points of detail.<sup>30</sup> In the process, several rival theories contrary to the emerging consensus were thrown up for consideration, arguing variously that those responsible for the DSS were Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots or early Christians or that the DSS had been brought from the library of the Jerusalem temple.<sup>31</sup> However, such proposals failed to gain momentum, for the majority felt that the real but intermittent links connecting the sectarian DSS with these other Second Temple groupings paled into insignificance compared to the overwhelming case for an Essene identification. Not only had Pliny pinpointed an Essene site which must surely be Qumran. But clinching the argument were substantial agreements between 1QS and other sectarian compositions, on the one hand, and Philo and Josephus, on the other, across a range of features. Indeed, both bodies of material witness a deterministic outlook and hierarchical structure, avoidance of the Jerusalem Temple, an initiation procedure, communal property and food, and distinctive rules on ritual purity.<sup>32</sup> Contradictions among the DSS, as well as between the DSS and the classical accounts, could be explained either by religious development over time or by the fact that Philo and Josephus were speaking in idealized yet imprecise terms as outsiders.

Nevertheless, by the 1970s and 80s, some were expressing doubts about this Qumran-Essene synthesis. Three major challenges emanated from Murphy-O'Connor, Davies and the proponents of the so-called Groningen hypothesis. Despite important differences, these scholars argued that Essenism was a broader movement than that envisaged above and from it the Qumran group separated as a sect. Schism, not development through time, explains many of the differences between the manuscripts themselves and the contradictions they exhibit in relation to the classical writers. Especially significant are three passages (CD 1:3f, 3:12ff, 6:2ff) which recount the formation of a faithful remnant soon after the Babylonian exile but prior to the advent of the Teacher of Righteousness in the second century BCE (CD 1:11).

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, the first edition of G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective* (London 1977), as well as works by F. M. Cross, R. de Vaux, J. Fitzmyer, M. Knibb, H. Stegemann and others.

<sup>31</sup> See C. Rabin, *Qumran Studies* (Oxford 1957), R. North, 'The Qumran Sadducees', *CBQ* 17 (1955), 164–88, C. Roth, *The Historical Background of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford 1958), G. R. Driver, *The Judaean Scrolls* (Oxford 1965), J. L. Teicher, 'Jesus in the Habakkuk Scroll', *JJS* 3 (1952), 53–5, K. H. Rengstorff, *Hirbet Qumran und die Bibliothek vom Toten Meer* (Stuttgart 1960).

<sup>32</sup> For further details, see E. Schürer, G. Vermes *et al.* *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, vol. II (Edinburgh 1979), pp. 555–90.

Murphy-O'Connor, through form-critical analysis of 1QS and CD, proposed that the Essenes were Babylonian Jews who returned to Palestine, probably in the wake of Maccabaeae success.<sup>33</sup> In Judaea, the message of their Essene Missionary Document (CD 2:14–6:1) was not well received and, with the appearance of the Teacher of Righteousness, the movement split. The main body of Essenes remained in various towns, while the Teacher and his followers settled at Qumran. In a similar vein, Davies argued that Essenism was a broad Palestinian movement whose members believed they had an origin in the Babylonian exile. They awaited one who would 'teach righteousness at the end of days' (CD 6:11) and, when a figure arose who fulfilled this expectation in the eyes of some (CD 1:11), schism resulted sometime in the mid- to late second century BCE. The Essene parent group rejected this Teacher of Righteousness, who absconded to Qumran where 1QS, 1QP<sup>Hab</sup> and CD in its final form were composed. Critical analysis, however, permits the detection of an earlier edition of CD which, along with 11QT, Jubilees and 1 Enoch, reflects the concerns of the Essenes proper.<sup>34</sup>

Mainly on the basis of 1 Enoch and CD, García Martínez and van der Woude place the origins of Essenism within Palestinian apocalyptic circles of the late third or early second century BCE, arguing, against Murphy-O'Connor and Davies, that CD's theological motif of a Babylonian origin should not be taken literally. Nothing, moreover, pinpoints the mid-second century BCE as central for the birth of the Essene movement. In reality, disputes about the calendar and purity over several decades led a splinter faction under the Teacher of Righteousness to settle at Qumran during the reign of Hyrcanus I (135–104 BCE), as the archaeological evidence of the site requires. This is reflected in 1QP<sup>Hab</sup> 5:9–12, for the Wicked Priest of this document denotes several Maccabaeae-Hasmonaeae rulers, not simply Jonathan Maccabaeae.<sup>35</sup>

With the benefit of hindsight, these reconstructions can be seen as variations on the Qumran-Essene hypothesis, although most scholars have not followed them in detail. Nonetheless, the work of García Martínez and van der Woude, Davies, and Murphy-O'Connor has highlighted the shortcomings of earlier formulations which neglected, for example, to take full account of archaeological work at Qumran. Claims to an exilic

<sup>33</sup> J. Murphy-O'Connor, 'La genèse littéraire de la *Règle de la Communauté*', *RB* 76 (1969), 528–49, 'An Essene Missionary Document? CD 11,14–VI,1', *RB* 77 (1970), 201–9, 'The Essenes and their History', *RB* 81 (1974), 215–44.

<sup>34</sup> P. R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant* (Sheffield 1983), and *Behind the Essenes: History and Ideology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta 1987).

<sup>35</sup> F. García Martínez and A. S. van der Woude, 'A Groningen Hypothesis of Qumran Origins and Early History', *RQ* 14 (1990), 521–42.

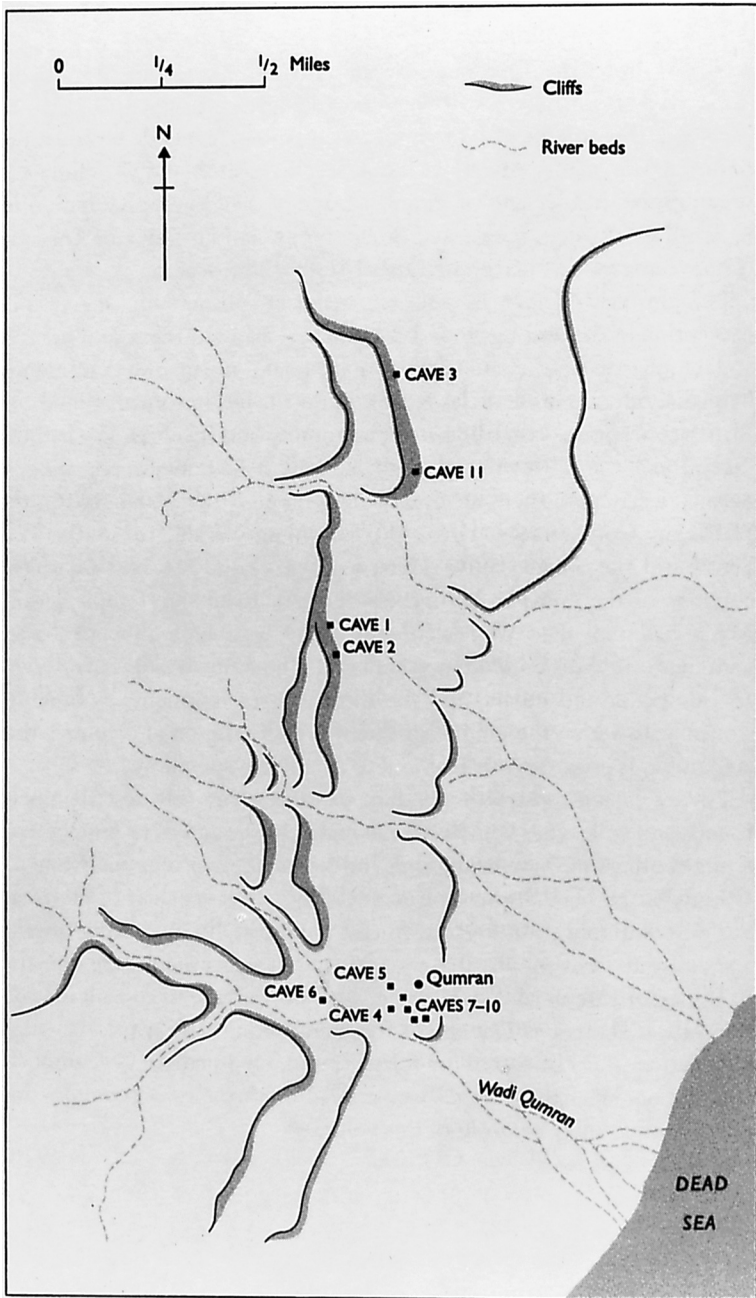


Fig. 24.2 The caves of Qumran.

origin in CD 1:3f, 3:12ff and 6:2ff, moreover, as well as CD's links to several documents (e.g. Jubilees, 1 Enoch, 11QT) with a distinctive ideology, but without the terminology of the sectarian DSS, also call for explanation. More generally, the early proponents of the Qumran-Essene hypothesis tended in practice to reduce the Essene phenomenon to Qumran and the DSS in isolation. While this was perhaps understandable, in view of the initial excitement surrounding the Qumran finds, it hindered satisfactory integration of the evidence with the classical data. And, especially in view of more recent appreciation for the complicated and diverse nature of late Second Temple Judaism, many now feel it failed to root the DSS adequately within that wider world. After all, even if the Qumran group was a separatist religious community which distanced itself from Jewish society at large, it has to be viewed at the same time as a product of that wider world from a socio-historical perspective.

In response to such concerns, Stegemann has radically reformulated the Qumran-Essene hypothesis to which he originally contributed and subscribed.<sup>36</sup> Arguing that the Essenes were a mainstream traditionalist party, the sense of alienation found in the sectarian DSS indicates, not that the movement was a peripheral sect, but that it was excluded from Hasmonaean political power. It formed under the Teacher of Righteousness, the High Priest deposed by Jonathan Maccabee in 152 BCE, who managed to salvage a 'union' or *yahad* from the three main factions formed in the aftermath of the upheavals of 167–164 BCE. Its centre was in Jerusalem, but Essene settlements existed in other towns, as Josephus states, while Qumran was also an important site. The Essenes adhered to a distinctive calendar not followed by the Hasmonaean authorities and, although not literally celibate, held to strict marriage laws.<sup>37</sup>

Many aspects of this revised theory are extremely speculative and will never gain widespread acceptance. Nevertheless, Stegemann's attempt to add recent insights to those inherent in the older Qumran-Essene theory is commendable. He had at his disposal some new material like 4QMMT. And, now that all Qumran manuscripts are available, some kind of revised Essene hypothesis seems the most likely candidate to take DSS research into the twenty-first century.<sup>38</sup> Such a reworking will have to

<sup>36</sup> H. Stegemann, 'The Qumran Essenes – Local Members of the Main Jewish Union in Late Second Temple Times' in J. T. Barrera and L. V. Montaner, *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls Madrid 18–21 March 1991* (Leiden 1992), pp. 83–166.

<sup>37</sup> In Stegemann's view, stringent rules on marriage and purity meant that members would undergo long periods of chastity, which was misconstrued by outsiders as total celibacy.

<sup>38</sup> See further G. Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London 1997) 1–90.

explain some new puzzling features, such as the multiplicity of scribal hands now evident in the DSS corpus as whole. But nothing has come to light which makes a revision impossible or renders any alternative preferable, as long as it is not thought that an Essene identification has to stand or fall with every detail of one of the hypothesis's manifestations in the 1950s, 60s or 70s intact.<sup>39</sup>

If this general conclusion is basically sound, caution is in order when it comes to the alternative theories recently propounded by Schiffman and Golb.<sup>40</sup> Golb underestimates artefactual links between Khirbet Qumran and the surrounding caves, whilst exaggerating the diversity of the DSS collection and maintaining that the Qumran ruins had nothing to do with the ancient texts found nearby. Understandably, in the light of our discussions above, Golb's contention that these documents represent the disparate contents of Jerusalem libraries hidden as the city came under Roman siege in the late CE 60s has failed to convince most scholars working in the field. Schiffman's revival of a Sadducean hypothesis likewise remains unconvincing. His thesis hinges on legal parallels between 4QMMT and halakhic stances attributed to the Sadducees in the tractate of the Mishnah called *Yadaim*. Although these parallels are real enough, they are outweighed by contrary signs. Thus, while Josephus states that the Sadducees rejected belief in angels, for instance, angelic beings certainly appear frequently in the DSS corpus. The people behind the documents, therefore, were either not Sadducees at all or had evolved so far beyond a Sadducean starting point that an original connection tells us little about their fully-fledged identity.

In sum, Golb and Schiffman have drawn on genuine but intermittent connections between individual items of data. Such overlaps between contemporary Jewish groups are only to be expected and further investigation of them may improve our understanding of the interrelationship between religious parties in late Second Temple Palestine, including the Essenes. When viewed overall, however, neither the theory of Golb nor the hypothesis of Schiffman is able to account satisfactorily for the broad sweep of the relevant evidence in the way that an Essene identification of the group behind the DSS corpus does.

<sup>39</sup> M. Wise, M. Abegg and E. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco 1996) 16–34, though usefully considering whether historical allusions in some texts might be reviewed now all DSS are available, dispense too readily with an Essene thesis which is treated unrealistically as a single immutable monolith.

<sup>40</sup> See N. Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* (London 1995), and L. H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Philadelphia 1994). For a brief response to both, see J. Campbell, *Deciphering the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London 1996), pp. 158–67.

## IV AN ESSENE COMMUNITY AT QUMRAN

In conclusion, several interrelated factors still render preferable the linking of the DSS, Qumran and the Essenes of Philo, Josephus and Pliny:

- (i) the connection between Pliny's description of an Essene settlement near En Gedi and the site of Khirbet Qumran;
- (ii) the distinctive pottery style common to artefactual remains recovered from both Khirbet Qumran and from the surrounding scroll caves;
- (iii) features peculiar both to the members of the community in 1QS and related documents, on the one hand, and to the Essenes of Philo and Josephus, on the other. These outweigh intermittent parallels between the DSS community and other second Temple Jewish groups.

These correspondences can only be explained satisfactorily by concluding that the group responsible for the DSS utilized Qumran in the late Second Temple period and was linked in some way with the Essenes of the classical writers. However this link is to be envisaged in detail and however the group behind the DSS stood in relation to other parties, this must remain the dominant paradigm for understanding the corpus, notwithstanding discrepancies among the sectarian DSS and the contradictory information they contain in relation to the accounts of the classical authors. Even if, with hindsight, formulations of the Qumran-Essene hypothesis during the 1950s, 60s and 70s now appear oversimple, such a conclusion represents their lasting contribution to DSS research.

Nevertheless, numerous facets of the evidence have yet to be explained satisfactorily. The multiplicity of scribal hands now evident in the 800 manuscripts, for example, requires attention. New documents, like the Jerusalem and King Jonathan Text (4Q448) or Calendar of Priestly Courses C (4Q332-4), may re-open questions about how best to integrate some of the historical allusions in other compositions, such as 1QP<sup>H</sup>ab or 4QP<sup>N</sup>ah, within an overall Essene theory, especially if the Qumran site was settled under the reign of Hyrcanus I (134-104 BCE) rather than Jonathan Maccabee (152-142 BCE). More seriously, scholars remain divided about how to handle the exilic claims of CD 1:3f, 3:12ff, and 6:2ff. It is a proper reading of these passages, taken together with other sectarian DSS and the classical sources, which may determine the outcome of ongoing disputes among advocates of an Essene hypothesis – especially whether the members of the Qumran group were Essenes proper or an Essene splinter faction. Inquiries along these lines, furthermore, will hopefully improve our grasp of the complex relationship between the Essene

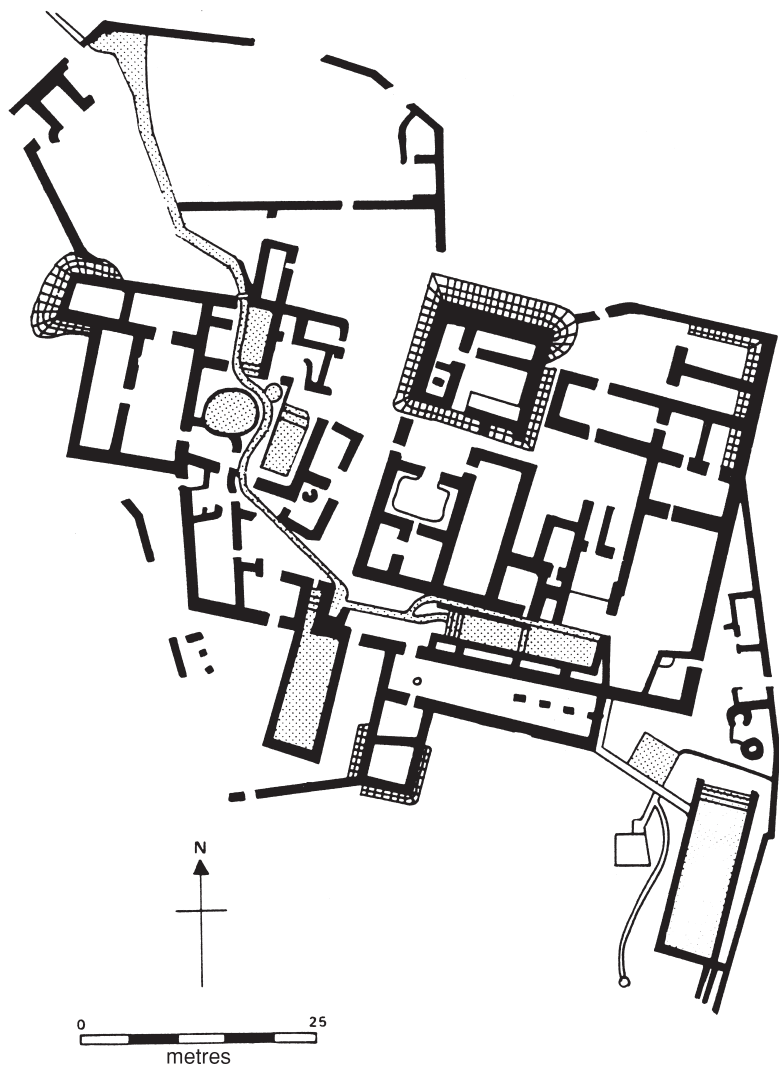


Fig. 24.3 General site plan of Qumran in the Hellenistic period.



group at Qumran and other religious parties in late Second Temple times. Important in this regard are the Pharisees and Sadducees, inasmuch as the halakhic parallels with Sadducean law noted earlier might suggest, for instance, that some Second Temple religious groups had a partially overlapping history and should not be viewed in neat isolation. More intriguing are a number of works in our second category of DSS which, while mirroring something of the ideology of sectarian texts yet lacking their distinctive terminology, also tie in to calendrical and other themes prominent in long-known works like 1 Enoch or Jubilees.

## CHAPTER 25

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND  
PRE-TANNAITIC JUDAISM

The widely held hypothesis that the Dead Sea Scrolls contain the views of Essene sectarians who had hidden them away for safe keeping *c.* CE 68 was first formulated in the infancy of Qumran studies, when only seven scrolls had been discovered. The identification of the site known as Khirbet (Kh) Qumran as a desert monastery or headquarters of the sect, proposed in the wake of the excavation of the site in the early 1950s, similarly met with widespread scholarly agreement. These two hypotheses have served as basic axioms for most Qumran researchers in their quest for a historical explanation of the manuscripts.

The case in favour of these hypotheses, and consequent historical conclusions, have been put forward in many publications since 1948 (see chapters 15 and 24). The accumulated evidence now pointing, on the contrary, to the Jerusalem origin of the scrolls and their composition by various sects, parties and individuals in pre-Tannaitic Judaism is presented here and the bearing of the scrolls on Judaism in this period is accordingly reconsidered.

## I THE STATE OF THE MANUSCRIPTS

The term generally applied to Hebrew scripts (square or cursive) employed by copyists of literary texts is 'Hebrew book hand', while that given to scripts used to write legal instruments, letters and other autographs is 'Hebrew documentary hand'. These terms apply not only to the Qumran scrolls, but also to the texts comprising the two other important Hebrew manuscript discoveries of modern times: those of the Bar Kokhba period discovered in Wadi Murabba'at and Naḥal Ḥeber (second century CE) and those of mediaeval times found in the Synagogue of the Palestinians of Fustat-Misr, known collectively as the Cairo Genizah (primarily ninth to thirteenth centuries).

The manuscripts whose study was most crucial in the formulation of the criteria for distinguishing between documentary and book hands are those contained in the Cairo Genizah, documentary Genizah texts being readily distinguishable from literary ones not only by their usually shorter

contents, and their scripts, but also by the different page sizes, and the way the script occupies the page. *Literary text-copies* in the Genizah sometimes contain colophons identifying the scribes, as well as the time and place of execution of their work. Original *autographs* of literary works, on the other hand, are as a rule distinguishable by frequent use of cursive documentary scripts, and additions or omissions introduced into the body of such texts by their authors, who can occasionally be identified by name through handwriting characteristics and other means. Similarly letters, legal instruments and other documentary texts often contain specific dates as well as personal and geographic names; and in addition, even the authors of such texts can often be identified either because their names are included in the instruments, or because of other texts in the same handwritings, whose authorship is specifically indicated. The documentary texts of the Genizah form the fundamental basis for investigation of the period they represent and permit legitimate historical inferences concerning it.

On the other hand, no documentary texts preserved from any period before that of the Genizah manuscripts can be attributed to members of any particular sect or party in ancient Judaism. It might have been hoped that the Qumran discoveries, as those of the Bar Kokhba period, would supply such documentation; but they have not. The Bar Kokhba texts are documentary manuscripts of the early second century CE. Besides offering a glimpse into the military organization and deployment of Bar Kokhba's forces (CE 132–5), they record various genuine names of the Judean Wilderness. If legal documents found among the Bar Kokhba papyri include deeds of sale of land by Jews in Jerusalem in the year CE 134, this is a firm indication that Jews resided there in that year, but yields no hints as to their religious leanings.<sup>1</sup> Their main value as documentary witnesses is to confirm that the Palestinian Jews of this period wrote letters and possessed legal documents in Hebrew, the surviving fragments representing a minute fraction of the total number of such texts extant in Jewish Palestine c. CE 132. The burning of the public archives in Jerusalem in CE 66 (*Bell.* II.427–8) indicates that the Jews of that period possessed documents and records, just as members of literate cultures always have.

These facts bear directly on the Qumran-Essene hypothesis, holding that Essene Jews had been living since perhaps the second century BCE at

<sup>1</sup> See the Jerusalem documents in P. Benoit, J. T. Milik and R. de Vaux, *DJD* 2, *Les grottes de Murabba'at*, nos. 29 and 30, pp. 141–4; cf. Milik on p. 205. The Bar Kokhba documents contain only the slightest indications of Jewish religious observance and belief before and during the Second Revolt, e.g. the two passages referring to the 'four species' (Lev. 23:40) for Tabernacles; cf. Y. Yadin, *Bar Kokhba* (London and Jerusalem 1971), pp. 128–32.

Kh. Qumran. On this view the site served as a centre or mother-house of the Essene movement; among those living there or nearby were authors and scribes; by means of the efforts of the latter, the ideas of the Essene spiritual leadership were propagated throughout Palestine in the form of scrolls copied at a scriptorium located within Kh. Qumran. When it was perceived during the First Revolt that Roman troops would seize the site, the manuscripts contained in the scriptorium were hastily gathered up and stored in the nearby caves either in jars or in linen wrappings; the site then fell to the Romans after a battle between them and the Essenes.

There are grave difficulties with this view. No documentary manuscript has ever been found that might lend probative textual support to it. Among the thousands of Qumran parchment and papyrus fragments now known, comprising portions of hundreds of writings, there is not one text that can be proved to be an original literary or documentary autograph. With the exception of the Copper Scroll (see below) and a few miscellaneous documentary fragments relative to ownership of grains, the various scrolls and scroll fragments found in the caves are uniformly scribal copies of literary works, all originally composed before – sometimes long before – the copies were executed. There is no letter of an Essene, nor any legal instrument, among the Qumran scrolls which might supply names, dates and places in Essene history, and none which demonstrably names the Kh. Qumran site or describes the history of its habitation. A documentary manuscript basis for the traditional theory is, to date, still lacking. No texts have ever been found at Kh. Qumran itself.

According to the traditional theory, the manuscripts had originally been located within Kh. Qumran, and were hastily removed thence to the caves upon word of the approach of the Roman soldiers. (Some scholars speak of the removal of scrolls only from the alleged scriptorium, while others suggest that the scrolls removed included works of an entire Qumran library.) To support this hypothesis cogently, however, the configuration of hidden manuscripts would have to be considerably different from that actually revealed. In 1948 only seven manuscripts were known; the simple explanation that a few pious Essenes had hidden some cherished writings near their settlement was not difficult to believe. In subsequent years, however – i.e., only after the traditional theory had been first formulated – many more literary texts were found in Qumran caves, in total thousands of fragments of no fewer than 820 scrolls. To judge by the way most were ravaged by the elements over the past 1,900 years, many more must have been hidden away and totally perished.

Thus a systematic effort of concealment was evidently carried out, and not merely by a few individuals but by a larger group who attempted to store away as many texts as possible, sometimes even several copies of

individual writings. If this project had been undertaken by Essenes occupying a site close to the caves, the hoard of texts now discovered would necessarily have included two other manuscript genres.

A mother-house of heterodox Jews thriving in a Judaeen desert environment for as much as two centuries would, first of all, have accumulated archives detailing their year-to-year affairs, and the leaders of the group would not have been likely to allow the destruction or abandonment of such materials while at the same time taking pains to preserve hundreds of literary scrolls. On the Qumran-Essene hypothesis, one would have expected to find at least official letters of the Essene sect as well as *bona fide* documents of a legal or juridical nature governing aspects of their communal life. No such texts have been found.

Responding to the criticism first expressed in 1980,<sup>2</sup> some scholars now claim that a particular Qumran text is indeed such a letter. However, from the photographs of this text which have been published, it is clear that this work, the so-called *Miqsat ma'ase ha-torah* ('Some Deeds of Torah') on which see further below, consists of nothing more than fragments of scribal copies of a literary epistle (cf. e.g. the *Letter of Aristeas*); it is not a *bona fide* autograph letter.<sup>3</sup>

Beginning in 1996, a similar claim has been promulgated to the effect that an inscribed documentary potsherd (viz., an ostrakon) found in February of that year approximately two inches beneath the ground surface outside the walls of the Kh. Qumran settlement, contains a fragmentary contract ceding either foodstuffs or orchards to the 'Yahad' – that is, the group of separatists mentioned in a number of Qumran texts who, in the traditional explanation, are claimed to have been the very inhabitants of the Qumran settlement in antiquity. According to computer-enhanced photographs of this fragment, however, the word *yahad* does not actually occur in the text. The three essential consonants making up the Hebrew word *yahad* are *yodh*, *beth*, and *daleth* (*ybd*); whereas at the point in the ostrakon where it is supposed to be extant, there is first a *nun* – not a *yodh* in any known or conceivable form – then an *aleph*, formed like several others throughout the text – not the needed *het* (h) of the word *yahad* –

<sup>2</sup> N. Golb, 'The Problem of Origin and Identification of the Dead Sea Scrolls', *PAPS* 124 (1980), 1ff. For earlier historical reconstructions than that presented in the *PAPS* article – reconstructions that were, however, offered before the full range of discoveries had been revealed – see particularly the contributions of C. Rabin, *Qumran Studies* (Oxford 1957); K. H. Rengstorf, *Hirbet Qumran und die Bibliothek vom Toten Meer* (Stuttgart 1960); and G. R. Driver, *The Judaeen Scrolls* (Oxford 1965). With respect to the views presented in these writings, cf. the discussion in N. Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* (New York 1995; London 1996), pp. 135ff, 157ff and 273ff.

<sup>3</sup> See particularly the photographs appearing in E. Qimron, J. Strugnell *et al.*, *Qumran Cave 4, V. Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah* (Oxford 1994), showing fragments in six different handwritings.

and thereafter the fragment of a third consonant whose identification is uncertain. The consonants required to sustain the claim of a documentary reference to the *yabad* group do not appear in the ostrakon. There is no proof whatever from the contents of this ostrakon that the heterodox *yabad* group ever inhabited Kh. Qumran.<sup>4</sup>

The absence, moreover, of sectarian or Essene-related documentary texts from the caves cannot be explained by the assertion that Essene sectarians would have consigned all their property to a custodian, and thus have had no need for individual documents proving ownership of property. A sect of the kind described in the *Manual of Discipline* would itself have needed such documents to prove ownership of collective properties, including land. It would have kept records of decisions arrived at during its court sessions, and would surely have possessed lists naming the individual members and detailing the spiritual rank which each had achieved. The *Manual of Discipline* explicitly mentions such a list (v.23).

Nor have literary autographs been found, works in whose text there are signs of the author correcting and making alterations as he writes. This too raises grave doubts regarding the Qumran-Essene hypothesis. For according to it, the writings found in the caves were, at least in part, not merely copied at Kh. Qumran, but composed there by Essene writers, whose products were then consigned to scribes working in a special chamber – the room known as a scriptorium. In 1948, when it was still believed that only seven scrolls had been hidden away, no mystery attached to the supposition that, among these few texts, literary autographs had failed to survive. Today, however, the problem posed by the absence of literary autographs is of the same magnitude as that posed by the absence of original sectarian letters and legal documents. Given the abundance of texts, the proximity of at least some of the caves to Kh. Qumran and the fundamental tenet of the standard hypothesis to the effect that sectarians functioned there as authors and propagators of Essene doctrine, why have no literary autographs been found?<sup>5</sup> The appearance in

<sup>4</sup> Cf. E. Eshel and F. M. Cross, 'Ostraca from Qumran', *IEJ* 47 (1997), 17–28. (The claim was earlier presented in papers read by Eshel at, inter alia, the 1996 Annual Meeting in New Orleans of the Society of Biblical Literature; computer-enhanced photographs of this text were displayed at the latter meeting, and later published in *IEJ*, *ibid.*, 19, and more clearly in *Ha'aretz*, 18 July 1997.) For objections to the *yhd* reading, first expressed by me at the Jerusalem Scroll conference of July 1997, see subsequently A. Yardeni in *IEJ* 47 (1997), 233–7, and N. Golb in *The Qumran Chronicle* 7 (1997), 171–3.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Golb, in *PAPS* 124 (1980), p. 5, and pp. 18–19, notes 42 and 43. R. de Vaux (*Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London 1973), p. 104), assumes that certain works were composed at Qumran, but points to no autograph. In his various writings on the scrolls, A. Dupont-Sommer shows no awareness of the problem.

the Qumran caves of hundreds of texts of a scribal nature, balanced against the fact that no parchment or papyrus literary autographs have been discovered there, represents a notable and as yet unexplained anomaly in the Qumran-Essene hypothesis.

In addition, with the publication of photographs of virtually all the scroll fragments specialists are now able to examine and even to count the handwritings represented in them.<sup>6</sup> While due allowance must be made for subtle changes in handwriting characteristics of individual scribes as they advance in age, the overall impression gained through palaeographic investigation of each text is that its handwriting is usually unique to the fragments of which it is comprised. While no palaeographic classification of the entirety of scripts has yet been published, one may nevertheless now observe that at least five hundred scribes contributed to the writing of the discovered texts. Moreover, as already observed, those texts are, judging by the state of their preservation, mere remnants of much greater hoards of manuscripts which over nineteen centuries must have mostly rotted away entirely. The physical characteristics of the texts plus the multiplicity of handwritings thus point ineluctably not to a theorized desert scriptorium or local sectarian book collection at Kh. Qumran, but rather to libraries in a large urban centre, as the original home of the manuscripts. Such libraries would not normally have contained texts of a documentary nature such as personal letters, deeds of ownership, and court records, in the same way that no such documentary materials have been found, for example, in the library room of the Roman villa at Herculanaeum where over 1,500 Greek and Latin scrolls were discovered in the eighteenth century.

Given the above facts, the presence of the scrolls in desert caves may be reasonably attributed only to their removal from libraries – not scriptoria – and originally housed within environments of a different nature from that postulated for the Kh. Qumran site. Other evidence now available firmly supports this conclusion, and moreover points to Jerusalem as the most likely place of origin of these manuscripts.

## II THE KHIRBET QUMRAN SITE

When the original seven scrolls were discovered in Cave 1 in 1947, the text eliciting the greatest interest was the *Serekh hayahad* (the ‘Manual of

<sup>6</sup> First publication of the photographs: R. H. Eisenman and J. M. Robinson, *A Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, vols. I and II (Washington 1991). See further E. Tov, with the collaboration of S. J. Pfann, *The Dead Sea Scrolls on Microfiche: A Comprehensive Facsimile Edition of the Texts from the Judaean Desert* (Leiden 1993).



Discipline'), which contained *inter alia* the description of a religious brotherhood. Certain beliefs and activities ascribed to this brotherhood were perceived to have affinities with those of the Essenes as described by Josephus. It was then pointed out that Pliny the Elder, in describing the western shore of the Dead Sea, had mentioned that Essenes lived there, that below their settlement was the town of En Gedi, and that they lived 'out of range of the noxious exhalations of the coast'.<sup>7</sup> The striking combination of details led many to infer that the *Serekh* scroll had not been hidden in the cave haphazardly by individuals far from their home, but was the practical and theoretical constitution of Essene sectarians inhabiting the western shore of the Dead Sea. When the nearby Kh. Qumran site was excavated, between 1951 and 1956, the layout and character of the building ruins, cisterns and artefacts were found to suggest a communal site of the second century BCE–first century CE. Some of the pottery specimens found at the site were of the same types as those uncovered in a number of caves.

On the basis of these indications, it was held that Kh. Qumran had been the Essene habitation spoken of by Pliny. The buildings were used for the collective purposes of the sect – dining in common, conducting study sessions, ritual bathing, and copying manuscripts. The Essenes had had their actual living quarters outside the settlement, in caves, for example, as well as in huts of which no traces remain. The cemetery was one which, appropriately for an Essene mother-house, had received the last remains of members of the sect over the lengthy period of its existence, the north–south orientation of the graves possessing a religious significance of undetermined nature. The fact that pottery found in the caves matched some found at Qumran established a tangible link between the two areas: the inhabitants had manufactured this pottery at a workshop located at Qumran (lower south-east extension of the settlement), and some of it was used to store Essene manuscripts written *in situ*.

There are, however, difficulties with this explanation resolvable only by an entirely different interpretation of the nature of the site. Pliny states of the Essene 'tribe' that 'it has no women and has renounced all sexual desire, has no money, and has only palm-trees for company' (*Natural History* v.xv.73). This does not fit the picture presented by the site, which shows no greater degree of collective organization than that consistent with its much earlier identification as a fortress.<sup>8</sup> Besides such features as a mill, oven, kitchen, dining-hall, food-storage facility and stable, a fortified two-storey tower was discovered<sup>9</sup> as well as large water reservoirs

<sup>7</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* v.xv.73; ET Pliny, *Natural History* II, LCL 1942, p. 277.

<sup>8</sup> G. Dalman, *PJ* 10 (1914), 9ff; 16 (1920), 40; M. Avi-Yonah, *QDAP* 5 (1936), 26; *Map of Roman Palestine*, 2nd edn (Jerusalem 1940).

<sup>9</sup> R. de Vaux, *Archaeology*, pp. 36 and 42.

and remnants of a surrounding wall. The archaeologist responsible for the excavation noted that the builders of the site had been preoccupied with defence considerations. The site thus has salient characteristics marking it, at all events in its original Hasmonaean form, as a well-built stone fortress, which Pliny or his source could hardly have failed to mention as the centre of the Essenes, had Essenes actually been living there. Pliny, however, says nothing of Essenes garrisoned in a fortress or in well-constructed stone buildings, but instead speaks of their having only palm-trees for company. Hence the view that the Essenes were in reality living in huts and caves outside of Kh. Qumran, for which, however, not a shred of cogent evidence has ever been adduced.

Not only is the site fortress-like; it must have sheltered a military troop at the time it was attacked. Iron arrowheads were found in the debris, the walls had been mined through by the Romans, and during the battle a great fire had swept through the buildings.<sup>10</sup> The Roman troops had thus to contend with an armed camp at Kh. Qumran which offered resistance before succumbing.

No description of the Essenes, however, leads one to believe that they could have constituted such a force. Philo states of the Palestinian Essenes (*Quod omnis probus liber*, XII): 'As for darts, javelins, daggers, or the helmet, breastplate or shield, you could not find a single manufacturer of them, nor, in general, any person making weapons or engines, or plying any industry concerned with war . . .'<sup>11</sup> Josephus mentions one commander in the revolt called 'John the Essene' (in an area far from the Dead Sea; *Bell.* II.567; III.11.19), but his description of the sect itself leaves no room for the possibility that they were a militant group capable of defending a fortress or any important site: 'They carry nothing whatever with them on their journeys except as protection against brigands' (*Bell.* II.125). Pliny's much shorter description likewise precludes the idea that the Essenes of the Dead Sea shore formed a militant band: he not only states that they had renounced sexual desire but that they were daily augmented by a 'throng of refugees . . . tired of life' – a statement which matches his assertion that they had only palm trees for company, rather than the protection of a fortress.

Pliny's statement moreover includes the observation that 'below' or 'south of' (*infra*) the site of habitation of the Essenes was the town of En Gedi which was, as he goes on to say, now like Jerusalem 'a heap of ashes'. From this and surrounding passages it is clear that Pliny wrote his description *after* the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in the summer of CE

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36; F. M. Cross, *Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Study* (London 1958), p. 45.

<sup>11</sup> Philo, LCL, vol. 9, 1960, pp. 54–5.

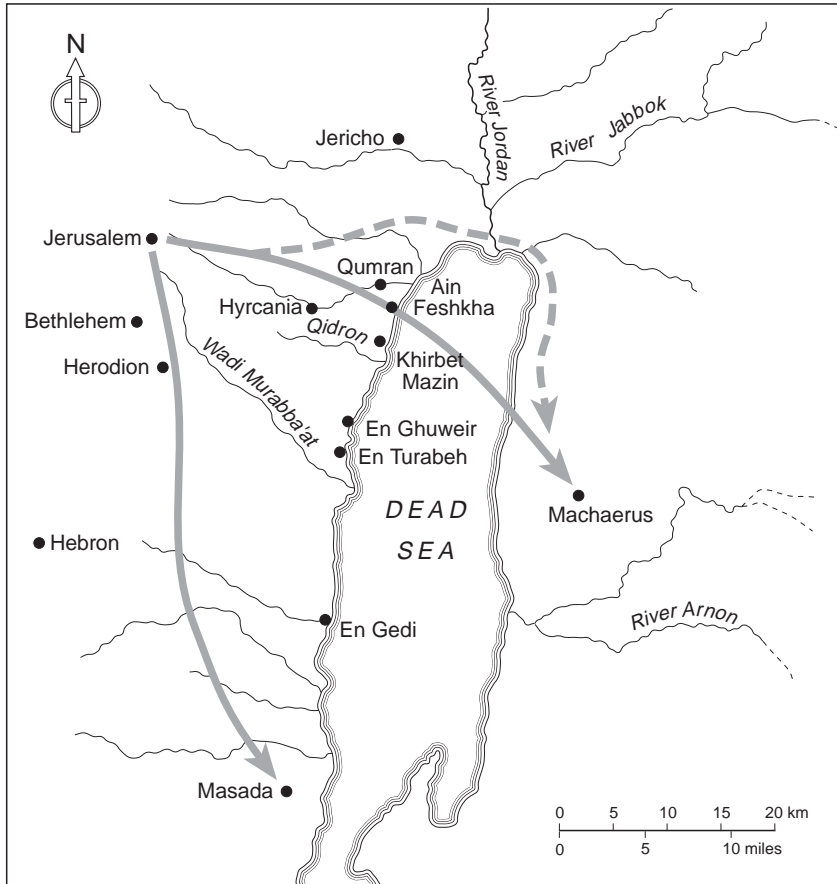


Fig. 25.1 Directions of Roman salients after the fall of Jerusalem (see p. 836).

70. His *Natural History* was edited *circa* CE 75 and published approximately in CE 78. Through numismatic and other evidence it has become clear, however, that Roman troops were occupying Kh. Qumran for several years after its fall and the final quelling of the rebellion; and the ensuing contradiction has been harmonized by creation of the theory that Pliny's text *did not originally include* the passage about En Gedi being reduced to ashes as had Jerusalem (and thus, it may be presumed, other surrounding passages indicating composition of the text after CE 70). The explanation has instead been offered that this was a mere editorial insertion put later on into Pliny's text. No proofs are adduced, however, that such editorial

insertions were ever made into the text of Pliny's *Natural History*.<sup>12</sup> Without forced exegesis, it is self-evident that the combination of the excavator's own archaeological findings and Pliny's express words demonstrates that the site of the Essenes as described by the latter could not have been Kh. Qumran but, rather, only an unfortified height above or north of En Gedi characterized by an abundance of palm-trees, and occupied by members of this sect after the fall of Jerusalem in CE 70.

The only documentary evidence that would seem to relate to the argument that Essenes inhabited a fortress is the letter (c. CE 134) of the Bar Kokhba period mentioning the *mešad* (fortress) of the *ḥṣḏyn*, in a context which favours localization of the site in the Judaeen wilderness;<sup>13</sup> *ḥṣḏyn* is usually construed as a defective form of *ḥṣidin*, signifying 'pietists' or practitioners of loving-kindness, and thought by some to refer to the Essenes. It is indeed not unlikely that one or more Judaeen wilderness fortresses were garrisoned in Hasmonaeen times by the historical Hasidaeans, and one such bastion may surely have been called the Fortress of the Hasidaeans.<sup>14</sup> Kh. Qumran might even have been such a fortress, but this is not proof that the site was occupied by Essenes.<sup>15</sup>

Some writers claim that the site matches Pliny's description insofar as it is located in an appropriate position, namely 'on the west side of the Dead Sea, but out of range of the noxious exhalations of the coast'. This argument had merit when Kh. Qumran was first excavated and thought to be the only settlement lying north of En Gedi. But other ancient places of habitation between Kh. Qumran and En Gedi have since been discovered. They include the building complex just to the north of En-Feshka, itself located three kilometres to the south of Kh. Qumran; Khirbet Mazin, approximately 3.5 km south of En-Feshka; and the rectangular building, approximately 7 km further south, near 'En Ghuweir.<sup>16</sup> Many other sites existed in the same region in antiquity.<sup>17</sup> Thus no compelling

<sup>12</sup> Cf. N. Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* (New York 1995; London 1996), pp. 19–20, for further indications of the post-CE 70 dating of Pliny's observations of Palestine.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. DJD 2, no. 45, line 6 (p. 163) and Milik's discussion, p. 164.

<sup>14</sup> See the map of concentric rings of fortresses which protected Jerusalem in *BA* 44 (1981), no. 2, cover map – which does not however break down the sites into periods, and must be treated with care.

<sup>15</sup> See further N. Golb, *Who Wrote the DSS?*, pp. 12ff.

<sup>16</sup> En-Feshka, cf. de Vaux, *Archaeology*, pp. 60–87; *RB* 66 (1959), 225–55; Khirbet Mazin, cf. H. E. Stutchbury and G. R. Nicholl, *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* 6–7 (1962), 96–103 and plates 18–23; En el-Ghuweir, cf. P. Bar-Adon, 'Chronique archéologique', *RB* 77 (1970), 398–400; 'Another Settlement of the Judaeen Desert Sect at En Ghuweir on the Dead Sea', *EI* 10 (1971), 72–89.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. de Vaux, *Archaeology*, p. 89. The survey conducted by Bar-Adon uncovered approximately 300 sites, *RB* 77, *ibid*.

topographical exigency requires the identification of the Kh. Qumran site with Pliny's Essene habitation.

That Kh. Qumran is in fact not identical with the location described by Pliny is suggested by the fact that skeletons of women have been found in the Qumran cemetery along with those of men, whereas Pliny describes his Essenes as celibate. Neither the *Manual of Discipline* nor any of the other Qumran texts published so far espouses the doctrine of celibacy. Some of the texts discuss the appropriate age for marriage, or promise the blessing of fertility. Some either prohibit sexual intercourse — obviously considered licit under other circumstances — only within Jerusalem or the Temple precincts, or else disallow those who have had intercourse from entering the Temple precincts for a three-day period. Some espouse monogamy, or polemicize against those who allow uncle-niece marriages.<sup>18</sup> If it were indeed Kh. Qumran that Pliny had in mind in discussing his Essene settlement, and the people living there actually espoused the ideas contained in the scrolls that reflect the aforementioned views, he could hardly have described this group as a celibate commune.

Josephus states (*Bell.* II.160–1) that 'another order of Essenes', believing that 'the main function of life . . . is to perpetuate the race', took wives. The proposal has been made that the Qumran group was of this marrying kind. Others suggest that it was a relatively complex community with both celibate and non-celibate Essenes living side by side in areas surrounding the Qumran mother-house. It has also been suggested that the entire Dead Sea area north of En Gedi was heavily dotted with Essene settlements, whether celibate or non-celibate, and that Kh. Qumran was only the most important of these. The fundamental bases that might support any of these assertions are, however, entirely lacking; and for this reason some writers, although maintaining that the inhabitants of Qumran were members of a sect in certain ways related to the Essenes, now either use the more neutral term 'the sect' with respect to these inhabitants, or else — mindful of other passages in Qumran texts not in harmony with the Essene identification — favour alternative sectarian designations.<sup>19</sup> Yet

<sup>18</sup> Age for marriage: IQSa 1.9–11; blessing of fertility *Manual of Discipline* IV.7; prohibition of intercourse DC XII.1–2; three-day prohibition, *Temple Scroll* col. 45, lines 11–12; monogamy: *Damascus Covenant* IV.19–v.2; polemic against uncle-niece marriages: *Damascus Covenant* v.7–11; *Temple Scroll* 66.15–17.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. M. Burrows, *More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York 1958), pp. 253–74; N. Golb, *PAPS* 124 (1980), 13–14, notes 13–15. The resulting confusion has led some writers to assert that the putative occupiers of Qumran were Sadducees or else Sadducees and Essenes at one and the same time, cf. the pertinent statements in N. Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, pp. 182–216.

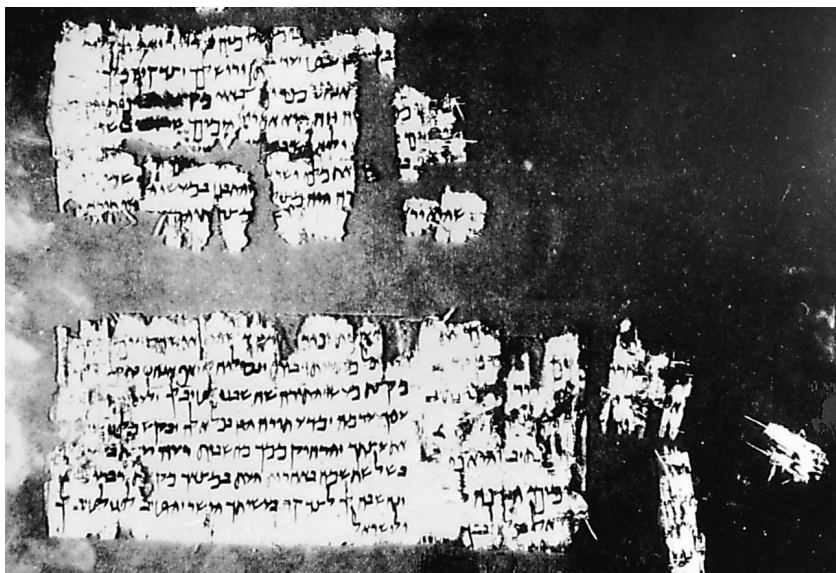


Fig. 25.2 Fragments of *Miqsat Ma'ase Torah*. Classification (top fragment): 4Q398, 11–13 (PAM 42.183; Mus. Inv. 157b); (bottom fragment): 4Q398, 14–17 (PAM 42.368; Mus. Inv. 157c). Edited and discussed in E. Qimron and J. Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4.V* (Oxford 1994), pp. 36–8, 58–61, 201–2.

if any of these were correct, why would Pliny mention only celibate Essenes in his description of the region above En Gedi?

Validation of the site as a centre of literary productivity, and thus as the home of the Essenes, has however been sought through identification of a chamber within the complex as a scriptorium. The archaeological excavations of the early 1950s revealed a room of 13 × 21 metres, which had originally supported a second storey of the same dimensions. In the debris of the lower room were found two inkwells as well as the remains of several plastered mudbrick slabs that were claimed to be portions of tables surviving from the destruction of the second storey. This no longer extant second storey has been identified as the site of the scriptorium. However, ancient depictions do not show scribes sitting at tables, nor is it indeed likely that the slabs are from tables.<sup>20</sup> What is more, no fragments of parchments or papyrus, no styluses or line-markers, and no

<sup>20</sup> Cf. B. M. Metzger, 'The Furniture of the Scriptorium at Qumran', *RQ* 1 (1959), 509–15; 'When did Scribes Begin to use Writing Desks?', *Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress 1958* (1960), 355–62; and N. Golb, *PAPS* 124 (1980), 17–18, notes 31–5.



great abundance of inkwells but only two, have been found in the debris of the room. In the past it was suggested that the parchments were totally destroyed due to weather conditions over the span of two millennia, but the discovery of scroll fragments in the ruins of Masada (see further below), where weather conditions were no less severe, weakens this explanation. Parchment and papyrus texts could and did survive, however fragmentarily, even outside caves in the harsh conditions of the Judaeian wilderness. The absence of scrolls and writing implements from the very room which is supposed to have been the place of origin of so many of the scrolls found in the caves does not favour the traditional identification of the room in question. No more may be read into the discovery of the several plastered slabs and two inkwells in the ruins of a room located near the military tower of a fortress than that the room possibly served as an office or hall where notes were taken and communications prepared.

Another archaeological argument brought forward in favour of the Qumran-Essene hypothesis concerns the jars found in the Kh. Qumran ruins and in the manuscript caves. Although many of the manuscripts hidden away in Cave 4, and evidently a part of those hidden in other caves, were not stored in jars, but only buried in linen wrappings, others were undoubtedly stored in jars. These jars were of varying sizes and dimensions, and could have had many other purposes originally than the storing of scrolls. Pottery types found in the caves were also discovered at Kh. Qumran, encouraging the inference that all the pottery found in the caves came from the Qumran site. This is possible; but since some of these pottery types have been found also elsewhere in the Judaeian wilderness,<sup>21</sup> it may also be inferred that the sequestration of texts was aided by Jewish inhabitants of the region in general, not only those inhabiting the Qumran site. There is no reason to doubt that those living at Kh. Qumran participated in hiding the texts by supplying jars for this purpose,<sup>22</sup> but particularly in the light of the totality of evidence (see further below), this hardly requires the conclusion that it was those inhabitants who possessed or wrote the scrolls brought to the caves for hiding. The configuration and content of later discoveries and the fortress-like nature of Kh. Qumran now work against that interpretation.

The suggestion has been made that the nature of the nearby cemetery indicates that a sect was living at the site. The approximately 1,200 graves

<sup>21</sup> Cf. P. Bar-Adon in his report on the excavation of the site near En Ghuweir in *RB* 77 (1970), 398–400; and in *EI* 10 (1971), 72–89.

<sup>22</sup> De Vaux and subsequent scholars take the view that as jars and scrolls were both abandoned in the caves at the same time, and as the pots apparently came mainly from the Kh. Qumran site, 'the source of these manuscripts was the community installed in the Qumran area'. This does not necessarily follow from the stated premises.



are placed in regular rows and close to one another, and with one exception are oriented in a north–south direction. The large number of graves has been thought to result from the interment there of Essenes living in the Qumran area over the course of two centuries. Only thirty-five of these graves however, have been excavated, not enough to allow inferences about the length of time over which the cemetery was used. Yet from the findings that a large percentage of the exhumed skeletons were evidently of men and women under forty, that the graves included one of a woman together with a two-year-old baby and a small girl, and that the tombs were laid out closely together in regular rows and appear to have been dug and covered in haste by more or less identical processes, it would appear likely that these graves were dug during a relatively short time and were the result of large numbers of people dying, or being put to death, in quick succession – as happened throughout Judaea during the First Revolt. The cemetery may also have served as the burial ground for many inhabitants of the region, not only those connected with the fortress. The lack of a thorough archaeological investigation presently renders moot any firmer judgement about this cemetery. The claim that it was an Essene burial site, however, is based only on the assumption that Kh. Qumran was a mother-house of Essenes.

As to the date of the siege and partial destruction, it has been held that these events occurred no later than the summer of CE 68. Since the siege of Jerusalem had not yet begun at that time, this claim would support the view that the texts found in the caves are local. The conclusion, however, was arrived at primarily on the basis of incomplete coin evidence. Recent numismatic findings are to the effect that the latest Jewish coins found at Qumran are not of the third year of the Revolt (spring CE 68/spring 69), as had been earlier claimed, but were rather ‘struck at Ascalon in CE 72/3’; the configuration of coin evidence at Qumran, as compared with that at Masada, is now such as to encourage ‘the impression that Qumran reached its end at the same time that Masada did’.<sup>23</sup> The present combination of coin evidence and historical information supplied by Josephus, however, may allow for a more definitive time-period for the taking of Qumran by Roman forces. While it has been acknowledged that Josephus mentions no military action south of Jericho, this formulation understates

<sup>23</sup> For the original pre-CE 70 dating, see particularly de Vaux, *Archaeology*, pp. 36–41, and the critique in N. Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, pp. 12–13. For the more recent numismatic findings, see Y. Meshorer, ‘The Coins from Qumran’, in the forthcoming volume of the Proceedings of the Fiftieth Anniversary Dead Sea Scrolls Conference, to be published by the Israel Exploration Society. (The quotations are by permission of Professor Meshorer.)

the matter. There is no evidence that the Romans ventured into any part of the Judean wilderness before Jerusalem was taken. Had they stormed the Qumran site two years previously, they would have been likely to move south-westward and to take Herodion then, rather than after the fall of Jerusalem. This would have enabled them to surround Jerusalem entirely instead of from three sides only (*Bell.* v.50–277). In contrast, Josephus only states (*Bell.* v.69) that at the beginning of the siege in the spring of 70, the Tenth Legion arrived at the Mount of Olives, ‘having come by way of Jericho where a party of soldiers had been posted to guard the pass formerly taken by Vespasian’.

It is thus highly likely, on historical grounds alone, that Qumran was destroyed only in the wake of the fall of Jerusalem, after the Roman troops under Lucilius Bassus had begun to venture into the Judean wilderness – the last remaining area of Jewish resistance. While one salient of the Roman advance was in the direction of Masada, the other was eastward toward Machaerus, which was besieged and fell to the Romans only a few years after Jerusalem had been taken (Josephus, *Bell.* v.163–209), and in whose path lay Kh. Qumran. The interplay of historical testimony and numismatic and geographical evidence is now such as to encourage the view that Kh. Qumran was taken by the Roman force that besieged it during the course of the march eastward toward Machaerus. (The highly strategic importance of this latter site, now lying within the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, will be apparent to any visitor who might venture to climb to its summit.) (See fig. 25.1, p. 830.)

Independent investigation of Kh. Qumran which has taken place during the early 1990s now tends to cast still further doubt on both archaeological and textual aspects of the traditional Qumran-sectarian theory. One team, among those officially charged with publishing the full results of the excavation of the 1950s, have concluded by careful measurement and analysis that the slabs of concrete claimed to be pieces of tables at which the scribes of Qumran are said to have copied manuscripts in the ‘scriptorium’ are in reality portions of benches that fit in along the walls of the (now destroyed) upper storey of that building, expressing their view that the room in question could well have been a *triclinium* where an important personage entertained his guests. Yet more significantly, they have shown that the pottery and allied artefacts found during the excavation contradict the notion of the site as the domain of a wealth-eschewing pious sect. ‘A small quantity of fine wares constitute a distinctive category’; these include not only ‘black-varnished’ potsherds but also ‘Pseudo-Nabataean ware’ of ‘fine to very fine quality . . . with stylized plant motifs . . . (that) specialists now tend to attribute . . . to the Jerusalem area’. The presence of the ‘sophisticated glass and stone ware’ in addition to

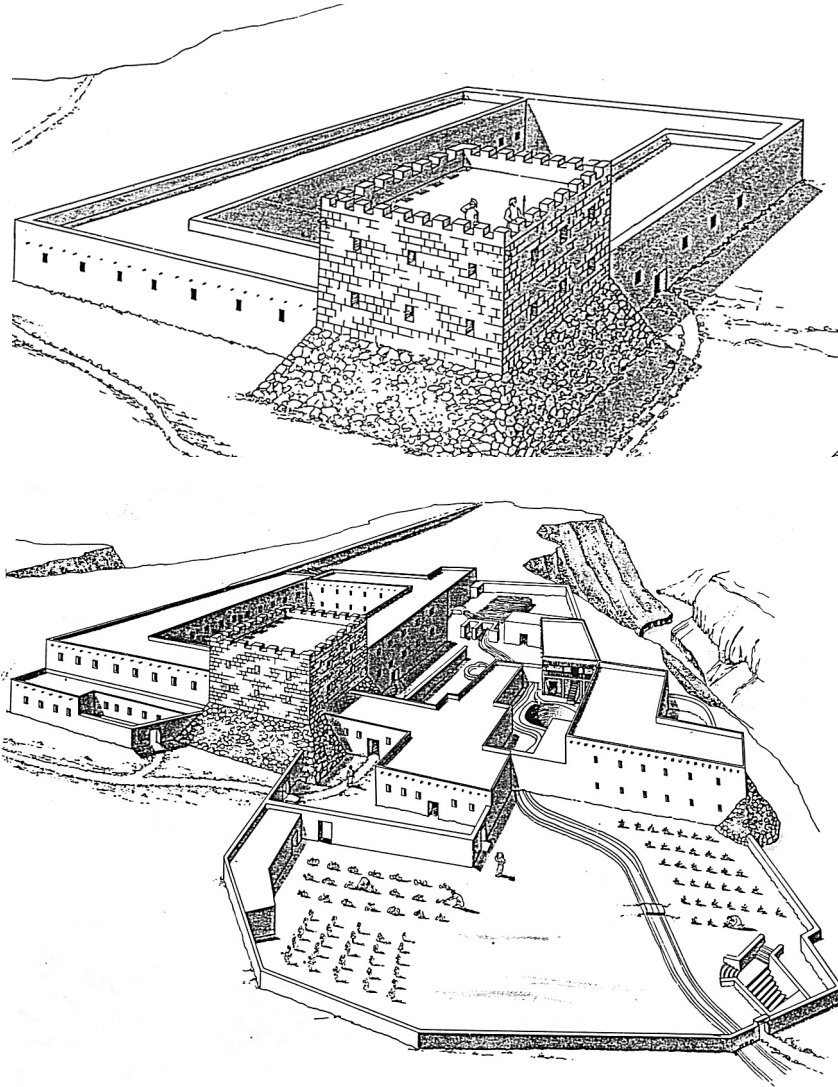


Fig. 25.3 Qumran, phases 1 and 2, according to the reconstruction of Y. Hirschfeld.

other artefacts of remarkable quality 'is astounding considering what has been said about the "monastic simplicity" of the site'.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, the excavator of the Hasmonaean fortress site known as Horvat 'Eleq (located on the Ramat Hanadiv rise north-east of Caesarea) now states, after reinvestigation of Kh. Qumran, that it was originally, like Horvat 'Eleq, part of a complex of country fortresses of the Hasmonaean state, and the site 'closest to (H. 'Eleq) in plan and components. . .' In a second stage (*circa* 50 BCE to CE 70) the site was, according to him, transformed into use as a fortified country estate, or *chorion*, of a magnate close to the family of Herod and his successors, as other such country forts in the Judaean Wilderness region and elsewhere in Roman Palestine.<sup>25</sup> The reconstruction of the two main phases of the Qumran complex according to that interpretation is presented in fig. 25.3.

Several Qumran treatises of a halakhic nature contain elements that place them at odds, or in obvious contradiction, with the views of the authors of the *Manual of Discipline*,<sup>26</sup> but writers have generally taken the position that the presence of such texts does not affect the view that the latter work was the central one used by and indeed governing the lives of the sectarians thought to be living at Kh. Qumran. This belief results from the assumption that the study and purity discipline described in the *Manual* (cols. v–ix) was achieved, or thought by the authors to be achievable, particularly in the desert – i.e., in an area such as the one where Qumran is

<sup>24</sup> Cf. R. Donceel and P. Donceel-Voûte, 'The Archaeology of Qumran' in M. Wise *et al.* (eds.) *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site* (Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, vol. 722, 1994), pp. 1–38; see particularly pp. 9–13 and 27–31. In the same volume (pp. 39–50), J. Magness discusses Qumran pottery as well, but appears to be unaware of the rich materials examined by Donceel and Donceel-Voûte, drawing the conclusion, from various inferior pieces described by her, that a sect espousing or practising poverty inhabited the site. This line of reasoning is clearly vitiated by the current preponderance of archaeological evidence associated with the site. A comparative study of the ceramics of Masada, Herodion, Machaerus and Qumran would undoubtedly go far toward settling the question of the nature and purpose of the latter site. Machaerus pottery is compared with that of Herodion (without comparison with Kh. Qumran) by S. Loffreda, *La ceramica di Machaeronte e dell'Herodion (90 a.C.–135 d.C.)* (Jerusalem 1996).

<sup>25</sup> See Y. Hirschfeld, 'The early Roman bath and fortress of Ramat Hanadiv near Caesarea', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, Supplementary Series, no. 14: *The Roman and Byzantine Near East* (1995), pp. 28–55; 'Early Roman Manor Houses in Judea and the Site of Khirbet Qumran', *JNES* 57 (1998), pp. 161–89. On the *chorion* or 'fortified place' as a characteristic feature of the Hasmonaean and Herodian states, cf. particularly I. Shatzman, *The Armies of the Hasmonaeans and Herod* (Tübingen 1991), pp. 92, 239–40. (The author wishes to thank Dr Hirschfeld for calling his attention to these developments and for his permission to publish the accompanying figure 25.3.)

<sup>26</sup> On the mutual contradictions inherent in the various halakhic texts, see the analysis in *Who Wrote the DSS*, chaps. 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9.

situated. Analysis of the two passages of the *Manual* (VIII.12–15; IX.18–20) claimed to allude to such a requirement does not however support this view.

In one passage the authors merely interpreted the imperative of Isaiah to ‘clear the way in the wilderness’ (Isa. 40:3) as a metaphor implying the virtue of studying the mystical teachings of the Torah (*ṣeb midrash batorab*) espoused in the text; according to the second passage the true or hidden meaning of the same expression in Isaiah is that the instructor was to teach the initiants how to comprehend the secrets and to walk in perfection with their fellow members during the epoch of Belial. The authors of the *Manual* (as well as those of the Damascus Covenant and other writings) freely assign metaphorical interpretations to biblical texts, and there is nothing in either of the two discussed passages or in any other passage of the *Manual* to imply that those who would have followed the rule of the *Manual* actually believed that they should go to live in a desert or inhabit a wilderness settlement.<sup>27</sup> The brotherhood of purity and Torah-study described in the *Manual* is in many respects reminiscent of later *haburot* (friendship orders, see ch. 29, section xv, below and M. Demai 2.3, 6.6., 9.12; Tos. Demai 2 and 3)<sup>28</sup> that required no special settlements in desert areas, although it may well be that earlier brotherhoods, such as the one envisioned or described in the *Manual*, preferred separate living areas outside the urban milieu. The authors of the Damascus Covenant refer to such areas of settlement not as deserts but as *mahanot* (literally ‘encampments’) as distinguished from ‘*arim* (‘cities’), but even in the case of the Damascus heterodox group it is impossible to say whether these ‘encampments’ were places actually settled by Covenanters, or only projected for a future time. Neither the *Manual* nor any other text found in the Qumran caves refers to a wilderness fortress or mother-house.<sup>29</sup>

### III THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MANUSCRIPTS AS WRITINGS OF PALESTINIAN JUDAISM

When the original seven scrolls were discovered and the traditional hypothesis was first formulated, most of the finds still lay in the future; the hypothesis was created without the hindsight of later discoveries. The

<sup>27</sup> See further *Who Wrote the DSS?*, pp. 73–5, 93–4.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. S. Lieberman, ‘The Discipline in the So-called Dead Sea Manual of Discipline’, *JBL* 71 (1952), 192–206; C. Rabin, *Qumran Studies* (Oxford 1957), *passim*.

<sup>29</sup> For further analysis of the ‘desert’-metaphor appearing in the *Manual*, cf. N. Golb, *Who Wrote the DSS?*, pp. 73–4, 93–4, and 350–1; for the *haburah*-societies, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 76–8. On friendship-societies see M. Klinghardt: ‘The Manual of Discipline in the Light of Statutes of Hellenistic Associations’ in M. Wise *et al.*, *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site*, pp. 251–70; and throughout his *Gemeinschaftsmahl und Mahlgesellschaft* (Tübingen and Basel 1996). See also M. Weinfeld, *The Organizational Pattern and the Penal Code of the Qumran Sect* (Göttingen 1986).

accumulating revelations were then adapted to a theory already having the Qumran area at its nexus. No attempt was made to reformulate the theory on the basis of the totality of discoveries, which showed the Qumran caves to be but one element in a complex geohistorical tableau. To see how this occurred, and why a reassessment necessarily points to Jerusalem as the home of the scrolls, one may consider the salient major findings in chronological order.

A. The first finding (1949), concerned discoveries of Hebrew manuscripts near Jericho in the third and ninth centuries CE. In the middle of the third century, Origen stated that the Greek Bible translation used by him for the sixth column of the Hexapla was ‘found together with other Hebrew and Greek books in a jar near Jericho’ during the reign of Caracalla (Antoninus) some fifty years earlier. Eusebius was later familiar with this statement; he states that ‘in the Hexapla of the Psalms, after the four well-known editions (Origen) placed beside them not only a fifth but also a sixth and seventh translation; and in the case of one of these (viz. the Sexta) he has indicated again that it was found at Jericho in a jar in the time of Antoninus the son of Severus’.<sup>30</sup>

Then in a Syriac letter written in Baghdad *circa* CE 800, the Nestorian patriarch Timotheus I of Seleucia mentioned a discovery of Hebrew manuscripts in a cave ‘near Jericho’. He states that he learned this fact from ‘trustworthy’ Jewish converts who told him that ‘the dog of a hunting Arab . . . entered a cave and did not come out. His master followed him, found a dwelling within the rocks in which were many books, went to Jerusalem and informed the Jews. They came in throngs and found books of the Old Testament and others in Hebrew script . . .’<sup>31</sup> The converts told Timotheus that ‘we found over two hundred psalms of David’, i.e. others beside the biblical ones.

Thus two ancient sources, one of the third century and the other of the ninth, had called attention to the discovery of Hebrew manuscripts near Jericho, of which at least the larger cache had been hidden in a cave.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Eusebius 6.16 (LCL 2, London 1932), p. 53, citing Origen; cf. G. Mercati, ‘D’alcuni frammenti esaplati sulla Va e VIa edizione greca della Bibbia’, *Studi e Testi* 5 (1901), 28–46; P. Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza*, edn. 2 (Oxford 1959), pp. 241–2.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. O. Braun, ‘Der Katholikos Timotheus I und seine Briefe’, *Oriens Christianus* 1 (1901), 138–52; ET in G. R. Driver, *The Hebrew Scrolls* (Oxford 1951), pp. 25–6.

<sup>32</sup> There are also statements in mediaeval Hebrew and Arabic literature alluding to discovery of manuscripts in caves. The most important of these concerns a Jewish sect known as the Maghariya, or ‘men of the cave’, who according to the Karaites Qirqisani (tenth century) were called by that name only because their books had been found in a cave (geographical location uncertain). One of the books found in it was, according to Qirqisani, a certain *Sefer yado’a*. See N. Golb, ‘Who Were the Maghariya?’, *JAOS* 80 (1960), 347–59. This cave too may have been located in Palestine.



Some writers active during the period of Qumran cave discoveries proposed, in explanation of these statements concerning Jericho, that they referred to earlier discoveries in the Qumran area itself.<sup>33</sup> The implication was that the Jerusalemites who had come to the cave site in the time of Timotheus had simply not discovered all the manuscripts hidden in various surrounding caves, thus leaving them for the modern discoverers.

However, since news of the find described by Timotheus had moved 'thongs', as he writes, to come to the site, it is difficult to believe they would have overlooked the possibility of finding other Hebrew scrolls in the nearby caves. And if the finds were made at Qumran, why did neither Origen nor Timotheus state that they had been made near the shore of the Dead Sea, which for Qumran is the closest geographical marker? Timotheus, residing in Baghdad, may be forgiven imprecision, but one might expect more of Origen, who lived in Palestine. There are caves closer to Jericho than those at Qumran. The possibility thus emerges of discovery over the past seventeen centuries of Hebrew manuscripts not merely in the single area of Qumran, but in several hiding-places in the wider neighbourhood of Jericho. This points to another cause for the hiding of manuscripts in Judaea in antiquity.

B. The second finding consists in statements preserved in a unique Qumran text on copper, which was discovered in Cave III in 1952. Composed of inventories of precious items described as being hidden away in various hiding places in Judaea, the text contains twelve columns, with approximately five inventories to each. There are occasional notations in the form of Greek letters following individual inventories. The text itself is composed in a non-literary Hebrew idiom, datable – unlike most Qumran texts, whose language is earlier – to the first century CE. The fact that it is carefully inscribed letter by letter on copper shows that the authors considered it to be important.<sup>34</sup> The writing is not that of professional book-scribes, and the inventories are given without literary embellishment. As in the Bar Cochba documents, but unlike the Qumran texts, here one finds genuine toponyms of the Judaeian wilderness and adjacent areas.<sup>35</sup> Among the geographical names given are Sekhakha, Jericho, the Valley of Achor, Harobah, Duq, Kohlat, Milham, the Cleft of

<sup>33</sup> Cf. e.g. R. de Vaux, *RB* 56 (1949), 236.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. A. Dupont-Sommer, *Essene Writings from Qumran*, p. 383: the Copper Scroll 'is a document drafted with all the baldness of bookkeeping, and the reason for its having been engraved on resistant material, and kept in two copies, is that it is an important archive, not of invented riches, but of very real ones'.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Milik, 'Le rouleau de cuivre provenant de la grotte 3Q (3Q15)', *DJD* 3 (Oxford 1962), pp. 259–75, and the discussions of individual sections in B.-Z. Lurie, *Megillat banebosbet* (Jerusalem 1963).



the Qidron (river), Beth ha-Kerem, and Masad(a). Significantly, in several descriptions the statement is made that scrolls (*sefer, sefarin*) or writings (*ketab, ketab(i)n*) are buried adjacent to the treasures. At the end of the scroll (col. XII, 10–13) one reads that ‘in a pit . . . to the north of Kohlat . . . is hidden a copy of this writing (*mishne baketab hazeh*) together with its explanation . . .’ All this shows that the *Copper Scroll* is a genuine documentary autograph text whose contents were themselves copied down, apparently with augmentations, into another scroll, the latter in turn being hidden away for safekeeping.

However, the wealth-eschewing Essenes, said by both Philo (*Quod omnis prob. lib.*, par. 12) and Josephus (*Ant.* XVIII.20) to have numbered no more than four thousand souls in Palestine, could hardly have had treasures of the size described in this scroll.<sup>36</sup> The only possible place of origin of the scroll’s treasures, artefacts and books is Jerusalem. Before and during stages of the siege of the capital, between CE 68 and 70, steps were obviously taken to remove at least part of the sizeable treasures that had accumulated there, particularly in the Temple. It has been maintained that the treasures could not have come from the Temple, since Josephus states that the Romans found Temple treasures within its precincts after the city had been taken. On such a detail as this, however, one cannot take Josephus’ account too literally, for he was not in Jerusalem at the time of the siege. Josephus also reports (*War* 6.429–32) that the Romans found ‘many precious things’ in trenches under the city. The *Copper Scroll* does no more than supplement his account by indicating that, in addition to such treasures, others had been secretly buried in caches deposited along with scrolls to the east of the capital, particularly in the Judean wilderness. Sequestration of the treasures could have begun any time after November CE 67, when word was first brought to Jerusalem of the fall of Gischala (*Bell.* IV.83; see below).

The challenge to the standard hypothesis posed by the *Copper Scroll* has led many writers to reject its authenticity: to persevere in the view that the site was inhabited by Essenes, who could not have had treasures of the size described by the document, they have had to claim that the statements given in it are untrue.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand almost all who

<sup>36</sup> K. G. Kuhn was the first to espouse the idea that the scroll describes Essene treasure, cf. *RB* 61 (1954), 193–205; however he subsequently proposed that the text might contain an inventory of treasures from the Temple, cf. *TLZ* 81 (1956), cols. 541–6, a hypothesis anticipated by C. Rabin, cf. *Jewish Chronicle* 15 June 1956.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. e.g. Milik, ‘Le rouleau de cuivre’, pp. 275ff. In this interpretation the connection with Essenes and with the other Qumran texts is either minimized or denied. De Vaux (*Archaeology*, pp. 108–9) both denied the genuineness of the descriptions in the *Copper Scroll* and separated it from the other Qumran texts physically and chronologically, as did Milik in his edition of the text.

accept it as genuine, while at the same time continuing to hold the Qumran-Essene hypothesis, claim that this text has no connection with the other scrolls: they uphold the view of a living bond between the parchment and papyrus texts and the Qumran settlement while denying the possibility of such a bond between the Copper Scroll and the settlement. The non-literary character of this text, the dry cataloguing of the deposits, and the fact that it too was found in one of the Qumran caves, precisely in a pre-CE 70 archaeological context, render either of these proposals unacceptable.<sup>38</sup>

One of the most striking passages in the text (col. VII, lines 1–7) is to the effect that in the Cave of the Pillar, which has two openings and faces eastward, one is to dig at the northern opening a distance of three cubits downward, where will be found an amphora containing a scroll, underneath which are forty-two talents (i.e. of silver). What makes this passage so remarkable is that it follows immediately the statement that thirty-two talents are hidden at a tomb (or, the tomb) situated at the Brook of the Dome, ‘as (one is) coming from Jericho to Sekhakha’ (*babi’ab miriho lisekhakha*). This juxtaposition of passages places the Cave of the Pillar in this same region between Jericho and the latter site, which cannot be identified with certainty, but was only a few kilometres from Jericho.

This passage thus refers to the hiding of a book in a cave near Jericho, which is at the same time not one of the caves of the escarpment above Qumran, a site too far from Jericho to be identified with Sekhakha. Again, at the beginning of column VIII one reads that scrolls have been hidden along with some ritual vessels (*kele dema’ usefarin*) at an aqueduct whose location also was apparently very close to Jericho.<sup>39</sup> These passages form a close parallel to the statements of Origen and Timotheus regarding the phenomenon of discovery of Hebrew manuscripts near the same city. Since, however, the places indicated in the Copper Scroll must be considerably nearer Jericho than is Qumran, they cast further doubt on the interpretation of the finds reported by Origen and Timotheus as being earlier discoveries of scrolls at Qumran.

Thus at some time in the first century CE Hebrew manuscripts were probably hidden away not only in the Qumran caves, but at *various* places in the Judean wilderness and the plain of Jericho, the burial of objects of

<sup>38</sup> Pixner, ‘Unravelling the Copper Scroll Code: a Study on the Topography of 3Q15’, RQ 11 (1983), 323–66, demonstrates archaeologically that the Copper Scroll ‘could have been hidden only by the same people that hid the other clearly Qumran related scrolls’ (p. 325), though his view that it described actual treasures of the Essenes, or of other people which they consigned to the Essenes, clashes notably with the testimony of first-century authors relative to the wilful poverty of the Essenes.

<sup>39</sup> See my discussion of earlier readings of this passage, and of the present decipherment, in *PAPS* 124, 21–2, note 62.

value, clearly emanating from Jerusalem, taking place in the same area at the same time. The combination of findings shows the arbitrary nature of the hypothesis that the scrolls discovered in our time belonged uniquely or largely to the Kh. Qumran settlement. The Copper Scroll – the only substantive Qumran scroll yet published having documentary characteristics – contains information from which it may be legitimately inferred, particularly in conjunction with the evidence contained in the reports of Origen and Timotheus, that both it and the other manuscripts of the caves are part of yet larger collections of texts, to whose concealment in the Judean wilderness and elsewhere must be attributed a cause entirely different from the one suggested by adherents of the Qumran-Essene hypothesis for the manuscripts discovered in our own time in the caves.

C. The third finding consists in the discovery of Hebrew manuscripts in the ruins of Masada, in the area inhabited by the insurgents after the fall of Jerusalem. This discovery was made during two archaeological expeditions between 1963 and 1965 – a decade after the Qumran scroll discoveries. Refugees from Jerusalem fled there after the walls of the capital had been breached, and along with Zealots were to resist the Romans until CE 73. Fragments of fourteen more scrolls were discovered then: portions of the books of Genesis, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Ezekiel and Psalms, parts of Ecclesiasticus, a fragment of Jubilees, three other apparently unknown intertestamental writings, and a portion of the composition known as *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. Fragmentary copies of this latter work had been found earlier in the Qumran caves.<sup>40</sup> The handwriting styles of these scrolls are, generally speaking, akin to those found at Qumran.

It had been observed at the time of publication of Qumran fragments of the *Songs* that the liturgical texts contained in it seemed to imply a special calendar according to which the year was divided into twelve months of thirty days each – the same calendar as that espoused by the authors of the Books of Jubilees and 1 Enoch. Before the Masada discoveries writers had generally held that this calendar, being also found in Qumran texts concerning the priestly watches (*mishmarot*), was endorsed by the Essenes and even peculiar to that sect.<sup>41</sup>

Under the influence of this prior hypothesis, a theory was formed to account for the existence of the *Songs* at Masada which excluded the obvious connection of this fortress site with Jerusalem. The *Songs*, and

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Yadin, *Excavation of Masada 1963–4* (Jerusalem 1965), pp. 103ff; *Masada* (London 1966), pp. 168–91.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. especially A. Jaubert, *La date de la cène* (Paris 1957); G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (London 1977), pp. 175–8; and rev. edn (London 1994), pp. 156–9. The fragments have been edited by C. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (Atlanta 1985).

perhaps other works discovered at Masada, had had a special history: either alone, or with other writings, they were brought there by Essenes from Qumran. These Qumran-Essenes joined up with the defenders of Masada during the last few years of the war with Rome. Since there is no evidence in Josephus or elsewhere that Essenes joined the Masada defenders, the explanation was offered that the commander of another sector during the revolt had been that same John the Essene (Josephus, *Bell.* II.567) mentioned above (p. 829), and that, to judge by the presence of the *Songs* at Masada, other Essenes had also joined the revolt and made their way to that stronghold.

This explanation protects the theory of an organic connection between the Qumran caves and the nearby settlement. However it contravenes the known fact of the capture of Masada by Judaeans *sicarii* (Josephus, *Bell.* II.408; IV.399f, 503ff, 516; VII.252ff) and the augmentation of the force gathered there by refugees from the siege of Jerusalem (Josephus, *Bell.* II.433–4, 447, 653). The theory is based on fragmentary scribal copies of a literary text which contains not one sentence of a demonstrably Essene nature. The belief in a solar calendar is never attributed to the Essenes in ancient sources. The fact that such a calendar is endorsed by the authors of Jubilees, 1 Enoch, and certain writings found at Qumran strongly implies that it was quite widely followed by Jewish groups in antiquity. This calendar was thought to be adopted by the Essenes only by virtue of its being found among the Qumran scrolls, and without consideration of the fact that *different* calendaric systems have also in ensuing years been found in the caves – i.e. those attempting to harmonize the lunar and solar years, such as the one described in the *Astronomical Book of Enoch* discovered in Cave 4.<sup>42</sup> The use of the fragmentary *Songs* in place of historical documents to prove participation of the Essenes in the war with Rome and their ultimate presence among the Masada defenders requires a leap of faith not warranted by the evidence.

It will also be observed that through this interpretation the standard Qumran-Essene hypothesis is transformed into a pan-Qumran theory that in effect serves to account for virtually all discoveries in Palestine of Hebrew manuscripts of the first century BCE and first century CE. One or more Masada texts are claimed to come from Qumran; the discoveries

<sup>42</sup> See J. T. Milik (with the collaboration of Matthew Black), *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave I*, pp. 273ff; seven copies of this Enoch text have been found in the Qumran caves and included in this edition. For discussions of other calendars, cf. particularly M. Wise, *Thunder in Gemini* (Sheffield 1994), pp. 13–50 and 186–239; and U. Glessmer, 'Investigation of the Otot-text (4Q319) and Questions about Methodology' in M. Wise et al. (eds.) *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site*, pp. 429–40 (with extensive bibliographies included by both authors).

near Jericho described by Origen and Timotheus are similarly claimed to be earlier discoveries of Qumran scrolls; and the scrolls and scroll-fragments discovered at Qumran since 1947, themselves originally consisting of no fewer than 800 texts, are all said to have originated at the nearby Kh. Qumran site. The implication of this theory is that all Hebrew literature possessed by first-century Palestinian Jews other than the Essenes has, with the exception of some works preserved in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, disappeared; while the writings of Essenes, numbering no more than 4,000 individuals in the first century CE, are represented through the centuries by at least four discoveries of at least a thousand manuscripts. This theory, moreover, requires that the rich documentary information contained in the Copper Scroll be considered either untrue, irrelevant, or, as has been more recently urged, indicative of the fact that the Essenes, in contrast to what has been stated of them in the first-century literary sources, in reality possessed or guarded great treasures.

To acquiesce in the combination of these and other beliefs<sup>43</sup> required to substantiate the Qumran-Essene hypothesis is not only difficult in itself, but also uncalled for in view of the total configuration of evidence now available. The one legitimate inference to be drawn from the presence of first-century Hebrew manuscripts at Masada is that Jewish *sicarii* inhabiting that site possessed scrolls which they had brought there after taking the fortress in the summer of CE 66 (Josephus, *Bell.* II.408; and IV.399ff, 503ff, 516; VII.252ff), while other Jews, most fleeing from Jerusalem, took scrolls with them (in addition to items needed for survival) when they withdrew to that stronghold.<sup>44</sup> In the Masada excavations surviving remnants of these possessions were discovered, including also texts such as the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* previously thought to have had a unique connection with Qumran. Without recourse to the special explanation of a bond between Qumran and Masada, the discoveries at the latter site imply the act of removal of scrolls from Jerusalem either during the revolt, the siege itself, or the retreat to the south-eastern area of Judaea that followed upon the taking of the capital by the Romans. These discoveries show that Hebrew literary texts were deemed precious, and warranted rescue during periods of danger.

There can be little doubt that it was the order in which the discoveries were actually made that was responsible for the inception and evolution of the Qumran-Essene hypothesis. Had those discoveries come about

<sup>43</sup> For a list of these, see N. Golb, *Who Wrote the DSS?*, pp. 141–3. For the view, expressed by A. Dupont-Sommer, that the Copper Scroll describes Essene treasures, or treasures collected by the Essenes, see Golb, *ibid.*, pp. 121–3.

<sup>44</sup> For participants in the rebellion fleeing or going there from Jerusalem or elsewhere, cf. *Bell.* II.433–4, 447, 653.

in reverse order, a theory of entirely different character would have resulted.<sup>45</sup> Once the actual chronological sequence of discoveries and the special beliefs generated as a result of that sequence are set aside, the elements in the pattern of unfolding events in Judaea in CE 68–73 fall readily into place.

The Roman subjugation of Galilee had reached its conclusion with the taking of Gischala (November CE 67). Josephus speaks of the Galilee fighting as ‘affording the Romans a strenuous training for the impending Jerusalem campaign’ (*Bell.* IV.120), and describes the entrance of the refugees from Galilee into Jerusalem, led by John of Gischala (*Bell.* IV.121–8).

Given the circumstances prevailing in Palestine as the winter of 68 set in, elements in the Jerusalem leadership would have seen the pressing need to make plans for the siege of the city which lay ahead. While they could not prevent it, steps could be taken to mitigate its effect. The walls could be strengthened, stores of food increased, and means sought to protect the wealth of the Temple and of the city’s inhabitants from total plunder by the Romans. The scrolls kept both in private and communal libraries would also have to be protected by storage or burial. Although some factions within the city (Josephus, *Bell.* IV.143ff; V.1ff) may have attempted to prevent such measures from being taken, in the belief that God would in the end save his Holy City unaided, some undoubtedly went ahead with the necessary preparations. By this time the city was swollen with refugees (*Bell.* IV.89), which could not but add to the difficulty of these efforts.

By the spring of CE 70 the siege was well under way (*Bell.* V.67ff), but the Romans did not entirely surround the city. Instead, they encompassed it on three sides only, leaving the southern area unguarded. This condition prevailed at least until they took the second wall of the capital at the end of May CE 70 (*Bell.* V.331ff; 347); but even afterwards the defenders were able to move in and out by secret routes (*Bell.* V.496–7; VII.215), so that, in June of CE 70, the Romans erected a huge siege-wall around the entire city (*Bell.* V.499ff; 504–7). Thus, for well over two years after the arrival of the refugees from Gischala, the inhabitants had access to the southern and eastern areas of the Judaeian wilderness, a region which continued to be under Jewish control until the city had fallen and the retreat to Machaerus, Herodion and Masada begun. The surmise is reasonable that those responsible for hiding objects of importance would have sought to do so in precisely this region of Judaea – the very region where the Copper Scroll was found, as well as hundreds of literary texts over the past seventeen centuries. The Copper Scroll mentions both the

<sup>45</sup> Cf. N. Golb, *Who Wrote the DSS?*, pp. 149–50.

Kidron and Achor river-beds as well as various geographical sites related to the wadi-system stretching out into the wilderness from Jerusalem.

Thus the pattern of events described by Josephus, when viewed together with the configuration of discoveries now known (but still unexpected and unforeseen in 1947) indicates that the Qumran and Masada manuscripts stem from first-century Palestinian Jews, although the period of actual composition of the individual texts may be placed considerably earlier, as much as one to two centuries before the extant scribal copies were achieved. These texts are remnants of a literature showing a wide variety of practices and beliefs, that was removed from Jerusalem before and perhaps also during the siege had begun or during some of its subsequent stages, and brought down to the Judaeen wilderness and adjacent areas where, with the aid of inhabitants of the region, the texts were successfully hidden away for long periods of time. Determination of the nature of the practices and ideas described in the scrolls may be best achieved by separating them out, through internal analysis of their contents, into various spiritual currents that quite obviously characterized Palestinian Judaism of the pre-Tannaitic period.

Some texts – the ones most often adduced in attributing the scrolls as a whole to Essene sectarians – reflect the ideas of writers evidently sharing awareness of a common background of opposition to Jerusalem circles in power in the second century BCE. The *Manual of Discipline*, together with the *Rules of the Congregation* (1QSa), the *Benedictions* (1QSB) and the group of blessings known as 4Q *Berakot*, show one distinct radicalizing trend within this group of texts, emphasizing an apocalyptic mode of brotherhood initiation, strict spiritual dichotomies, heightened metaphorical interpretation of Torah-mysteries, and overriding purity-discipline. The brotherhood theme is not as pronounced in the Damascus Document, which recognizes and indeed emphasizes urban modes of religious conduct characterized by observance of ritual laws; this text has moreover been interpolated by a glossator, himself the follower of a separatist Torah-purity group originally formed by an ‘Expounder of the Torah’ who led adherents of a ‘New Covenant’ to Damascus. Other texts, whose idiosyncrasies may indicate the work of a single author, are concerned with the midrashic interpretation of scriptural writings in a historical-eschatological vein. The author is mainly allusive rather than explicit in both the historical and eschatological Midrash elements; he shows particular concern for an historic ‘Teacher of Righteousness’ who, however, is in no extant passage of this group of texts connected with a migration to Damascus. The radicalizing tendencies of the *Manual of Discipline* are likewise absent from this group, which includes *pesbers* on Isaiah, Hosea, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Psalms and possibly Micah and some other prophetic writings.



Closely associated with these *pesher*-texts are the 4Q *Florilegium* and the 4Q *Testimonia*, each of which, like the *pesbers* to Isaiah and Habakkuk, mentions the ‘Council of the Community’.<sup>46</sup> These latter texts, however, speak of a single Messiah from the stem of David rather than that of two Messiahs, of Aaron and of David, belief in which is endorsed by the authors of other texts mentioned above. The precise meaning of the majority of historical allusions in these texts, as in the Damascus Covenant, awaits definitive explanation. The texts hint at aspects of the formation of trends in ancient, pre-Tannaitic Judaism, but do not tally with Josephus’ description of the three ‘philosophies’. The Temple Scroll shares a few of the views espoused by the author of the Damascus Covenant (e.g. prohibition of polygamy and uncle–niece marriages, and of an Israelite’s presence in the Holy City in a state of sexual impurity), but its author stands largely outside the literary and doctrinal traditions of all the above writers. His method of Torah augmentation and reduction in the cause of sustaining a polemical trend is otherwise unknown.

With the exception of the above texts, the most important writing of a doctrinally divergent nature found in the Qumran caves is the *Miqsat ma’ase hatorab*. Neither the ritual laws – approximately twenty in number – nor the religious ideas found in this text are shared by the above writers. The author, who speaks of the Torah as the *Sefer Mosheh*, or ‘Scroll of Moses’, uses Hebrew of a proto-Tannaitic flavour, similar to that found in the Copper Scroll, thus showing a period of composition approximately in the early first century CE.<sup>47</sup> The author emphasizes strict ritual purity in conjunction with sacrificial laws, upon which he expostulates at length. If the text has been correctly deciphered, the author states that ‘we have separated (*parashnu*) from the majority of the people’, an expression which calls to mind immediately the term *perushim* (Pharisees), derived from the same root, and meaning ‘separatists’. Several of the halakhot championed by the author reappear in later, rabbinic texts as points of controversy between Sadducees and Pharisees. The polemical tone of the author is highly subdued, in contrast to that of the author of the Damascus

<sup>46</sup> In the Habakkuk *pesher* however the expression is a gloss at XII.3–4.

<sup>47</sup> E. Qimron and J. Strugnell, ‘An Unpublished Halakhic Letter from Qumran’, *Israel Museum Journal* 4 (1985), 9–12 claim that this proto-Tannaitic idiom was a distinct dialect of Hebrew ‘spoken at Qumran’, and yet that the letter was written by the putative founder of the ‘Qumran sect’ in the second century BCE. None of the other writings attributed to such a sect have this linguistic peculiarity, and there is no evidence that Tannaitic Hebrew in any form was in use before the first century BCE. In their eventual publication of this text (E. Qimron, J. Strugnell *et al.*, *Qumran Cave 4.V. Miqsat Ma’ase Ha-Torab* (Oxford 1994)), the view that the Teacher of Righteousness was the author of the *MMT* is abandoned, but the idea of a second-century BCE provenance of the idiom retained, again without proof.

Covenant and the midrashist responsible for the *pesher*-texts. Also in contrast to these authors, the writer of this text and his fellow separatists believed that the ‘encampment’ of the Pentateuch metaphorically signified Jerusalem. No mystical apocalypticism is expressed by the author, the hints of whose eschatological views, as other ideas expressed by him, appear to be considerably closer to those of the Pharisees than of either Sadducees or Essenic sectarians. Other texts discovered in the Qumran caves show no separatist tendencies, but appear to be fragments of Palestinian Jewish literature popular in the first century BCE and in the decades prior to the First Revolt.<sup>48</sup> These texts appear to reflect the religious views of many individual writers of the second and first centuries BCE.

The highly eclectic contents of the literary scrolls have their parallel in the phylacteries, worn daily by observant Jews since antiquity in literal fulfilment of the command of Deut. 6:8 to bind the words of the Lord ‘as a sign upon your hand . . . and as frontlets between your eyes’. Remarkably, the many fragments of phylacteries, found in at least Caves 1, 4 and 8, reveal a decided lack of agreement among those who deposited them as to the particular Pentateuchal verses that were to be inscribed on the parchments. By this testimony, however prosaic, it becomes evident that members of a single sect, who by definition would have been engaged in observing a mutually agreed upon discipline, could not have been responsible for hiding away the phylacteries. They constitute, rather, an indication of the desperate state of affairs that pressed upon the sequesterers of the scrolls, who were clearly intent upon preventing the defilement of their holy objects, as the siege around Jerusalem tightened its grip.<sup>49</sup>

Also found in Cave 1 were various fragments of religious hymns, and an entire scroll in eighteen columns known as the *Hodayot*, or ‘Thanksgiving Hymns’. This scroll too has been associated with the Essenes, primarily by virtue of being found together with the *Manual of Discipline*. Scholars have adduced similarities of expression with the *Manual*, but neither the ideas nor the Hebrew idiom of the *Hodayot* can be said to reflect a sectarian environment; the text moreover contains no religious

<sup>48</sup> Cf. the detailed analysis of the MMT in *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, pp. 193–206; and the discussion of various other texts *ibid.*, chaps. 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, and Epilogue.

<sup>49</sup> For publications of the phylacteries by D. Barthélemy, K. G. Kuhn, M. Baillet, J. T. Milik and Y. Yadin, see *Who Wrote the DSS?*, pp. 415–16, note 12. Cf. the conclusions of D. Rothstein, *From Bible to Murabba'at: Studies in the Literary, Textual and Scribal Features of Phylacteries and Mezuzot in Ancient Israel and Early Judaism* (University Microfilms 1993), with respect to the ‘broad spectrum’ of Jewry that must have been responsible for the hiding away of such texts (*ibid.* p. 181). Cf. further the analysis in Golb, *Who Wrote the DSS*, pp. 102–4 and 351.

views attributed to the Essenes in the classic sources. The Hebrew idiom of this text shows a continuity with that of the later biblical psalms; the ideas expressed in the text are largely drawn from the same source, although developed occasionally in idiosyncratic ways. The *Hodayot* represent one of a large number of poetic and liturgical works found in the Qumran caves, of which Cave 1 contained fragments of at least six different compositions. In Cave 4 were found many more such writings, reflecting various shades of religious expression. Three of the most important hymnic and liturgical writings found in the Qumran caves are the Pseudepigraphic Psalms collection (4Q380 and 4Q381), the Psalms Scroll of Cave 11 (containing both canonical and non-canonical psalms), and the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (see above, pp. 844–5), which imaginatively describes communion with the angels within the context of the sacrificial offerings.<sup>50</sup> None of these hymnic and liturgical texts expresses heterodox ideas, so far as these are understood from the *Manual of Discipline*, the Damascus Covenant, other sectarian texts or text-fragments, or Josephus' description of the three 'philosophies'. These and the texts discussed above, as well as various other Qumran texts not discussed here (many of which were unpublished until recently or still await publication) all pre-date the texts of Tannaïtic Judaism, offering new glimpses into the state of Jewish religious thought and practice in Palestine during the inter-testamental period.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Ed. and tr. C. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta 1985). The author finds points of similarity between the vocabulary of this work and a few others found in the Qumran caves, but these are not sufficient even to hint at a sectarian origin of the *Songs*; on her more recent consideration of the possibility that the expressions cited may have been in wide use among Palestinian liturgical poets in relevant time-periods, cf. *Who Wrote the DSS?*, pp. 296–8, 300–3.

<sup>51</sup> Among the wider spectrum of texts now available for study in the wake of events transpiring in 1991, see especially the editions and translations of 50 new texts by M. Wise in R. Eisenman and M. Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (Shaftesbury, Dorset 1992). Of translations of new texts one may particularly mention F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, translated by W. G. E. Watson (Leiden 1994) and (for a fuller English translation of texts, made directly from the Hebrew and Aramaic originals) M. Wise, M. Abegg Jr, and E. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls – a New Translation* (San Francisco 1996).

## CHAPTER 26

## PRAYER IN THE QUMRAN TEXTS

The Dead Sea Scrolls are the single most valuable source for the study of Jewish prayer in the Second Temple period. Other evidence for Jewish prayer practice during this period is notoriously ambiguous: what prayers are preserved appear almost exclusively in literary contexts – either narratives or poetic collections – and references to liturgical prayer are rare. By contrast, in the Dead Sea Scrolls are collections of prayer texts for various designated occasions and indications of a detailed cycle of liturgical prayer such as is otherwise only clearly attested after the destruction of the second temple. Thus, this body of data is potentially a valuable link between the mostly *ad hoc* prayers glimpsed in the Hebrew Bible and the later synagogue liturgy.

On the other hand, neither the source of these prayers nor the relationship between those who prayed them and Judaism at large are obvious. Some view the prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls as sectarian products representing a marginal practice of limited relevance to the study of Jewish prayer in general.<sup>1</sup> According to this view, the *Yahad* (a common self-designation for the sectarian community in the Qumran texts) developed its liturgy in the place of the sacrificial cult from which it was alienated, anticipating by over two centuries the ‘service of the heart’ which would emerge after the destruction of the second temple. However, a growing conviction among scholars that many of the Dead Sea Scrolls did not originate within the Qumran community – and many of the prayer texts fall into this category – raises the possibility that these prayers reflect Jewish practice more widely. If so, the impetus for the liturgical prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls and their significance for those who prayed them would have important ramifications for the origins of Jewish liturgical prayer.

Evidence for prayer practice in the Dead Sea Scrolls is of five types. (1) Various descriptive or allusive references to prayer especially in rule books

<sup>1</sup> S. Talmon, ‘The Emergence of Institutionalized Prayer in Israel in Light of Qumran Literature’ in *The World of Qumran from Within: Collected Studies* (Jerusalem 1989), pp. 200–43; E. Fleischer, ‘On the Beginnings of Obligatory Jewish Prayer’ (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 59 (1990), 397–441.

hint at prayer practices and the significance of prayer in community life. (2) Some liturgical instructions appear in collections of prayers, the rule books, and calendrical texts, mostly concerning the time and occasion of recital and the role of functionaries. (3) In narrative contexts are a number of prose prayers. Although literary constructions, it is likely that they reflect to a certain extent actual prayer practices. (4) *Tefillin* (1Q13; 4Q128–48; 5Q8; 8Q3; xQ1–4) found in the caves constitute liturgical artefacts attesting recital of the *Shema*. (5) There are also many texts of prayers themselves. Most obvious are addresses to God which contain benediction formulas and/or liturgical directions, whether in collections or embedded in rule books, but the boundaries of this corpus are unclear. Which of the large number of psalms and mystical texts qualify as prayers? The following discussion will focus on those texts which are clearly prayers designated for a particular liturgical occasion, but will also survey briefly the vast body of texts more and less ‘liturgical’ in character. For the problems with regard to defining the corpus, classifying the texts, determining provenance and *Sitz im Leben*, and comparing with later rabbinic statutory prayer, see the surveys by E. Chazon, J. Maier and E. Schuller. Much information relevant to the phenomenon of prayer is completely lost to us, such as gestures, postures and place.

## I PRAYERS AT FIXED TIMES

Numerous passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls express the importance of reciting prayers with regularity at set times of the calendar, seemingly a 364-day solar calendar. A poem in the sectarian *Community Rule* concerning the role of the *Maskil* – an instructor concerned especially with liturgical matters – clearly states the principle of divinely prescribed times for prayer:

(At every period that will be) he will bless his maker, and in whatever may happen he will de(clare . . . With the offering of) lips he will bless him during the periods which he prescribed. (1QS 9:26–10:1A)

This is followed by a schematized calendar of sacred times for prayer: morning and evening of each day, the first day of each season (Days of Remembrance), the beginnings of (solar) months, festivals, New Year, sabbatical years, and jubilee years (1QS 10:1b–17). A related passage in the sectarian thanksgiving psalms (*Hodayot*), again followed by a calendar of times for prayer, reveals that both praise and petition are concerned: ‘(For the Maskil): (p)raise and prayer, for prostration and pleading mercy

daily at every fixed time . . .’ (1QH 20:4–11).<sup>2</sup> Similar calendars of prescribed times of prayer in sectarian documents appear in the *War Scroll* (1QM 14:12b–14a) and the numinous blessings from cave 4 (4QBer<sup>a</sup> 1 ii. 9–13). By praying at these prescribed times, the community exercises harmony with God’s created order (see the calendrical texts, e.g. 4Q208–11, 4Q317–30, 4Q335–7), and as 4QBer reveals, unity with the heavenly community.<sup>3</sup> A prose composition included in a psalter from cave 11 (11QPs<sup>a</sup> *David’s Compositions*) lists occasions for which David composed songs: to accompany the sacrificial offerings for each day of the year, and for sabbaths, New Moons, festivals, and the Day of Atonement.

S. Talmon suspected early on that such texts assume a ‘manual of benedictions’ which contained prayers arranged according to the calendar, possibly the “(B)ook of the Manual of Appointed Time” mentioned in 1QM 15:4–5.<sup>4</sup> If there ever was a master ‘prayerbook’ as Talmon imagined, however, it has not survived, but there are several scrolls which supply texts of prayers together with their times of recital. Generally, these scrolls collect prayers of the same form and usually for a single liturgical occasion (days of a month, days of the week, sabbaths, festivals, purifications, to ward off evil, and 1QM 15:4–6 refers to a scroll of war prayers and hymns).

#### I DAILY PRAYERS

Jewish daily prayers are generally linked to the course of the sun or to the sacrificial service, although these are not necessarily mutually exclusive since according to some traditions times for sacrifice were associated with sunrise and sunset (e.g. *Jub.* 3:27; 6:14; 49:19). Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, daily prayers are explicitly linked with sacrifice only in 11QPs<sup>a</sup> *David’s Compositions*, which is unlikely to be a sectarian composition. On the other hand, the course of the sun lies behind the poetic and repetitive description of prayer at sunrise and sunset in the sectarian texts 1QS 10:1b–3a, 1QM 14:12–14, and 1QH 20:4–7, even if the prayer is metaphorically an offering (1QS 9:26; 10:6). The content of these prayers at sunrise and sunset is not provided. The latter two passages allude respectively to praise of God’s mighty deeds, and praise and petition, but that mentioned in 1QS 10:1b–3a is expounded in 1QS 10:10–14a:

<sup>2</sup> References to 1QH are cited according to the numbering in F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated. The Qumran Texts in English*, translated by W. G. E. Watson (Leiden 1994).

<sup>3</sup> B. Nitzan, ‘Harmonic and Mystic Characteristics in Poetic and Liturgical Writings from Qumran’, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 85 (1994), 174–6.

<sup>4</sup> S. Talmon, ‘The “Manual of Benedictions” of the Sect of the Judaean Desert’, *Revue de Qumran* 2 (1960), 499.

With the arrival of day and night, I will enter into the covenant of God. And with the departure of evening and morning, I will recite his laws. In their existence I will place my boundary without turning back. I will declare his judgement concerning my sins, and my transgressions are before my eyes as an engraved statute . . . as soon as I stretch out my hand or my foot, I will bless his name; as soon as (I) go out or come in, to sit down or rise up, and while I recline on my couch, I will cry out to him.

The allusions to Deut. 6:4–9 and the expression ‘saying his laws’ points to recital of the *Shema* together with the Decalogue, as attested in several liturgical fragments and *tefillin* at Qumran,<sup>5</sup> as well as witnesses outside Qumran to the same practice during the Second Temple period (the Nash papyrus (2nd century BCE); *m. Tamid* 5.1; cf. LXX Deut. 6:4). It is likely that the use of the verb *brk* (1QS 10:13) implies the recital of benedictions along with the *Shema*, a practice also hinted at by Josephus (*Ant.* iv.212),<sup>6</sup> although it has been debated for this time period. So far, then, the morning and evening prayer attested in 1QS 10 appears to be similar to a wider Jewish practice in the second temple period.

On the other hand, this passage also implies that the sectarian morning and evening prayer included confession of sin and praise of God’s just judgement. The language of entry into the covenant and numerous other structural, thematic and terminological similarities with the covenant ceremony described in 1QS 1–2 suggest that by so doing, the *Yahad* sectarians commemorated in their morning and evening prayers their initial entry into the covenant and their annual renewal.

Similar to the passages mentioned above, a hymn fragment (4Q408) praises God for creating morning and evening as times of prayer. A few small fragments remain of a liturgical calendar (4Q334) which prescribes the number of ‘songs’ and ‘words of praise’ to be recited on the evening and morning of specified days of a month. Whether this was for only one particular month or even part of a month (i.e. festival) is unknown, and it is not clear what compositions are intended by the designations ‘songs’ and ‘words of praise’. The number of recitations is suspiciously high: one evening is marked by eight songs and forty-some words of praise. It is possible that this is a description of angelic praise after the manner of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, which uses the same designations. In any case, it is a different phenomenon from either of the two collections of daily prayers to be reviewed next, although the first points to the same times of recital.

<sup>5</sup> M. Weinfeld, ‘Grace After Meals in Qumran’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992), 427–40; Y. Yadin, *Tefillin from Qumran* (Jerusalem 1969).

<sup>6</sup> D. K. Falk, ‘Jewish Prayer Literature and the Jerusalem Church in Acts’ in *The Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting*, edited by R. Bauckham (The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting, vol. 4; Grand Rapids 1995), pp. 287–8.



4Q503 *Daily Prayers* is the sole surviving copy of a scroll prescribing evening and morning benedictions for each day of a month. Allusions to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread ('when he passed over', 'our redemption', 'pilgrim festivals of joy') suggest it was intended for the month of Nisan, although it may possibly have been a generic cycle to be used throughout the year with references to festivals on appropriate days, assuming a 364-day solar calendar.

Despite the extremely fragmentary condition, the stylized framework and standardized benediction formulas are perceptible. Prayers are oriented to the course of the sun ('in the evening'; 'when the sun rises to shine on the earth') and the calendar is described in terms of 'lots of light' and 'gates of light' similar to the language in the astronomical section of 1 Enoch. Despite the mention of evening before morning which suggested to some that this must be based on a lunar calendar, sabbaths fall on particular days of the month, possible only with a 364-day solar calendar. The prayers generally open with an impersonal formula 'Blessed be the God of Israel who . . .' and close with a direct blessing 'Blessed be you/your name, God of Israel . . .' and/or a response formula 'peace be on you Israel'.

The content of the prayers is adapted to the occasion, both the time of day and the day in the calendar. Thus, references to night and day occur respectively in the evening and morning prayers, prayers on sabbath include customary sabbath themes (rest and joy, God's holiness, and the praise of angels and men),<sup>7</sup> and the prayers for Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread contain allusions to these commemorations.

These prayers were recited publicly ('they will bless'; and 'answering they will say'). As suggested by the direct address 'Peace be on you Israel' which conflicts with the otherwise second-person address for God, a priest or group of priests then responded with a blessing of peace over the congregation. Numerous 'priestly' concerns which appear in the prayers – participation in the heavenly liturgy, the temple, God's kingship, the priesthood and God's ministers – further suggest that these prayers derive from a priest-dominated group. A Qumran provenance remains possible for this text, but there is no positive evidence for it.

Another set of daily communal prayers is preserved in two copies (4Q504, 4Q506),<sup>8</sup> entitled – on the outside of the first scroll – 'Words of the Luminaries'. As a result of the detailed reconstruction and analysis by E. Chazon, the nature of this collection of prayers is now reasonably

<sup>7</sup> E. Chazon, 'On the Special Character of Sabbath Prayer: New Data from Qumran', *Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy* 15 (1992/3), 1–21.

<sup>8</sup> See note 19.

clear.<sup>9</sup> The title is best understood as referring to the liturgical recitation of these prayers at sunrise and/or sunset. Unlike 4Q503 which gives 2 short benedictions for each day of a month, this collection prescribes a single elaborate petitionary prayer for each weekday, followed by a song of praise for the sabbath. Strong formal connections with the *Festival Prayers* and the clause 'let us keep the feast of (our) redemption' in the prayer for Tuesday might suggest that this cycle was intended for one particular festival week,<sup>10</sup> but more likely it was repeated for each week throughout the year.

In the weekday petitions, the congregation speaks in the first person plural and addresses God directly, although the concluding benediction blesses God impersonally in the third person. The prayers follow a very regular formula, virtually identical to that in the *Festival Prayers* (4Q507–9).

Each prayer is preceded by (1) a superscription 'Prayer for the X day' and begins by (2) summoning God to recall his holiness or his past dealings with Israel: '(Remember), O Lord, Yo(ur) holy name' (4Q504 4 16, prayer for Monday). Following is (3) an extended historical summary of Israel's relationship with God: '(...) wonders from of old and awesome deeds (...) You formed (Adam) our (fa)ther in the likeness of (your) glory ... (Re)member, please, that we are all your people, and you bore us up wonder(fully on the wings) of eagles and you have brought us to you' (4Q504 8 3–4 and 6 6–7, prayer for Sunday). Then comes (4) a petition section: '(Have compassion on us and do not re)ckon to us the sins of the fathers in all their wick(ed) dealings, (nor the hardening of) their necks. But you, ransom us and forgive, (please), our iniquity and (our) s(in)' (4Q504 4 5–7 and 4Q506 131+132 11–14, prayer for Sunday). The prayer closes with (5) a benediction and (6) a response: '(Blessed) be the Lord, who has made (us) to kn(ow ...) Amen, Amen' (4Q504 4 14–15, prayer for Sunday).<sup>11</sup>

Despite the formulaic and independent nature of each prayer, the historical summaries for each day follow a progression through biblical history from creation to exile, suggesting that they were composed by a professional for liturgical use by the community.<sup>12</sup> Three components are dominant in the weekday prayers: the recounting of God's past acts of

<sup>9</sup> For the following discussion, see the items by Chazon in the bibliography. See also the notes on reconstruction by É. Puech, review of *Qumrân grotte 4, III (4Q482–4Q520)*, by Maurice Baillet, *Revue Biblique* 95 (1988), 407–9.

<sup>10</sup> J. Maier, 'Zu Kult und Liturgie der Qumrangemeinde', *Revue de Qumran* 14 (1990), 579.

<sup>11</sup> E. Chazon, 'Dibre Hamme'orot: Prayer for the Sixth Day (4Q504 1–2 v–v1)' in *Prayer from Alexander to Constantine: A Critical Anthology*, edited by Mark Kiley et al. (London 1997), 23.

<sup>12</sup> E. Chazon, '4QDibHam: Liturgy or Literature?' *Revue de Qumran* 15 (1992) 447–55.

mercy, confession of sin and petition for forgiveness, and supplication for both deliverance and strengthening to do God's will.

In contrast to the weekday petitions, the hymn for the sabbath praises God in the third person with doxological language. Its themes of joint human and angelic praise and God's holiness are characteristic sabbath themes, and the use of praise instead of petition on sabbath is consistent with some rabbinic concerns.<sup>13</sup>

A Qumran provenance is unlikely for the *Words of the Luminaries*. Most importantly, the historical reflections lack Qumran perspectives where we would expect them and the *Festival Prayers* which share the same provenance seem to conflict with the calendar followed at Qumran.<sup>14</sup> The earliest copy (4Q504) – dating from around the middle of the second century BCE – may suggest a pre-Qumran origin, but they were at least copied and used at Qumran as indicated by a copy dating about two centuries later (4Q506) and the four copies of the *Festival Prayers*.

With regard to numerous features, these prayers for days of the week are incompatible with the cycle of prayers in 4Q503 for days of a month, as illustrated by table 26.1:

Table 26.1 *Daily prayers and Words of the luminaries*

	4Q503	4QDibHam
• Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• blessings</li> <li>• two prayers for each day</li> <li>• morning and evening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supplications for weekdays, hymn for sabbath</li> <li>• one prayer for each day</li> <li>• morning alone, or morning and evening repeated (?)</li> </ul>
• Formulas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opening and concluding benedictions</li> <li>• priestly blessing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• petitionary opening</li> <li>• concluding benediction of different form than in 4Q503</li> <li>• 'Amen, Amen' response</li> </ul>
• Cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weekly</li> </ul>
• Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• priestly concerns (communion with angels, Temple theology)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deuteronomic salvation-historical perspective (sin–punishment–restoration cycle)</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> E. Chazon, 'On the Special Character of Sabbath Prayer,' 5–6.

<sup>14</sup> E. Chazon, 'Is *Divrei Ha-me'orat* a Sectarian Prayer?' in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*, edited by D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (Jerusalem 1992); see C. A. Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit" Literature from Qumran' in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreters*, edited by W. Propp, B. Halpern and D. N. Freedman (Winona Lake, IN 1990), 167–87.

Both J. Maier and Tz. Zahavy have done important work in attempting to discern different socio-liturgical settings of prayers.<sup>15</sup> Although such efforts risk oversimplification and stereotypes, it is probable that the two collections of daily prayers originated in different environments. 4Q503 seems to derive from a priestly circle but two different possibilities may be speculated for *Words of the Luminaries*. (1) The professional style, the focus on Deuteronomic salvation-historical themes, the weekly cycle of prayers (cf. the psalms for days of the weeks attributed to the Levites in *m. Tamid* 7.4), the calls to prayer and congregational responses of ‘Amen’ (cf. 1 Chron. 16:8–36), and the distinctive use of Moses’ prayer (Num. 14:13–19) as a model might suggest that these prayers originated in a circle of levitical liturgists. (2) Another possibility is a connection with the lay *ma’amadoth* services. These lay representatives for the daily sacrifices, corresponding to the courses of priests and Levites met for one week at a time and read particular passages from the creation story in sequence for each day of the week. There is no hint that communal prayer played any part in these services, about which little is known, but if they did pray – as many scholars assume – a weekly cycle of prayer following a historical progression from creation would be appropriate. The single sabbath hymn in contrast to collections of sabbath prayers (e.g. *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 11QPS<sup>a</sup> *David’s Compositions*) could support either hypothesis: it is paralleled by the use of Pss. 92 for sabbath by the temple singers and is also appropriate for the weekly cycles of the *ma’amadoth*.

## 2 SABBATH PRAYERS

Four different kinds of sabbath prayers are attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls. (1) 11QPS<sup>a</sup> *David’s Compositions* mentions fifty-two songs for the sabbath offering, thus, one for each sabbath of the 364-day solar calendar. (2) The collection known as *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* contains thirteen songs to accompany the sacrifices for each of the first thirteen sabbaths of the year, that is, the first quarter of a 52-week (364-day) calendar. Since ten copies survive of this collection, it is improbable that these thirteen songs were part of a 52-song cycle, 39 other songs having disappeared without a trace. Either it was only the first quarter which

<sup>15</sup> Maier, ‘Zu Kult und Liturgie der Qumrangemeinde,’ 543–5; Tz. Zahavy, ‘Three Stages in the Development of Early Rabbinic Prayer’ in *From Ancient Israel to Modern Judaism. Intellect in Quest of Understanding. Essays in Honor of Marvin Fox*, vol. 1, edited by J. Neusner, E. S. Frerichs and N. M. Sarna (Atlanta 1989), pp. 233–65; Tz. Zahavy, ‘The Politics of Piety. Social Conflict and the Emergence of Rabbinic Liturgy’ in *The Making of Jewish and Christian Worship*, edited by P. F. Bradshaw and L. A. Hoffman (Notre Dame and London 1991), pp. 42–68.

merited special sabbath songs, as perhaps suggested by the dating formulas ('the *N*th sabbath on the *N*th (day) of the *N*th month'),<sup>16</sup> or more likely, each quarter was treated as a distinct unit (cf. 1QS 10:7) and the cycle repeated throughout the year. (3) Short sabbath benedictions are included in a collection of prayers for each day of a month (4Q503 *Daily Prayers*). (4) A hymn of praise for the sabbath is included in a collection of prayers for each day of the week (4Q *Words of the Luminaries*), probably to be repeated throughout the year.

The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* were prominent at Qumran (nine copies, one from Masada) and may have been composed by the Yaḥad as suggested by attribution to a functionary (*Maskil*) distinctive in sectarian writings found at Qumran and other strong ties with Qumran sectarian writings.<sup>17</sup>

In a highly formulaic structure, the songs portray the heavenly worship of angels without ever revealing the content of angelic praise. Throughout the cycle of thirteen songs, the worshippers are led through detailed descriptions of the organization and praise of the angelic priesthood, the heavenly sanctuary, and finally to the sacrificial service of the angelic high priests.

As with the prayers at fixed times mentioned in 1QS 9:26–10.1a and 1QH 20:4–11, these intricate prayers are apparently directed by the *Maskil*. The following is a well-preserved beginning:

For the *Maskil*. Song of the whole offering of the seventh sabbath, on the sixteenth of the month: Praise the God of the heights O you elevated ones among the divine beings of knowledge! (4Q403 1 i 30)

The mystical style of the liturgy seems intended to engender in the congregation that recites it a sense of unity with the heavenly community in worship, as also mentioned in other writings of the Qumran community (e.g. 1QH 11:21–3; 19:11–3, 25–6; 10:6–7; 1QS 11:7–8; 4Q491 24:4):

to praise your glory wondrously among the divine beings of knowledge and the praises of your kingship among the holiest of the h(oly) ones . . . how shall we be considered (among) them? And our priesthood, what is it amidst their dwellings? . . . (What) is the offering of our earthly tongue (compared) with the knowledge of the *el(im)?* . . . (4Q400 2 1–7)

Such statements, as well as the opening formula for each song – 'song of the sabbath whole offering' – and the movement toward the heavenly

<sup>16</sup> C. A. Newsom, "'He Has Established for Himself Priests': Human and Angelic Priesthood in the Qumran Sabbath *Shirat*" in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The New York University Conference in Memory of Yigael Yadin*, edited by L. H. Schiffman (JSP Supplement Series 8; Sheffield 1990), pp. 109–10.

<sup>17</sup> C. A. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, a Critical Edition*, HSS 27 (Atlanta 1985), pp. 1–4; revised opinion in Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit" Literature', 182–5.

altar throughout the cycle indicate that the songs were intended to accompany the heavenly altar service (cf. *T. Levi* 3:5–6; Rev. 6:9; 8:3–5). Newsom rejects this possibility because of her opinion that the cycle pertained to only the first thirteen weeks of the year. She is probably correct, however, that the liturgy was recited at the time of sacrifice and served as a vehicle for ‘experiential validation’ of the community’s claims to be the true priesthood despite their exiled condition.<sup>18</sup>

How or even if these different sabbath prayers may have been incorporated into a single liturgical scheme is unknown, but it is virtually certain that they derive from different circles and reflect a diverse tradition of sabbath prayer.

### 3 FESTIVAL PRAYERS

Two Qumran sectarian poems associated with the *Maskil* mention festivals schematically as divinely ordained times for prayer. 1QS 10:5b–8 speaks of blessing God at festivals along with the beginnings of months and other occasions to mark the course of seasons and years. The *Songs of the Sage* (511 2 i. 8–9) makes reference to divinely ordained praise at the festivals. Another sectarian *Maskil* poem in the *Hodayot* (1QH 20:7–9) mentions the use of (part of?) this collection as praise and petition generally at every fixed time. Presumably this includes festivals, but not in the sense of specific festival prayers. None of these passages reveal the nature of festival prayers or how they were used. Neither do they indicate which festival days were so embellished, but it may be assumed that these included the extra festivals for the first fruits of new wine, oil, and wood mentioned in the *Temple Scroll* (11QT 19:11–25:2) and at least two of the calendrical texts (4Q325, 4Q327). This is supported by 4Q409 *Times for Praising* (copied no later than the early first century CE), a hymn which issues calls to praise at the various festivals. The following are preserved: first fruits (of wheat; also of new wine and new oil?); wood festival; Day of Remembrance (= autumn New Year); festival of Booths.

In contrast to these, 11PQs<sup>a</sup> *David’s Compositions* mentions thirty Davidic songs ‘for the offering of the beginnings of the months, for all the days of festivals, and for the Day of Atonement’. It does not seem possible to accommodate these thirty songs to the extra festivals mentioned above, nor the seasonal dividers mentioned in 1QS 10:7. Rather, the thirty songs are probably accounted for according to the biblical appointed times as follows: beginnings of months (12), Passover (1), Unleavened Bread (7), Pentecost (1), Tabernacles (8), Day of Atonement (1). This contrast is

<sup>18</sup> C. A. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (HSS 27; Atlanta 1985), pp. 19, 59–72.

particularly striking because the copy of 11QP<sup>a</sup> is roughly contemporary with that of 4Q409 – around the beginning of the first century CE. Here, then, we may witness a different liturgical tradition of festival prayer from that espoused in the Qumran sectarian compositions.

Four copies of a collection of festival prayers have been poorly preserved at Qumran: *Festival Prayers* (1Q34+34<sup>bis</sup>, 4Q507, 4Q508, 4Q505+509).<sup>19</sup> With regard to form, these prayers are the same as the *Words of the Luminaries*. A heading (e.g. ‘Prayer for the Day of Atonement’) introduces the prayer, which begins with an appeal to God to remember his institution of festivals and his past mercies. The content includes confession of sin and God’s wondrous deeds and petition for mercy in the present. God is addressed throughout in the second person except in the concluding benediction, which, like that of *Words of the Luminaries*, is impersonal. The only recognizable difference is that, as appropriate to festivals, most of the prayers are dominated by descriptive praise. The same comments as to provenance and socio-liturgical setting apply here as well: used at Qumran but possibly originated in some connection with pre-Qumran levitical circles and/or *ma’amadoth* services.

Unfortunately, the extremely fragmentary condition of the manuscripts does not allow certainty as to the order of festivals or the number of prayers. Material relating to the Day of Atonement, Passover<sup>20</sup> and Pentecost (Festival of First Fruits) may confidently be identified by introductory formulas, but it is possible to identify content which probably belongs to the festival of Booths and New Year as well, since the prayers allude to the character of the festival. So, for example, the prayer for New Year mentions the seasonally relevant concerns of rain, sowing and sprouting:

‘(…) the festival of *our* peace (…),  
 (for you gladdened) us from our grief,  
 and you gathered (our banished ones for the time of…),  
 and our scattered (ones) for (the age of…)’  
 (…) your (me)rcies on our assembly  
 like ra(in) drops on the earth at seed-time  
 and as showers on the gr(ass) at sprouting-time.  
 (…)  
 (We will declare) your (w)on(d)ers for generation after generat(ion) (… Bless)ed  
 be the Lord who has gladdened (us …)

(4Q509 3 8–9 (=1Q34 2+1 3–4)).

<sup>19</sup> The fragments designated 4Q505 and originally associated with *Words of the Luminaries* belong to the same manuscript of *Festival Prayers* as 4Q509. See the discussion in D. K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden 1998), 59–61, 156.

<sup>20</sup> 4Q505 125; see n. 19.



The prayer for the Day of Atonement focuses on guilt, affliction, repentance and mercy, and the Passover prayer alludes to the Exodus, God's miracles of deliverance and the election of Israel.

The Day of Atonement came early in the scroll and Passover and First Fruits came later, suggesting a calendar beginning with the autumn New Year rather than spring as elsewhere in Qumran texts. Thus, although these were probably adopted by the *Yahad* it is likely that they attest a cycle of festival prayers of different origin. On the other hand, these predominantly prose prayers also cannot be the songs for festivals mentioned in *David's Compositions*.

All of the above data are broadly consistent with a large body of evidence for prayers at festivals and fasts in the second temple period (e.g. Pss. 30, 120–34; Isa. 30:29; Zech. 14:17; *Jub.* 32:7–8; Sir. 47:9; 1 Macc. 4:52–9; 12:11; 2 Macc. 1:24–9; 10:6–7; Bar. 1:10–13; Philo *Spec. Leg.* 1.193–5; 2.148; *Vit. Cont.* 64–90; Jos. *Ant.* IV.203; *m. Sukk.* 5.4; *t. Sukk.* 4.5). At least three basic kinds of prayers can be discerned: (1) the hymn-type (e.g. temple songs, cf. *David's Compositions*); (2) the series-type (sequence of short benedictions or petitions analogous to the *Amidah*, e.g. 2 Macc. 1:24–9 and the benedictions for festivals which can be extrapolated back from rabbinic references); and (3) the confession-type (confession of sins and of God's just deeds in the form of a historical recital, and petition for mercy; e.g. Bar. 1:10–13). Locating the *Festival Prayers* in the third category adds some support to the hypothesis that these prayers originated in a levitical liturgy with participation by the people. In the only two examples of this type of prayer which provide information on their use – Neh. 9; 1QS 1–2 – the Levites have a dominant role in leading the people in a responsive liturgy.<sup>21</sup>

Numerous comparisons can be made between the *Festival Prayers* and the later synagogue liturgy, but many of these are of little value since customary festival themes are natural.<sup>22</sup> There are, however, some remarkable similarities with the later synagogue liturgy with regard to the system of 'remembrance' and particular combinations of topics and terminology which suggests a broad stream of festival prayer tradition.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The Hebrew of Neh. 9:4–5 lacks the LXX's introduction of Ezra in Neh. 9:5a.

<sup>22</sup> M. Weinfeld, 'Prayer and Liturgical Practice in the Qumran Sect' in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*, edited by D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (Leiden 1992), pp. 244–7.

<sup>23</sup> B. Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry*, translated by J. Chipman (STDJ, 12; Leiden 1994), pp. 89–116.

## II PRAYERS FOR RITUALS

In addition to prayers for recital at particular times, a number of prayers are explicitly associated with various rituals. Further texts with similar content and/or style may be associated with the same occasions.

## I ANNUAL COVENANT CEREMONY

Once a year, apparently at the festival of Pentecost, the *Yahad* performed a ceremony in which new members were inducted and the community as a whole was mustered and reaffirmed their position in the 'New Covenant'. The most complete description of the four-part ceremony is preserved in the *Community Rule* (1QS 1:18–2:18). (1) The priests and Levites praise God; the people respond 'Amen, Amen'. (2) The priests recount God's righteous acts; the Levites recount the sins of Israel; the people confess their sins and declare God's justice. (3) The priests bless all the 'men of God's lot who walk blamelessly in all His ways' with an expanded Priestly Blessing (Num. 6:24–6); the Levites curse the 'men of Belial's lot'; the people respond 'Amen, Amen'. (4) The priests and the Levites curse the apostate; the people respond 'Amen, Amen'.

This is obviously based on the blessing and cursing ceremony in which the Israelites committed themselves to God's covenant at the time of the conquest (Deut. 27–8; Josh. 8:30–5). However, unlike the biblical model, the curses are pronounced upon outsiders and apostates rather than as a warning upon themselves, and it is combined with a confession of sin which lacks the usual petition for mercy (cf. Neh. 9, Dan. 9, Bar. 1:15–3:8). These details reflect the confident self-authenticating function of this unique sectarian liturgy.

Only four of the recitations from this liturgy are recorded in the *Community Rule*: the people's confession of sin, the blessing on insiders, the curse on outsiders, and the curse on apostates. Other Qumran texts also preserve parts of the liturgy. The Damascus Document includes the people's confession of sin in a slightly different wording (CD 20:27–30) and a prayer of banishment for the apostate (4QD<sup>a</sup> 18 v; 4QD<sup>c</sup> 11 i). 5Q13 *Sectarian Rule* seems to be a description of the ceremony similar to but not the same as the *Community Rule*. Fragments of a prayer recounting God's deeds and a confession of sins can be discerned. Six copies survive of a collection of blessings and curses (4Q*Berakhot*: 4Q280, 286–90) belonging to the liturgy, which differ in certain respects from those of the *Community Rule*. Many other hymns of praise, recitals of God's deeds, prayers of confession, and blessings and curses may also have been used in connection with the covenant ceremony, but these will be mentioned separately

below. It appears that either there was not one statutory formulation for the prayers or the liturgy adapted through time.

## 2 GRACE AT MEALS

Wherever there were a minimum of ten men eating together in the *Yabad*, grace before meals was recited in common (1QS 6:4b–6; cf. 10:14b–15a; 1QSa 2:17–21). A priest presided, extending his hand and reciting a blessing over the bread and then the wine, followed in turn by the rest of the congregation according to their status. Nothing suggests that this was an exceptional procedure or a ‘sacral’ meal. It was rather a common Jewish practice of grace before formal meals, where neither priestly precedence (*Ep. Arist.* 184–5) nor blessing bread before wine (*m. Ber.* 8:8; Mark 14:22–3) would be unusual.

Presumably they also recited grace after meals as was common practice (e.g. *Jub.* 22:5–9) and as Josephus notes of the Essenes (*Bell.* 11.129–32), although there is no solid evidence for this. The biblical motivation for grace after meals – Deut. 8:5–10 – does appear alongside the Decalogue and *Shema* in two manuscripts of excerpted biblical texts, but it is far from clear that this signifies liturgical recitation of grace after meals as M. Weinfeld believes.<sup>24</sup> It might be indirect evidence, though. Nor have any texts of meal prayers turned up at Qumran. The two fragments which Weinfeld proposes as a ‘grace after meals at the mourner’s house’<sup>25</sup> contain rather a psalm about God’s future consolation of Jerusalem’s afflicted based on Isaiah 61:10–16. It is best understood as a song of Zion (cf. Pss. 48; 11QPs<sup>a</sup> Hymn to Zion; 4Q380 1–2) and belongs to a collection of psalms known as *Barki Naphshi* (see below). Neither the comparisons that he draws to the traditional grace nor to the mourner’s prayer compel one to view this as an early example.

## 3 PURIFICATION RITUAL

Among the scrolls are two liturgies for purification washings (4Q414, 4Q512) in various cases of impurity. Both contain liturgical instructions as well as prayers to be recited before and after entry into the water, beginning with a benediction formula. In both, as well, the prayers link the purification with God’s forgiveness of sin: ‘to atone for us’ (4Q414 2 i. 3), ‘Blessed are you (God of Israel who delivered me from al)l my sin and

<sup>24</sup> M. Weinfeld, ‘Grace After Meals in Qumran’, 427–9.

<sup>25</sup> M. Weinfeld, ‘Grace After Meals at the Mourner’s House in a Text from Qumran’, *Tarbiz* 61 (1991), 15–23.

purified me from impure indecency, <and you atoned> that (I) might enter . . .' (4Q512 29–32:9). The moral/spiritual overtone to purity witnessed in these prayers is the same as that expressed in IQS 2:25–3:12 whereby repentance must precede purification. These prayers may be unique to the *Yahad*, but the emphasis is similar to baptism for John (Mark 1:2–8 and parallels) and the early Christians (Acts 2:38).

#### 4 APOTROPAIC PRAYERS

In addition to texts for calendrical occasions, 11QPS<sup>a</sup> *David's Compositions* also mentions four 'songs for making music over the demon-possessed'. Possibly this refers to the scroll known as 11Q *Apocryphal Psalms*<sup>a</sup> which contains three apocryphal psalms directly adjuring demons in the name of YHWH to be banished, together with Psalm 91, early on regarded as an apotropaic psalm. Apparently each psalm was introduced with the formula 'by (or to) David', and ended with the refrain 'Amen Amen selah' common in later Jewish incantations. These songs seem to be for the use of the individual, e.g. '(call at an)y time to the heaven(s when) Beli(al) comes to you, (and s)ay to him . . .' Use of the Divine Name and the probable association with 11QPS<sup>a</sup> *David's Compositions* suggest that these are likely not of Qumran origin. Another fragmentary manuscript contains similar incantations (4Q560).

A different kind of apotropaic practice is attested for use by a professional 'exorcist'. This is represented by the collection of songs of praise combined with incantation in 4Q510–11 *Songs of the Sage* for magical use by the *Maskil* to ward off evil spirits 'during the period of the rule of evil':

And I, the *Maskil*, proclaim the splendor of his beauty to frighten and to ter(rify) all the spirits of the angels of destruction and the spirits of bastards, demons, Lilith, howling creatures and (wild beasts . . .) (4Q510 1 4–6).

Another manuscript (4Q444) belongs to the same or a closely related collection. In both, the 'exorcist' emphasizes his authority as one gifted with divinely inspired speech. They are distinctively related to the *Yahad* and its view that the present age is dominated by the conflict between the hosts of light and darkness (IQS 3:20–5; 4:15–18).<sup>26</sup> Other examples of this type of exorcism incantation are probably the fragmentary remains of 4Q560 and 8Q5.

Apotropaic magic is well attested within Judaism of the time (Tobit 6:17–18; 8:1–3, Josephus *Ant.* VIII.45–9, amulets, incantation bowls), but these are the earliest collections of Jewish apotropaic prayers.

<sup>26</sup> E. Chazon, 'New Liturgical Manuscripts from Qumran', *Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies, Division A, The Bible and Its World* (Jerusalem 1994), pp. 207–14.

## 5 MARRIAGE CEREMONY (?)

One very fragmentary scroll seems to be a marriage liturgy as suggested by its editor M. Baillet (4Q502 *Ritual of Marriage*)<sup>27</sup> in which a couple make vows to each other in the presence of others and recite blessings to God beginning 'blessed be the God of Israel who . . .' It contains appropriate expressions of joy, an allusion to the first couple, and wishes of a long and pious life. Similar features characterize the marriage between Tobias and Sarah in Tobit 7–8. A citation from the two spirits instruction of the *Community Rule* (IQS 4:4–6) suggests that this ceremony originated in the *Yahad*. Baumgarten proposed alternatively that it is a ritual for elderly couples,<sup>28</sup> but this would be persuasive only under the waning consensus that the *Yahad* was celibate.

## III ESCHATOLOGICAL LITURGIES AND BLESSINGS

In the sectarian *War Scroll* appear numerous addresses, hymns, blessings, and curses along with liturgical instructions for use at various stages of the final war (IQM 10–19; 4QM<sup>a,b,e,f</sup>; cf. 4Q471 5 and 4Q497 1–2). It is unlikely that this rule was actually used liturgically in the life of the *Yahad*, e.g. as 'cultic drama' in connection with the covenant festival.<sup>29</sup> Rather, it probably represents an idealized vision of the future projected from the biblical law of warfare (Deut. 20:2–9). Even so, its picture of battle hymns and prayers reflects to a certain extent contemporary practice (cf. 1 and 2 Macc *passim*; *m. Soṭa*. 8.1), as well as liturgical forms important to the sect, particularly the hymns to God in the *Hodayot* and the blessings and curses in the covenant ceremony. The scroll gives evidence for the liturgical reading of prayers from a scroll (IQM 15:4–5) and contains intriguing similarities to the Benedictus and Magnificat in Luke's gospel (Luke 1:46–55, 68–79).<sup>30</sup>

There are two copies of an eschatological blessing for prosperity and protection from the covenantal curses (4Q285 *Serek ha-Milḥamah* frg. 1 and 11Q14 *Berakhot*), seemingly to be recited by a priest over the community in the days of the final war. This may belong to the end of the *War Scroll* or be part of a related work.

<sup>27</sup> M. Baillet, *Qumrân grotte 4, III* (4Q482–4Q520), vol. 7 of *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (Oxford 1982), 81.

<sup>28</sup> J. M. Baumgarten, '4Q502, Marriage or Golden Age Ritual?' *Journal of Jewish Studies* 34 (1983), 125–35.

<sup>29</sup> M. Krieg, 'MŌ'ĒD NĀQĀM – ein Kultdrama aus Qumran', *Theologische Zeitschrift* 41 (1985), 20–4.

<sup>30</sup> D. Flusser, 'The Magnificat and the Benedictus', *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem 1988), pp. 126–49.

The sectarian *Rule of Blessings* (1Qsb) contains a collection of benedictions to be recited by the *Maskil* over various groups and individuals in the last days. This seems to reflect the mustering and blessings of the *Yahad* covenant ceremony projected into an idealized future (cf. *Rule of the Congregation* 1Qsa 1:22–25) when there will no longer be the sons of darkness to curse.<sup>31</sup> Prominent features include the use of an expanded priestly benediction and emphasis on liturgical union with the angels.

The *Rule of the Congregation* similarly envisages the manner in which the grace before meals will be carried out by the eschatological community with the messianic priest and Messiah of Israel presiding.

#### IV MISCELLANEOUS PRAYERS AND RELIGIOUS POEMS

Many texts remain which in some manner or other suggest a possible 'liturgical' function, but these can only be listed here under tentative headings.

##### I PETITIONARY PRAYERS

It was noted above that communal confessions of sin in the context of historical recital find a place in the covenant ceremony, prayers for festivals, and prayers for days of the week. 4Q393 *Communal Confession* exhibits the same pattern and could have been used for one of these occasions.<sup>32</sup> Contrary to Neh. 9, this prayer acknowledges that God has abandoned his people and petitions for the very things which Neh. 9:22–5 announced that God gave to the Israelites. The expansion of Moses' prayer is predicated on the viewpoint of Jubilees 1. It also adapts Psalm 51 to a communal confession.

4Q501 *Apocryphal Lamentation* pleads for God not to abandon his people in language very similar to that of 4Q393 *Communal Confession* and to the *Festival Prayers*, but the tone is closer to the complaint style of biblical laments.

##### 2 BLESSINGS AND CURSES

4Q275 (misleadingly titled *Tohorot B*) contains curses and responses which may relate to the covenant ceremony.

6Q16 mentions blessings, but the context is lost.

<sup>31</sup> L. H. Schiffman, *The Eschatological Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls: A Study of the Rule of the Congregation*. SBL Monograph Series 38 (Atlanta 1989), 72–6.

<sup>32</sup> D. K. Falk, '4Q393: A Communal Confession', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 45 (1994), 184–207.

## 3 CIVIC PRAYER

4Q176 *Tanḥumim* includes at the beginning of an anthology of scriptural passages about restoration a short prayer for God to be gracious to the people and restore Jerusalem.

4Q448 col. B–C appears to be a prayer for the well-being of the holy city, the king (Jonathan), and all the congregation of Israel who are dispersed over all the earth. Such civic prayers are attested as normal in connection with sacrifices on festivals and special days (e.g. 1 Macc. 12:5–12)<sup>33</sup> but a prayer at Qumran for a Hasmonaean king is unexpected. If the editors are correct to interpret this as a reference to Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BC) – the first Hasmonaean to use the title ‘King Jonathan’ – it is a very surprising prayer and may reflect support for Jannaeus’ opposition to the pharisees. This reading is, however, very uncertain.<sup>34</sup>

## 4 UNDETERMINED

Other tiny and/or unpublished fragments include 4Q291; 4Q292 (praise for God’s holiness); 4Q293 (praise for God’s deeds; Amen Amen refrain); 4Q297; 4Q302; 4Q408; 4Q439; 4Q440–3; 4Q448 col. A; 4Q449–57; 4Q460; 4Q498; 4Q499; 4Q500 (praise of God’s temple?); 6Q18; 8Q5; 11Q15–16 (praise for God as creator).

## 5 NARRATIVE PRAYERS

Many more prayers are embedded in narratives. Particularly the so-called ‘parabiblical’ texts introduce or expand prayers of the patriarchs, Moses, and Joshua. Although these are essentially literary compositions, they give evidence of reflecting living prayer practice. Only two samples will be mentioned. One of the copies of *Testament of Levi* from Qumran contains a prayer of Levi (4Q213 1 i). Levi petitions for forgiveness, knowledge, strength to do God’s will, and protection from evil – not as a motivation for deliverance but spiritual perfection as an end in itself. It is also a valuable source on posture in prayer: after a purification bath Levi raises his eyes and face, spreads his fingers and hands and apparently recites the

<sup>33</sup> E. Bickerman, ‘The Civic Prayer for Jerusalem’, *Harvard Theological Review*, 55 (1962), 163–85.

<sup>34</sup> E. Eshel, H. Eshel, and A. Yardeni, ‘A Qumran Composition Containing Part of Ps. 154 and a Prayer for the Welfare of King Jonathan and His Kingdom’, *Israel Exploration Journal*, 42 (1992), 199–299; G. Vermes, ‘The So-Called King Jonathan Fragment (4Q448)’, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 44 (1993), 294–300; P. Alexander, ‘A Note on the Syntax of 4Q448’, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 44 (1993), 301–2.



prayer aloud, then continues praying silently. A poetic prayer for deliverance in the mouth of Joseph (4Q372 1) shows the intimate address to God as ‘my father’ (see p. 875 below) and deliberately expands the traditional list of God’s attributes (great, mighty, and awesome, Deut. 10:17; Neh. 9:32) in a manner condemned by some of the later rabbis (e.g. *b. Ber.* 33b).<sup>35</sup>

## 6 HYMNS AND PSALMS

Well known are the *Hodayoth*, so called because of a characteristic formula ‘I give thanks to you.’ Two formal types have been discerned: individual songs of thanksgiving – intensely personal in nature and often regarded as autobiographical songs by the Teacher of Righteousness – and community hymns of confession. The latter are commonly associated with the *Maskil*, praise God’s greatness in contrast with human sinfulness/frailty, and focus on the topics of forgiveness, election, knowledge and judgement. Liturgical use has frequently been proposed for the hymns of confession, particularly in connection with the covenant ceremony. In the light of the following introduction formula uncovered by the restoration by E. Puech,<sup>36</sup> it appears probable that these hymns were available for liturgical use on various occasions as well as for instruction:

(Psalm, for the In)structor,  
 for prostration befor(e God  
 and for seeking favour daily for his sins,  
 for understanding) the (great) works (13) of God  
 and for making the simple understand his (wonder)ful mysteries,  
 (for) declaring (all his works of justice  
 and for opening in the) eternal (foun)dations (14) the fountain  
 of knowledge,  
 and for making humankind understand the (inclin)ation of the flesh  
 and the council of the spirits of ini(quit)  
 because) they walk (in the ways of humanki)nd.

(1QH 15 1–3 + 31 1–2)

The Cave 4 copies (4QHod<sup>a–f</sup> = 4Q427–32; cf. 4Q433) give evidence of collections of different character, and in the cases of 4QH<sup>a</sup> and 4QH<sup>c</sup> perhaps dedicated almost exclusively to community hymns of confession.<sup>37</sup> This may suggest ordering for liturgical use.

<sup>35</sup> E. Schuller, ‘The Psalm of 4Q372 1 within the Context of Second Temple Prayer’, *CBQ* 54, no. 1 (1992), 67–79.

<sup>36</sup> E. Puech, ‘Quelques aspects de la restauration du rouleau des hymnes (1QH)’, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 39 (1988), 38–55.

<sup>37</sup> E. Schuller, ‘The Cave Four Hodayot Manuscripts: A Preliminary Description’, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 85 (1994), 137–50.

4Q392 *Works of God* is a song of praise for God's gracious works for humans, similar in tone to many of the *Hodayot*.

Another collection called *Barki Nafshi* (4Q434–9) after an opening formula 'Bless the Lord, my soul' contains disparate poems. Included are a third-person psalm of praise to God for his deliverance and direction of the poor (possibly a community self-designation), a song of Zion rejoicing in God's future comfort of the afflicted in Jerusalem, and a second-person song of thanksgiving for strengthening to do God's will.

There are also about twenty biblical psalters, a collection of non-canonical psalms (4Q380, 381), and three 'hybrid' psalters (4QPs<sup>f</sup>, 11QPs<sup>a,b</sup>). Each of these encompasses a wide range of genres, and it is very problematic determining whether these had any liturgical function. 11QPs<sup>a</sup> is the largest and provides the most promising evidence for the liturgical use of biblical and non-canonical psalms, most strikingly the addition of the antiphonal response 'blessed be the Lord and blessed be his name for ever and ever' after each acrostic line of Pss. 145 and the catalogue of *David's Compositions*. M. Weinfeld found in the three previously unknown psalms – *Plea for Deliverance*, *Apostrophe to Zion* and *Hymn to the Creator* – thematic and linguistic similarities to morning benedictions from the later synagogue liturgy, but these are too scattered to suggest a direct link.<sup>38</sup>

## V PRAYER MOTIFS AND LITURGICAL MOTIVATION

Thematic resonances with the later synagogue liturgy can be heard frequently in the Qumran prayers (see the articles by M. Weinfeld and *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* by B. Nitzan). It does not necessarily follow from this that we have incipient forms of the synagogue liturgy in the Dead Sea Scrolls (see J. Maier, 'Zu Kult und Liturgie'), but it does at least reveal that the prayers found at Qumran belong to a broad stream of prayer tradition in which the rabbis also stood.<sup>39</sup> The following motifs are especially notable.<sup>40</sup>

One finds frequently in both the petitions and psalms at Qumran concern for spiritual assistance from God, especially for knowledge, forgiveness and protection from sin (e.g. *Words of the Luminaries*, *Festival*

<sup>38</sup> M. Weinfeld, 'Traces of Kedushat Yotzer and Pesukey De-Zimra in the Qumran Literature and in Ben-Sira (Hebrew)', *Tarbiz* 45 (1976), 15–26; M. Weinfeld, 'The Morning Prayers (Birkhoth Hashachar) in Qumran and in the Conventional Jewish Liturgy', *Revue de Qumran* 13 (1988), 481–94.

<sup>39</sup> E. Chazon, 'Prayers from Qumran and their Historical Implications', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 1 (1994), 277–84.

<sup>40</sup> See Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer*, 80–7 in general and Chazon, *A Liturgical Document*, 104–12 on *Words of the Luminaries*.

*Prayers, Communal Confession, 4QTestLevi<sup>a</sup> 1 i, 11QPs<sup>a</sup> Psalm 155, 11QPs<sup>a</sup> Plea, the Hodayoth):*

... with all (our) heart and with all (our) soul, and to implant your Torah in our heart (so that one may not turn from it to go) to the right or the left. For you will heal us from madness, blindness and bewilderment (of heart ... because of) our (si)ns we were sold, but despite our trespasses you called us (...) and you will deliver us from sinning against you (...) and to make us understand the testimonies.

(*Words of the Luminaries* 4Q504 1-2 ii 13-17)

Often in conjunction with this, deliverance is conceived in salvation-historical terms, especially the regathering of exiles: 'you will assemble (our banished ones ...) and our dispersed ones (you will) gat(her)' (*Festival Prayers* 4Q509 3:3-4).

In other words, these are interested in the reversal of the covenantal curse and its causes. Such concerns become more and more important among post-exilic prayers in general (e.g. Dan. 9:4-19; 2 Macc. 1:2-5; *Pss.Sol.* 8:27-32), over against immediate physical needs. This move represents a generalizing and universalizing of petition which ultimately climaxes in the developed synagogue liturgy. In this context, the petitions for regular daily and festival use found at Qumran are of particular importance.

*Words of the Luminaries* is the earliest extant witness to daily supplications for deliverance, and provides a vital ideological analogy for the daily petitions of the *Amidah* and the individual private supplications known as *Taḥanunim* which came to be recited after the daily *Amidah* in the synagogue. The many terminological and thematic similarities which can be drawn with the *Taḥanunim*, however, have biblical precedents and are probably to be explained as independent exploiting of biblical models of supplication and the penitential liturgies of public fast days.<sup>41</sup> Stronger comparisons can be made with the thirteen intermediate petitions of the *Amidah*, but these do not indicate that we are dealing with a proto-*Amidah* either. Rather, together with such texts as the Hebrew hymn following Sir. 51:12, they point to a common tradition of prayer themes and phrases based on conventional biblical passages which eventually crystallized in various prayer texts.<sup>42</sup> The same can be said for the phrases 'implant your Torah in our heart' and 'circumcise the foreskin of our heart' which came to have standard places in the synagogue liturgy but have their earliest attestation in 4Q *Words of the Luminaries*.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Chazon, 'Sectarian Prayer,' 9-13, and see the references there to Lehmann, Flusser and Weinfeld.

<sup>42</sup> Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry*, 109-10; Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns* (Studia Judaica, no. 9; Berlin 1977), 219-21.

<sup>43</sup> Chazon, *A Liturgical Document from Qumran*, pp. 104-5, 167; Flusser, '“He Has Planted It (i.e. the Law) as Eternal Life in Our Midst”', *Tarbiḥ* 58 (1989), 147-53.

Nevertheless, the confessions and petitions of *Words of the Luminaries* demonstrate that as early as the second century BCE the essential ideological step had already been taken which could enable the development of the statutory synagogue prayers. There is no proof that this was at first an exclusively sectarian development, nor that it originated as a substitute for sacrifice, although the time of sacrifice was certainly seen as a particularly appropriate time for prayer (see Sir. 50:18–21 and below) and sacrificial language for prayer would render it a natural replacement among those who quit participation in the Temple sacrifices (possibly 1QS 9:4–5). The motivation for such regular confession and petition is likely to be sought in the ideology which was disillusioned with the return under Nehemiah and held that even in the land the people still languished in exile under the curse of the covenant. It represents a generalizing of the exile remedy spelled out in the covenantal warnings (Lev. 26:40–5; Deut. 30:1–10; cf. 1 Kgs 8:46–53). This disillusioned exile ideology was apparently shared among various pious Jews in the second and third centuries BCE, as attested not only by the sectarian writings found at Qumran (e.g. CD 1:5–8), but also, for example, Daniel who regularly prayed thrice daily (Dan. 9:24–7; 6:10–11; 9:3–19) and 1 Enoch (93:9–10).

Another important constellation of themes appears frequently in prayers of praise: God as creator, God's holiness, and praise in communion with the angels. By praising God at the times established by his knowledge, the community can unite with the angels who praise God's holiness at these times. In particular, sunrise and sunset recall God's creation of the luminaries and are especially times for angelic praise: 'Great and holy are you, YHWH, the holiest of the holy ones from generation to generation . . . He separates light from darkness. He established the dawn by the knowledge of his mind. Then all his angels saw and sang out, for he showed them what they did not know' (*Hymn to the Creator* 11QPS<sup>a</sup> 26:9–12; cf. *Jubilees* 2:2–3). In this way, these themes are appropriate for daily prayer in connection with the course of the luminaries, as in the *Daily Prayers* (4Q503). The same themes form the basis of the first benediction preceding the morning recital of the *Shema* in the synagogue liturgy, in which God is blessed as the creator of light (*Yotzer 'Or*) and in which is embedded a liturgical description of the angelic worship of God's holiness known as the *Qedushah* (based on Isa. 6:3 and Ezek. 3:12).<sup>44</sup> This reveals perhaps nothing more, but certainly nothing less, than that the general thematic basis of this benediction was customarily associated with morning prayer at least by the beginning of the first century BCE.

<sup>44</sup> M. Weinfeld, 'The Angelic Song Over the Luminaries in the Qumran Texts' in *Time to Prepare the Way in the Wilderness*, edited by D. Dimant and L. H. Schiffman. (STDJ, 16; Leiden 1995), pp. 131–57.

Essentially the same thematic complex appears also in sabbath praise in the Dead Sea Scrolls, namely the sabbath hymn of *Words of the Luminaries*, the sabbath benedictions of *Daily Prayers*, and the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*.<sup>45</sup> Emphasis on God's kingdom is combined with these themes in *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, but the other two prayer texts are too fragmentary to determine whether the same is true of them. It is apparent from *Jubilees* 2:17–22 and 50:9–11 that joint angelic and human praise of God as creator, God's holiness and God's kingdom were themes linked with the sabbath already by the second century BCE. Cultic overtones are explicit with *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*: 'kingdom' here designates above all the heavenly temple over which God is lord, served by angelic priests with praise and offerings.<sup>46</sup> Thus there is an ideological motivation for praising God at fixed times associated with the sacrificial cult: the angels praise God at these times. For the sectarian community which used the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* – and probably also the *Daily Prayers* – uniting with the angels in praise apparently served to legitimize the community's priestly identity in a situation where they themselves did not conduct sacrifices.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, it is more likely that this cult-oriented praise attempted to preserve priestly liturgical traditions than that it originated as a substitute for sacrifice. In *Jubilees* the underlying ideology and customary themes coexisted comfortably with participation in sacrifices.

At Qumran the two broad tendencies represented by the theme complexes just discussed – salvation-historical and priestly/cultic – dwelt in close quarters but remained distinct. Ultimately these tendencies formed a symbiosis in the *Shema* benedictions and the *Amidah* as the core of the synagogue liturgy.

One further theme merits mention here, that of Israel's election as God's son. Whereas election language in general has a special significance in the sectarian scrolls, reference to the father–son relationship is used primarily in non-sectarian prayers within a broader salvation-history context. A Passover prayer reasserts the biblical motif that God 'called us sons' in the Exodus event (*Festival Prayers* 4Q505 126:2). More specifically, Israel's sonship is evoked as the relationship on which petition can be made. God as father disciplines, but is also merciful and open to appeal: 'For your glory you created us and (as) children you placed us for yourself in the sight of all the nations, for you called (I)srael "my son, my

<sup>45</sup> Chazon, 'On the Special Character of Sabbath Prayer'.

<sup>46</sup> A. M. Schwemer, 'Gott als König und seine Königsherrschaft in der Sabbatlleder aus Qumran' in *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult in Judentum, Urchristentum und in der hellenistischen Welt*, edited by M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer (Tübingen 1991), pp. 72, 116.

<sup>47</sup> Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 59–72.

firstborn”, and you chastened us as a man chastens his son’ (*Words of the Luminaries*, 4Q504 1–2 iii 4–7, prayer for Thursday). There is no definite evidence that the election theme is related to the gift of Torah and sabbath as in later rabbinic benedictions.

Intriguing are two unambiguous invocations of God as ‘my Father’ in prayers from Qumran, only recently accessible.<sup>48</sup> A lament in the mouth of Joseph begins with the address ‘My Father, and my God, do not abandon me into the hands of the nations’ (4Q372 16). A fragmentary text includes a prayer with the words ‘(f)or you did not abandon your servant . . . my Father and my Lord’ (4Q460 5 i. 4–5).<sup>49</sup> Neither of these is likely to be sectarian in origin. The address ‘my father’ in Jewish prayer was recognized by Joachim Jeremias in Greek sources from the diaspora (Wis. 14:3; III Macc. 6:3, 8, and the Greek translation of Ecclus. 23:1, 4), but Jeremias argued that the prayers of Jesus were the only reliable attestation of this form of address in ancient Palestine.<sup>50</sup> His dismissal of other Palestinian material had already been questioned on the basis of existing evidence,<sup>51</sup> but these more recently available fragments from Qumran clearly attest the address ‘my father’ in Hebrew prayer-texts from Judaea.

## VI CONCLUSION

It is very unlikely that the many prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls derived from a single source. This is apparent with regard to the contrast between 4Q *Daily Prayers* and 4Q *Words of the Luminaries* which probably originated in two different circles, perhaps priestly and levitical or *ma’amadot* services respectively. Despite their origins, it is possible that they were all used at Qumran where they turned up, but it is difficult to reconstruct one coherent liturgical cycle in which they could all find a place. We may have to do with heterogeneity in the group, or with changes in the make-up of the group throughout time. With regard to motivation for liturgical prayer, both prayer as sacrifice and prayer as response to exile can be found. The

<sup>48</sup> See Schuller, ‘The Psalm of 4Q372 1 within the Context of Second Temple Prayer,’ p. 68.

<sup>49</sup> B. Z. Wacholder, and M. G. Abegg, *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls: The Hebrew and Aramaic Texts from Cave Four. Fascicle Three* (Washington, DC 1995), p. 345.

<sup>50</sup> See J. Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus*, translated by J. Bowden, C. Burchard and J. Reumann (Philadelphia 1967), pp. 11–65, esp. p. 29, ‘there is as yet no evidence in the literature of ancient Palestinian Judaism that “my Father” is used as a personal address to God’.

<sup>51</sup> G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (London 1983), pp. 39–42; J. Barr, ‘Abba isn’t “Daddy”’, *JTS* NS 39 (1988), 28–47.

two are not mutually exclusive, but it does seem possible to distinguish roughly between praise as a metaphorical sacrifice and petitionary prayer – including confession of sins – as deriving from an exile ideology. The latter have their own inherent justification in passages like Lev. 26:40–5. Whether praise as sacrifice carries over from temple liturgies, the evidence surveyed here suggests that the impetus to communal confession and petition for spiritual assistance at set times came from reflection on the exile as a judgement for sin. In any case, there are now much better grounds for arguing that liturgical prayer was a wider phenomenon in Judaism prior to the destruction of the Second Temple.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> I am grateful to the following bodies which supported the period of research necessary for this study: the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Kennicott Fund of the University of Oxford, and the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies.



## CHAPTER 27

## PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA

Of all the Jews who have written in Greek, Philo of Alexandria is undoubtedly the greatest on account of the breadth and richness of his ideas, the number of his works and his brilliant literary qualities. No other author in antiquity has attempted with so much boldness the confrontation and symbiosis of Judaism with another philosophy and another culture. This, one would think, would have assured his work and his personality a posthumous life among the generations of Jews which have followed him throughout the Mediterranean. However, in general Judaism knew absolutely nothing about him for fifteen hundred years, until in the sixteenth century Azariah ben Moses dei Rossi, a man of great learning who knew little Greek but who read in the Latin translation all the ancient Greek writers, including the Fathers of the Church, revived his name and his writings.

These writings, however, had not disappeared in the course of so many centuries; Christians from the beginning knew of them, made use of them and copied the manuscripts until the printed editions of the Renaissance; in 1552, Adrien Turnèbe published the whole of Philo's treatises in Paris for the first time. But it is above all in the nineteenth century that Philo gradually came to have an increasingly important place in the history of religious and philosophical ideas, as also in literary history. For a century, one study has followed another: sometimes detailed monographs as Zeller already attempted when he devoted nearly a hundred pages to Philo in his monumental *Philosophie der Griechen* (vol. III.2, Tübingen, 1852; edn 5, Leipzig 1923); sometimes one-sided essays which overlook the complexity of a man who is both a Greek philosopher nurtured by Judaism and also a Jewish thinker moulded by Greek culture, and which claim to sum up the character of this astonishing personality in a word by choosing one of the alternatives Greek or Jew.

However, in the last decades the literature on Philo has continued to grow at an increasing rate, offering us still more numerous editions, translations and, in some of the books and articles, an increasingly accurate, varied and deepened knowledge of the man and his ideas. For this renewal of interest credit can be given to the progress of Hellenistic

scholarship in several spheres: the history of ideas at the end of the Hellenistic period and at the beginning of the Roman Empire, particularly the history of Stoicism, of Middle Platonism and Neo-Platonism; the study of the Jewish Diaspora in antiquity; of the Bible and of the Septuagint; of Christian origins and of the relationship between the New Testament and its Jewish milieu; the development of patristic studies, and finally the great discoveries of Qumran. In short, today the personality of Philo and his work, because both are accessible and better known, take on their true dimensions in history.

## I BIOGRAPHY

The only certain date in the life of Caius Julius Philo is that of his embassy to Rome in CE 40 – he was already an *old man*, so he tells us himself. He must have been born between 20 and 10 BCE and died around CE 50. He was a member of one of the richest Jewish families in Alexandria, and because of this enjoyed from childhood all advantages of Greek culture. His father moreover was a *civis romanus*. His brother, Alexander Lysimachus, was an *alabarch* (that is, probably responsible for the collection of customs or taxes) under the emperors Tiberius and Claudius, but was imprisoned by Caligula at the time of the disturbances in Alexandria. He also looked after the property which Antonia, mother of the emperor Claudius, possessed in Egypt. He had an immense fortune and lent considerable sums of money to Herod Agrippa, paying for the covering of the doors of the Jerusalem temple with gold and silver.

We know nothing of Philo's private life, whether he was married or if he had any children. But his two nephews, the sons of Alexander Lysimachus, are known to historians. One, Marcus Julius Alexander, married Berenice, the daughter of Herod, and the other was extremely well known, to the point of notoriety, because he abandoned the faith and traditions of his fathers to achieve a brilliant career as a leading Roman civil servant. This Tiberius Julius Alexander was successively an official in Rome, *epistrategos* in Thebes, *procurator* in Judaea (46–8), *praefectus* of Egypt under Nero, in 66, and finally assistant to Titus in 69–70 during the campaign in Judaea. In 69 he played an important part in raising Vespasian to the imperial throne, and in the course of his prefecture in Egypt he did not hesitate to repress the Jewish revolt very cruelly and to have a large number of his former co-religionists massacred, perhaps as many as fifty thousand.

Alexandria was still in Philo's time the most brilliant city in the Empire on account of its commercial activity and its maritime importance, its ethnic and religious cosmopolitanism, its library and its schools, its scien-

tific and artistic resources and its fashionable life. The Jewish community there could rightly be considered the most important of the Diaspora, through the number of its faithful, but particularly through the intensity of its religious life. This is the milieu which produced the Septuagint, the Letter of Aristeas, the Wisdom of Solomon,<sup>1</sup> the third book of the Maccabees and several poetic and historical works.<sup>2</sup>

The Jews of Alexandria normally spoke Greek, but remained attached to the Law, the Scripture, to their meetings for worship in Alexandria and to their national unity, as well as their Messianic hope. They were ready to accept Hellenistic culture, which was equally accepted by the Pharisees in Palestine.<sup>3</sup>

We have evidence that Philo did not live on the fringe of his religious community, nor of Alexandrian society; first and foremost from his work, where on every occasion both his deep attachment to the faith and traditions of his fathers and also his knowledge of the activities of the city, with its theatres, gymnasia, its stadium, its banquets and shows and its commercial and financial activity are found. It is significant that his co-religionists chose him as ambassador to Caligula in 39–40. In such circumstances only a man who was important in the city could be appointed.

## II THE WRITER

It is, however, through his written work that Philo held an important place in his community in Alexandria and that he remains a prominent figure in the history of Judaism. There are about two thousand pages (a small part of this is only preserved in Armenian translation), and this includes works which are very varied in tone and style. Although no classification can be absolutely satisfactory, the following groups can be distinguished: historical works; expositions of the Law; allegorical exegeses; philosophical treatises.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. Laporte, 'Philo in the Tradition of Biblical Wisdom Literature' in R. L. Wilken (ed.) *Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Early Christianity* (Notre Dame-London 1975), pp. 103–41.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. D. Sly, *Philo's Alexandria* (London–New York 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. M. Simon, 'Le Judaïsme alexandrin' in *Philon d'Alexandrie* (Colloque de Lyon, Paris 1967), p. 20; E. Starobinski-Safran, 'La communauté juive d'Alexandrie à l'époque de Philon' in *ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΙΝΑ, Mélanges Cl. Mondésert* (Paris 1987), pp. 45–75; J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora* (Edinburgh 1996), pp. 19–81; P. Borgen, 'Philo and the Jews in Alexandria' in P. Bilde *et al.* (eds.), *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt* (Aarhus 1992), pp. 122–38; J. Méléze Modrzejewski, *Les Juifs d'Égypte* (Paris 1991); W. C. van Unnik, *Das Selbstverständnis der jüdischen Diaspora in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit* (Leiden 1993).

(a) Works which are historical (and to a slight extent biographical): the *In Flaccum* and the *Legatio ad Gaium*. These two treatises deal with the situation of the Jews in Alexandria in the years 35–40; in general they manifest detailed information in the case of several episodes which only an eye-witness and a participant in the events could give. They offer pages which are outstanding for their lively descriptions, for the drama of certain scenes and for sometimes restrained and sometimes eloquent or sarcastic emotion; it is with these texts that one should begin reading Philo, as E. R. Goodenough recommends, to get to know the writer's personality first. Philo vigorously attacks the enemies of the Jews: Aulus Avillius Flaccus, who in his term as prefect of Egypt, after five years of blameless government, thought fit to support the nationalist and anti-Semitic demagogues of Alexandria against the Jews who supported Rome and were protected by her; and Caligula, who became mad enough to want pictures or statues of himself set up not only in the synagogues of Egypt but even in the temple of Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> With a skilful political sense Philo, in these two treatises, seeks to show the Roman administrators – the prefect of Egypt or the Emperor – that the Jews were good citizens, conscientious and devoted, that it would be wise to allow them to observe their religious traditions, and that their persecutors could only bring down divine punishment upon themselves.

These two works of circumstance, which are at the same time historical, polemic and apologetic, can be compared with two other treatises of a quite different tone, which are also, in their way, historical and apologetic. The first, *De vita Moysis*, which recounts in the manner of Hellenistic biographies the life of the character chosen, sets forth his career as leader of the Jewish people and shows how he was at one and the same time legislator, priest and prophet.<sup>5</sup> This text, which seems to be addressed to readers who are Gentiles but sympathetic, was conceived by the author as a sort of introduction to Judaism: in it Moses is presented in the same way as Hellenistic writers outline for us the portrait of an ideal sovereign, who should be wise, a saviour, a being of divine inspiration and a living law explaining the law of nature and of God.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. P. Bilde, 'The Roman Emperor Gaius (Caligula)'s Attempt to erect his Statue in the Temple of Jerusalem', *StTh* 32 (1978), 67–93; J. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: attitudes toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian antiquity* (New York–Oxford 1983); M. Pucci Ben Zeev, 'New Perspectives on the Jewish–Greek Hostilities in Alexandria during the Reign of Emperor Caligula', *JSJ* 21 (1990), 227–35.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. E. Starobinski-Safran, 'La prophétie de Moïse et sa portée d'après Philon' in R. M. Archard *et al.* (eds.), *La figure de Moïse* (Geneva 1978), pp. 67–79.

<sup>6</sup> On the readers of Philo's works in general, see R. McL. Wilson, 'Jewish literary propaganda' in *Paganisme, Judaïsme, Christianisme* (Paris 1978), pp. 61–71. The question of Philo's gentile readership and of Jewish proselytism in general has been discussed

The second, the *De vita contemplativa*, is well known for its enthusiastic description of the life of the Therapeutae, worshippers of the true God who led a solitary existence not far from Alexandria, devoting themselves wholly to philosophy. These hermits, men and women, seemed to Eusebius of Caesarea so like Christian monks that he believed he could see in their establishment one of the first Christian monasteries. This interpretation was accepted, and for a long time it seemed so plausible that the authenticity of the Philonic treatise was questioned and it was seen as a literary imitation. Today no one any longer doubts its authenticity, but neither is there any question of the Therapeutae being Christians. They were a Jewish sect, similar to the Essenes and perhaps of the same origin, with resemblance but also with some differences.<sup>7</sup>

To this first group of writings may be added some fragments which Eusebius of Caesarea mentions as being extracts from two works which he refers to by the title of *Apologia for the Jews* and *Hypothetica*. The first fragment (*Apologia*) shows us how the Essenes in their piety practise the virtues of sociableness and humanity, a fact which refutes the accusations of misanthropy and of self-segregation laid against the Jews. The other fragments (*Hypothetica*) contain an apologia for Moses, leader of the Exodus and legislator of the Jews, and can be compared with certain passages of the *Against Apion* of Flavius Josephus.

(b) Philo certainly intended to address to the Gentiles the treatises generally grouped under the heading of Expositions of the Law. It was supposed that, after reading the life of Moses, they would want to become acquainted with the Torah. Philo responds to their desire by introducing them to the Pentateuch, and he presents to them in succession – as Goodenough (*An Introduction to Philo Judaeus*, p. 35) correctly shows – first a cosmological introduction (the *De opificio*), then the people who

controversially in recent times, the present author's views on this topic, as presented in the following pages (see esp. pp. 8f, is shared by L. H. Feldman, 'Was Judaism a Missionary Religion in Ancient Times?' in M. Mor (ed.) *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation and Accommodation* (Lanham 1992), pp. 24–37 and, in greater detail, in *ibid.*, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton 1992), *ad loc.* and esp. 318f; the opposite view is put forward by M. Goodman, 'Jewish Proselytizing in the First Century' in J. Lieu, J. North and T. Rajak (eds.), *The Jews among Pagans and Christians* (London 1992), pp. 53–78, and Goodman, *Mission and Conversion* (Oxford 1994); also A. Hilhorst, 'Was Philo Read by Pagans? The Statement on Heliodorus in Socrates *Hist. Eccl.* 5.22', *SPhA* 4 (1992), 75–7 (concerning later pagan readers); E. Will, 'Philon et les prosélytes' in P. Goukowsky and C. Brixhe (eds.) *Hellénika symmikta* (Nancy 1991), pp. 151–68; E. Will and C. Orrieux, 'Prosélytisme juif?' *Histoire d'une erreur* (Paris 1992), esp. pp. 81–101.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. V. Nikiprowetzky, 'Le *De vita contemplativa* revisité' in *Sagesse et religion: colloque de Strasbourg (octobre 1976)* (Paris 1979), pp. 105–25.

embody the Law (*De Abrahamo*, *De Josepho*); then the general principles of the Law and the application of these principles in specific laws (*De specialibus legibus*); then the connections between the laws and moral virtues (*De virtutibus*); and finally the sanctions, rewards and punishments (*De praemiis* and *De execrationibus*).<sup>8</sup>

In the whole of this part of his work Philo's profoundly religious mind, his devotion to the Law and the universalism of his thought are seen at their best. In his eyes it is evident that the Mosaic Law has a universal meaning and value, it concerns not only the Jews, but all men, and it teaches a manner of conduct which befits every age and every country. The man who obeys the law of Moses is not only a good Jew, but a good citizen of the universe. This conviction of Philo was inspired by the Pentateuch: creation is a work of order, harmony and beauty; the cosmos is the image of the Logos and God himself; after the fall man must return to this order and beauty, that is, to the law of the universe or the law of nature; the patriarchs embodied this law until Moses gave us the written Law.

The *De opificio mundi* is a key treatise in the study of Philo's thoughts;<sup>9</sup> it can be seen in it how he is fundamentally guided by the biblical text, but also very consciously furnishes himself with ideas borrowed from Greek philosophy, as this appeared in the eclectic culture of the time. Platonism and Aristotelianism were combined with Stoicism; numerical symbolism, amongst other ideas, represents the tradition of Pythagoras. It is then as a philosopher and as a theologian that Philo examines and interprets the dual account of creation, as Genesis presents it, discusses the problem of time, the origin of the sexes and the fall of man. He concludes his treatise firmly by stating emphatically certain principles which undeniably rely on the Mosaic account of Creation, but which have also been explained in great detail in the preceding pages with the help of many philosophical ideas: the existence and unity of God; the creation of the world by God; the unity of the world; God's fatherly providence. These 'teachings', he tells us, are 'the finest and best there are . . . The man who has learnt these things . . . will live a life of happiness and perfect blessedness, marked by the teachings of piety and saintliness' (§§ 170–2).<sup>10</sup>

Of the series of biographies which showed the patriarchs as *living unwritten laws* (*De Decalogo* § 1; *De Abrahamo* § 5; etc.), only the *De Abrahamo*

<sup>8</sup> Cf. G. W. A. Thorne, 'The Structure of Philo's Commentary on the Pentateuch', *Dionysius* 13 (1989), 17–50.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. R. Radice *et al.*, *Filone di Alessandria. La filosofia Mosaica* (Milan 1987).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. T. H. Tobin, *The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation*, CBQ.MS 14, (Washington 1983); R. Radice, *Platonismo e creazionismo in Filone di Alessandria* (Milan 1989).

is left: the *De Isaaco* and the *De Jacobo* are lost. This triad showed the three ways of acquiring or possessing *virtue* (that is wisdom or true piety): study, nature and exercise. Abraham is the symbol of virtue as the fruit of instruction, but not without sharing the fruits of nature and exercise, for there is a *relationship* between these methods of acquiring wisdom, since the three patriarchs constitute *one house and one family*, all three loving God and being loved by him. Returning to the accounts in the Bible, Philo skilfully gives us, in turn, the literal and the spiritual or *allegorical* meaning of the migrations of Abraham, of his sojourn in Egypt, of the visit of the three angels, of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, of the sacrifice of Isaac, of Lot's quarrel, of the war against the kings of the East and finally of the death of Sarah. And so the *founder of the nation* becomes an example of perfect faith and an incarnation of the unwritten law, a true friend of God.

The treatise *De Josepho* does not call for idealization as do those of the three great patriarchs. It is clear that Philo wished to present here the model of a politician, or more precisely, the model of a prefect of Egypt: if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are typical of the wise man who influences the whole world which is governed by *upright reason*, Joseph is typical of the top civil servant who rules skilfully and wisely a country which is governed by its own particular laws; if he succeeded in this, it was because he was faithful to the voice of his conscience, unbiased, pure, devoted to good things which do not pass away, in a word, faithful to his God. The apologetic design of this fine short biography is quite evident; what it reveals to us of Philo's political views is equally important.

Having shown us the unwritten Law present in the cosmos and embodied in the great patriarchs, Philo next presents to us the written Law, which the Jews have received from none other than God Himself: that is the aim of *De Decalogo*. He begins by reminding us of the meaning of the Exodus and the wilderness, stages in a process of sanctification in preparation for the great Revelation. Then he answers certain questions concerning the scene at Sinai: what is the sense of the Decalogue? How must the expression *the voice of God* be interpreted, etc.? It is surprising that Philo did not include a restatement of the story of Scripture, as he did very ably in the case of many other biblical scenes; doubtless a respectful feeling of reserve prevented him from doing so. But he shows how the ten commandments, regulating our connection with God and men, are the general principles from which all individual precepts stem,<sup>11</sup> and he ends his treatise by underlining that this divine legislation is not connected

<sup>11</sup> On the decalogue in Philo, see: Y. Amir, 'Die zehn Gebote bei Philon von Alexandria', in *idem, Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums* . . . (Neukirchen 1983), pp. 131–63.



with any sanction, because God 'wanted people to choose the greatest good, not unwillingly or yielding to that foolish counsellor, fear, but deliberately and by dint of an enlightened rational step' (§ 177). That was the right thing to say to the gentile Greeks. The Jews, on the other hand, knew well enough that the workers of iniquity were certain to be punished ultimately.

The natural complement to the preceding treatise was the presentation of particular laws (*De specialibus legibus*, in four books), the detailed legislation which so clearly marked off the Jewish communities and the individual Jew, and which was doubtless an object of astonishment to the pagans who surrounded them. Philo attempts with great care and sometimes with great imagination to show that particular laws are a reasonable application of the principles of the Decalogue, or else that a moral and spiritual meaning must be found for them. And so he reviews circumcision, worship in the temple, the priesthood, the tithe, sacrifices, vows, prayers, feasts, family relationships, inheritances, the Sabbath, marriage, sexual life, murders, etc. These four books have, in recent years, been the object of discussions among Philo scholars: must one see in them a reflection of the Greek and Roman legislation and procedure which existed in Egypt in the time of Philo?<sup>12</sup> Is it a commentary largely inspired by Rabbinic traditions?<sup>13</sup> How much Greek influence is there on these moral principles?<sup>14</sup> There is much for study here.

The final pages of *De specialibus legibus*, which deal with justice, are followed by *De virtutibus*, which deals with courage, the virtue of humanity, repentance and nobility. It does not contain a systematic study of virtues, although certain details in it recall the speculations of Greek ethics. For Philo, virtues are 'certain moral values, but, before that and more profoundly, metaphysical powers, whose source is in the power of God and whose end is to continue and imitate within the world the action of God upon the world' (R. Arnaldez). In the pages dealing with the virtue of humanity (*philanthropia*),<sup>15</sup> one can sense the concern the writer has to defend the Jews from being reproached for *misanthropia*, a commonplace feature of contemporary anti-Semitism. But still more noteworthy, on the subject of nobility of birth, is the argument which

<sup>12</sup> Cf. A. Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt: The Struggle for Equal Rights*, TSAJ 7 (Tübingen, 1985).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. G. Alon, 'On Philo's Halakha' in *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World* (Jerusalem 1977), 89–137; N. G. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus: His Universe of Discourse* (Frankfurt 1995).

<sup>14</sup> On Philo's views on several Greek ethical questions, see D. Winston, 'Philo's Ethical Theory' in *ANRW* II 21.1, 372–416.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. M. D. Veldhuizen, 'Moses: A Model of Hellenistic Philanthropia', *RefR* 38 (1985), 215–24.

rests on the Stoic principle of the nobility of the wise man and which claims equality for the proselytes with those born Jews; the latter are even inferior to the former if they do not add the merits of virtue and of practical faithfulness to their title at birth. The Law requires every man to be judged by his own conduct and not by that of his ancestors.

And thus the *De praemiis et de poenis* is linked quite naturally with the preceding text. Philo returns to the double triad of biblical personalities who are the archetypes of virtues recompensed by God: Enosh, Enoch and Noah; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He adds to them Moses, the great Philonic archetype of perfection, and contrasts them with Cain and Korah, types of the evildoers whom God punishes. At this point the text breaks off abruptly, the pace changes from that of the preceding pages and the reader meets, in all editions, a writing called *De benedictionibus et execrationibus*. E. R. Goodenough rightly suggests that this should be regarded as a sermon delivered before a popular audience: it is an exhortation, a very simple but eloquent one, to practise the Law, because God accords to those who do so success, material prosperity and health; just as he reserves for the unfaithful poverty, servitude and illness.

The *Exposition of the Law* was certainly intended in Philo's mind for the pagans, Greeks and Romans, but it was doubtless of value for the Jews of the Diaspora, whose faith was sometimes shaken and who fell into lax behaviour because of the atmosphere in which they lived. All these treatises were apologetic in a twofold way. Having little recourse to allegorical interpretation they are usually confined to the literal commentary and paraphrasing of the biblical text. However this does not prevent the author from continually singling out from amongst the events and characters of history the broad lines of the design of God the Creator and Provider, or from underlining the agreement that exists between the whole of his religion – doctrine, cultus and ethics – and Greek philosophy, or even from suggesting occasionally the incontestable superiority of the former.

(c) Since they were intended for his fellow Jews it seems that Philo's other writings are characterized by *allegorical* exegesis which draws out from each passage of the holy text not only its deep and objective meaning, accessible only by meditation, but also developments which are apparently more or less arbitrary and which can only be justified as the application and explanation of a theology and spirituality which are themselves inferred from Scripture as a whole. This exegesis, which is rather disconcerting in the beginning, is addressed to the initiated. This word must not be taken in too esoteric a sense; it simply means men who are in search of wisdom; but, for a Jew, this wisdom can only mean knowledge of God, of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and of the

ways that lead to him. To these believers, Philo proposes a spiritual doctrine, deeply rooted in the Jewish religion, in history and in biblical theology. The background of this allegorical interpretation is

the human drama, the internal struggle which opposes man to himself in opposing him to God . . . (this drama) is represented everywhere in the Bible, and Philo never fails to make it evident, every time he meets it or has a sense of its presence in a passage of the Sacred Book. This explains why the commentary is never restricted precisely to the episode which he takes as his theme, but evokes constantly other characters and other analogous scenes, which give resonance to the teaching which emerges and lets us – so to speak – hear its harmonics. Passages which often seem to the reader to be simple digressions are precisely a result of this method of composition.

(R. Arnaldez, introduction to *De posteritate, Les Œuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie* 6, Paris 1972)<sup>16</sup>

And so the severe judgements expressed by a good number of literary historians and numerous criticisms about the apparent disorder of composition in the works of Philo should not discourage the reader; they show that these astonishing writings have not yet been studied closely enough. If we take the trouble to read and reread them carefully, we find in them a learned composition, and even a coherent pattern of thought which bears witness to the religious maturity of Alexandrian Judaism at that time. No doubt, too, new methods of analysing texts, used with discernment on work which is essentially religious and which has been suggested as divine revelation, will soon be able to enlighten us more effectively on the writer's mode of composition and on his own reading of the Bible.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Undoubtedly the exegesis of Philo in more than one passage is related to that of the Rabbis: *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesim et in Exodum* prefigure the form of commentary which would later become the Midrash.

<sup>17</sup> On Scripture in Philo, see Y. Amir, 'Moses als Verfasser der Tora bei Philon' in *Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums . . .* (Neukirchen 1983), pp. 77–105; R. Arnaldez, 'La Bible de Philon d'Alexandrie' in Cl. Mondésert (ed.) *Le monde grec et la Bible* (Paris 1984), pp. 37–54; H. Burkhardt, *Die Inspiration Heiliger Schriften bei Philo von Alexandrien* (Giessen–Basel 1988); R. D. Hecht, 'Scripture and Commentary in Philo', *SBLSP* 20 (1981), 129–64; B. L. Mack, 'Philo Judaeus and Exegetical Traditions in Alexandria' in *ANRW* II 21.1, 227–71; V. Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l'écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie*, ALGHJ 11 (1977). On allegory in particular, see Y. Amir, 'Rabbinischer Midrasch und philonische Allegorie' in *Die Hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums . . .* (Neukirchen 1983), pp. 1107–118 and *ibid.* 'Die Übertragung griechischer Allegorien auf biblische Motive bei Philon', 119–28; J. D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley 1992); J. R. Sharp 'Philo's Method of Allegorical Interpretation', *EJTh* 2 (1984), 94–102, F. Siegert, 'Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic Style' in M. Sæbø (ed.) *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the History of its Interpretation* 1/1 (Göttingen 1996), pp. 130–98.

Without spending any time analysing the eighteen treatises which constitute this *allegorical* series we may note that they all deal with the Pentateuch and in fact only with Genesis, from chapters 2 to 31. Although, when Philo stops at an episode of the history of the patriarchs, he normally follows the text step by step and often word by word, it is immediately noticeable that, in the same passage, he occasionally omits on purpose a certain verse and that, among the treatises which followed, from *Legum allegoriae* to *De somniis*, there are groups of verses and even whole chapters missing. This absence stems partly from the lacunae which affect several treatises that have been handed down to us incomplete, partly from the loss of at least nine others and finally also partly from the writer's choice. This choice, which he nowhere explains to us, stems perhaps from the fact that he intended to comment elsewhere on these chapters and verses. Indeed he scarcely concerns himself with offering us a systematic exposition of a teaching which is basically quite coherent, in spite of some contradictions in the details; the unity he desires for each treatise appears in the image or figure which inspires the title, and they are themselves connected with some biblical scene or other: terrestrial paradise, the Cherubim, Cain and Abel offering their sacrifices, the tower of Babel, Noah, the departure of Abraham, etc.

The most important treatise of this series is without doubt the *Legum allegoriae* (this is the usual title), first of all because of its length, but also and above all because it gives a commentary on the second and third chapters of Genesis and constitutes a rich repository of Philo's religious ideas on the eternity of God and his transcendence, the creation of all beings and particularly of man, the non-eternity of the world and the creative act outside time, the profound unity of the cosmos and the hierarchy of its elements, on Providence, both transcendent and immanent, and on the direct action of grace in the depths of the soul – just to mention the most constant themes of this commentary. Through this religious cosmology, which is a sort of theodicy, Philo develops a teaching of an inner life and examines in succession the different attitudes of the soul in relation to God; innocence and sin, repentance, trust, personal responsibility and grace, progress toward the knowledge of God and the possession of the true wisdom, which is in the end the *vision of God*, by throwing off passions and vices and practising virtues, by a kind of meditation on the divine Logos and the union with him.

But here again it must be emphasized that this allegorical interpretation does not exclude the literal exegesis of the text: it would be a grave error to think that Philo evaporates historical facts or concrete precepts from the Bible to confine himself to a purely spiritual interpretation and to teach a religion which is strictly inner, non-temporal and without legal

observances. We shall discuss later what Philo thought about these and how he considered them as indispensable. From a historical point of view he maintains a continuity from Adam to the present.

In fact, although in the *Allegory of the Laws* Adam and Eve are treated entirely symbolically, as representative of the basic faculties of the human soul, in the *De opificio mundi* the ancestor of the human race is also presented as the leader of humanity (§§ 134–40). On to the chain of generations which goes from the first man to Moses, allegory and history are superimposed – and the further one goes, the more the human types studied become actualized in people who have really lived, so much so that at the end Moses is undoubtedly for Philo a historical being rather than an allegorical figure.

(R. Arnaldez, introduction to *De posteritate*, pp. 15–16)

After the *Legum allegoriae* (and there is no question here of chronological order, but simply of grouping together writings which are properly exegetical) Philo's allegorical interpretation extends to numerous treatises which certainly do not lack repetitions, but of which each one possesses its own originality; so much so that one does not weary of going from one to another, so varied are the literary methods, the aspects of teaching, the allusions to contemporary life and finally, the sentiments of the author. Philo, who only very rarely steps into the picture, gives rein in turn to his eloquence, his irony, his indignation, his lyrical or mystical fervour, the *impassioned tremor* of a master who wants to enlighten, convince and persuade, his skill in narrating or explaining, sometimes with an almost incisive clarity, sometimes with a richness of images and a verbal abundance which stun the reader.

It is in this brilliant form that Philo presents in turn the *De cherubim*, then the group of *De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini*, the *Quod deterius potiori insidiari solet*, in which Cain, the murderer of his brother, represents the internal conflict of every man who is divided between love of God and love of self, and the *De posteritate Caini*, a text full of ideas on the problem of evil in man; two treatises complete in themselves, the *De gigantibus* and the *Quod Deus sit immutabilis*, in which the writer avails himself of all his ordinary procedures of exegesis from literalism to allegorism without neglecting constant recourse to Greek philosophy in order to show us the abasement of man abandoned to himself and his recovery through God's infinite mercy; and a group of four short treatises devoted to a commentary on verses 20 and 21 of chapter 9 of Genesis, on Noah the vine-grower: the *De agricultura*, the *De plantatione*, the *De ebrietate* and the *De sobrietate*, which trace for us the advance of the soul towards wisdom and also emphasize in a negative way the consequences of blinding passions and ignorance. Next comes the *De confusione linguarum*, which is a com-

mentary on the account of the Tower of Babel. The character of Abraham, the man who relies completely on God, is the central point of four important treatises which are very rich in content: the *De migratione Abrahami*, the *Quis rerum divinarum heres* (concerning the descendants of the patriarchs), the *De congressu quaerendae eruditionis gratia*, which refers to relations between Abraham and Hagar, the *De fuga et inventione*, the title of which recalls the flight of Hagar and her meeting with the angel, and, finally, the *De mutatione nominum*, which comments on the changing of the names of Abram and Sarai as a symbol of a profound change in the soul.

The *De somniis* and the *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesim et in Exodum* are usually added to this series. The first of these treatises, now badly defective, is, judging by the first third of it, not the psychological analysis that its title suggests but yet another allegorical commentary on the dreams sent by God to Jacob, to Joseph, to the officials of the Pharaoh's court and to the Pharaoh himself. We note that Joseph, who was presented to us in the *In Flaccum* as the model of a good ruler, appears here, in the pursuit of the good, as a rather lukewarm person compared with Jacob, the noble ascetic. As for the *Quaestiones et solutiones*, it is a work of a particular literary genre, inherited from classical Greek philosophy (Aristotle), and often used after Philo by Christian writers up to the Middle Ages; the writer actually intends to give a fairly close commentary on the text of Scripture, but he presents it in the form of questions which he himself puts and which are in fact the ones he intends to deal with. This process, already somewhat artificial in Philo's time, was to become more so, as the writers of such *Quaestiones* forsook the true story of the text to copy their predecessors more or less slavishly. What characterizes this work of Philo's and earns it an important place is that he gives quite methodically, in each reply, first the literal and then the allegorical sense. The *Quaestiones in Genesim*, as they have reached us, are no doubt incomplete, and of those concerning Exodus, even Eusebius of Caesarea knew no more than two books out of five. Philo perhaps intended to pursue this method of commentary on the Pentateuch up to the end of Deuteronomy (*Quaestiones in Gen.* iv.123); but nothing gives us reason to believe he ever did.

(d) Finally, mention must be made of those treatises which have been called *philosophical*; they are characterized by the fact that Philo speaks in them as a philosopher and scarcely quotes Scripture or does not even mention it at all. Their authenticity has been discussed and denied more than once. Today, it seems, they are generally accepted; with good reason in the case of *De aeternitate mundi*, the *Alexander* (or *De animalibus*), the *De providentia* and the *Quod omnis probus liber sit*. In them Philo tackles some of

the great problems which could excite the cultivated minds of Alexandria; he treats them with little originality and only rarely and surreptitiously does he allow any religious preoccupation to appear. One may wonder if this is not the way in which such subjects were approached at the time; Philo may have used it following many others. Perhaps too they could have been essays or school exercises undertaken in his youth: Philo certainly received a careful education which included the study of eclectic philosophy, as befitted the times.<sup>18</sup> Each of these treatises deserves individual attention. Here it must suffice to say that the *Alexander* is a (fictitious?) dialogue between Philo and his brother Lysimachus about a work in which his nephew Alexander was trying to prove by examples that animals have intelligence – a subject already tackled by Aristotle. We possess only the first half of the *De aeternitate mundi*. We owe to it extracts from ancient works which have since disappeared. It shows us how Philo, in spite of his firm and constant adhesion to the teachings of Moses, was aware of those of the Greek philosophers. It is again in the form of a dialogue, with his nephew Alexander, that Philo develops, in the only Book left to us from the *De providentia*, his ideas on this subject, opposing Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics in turn to his arguments. Finally the *Quod omnis probus liber sit* (*That every good man is free*), of which we have only the second half, also takes up a Stoic scholarly theme, approached by arguments, classic examples and some scriptural texts; in particular it contains the famous section on the Essenes (§§ 75–91), which must be compared with the extract from an *Apology for the Jews* preserved by Eusebius of Caesarea.

#### CHRONOLOGY OF PHILO'S WORKS

This account has given some idea of the extent to which Philo was essentially a writer bound to Judaism, even though he expressed himself in Greek and his writings are steeped in Hellenistic culture. However, nothing has been said yet about the chronology of the treatises. This has been discussed frequently, but the best studies have not led to decisive results. For Philo's references to his own works are normally so vague that it is impossible to decide if allusions are being made to a certain passage, or whether he is indicating a treatise still to be written or one lately written. On the other hand it cannot be claimed that there is an evolution in his work from literal exegesis to allegorical exegesis, as certain critics have been tempted to assume. Why should Philo not have had in hand at the same time an exposition of his religion (*Life of Moses*, etc.) intended for cultured Greeks whom he knew well and frequented

<sup>18</sup> Cf. B. L. Mack, 'Decoding the Scripture: Philo and the Rules of Rhetoric' in *Nourished with Peace* (Chico, California 1984), pp. 81–115.



daily, and an allegorical commentary, worded in case it was needed for homilies in the synagogue, for the information of his co-religionists? It is clear at least that the *In Flaccum* and the *Legatio* were only composed in the very last years of his life, after the troubles in Alexandria in CE 38 and after his embassy to Rome (CE 40). It can be concluded that the *philosophical writings* are probably essays done in his youth, both on account of their clumsy composition and of their similarity to the type of scholastic exercises which were practised in the schools of rhetors and philosophers.

### III TRANSMISSION AND INFLUENCE OF PHILO'S WORKS

A few words must be said about the transmission and influence of Philo's works. Their Greek text must have been the object of a first recension in Alexandria and must have been kept in the city's famous library: in the second half of the second century. Clement of Alexandria is familiar with them, gets inspiration from them and even uses them (several hundred times), much more often than he cites them (four times).<sup>19</sup> They also exert an undisputed influence on Origen, whether he had already read them in Alexandria or later at Caesarea in Palestine. Eusebius, in the fourth century, is able to find the collected works in Caesarea, but already incomplete, in some disorder, and perhaps already revised again by a Jewish rabbi, at least with regard to biblical quotation and certain words in the text (*nomos, logos*).<sup>20</sup> It is there, too, that Bishop Euzoios had the manuscripts which came from Alexandria recopied, also in the fourth century. Then in the Mediterranean throughout the Middle Ages it was the Christians who preserved and read Philo's works: following Eusebius of Caesarea and St Jerome, they were convinced that Philo met Peter in Rome and that when he described the Essenes and the Therapeutae he was describing the first Christian monks, so that more than once mediaeval manuscripts gave the Alexandrian Jew the title of Bishop. It is, however, impossible to find the slightest trace of Christianity in his work, and the meeting in Rome is only a legend.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Cf. A. van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and his Use of Philo in the Stromateis: an Early Christian Reshaping of a Jewish Model*, VCSup 3, diss. Nijmegen (Leiden 1988); E. F. Osborn, 'Philo and Clement', *Prudentia* 19 (1987), 34–49.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. D. Barthélmy, 'Est-ce Hoshaya Rabbi qui censura le *Commentaire allégorique?*' in *Philon d'Alexandrie*, Colloque de Lyon (Paris 1967), pp. 45–79.

<sup>21</sup> It is undeniable that there are very striking parallels between the New Testament and in particular John and Paul on the one hand and Philo on the other, especially since the work of C. H. Dodd and W. D. Davies. But these are to be explained more by the participation of these authors in a common milieu, part Jewish and part Hellenistic, than by direct influences.

It is nonetheless certain that his work had a considerable influence on Christian writers, especially on their interpretation of the Old Testament. Ambrose, in Milan, read his actual texts and translated from them in his homilies or in his commentaries on the Scriptures;<sup>22</sup> Augustine was familiar with a Latin translation of Philo's work which must date from the fourth century.<sup>23</sup> It was probably in Constantinople in the sixth century that some of his work was translated into Armenian; this version alone has preserved the two books of the *De providentia* and some other treatises and what we have of the *Quaestiones*. In the Renaissance it was the Christians who took it upon themselves to re-edit the work. Today some Jews, too, are reading and studying Philo again, and their studies take their place among the numerous books devoted to the man and his writings and to the editing and translation of his works.<sup>24</sup>

How can this immense and lasting success which Philo had amongst Christians be explained? It is not enough to say that he offered them an acceptable interpretation of a certain number of texts of the Pentateuch. By this we do not mean that psychological or cosmological interpretation which is the extreme form of allegorization, but a spiritual intelligence which goes beyond the literal reading, penetrates to the heart of the holy text and seeks to seize the Word of God, the meaning of which is always greater than the form in which it is expressed. Certainly the Septuagint, Aristeas, Aristobulus and several others before Philo had made translations. But Philo, surpassing them greatly in the breadth and value of his undertaking, represents the first encounter in depth and the first substantial exchange between Jewish theology on the one hand and Greek culture on the other. And so, first of all, he was an example to follow for the Christians who were anxious to convert the civilization in which they were living, but also he was for them an excellent interpreter of the Old Testament, which Christianity inherited through its foundation in the

<sup>22</sup> Cf. E. Lucchesi, *L'usage de Philon dans l'oeuvre exégétique de Saint Ambroise: une Quellenforschung relative aux Commentaires d'Ambroise sur la Genèse*, ALGHJ 9 (Leiden 1977); H. Savon, *Saint Ambrose devant l'exégèse de Philon le Juif*, 2 vols., Etudes Augustiniennes (Paris 1977).

<sup>23</sup> On the Church Fathers and their relationship to Philo, see D. T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey*, CRINT III 3 (Assen–Minneapolis 1993) and D. T. Runia, *Philo and the Church Fathers: A Collection of Papers* (Leiden 1995).

<sup>24</sup> Apart from the number of Jewish scholars partaking in research on Philo, another indication of the increasing interest in Philo is: S. Belkin, *The Midrash of Philo: The Oldest Recorded Midrash Written in Alexandria by Philo (c. 20 BCE–45 CE) before the Formation of Tannaitic Literature. Vol. 1: Genesis II–XVII: Selected Portions from Philo's Questions and Answers and from his Other Writings, translated into Hebrew from the Armenian and Greek with a Commentary. Based upon Parallels from Rabbinic Literature*, ed. by E. Hurvitz (New York 1989); cf. N. G. Cohen, 'Review on S. Belkin, *The Midrash of Philo* vol. 1', *JSJ* 23 (1992) 100–5.

Jewish milieu, because he spoke (brilliantly) their language and used the ideas of his day.

#### IV HELLENISM AND JUDAISM IN THE WORKS OF PHILO

Today when the study of Hellenistic thought and philosophy at the beginning of the Roman Empire reveals more clearly the syncretism and eclecticism which are characteristic of this epoch, we can claim that Philo was not only a great authority on the philosophy of his time but even one of its representatives, alongside the slightly earlier Cicero and the slightly later Plutarch. There were numerous meeting-points between the philosophy of his day and Jewish theology on the most important questions: the existence and nature of God, divine transcendence and immanence, the creation of the world and of man, the dual nature of man, the pre-existence and survival of the soul, the intermediary between God and man and the cosmos, relations between the soul and God, not to mention questions concerning truth and ethics. It is important to see in detail how often, sometimes with discernment, sometimes clumsily, but always guided by the necessity of his biblical commentary and not by an arbitrary eclecticism, Philo borrowed Greek concepts which serve to explain what is the object of his faith and to express it to his readers. He does this unhesitatingly and with confidence, for he is convinced of the superiority of his beliefs over the teaching of the pagan philosophers, and moreover is sure, as were his predecessors, that the most brilliant Greek thinkers, including Plato, who is his master almost as much as Moses is, educated themselves through the school of Moses, and that their loftiest thoughts are already familiar to the disciples of the great prophet. He borrows from all the schools: those of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics and even from the Epicureans and the Sceptics.<sup>25</sup>

Since the sciences constituting the cycle of education help one to grasp philosophy, similarly philosophy helps one to acquire wisdom . . . and wisdom is the knowledge of things human and divine and their causes.

(*De congressu*, § 79)

<sup>25</sup> On the relationship between Philo and the philosophy of his time: R. A. Horsley, 'The Law of Nature in Philo and Cicero', *HTbR* 71 (1978), 35–59; H. A. Moehring, 'Moses and Pythagoras: Arithmology as an Exegetical Tool in Philo' in E. A. Livingstone (ed.) *Studia Biblica 1: Sixth International Congress on Biblical Studies*, JSOTS 11 (1979), 105–8; T. H. Tobin, *The creation of man: Philo and the history of interpretation*, CBQMS 14 (Washington 1983); D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, PhilAnt 44 (Leiden 1986); R. Radice, *Platonismo e creazionismo in Filone di Alessandria* (Milan 1989).

Now, for a practising Jew, this knowledge is the natural accompaniment of the Scriptures and the Law.

But the point is that Philo is above all a practising Jew: from the bottom of his heart he is this, and although he is profoundly affected by Hellenism, his mind is completely convinced of the truth and superiority of his religion. If he resorts to philosophical language, he does so in order to express his theology more clearly, to communicate his faith. He holds the faith of his family and his community: on several occasions he alludes to the teaching of the elders, which he has heard in the synagogue; he made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, 'in order to pray and make sacrifices there', he says (*De providentia*, II § 107),<sup>26</sup> he has read and pondered the works of Moses, which he considers as revelation and inspiration in their very words; he is familiar with the Pentateuch but he is aware too of the other books of the Old Testament, although he only rarely quotes them. He read them in the Septuagint, since he knew very little Hebrew,<sup>27</sup> but he considered this version just as much dictated by God. His heroes are Abraham and, above all, Moses. Apart from these, Philo scarcely quotes any other name in Jewish history.

Philo, who, because of his fortune and his family's rank, was involved in the fashionable aspects of the life of the city and was obliged to concern himself with financial and perhaps even commercial business, always took care to balance an active life with a time reserved for study and meditation and even religious contemplation. The fervour with which he describes to us the life of the Therapeutae or the Essenes reveals his taste for meditation and contemplation, and it is possible that he may have shared for a time the life of the Therapeutae.<sup>28</sup> The few passages of his work in which he lets personal confidences slip out give evidence of his inner life.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Y. Amir, 'Die Wallfahrt nach Jerusalem in Philons Sicht', in *Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums* . . . (Neukirchen 1983), pp. 52–64; A. Kasher (א. קשר), 'מית של פילון, (א. קשר) מית של פילון, 'מטרופוליס' בתודעתו הלאו ירושלים כ' (Jerusalem as "metropolis" in Philo's national consciousness'), *Cathedra* 11 (1979), 45–56; H.-J. Klauck, 'Die heilige Stadt: Jerusalem bei Philo und Lukas', *Kairos* 28 (1986), 129–51.

<sup>27</sup> Some titles on Philo's knowledge of Hebrew: L. L. Grabbe, *Etymology in Early Jewish Interpretation: The Hebrew Names in Philo*, BJS 115 (Atlanta 1988); V. Nikiprowetzky, 'Moses palpans vel liniens: On some Explanations of the Name Moses in Philo of Alexandria' in F. E. Greenspahn, E. Hilgert, B. L. Mack (eds.), *Nourished with peace* (Chico California 1984), pp. 117–42; S. Sandmel, 'Philo's Knowledge of Hebrew: The Present State of the Problem', *StPh* 5 (1978), 107–12.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. J. Riaud, 'Quelques réflexions sur les Thérapeutes d'Alexandrie à la lumière de *De vita Mosis* II 67' in D. T. Runia, M. D. Hay and D. Winston (eds.), *Heirs of the Septuagint* (Atlanta 1991), 184–91. D. M. Hay throws some doubts on Philo's implicit admiration for the Therapeutae in 'Things Philo Said and Did not Say about the Therapeutae', *SBLSP* 31 (1992), 673–84.

One cannot but realize too that he was a faithful observer of Jewish religious practices when one reads a page such as the one from *De migratione* (§ 89–90), quoted here in its entirety:

Some men understand that the laws, literally expressed, are symbols of intellectual realities; they show themselves over-scrupulous in analysing the symbol, but neglect the letter of the law, which they scorn. I willingly reproach them for the laxity they allow themselves. For one should apply oneself at the same time to the scrupulous pursuit of the invisible content and to irreproachable stewardship of the visible content. Now, in fact, they behave as if they were living all alone in the desert, or as if they had become disembodied souls.

This devotion to action in his religion doubtless prepared him for the step which crowned his career: the embassy to Rome in 40, to Caligula. To accept the leadership of it was brave and even dangerous. The city of Alexandria was experiencing at that time a fever of anti-Semitism which had led, in the course of the previous months, to all kinds of harassment inflicted on the Jews, tolerated and no doubt encouraged by the prefect Flaccus: public humiliation of notable people in the community, mocking, insults, looting, expulsions, tortures and massacres. Soon, again with the approval of Flaccus, the rioters set up effigies of the emperor in those synagogues which had not been destroyed or sacked. This was too much. The Jews of Alexandria decided to send a delegation to Rome and asked Philo to be its head. In Italy, the ambassadors had to bide their time for months awaiting an imperial audience. Then they were received by the emperor in a coarse, off-hand manner and were finally dismissed after he had referred to them as *wretches and fools*. One can imagine how Philo, who was already an old man, a man known for the dignity of his life, his connections and his culture, reacted and what his feelings were when confronted by this mad Caligula and the members of the opposing delegation: one Apion, a conceited pagan, a pretended scholar, and one Isodorus, a vulgar and unscrupulous demagogue. In the end, this embassy ended in failure, for it seems that the emperor, when he abandoned his plan to have his statue put in the Temple of Jerusalem, was yielding to the influence of his friend Herod Agrippa, rather than to the demands of Philo and the Jewish delegation. These men had fulfilled their difficult mission in spite of the most formidable problems. They were ready, as many of their co-religionists had been, to be condemned by the tyrant: they were convinced that ‘a most glorious death in order to safeguard our laws is itself a way of life’ (*Legatio*, § 192).

Philo’s fidelity to Judaism was neither narrow nor petty, and he has perceived admirably indeed the universal elements in the teachings of the Bible: God is the creator of the whole universe and of all beings, his Law

is reasonable and capable of guiding all men, whoever they may be, his people have a universal mission and even a responsibility as priestly mediator, through prayer and offerings, for the salvation of humanity. Philo is deeply convinced that his religion can and should be that of the whole world. It is with this aim that he constantly sought to find in the sacred text what is most religious in Greek philosophy, sometimes being readily satisfied with a superficial similarity or even an arbitrary interpretation.

At this time Jewish monotheism was encountering a diffuse monotheism in pagan circles.<sup>29</sup> The reason why we have difficulty in (and are sometimes prevented from) distinguishing what Philo borrows from Greek philosophy and what he owes to his own religion is that we have insufficient knowledge of both Hellenism and Judaism of the time. Thus, in an endeavour to place Philo within Judaism, he has been linked in turn with the Sadducees and the Pharisees. But what in fact distinguished those groups at that particular time? If the extraordinary discoveries of Qumran had not been made, what might we understand of the descriptions which Philo gives us of the Essenes and the Therapeutae? It is probable that Alexandrian Judaism was strongly affected by Hellenism, and it is not likely that Philo was an absolutely original innovator; he was part of a movement already familiar with Hellenism. But this double affiliation, which he did not hide, which on the contrary he emphasized with all the vigour of a great mind and the impetus of a profoundly religious soul, was to be fatal to him in the generations of Jews to come. It is partly because of this that Judaism subsequently neglected him. It did so the more easily since the Christians appropriated his work without hesitation, just as they had from the beginning of their Church adopted the Septuagint for their reading of the Old Testament.

What is curious however is that the Christians (at least those of the early generations as they expressed themselves through apologists) reproached the pagans unceasingly for their polytheism; while Philo, although he asserted that only the supreme, unique God could be adored, only rarely attacked such polytheism, and he even seems to see in the pagan world that surrounded him a measure of monotheism. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that his attention was focused on the philosophy of his time rather than on the religious practices of the masses.

In any case, God is not only the Supreme Being who created the universe, the principle of everything, but also a father, protector and providence to his children, compassionate and merciful, devoted to his

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Y. Amir, 'Die Begegnung des biblischen und des philosophischen Monotheismus als Grundthema des jüdischen Hellenismus', *EvTh* 38 (1978), 2–19.

people, *those who see God* and who are *loved by God*. This can be observed throughout his works, even in the most abstract and philosophical texts.<sup>30</sup>

## V PHILO AS SPIRITUAL MASTER

Philo is indeed a spiritual master and even a mystic.<sup>31</sup> After many studies which have tried to emphasize the main features of his thought, what Bréhier, a philosophical historian, had already written in 1908 can still be repeated: ‘The main idea is that of the relations of the soul with God. These relations are not the object of philosophical theory with limited and definite ideas: they are the actual expression of the intimate experience of the author.’<sup>32</sup> One of the constant aspects of his thoughts is the description of the stages that lead the soul to God. For this reason he is a master of the inner life. He always takes care to balance the active and the contemplative life.<sup>33</sup> Though he does not wish the quest for the latter to be motivated by egoism and laziness, he makes it the supreme aim: ‘It is fine to struggle to the end of an active life and then to have access to a life of contemplation . . . (*De fuga* § 36), for it produces an ‘unadulterated joy’ (*ibid.*, § 176). It seems probable that, from his youth, Philo was able to devote months, if not years (perhaps with the Therapeutae) to this life of study and meditation, and that he had to give it up to take up public responsibilities. He describes an interruption of this kind, but a more tragic one than any before at the beginning of the third book of *Special Laws*, where the reference is perhaps to the embassy to Rome.

A famous passage from the *Legum allegoriae* (II, § 85) testifies eloquently to the fact that wherever he was, he kept the habit of meditation and prayer:

Often indeed when I have left family, friends and country, and gone into the desert to think about something worthy of contemplation, I have gained nothing from it; my intellect, distracted or seized by passion, would keep turning to other things. And yet, sometimes in a crowd of thousands of men I am made tranquil in my thoughts: God has scattered the throng that is in my soul and has taught me that it is not different places which make one well or ill disposed, but God himself who moves and leads the chariot of the soul where he chooses.

It is God, Philo goes on, who can directly quench the thirst of the soul and nourish it with his manna.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. D. Zeller, *Charis bei Philon und Paulus* (Stuttgart 1990).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. D. Winston, ‘Was Philo a Mystic?’, *SBLSPS* 13 (1978), 1.161–180.

<sup>32</sup> *Les idées philosophiques et religieuses de Philon d’Alexandrie* (Paris 1950), p. 311.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. D. Winston, *Logos and mystical theory in Philo of Alexandria* (Cincinnati 1985); and *idem*, ‘Philo on the Contemplative Life’ in A. Green (ed.) *Jewish spirituality: from the Bible through the Middle Ages* (New York 1986), 198–231.



We can already see in a similar text that it is not only a question of a simple ascetic exercise, of pure intellectual, even pious reflection, but of a mystical state where the soul's own effort no longer counts for anything, but where it is the gift of God, his *grace* (Philo uses the word in this sense) which invades the soul, overwhelms it with joy, grants it a *vision* of truth, in short manifests an action of quite a different quality from the natural opening out of moral virtues.<sup>34</sup> That is what the *changing of names*, a divine prerogative, symbolizes according to Philo, and this explains the passage in the *Quis heres* (§§ 68–70) in which the soul appears more passive than active and in which the expressions, if not the thoughts, are connected with a tradition of the religious philosophy of the Greeks:

Who then will be the heir? It is not the way of thinking which remains of its own accord in the prison of the body, but that which has been loosened from its chains, has been set free and gone outside the walls and, so to speak, left itself behind: *he who comes out of you*, he says, *shall be your heir* (Gen. 15:4). If then, my soul, any desire to inherit the good thing of God enters you, leave not only *your country*, that is, the body, and *your kinsmen*, that is, the senses and *your father's house*, speech, but fly yourself, come out of yourself, like the possessed and corybants, seized by a Bacchic frenzy, transported by God in a sort of prophetic enthusiasm. For the mind which is filled by God and which is no longer within itself, but is excited and almost maddened by heavenly love, led by the One who truly is and drawn towards him, preceded by the truth which removes all obstacles so that the soul may walk on a smooth road, this mind has the inheritance.

## VI PHILO AND POLITICS

Philo was not only a spiritual person and a mystic: he was a politician and, it could be said, a political thinker. It must be emphasized first that Philo, an intellectual and mystic, considers politics an essentially impure occupation – in which he is more a disciple of Plato than of Moses. But he also considers it a difficult activity. We see Philo in the *De somniis* attacking at length that same Joseph whom he had, in the biography *De Josepho*, made the model of the good governor, and we see him emphasize the weaknesses which show Joseph to be a dangerous governor, the qualification of a bad governor being reserved for Flaccus. When dealing with this governor (be he dangerous or bad) one must employ all the resources of prudence and skill: Philo is advising his fellow citizens to behave towards princes and civil servants like Joseph as he himself was behaving towards Flaccus and the Romans.

<sup>34</sup> H. Chadwick, 'Philo and the Beginnings of Christian Thought' in A. H. Armstrong (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge 1967), 133–94; J. Laporte, *La doctrine eucharistique chez Philon d'Alexandrie* (Paris 1972).

Have they not then lost their senses, are they not mad, those who strain themselves to display inopportune candour, daring to defy in words and deeds kings and sometimes tyrants? Do they not realize that they not only have their neck under the yoke, like beasts of burden, but that the same chain holds their whole bodies prisoner, their souls, wives, children, fathers, mothers, their numerous relatives and the vast circle of their friends; that the one who holds the reins can with the greatest of ease spur on, push, hold back, stop by the mane and apply with whatever force he pleases any treatment whatever? That is why they are stabbed, whipped, mutilated, enduring all the tortures which pitiless cruelty inflicts before death and finally are led away and killed.

That is the reward for inopportune candour, a candour, moreover, which is not such in the eyes of sensible judges, but which is foolishness, madness, incurable extravagance. What do you say? Would anyone who saw that the weather could not possibly be worse, that there was a violent wind rising, that a violent hurricane was raging and that the sea was stormy, when it was advisable to stay in the harbour, would anyone such leave the harbour and take to the open sea?

(*De somniis* II §§ 83–5)

No one sensed better than Philo that the position of the Alexandrian Jews, and hence his own too, was delicate, for this community enjoyed privileges which, in their circumstances, aroused much jealousy amongst the Egyptians.<sup>35</sup> Although, apart from a few exceptions, the Jews had neither Roman nor even Alexandrian citizenship, they could live *according to the traditions of their forefathers*, with their synagogues and with a measure of autonomy which separated them from foreigners and in particular gave them the right to assemble together. Another cause of difficulty was added to this first one: this was the social and above all the religious tie which bound the Jewish community in Alexandria to the Jewish people in Palestine, and created for both a very special situation within the Roman Empire.<sup>36</sup>

In spite of this, Philo's effective loyalty towards the might of Rome and its representatives, as long as they respected Jewish traditions, must be emphasized. In accordance with his political ideas, Philo saw no problem in the fact that particular laws of the Empire should be added to the unique Law, the Law of God, of nature and of Moses, which could and should rightly govern the whole of humanity. Since the necessity of time and place gave rise to particular laws, nothing prevented the Jews

<sup>35</sup> Cf. note 3, also R. Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics: Roman Rule and Hellenistic Judaism', *ANRW* II 21.1, 417–553.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. B. H. Amaru, 'Land Theology in Philo and Josephus' in L. Hoffman (ed.) *The Land of Israel: Jewish Perspectives* (Notre Dame 1986), pp. 65–93; B. Schaller, 'Philon von Alexandrien und das "Heilige Land"' in G. Strecker, *Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit: Jerusalem Symposium 1981 der Hebräischen Universität und der Georg-August Universität* (Göttingen 1983), pp. 172–87.

from accepting them, provided that the people of God could observe their *special laws*. Philo's writings do indeed suggest the interpretation of his work which Goodenough proposes: Philo felt and acknowledged, before Augustine, the co-existence of the two cities.<sup>37</sup>

In any case Philo presents the political organization of the Jewish people, that is to say of Moses, as profoundly original and superior to all others. In order to prove this, it was sufficient to say that it comes from God. But he added yet another proof: this political constitution brings together all the advantages of the best Greek regimes, those of the monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, and it is, in his eyes, the ideal state, one in which each individual recognizes himself subject only to God and to the Law. The king and the high priest have all their authority from the Law and are only instruments of its interpretation and its application. Moreover, this unique authority only authorizes the existence of the one single Temple (*De specialibus legibus* I § 67).

However, Philo remains conscious that this politico-religious organization of the Jews sets them apart in the midst of the nations and that this is perhaps the most real cause of anti-Semitism, which was already rife in Roman Egypt. He sees the solution to this eternal problem in the coming of the Messianic era, but for him there is no question of a conquering, still less of a warlike, Messianism: it is to be the adoption of the Law by the whole universe, the conversion of humanity to the God of the Jews and to that religion, the universalism of which he has often emphasized.<sup>38</sup> This, nevertheless, could not happen before Israel became the *true Israel*, that is one which is sincerely and totally faithful to the teaching of Moses, nor before the day when all men wholeheartedly seek out virtue and wisdom. That is the discreet and essentially spiritual Messianism of Philo.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Cf. J. R. Martín, 'Philo and Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XIV 28 and XV: Some Preliminary Observations' in D. T. Runia, M. D. Hay and D. Winston (eds.) *Heirs of the Septuagint* (Atlanta 1991), 283–294; J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: a Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden 1991).

<sup>38</sup> Wherever he speaks of it, Philo does not envisage the Promised Land as an inheritance for Israel as much as in terms of a sapiential interpretation, that is in a symbolic fashion as participation in spiritual blessings and the Divine Wisdom. He never seems to have alluded to the physical earth.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. U. Fischer, *Eschatologie und Jenseitserwartung im hellenistischen Diasporajudentum* (Berlin–New York 1978); R. D. Hecht, 'Philo and Messiah' in J. Neusner, W. S. Green and E. S. Frerichs (eds.) *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* (Cambridge 1987), pp. 139–69.

## CHAPTER 28

## JOSEPHUS (CE 37–c. 100)

## I LIFE

Few scholars have been neutral in their judgement of the life of Josephus. In the nineteenth century there was an almost unanimous condemnation of him by Jews and Christians alike, a major exception being the Jewish scholar Hamburger,<sup>1</sup> who regarded Josephus' own steadfast adherence to Judaism and his able literary defence of its tenets as providing sufficient ground for pardoning his supposed wrongs to the Jewish people.

Aside from Josephus' own autobiography and the references to his career in the *Jewish War*, the sources for his life are slight. Among pagan writers Suetonius (*Vespasian* 5.6), Appian (fragment 17) and Dio Cassius (LXVI.1) mention Josephus' prediction that Vespasian would become emperor; and Porphyry (*De abstinentia et esu animalium* iv.11) cites Josephus' discussion of the three philosophical schools. Perhaps the silence of the Talmud about him is due to the fact that he was an 'outsider', though Brüll<sup>2</sup> has attempted to find a hidden reference to him in a minor Talmudic tractate (*Der. Er. Rab.* 5, *Pirke Ben Azzai* 3) which mentions a visit of several sages to a nameless (to be sure, pagan) philosopher in Rome seeking his intercession with the Emperor Domitian.

We know nothing of Josephus' life until the age of fourteen, when, according to Josephus (*Vita* 8), the chief priests and leaders of the city of Jerusalem constantly resorted to him for information concerning the laws. This is, however, a traditional motif in biographies, as we see, for example, in Luke 2:46–7. At about the age of sixteen (*Vita* 10–12) Josephus decided to gain experience in the three sects (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes) in order to select the best; but this procedure is, again, a common motif in this period, as we see in the cases of Nicolaus of Damascus, Apollonius of Tyana, Justin and Galen, and may therefore not correspond to reality. There is some confusion in the text, because Josephus

<sup>1</sup> J. Hamburger, 'Josephus Flavius', *Real-Encyclopädie für Bibel und Talmud*, Abt. 2 (Strelitz 1883), pp. 502–10.

<sup>2</sup> N. Brüll, 'Eine Talmudische Nachricht über Josephus', *Jahrbücher für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* 4 (1879), 40–2.

(*Vita* 12) proceeds to say that he became a devoted disciple of a certain hermit (not necessarily an Essene) named Bannus for three years. He was now, he says, in his nineteenth year; but since he spent three years with Bannus, this would leave no time for the three sects.

In 64 Josephus (*Vita* 13) says that he went to Rome (there is no statement who sent him) to help deliver some priestly friends from bondage. Thanks to the aid of a Jewish actor at court named Aliturus and of Nero's mistress Poppaea Sabina, who was a 'sympathizer' with Judaism (*Ant.* xx.195), he succeeded. In addition to the release of the captives Josephus also received some gifts; and one wonders whether there was not some connection between the extraordinary achievement of the young man and a promise, explicit or implicit, to defuse the incipient revolution once he would return to Jerusalem. Two years later, according to *Bell.* (ii.562–8), the revolutionaries, after their rout of the Roman governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, brought over to their side, whether by persuasion or force, such pro-Romans as still remained and appointed additional generals, including Josephus, who was put in charge of the Galilean sector. In the *Vita*, however, which tells the story at greater length, Josephus asserts that he, together with the chief priests and leading Pharisees, pretended to agree with the views of the revolutionaries, while actually hoping that Cestius would in the meantime quell the revolution and that the leaders in Jerusalem, who favored pacification, dispatched him with two other priests to Galilee to induce the terrorists to fight only in self-defence. Inasmuch as Josephus was so young, being not yet thirty, and had had no previous military experience, it seems remarkable that he was chosen as commander in the area where the Romans were most likely to attack first; and it seems likely that he was selected more because of his prominent genealogy than because of his capacity for military leadership. The two versions may, of course, represent two stages in Josephus' activities.

One wonders why Josephus, once appointed, did not undertake guerrilla warfare, as his ancestors, the Maccabees, had done so successfully more than two centuries earlier, or why he did not retreat with his army to Jerusalem, which he knew was by far the best fortified of all the Jewish strongholds, rather than shut himself up in the tactically hopeless trap of Jotapata. The suspicion is strong that Josephus was playing a double role; and indeed he says, in an extraordinarily candid passage (*Vita* 72), that when John of Gischala had asked for the imperial corn in Galilee, so that he might use the income with which to construct defences for Gischala, Josephus refused, saying that he intended to reserve the corn 'either for the Romans or for my own use'. Again, the fact that in the suicide pact with his men at Jotapata Josephus somehow managed to be among the last two has led to suspicions that he arranged the lots. Indeed, the

Slavonic version (*Bell.* III.391), which hardly seeks to discredit Josephus, states quite explicitly that ‘he counted the numbers with cunning and thereby misled them all’. Perhaps Josephus, guided by an inner voice, was so deeply imbued with a sense of mission to record these events for posterity that he felt that he had to survive in order to fulfil this task. Moreover, in view of the tremendous success of the Jews during this period in winning converts, he may have looked upon the revolt as ruining the prospect of winning the Roman Empire to Judaism. In addition, we may note that while some of the *people* in Jerusalem condemned him as a traitor, he was apparently never censured by the government.

It has often been pointed out that the great Pharisaic leader Joḥanan ben Zakkai similarly sought peace with the Romans and likewise prophesied (*b. Gittin* 56a–b) that the general Vespasian would become emperor. Undoubtedly, as we may gather from the appearance of the revolutionary leader Menahem in royal robes in the Temple (*Bell.* II.444), there was a Messianic basis to the revolt against Rome, as there was to be in the revolt of Lucius Andreas against Trajan in 115–17 and in that of Bar Kokhba against Hadrian in 132–5; but instead of applying the Messianic prophecy to the Jews, Josephus and Joḥanan apparently applied it to Vespasian, just as Cyrus in Isa. 45:1 is called Messiah. On the other hand, Joḥanan did not seek any personal rewards, whereas Josephus received from Titus a tract of land outside Jerusalem, some sacred books, Roman citizenship, lodging in the former palace of Vespasian, and a pension.

## II WORKS

### A THE JEWISH WAR (*BELLUM JUDAICUM*)

Josephus’ first work, his *Jewish War*, was originally composed in Aramaic (*Bell.* I.3). With the help of assistants (*Against Apion* I.50) he rewrote (rather than translated) the work in Greek.<sup>3</sup> The view that the Slavonic version was made directly from the lost Aramaic version has now been disproved by Meščerskij,<sup>4</sup> who, through a careful linguistic analysis, has concluded that the translation was made directly from Greek.

The usual date for the *Bellum*, 75–9, has now been challenged by Cohen,<sup>5</sup> who notes that the black picture of Caecina (*Bell.* IV.634–40) shows that the work was published after 79, when Caecina was executed

<sup>3</sup> See G. Hata, ‘Is the Greek Version of Josephus’ *Jewish War* a Translation or a Rewriting of the First Version?’ *JQR* NS 66 (1975–6), 89–108.

<sup>4</sup> N. A. Meščerskij, *Istorija iudeskoj vojny Josifa Flavija* (Moscow and Leningrad 1958).

<sup>5</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as a Historian* (Leiden 1979).

for an alleged plot against the Emperor Titus, since Caecina stood too high in favour with Vespasian and since Josephus was too much a servile flatterer to adopt an independent position. Cohen also notes that Book VII gives much more prominence and favour to Domitian, and he concludes that it is a Domitianic addition; Morton and Michaelson,<sup>6</sup> in their statistical study, confirm that Book VII differs markedly from the other books of the *Bellum* in style.

For the first part of the war, when Josephus himself was a participant, it seems likely that he relied chiefly upon his own observations; for the latter part he apparently relied primarily upon the memoirs of Vespasian and Titus (*Vita* 342, 358; *Against Apion* 1.50). Despite his statement, traditional in prooemia, that previous accounts had been inaccurate or prejudiced or rhetorical, his own work has been rightly suspected on precisely these grounds, especially since his expressed purpose (*Bell.* III.108) in writing was to deter others from revolting. Indeed, the very title, *Concerning the Jewish War*, shows that Josephus is writing from the standpoint of the Romans. Tacitus, we may note, although manifestly anti-Jewish, gives an entirely different picture of the war, portraying it as a national rebellion rather than as the work of a few thugs. Josephus ignores mention of the facts that many Jews, not only of the Roman Empire but also beyond the Euphrates, aided the revolutionaries (Dio 66.4.3) and that some Roman soldiers even deserted to the Jews (Dio 66.5.4). There is good reason to prefer the statement of the fourth-century Christian historian Sulpicius Severus, supported by the implicit statement in the proem of Valerius Flaccus and by the Talmud (*b. Gittin* 56b), that Titus demanded the destruction of the Temple, rather than Josephus' statement (*Bell.* VI.241) that Titus urged that the Temple be spared.

Moreover, the messianic goal of the rebellion indicated by Tacitus (*Histories* v.13) and Suetonius (*Vespasian* 4) and by Simon bar Giora's coins is almost completely suppressed by Josephus, except for *Bell.* VI.312–15, presumably because he wished to represent the war as an action of a fanatical element in order to conceal the general Jewish hostility to the Romans and to exculpate the Jews as a whole in the eyes of the Roman administration. In addition, as Thackeray<sup>7</sup> has noted, Josephus' blackened portraits of the revolutionaries Simon bar Giora and John of Gischala are suspiciously modelled, to some extent, on that of Catiline by Cicero. On the other hand, Farmer's theory<sup>8</sup> that Josephus has deliberately ignored a

<sup>6</sup> A. Q. Morton and S. Michaelson, 'Elision as an Indicator of Authorship in Greek Writers', *Revue, Organisation Internationale pour l'Etude des Langues Anciennes par Ordinateur* 3 (1973), 33–56.

<sup>7</sup> H. St J. Thackeray, *Josephus the Man and the Historian* (New York 1929), pp. 119–20.

<sup>8</sup> W. R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus: An Inquiry into Jewish Nationalism in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York 1956).



connection between the revolutionaries and the Maccabees has not won general acceptance, since the Maccabees rebelled because of the suppression of the Jewish religion, whereas the Jews in the time of the revolt against Rome had religious liberty but sought to obtain political liberty.

The most spectacular case where archaeology has enabled us to check Josephus' accuracy is the episode at Masada. Before the discoveries of Yadin in 1963–5, scholars had tended to be sceptical about Josephus' account, since he himself was not present and presumably derived it from the Romans, who in turn had learned of the mass suicide from a woman who had survived in an underground conduit. The speeches by Eleazar ben Jair, with passages almost taken verbatim from Plato about the relation of the body and the soul, seem to be the work of Josephus' scriptorium in the style of ancient historians. It did not seem likely that brave fighters would commit suicide rather than fight to the last man, especially since suicide is so severely frowned upon by Jewish law. Yadin,<sup>9</sup> however, concluded that the discoveries confirmed Josephus' reliability as a historian. In particular, the discovery of twenty-five skeletons of the defenders, of eleven ostraca (one of which contained the name of Ben Jair, the commander of the Sicarii at Masada) with names which may well be the lots used to determine who would kill the others, of sherds which may have been used by the defenders in rationing food, of sherds connected with the tithes, and of two ritual baths and a synagogue appeared to confirm Josephus' credibility. The discoveries have also, however, raised a number of questions. Thus Josephus says that Herod's palace was on the western slope, whereas it is actually on the northern slope, that the pillars of Herod's palace were cut from a single block, whereas those found by Yadin had been made up of several sections fitted together and then covered with stucco so that the joints would not be seen, and that the food of the defenders was preserved to prove to the Romans that the defenders had not been driven to suicide by hunger, whereas Yadin found that some of it had been preserved but that part of it had been burnt. In particular, the discovery of a sectarian scroll of liturgies based on the peculiar calendar used by the Dead Sea sect at Qumran would suggest some connection between the sect and the Sicarii not mentioned by Josephus. It is perhaps this sectarianism which will at once explain the Talmud's silence about the defenders, the fact that they engaged in a raid (*Bell.* iv.402) on En Gedi on Passover (which was apparently not Passover according to their sectarian calendar), and their differing view on suicide. We may conclude that, in view of Josephus' bitter denunciation of the Sicarii elsewhere, the incredulosity at their

<sup>9</sup> Y. Yadin, *Masada: Herod's Fortress and the Zealots' Last Stand* (London 1966).

amazing boldness expressed by the Romans according to Josephus (*Bell. VII.405*) puts a stamp of credibility upon the narrative as a whole.

#### B THE JEWISH ANTIQUITIES (*ANTIQUITATES JUDAICAE*)

In the first half of the *Antiquities*, where Josephus parallels the Bible, it is clear that his solemn declaration (*Ant. I.17*) that he will set forth the 'precise details' of what is written in the Scripture, neither adding nor omitting anything, is either a commonplace or an indication that Josephus included in 'Scriptures' not only the written Bible but Jewish tradition generally. For the Hexateuch the evidence that Josephus used the Septuagint, in any of the forms known to us, is slight. Either Josephus is dependent upon a Greek tradition or upon a Hebrew text somewhat different from ours, or upon an Aramaic Targumic paraphrase, or, most likely, was an eclectic using all of them. For his paraphrase of Samuel through 1 Maccabees, however, Josephus employed a proto-Lucianic (or, according to Barthélemy,<sup>10</sup> an old Septuagint) Palestinian text akin to that found in Qumran and in his presumed Palestinian contemporary Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*. Hölscher's<sup>11</sup> theory that Josephus used neither the Hebrew nor the Greek Bible but rather a Hellenistic Greek midrash has not been widely accepted, since it seems hard to believe that Josephus, who was certainly well educated and probably, in accordance with the usage of the time, knew much of the Bible by heart, did not also resort to direct use of the Bible; and, moreover, several of Josephus' major modifications are paralleled in rabbinic midrashim. Thus his omission of the story of the golden calf (*Exod. 32*) is in accord with the minority view of the Talmud (*b. Meg. 25a*) that this passage should not be read in the synagogue out of respect for Israel. In addition, Josephus often shares with Philo an allegorical interpretation of the Bible, particularly in the symbolic explanation of the Tabernacle in cosmic terms, though it is hard to assert categorically that Philo was Josephus' source since similar traditions may sometimes be found in rabbinic midrashim. In at least thirty instances, moreover, there are parallels in extra-biblical details between Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities* and Josephus, which are to be found in no other extant source,<sup>12</sup> though in general Pseudo-Philo is closer to the rabbinic midrashim than is Josephus.

<sup>10</sup> D. Berthélemy, *Les Devanciers d'Aquila. Vt Sup* 10 (Leiden 1963).

<sup>11</sup> G. Hölscher, 'Josephus', *PW* 9 (1916), cols. 1955–60.

<sup>12</sup> See L. H. Feldman, 'Prolegomenon' in M. R. James, *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo* (New York 1971, reprint of London, 1917, with new introd.), lviii–lxvi; and L. H. Feldman, 'Epilegomenon to Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (LAB)*', *JJS* 25 (1974), 306–7.

But the *Antiquities* is also the work of Josephus himself, who, under the influence of the antiquarian approach of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (whose *Roman Antiquities*, also in twenty books, clearly influenced Josephus), adopted the conventions of a very different style of historiography in the *Antiquities* from that which he used in the *War*. Many of these are historiographical commonplaces derived from Isocratean rhetoric and paralleled in other Hellenistic writers.<sup>13</sup> In rearranging the biblical material Josephus follows the ‘thematic’ school, in accordance with the Hellenistic historical tradition, i.e. he brings into juxtaposition the items which belong together on subject matter, regardless of chronology or source. In his modifications Josephus is often concerned with answering anti-Jewish charges, such as that the Jews had invented nothing useful in sciences, that the Jews were illiberal toward non-Jews, that the Jews were cowards, etc. Sometimes, as in the paraphrase of the stories of Joseph and of Esther, Josephus highlights erotic elements, perhaps under the influence of the Greek novelistic tradition. In particular, Josephus paints portraits of Abraham and Moses as typical national God-like heroes, such as were popular in Hellenistic times, with emphasis on them as statesmen, philosophers, logicians, rhetoricians, scientists and romantic heroes. Thus Abraham’s teleological proof for the existence of God (*Ant.* 1.156) from the irregularities of the heavenly bodies, though it is in the form of the proof promulgated by the Greek philosophical schools, is found only in Josephus; and it is clear from the context that Josephus is here combating the Stoics.<sup>14</sup>

In general, moreover, Josephus tends to downgrade miracles, as we see especially when we compare, for example, his view of Abraham and Moses as talented generals with the rabbinic portraits of these leaders as prevailing because of God’s miraculous assistance. On several occasions, moreover, when mentioning miracles, Josephus uses the formula familiar from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, that ‘everyone is welcome to his own opinion’ as an expression of courtesy and tolerance intended for his pagan readers. Similarly directed to his Hellenistic readers is Josephus’ emphasis on fate as the distinguishing feature of the three Jewish sects, as well as his comparisons of the Pharisees with the Stoics (*Vita* 12) and of the Essenes with the Pythagoreans (*Ant.* xv.371).

For his account of the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar Josephus also employs the Babylonian historian Berossus (third century BCE). An important recently published chronicle<sup>15</sup> strikingly confirms Berossus’

<sup>13</sup> See G. Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung* (Meisenheim 1956).

<sup>14</sup> See L. H. Feldman, ‘Abraham the Greek Philosopher in Josephus’, *TAPA* 99 (1968), 143–56.

<sup>15</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings (626–556 BC) in the British Museum* (London 1956).

account, as reported in Josephus (*Against Apion* 1.135 and *Ant.* x.219ff), of the Battle of Carchemish, though it does show a number of differences with the account (*Ant.* x.96–102) of the events leading up to the fall of Jerusalem and the capture of King Jehoiachin.

Josephus' account of Ezra and Nehemiah is full of inaccuracies, particularly in the chronology of the Persian kings, and deviates widely from both the Hebrew and Greek texts. It is clear that Josephus had an additional source for this period. In his account of Samaritan affairs during this time, Josephus has apparently projected the hostilities against the Samaritans of his own day.<sup>16</sup> Papyri now confirm that Josephus has confused the first and third Sanballats, who were governors of Samaria.<sup>17</sup>

The fact that, in a treatise on Jewish law which entailed and indeed attempts a kind of codification of halakhah, Josephus omits certain laws (e.g. Exod. 21:7–11, 20–2, 26–7; Lev. 1:4, 3:2) is an indication that his work is often motivated by apologetic concerns. Josephus' statement (*Ant.* iv.207 and *Against Apion* 11.237) citing as a law the prohibition against blaspheming the gods of other peoples is clearly not based on the Hebrew Bible, which in fact (e.g. Lev. 18:3) reviles the laws of pagans and commands the destruction of pagan altars (Deut. 12:2–3); it clearly derives from the Septuagint version of Exod. 22:27, 'Thou shalt not revile God', where the plural form of the word for God is rendered *theous*, 'gods', from which Philo (*De vita Mosis* 11.205, *De specialibus legibus* 1.53) had drawn the same conclusion and indeed had given (*De vita Mosis* 11.205) the same reason for the prohibition, namely the holiness attached to the very name of God. In some instances Josephus may have been influenced by his use of Philo's *Hypothetica*, namely in the death penalty for abortion (*Against Apion* 11.202), the prohibition of revealing secrets (*Against Apion* 11.207), the necessity of kindness toward suppliant animals (*Against Apion* 11.213), and public reading of the Torah on the Sabbath (*Against Apion* 11.175). In view, however, of the fact that Josephus was under constant attack from his fellow Jews, it seems unlikely that he would have dared to 'deviate' thus from Jewish law unless such interpretations were to be found among pious Jews in his homeland; and indeed the first three of these deviations have their parallels in rabbinic sources, if not to quite the same degree as in Philo, whose language Josephus parallels, sometimes strikingly. Again, Josephus (*Against Apion* 11.199) says that sexual intercourse is permitted only if designed for procreation of children; but in the Mishnah (*Yebam.* 6.6–7) we find that companionship

<sup>16</sup> See M. Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics That Shaped the Old Testament* (New York 1971; edn 2, London 1987).

<sup>17</sup> F. M. Cross, 'The Discovery of the Samaria Papyri', *BA* 26 (1963), 110–21.

is also a purpose of marriage. Riskin<sup>18</sup> conjectures that Josephus was influenced by the Essenes; but we may suggest that perhaps he was influenced by Philo's statement (*De vita Mosis* 1.28) that Moses participated in sexual relations solely to beget children. Moreover, in a number of cases, Josephus appears to adopt a legal position for apologetic reasons. Thus he declares (*Against Apion* 11.207) that a judge who accepts a bribe suffers capital punishment, whereas there is no such penalty in the Bible or in the Talmud. Inasmuch as, according to the rabbinic understanding of the seven Noachian commandments which are incumbent upon Gentiles, if a Gentile judge accepts a bribe he is indeed put to death, perhaps Josephus did not want to have it appear that the law is more stringent for Gentile than for Jewish judges, and thus he applied the same penalty to both. We may also note that Josephus (*Against Apion* 11.202) equates abortion with infanticide, whereas the Mishnah (*Nid.* 5.3) does not regard the unborn foetus as a human being and justifies killing it to save the mother if the majority of it has not emerged. Here, too, apparently Josephus did not want to let it appear that Jewish law was more lenient than the law as applied to non-Jews, since the Talmud (*b. Sanh.* 57b) quotes Rabbi Ishmael as stating that Noachian law forbids killing a foetus in its mother's womb on the basis of an interpretation of Gen. 9:6; or perhaps Josephus was motivated by a desire not to be more lenient than Plato, who says (according to Plutarch, *De placitis philosophorum* 5.15) that a foetus is a living being.

Apologetic purposes may similarly be behind Josephus' declarations (*Against Apion* 11.214), which have no basis in the Bible or in the Talmud, that the law bids the Jew even in an enemy's country to spare and not to kill beasts employed in labour, and that castration of an animal is a capital crime. Again, perhaps to remain consistent with the literal interpretation of the Bible, Josephus, in his attitude toward images, seems more strict than the rabbinic tradition. Indeed (*Ant.* VIII.195), he goes out of his way to condemn King Solomon for breaking the Second Commandment in putting the images of bulls and lions in the Temple, where the Bible itself (1 Kgs 7:25, 10:20) and the Talmud (*b. Zebah* 62b) do not censure him.

For the post-biblical period Josephus has been justly criticized for giving such scant attention to those developments in Judaism on the eve of Antiochus III's conquest of Palestine which must have been of some importance to produce the religious and cultural outburst that followed. Starting with the Maccabean period Josephus has parallel accounts in the *Bellum* and in the *Antiquities*. The former is more carefully composed and

<sup>18</sup> S. Riskin, *The Halakah in Josephus as Reflected in Against Apion and the Life* (Diss., MA, Yeshiva Univ., New York 1970).

more polished stylistically; the latter has considerably greater length, is generally more critical of Herod, and stresses the power and influence of the Pharisees. For the Maccabees, Josephus apparently used both the Hebrew original and a Greek translation of 1 Maccabees, which was more correct and fuller than ours. For the Hasmonaean kings and Herod Josephus' chief source was most likely Nicolaus of Damascus, Herod's non-Jewish adviser, who was probably anti-Hasmonaean. Indeed his heavy dependence on Nicolaus seems clear from the fact that once he reaches the period no longer covered by Nicolaus' work Josephus' own account becomes meagre indeed, except for occasional long digressions, where Josephus presumably had special sources. Still, Josephus consciously tried to free himself from the panegyric approach of Nicolaus toward Herod, and we must therefore conclude that he used Nicolaus more critically in the *Antiquities* than in the *Bellum*. His other major sources for the Hellenistic period were Polybius, Posidonius, Strabo and Diodorus.

The documents bearing on Roman–Jewish relations cited by Josephus in *Antiquities*, Books 14 and 16, have occasioned much dispute about authenticity. Most scholars have regarded the majority of them as genuine; but Moehring<sup>19</sup> imputes significance to Josephus' silence about the fire of 69 in which three thousand documents in the Roman archives were destroyed, cites instances where decrees of the senate were forged, asserts that in antiquity historians probably did not bother to check the original texts of decrees and were content with second-hand opinions about them, notes a number of instances where the texts of the document are unusually corrupt and where Josephus' versions of decrees do not correspond to the standard known to us from epigraphical evidence, and concludes that Josephus' invitation to check the accuracy of his statements by consulting the original documents is merely a literary device.

On the basis of a close study of Josephus' vocabulary and style, Thackeray<sup>20</sup> has theorized that in Books 15 and 16 Josephus utilized an assistant who had a particular love of Greek poetry, especially Sophocles, and in Books 17–19 an assistant who was notably fond of Thucydides. Actually, we may comment, Josephus (*Against Apion* 1.50) says that he used fellow-workers for the Greek of the *Bellum*, where ironically Thackeray is forced to admit that he cannot pinpoint the nature and extent of their help. Moreover, the presence of many Sophoclean and Thucydidean phrases in the other Greek works of the period, notably in Dionysius of

<sup>19</sup> H. R. Moehring, 'The *Acta Pro Judaëis* in the *Antiquities* of Flavius Josephus: A Study in Hellenistic and Modern Apologetic Historiography' in J. Neusner (ed.) *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty*, part 3: *Judaism before 70* (Leiden 1975), pp. 124–58.

<sup>20</sup> H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus the Man and the Historian* (New York 1929), pp. 100–24.

Halicarnassus, shows that they are characteristics of first-century Greek rather than that they are the work of a special assistant. Furthermore, there are Sophoclean and Thucydidean traces throughout the *Bellum* and the *Antiquities*.

Where Josephus parallels Tacitus in their accounts of Parthian affairs, Josephus is generally to be preferred, as the numismatic evidence appears to indicate, presumably because Josephus, with his knowledge of Aramaic, the language of the populous Jewish communities in Babylonia, had a more direct knowledge of the events there. Schalit<sup>21</sup> has ingeniously discerned an Aramaic word in *Ant.* XVIII.343 in Josephus' account of the Jewish robber-barons Anilaeus and Asinaeus who defied the Parthians, and has suggested that Josephus' source was a Greek translation which goes back to an Aramaic original. He similarly, though less convincingly, finds an Aramaic source for Josephus' account of Izates, the king of Adiabene who was converted to Judaism.

Occasionally inscriptions will shed light on Josephus' terminology. Thus an inscription discovered in 1961 in Caesarea<sup>21a</sup> has established Pilate's official title as prefect rather than as procurator, the title given him by Tacitus (*Annals* xv.44.3) and Josephus (*Bell.* II.169). But Josephus elsewhere, like the New Testament, calls him by the more ambiguous term *hēgemōn*, 'governor'; and Josephus' fluidity in terminology generally indicates either that Pilate's title changed in the course of his administration of Judaea or that the titles were not as rigid as most modern scholars believe.

We may remark here on the passage in Josephus which has occasioned by far more comment than any other, the so-called *Testimonium Flavianum* (*Ant.* XVIII.63–4) concerning Jesus. The passage appears in all our manuscripts; but a considerable number of Christian writers – Pseudo-Justin and Theophilus in the second century, Minucius Felix, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Julius Africanus, Tertullian, Hippolytus and Origen in the third century, and Methodius and Pseudo-Eustathius in the early fourth century – who knew Josephus and cited from his works do not refer to this passage, though one would imagine that it would be the first passage that a Christian apologist would cite. In particular, Origen (*Contra Celsum* 1.47 and *Commentary on Matthew* 10.17), who certainly knew Book 18 of the *Antiquities* and cites five passages from it, explicitly states that Josephus did not believe in Jesus as Christ. The first to cite the *Testimonium* is Eusebius (c. 324); and even after him, we may note, there are eleven

<sup>21</sup> A. Schalit, 'Evidence of an Aramaic Source in Josephus' "Antiquities of the Jews"', *ASTI* 4 (1965), 163–88.

<sup>21a</sup> A Frova 'L'Iscrizione di Ponzio Pilato a Cesarea', *RIL* 95 (1961), 419–34.



Christian writers who cite Josephus but not the *Testimonium*. In fact, it is not until Jerome in the early fifth century that we have another reference to it.

The principal internal argument against the genuineness of the *Testimonium* is that it says that Jesus was the Christ, whereas Josephus, as a loyal Pharisaic Jew, could hardly have written this. To be sure, there were several claimants to the status of Messiah in this era, and those who followed them were not read out of the Jewish fold; but in view of the fact that Josephus nowhere else uses the word *Christos* (except in referring to James, the brother of Jesus, *Ant.* xx.200) and that he repeatedly suppresses the Messianic aspects of the revolt against Rome because of the association of the Messiah with political revolt and independence, it would seem hard to believe that he would openly call Jesus a Messiah and speak of him with such awe. The fact that Jerome (*De viris illustribus* 13) reads that 'he was believed to be the Christ' (*credebatur esse Christus*) would suggest that his text differed from ours. Another objection to the authenticity of the passage is that it breaks the continuity of the narrative, which tells of a series of riots. Those, such as Eisler,<sup>22</sup> who regard the passage as interpolated, suggest that the original spoke of the Christian movement as a riot.

Pines<sup>23</sup> has created a considerable stir by bringing to the scholarly world's attention two hitherto almost completely neglected works containing the *Testimonium*, one a tenth-century history of the world in Arabic by a Christian named Agapius and the other a twelfth-century chronicle in Syriac by Michael the Syrian. There are a number of differences between Agapius and our *Testimonium*, notably in the omission of the statement 'if one ought to call him a man' and of Jesus' miracles and of the role of the Jewish leaders in accusing Jesus, and, above all, in the assertion that Jesus was perhaps the Messiah ('was thought to be' in Michael). Since Agapius declares that 'This is what is said by Josephus and his companions' and indeed includes a number of other details not found in Josephus, we may conjecture that he used other sources as well. Inasmuch as there are changes in the order of the statements of the *Testimonium* in Agapius and Michael, we are apparently dealing not with a translation but with a paraphrase.

<sup>22</sup> R. Eisler, *Jesous Basileus ou Basileusas* (Heidelberg 1929; ET London 1931).

<sup>23</sup> S. Pines, *An Arabic Version of the Testimonium Flavianum and Its Implications* (Jerusalem 1971). On the whole question of the *Testimonium Flavianum* see L. H. Feldman, 'The Testimonium Flavianum: The State of the Question' in R. F. Berkey and S. A. Edwards (eds.) *Christological Perspectives: Fs H. K. McArthur* (New York 1982), pp. 179–99, 288–93.

For the lengthy account in Book 19 of the *Antiquities* of the assassination of Caligula and the accession of Claudius, Mommsen's<sup>24</sup> view that Josephus' source was the lost Roman historian Cluvius Rufus has won general acceptance, but several alternative written and oral sources have been suggested.<sup>25</sup> In particular, we may note the fact that Agrippa I's role in the accession of Claudius is built up to a high degree. This can hardly be due to Cluvius, but most likely was derived from Josephus' friend Agrippa II, son of Agrippa I, who elsewhere (*Vita* 366) declares himself ready to inform him of details that are not generally known.

Near the end of the *Antiquities* (xx.266), he dates the work in the thirteenth year of the reign of Domitian (93–4), Josephus indicates that he will append his *Vita* to his *Antiquities*. Inasmuch as the *Vita* (359) definitely indicates that Agrippa is already dead, and Photius (*Bibliotheca*, p. 33) says that Agrippa died in the third year of the reign of Trajan (i.e. 100), Laqueur<sup>26</sup> has argued that the *Antiquities* appeared in two editions, the first in 93–4, and the second some years later. Our manuscript tradition, however, provides no proof for a second edition, and the alleged two endings to the *Antiquities* (xx.259, xx.267) may simply be due to the fact that after twenty long books it took Josephus some time to bid the reader farewell. Still, we may remark that ancient book production afforded ample opportunity for change and correction.

### C LIFE (*VITA*)

Josephus' *Vita* is the oldest autobiography that we possess from antiquity in its original form, though most of it is devoted to a single episode in the author's life, his command in Galilee. That it is an appendix to the *Antiquities* is clear from both the end of the *Antiquities* (xx.266) and the end of the *Vita* (430). Laqueur<sup>27</sup> has hypothesized that the nucleus of the *Vita* was an administrative report, the use of which makes it more original, more truthful, and less tendentious than the *Bellum*. But all attempts at 'higher criticism' of the *Vita* have failed to disclose strata within it or differences between it and Book 20 of the *Antiquities* in style. On the contrary, there are numerous links of style between them, including the alleged early portions of the *Vita*.

In fact, the *Vita* shows the internal unity of a single work written for a particular purpose, namely that of refuting the charges of Justus of Tiberias,

<sup>24</sup> T. Mommsen, 'Cornelius Tacitus und Cluvius Rufus', *Hermes* 4 (1870), 295–325.

<sup>25</sup> See L. H. Feldman, 'The Sources of Josephus' *Antiquities*, Book 19', *Latomus* 21 (1962), 320–33.

<sup>26</sup> R. Laqueur, *Der jüdische Historiker Flavius Josephus* (Giessen 1920), p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

whose work, written twenty years after the war, is completely lost. Laqueur postulates that Justus had attacked Josephus' style and that the competition from Justus meant financial ruin for Josephus; but inasmuch as the Emperor Titus favoured the *Bellum*, the competition with Justus would have had no direct financial impact upon Josephus; and, in any case, the style of the *Vita* is inferior to that of the *Bellum*. The invective exchanged by Josephus and Justus is typological. Actually, both of them were realists, who clashed because each was playing his own double game. In the end, Justus fled for protection to the collaborationist Agrippa II, whereas Josephus joined Vespasian. Cohen<sup>28</sup> has conjectured that the reason for Justus' delay in publishing his work was that after the war Tiberias had had to suffer the ignominy of seeing many cities become the autonomous rulers of extensive territories, while it was still subservient to Agrippa II and was not even the capital of his kingdom. Hence Justus, as a native son, came to the defence of his city, whereas the *Vita* is an anti-Tiberian polemic. Moreover, Justus had apparently attacked Josephus' religiosity, and hence the *Vita* seeks to portray Josephus as a religious man.

The discrepancies between the *Vita* and the *Bellum* may, in large part, be explained by the licence traditionally granted in biographies to engage in panegyric. Thus Polybius (x.21), whose work Josephus knew, states that when he wrote a biographical memoir of Philopoemen he exaggerated as panegyric required, whereas in his history he was more objective. Autobiography was still less reliable as a source of fact, as we may infer from Josephus' contemporary, Tacitus (*Agricola* 1). The same distinction between history and biography is to be found in the licence permitted in a monograph in contrast to the truthfulness demanded in a more general history, as seen in Cicero's request (*Ad familiares* v.12) to the historian Luceius to treat the events of the *annus mirabilis* of his consulship in a monograph. A comparison with the *Agricola* shows substantially the same division of subject matter and the same addiction to digression. Indeed, Cohen has with good reason concluded that the *Vita* is Josephus' least careful work – confused, tendentious, inconsistent, with incorrect cross-references, with doublets, and with important segments of information presented in a casual and even a startling manner.

#### D AGAINST APION (*CONTRA APIONEM*)

The treatise *Against Apion* was written after the *Antiquities*, to which it refers (I.1, I.54, II.287). It is a defence of the Jews against charges of their

<sup>28</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as a Historian* (Leiden 1979).

opponents, though Apion himself is not mentioned until the second book. In particular, Josephus answers the contention that the Jews are of recent origin. He counter-charges that the Greeks themselves are of much more recent origin and that their historians are untrustworthy. He shows considerable acquaintance with antiquarian problems; and his remark (*Against Apion* 1.12) that Homer himself did not commit his poems to writing was the basis of Wolf's *Prolegomena* on the origin of the Homeric corpus. He replies to the distortions in the accounts of the Exodus by Manetho, Chaeremon and Lysimachus, and rebuts such calumnies in Apion as that the Jews worshipped the head of an ass in the Temple, that they practised ritual murder, and that they were more concerned with their own affairs than with those of the community in which they lived. The work closes with a summary and defence of the Mosaic constitution as compared with those of the Greeks. In this he follows the standard rhetorical pattern for such encomia, particularly as seen in Dionysius of Halicarnassus' encomium of Rome in *Roman Antiquities* (I.9–II.29). Josephus was clearly indebted to Philo's *Hypothetica*, notably in his interpretations of law, as indicated above.

#### E PROPOSED AND SPURIOUS WORKS

Josephus also mentions a number of works which he intended to write, notably on God and his Substance and the laws. Petersen<sup>29</sup> has, however, concluded that we have all of Josephus' proposed works, and that most of the references to contemplated works are to *Against Apion*, which, however, when finally written, contained certain changes from the original plan.

Several works are ascribed to Josephus but are clearly not by him. In particular, the Christian tradition, ever since Eusebius, has ascribed 4 Maccabees to Josephus. Modern scholars have rejected this authorship on the ground that this work uses 2 Maccabees, which Josephus did not know. In addition, Skimina<sup>30</sup> has shown that 4 Maccabees differs considerably from the other works of Josephus in its prose rhythms at the ends of sentences. It smacks of having been composed by an Alexandrian Jew deeply imbued with Greek philosophy, notably Stoicism. Another work ascribed to Josephus, *De universo*, is a philosophical refutation of Plato by a Christian, presumably Hippolytus.

<sup>29</sup> H. Petersen, 'Real and Alleged Literary Projects of Josephus', *AJP* 79 (1958), 259–74.

<sup>30</sup> S. Skimina, *Etat actuel des études sur le rythme de la prose grecque*, Bulletin international de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences et des Lettres 1937, supp. 3 (Cracow 1937), 171–2.

## III THE TEXT OF JOSEPHUS

The standard editions of Josephus remain those that were issued almost simultaneously by Niese<sup>31</sup> and Naber.<sup>32</sup> The former has a much fuller apparatus criticus in his *editio maior*; and indeed both Naber and the Loeb edition of Thackeray and others<sup>33</sup> depend upon it. It is close to the manuscript tradition and is generally, and with good reason, more widely accepted than Naber. It should be noted, nevertheless, that Niese's *editio minor* changes the text of the *editio maior* in several hundred passages, though often it is unnecessarily bold; it rates, however, as Niese's final edition. But Niese, in line with the prevailing principle in text-criticism of his time, overestimated the value of one group of manuscripts and frequently failed to consider the quality of individual readings case by case. Consequently, all too often, as Schreckenberg<sup>34</sup> remarks, the best textual tradition appears in Niese's apparatus. Naber's text may be smoother generally than that of Niese, especially when compared with the latter's *editio maior*; but the task of the editor is to reconstruct what Josephus wrote rather than to improve his Greek. Naber's edition, and especially his apparatus criticus, are, moreover, full of errors.

Schreckenberg<sup>35</sup> has listed a number of manuscripts missed by Niese, but he admits that an extensive collation of these manuscripts would increase the massive apparatus of Niese's *editio maior* insignificantly, with only a slight chance here and there of localizing the genuine tradition. A possible clue to the unreliability of the text that we possess may be found in the fact that Origen (*Contra Celsum* 1.47, II.13 end; *Commentary on Matthew* 10.17), Eusebius (*Historia Ecclesiastica* II.23.60), and Jerome (*De viris illustribus* 13) declare that Josephus said that Jerusalem was destroyed because of the murder of James the Just, a statement nowhere to be found in our text of Josephus. Similarly, as Pines<sup>36</sup> has noted, there are statements in the tenth-century Arabic historian Agapius allegedly drawn from Josephus which are not in our texts. These may, of course,

<sup>31</sup> B. Niese (ed.) *Flavii Josephi opera*, 7 vols. (Berlin 1888–95; repr. 1955; =*editio maior*); B. Niese (ed.) *Flavii Josephi opera*, 6 vols. (Berlin 1888–95; =*editio minor*).

<sup>32</sup> S. A. Naber (ed.) *Flavii Josephi opera omnia post Immanuelem Bekkerum*, 6 vols. (Leipzig 1888–96).

<sup>33</sup> H. St J. Thackeray, R. Marcus, A. Wikgren, L. H. Feldman (eds.) *Josephus*, 9 (reprinted in 10) vols. LCL (Cambridge, MA 1926–65).

<sup>34</sup> H. Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter* (Leiden 1972).

<sup>35</sup> H. Schreckenberg, 'Neue Beiträge zur Kritik des Josephustextes', *Theokratia* 2 (1970–2), 81–106. See also his *Rezeptionsgeschichtliche und textkritische Untersuchungen zu Flavius Josephus* (Leiden 1977).

<sup>36</sup> S. Pines, *An Arabic Version of the Testimonium Flavianum and its Implications* (Jerusalem 1971).

be due to interpolations or to loose paraphrasing, or they may refer to a different text.

The text of Josephus' *Bellum* is relatively sound; but Schalit,<sup>37</sup> the foremost Josephus scholar of the past generation, has remarked that the text of the *Antiquities* is more corrupt than any other Greek text.

Inasmuch as Josephus is writing in a language which is still foreign to him, and inasmuch as he appears not to have had assistants for most of the *Antiquities* (if he had them at all), as he did for the *Bellum*, we are often reduced to finding what a writer not thoroughly familiar with the language would have written. The corruption in the text of the first half of the *Antiquities*, where he paraphrases the Bible, has been aggravated by the tendency of copyists to assimilate Josephus' text to that of the Septuagint, particularly in the spelling of proper names.

Schreckenbergs<sup>38</sup> has presented us a complete, annotated list of the manuscripts of Josephus (including many missed by Niese), as well as of those who cite or quote excerpts from him. The textual tradition was apparently polarized into two families as early as the third century. The oldest manuscripts of complete treatises of Josephus date from the tenth or eleventh century. The tradition for the second half of the *Antiquities* differs from that of the first half. For the treatise *Against Apion* we are dependent upon a single manuscript dating from the eleventh century, for which II.52–113, which is missing, must be supplied from the Latin version of Cassiodorus' school. The one papyrus fragment (*Bell.* ii.576–9) that has been found dates from the third century, apparently before this polarization took place.

#### IV THE VERSIONS OF JOSEPHUS

Especially in view of the corrupt state of the text, the versions, often much older than our oldest Greek manuscripts, are of considerable importance. In Latin there is a free reworking of the *Bellum* of the fourth century attributed to a certain Hegesippus (sometimes, probably wrongly, identified with Ambrose or pseudo-Ambrose), who claims to be writing an original work in accordance with the spirit of Christianity.

There is also in Latin a closer translation of the *Bellum* usually attributed to Rufinus (d. 410) and a translation of the *Antiquities* and *Against Apion* made under the direction of Cassiodorus in the sixth century. The fact that there are 171 manuscripts of Cassiodorus' version is an indication

<sup>37</sup> A. Schalit, trans., *Josephus* (in Hebrew), vol. 3 (Jerusalem 1963), p. viii.

<sup>38</sup> H. Schreckenbergs, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter* (Leiden 1972).

of its popularity. Blatt's<sup>39</sup> edition of Books 1–5 of the *Antiquities* is unfortunately based on only a few of these; a truly critical text remains a desideratum.

The linguistic and ethnographic evidence that the Hebrew paraphrase of the *Bellum* by Josippon (Josephon), identified in the manuscripts as Joseph ben Gorion (cf. *Bell.* II.563), dates from the middle of the tenth century seems overwhelming. The textual tradition of this version is extraordinarily complicated by the fact that there are three substantially different recensions. A critical edition has finally been produced by David Flusser (2 vols., Jerusalem, 1978–80). Josippon's major source was Hegesippus, but he also used a Latin Bible and a Latin version of sixteen of the twenty books of the *Antiquities*. Until the nineteenth century, with the major exception of Azariah dei Rossi in the sixteenth century, Jews identified Josippon with Josephus, and the work was extremely popular.

In the tenth century Josippon was translated into Arabic, and this in turn was translated into Ethiopic some time between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries.

The Slavonic version of the *War*, apparently made in the eleventh century, contains a number of additions not found in the Greek, notably passages on John the Baptist and Jesus, which Josephus could hardly have written, since they speak with such antipathy of the role of the Jews. Recent scholarship<sup>40</sup> indicates that the work was used by Christians in the ideological struggle against the Khazars, who had been converted to Judaism in the eighth century.

## V BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AND LEXICAL AIDS TO THE STUDY OF JOSEPHUS

Schrekenberg<sup>41</sup> has attempted to present a year-by-year listing of all editions, translations and scholarship dealing with Josephus from 1470, the year of the *editio princeps*, to 1968, with systematic coverage to 1965. A supplementary volume carries the work to 1978 and includes many items omitted from the first volume. For most items he gives brief summaries and, in addition, places before most items a classification number according to a scheme of twenty-five categories. There are, however, numerous errors and many hundreds of omissions.

<sup>39</sup> F. Blatt (ed.) *The Latin Josephus, 1: Introduction and Text, The Antiquities, Books I–V* (Aarhus and Copenhagen 1958).

<sup>40</sup> N. A. Meščerskij, *Istorija indeskoiž vojny Josifa Flavija* (Moscow and Leningrad 1958).

<sup>41</sup> H. Schrekenberg, *Bibliographie zu Flavius Josephus* (Leiden 1968); Supplementband mit Gesamtregister (Leiden 1979).



My own bibliography,<sup>42</sup> which is limited to the years 1937–62, is arranged by subject matter and contains critical appraisals. It has now been revised, greatly expanded, and brought up to 1980. My further supplement to Schreckenberg appeared in 1986.

The dictionary of Thackeray and Marcus<sup>43</sup> reached *emphilochōrein*, but nothing has appeared since 1955. It is exhaustive in most cases but is content to list merely a selection of occurrences for certain words. Rengstorf's concordance<sup>44</sup> lists every occurrence of every word except for certain extremely common words. But Thackeray and Marcus give the meaning of a word for every particular occurrence, whereas Rengstorf lists all the meanings at the beginning of the article. Moreover, Thackeray and Marcus is an analytical dictionary, organizing the entries by constructions.

## VI THE INFLUENCE OF JOSEPHUS

The only extant pagan writer who definitely knew the works of Josephus is the third-century Porphyry, who in his *De abstinentia ab esu animalium* iv.11, states that the Essenes are referred to in the second book of his *Jewish History* (that is the *Bellum*), in the eighteenth book of his *Archaeology*, and in the second book of his *To the Greeks* (that is *Against Apion*).

Josephus influenced the Church Fathers, particularly the Greek Fathers: Origen, Eusebius, Pseudo-Eustathius, John Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Isidore of Pelusium. Among the Latin Fathers he particularly influenced Tertullian, Lactantius, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Cassiodorus. Jerome (*Epistula ad Eustochium* 22.35, PL xxiii, col. 421) praises Josephus as a second Livy. Indeed, so marked was Jerome's favour for Josephus that during his lifetime it was thought, without basis, that he had translated Josephus' *Bellum* into Latin. We may also note that the Syriac version of the sixth book of the *Bellum* was actually included in the sacred canon of the Syrian Church.

During the Middle Ages and into modern times Josephus was associated with either pagan or Christian authorities, as the occasion demanded. Indeed, he was regarded as a veritable polymath – an authority in such diverse fields as biblical exegesis, allegory, chronology, arithmetic (the *Josephus-spiel* was one of the popular arithmetical problems of the Middle Ages), astronomy, natural history, geography of the Holy Land, grammar,

<sup>42</sup> L. H. Feldman, *Scholarship on Philo and Josephus (1937–1962)* (New York 1963), 26–55; *Josephus and Modern Scholarship (1937–1980)* (Berlin 1984).

<sup>43</sup> H. St J. Thackeray and R. Marcus, *A Lexicon to Josephus*, 4 fascicles (Paris 1930–55).

<sup>44</sup> K. H. Rengstorf (ed.) *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus*, 4 vols. (Leiden 1973–83).

etymology and Jewish theology. There was a legend that Josephus had cured the Emperor Titus of a swollen leg, gout or palsy. When the Christians were largely cut off from the direct Jewish tradition, it was Josephus who supplied the pilgrims with knowledge of the Holy Land, their teachers with knowledge of Jewish history and the Jewish religion and lore, and their military leaders with military tactics and formulae. The *Jewish War* was particularly popular since it contained such a graphic account of the destruction of the Temple, a debacle which was explained as divine punishment meted out to the Jews for their rejection of Jesus. Because of the *Testimonium Flavianum* Josephus was regarded as having borne witness to the miracles, Messiahship and resurrection of Jesus; and it is not surprising that in the catalogues of mediaeval libraries his works commonly appear with those of the Church Fathers. In the late Middle Ages Josephus was widely known through the *Historia Scholastica* of the twelfth-century Peter Comestor, a summary of biblical history which soon became the most popular book in Western Europe. In the Byzantine Empire he was particularly used by George Syncellus, Photius, George Hamartolos, the anonymous *De obsidione toleranda*, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Joannes Zonaras, Nicetas Choniates and Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos. His influence is also to be seen in painting, particularly in Christian miniatures of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries.

In modern times, until the twentieth century, both in England and on the continent, it is no exaggeration to say that Josephus was the most widely read of all ancient historians. Until our own days a very common sight in houses was a copy of Josephus (in England and in the United States most often in Whiston's much reprinted translation – there have been at least 217 reprintings) next to the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, since the Jewish historian was regarded as the bridge between them. In fact, among strict English Protestants, only Josephus and the Bible were permitted to be read on Sunday. In the seventeenth century the growing sanctity of the Hebrew Scriptures in England led playwrights to turn to the Apocrypha and the works of Josephus, which provided scriptural settings and associations without the awkwardness of divine authority. The first book of Jewish authorship printed in the American colonies was L'Estrange's translation of Josephus in 1719; the second was Morvvyne's translation of Josippon in 1722.

Among famous Italian writers Petrarch, among the French Voltaire, and among the Spanish Lope de Vega were particularly influenced by Josephus.

The Hebrew paraphrase, Josippon, was well known to the mediaeval commentators on the Bible and the Talmud. The Arabic version of Josippon was widely used by Muslim historians, notably by the great

fourteenth-century Ibn Khaldun. The Ethiopic version became a semi-canonical work of the Monophysite Church.

The Slavonic version of the *War* influenced mediaeval Russian literature and especially Russian chronicles and the *Tale of Igor's Expedition*.

In modern times Josephus has had notable influence on Hebbel's tragedy *Herodes und Mariamne* and on Feuchtwanger's trilogy of novels.

## CHAPTER 29

THE RABBI IN SECOND-CENTURY  
JEWISH SOCIETY

Who were the rabbis of second-century Palestine (the ‘tannaitic’ period)? What was their role in Jewish society? What was their relationship with their fellow Jews? In what areas did they exercise authority? What were the institutional bases of their power? In sum, what was the nature of the society in which the rabbis lived and worked? These are the primary questions to be addressed by this chapter.

I admit at the outset that these questions are not fully answerable, and that the answers, whether full or partial, do not yield a complete portrait of the social history of second-century Palestine. A thorough study of Palestinian society would have to treat all the elements of the population: Jews of all sorts (not just rabbis and not just those Jews who came into contact with rabbis), pagans (of all sorts), Christians (of all sorts), and Samaritans (of all sorts).<sup>1</sup> Some of the inhabitants were rich, most were poor; some lived in cities, most lived in towns and villages; some were artisans and traders, most were farmers. The land was as diverse as its population and was divided into politico-geographical regions (Galilee, Samaria, Judaea, Idumaea, the coastal plain, the trans-Jordan, etc.) and sub-regions (notably upper Galilee and lower Galilee). The power structure which governed this complex land was also complex. In addition to the central Roman administration, both civil and military, many cities (*poleis*) had jurisdiction over substantial amounts of terrain. Other areas (*toparchies*) were governed from the towns and villages. Each religious group, whether or not recognized by the Roman state, had its own functionaries and temples. The religious leaders may have based their authority on their personal charisma, their magic power and status as holy men, or the institutional precedents of previous times (traditional-rational authority, Max Weber calls it).<sup>2</sup> And, of course, the real leaders of society may not have been any of these. Perhaps the local landowner, by virtue

<sup>1</sup> Samaritans too had sects; see for example S. Isser, *The Dositbeans* (Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, no. 17; Leiden 1976).

<sup>2</sup> M. Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations*, trans. A. M. Henderson and T. Parsons (New York 1947; repr. 1964), pp. 328–9. Rabbinic authority does not fit any of these categories neatly (see below).

of his wealth, connections, and army of retainers, wielded more power than any elected or appointed official. A thorough study of Palestinian society would have to treat all of these elements both separately and in conjunction with each other.<sup>3</sup> No one has yet attempted such a study and I am not about to do so here. This chapter treats but one part of the larger theme.

## I NON-RABBINIC SOURCES

For an analysis of rabbinic society we are dependent almost entirely upon rabbinic texts. Non-rabbinic sources, both literary and archaeological, are important for the social history of Roman Palestine, but they tell us almost nothing about the rabbis and the rabbinic movement. The Bar Kokhba artefacts and documents discovered in the Judean desert give us a vivid glimpse into the daily lives of second-century Jews in southern Judaea (marriages, divorces, land use, prices, religious observances, languages, etc.) but aside from these finds archaeology has little to offer the student of our subject. The monumental Galilean synagogues once thought to have been built in the second century are now generally attributed to the fourth.<sup>4</sup> The second-century remains from Joppa, Taricheae-Magdala, Capernaum, Khirbet Shema, and other sites are meagre. On the eastern side of the Jordan, from Philadelphia to the Hauran, second-century material is abundant but little of it is Jewish. The numerous inscriptions of Gerasa, the Hauran, and the villages of Syria are rich sources for the political, social, and religious history of these areas.<sup>5</sup> There is no comparable corpus of texts from Jewish Palestine of the second century. Most of the burials of Beth Shearim and Joppa date from the third and fourth centuries.<sup>6</sup> Most synagogue inscriptions are even later.

The Jewish archaeological evidence is not only meagre, it also is of questionable relevance. It illuminates *Jewish* society which is not necessarily synonymous with *rabbinic* society. The Bar Kokhba documents nowhere

<sup>3</sup> For very different examples of this kind of social history, see J. Gagé, *Les classes sociales dans l'empire romain* (Paris 1966); R. MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations* (New Haven 1974); M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1957; second edition).

<sup>4</sup> *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*, ed. Lee Levine (Jerusalem 1981), pp. 52–62.

<sup>5</sup> *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis*, ed. C. H. Kraeling (New Haven 1938), inscriptions edited by C. B. Welles; D. Sourdel, *Les cultes du Hauran à l'époque romaine* (Paris 1952); G. M. Harper, 'Village Administration in the Roman Province of Syria', *Yale Classical Studies* 1 (1928), 105–68; G. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord*, 3 vols. (Paris 1953–8).

<sup>6</sup> *Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. M. Avi Yonah (Jerusalem-New Brunswick 1975–8), s.v. Beth Shearim and Jaffa. The burial inscriptions of Joppa have not been studied adequately.

mention Rabbi Aqiba, who figures so prominently in most modern accounts of the rebellion. The documents do mention Rabbenu Botnyah b. Miashah, otherwise unknown. We have no reason to assume that this rabbi was a member of that elect society which created the literature and fashioned the Judaism we call rabbinic, the society which is our major concern in this chapter. 'Rabbi' was a generic title of respect which could be applied to master craftsmen, brigand chieftains, and numerous others. It was not the invention or exclusive possession of *the* rabbinic movement. Similarly, the rabbis memorialized in the epitaphs of Joppa and Beth Shearim are not necessarily talmudic scholars. The connection with *the* rabbinic movement needs to be proved – it cannot be assumed.<sup>7</sup>

Non-rabbinic literary sources tell us a little about Palestinian society in the second century (for example, the number of villages and *poleis*, the natural resources of the country, the presence of brigands and exorcists)<sup>8</sup> but nothing about rabbis. Justin frequently mentions the Jewish *didaskaloi* (teachers), but the references are too problematic to be useful here.<sup>9</sup> Julius Africanus and Origen are third-century fathers who know a great deal about contemporary Judaism, but their testimony, important for the history of the patriarchate (see p. 253, n. 14 above), does not contribute anything to our topic. We are left, then, with rabbinic literature and nothing else.

## II RABBINIC SOURCES

Rabbinic literature is an enormous and enormously complex collection of laws, homilies, stories, legends, folklore and scriptural exegesis. How can such material be used to describe the society which produced it? The traditional scholarly method, exemplified by the works of Adolph Büchler, Gedaliah Alon and Ephraim Urbach,<sup>10</sup> is based on two fundamental assumptions: the rabbis were the leaders of Jewry and the sole authority

<sup>7</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, 'Epigraphical Rabbis', *Jewish Quarterly Review* 72 (1981), 1–17. Rabbi = brigand chieftain: b. *B. Mes.* 84a. Rabbi = master craftsman: t. *Hor.* 2.5 (476 Zuckermann) = t. *B. Mes.* 2.30 (375 Zuckermann).

<sup>8</sup> Villages and *poleis*: see below. Natural resources: M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem 1980), nos. 355 and 359 (Pausanias), 379–86 and 388–93 (Galen). Brigands: Stern no. 442. Exorcists: Stern no. 372.

<sup>9</sup> Shaye J. D. Cohen, 'The Significance of Yavneh', *Hebrew Union College Annual* 55 (1984) 27–53.

<sup>10</sup> A. Büchler, *The Political and Social Leaders of the Jewish Community of Sepphoris in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries* (Oxford 1909); G. Alon, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age*, trans. G. Levi (Jerusalem 1980), and *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World*, trans. I. Abrahams (Jerusalem 1977); E. E. Urbach, 'Class Status and Leadership in the World of the Palestinian Sages', *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 2, 4 (1966).

figures for religious matters; statements ascribed to, and stories told about, second-century rabbis (generally known as *tannaim*), are authentic and true, no matter where they may be found. These scholars rarely distinguish early sources from late, Palestinian from Babylonian, legal (halakhic) from non-legal (aggadic). They write social history by stringing together as many statements and anecdotes as possible about various topics and the resulting catenae pass for social analysis. The basic problem with this method, as has been repeatedly emphasized by Jacob Neusner, is that it assumes what needs to be proven. It assumes that we know what social position was occupied by men titled 'rabbis' and it assumes that all rabbinic sources are equally reliable. Both assumptions are false. Neusner therefore urges that traditional 'historical' scholarship be abandoned in favour of the historiographical and literary study of individual rabbinic documents. The outlooks and concerns of each document will reveal the nature of the society behind that document. In a remarkable book Neusner has studied the Mishnah from this perspective and attained results which in part seem absolutely correct (the Mishnah addresses issues which are important to landowners and priests). But this method too has its deficiencies. It relies too heavily upon an impressionistic reading of the texts. It cannot be applied readily to the midrashim and to the two talmudim because their agenda are determined by the works upon which they are commenting (the Bible and the Mishnah). Furthermore, the method despairs much too easily of the value of rabbinic documents for historical purposes.<sup>11</sup>

In this chapter I adopt a middle course. Our primary questions are questions which the rabbinic texts can answer: what are the fundamental social relationships treated by rabbinic literature? what position in society do the rabbis assign themselves? Since we are looking for patterns and structures, we do not have to determine the authenticity or reliability of any single dictum or anecdote. In order further to minimize the difficulties of the traditional method, I shall restrict my investigation to the Mishnah and other tannaitic corpora, ignoring for the most part the allegedly tannaitic material quoted by the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds. All the tannaitic corpora were redacted in the third century and all of them undoubtedly contain some post-tannaitic material, but we may assume that these works bring us much closer to the world of the second-century rabbis than do the talmudim.<sup>12</sup> As we shall see, in a number of

<sup>11</sup> J. Neusner, *Judaism: The Evidence of the Mishnah* (Chicago 1981); see my review 'Jacob Neusner, Mishnah, and Counter-Rabbinics,' *Conservative Judaism* 37, 1 (Fall 1983), 48–63.

<sup>12</sup> I have concentrated upon the *Mishnah*, *Tosefta*, *Mekilta*, *Sifra*, and *Sifre*. I occasionally cite the *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* although its tannaitic origins are debatable. *Sifre Zuta* and *Midraš Tannaim* are extant largely through quotations from later works and



important areas the tannaitic material is consistent with itself but is incompatible with the allegedly tannaitic material quoted by the talmudim. Whether these contrasts are the result of the literary criteria by which the tannaitic corpora were assembled and redacted or of pseudepigraphic activity by later rabbis is not clear, but the question requires investigation. These problems are best avoided here. This chapter, then, is not a summation of previous research but is a tentative sketch based upon a fresh reading of the sources, which will have to be corroborated, corrected and supplemented by future research.

### III NOMENCLATURE

Some of the fundamental relationships of rabbinic society are illustrated by the various modes of rabbinic self-identification. Rabbis and other members of rabbinic society are generally named in one of the following forms:

(Rabbi) X

(Rabbi) X son of Y

(Rabbi) X son of Rabbi Y

(Rabbi) X the Y (the great, the small, the pious, the lame, etc. – an adjective describing a physical attribute or some other characteristic)

(Rabbi) X the Y (the priest, the proselyte, the baker, the scribe, etc. – a noun indicating status or profession)

(Rabbi) X from Y (a place)

Since rabbinic nomenclature has never been investigated, many mysteries remain which cannot be penetrated here. Why were some figures identified in one fashion, others in another?<sup>13</sup> In many instances of '(Rabbi) X son of Y' Y too was a rabbi, although the title is not affixed to his

therefore are cited here only rarely. In this chapter I do not discuss many topics generally treated in a chapter on 'social and economic' history. See the classic works of F. Heichelheim, 'Roman Syria', *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, ed. T. Frank, vol. 4 (Baltimore 1938), and S. W. Baron, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. 2 (New York 1952, second edition). Although focusing on the first century, J. Jeremias discusses much rabbinic material in his *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, trans. F. H. Cave and C. H. Cave (Philadelphia 1969). Although focusing on the third and fourth centuries, D. Sperber discusses much tannaitic material in his *Roman Palestine 200–400: Money and Prices* (Ramat-Gan 1974) and *Roman Palestine 200–400: The Land* (Ramat-Gan 1978).

<sup>13</sup> Some rabbis are referred to differently in different documents; Mishnah and Mekilta always have 'R. Simeon', other documents occasionally have 'R. Simeon b. Yohai'. Cf. p. B. *Qam.* 3.7 (3d), 'They say that Yosi the Babylonian is identical with Yosi b. Judah and Yosi *qntb.*' The Hebrew Bible too employs several different systems of nomenclature. Legal nomenclature was either 'X son of Y' or 'X from place Y'; see t. *Yeb.* 14.8 (54 Lieberman).

name. Why not? And when the title is affixed to his name, there are three ways of indicating the relationship of the son to the father: X *ben rabbi* Y, X *bîrabbî* Y, X *bênô shel rabbi* Y. Similarly there are three ways of indicating 'X from place Y': X of (*min*) Y, X a man of Y, X + *ethnikon*. Are these variations merely stylistic, the vagaries of redactors and scribes, or do they conceal substantive differences in status?<sup>14</sup> Many of the nouns and adjectives appended to rabbinic names (the Y of 'X the Y') are obscure.<sup>15</sup> No less obscure is the title *rabbi* itself. Tannaitic literature never describes, and hardly ever refers to, an 'ordination' ceremony. Who, then, is called a *rabbi* and who not? Disciples called their master 'rabbi' in both the second and third persons, but did the title also indicate some administrative or institutional function?<sup>16</sup>

Although many points are obscure, these modes of nomenclature illustrate those elements which distinguished one Jew from another. In rabbinic society one's status was determined by one's father (not mother),<sup>17</sup> one's profession, and one's origin. We shall return to each of these below. Conspicuously absent from rabbinic nomenclature is the relationship of disciple to teacher. Not a single second-century *rabbi* is regularly referred to as 'Rabbi X disciple of Rabbi Y' or 'Rabbi X of the academy of Rabbi Y'.<sup>18</sup> This avoidance might indicate that the rabbis were attempting not to separate themselves from the normal social patterns (contrast Jesus)<sup>19</sup> or, in turn, that the normal social patterns were simply too strong for the rabbis to overcome. We shall return to this question below.

<sup>14</sup> On 'Rabbi X son of Rabbi Y' see Cohen, 'Epigraphical Rabbis', pp. 8–9. On 'X from place Y' see note 81 below.

<sup>15</sup> S. Klein, 'On the Investigation of Names and Epithets', *Lešonenu* 1 (1929), 325–50, and 2 (1930), 260–72. This subject awaits detailed investigation. See now Rachel Hachlili, 'Names and Epithets of the Jews in the Second Temple Period', *Eres-Israel* 17 (1984), 188–211 and Joseph Naveh, 'Nameless People?' *Zion* 54 (1989), 1–16.

<sup>16</sup> See below. Other titles are *Rabban*, *Biribbi*, *Abba*, etc. On second person address see Gospel of John 1.38 and t. *Ed.* 3.4 (460 Zuckerman).

<sup>17</sup> In 'X son of Y', Y is always the father, never the mother. Some have suggested that *Abba Saul b. Botnit*, *Yohanan b. HaHornit*, and *Yosi b. Durmasqit* are identified by their mothers, but this is unlikely (see B. J. Bamberger, *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period* (1939, repr. New York 1968), pp. 230–1. Some mediaeval authorities suggested that *Pazi* was the mother of *R. Simeon b. Pazi*, but this too is unlikely; see S. Lieberman, *Tosefeth Rishonim* III, 160. See now Tal Ilan, "'Man Born of Woman . . .': The Phenomenon of Men Bearing Metronymes at the time of Jesus", *Novum Testamentum* 34 (1992), 23–45.

<sup>18</sup> As far as I have been able to determine, this is true of the amoraic period as well. In one story a prostitute asked a rabbinic disciple to write down for her 'his name, the name of his town, (the name of his master), and the name of his school in which he studies Torah'. In other words, she requested his address (*Sifre* Numbers 115 (Horowitz 128 129); b. *Men.* 44a).

<sup>19</sup> Mark 3:33–5; 10:29–30.

#### IV SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIVISIONS (RICH AND POOR, CITY AND COUNTRY)

Two of the fundamental tensions of ancient society were those of city versus country and rich versus poor. Modern western societies feel these tensions too but in much attenuated form. The city in antiquity was the home of the large landowner and the tax collector, the administrative capital from which the villages and their lands were controlled, and the centre for the dissemination of culture and vice (which, in a peasant's perspective, are often synonymous). The countryside was populated by shepherds and peasants tending their modest possessions or, more likely than not, the not-so-modest possessions of others. In both city and country the overwhelming bulk of the population was very poor. There were people of modest wealth – successful merchants, say, or prosperous landowners or skilled artisans – but they were not sufficiently numerous to constitute a middle class of the dimensions familiar to us in modern western economies. Last and numerically least were the rich and the very rich, those who owned large estates, lived in luxurious villas, wielded power through official and unofficial channels, and rarely came into direct contact with those whom they exploited. The poor hated the rich with justifiable passion and, without a large middle class to serve as a buffer between them, had frequent opportunities to express their feelings. This description portrays in general terms the society of the Roman empire as a whole, especially the Greek east; that it fits Palestine in the first century is amply demonstrated by Josephus and the New Testament.<sup>20</sup> Does it also fit Palestine in the second-century, rabbinic society in particular?

Ptolemy, a geographer of the second century, lists thirty-one Palestinian *poleis* (cities and large towns): eight on the coast, four in Galilee, and nineteen in Judaea. If we include Dora, Akko-Ptolemais, and Beth Shean (Scythopolis), omitted by Ptolemy, the total is thirty-four (excluding the cities of Samaria, Idumaea and Peraea).<sup>21</sup> The villages, by contrast, numbered in the hundreds, if not thousands. Josephus reports that in CE 67, Galilee had 204 villages and *poleis*. According to Dio Cassius, in the war against Bar Kokhba the Romans destroyed fifty 'important' fortresses

<sup>20</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome* (Leiden 1979), pp. 206–27; S. Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander to Hadrian* (Notre Dame 1980), *passim*. In general, see G. E. M. de Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* (Ithaca 1982), and the works listed in note 3 above.

<sup>21</sup> Stern no. 337a. On the urbanization of Palestine see now Z. Safrai, 'Urbanization in Israel in the Greco-Roman Period', *Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel* 5 (1980), 105–29, and M. Broshi, 'The Urban Population of the Land of Israel', in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple to the Muslim Conquest*, ed. Z. Baras *et al.* (Jerusalem 1982), pp. 447–50.

and 985 'famous' villages in Judaea.<sup>22</sup> Some of these villages were tiny, others were more substantial. Josephus claims that the smallest Galilean village had a population of fifteen thousand and in spite of the obvious exaggeration the claim has some truth. Some villages of Roman Syria had very large populations.<sup>23</sup> Whatever the total population of the province in the second century – the guesses range from an incredible five million (including Samaria and the Negev) to a more realistic one million – most Jews lived in rural villages and small towns, not cities.<sup>24</sup>

We turn now to the rabbinic evidence concerning city and country. The tannaim sometimes distinguish between a *kēṛak* (large walled city), an *‘îr*, and a *kēṣpar* (village),<sup>25</sup> sometimes between a *kēṛak* and an *‘îr*,<sup>26</sup> and sometimes between a *kēṛak* and a *kēṣpar*.<sup>27</sup> The distinction between these terms is not always clear. *‘îr* in particular has a wide range of meanings, extending from 'large city' to 'small town' to 'small village' (or country estate).<sup>28</sup> A city (*‘îr*) had a market place, a bathhouse, a synagogue, and a Torah scroll.<sup>29</sup> A 'large city' had to have ten 'men of leisure'; otherwise it would have the status of a village.<sup>30</sup> For the rabbis, then, the crucial differentiation between city and village was not population size or administrative status but institutional life. The village lacked the institutions which characterized the city. It also lacked the refinements of the city. Country onions were inferior to those consumed by city folk. City girls washed in the bathhouse, country girls did not; country girls carried heavy pitchers and worked at the grinding wheel, city girls did not. The difference between them at puberty was noticeable.<sup>31</sup>

Although the rabbis know how to distinguish the city from the village, they know nothing about tensions between them. The very elasticity of the word *‘îr* shows how little attention the tannaim paid to the division

<sup>22</sup> Josephus, *Vita* 235; Dio Cassius 69.14.1 = Stern no. 440 (p. 392). S. Applebaum writes that 600 rural villages are archaeologically attested in Judaea and Samaria for the Roman period; see his 'Judaea and a Roman Province: The Countryside as a Political Economic Factor', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 11, 8 (1977), p. 362.

<sup>23</sup> Josephus, *Jewish War* 3.43; see Harper and Tchalenko, note 5 above.

<sup>24</sup> Broshi, pp. 442–55. <sup>25</sup> m. *Meg.* 1.1–3; 2.3. <sup>26</sup> m. *B. Meṣ.* 8.6.

<sup>27</sup> m. *B. Meṣ.* 4.6 = t. *B. Meṣ.* 3.20 (377 Zuckermandel).

<sup>28</sup> *‘îr* = large city: common; = small town: m. *San.* 1.6 and m. *Ket.* 7.8; = small village (or country estate): m. *B. Bat.* 4.7 and m. *‘Eruv.* 5.6. On population size see further m. *Ta’an.* 3.4. In general see S. Krauss, 'City, Town, and Village in the Talmud', *He ‘Atid* 3 (1923), 1–50; see now Ze'ev Safrai, *The Jewish Community in the Talmudic Period* (Jerusalem 1995), 29–49.

<sup>29</sup> m. *Ned.* 5.4–5; t. *B. Meṣ.* 11.23 (396 Zuckermandel). Schools are omitted in these texts but are added in b. *San.* 17b.

<sup>30</sup> m. *Meg.* 1.3. It is of course unlikely that all Jewish cities followed these prescriptions. The meaning of 'ten men of leisure' is not clear.

<sup>31</sup> m. *Ter.* 2.5; t. *Nid.* 6.9 (Zuck. 648).

between city and country. Similarly the tannaim tell us almost nothing about rivalry between regions (e.g. Galilee and Judaea) and cities (e.g. Tiberias and Sepphoris) and about enmity between the poor and the rich. Since these tensions are documented for both the first and the third–fourth centuries, they probably existed in the second century as well but were ignored by the tannaim.<sup>32</sup> Description of contemporary society was not their concern.

## V RICH AND POOR

The economic status of most of the tannaim is unknown, but at least some of them were landowners. R. Gamaliel's estate was worked by sharecroppers, R. Yohanan b. Matthia's by hired hands.<sup>33</sup> R. Simeon of Shezor reveals his family history:

My father's family consisted of householders (*ba'ālê bātīm*). Why was the family destroyed? Because they judged monetary cases in courts of one and because they raised small animals.<sup>34</sup>

His family consisted of *ba'ālê bātīm*, prosperous landowners,<sup>35</sup> whose fortunes declined because of two sins. 'They', presumably the patriarchs of the clan, would judge monetary cases by themselves although rabbinic law demands a tribunal of three. (Para-legal justice meted out by a single powerful person is common in rural societies; compare the position of a mafia chieftain in a Sicilian village.) The second sin was the raising of small animals. The rabbis regarded shepherds and goatherds as inveterate thieves and contumacious liars whose testimony, like the testimony of usurers, gamblers and other scoundrels, could not be trusted. The rabbis even prohibited the raising of small cattle.<sup>36</sup> This prejudice links the

<sup>32</sup> First century: see note 20 above. Third–fourth centuries: p. *Hor.* end (*pagani* vs. *boulentae* of Sepphoris); b. *Ket.* 103a–b (Judah the Patriarch's prohibition of rural eulogies); G. Alon, 'Ga'on, Ge'im', *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World*, pp. 344–53 (rich vs. poor); L. Levine, 'R. Simeon b. Yohai and the Purification of Tiberias', *Hebrew Union College Annual* 49 (1978), 143–85 (Sepphoris vs. Tiberias); S. Lieberman, *Siphre Zutta (The Midrash of Lydda)* (New York 1968), pp. 145–8 (Galilee versus the South).

<sup>33</sup> m. *B. Meš.* 5.8 and 7.1; in general see A. Büchler, *The Economic Conditions of Judaea after the Destruction of the Second Temple* (London 1912), pp. 29–41.

<sup>34</sup> t. *B. Qam.* 8.14 (362 Zuckerman). Some readings ascribe this statement to R. Ishmael.

<sup>35</sup> m. *Sabb.* 1.1 and *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan B* 31 (Schechter 34a). The term frequently has this meaning.

<sup>36</sup> Prejudice against goatherds and shepherds, goats and sheep: m. *B. Qam.* 7.7; t. *B. Qam.* 8.10–15 (362 Zuckerman); t. *B. Meš.* 2.33 (375 Zuckerman); t. *San.* 5.5 (423 Zuckerman); m. *Roš. Haš.* 1.8. 'It cannot be accidental that no flocks are mentioned of any rabbi or landowner discussed above (see note 33)', writes Büchler, p. 45. The goats of m. *Tam.* 3.8 troubled the landowners of the pre-70 period. By the third century rabbinic views had shifted; R. Yohanan preferred sheep to land (b. *Hul.* 84a). Social prejudice adequately explains the rabbinic attitude towards shepherds and there is no

rabbis to other landowners in the eternal conflict between farmers and shepherds, a conflict as old as Cain and Abel. The family of R. Simeon of Shezur violated the interests of its class and was punished as a result.

The rabbis share not only the prejudices but also the concerns of the landowning class. The Mishnah has relatively little to say about commerce and trade (which are severely restricted by the prohibition to take and pay interest) and about manufacture and marketing (there is almost no maritime law). Much of the Mishnah, however, treats the problems faced by a landowner who works his land and tends his cattle while trying to observe the prescriptions of the Torah. The economic status of these people will have ranged from the barely comfortable to the very wealthy, although most of them surely were rather well-to-do.<sup>37</sup> Whether rabbinic legislation also favoured the interests of this class in its conflicts with sharecroppers, servants, employees, etc., remains to be investigated.<sup>38</sup>

The rabbis also share the viewpoints of the well-to-do. The Jewish matron, like her Roman counterpart, was supposed to spend her time with her wool, no matter how many servants she was able to afford.<sup>39</sup> The etiquette to be followed at a rabbinic symposium mimics that of the Graeco-Roman. It is the etiquette of those who recline on stuffed pillows as they eat multi-course dinners served by butlers and other attendants. These servants had many uses. For example, their hair could be used to wipe off excess oil from the hands of the diners. The master of ceremonies at these banquets was the rabbinic sage.<sup>40</sup> One master beheld the masses gathered for festival and exclaimed, 'Praised be he who created all these to serve me.' This is the arrogance of wealth.<sup>41</sup>

It is unlikely that all the tannaim were prosperous landowners but no tannaitic document except one ascribes poverty to any of the second-century rabbis. The exception, *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan*, is really

need for the complicated political explanations advanced by A. Gulak, 'Shepherds and Breeders of Small Cattle after the Destruction of the Second Temple', *Tarbiz* 12 (1940–1), pp. 181–9. See G. Alon, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age*, pp. 277–85.

<sup>37</sup> J. Neusner, *Judaism: The Evidence of the Mishnah*, pp. 250–6. To what extent there was a landowning 'middle-class' is not entirely clear. See Freyne, *Galilee*; A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Oxford 1963, repr. 1969), pp. 139–41; D. Sperber, *Roman Palestine 200–400: The Land* (Ramat-Gan 1978), pp. 177–203.

<sup>38</sup> Neusner, *Evidence*, and Sperber, *Land*, only begin to analyse this complex topic. Much discussed is the *sikarikon* law which allowed the repurchase of confiscated land, but the larger issue awaits investigation.

<sup>39</sup> m. *Ketub.* 5.5.

<sup>40</sup> m. *Ber.* 8; t. *Ber.* 4.8–10 (20 Lieberman), 5.5–7 (26 Lieberman), 5.25–30 (29–31 Lieberman). Some of the laws presented in these texts probably originated in *ḥabūrôt*, associations of people who observe purity laws (see below), but others seem to be merely laws of etiquette. On rabbinic symposia, see S. Stein, 'The Influence of Symposia Literature on the Literary Form of the Pesah Haggadah', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 8 (1957), 13–44.

<sup>41</sup> Or the arrogance of power? t. *Ber.* 6.2 (33–34 Lieberman).

not much of an exception. Its stories of the early years of Rabbi Aqiba and Rabbi Eliezer b. Hyrcanus are clearly of the 'rags to riches' type designed to encourage future students to overcome all obstacles in their quest for Torah. R. Eliezer is almost disinherited by his wealthy family because of his desire to study Torah, but in the end he is assured that he will receive his rightful share of the inheritance – and then some.<sup>42</sup> R. Aqiba, in contrast, is poor, but he too perseveres and in the end he too is both learned and rich.<sup>43</sup> The narrator of this story obviously hoped that students from the poorer classes would imitate the paradigmatic R. Aqiba and enter the rabbinic academy. The narrator also hoped that mastery of Torah would be accompanied by wealth. We do not know how frequently either of these hopes was realized. Some Jews even wished to become rabbis in order to become wealthy:

Perhaps you will say, 'I shall study Torah so that I may become wealthy, so that I may be called 'rabbi', so that I may receive reward in the world to come', therefore scripture says 'To love the Lord your God'. Everything you do, do only out of love.<sup>44</sup>

How the rabbinic estate conferred wealth on its members is not clear (see below), but the connection between Mammon and Torah is unmistakable.

According to the rabbinic work ethic, a father was obligated to teach his son a 'clean and easy craft'.<sup>45</sup> The tannaim were familiar with dozens of crafts<sup>46</sup> but how many of the tannaim were themselves craftsmen and labourers? Some of the Jews buried at Joppa were remembered as X the

<sup>42</sup> *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* A 6 and B 12–13 (14b–17a Schechter). Eliezer's acquisition of wealth is a point of contention between the two versions of the story; see Z. Kagan, 'Divergent Tendencies and their Literary Moulding in the Aggadah', *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971), 151–70.

<sup>43</sup> See the references in note 42. The date of *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* is uncertain; it may well be post-tannaitic.

<sup>44</sup> *Sifre* Deuteronomy 41 (87 Finkelstein); cf. *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* B 46 (65a Schechter); *Mekilta Kasha* 3 (168–169 Lauterbach = 327 Horovitz-Rabin); and *Sifre* Deuteronomy 48 (113–14 Finkelstein).

<sup>45</sup> m. *Qidd.* 4.14; t. *Qidd.* 5.15–16 (297–298 Lieberman). Work ethic: m. *Abot* 1.10 ('Love labour').

<sup>46</sup> Here, in no particular order, are *some* of the crafts mentioned by tannaitic literature: attendant at a bathhouse, attendant at a well, dyer, olive processor, glass maker, plasterer, potter, wool maker, goldsmith, silversmith, blacksmith, carpenter, stone-cutter, worker in pitch, tree trimmer, barber, tanner, tailor, notary, school teacher, money changer, wool comber, merchant, camel driver, sailor, shepherd, shopkeeper, donkey driver, butcher, baker, wagon-driver, miller, fisherman, physician, perfumer, fruit-picker, one who fattens animals, launderer, leather worker, net maker, weaver, peddler, mill-stone sharpener. For lists of professions see e.g. m. *Kel.* 8.8–9 and 29.6–7; m. *Miqv.* 9.7; m. *Sabb.* 1.2–3; t. *Sabb.* 1.8–9 (2–3 Lieberman); m. *Pe'a* 4.6; *Mekilta Neziḳin* 1 (6 Lauterbach = 248 Horovitz-Rabin). See now Meir Ayali, *Nomenclature of Workers and Artisans in the Talmudic and Midrashic Literature* (Tel Aviv: ha-Kibuts ha-meuhad 1984).



Baker, Y the Peddler, Z the Flax-Seller,<sup>47</sup> but rabbinic literature, both tannaitic and amoraic, rarely bestows such cognomens upon the tannaim.<sup>48</sup> Amoraic traditions refer to the poverty of R. Joshua and others who allegedly were employed in menial occupations,<sup>49</sup> but these traditions receive no confirmation from tannaitic sources. In response to the injunction for a father to teach his son a trade, R. Nehorai remarks:

I would set aside all the crafts in the world and teach my son nothing except the Torah, for a man enjoys its reward in this world, and its whole worth remains for the world to come. But with all other crafts it is not so; for when a man falls into sickness or old age or troubles and cannot engage in his work, lo, he dies of hunger. But with the Torah it is not so . . .<sup>50</sup>

This opinion is similar to that of R. Eliezer:

When the prophet Jeremiah said to the Israelites: Why do you not busy yourselves with the Torah? they said to him: If we be kept busy with the words of the Torah, how will we get our sustenance? Then Jeremiah brought forth to them the bottle containing the manna and said to them . . . See with what your forefathers, who busied themselves with the words of the Torah, were provided. You, too, if you will busy yourselves with the words of the Torah, God will provide you with sustenance of this sort.<sup>51</sup>

Both Torah and the necessity to earn a living make demands upon the Jew but the rabbis usually declare that the demands of the former have precedence over those of the latter.<sup>52</sup>

Who produces such opinions? The poor, who, unable to make a living in any case, decide to make the theological best of their situation? Or the

<sup>47</sup> J. B. Frey, *Corpus inscriptionum Iudaicarum*, 2 vols. (Rome 1936 and 1952), vol. 2, nos. 902, 928, 929, 931, 937, 940, 945, and 949. It is perhaps significant that none of the rabbis buried at Joppa bore this type of nomenclature. The Murabaʿat documents refer to a Josephus the Scribe; see *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, vol. 2, p. 232 (no. 103).

<sup>48</sup> The only two clear cases known to me are Yohanan the Sandal-maker and Judah the Baker. Several pre-70 figures were remembered with their crafts: Nahum the *libellarius*, Zekarya son of the butcher, Nehunya the Ditch-digger, Tobiah the Physician, and Judah b. Isaiah the Perfumer (I assume that the perfumer was Isaiah, not Judah, who was a contemporary of R. Aqiba). The reference to 'the son of the blacksmith' in t. *ʿEruv*. 5.7 (112 Lieberman) is probably corrupt; see Lieberman's apparatus and cf. t. *Ketub*. 5.1 (72 Lieberman). Various cognomens are obscure and may refer to a trade or craft: Simeon the *peḡūlī*, Yosi the *bōrem*, Joshua the *garsī*, Levi the *sadār* (or *sarād*), Eleazar *ḥismā* (the explanation of this name in Leviticus *Rabbah* 23.4 (531–2 Margalioth) is obviously fictional), and Eleazar the *qappār*. For the rabbinic references to all these figures, see Hyman, *Toldoth Tannaim veʿAmoraim*.

<sup>49</sup> R. Joshua: b. *Ber*. 28a and p. *Ber*. 4 (7d). In general, see Urbach, 'Class Status', pp. 24 and 31, who accepts the amoraic testimony.

<sup>50</sup> m. *Qidd*. 4.14. <sup>51</sup> *Mekilta Wayassa* 6 (126 Lauterbach = 172 Horovitz-Rabin).

<sup>52</sup> *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* A 1 (1a Schechter) and A 28 (43b Schechter); compare Matthew 6:24.

rich, who have the leisure (Greek *scholē*, whence Latin *schola* and English *school*) to discuss such idle questions?<sup>53</sup> R. Simeon b. Yohai says explicitly that only the rich are really able to study Torah:

Only to those who have manna to eat is it given to study the Torah. For behold, how can a man be sitting and studying when he does not know where his food and drink will come from, nor where he can get his clothes and coverings? Hence only to those who have manna to eat is it given to study the Torah.<sup>54</sup>

This is not an isolated view.<sup>55</sup> The idealization of poverty and the ‘democratic tendency of rabbinic Judaism’, which affirms the equality and nobility of all Jews, could derive just as easily from rich circles as from poor. At least two representatives of the democratic ideal were wealthy.<sup>56</sup>

If the rabbis demanded complete and exclusive devotion to the study and observance of the Torah, how was a poor rabbi (or would-be rabbi) supposed to support himself?<sup>57</sup> Rabbinic functions like judging disputes and teaching Torah did not, in theory at least, confer any material rewards, although a few *issars* could be made by inspecting blemishes in first-born cattle or by teaching the Bible to children.<sup>58</sup> Like all holy men the rabbis received gifts from those who venerated them, not only Jews but Gentiles and Samaritans as well.<sup>59</sup> The earliest Christians apparently

<sup>53</sup> Compare *Ben Sira* 38.24–34.

<sup>54</sup> *Mekilta Besallah* 1 (171 Lauterbach = 76 Horovitz-Rabin); cf. *Wayassa* 3 (104 Lauterbach = 161 Horovitz-Rabin).

<sup>55</sup> See *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* A 3 and B 4 (7b–8a Schechter); A 40 (64a Schechter); and *Mekilta Amaleq* 4 (183 Lauterbach = 198 Horovitz-Rabin).

<sup>56</sup> Idealization of poverty: m. *Abot* 6.4; ‘democratic tendency’: m. *Šabb.* 14.4 (‘All Israel are the sons of kings’); m. *B. Qam.* 8.6 (‘Even the poor of Israel are seen as if they were impoverished noblemen’); m. *B. Meš.* 7.1; t. *Ketub.* 5.8 (74 Lieberman); t. *Nid.* 9.16–17 (651–2 Zuckerman); m. *Ta’an.* end. The phrase ‘democratic tendency of rabbinic Judaism’ is from S. W. Baron, *The Social and Religious History of the Jews* (New York 1952), vol. 2, p. 288. This ideology is advocated by R. Gamaliel (t. *Nidd.*) and R. Yohanan b. Matthia (m. *B. Meš.*) both of whom were wealthy.

<sup>57</sup> M. Beer, ‘Talmud Torah and Derekh Eretz’, *Bar Ilan Annual* 2 (1964), 134–62, and ‘Issachar and Zebulun’, *Bar Ilan Annual* 6 (1968), 167–80; H. Z. Reines, ‘The Support of Scholars in the Talmudic Period’, *Sinai* 9 (1946), numbers 106–7, pp. 137–52, and 10 (1947), numbers 119–21, pp. 168–73.

<sup>58</sup> No material rewards: m. *Bek.* 4.6; t. *Bek.* 3.8 (537 Zuckerman); m. *Ned.* 4.3. A few *issars*: m. *Bek.* 4.5; m. *Ned.* 4.3; m. *Qidd.* 4.13 with the note in Albeck’s edition. (An *issar* is a small coin, the Roman *as*.)

<sup>59</sup> t. *Šabb.* 7.17 (28 Lieberman); t. *Dem.* 5.24 (93 Lieberman); t. *Ma’as.* 2.1 (230–1 Lieberman); m. *Beš.* 3.2; t. *Kelim B. Bat.* 2.4 (592 Zuckerman); see the similar story in b. *‘Abod. Zar.* 35b. Song of Songs *Rabbah* 2.16, on the hospitality extended to the rabbis by the people of Usha, seems to be a tract advocating such behaviour, but the provenance and meaning of this account remain to be investigated. M. *Sukk.* 2.5; t. *Ber.* 4.15–16 (21–3 Lieberman); and b. *Yoma* 79b may or may not refer to gifts.

relied on charity of this type,<sup>60</sup> but the tannaitic references to these spontaneous good-will offerings are brief and inconsequential, and give no indication that the rabbinic movement depended for its survival upon this sort of maintenance. According to amoraic sources prominent tannaim would approach wealthy Jews for a donation on behalf of the ‘sages’ or the ‘students’, but this picture, although plausible, is nowhere confirmed by tannaitic sources.<sup>61</sup> In tannaitic texts the rabbis receive unsolicited gifts, not solicited charity.

The tannaim encouraged Jews to support the poor, tried to regulate the collection and disbursement of charity, and perhaps even served as charity agents themselves,<sup>62</sup> but the tannaim never say that charity should be given to needy rabbis and never report that poor students actually received any charity.<sup>63</sup> The Babylonian Talmud has R. Gamaliel appoint two needy students to public positions in order to give them a livelihood, but the ‘make-work’ aspect of the appointment and the reference to the poverty of the students are absent from the tannaitic version of the story.<sup>64</sup> Paul argues that those who proclaim the gospel ought to be able to make a living from their work just as priests are able to make a living from their work in the temple.<sup>65</sup> The tannaim, like Paul, regard their work, the study and teaching of Torah, as equivalent to the Temple service, even suggesting that a rabbi at his work was bound by the same rules which applied to an officiating priest, but they do not draw the Pauline conclusion. That rabbis are as entitled as priests to economic support is an idea which first appears in amoraic texts.<sup>66</sup> In the second century only priests (preferably, priests who were rabbis) received tithes. Rabbis did not.

<sup>60</sup> Matthew 10:9–11; 1 Corinthians 9 and 2 Corinthians 7:10–11; Philippians 4:10–20.

<sup>61</sup> p. *Pesab.* 4.9 (31b–c) and 7.1 (34a) = b. *Pesab.* 53a; p. *Hor.* 3.7 (48a); *Leviticus Rabbah* 5.4 (110–14 Margalioth); cf. *Leviticus Rabbah* 34.16 (812–13 Margalioth); p. *Meg.* 3.1 (74a); p. *Šegal.* 5.6 (49b).

<sup>62</sup> Encourage Jews to support the poor: t. *Peʿa* 4.18–21 (61 Lieberman). Regulations: m. *Peʿa* 8.7–9; t. *Peʿa* 4.8–17 (57–60 Lieberman); t. *Šabb.* 16.22 (79–80 Lieberman); t. *Meg.* 1.5 (344–5 Lieberman) and 2.15 (352 Lieberman); t. *Dem.* 3.17 (77–8 Lieberman). Rabbis served as charity agents: m. *Maʿas. Š.* 5.9 (ambiguous); *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan A* 3 (9a Schechter) (involving Benjamin the Righteous); and the amoraic traditions listed in note 61. On *parnasim*, *gabaʿim*, and *heber ʿir*, see further below.

<sup>63</sup> The only possible exception known to me is t. *Peʿa* 4.10 (58 Lieberman).

<sup>64</sup> Compare *Sifre* Deuteronomy 16 (26 Finkelstein) with b. *Hor.* 10a–b.

<sup>65</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:13–14; compare *Didache* 13:3–7.

<sup>66</sup> Study of Torah equivalent to temple service: *Sifre* Deuteronomy 41 (87–8 Finkelstein) and *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan A* 4 (9b Schechter). Same laws apply to rabbi and to priest: t. *Ker.* 1.20 (562–563 Zuckerman). Pauline conclusion in amoraic texts: b. *Ketub.* 105b; b. *Ber.* 10b; b. *Ned.* 62a; cf. p. *San.* 2.6 (20d) = *Genesis Rabbah* 80.1 (950–3 Theodor-Albeck).

In sum, tannaitic documents nowhere imply that any second-century rabbi was poor. Nor do they give any clue as to how a poor rabbi might have supported himself and his family. The amoraic testimonies about poor rabbis, organized charity for rabbis, and patriarchal appointments of needy rabbis to salaried posts are best explained as throwbacks ('retrojections') from the amoraic period. Tension between the well-to-do and the rabbis, patriarchal appointments of rabbis to salaried posts, and the distribution of the 'poor tithe' to needy students are securely attested for the period of Judah the Patriarch.<sup>67</sup> During his tenure the patriarchate enlarged its powers and the rabbinic movement expanded its social horizons to include the non-rabbinic wealthy and the rabbinic poor. We shall see below various other indications that Judah's patriarchate marked a major advance in the institutionalization and socialization of the rabbinic estate. In the period before Judah the patriarch the rabbis were well-to-do, associated with the well-to-do, and interested themselves in questions which were important to the landed classes.<sup>68</sup> Perhaps some tannaim were poor, but their poverty has been rendered invisible by the tannaitic documents.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Tension between the well-to-do and the rabbis: G. Alon, 'Ga'on, Ge'im', and 'Those Appointed for Money', both in *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World*; Lee Levine, 'The Jewish Patriarch (Nasi) in Third Century Palestine', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II.19, ed. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin–New York 1979), 649–88; R. Kimelman, 'The Conflict between R. Yohanan and Resh Laqish on the Supremacy of the Patriarchate', *Proceedings of the Seventh World Congress of Jewish Studies . . . 1977: Studies in the Talmud, Halacha, and Midrash* (Jerusalem 1981), 1–20. Cf. the prayer of the school of R. Yannai, 'Do not (O God) bring us to need the gift of men and do not entrust our support into the hands of men, for their gift is small but their abuse is great' (p. *Ber.* 4.2 (7d)) with the analysis of A. Oppenheimer, 'Those of the School of Rabbi Yannai', *Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel* 4 (1978), 137–45). Appointments to salaried posts: see below. Distribution of poor tithe: p. *Pe'a* 8.8 (21a).

<sup>68</sup> Second-century rabbis dine with people who seem to have been wealthy: *Sifre* Deuteronomy 41 (85 Finkelstein); t. *Šabb.* 2.5 (7 Lieberman); t. *Šabb.* 13.2 (57 Lieberman); t. *Erub.* 6.2 (118–19 Lieberman); t. *Pesah.* 10.12 (198–9 Lieberman); t. *Sukk.* 1.9 (258 Lieberman). The rabbis also associated with the well-to-do: *Mekilta Pisba* 15 (127 Lauterbach = 57 Horovitz-Rabin); t. *Ter.* 2.13 (115 Lieberman); t. *Erub.* 1.2 (87 Lieberman); t. *Hag.* 2.13 (386 Lieberman). Alon and Beer understand these texts as referring to charity – needy rabbis are given a place at the tables of the wealthy – but there is no indication of this in the texts themselves.

<sup>69</sup> Perhaps the poor rabbis were not remembered by subsequent generations because they had no students. If there was no institutional means of support for needy students, such students will have had to depend upon their masters for material aid. Wealthy rabbis could afford such aid, poor rabbis could not. Therefore wealthy rabbis had students to preserve their memory, poor rabbis did not. On rabbinic support for students see the amoraic data assembled by M. Aberbach, 'The Relations between Master and Disciple in the Talmudic Age', *Essays Presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie*, ed. H. J. Zimmels (London 1967), pp. 1–24, esp. 4, nn. 29–31 (= H. Z. Dimitrovsky ed., *Exploring the Talmud, I: Education* (New York 1976), pp. 202–25, esp. 205, nn. 29–31).

## VI CITY AND COUNTRY

If in the division between rich and poor the tannaitic sources clearly place the rabbis in the orbit of the former rather than the latter, in the division between city and country the evidence is more ambiguous. Many tannaim were landowners, as we have already seen, but landowners in antiquity could live either in the city or country (for example, R. Eliezer lived in Lydda but owned a vineyard in Kephars-Tabi, about 15½ kilometres south-east of the town). Let us try to determine where the bulk of the tannaim lived.<sup>70</sup>

They did not live in the six coastal cities: Akko-Ptolemais, Dora, Caesarea, Apollonia, Joppa and Ascalon. Of the legal cases decided by the tannaim, two originated in Akko-Ptolemais, one in Caesarea, none in the other cities. Various tannaim are said to have visited Akko-Ptolemais, Caesarea and Ascalon, but no rabbi is ever said to have lived in any of them. No rabbi even visits any of the other three cities.<sup>71</sup> The rabbinic absence from these cities, especially Caesarea and Joppa, is striking. In the third century Caesarea was one of the most important rabbinic settlements in the country, but not a single rabbi lived there in the second-century. In the second century Joppa was a flourishing city with a flourishing Jewish community, as archaeology demonstrates. In the third and fourth centuries several of her native sons became amoraim, but in the second century Joppa too was avoided by the tannaim.<sup>72</sup> These coastal cities, with pagan populations, cosmopolitan ways and mercantile interests, were not attractive to the rabbis of the second-century.<sup>73</sup>

Only one of the four cities of the south was populated by the rabbis. Antipatris, Ashdod-Azotus and Gaza were never graced by a rabbinic presence. The exception is Jamnia-Jabneh, whose 'synod', numbering at times as many as 'seventy-two' or thirty-eight rabbis,<sup>74</sup> has named an era

<sup>70</sup> t. *Ma'as.* 5.16 (271 Lieberman).

<sup>71</sup> Legal cases: in appendix 29.2 below, A 36 and C 1 (Akko-Ptolemais), and A 41 (Caesarea). Various tannaim visit Akko-Ptolemais: t. *Mo'ed (Qat.)* 2.15 (372 Lieberman); t. *Pesab.* 2.15 (146–7 Lieberman); t. *Ber.* 5.2 (25 Lieberman); Caesarea: t. *Sukk.* 2.2 (260 Lieberman – the reference may be to Caesarea Philippi); t. *Dem.* 3.14 (77 Lieberman – unclear whether R. Yosi actually visited Caesarea); Ascalon: t. *Miqw.* 6.3 (658 Zuckerman). The indispensable reference work for this subject is *Sefer haYisub*, vol. 1, part 1, ed. S. Klein (Jerusalem 1939).

<sup>72</sup> In the early second century Joppa had a Jewish *agoranomos*; see J. Kaplan, *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962), 149–50. The *Sefer haYisub*, pp. 79–80, lists the following amoraim who were labelled 'from Joppa': R. Ada, R. Yudan, R. Nehemyah, R. Nahman and R. Tanhum.

<sup>73</sup> Hence too there is little rabbinic mercantile law, as indicated above.

<sup>74</sup> 'Seventy-two' elders (a typological number): m. *Yad.* 3.5 and 4.2. Thirty eight: *Sifre Numbers* 124 (158 Horovitz) (but the parallel text in t. *Miqw.* 7.11 (661 Zuckerman) has thirty-two elders in *Lydda*).

in modern historiography. Why the rabbis headquartered their movement here between the wars of 66–74 and 132–5, is not known. Since Jamnia-Jabneh was part of an imperial estate, permission (or compulsion) must have come to the rabbis from the Roman government. This is probably the historical kernel from which sprouted the legendary account of the meeting of R. Yohanan b. Zakkai with the soon-to-be-emperor Vespasian.<sup>75</sup> The rabbis of the pre-Bar Kokhba period also frequented Lydda, a town mentioned by Ptolemy and raised to the status of a *polis* (with the name Lydda) around CE 200. R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus and R. Tarphon, two wealthy rabbis, lived in Lydda, but numerous others as well are associated with the town by tannaitic tradition. We even hear of a synod of thirty-two rabbis.<sup>76</sup> The other large towns of the south mentioned by Ptolemy and raised to the status of *poleis* in the third century, Beth-Gubrin (which became Eleutheropolis c. CE 200) and Emmaus (which became Nicopolis c. CE 221), had no rabbinic presence until the amoraic period.<sup>77</sup>

Of the four cities of the north, two, Gaba and Beth Shean (Scythopolis), were not populated by the rabbis.<sup>78</sup> The other two, Sepphoris and Tiberias, were centres of rabbinic activity in the third and fourth centuries and, to a much lesser extent, in the second. Sepphoris was home to R. Halaphta, his son R. Yosi, and, at the end of the century, R. Judah the Patriarch. The city was the setting for six legal decisions, a total exceeded only by Lydda. Tiberias in contrast was not home to any tanna and was the setting for only two legal cases.<sup>79</sup> Both cities were visited by various rabbis before and after the Bar Kokhba war. Kephars Utnai, a village mentioned by Ptolemy which became a Roman cavalry town after CE 135 with the name Legio and a *polis* c. CE 300 with the name Maximianopolis (Legio), had minimal rabbinic presence.

Some rabbis, then, did live in the cities, but most did not. Jamnia-Jabneh and Lydda are the only cities which saw large numbers of rabbis

<sup>75</sup> Jamnia-Jabneh part of an imperial estate: Josephus, *Bell.* II.167 and *Ant.* XVIII.31. This was brought to my attention by Professor Shimon Applebaum.

<sup>76</sup> See note 74. More common is the figure of *five* sages at Lydda: t. *Miqv.* 7.10 (660 Zuckerman); t. *Tobor.* 9.14 (670–71 Zuckerman); cf. *Sifre Zuta* p. 314, lines 21–2, ed. Horovitz, with S. Lieberman, *Sifre Zutta*, p. 97.

<sup>77</sup> Beth Gubrin was the place of origin for one tanna: t. *Obol.* 18.16 (617 Zuckerman). Emmaus was not a place of Torah: *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan B* 29 (30a Schechter).

<sup>78</sup> Beth Shean (Scythopolis) was the setting for two legal cases decided by the rabbis: m. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 1.4 and 4.12 (= c 28 and 31 in appendix II below). R. Meir once visited there: m. *Hul.* 6.2.

<sup>79</sup> Legal cases originating in Sepphoris: in appendix 29.2 below, cases A 7, 12, 33, 56; B 2; C 5; Lydda: C 7, 8, 9, 26, 37, 40; cf. C 44, 45, 46, cases which are adjudicated in Lydda but which apparently originated elsewhere; Tiberias: B 5 and C 3.

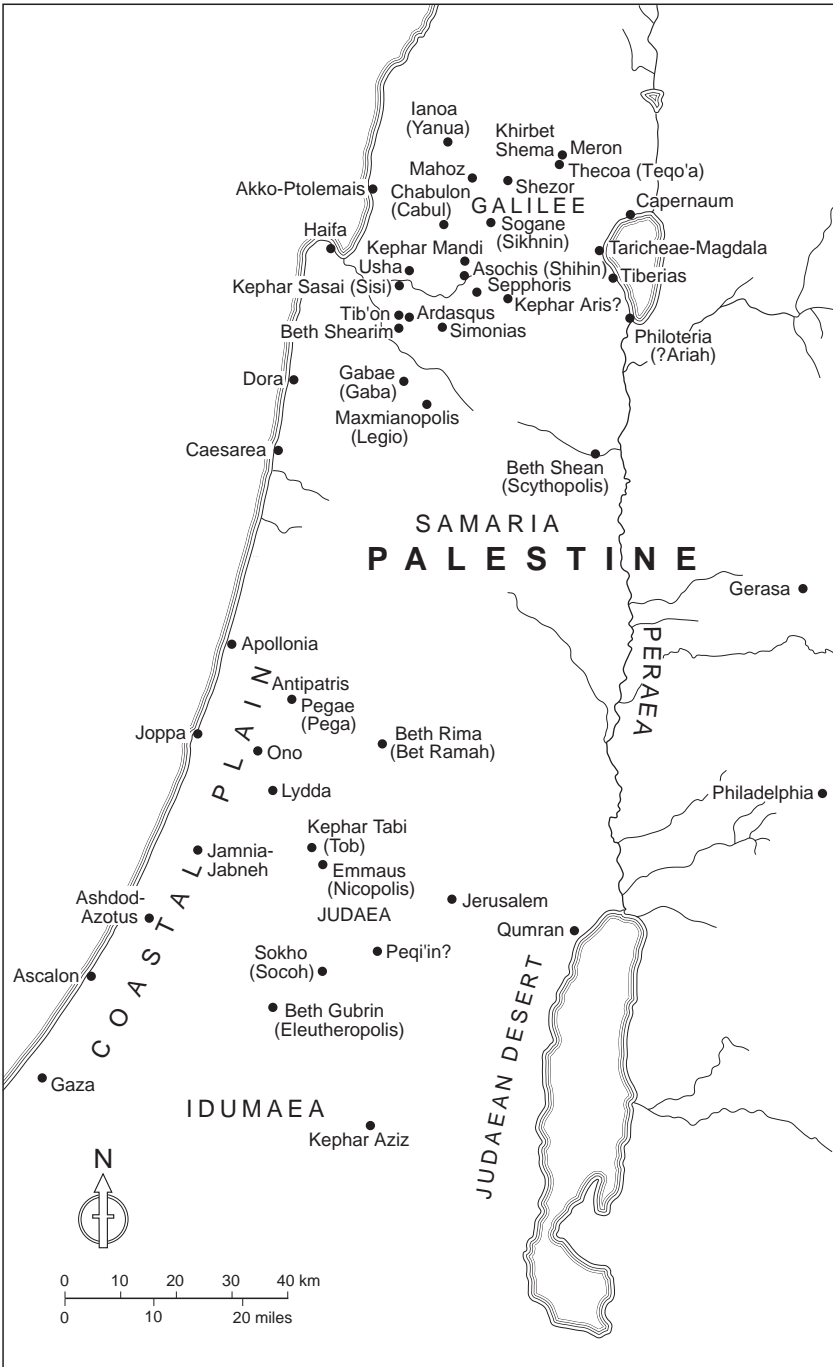


Fig. 29.1 Rabbinic activity in Galilee.



in the tannaitic period (pre-Bar Kokhba). Caesarea, Tiberias, and Sepphoris had a rabbinic presence of sorts both before and after the Bar Kokhba war, but nothing comparable to the presence which the rabbis maintained in these cities in the amoraic period. None of the other cities even comes close to these. Obviously, then most of the tannaim lived and taught in the small towns and villages.<sup>80</sup> This conclusion is supported by more than just this argument from silence.

Some tannaim were identified to posterity by their name and geographical origins. The latter could be expressed in any of three ways (see above): 'X a man of Y' (e.g. Antigonos a man of Sokho), 'X + *ethnikon*' (e.g. R. Yosi the Galilean), or 'X of Y' (e.g. R. Judah b. Jacob of (or: from) Beth Gubrin). Whether there is any substantive difference among these formulae, and why specifically these individuals were identified by their geographical origins, we do not know.<sup>81</sup> Forty or so of the post-70 CE tannaim are identified in one of these ways. Some are of Diaspora origin (e.g. Simeon the Temanite, Nathan the Babylonian, Abba Gurion a man of Sidon, Theudas a man of Rome), but the vast majority are from the rural towns and villages of Judaea and Galilee (e.g. Ono, Hadar, Yanua, Bartota, Tib'on).<sup>82</sup> Similarly, tannaitic (and amoraic) traditions place many of the prominent tannaim in the small towns and villages: R. Ishamel in Kephaz Aziz, R. Joshua in Peq'in, R. Yohanan b. Nuri in Beth Shearim, R. Simeon in Teteoa, and R. Meir

<sup>80</sup> Some rabbis of course did live in cities. Tannaitic literature occasionally presumes urban conditions; note especially its legislation concerning guilds (see below), *erubin* (delimiting courtyards and common ground in order to permit carrying on the sabbath within the marked perimeter), and the prohibition of allowing tanners and other undesirables to dwell in a common courtyard (t. *B. Meš.* 11.16 (396 Zuckerman); cf. t. *Ket.* 7.11 (82 Zuckerman) and t. *Qidd.* 2.2 (282 Zuckerman)). The clearest statement is b. *Ber.* 17a, 'A pearl (= proverb) frequently uttered by the rabbis of Jamnia-Jabneh: I am a creation of God and my fellow is a creation of God, my work is in the city and his work is in the field . . .' Unfortunately we do not know the reliability of the ascription of this remark to the Yavnean sages, or in what generation they are supposed to have said it.

<sup>81</sup> The variations seem to be stylistic; each of these forms is used consistently with a given place name. No place name, as far as I have been able to determine, governs more than one form. The form *min* is uncommon in tannaitic texts which prefer *'iš* (a man of). The Babylonian Talmud frequently employs *dēmin*, the Palestinian Talmud *dē* (without *min*). See also note 14 above.

<sup>82</sup> R. Hananyah a man of Ono (near Lydda), R. Yaqim a man of Hadar (near Lydda), Abba Yosi b. Hanin a man of Yanua (in lower Galilee; the name is variously spelled), R. Eleazar a man of Bartota (location unknown), Abba Yosi HLYQFRI a man of Tib'on and R. Hananyah a man of Tib'on (near Haifa), etc. Many of these place names are obscure or corrupt. The standard aids are the *Sefer ha Yišub*; M. Avi Yonah, *The Historical Geography of the Land of Israel* (Jerusalem 1951), and *Gazetteer of Roman Palestine* (Jerusalem 1976).

in Ardasqus.<sup>83</sup> Most of the legal cases addressed by the tannaim originated in these settlements, not the cities (see below). The tradition quoted by the Babylonian Talmud on the peregrinations of the Sanhedrin is of doubtful historicity, but it agrees with this portrait of a rural rabbinate. When R. Judah the Patriarch moved his seat from Beth Shearim to Sepphoris, the rabbinic movement found itself headquartered in a city for the first time since its golden days at Jamnia-Jabneh.<sup>84</sup>

The urbanization of the rabbinic movement is the work of R. Judah the Patriarch. He attempted to establish the ritual purity of the cities of Palestine and to free their inhabitants from the priestly tithes, both reforms clearly intended to facilitate the entrance of rabbis and rabbinic Jews into the cities. Probably not by coincidence Palestine entered a new phase of urbanization during Judah's tenure: Lydda and Beth Gubrin (Eleutheropolis) were elevated to the status of *poleis* by Septimius Severus, Emmaus by Elagabalus. We have already seen that the rabbinic movement expanded its social horizons during Judah's tenure.<sup>85</sup> In the second century the rabbinate was primarily wealthy and rural. In the third and fourth centuries it was wealthy and poor, rural and urban.

## VII ARISTOCRACY OF BIRTH

We have already seen that rabbinic nomenclature identifies some rabbis by their craft or geographical origins. By far the most common form of nomenclature, however, was identification by paternity. The ubiquitous formula '(Rabbi) X ben Y' shows that rabbinic society was constructed along 'normal,' traditional lines. But paternity was more than a vehicle for identification. It determined not only who one was but also what social status one had. In a catalogue which appears at least ten times in tannaitic corpora the rabbis list the various classes of Jewish society. For the most part the classifications are determined by birth and are immutable. Whether these lists were meant to describe contemporary reality or whether they were intended as exercises in rabbinic antiquarianism and *Listenwissenschaft*, is not here our concern. The lists demonstrate that even the rabbis,

<sup>83</sup> R. Ishmael: m. *Kil.* 6.4 and *Ketub.* 5.8; R. Joshua: t. *Sot.* 7.9 (193–4 Lieberman); R. Yohanan b. Nuri: t. *Ter.* 7.14 (147 Lieberman) and t. *Sukk.* 2.2 (260 Lieberman); R. Simeon: t. *ʿErub.* 5.24 (116 Lieberman); R. Meir: t. *Nazir* 5.1 (141 Lieberman) = t. *Obol.* 4.14 (601 Zuckerman) and t. *ʿErub.* 6.4 (119 Lieberman). Compare b. *San.* 32b.

<sup>84</sup> b. *Roš. Haš.* 31a–b.

<sup>85</sup> On Judah and the cities, see A. Büchler, 'The Patriarch R. Judah I and the Graeco-Roman Cities of Palestine', *Studies in Jewish History*, ed. I. Brodie and J. Rabinowitz (Oxford 1956), pp. 179–244, and L. I. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Rule* (Leiden 1975), pp. 64–8.

whose hierarchy was based on intellectual and spiritual attainments, believed that birth determined social status. Here are two versions of this list. The first is Mishnah Horayot 3:8:

A priest precedes a Levite, a Levite an Israelite, an Israelite a *mamzēr*, a *mamzēr* a *nētîn*, a *nētîn* a proselyte, and a proselyte a freed slave.

The second is Mishnah Qiddushin 4:1:

Ten family stocks came up from Babylonia: the priestly, levitic, and Israelitic stocks, the impaired priestly stocks, the proselyte, freedman, *mamzēr*, and *nētîn* stocks, and the *šētūqî* and *āsūfî* stocks.

Priests, Levites and Israelites occupy the first three positions in all versions of the list. Mishnah Qiddushin assigns fourth position to impaired priests and fifth position to proselytes. Mishnah Horayot assigns fourth position to *mamzērîm* (i.e. offspring of illicit unions) and fifth position to *nētînîm* (an antiquarian relic of the days of Ezra and Nehemiah). In contrast all other versions of the list assign fourth position to proselytes and fifth position to freedmen, reserving *mamzērîm*, *nētînîm* and impaired priests for sixth, seventh or eighth, or omitting them altogether. Some versions add women, slaves, children and assorted others.<sup>86</sup> In order to appreciate the importance of birth in rabbinic society, let us briefly examine the role of priests, proselytes, slaves and women. After that we shall attempt to determine whether rabbinic status too was determined by birth.

### VIII PRIESTS

The destruction of the temple in 70 did not mark the end of the priesthood or of priestly prerogatives. The priests could no longer demand a share of the sacrificial meats, but they could – and did – demand their share of crops, flocks and bread dough. These sacred offerings, their punctilious payment by the Jews, and their proper disposal by the priests were central concerns of rabbinic piety. The rabbis enjoined that a meal could be shared only with him who could be trusted to observe the laws of purity and tithing correctly, and the priestly offerings should be given only to a priest who could be trusted to protect them from ritual defilement. The tannaim even preserve some relics of priestly ideology, for example, ‘It is a divine commandment that a court consist of priests and

<sup>86</sup> See the synoptic table in appendix 29.1. *šētūqî* are children whose mothers are known but whose fathers are not; *āsūfî* are foundlings both of whose parents are unknown. For a full discussion of all these social divisions, see J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia 1969), parts three and four.

Levites' and 'All verdicts must come forth from the mouths (of Levites).'<sup>87</sup> The rabbis do all this in spite of the fact that only a few tannaim are said to have been priests and in spite of the fact that the priests maintained a distinct self-identification in the rabbinic period. 'The priests' sometimes acted independently of the rabbis and did not accept rabbinic decisions. We even hear of a 'court of priests' (and a court of Levites) although the reference does not indicate when this court is supposed to have existed.<sup>88</sup> The temple still lived in the minds of the priests who carefully remembered the sequence of the priestly courses in the temple service. During its designated week each course followed the observances which had been the norm for priests actually officiating in the temple. Ultimately, in order to preserve its genealogical purity, each of the twenty-four courses settled in a different Galilean village. These priestly colonies lasted well into the middle ages; when they began, we do not know.<sup>89</sup>

The priests, then, were an aristocracy. They had status – only well-pedigreed Israelites could intermarry with them – but did they also have wealth and power? One tannaic midrash remarks 'Most priests are wealthy', but we do not know whether this is wishful thinking or the truth, and whether the remark was intended to refer to second temple days or to the second century.<sup>90</sup> In the decades before the war of CE 66–70 some priests took the priestly offerings by force, leaving the poor priests with nothing. In the second century, however, R. Simeon b. Gamaliel assures us that priests acted charitably toward their brethren when collecting tithes.<sup>91</sup> Some priests obviously were poor even in the second century. But beyond the question of wealth is the question of power. Were the priests of the tannaic period merely religious pensioners, devoid of any influence or authority, or were they, like the rabbis, a group which wielded some power? We do not know.

<sup>87</sup> *Sifre* Deuteronomy 153 (206 Finkelstein; cf. m. *San.* 4.2) and 351 (408 Finkelstein). On purity and priestly offerings, see below.

<sup>88</sup> Rabbis who were priests: R. Tarphon, R. Eleazar b. Azariah, and perhaps others. Priests not accepting decisions of rabbis: m. *Ed.* 8.3 and *Šegal.* 1.3–4. Court of priests: m. *Ketub.* 1.5; compare m. *Roš. Haš.* 1.7. Court of Levites: *Sifre* Numbers 122 (149 Horowitz).

<sup>89</sup> m. *Ta'an.* 2.6 and t. *Ta'an.* 2.3 (330 Lieberman) and 3.6 (338 Lieberman). On the priestly colonies see now A. Oppenheimer in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple to the Muslim Conquest*, ed. Z. Baras et al. (Jerusalem 1982), pp. 75–76. The priesthood was divided into twenty-four clans (or 'courses') each of which served in the temple for a week at a time. See 1 Chronicles 24. Not all priests in the rabbinic period carefully preserved their pedigree and purity; see e.g. p. *Šeb.* 6.1 (36c).

<sup>90</sup> Pedigreed Israelites: m. *Qidd.* 4.5. Wealthy priests: *Sifre* Deuteronomy 352 (409 Finkelstein).

<sup>91</sup> First century: Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* xx.181 and 206–7. R. Simeon b. Gamaliel: t. *Pe'a* 4.3 (56 Lieberman).

## IX PROSELYTES

The first century BCE and the first century CE were the heyday of Jewish proselyting. Converts and sympathizers ('God-Fearers') packed Jewish synagogues and followed Jewish ways. The spate of conversions seems to have abated in the second century, but both Jewish and non-Jewish evidence indicates that it did not cease.<sup>92</sup>

The rabbis were ambivalent in their attitude towards proselytes. On the one hand, they frequently spoke of the obligation to show him love and respect and of the prohibition to remind him of his pagan past. They asserted that a proselyte was equal in all respects to the native-born Israelite. On the other hand, although they accepted proselytes, they refrained from missionary activity. Nor were they entirely convinced by their own ideology of the equality between the convert and the native. When discussing scriptural phrases like 'The Lord your God' or 'man of Israel', the tannaitic exegetes regularly ask, 'Are proselytes included?' (the answer can be yes or no). According to tannaitic law a proselyte has no share in the land of Israel and is unable to say in his prayers 'Our God and God of our fathers'.<sup>93</sup> The son or daughter of a proselyte was known as a proselyte, the epithet disappearing only when the 'proselyte' was the offspring of a native Jewish mother. In sum, the rabbis regarded the proselyte as a Jew, an adherent of the true faith, but they were not entirely sure that he was an Israelite. To the extent that Jewish self-definition depended upon national affiliation, to that extent the proselyte was anomalous: an Israelite without tribe or land.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>92</sup> The classic exposition of the evidence remains J. Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain*, 2 vols. (Paris 1914), vol. 1, pp. 253–337; M. Simon, *Vetus Israel* (Paris 1948; second edition, 1964) is frequently inaccurate. The standard treatment in English is B. J. Bamberger, *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period* (Cincinnati 1939; repr. New York 1968). See now Gary G. Porton, *The Stranger within your Gates* (Chicago: University of Chicago 1994).

<sup>93</sup> To love the proselyte and not despise him: Bamberger, pp. 158–61; see for example *Sifre* Numbers 78 (76 Horovitz). 'The Lord your God' may or may not include proselytes: Bamberger, pp. 60–3. No share in the land: m. *Ma'as. Š.* 5.14 and elsewhere. Not say 'God of our Fathers': m. *Bikk.* 1.4–5 and cf. the Palestinian Talmud *ad loc.* which rejects the Mishnah. See Shaye J. D. Cohen, 'Can a Convert to Judaism say "God of our Fathers"?' *Judaism* 40 (1991), 419–28.

<sup>94</sup> Native Jewish mother removes status of proselyte from her children: m. *Bikk.* 1.4–5 and contrast t. *Qidd.* 4.15 (292 Lieberman). See Shaye J. D. Cohen, 'Can a Convert to Judaism have a Jewish Mother?' *Torah and Wisdom: Studies in Jewish Philosophy, Kabbalah, and Halacha in honor of Arthur Hyman* (New York: Shengold 1992) 19–31. A proselyte was not an Israelite in marriage law: *Sifre* Deuteronomy 247 (276 Finkelstein); m. *Qidd.* 4.1; t. *Qidd.* 5.1 (293 Lieberman). Later rabbis did not trust the sexual morality of the female proselyte or the religiosity of the proselyte of either sex, but there is little of this distrust in tannaitic literature: m. *Nid.* 7.3; *Mekilta Kaspa* 2 (163–4 Lauterbach = 324 Horovitz-Rabin); contrast m. *Yeb.* 6.5 with t. *Hor.* 2.11 (477 Zuckerman).

Did this ideological ambivalence have social implications? The paucity of data prevents a clear answer. Tannaitic materials mention only five converts: Valeria, a wealthy woman who questions the rabbis about the conversion of her slaves; Judah the Ammonite and Minyamin the Egyptian, a disciple of R. Aqiba, who were concerned about the Deuteronomic prohibitions of ‘entering the congregation’; Aquila, a wealthy man who, according to patristic and amoraic traditions, translated the Bible into Greek under rabbinic aegis; and last, but hardly least, the beautiful prostitute who gave up her lucrative profession in order to marry a rabbinical student.<sup>95</sup> Even if we include the additional converts ascribed to the second century by talmudic tradition,<sup>96</sup> we still do not have much. Proselytes were part of rabbinic society, but apparently only a small part.<sup>97</sup>

## X SLAVES

Following the Pentateuch the rabbis distinguished between two types of slaves: Hebrew and gentile. The Hebrew slave was a Jew who was indentured for a maximum of six years (unless he elected to have his ear bored). The rabbinic legislation concerning the Hebrew slave is of minimal social significance since the institution of Hebrew slave had long since disappeared by rabbinic times. Gentile slavery, by contrast, was still a living institution. The gentile slave was indentured forever and was the legal property of his owner who could sell him or otherwise deal with him as he liked (within certain limits). But in addition to being property the gentile slave was also a proselyte in the making. Upon purchase (or birth, in the case of house-born slaves) he was circumcised and baptized, like a convert. During his years of servitude he had the legal obligations of a Jewish woman with respect to the laws of the Torah (see below). When manumitted, he received a deed which made him a free man, and a second baptism which made him a full Jew.<sup>98</sup>

Although many tannaim were landowners tannaitic sources tell us little about slavery in the second century. Not once do they mention slaves working in a field or otherwise employed in large-scale commercial or agricultural operations. We have to wait for the Babylonian Talmud to

<sup>95</sup> In Bamberger’s catalogue of converts (pp. 221–66, ‘The Proselytes Mentioned in Rabbinic Literature’), see nos. 9, 10, 14, 17, 23. The prostitute story (no. 23) seems fictional.

<sup>96</sup> Bamberger, nos. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24; some of these seem fictional.

<sup>97</sup> I do not know why the conversion ceremony is described only in the Babylonian Talmud (*Yeb.* 47a–b), not in tannaitic literature or the Palestinian Talmud.

<sup>98</sup> On slavery see Bamberger, pp. 124–32; E. E. Urbach, ‘The Laws Regarding Slavery as a Source for Social History’, *Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies – London* 1 (1964), 1–94; see now Paul V. M. Fleisher, *Oxen, Women, or Citizens?* (Brown Judaic Studies 143; Scholars Press 1988).

preserve (?) the words of R. Tarphon, 'Who is wealthy? He who owns 100 vineyards, 100 fields, and 100 slaves.'<sup>99</sup> As far as I have been able to determine, only one rabbi appears in tannaitic corpora as a slaveowner, and both he and the slave are exceptional. The owner is the patriarch R. Gamaliel, and the slave (really a manservant and travelling companion) is Tbi (usually vocalized Tabi). Tbi is mentioned numerous times in tannaitic literature, always to stress his unusual erudition and piety.<sup>100</sup> We hear nothing about 'normal' slaves. Those who wined and dined at the elegant symposium described by the Tosefta (see above) were attended not by slaves but by servants. Even R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, the son of Tbi's owner, was attended not by a slave but a servant.<sup>101</sup> Tannaitic law deals relatively seldom with slaves. R. Ishmael and R. Eliezer debate whether it is permissible to own uncircumcised slaves, a question which would exercise the rabbinic authorities of the Middle Ages when many Jews in the east engaged in the slave trade, but there is no sign that the tannaim engaged in such trade or made much use of slave labour.<sup>102</sup>

## XI WOMEN<sup>103</sup>

Although rabbinic law did allow women certain independent rights (e.g. ownership of real property) it generally defined a woman's legal status by her relationship with men. 'A woman is always under the control of her father until she comes under the control of her husband in marriage.' Because a woman, like a slave, was always subservient to someone else, she was exempted by rabbinic law from all religious requirements which had to be performed at set times. Whether women could or should study Torah was a question debated by the tannaim.<sup>104</sup> Women were allowed no

<sup>99</sup> b. *Šabb.* 25b.

<sup>100</sup> E.g. m. *Ber.* 2.7; *Sukk.* 2.1; *Pes.* 7.2; *Mekilta Pisha* 17 (153–4 Lauterbach = 68 Horovitz-Rabin).

<sup>101</sup> On symposia see above n. 40. Simeon b. Gamaliel: t. *Sukk.* 2.2 (260 Lieberman). On domestic slaves see n. 109 below.

<sup>102</sup> Permissible to own uncircumcised slaves: *Mekilta Pisha* 15 (119–20 Lauterbach = 53–4 Horovitz-Rabin. See B. Z. Wacholder, 'The Halakah and the Proselyting of Slaves during the Geonic Era', *Historia Judaica* 18 (1956), 89–106.

<sup>103</sup> Women obviously did not form a caste like the priesthood, and their status obviously was governed by many factors which did not obtain at all for slaves and proselytes. Nevertheless, I treat women here because the tannaitic texts do likewise. See appendix 29.1 below. This is not the proper place for a full discussion of the status of women in rabbinic law and society; see the fine survey by Baron, *Social and Religious History*, vol. 2, pp. 235–41. See now Judith R. Wegner, *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah* (New York: Oxford University Press 1988) and Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck 1995).

<sup>104</sup> M. *Ket.* 4.5; t. *Ber.* 6.18 (38 Lieberman) and m. *Qidd.* 1.7; m. *Sot.* 3.4 and *Sifre* Deuteronomy 46 (104 Finkelstein).



public role by rabbinic law. They could not (except under special circumstances) serve as administrators of charity, witnesses, or legal guardians.<sup>105</sup> They had no role in the rabbinic synagogue.<sup>106</sup> When women came to the rabbis on legal matters, their questions usually concerned the affairs of women: marriage contracts, menstruation and the laws of purity.<sup>107</sup>

The rabbis valued family life very highly. A Jewish man was obligated to marry and have children. A Jewish woman was obligated to allow her husband his conjugal rights and to raise his children.<sup>108</sup> Her other responsibilities are detailed in the following two mishnayot:

These are the works which the wife must perform for her husband: grinding flour and baking bread and washing clothes and cooking food and giving suck to her child and making ready his bed and working in wool. If she brought him one bondswoman she need not grind or bake or wash; if two, she need not cook or give her child suck; if three, she need not make ready his bed or work in wool; if four, she may sit (all day) in a chair. R. Eliezer says: Even if she brought him a hundred bondwomen he should compel her to work in wool, for idleness leads to unchastity.<sup>109</sup>

These are they that are divorced without receiving their marriage settlement: a wife that transgresses the law of Moses and Jewish custom. What (conduct is such that transgresses) the law of Moses? If she gives her husband untithed food, or has intercourse with him in her uncleanness, or does not set apart dough-offering, or utters a vow and does not fulfil it. And what (conduct is such that transgresses) Jewish custom? If she goes out with her hair unbound, or spins in the street, or speaks with any man.<sup>110</sup>

As usual, we do not have enough data to determine the extent to which these laws were actually practised. The rabbis, at least, heeded their own advice to marry and procreate. Few rabbis remained celibate; none,

<sup>105</sup> *Sifre* Deuteronomy 157 (209 Finkelstein), cf. 13 (21 Finkelstein); *Sifre* Deuteronomy 190 (230 Finkelstein); m. *Ket.* 9.4 and t. *Ter.* 1.11 (109–10 Lieberman).

<sup>106</sup> They might have had a role in non-rabbinic synagogues; see S. J. D. Cohen, 'Women in the Synagogues of Antiquity', *Conservative Judaism* 34.2 (November–December 1980), 23–9, and B. Broton *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* (Scholars Press 1982).

<sup>107</sup> Marriage contracts: t. *Ket.* 4.7 (67 Lieberman). Menstruation and purity: m. *Nid.* 8.3 and m. *Yad.* 3.1; t. *Kelim B. Bat.* 1.2–3 (590 Zuckerman). One woman asked Judah the Patriarch about her sexual obligations to her husband (b. *Ned.* 20b).

<sup>108</sup> Man obligated to have children: m. *Yeb.* 6.6 and t. *Yeb.* 8.7 (26 Lieberman). Woman obligated to raise her husband's children: t. *Nid.* 2.4–5 (642 Zuckerman).

<sup>109</sup> m. *Ket.* 5.5. The slaves ('bondwomen') envisioned by this mishnah are domestics; see above.

<sup>110</sup> m. *Ket.* 7.6. On a woman's obligation regarding dough offering and menstruation, see m. *Šabb.* 2.6. Menstruant women stayed in a separate room during their period of impurity: see m. *Nid.* 7.4 with Albeck's note. Like a Roman matron a Jewish wife was obligated to work her wool in private in the home, not in public; see t. *Šot.* 5.9 (178–9 Lieberman).

however, was polygamous.<sup>111</sup> In order to enable a student to devote himself to his master, the rabbis allowed a student to leave his wife for thirty days at a time even without her permission. The Babylonian Talmud has some wonderful stories illustrating the selfless dedication to Torah in these circumstances by both husband and wife, but we do not know how often these paradigms were followed in real life.<sup>112</sup> Numerous other questions (e.g. what was the average age at marriage? what was the average number of children per marriage? etc.) are completely beyond our grasp.<sup>113</sup>

## XII THE RABBIS: AN ARISTOCRACY OF BIRTH?

Was rabbinic status, like gender, priesthood, nationality, and marriageability, determined by birth, or was it solely a function of scholarly and pietistic attainments? Was a son of a rabbi a member of the rabbinic estate by virtue of his father's rank? In other words, was the rabbinate a caste (or guild)? Or did a rabbi's son merely have the unofficial advantages which always accrue to one born into a prestigious and well connected family? The evidence is meagre and ambiguous. In one frequently repeated tannaïtic midrash Moses expected that his sons would succeed him as leaders of Israel and was sorely disappointed when God nominated Joshua as his successor. The same midrash explicitly says that all leaders of Israel (*parnasim*) ought to be succeeded by their children.<sup>114</sup> When describing the ranks at the court of the patriarch and the measure of respect due to each of them, one text refers to 'the sons of the sages'.

<sup>111</sup> Celibate: notably Ben Azzai (t. *Yeb* 8.7 (26 Lieberman)). As far as I have been able to determine, tannaïtic texts portray only one instance of polygamy: R. Tarphon's 'marriage' of 300 women during a famine in order to enable them to partake of the priestly offerings (t. *Ket.* 5.1 (72 Lieberman)) which R. Tarphon received in abundance (t. *Hag.* 3.3 (393 Lieberman)). The levirate marriage of 12 wives by the surviving brother of the clan is similar (p. *Yeb.* 4.12 (6b), in the time of Judah the Patriarch). The Babylonian amoraim tolerated polygamy more than their Palestinian counterparts, but this is not the place for a full discussion of the evidence.

<sup>112</sup> m. *Ket.* 5.6; t. *Ket.* 4.7 (67–8 Lieberman); b. *Ket.* 62.

<sup>113</sup> Contrast the demographical data which can be extracted from the Jewish inscriptions of Rome: H. J. Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome* (Philadelphia 1960), pp. 229–33, but see the methodological cautions sounded by Leonard Rutgers, *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome* (Leiden: Brill 1995). Judah b. Tema recommended that men marry at the age of eighteen (m. *Abot* 5.21).

<sup>114</sup> *Sifre* Numbers 141 (187 Horowitz); *Sifre Zuṭa*, p. 322 Horowitz; *Sifre* Deuteronomy 162 (212–13 Finkelstein) and 305 (324 Finkelstein); *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 17 = B 30 (33a Schechter). The term *parnas* can mean either 'a disburser of charity' or 'leader.' On this ambiguity see further below. On the inheritance of offices in rabbinic Judaism, see G. Alon, 'The Sons of the Sages', *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World*, pp. 436–57, and M. Beer, 'The Hereditary Principle and Jewish Leadership', *Bar Ilan Annual* 13 (1976), 149–57.

Another text refers to ‘the sons of the elders and the sons of the great ones’.<sup>115</sup> These locutions, however, are as ambiguous as the biblical ‘sons of the prophets’. It might mean either ‘members of the rabbinic guild’ (son = member), or ‘disciples of the sages’ (son = student), or ‘sons of the sages’ (son = son). If the last alternative is correct, these texts show that rabbinic offspring constituted a clearly defined social stratum.<sup>116</sup> At least twenty-four different tannaim are regularly called ‘Rabbi X the son of Rabbi Y’; others have the title ‘Biribbi’ appended to their names which, at least in rabbinic texts, seems to mean ‘son of a rabbi’.<sup>117</sup> Several rabbinic families were virtual dynasties. R. Yosi of Sepphoris was the son of a rabbi (R. Halaphta), the father of four or five rabbis, and the grandfather of at least one rabbi.<sup>118</sup> Many Palestinian amoraim too, unlike their Babylonian counterparts, were the fathers and sons of rabbis.<sup>119</sup>

This evidence implies that the rabbis of the second century were a tightly knit, socially coherent group. I use the term ‘group’ because ‘caste’ and ‘guild’ seem unjustifiable. It is likely too that rabbis generally married the daughters and sisters of rabbis, an assumption frequently made by the Babylonian Talmud but not verified by any tannaitic sources.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>115</sup> t. *San.* 7.8–10 (426–7 Zuckerman) and *Sifre* Deuteronomy 48 (112 Finkelstein).

<sup>116</sup> Unfortunately Alon does not appreciate the ambiguity of the term. In Isaiah 19.11 the phrase ‘son of sages’ is similarly ambiguous. The Greek *pais* also is ambiguous; see the Lexicon of Liddell-Scott-Jones, s.v. *pais* 13. The term *philosophōn paides* appears in Julian, Epistle 31 ed. Wright (in the Loeb Classical Library). See further the article by L. Dürr cited in note 137 below.

<sup>117</sup> E.g. R. Eliezer the son of R. Yosi the Galilean, R. Eleazar the son of R. Simeon, R. Ishmael the son of R. Yohanan b. Beroqah, R. Yosah the son of R. Judah, etc. *Biribbi* is used both as a second person form of address (e.g. *Sifre* Deuteronomy 1 (6–7 Finkelstein)) and as a third person title. In the latter case it seems to mean ‘son of a rabbi’. See notes 14 and 16 above, and Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutab*, vol. 5 (*Mo'ed*), p. 922.

<sup>118</sup> For the five sons of R. Yosi see b. *Šabb.* 118b and p. *Yeb.* 1.1 (2b); they are mentioned individually in tannaitic documents. For his grandson see Hyman, *Toldoth*, s.v. Halaphta.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. b. *Ned.* 81a.

<sup>120</sup> According to the Babylonian Talmud, Pinhas b. Yair was the son-in-law of Simeon b. Yohai (b. *Šabb.* 33b), Hanina b. Teradyon the son-in-law of R. Meir (b. *‘Abod. Zar.* 18a), and R. Gamaliel the brother-in-law of R. Eliezer (b. *B. Meš.* 59b). As far as I have been able to determine, these relationships are not confirmed by Palestinian texts. In one case, at least, the legendary character of these family connections is clear. Ben Azzai did not marry (t. *Yeb.* 8.7 (26 Lieberman) and b. *Yeb.* 63b; see note 111 above). In order to exonerate him partially from the charge of celibacy, the Babylonian Talmud has him marry but separate from his wife (b. *Soṭ.* 4b; also p. *Soṭ.* 1.2 (16c)). Next step: who but R. Aqiba could have produced a daughter saintly enough for the saintly Ben Azzai to marry? (b. *Ket.* 63a). On this tendency in the historiography of the Babylonian Talmud, see S. Safrai, ‘Tales of the Sages in the Palestinian Tradition and the Babylonian Talmud’, *Scripta Hierosolymitana 22: Studies in Aggadab*, pp. 209–32, esp. 229–32.

To some extent, at least, membership in the rabbinic estate was determined by birth.

### XIII ARISTOCRACY OF BIRTH VERSUS ARISTOCRACY OF LEARNING

Perhaps *de facto* the rabbinate was the privileged possession of an elite few, but rabbinic ideology declared that the Torah was to be the possession of all Israel. In order to underscore the insignificance of noble birth, the rabbinic chain of tradition does not mention priests, the representatives of pedigreed aristocracy, and does not have a single case of transmission of the Torah from father to son. The links in the chain are forged by master and disciple.<sup>121</sup> The tannaim explicitly declare that one's father is less important than one's teacher, because the former brings one into this world but the latter brings one into the world to come.<sup>122</sup> The rabbis thus are familiar with two different aristocratic ideologies, the one based on birth, the other based on personal achievement. The tension between the two ideologies is occasionally evident, nowhere more clearly than in the following mishnah (the first part of which was discussed above):

A priest precedes a Levite, a Levite an Israelite, an Israelite a *mamzēr*, a *mamzēr* a *nētīn*, a *nētīn* a proselyte, and a proselyte a freed slave. This applies when they all are (otherwise) equal; but if a *mamzēr* is learned in the Torah, and a high priest is ignorant of the Torah, the *mamzēr* that is learned in the Torah precedes the high priest that is ignorant of the Torah.<sup>123</sup>

Here a *mamzēr* who is a *talmid ḥākām* (learned) outranks a high priest who is an *‘am ḥā’āreṣ* (ignorant; see below). The Mishnah clearly rejects pedigree if it conflicts with scholarship. Elsewhere, however, pedigree triumphs. ‘X son of Y’ is the most common form of rabbinic nomenclature, while ‘X disciple of Y’ is never used. All the rhetoric about the superiority of one's teacher to one's father could not change the social facts. Rabbis were identified not by their scholastic affiliation but by their pedigree.<sup>124</sup>

### XIV SCHOOLS, DISCIPLE CIRCLES AND SECRECY

Let us turn now to the institutions which the rabbis created for the perpetuation of their ideals. Rabbinic texts (both tannaitic and amoraic)

<sup>121</sup> m. *Abot* 1–2. The text does not mention that Simeon the Righteous was a high priest. Heredity does not enter the chain until the line of the patriarchate.

<sup>122</sup> See below.

<sup>123</sup> m. *Hor.* 3.8. A sage outranks even a king; t. *Hor.* 2.8 (476 Zuckermannel, Cf. *Sifre* Deuteronomy 48 (112 Finkelstein)).

<sup>124</sup> See above notes 18–19.

presume two different educational settings: ‘academies’ and disciple circles. An academy is a permanent institution whose corporate identity transcends the existence of any single individual. It has faculty and students, officers and ranks. It might hold its sessions in a building or some other specific place. A disciple circle is much more fluid, with no permanence or corporate identity. A single master has around him a handful of apprentices who attend their master like servants in order to learn from his every action. When the master dies, the circle disbands and the students are left to fend for themselves. How these two educational systems functioned simultaneously throughout rabbinic antiquity in both Palestine and Babylonia is obscure.<sup>125</sup> In the tannaitic period, at least, only a few academies existed; the basic educational institution was the disciple circle.

The prime candidate for status as an academy is the school of the patriarch. The school (court?) hierarchy consisted of the patriarch, the head of the court, and the sage; below them were the sages, the ‘sons of the sages’ (see above), and the disciples of the sages. Each rank owed deference to its superiors.<sup>126</sup> By the time of Judah the Patriarch the school had numerous students, the best seated in the front rows, the weakest in the rear. The school was administered by an attendant in accordance with set rules. When the patriarch died a new patriarch automatically assumed his place.<sup>127</sup> If we may believe an amoraic story, some of these features were already in place by the time of R. Gamaliel.<sup>128</sup>

Perhaps there were other academies too. Once R. Hanina asked R. Eleazar a question at ‘the great session’ or ‘the great school’ (*metibtā* (or *mōtbā*) *rabbā*) but unfortunately the text does not describe this institution.<sup>129</sup> In the rabbinic imagination Moses appointed for Joshua a *turgēmān*, an

<sup>125</sup> D. M. Goodblatt, *Rabbinic Instruction in Sasanian Babylonia* (Leiden 1975), *passim*, and I. Gafni, ‘Yešibah and Metibta’, *Zion* 43 (1978), 12–37.

<sup>126</sup> t. *San.* 7.8–10 (426–427 Zuckermann). On ‘sons’ see above. The relationship between schools and courts is not here our concern.

<sup>127</sup> b. *Hul.* 137b; b. *Yeb.* 105b; b. *B. Qam.* 117a with I. Gafni, ‘The Babylonian *Yeshiva* as Reflected in Bava Qamma 117a’, *Tarbiz* 49 (1980), 292–301. On succession see S. J. D. Cohen, ‘Patriarchs and Scholarchs’, *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 48 (1981), 57–85.

<sup>128</sup> b. *Ber.* 27b–28a and p. *Ber.* 4.1 (7c–d) with R. Goldenberg, ‘The Deposition of Rabban Gamaliel II’, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 23 (1972), 167–90. We occasionally hear of sessions with a large number of rabbis: see t. *Kelim B. Bat.* 2.4 (592 Zuckermann) (85 elders sitting with R. Gamaliel) and the texts listed in note 74 above. Are these temporary synods or permanent assemblies? We do not know. The date of the Roman recognition of the patriarchate has some bearing on our understanding of the patriarchal school, but the question is too complex to be discussed here.

<sup>129</sup> *Mekilta Amaleq* 1 (138 Lauterbach = 177 Horowitz-Rabin). Is there any connection with the Qumran institution *mōšab hārabīm* (C. Rabin, *Qumran Studies* (Oxford 1957; repr. New York 1975), pp. 103–7)? For ‘the great *bēt midrās*’ see note 133.

official whose function it was to repeat, amplify, and explicate the words of the sage for the assembled throng. Is this based upon the procedures of the patriarchal school or upon general practice?<sup>130</sup> Disciple circles presumably did not need amplification and explication since the master himself could be heard easily by his students. Tannaitic texts frequently refer to *bāte midrāš*, ‘houses of study,’ a term which first appears in Ben Sira.<sup>131</sup> Whether these were permanent establishments or simply meeting places for one or more disciple circles is not always clear. One rabbi might comment on another’s absence from the *bêt midrāš*.<sup>132</sup> We hear of ‘the *bêt midrāš* at Ardasquš’ and ‘the *bêt midrāš* at Lydda’. One rabbi used to offer a brief prayer before entering the *bêt hamidrāš*. R. Simeon b. Eleazar, in the denouement of a long story, entered ‘his large *bêt hamidrāš*’.<sup>133</sup> These passages suggest that occasionally, at least, the *bêt midrāš* could be a permanent institution, perhaps a permanent building,<sup>134</sup> whose identity as a school was independent of the rabbi or rabbis who happened to be active there at any given time. But most tannaitic schools certainly did not have such institutional stability. The Palestinian Talmud often refers to ‘the elders of the south (= Lydda)’, ‘the rabbis of Naweh’, ‘the rabbis of Caesarea’, ‘the rabbis of Sepphoris’ and ‘the rabbis of Tiberias’,<sup>135</sup> but such locutions never appear in tannaitic corpora. In the second century most rabbinic schools were not permanent fixtures in the social landscape.

Not academies, then, but disciple circles. Disciples would live, eat, sleep, and travel with their masters. They would listen to his discussions with other rabbis and watch him decide legal cases. Those who did not actually live with their master would at least visit him on sabbaths and holidays. There was no privacy for either party in this relationship; even

<sup>130</sup> *Sifre* Numbers 140 (186 Horovitz) and *Sifre* Deuteronomy 305 (324 Finkelstein). Legislation regarding the *turgeman*: t. *Meg.* 3.41 (364 Lieberman).

<sup>131</sup> Ben Sira 51.23.

<sup>132</sup> *Sifre* Numbers 116 (133 Horovitz); t. *Beṣ.* 2.6 (287–8 Lieberman); cf. too b. *Ned.* 81a.

<sup>133</sup> Ardasquš: t. *ʿErub.* 6.4 (119 Lieberman) (the text is not certain). Lydda: t. *Pes.* 3.11 (154 Lieberman). Brief prayer: m. *Ber.* 4.2. Large *bêt hamidrāš*: *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan A* 41 (66a Schechter) (the phrase is missing from the version in b. *Taʿan.* 20b). Cf. the inscription from the Gaulan, ‘This is the *bêt midrāš* of Eleazar haQappar.’ See J. Naveh, *On Stone and Mosaic: The Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues* (Tel Aviv 1978), number 6.

<sup>134</sup> Teaching generally was conducted out of doors; see the essays by S. Krauss and A. Büchler in H. Z. Dimitrovsky (ed.), *Exploring the Talmud I: Education*. Even established academies might meet outdoors in antiquity; see the mosaic from Pompeii which portrays the Platonic school in Athens. Plato and six disciples are sitting under a tree. (See K. Gaiser, *Das Philosophenmosaik in Neapel: Eine Darstellung der platonischen Akademie*, *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Heidelberg*, 1980, number 2.)

<sup>135</sup> A. Oppenheimer, ‘Batei Midrash in Eretz Israel in the Early Amoraic Period’, *Cathedra* 8 (1978), 80–9; Hyman, *Toldot*, p. 1096.

on the first night of his marriage R. Gamaliel was attended by his faithful disciples.<sup>136</sup> The master was like a father to his disciples. In fact, as we have already seen, the tannaim assert that a rabbinic master is superior to a natural father, because the latter brings one into this world while the former brings one into the world to come.<sup>137</sup> Both the natural and spiritual father were allowed to work the 'son' harshly.<sup>138</sup> A student's obligations to his master were similar to those of a son to his father: he had to stand up before him, to greet him, perhaps even to bow down before him, and always to treat him with awe and respect. He could not stand or sit in his place, speak in his presence, contradict him, or respond sharply to him. All of this was the way of Torah.<sup>139</sup>

How much of the legislation was actually practised, we do not know, but the following stories suggest that the rabbis wanted these norms observed.

(During a discussion R. Judah b. Nahman sharply rebuts the opinion of R. Tarphon.) R. Aqiba saw that R. Judah's face was shining (with joy). He said to him: Judah b. Nahman, your face shines because you have rebutted an elder. I will be amazed if your days in this world are prolonged. R. Judah b. R. Ila'i says: The incident occurred at Passover. When I came at Pentecost I said, Where is Judah b. Nahman? They told me: He has gone (i.e. died).<sup>140</sup>

R. Eliezer says: Nadab and Abihu were condemned to death only because they made legal decisions before Moses, and anyone who decides points of law before his master is liable to the death penalty. It once happened that a student made a legal decision before him (R. Eliezer). He said to Imah Shalom his wife: he will not last the sabbath. (The student) died. After the sabbath the sages came to him and said: Master, are you a prophet? He said to them: I am neither a prophet nor

<sup>136</sup> Visit on sabbaths and holidays: t. *Sukē.* 2.1 (260 Lieberman) and t. *Neg.* 8.2 (628 Zuckerman). Gamaliel: m. *Ber.* 2.5 (compare R. Kahana in b. *Ber.* 62a). In general see the article by Aberbach (above note 69) and the article *mathētēs* by K. H. Rengstorff in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*.

<sup>137</sup> m. *B. Meš.* 2.11 and t. *B. Meš.* 2.29 (375 Zuckerman); cf. m. *Ker.* 6.9. Following biblical (and non-biblical) conventions of wisdom literature, the rabbis often refer to disciples as 'sons' (e.g. *Sifre* Deuteronomy 34 (61 Finkelstein)). On the title 'abba,' 'father,' see E. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, revised edition by G. Vermes, F. Millar, et al., 2 vols. to date (Edinburgh 1979), vol. 2, p. 327, n. 16, and L. Dürr, 'Heilige Vaterschaft im antiken Orient', *Heilige Ueberlieferung: Ausschnitte . . . Ildefons Herwegen . . . dargeboten*, ed. O. Casel (Münster, 1938), pp. 1–20. The origin and implication of this title are obscure.

<sup>138</sup> *Mekilta Neziḳin* 1 (5–6 Lauterbach = 248 Horowitz-Rabin).

<sup>139</sup> t. *Meg.* 3.24 (360–361 Lieberman); *Sifra* 91a and numerous parallels. On bowing down, see Lieberman, *Tosefta Ki-Fshutab* vol. 5: *Mo'ed*, p. 1201. Students who had more than one master were obligated to venerate in this fashion only their most important teacher. Some rabbis, however, said that this treatment was due to all of one's teachers. See t. *B. Meš.* 2.30 (375 Zuckerman) = t. *Hor.* 2.5 (476 Zuckerman).

<sup>140</sup> *Sifre* Numbers 148 (195 Horowitz); cf. *Sifra* 4a, 4b, 47d; *Sifre Zuta*, p. 329, line 24, ed. Horowitz.



the son of a prophet. But I have received a tradition from my masters that anyone who makes a legal decision before his master is liable to the death penalty.<sup>141</sup>

In each of these stories an unfortunate student violated one of the taboos governing the master–disciple relationship, and in each case retribution from heaven followed swiftly and inevitably upon the offender. Neither R. Aqiba nor R. Eliezer invoke the divine wrath – R. Eliezer explicitly denies any magical (‘prophetic’) power for himself – but the unequivocal moral of these tales is that a disciple may show disrespect for his masters only at great personal peril. One rabbi remarked that ‘respect for one’s master should be as dear as fear of heaven’.<sup>142</sup> Since few tannaitic stories portray second-century rabbis as holy men (or anything like holy men), it is surely significant that two such stories concern relations between master and disciple.<sup>143</sup> Students had to be convinced to mind their proper place.

There are important social consequences to this educational system. Although rabbinic ideology obligated all Jews to study Torah, the tannaim did not create any social mechanisms by which the ideology could be implemented. The number of those willing and able to serve as rabbinic apprentices must have been small. Academies with numerous students and rows set aside for the unlearned were somewhat more accessible, but even here an exclusivistic ethic might prevail,<sup>144</sup> and, in any case, there were few academies in the tannaitic period. Furthermore, there is no indication that the tannaim ever attempted to propagate their teaching among the masses. We do not hear of anything like ‘the kallah months’ which were a regular part of the academic life in Babylonia and which allowed the masses to take part in the sessions of the school.<sup>145</sup> On the

<sup>141</sup> *Sifra* 45c.

<sup>142</sup> *Mekilta Amaleq* 1 (140 Lauterbach = 178 Horovitz-Rabin); m. *Abot* 4.12; and elsewhere.

<sup>143</sup> For R. Gamaliel as a clairvoyant see t. *Pes.* 2.16 (147–8 Lieberman). The holy men of tannaitic literature are generally pre-70 figures like Honi the Circle Drawer (m. *Ta’an.* 3.8) and Judah b. Tabbari (t. *San.* 8.3 (427 Zuckerman)). The Babylonian talmud portrays several amoraim as holy men.

<sup>144</sup> In b. *Ber.* 28a R. Gamaliel declares, ‘He whose inside is not like his outside shall not enter into the study hall.’ See Cohen, ‘Patriarchs and Scholarchs’, pp. 76–9. The type stories about the education of the great masters Hillel (b. *Yoma* 35b), R. Eliezer and R. Aqiba (*Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 6 and B 12–13) are set in academies, not disciple circles.

<sup>145</sup> Kallah months were held twice yearly at the Babylonian academies and attracted great crowds during the Geonic period (ninth to twelfth centuries). Regular sessions were suspended in order to allow alumni and other interested parties to share in rabbinic learning. Various modern scholars reassure us that the tannaim devoted all their energies to the propagation of Torah among the people, but they cite no evidence. See e.g. Judah Goldin in H. Dimitrovsky, *Education*, p. 13.

contrary, Judah the Patriarch, in whose time the rabbinic establishment entered the cities and broadened its social base, decreed that Torah was not to be taught in the marketplace. Like the thighs of a woman Torah was to be kept covered in public. Presumably he was afraid of casting pearls before swine.<sup>146</sup> Rabbinic law, both tannaitic and amoraic, and both in disciple circles and academies, was always studied orally. Perhaps students used notes in their private studies, but in their formal sessions neither masters nor disciples ever consulted a written text of rabbinic law.<sup>147</sup> Oral teachings are often secret teachings, the hallmarks of esotericism. The tannaim enjoined that certain sections of the Bible which were difficult or easily misunderstood were to be taught only to a few pupils at a time and not to the public. Were other portions of rabbinic Torah kept secret from the Jews?<sup>148</sup> Would the rabbis always teach the same law in public as in private?<sup>149</sup> If a Jew or gentile asked a difficult question, would he always receive a truthful answer?<sup>150</sup> We cannot be sure. Thus, while the tannaim had neither the mechanisms nor the inclination to propagate their Torah among the masses, they had the mechanisms (disciple circles and oral teachings) and the inclination to keep their Torah secret.<sup>151</sup>

The rabbis were not alone in their combination of secrecy and openness. Many of their Christian contemporaries, especially in Alexandria, were similarly ambivalent. In justifying his allegorical exegesis of the Song of Songs, Origen writes that ‘the Holy Spirit willed that the figures of the mysteries should be roofed over in the divine scriptures and should not be displayed publicly and in the open air’, a sentiment with which Judah

<sup>146</sup> b. *Mo'ed. Qat.* 16.

<sup>147</sup> S. Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York 1950, repr. 1962), pp. 83–99 (‘The Publication of the Mishnah’). The prohibition of the writing of the ‘Oral Law’ first appears in amoraic corpora, but tannaitic texts know nothing about written copies of rabbinic lore.

<sup>148</sup> m. *Hag.* 2.1 and t. *Hag.* 2.1 (380 Lieberman). t. *Ber.* 6.23–24 (39–40 Lieberman) seems to recommend to keep Torah secret under certain circumstances. Compare b. *Pes.* 49b (not to teach Torah to an ‘*am ha'āreṣ* and not to reveal secrets to him), and p. ‘*Abod. Zar.* 2.8 (41d) (to study Torah only before people who are worthy).

<sup>149</sup> Rav did not; see p. *Šabb.* 3.1 (5d) and b. *Hul.* 15a.

<sup>150</sup> Obviously the Romans did not think so; they sent spies to discover what the rabbis were teaching. See *Sifre* Deuteronomy 344 (401 Finkelstein) with Bamberger, *Prosehytism*, pp. 233–4. There are many stories about rabbis who answer a gentile’s question in a manner which the rabbi knows to be unsatisfactory. The students object, ‘This one (the gentile) you turned away with a (broken) reed, but to us what will you say?’, that is, ‘What is the *real* answer to the question?’ See e.g. p. *Ber.* 9.1 (11d) = Gen. R. 8.9 (62–3 Theodor-Albeck) and b. *Hul.* 27b.

<sup>151</sup> Secrecy in rabbinic Judaism needs further study; see the partial collection of material in G. A. Wewers, *Geheimnis und Geheimhaltung im rabbinischen Judentum* (Berlin–New York 1975).

the Patriarch might have agreed.<sup>152</sup> Clement apologizes to his readers for daring to write and publish his ideas, since Christian doctrine should not be written.<sup>153</sup> Even the vaunted 'Alexandrian catechetical school' has recently been shown to have been not an academy but a disciple circle.<sup>154</sup> The Fathers of Alexandria and the Rabbis of Palestine shared a common vision. Each wanted to win the world over to the true faith, but neither would have been comfortable with a real mass movement.

## XV ASSOCIATIONS SECULAR AND RABBINIC

Schools were not the only organizations which characterized the rabbinic estate and distinguished the rabbi from the non-rabbi. Associations were another. Jewish society in the second century probably had its share of associations, guilds, clubs, etc., both secular and religious, although it is hard to verify this assumption.<sup>155</sup> Tannaitic law recognizes the right of professional guilds to fix prices and to act in the best interests of its members, but no case histories of guilds in action are given.<sup>156</sup> Nothing is known about other secular associations.

We are somewhat better informed about religious associations which the rabbis called *ḥābūrôt* (sing. *ḥābūrâh*).<sup>157</sup> One passage refers to 'the

<sup>152</sup> R. P. Lawson, *Origen: Commentary on Song of Songs* (New York 1957), p. 74, commentary on 1.3 (for the Greek text see the GCS edition by Baehrens, vol. 8 of Origen's works, vol. 33 of the whole set, p. 101). Note that Judah the Patriarch bases his ruling on a verse from the Song of Songs.

<sup>153</sup> E. F. Osborn, 'Teaching and Writing in the First Chapter of the *Stromateis* of Clement of Alexandria', *Journal of Theological Studies* 10 (1959), 335–47.

<sup>154</sup> Pierre Nautin, *Origène: sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris 1977), p. 39, n. 6.

<sup>155</sup> Associations and corporations of all sorts were widespread in the Graeco-Roman world. A comprehensive modern study (all the standard reference works on the subject were written in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century), which will also treat the rabbinic and Qumran evidence, is needed. See now John Kloppenborg and Stephen Wilson, *Voluntary Associations in the Ancient World* (New York: Routledge 1996). See note 159.

<sup>156</sup> t. *B. Meṣ* 11.24–6 (397 Zuckerman) discusses the rights of guilds, specifically of wool dealers, dyers, bakers, muleteers, and shippers. The 'head of the (guild of) butchers of Sepphoris' is mentioned in b. *Ḥul.* 50b and 58b (period of Judah the Patriarch). In amoraic times, if not before, there was a synagogue (assembly hall?) of *tarsiyim* (weavers? metal workers? men of Tarsus?) in Lydda (b. *Nazir* 52a in an addition to t. *Obol.* 4.2 (600 Zuckerman); Leviticus *Rabbah* 35.12 (831 Margolioth); and elsewhere). Joppa had a guild of fisherman (Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum*, no. 945), Gerasa of potters (*Gerasa, City of the Decapolis*, ed. C. H. Kraeling (New Haven, 1938), p. 410, inscription number 79). In general see Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, pp. 18–27.

<sup>157</sup> The name *synagogue* implies that this institution has its origins, at least in part, as an *association*. It was so regarded by the Romans (whose legislation concerning *collegia* included the synagogue). Synagogues will be treated briefly below; see also the discussion in chapter 9 of this history.

*ḥābūrāb* of those who have mastered scripture, the *ḥābūrāb* of those who have mastered tradition, and the *ḥābūrāb* of those who have mastered the rabbinic mode of study'. The nature of these *ḥābūrōt* and their relationship with the academies and disciple circles discussed above, is very unclear.<sup>158</sup>

The *ḥābūrāb* about which we are best informed is the association of those who pay strict attention to the ritual status of food. Probably a relic of the Pharisaic element of rabbinic Judaism, this 'table fellowship' had many sectarian trappings: the requirement of an oath from potential members, a board to examine the behaviour of candidates, ranks through which the novice passed on his way to full membership, an obligation to eat with no one except other members of the group, and the penalty of expulsion for not obeying the rules.<sup>159</sup> Since a full discussion of this complex phenomenon would be out of place here, I shall briefly treat some of its legal aspects before assessing its social implications.

The central text is Mishnah Demai 2:2–3:

He that undertakes to become trustworthy (*ne'ēman*) must give tithe from what he eats and from what he sells and from what he buys; and he may not be the guest of an *'am ḥā'āreṣ*. R. Judah says: Even he that is the guest of an *'am ḥā'āreṣ* may still be reckoned trustworthy . . . He that undertakes to become an Associate (*ḥabēr*) may not sell to an *'am ḥā'āreṣ* (foodstuff that is) wet or dry, or buy from him (foodstuff that is) wet; and he may not be the guest of an *'am ḥā'āreṣ* nor may he receive him as a guest (if the *'am ḥā'āreṣ* is) in his own raiment. R. Judah says: Nor may he rear small cattle or be profuse in vows or levity or contract uncleanness because of the dead, but shall minister in the house of study.<sup>160</sup>

The Mishnah contrasts the trustworthy and the Associate with the *'am ḥā'āreṣ*, literally 'people of the land'. One who is trustworthy pledges to tithe his food properly; the Associate pledges to observe the laws of purity. Since the *'am ḥā'āreṣ* observes these laws either unsatisfactorily or not at all, the trustworthy and the Associate must absent themselves from

<sup>158</sup> *Sifre* Deuteronomy 355 (418 Finkelstein). See Moshe Beer, 'On the *Havura* in Eretz Israel in the Amoraic Period', *Zion* 47 (1982), 178–85. There is no tannaitic evidence concerning the 'Holy Assembly of Jerusalem'; the amoraic references are discussed by Rabin, *Qumran Studies*, pp. 37–52, and S. Safrai, *Zion* 22 (1957), 183–93.

<sup>159</sup> This *ḥābūrāb* is similar in many respects to the Qumran *yahad*; see Rabin, *Qumran Studies*, pp. 1–21. It also has similarities with the other religious associations of the semitic east, a subject treated by J. T. Milik, *Dédicaces faites par des dieux* (Paris 1972), chapters 4–5. I use the term *ḥābūrāb* to refer to this organization although, as far as I have been able to determine, the tannaim never do so (except perhaps m. *Beṣ.* 2.3 and t. *Beṣ.* 2.7–8 (288 Lieberman)). M. *Zab.* 3.2 uses 'the members of the assembly' (*bēneḥ ba kēneset*) instead of *ḥābērīm*.

<sup>160</sup> I do not accept the emendation suggested by Epstein and accepted by Rabin, *Qumran Studies*, p. 12, n. 9.

his table. The modifications advanced by R. Judah suggest that by the middle of the second century the old structure was breaking down. R. Judah allows the trustworthy to sup with an *'am hā'āreš*. His definition of an Associate does not involve a contrast with the *'am hā'āreš* and does not even centre upon the laws of purity. According to R. Judah, the Associate pledges to follow certain rabbinic norms (on the prohibition of raising small cattle, see above), to behave in proper rabbinic fashion, and to serve the rabbis. The *ḥābūrāh* has been rabbinized, losing in the process its sectarian focus upon purity and tithing.<sup>161</sup> The legal definition of an *'am hā'āreš*, then, is either someone who does not tithe properly (in contrast to the *ne'ēmān*), or someone who does not observe the laws of purity properly (in contrast to a *ḥabēr* of the first type), or someone who does not follow rabbinic piety, i.e. a non-rabbinic Jew.<sup>162</sup>

The social ramifications of this legislation are discussed by the Tosephta. How can an *'am hā'āreš* become a *ḥabēr*? What if a *ḥabēr* marries a woman from an *'am hā'āreš* family? What if a *ḥabēr* has a brother who is an *'am hā'āreš*? What if a *ḥabēr* and an *'am hā'āreš* have business dealings with each other? The questions which the Tosephta addresses show that it envisions close social relations between the Associate and the *'am hā'āreš*, although the pronounced purpose of the *ḥābūrāh* was to keep the two classes apart.<sup>163</sup>

This brings us to the crucial issue: what was the social reality behind the legal theory? Were all rabbis Associates? If not, what was the relationship between those who were and those who were not? The *'ammē hā'āreš* constituted what percentage of the population? What was their social status? What and who brought about the de-emphasis of the sectarian elements of the *ḥābūrāh*? We cannot answer these important questions. Tannaitic texts adduce few actual cases to illustrate the legislation governing the relationships between *haberim* and *'ammē hā'āreš*. We are never told explicitly that Rabbi X was a *ḥabēr* or that a certain event happened to Rabbi Y when he was a novice in the Association. This silence suggests that while the laws of tithing and purity did have important social consequences, clearly dividing those who observed them from those who did not, the association in the second century was not an important mechanism for social identification. But the tannaitic legislation does show that the ethic of separation, inherited by the rabbis from their sectarian forebears, was still alive all the while the rabbis were declaring

<sup>161</sup> On this transformation see Alon, *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World*, pp. 190–234. *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 41 (66b Schechter) gives a mixed definition of *ḥabēr*.

<sup>162</sup> Does not tithe and obey the laws of purity: t. *'Abod. Zar.* 3.10 (464 Zuckerman). Does not follow rabbinic piety: b. *Ber.* 47b.

<sup>163</sup> See t. *Dem.* 2 and 3 *passim*; t. *Dem.* 6.9–10 (96 Lieberman); t. *'Abod. Zar.* 3.9–10 (464 Zuckerman); t. *Tohor.* 8 and 9.

that there should be no separation between themselves and their fellow Jews.<sup>164</sup>

## XVI THE RABBIS AND THE MASSES

Tannaitic and, to the best of my knowledge, later Palestinian literature knows nothing of hatred between the rabbis and the non-rabbinic masses.<sup>165</sup> Disdain, perhaps, but not hatred. Every day a rabbinic Jew was supposed to thank the Lord for not creating him ‘a gentile, an “outsider” (*bur*), or a woman’, three categories of people who could not experience rabbinic piety.<sup>166</sup> What exactly makes a *bur* an outsider is nowhere stated. Presumably his entire way of life was unrabbinic.<sup>167</sup> He is similar, perhaps, to the one ‘who is not immersed in scripture, rabbinic tradition, and proper conduct’. Such a person ‘has no part in the inhabited world’.<sup>168</sup> When R. Aqiba remembered what he had done in his youth before becoming a rabbi, he said, ‘I thank you, Lord my God, that you have placed my lot among those who dwell in the rabbinic school (*bêt midraš*) and you have not placed my lot among those who dwell on the corners (?) in the marketplace.’<sup>169</sup> This prayer is quoted in order to elucidate the saying of another rabbi, ‘Sleep during the morning, wine during midday, talk with children, and sitting in the assemblies of the ‘*ammê hā’āreš* drive a man out of the world.’<sup>170</sup> In the minds of many of the tannaim, the ‘*ammê hā’āreš* were almost synonymous with Gentiles, as can be seen from the fact that legislation concerning relations with the former often merges impercep-

<sup>164</sup> It is likely that not all rabbis were *hābērīm*; see Alon (n. 161) and E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia 1977), pp. 154–5. On the tension between the ethic of separation and the ethic of equality, see Urbach, *Hazal*, pp. 569–84.

<sup>165</sup> For example, the story in Genesis *Rabbah* 79.6 (943–4 Theodor-Albeck about the opposition of an ‘*am hā’āreš* to R. Simeon b. Yohai’s purification of Tiberias lacks any pointed references to the hatred borne by the ‘*ammê hā’āreš* against the rabbi. Hatred between the rabbis and the masses is perhaps implied by *Sifre* Numbers 92 (93 Horowitz) but the reference to cursing and stoning may be exegetically derived.

<sup>166</sup> t. *Ber.* 6.18 (38 Lieberman). In his commentary Lieberman (following previous scholars) compares Diogenes Laertius 1.33. Compare too Galatians 3:28.

<sup>167</sup> ‘From the manner in which one recites the blessings we can discern whether a man is a *būr* or a sage’ (t. *Ber.* 1.6 (3 Lieberman)). The etymology of the word indicates that the *būr* is an outsider; G. R. Driver, *Harvard Theological Review* 29 (1936), 172, suggested that the original meaning was ‘outside the city’, a usage common in many languages (e.g. *agroikos*, *rusticus*, *paganus*). It is probably unnecessary to add that the word has nothing to do with the English *boor* which derives from the Dutch *boer*, ‘farmer’.

<sup>168</sup> m. *Qidd.* 1.10 and t. *Qidd.* 1.17 (281 Lieberman). ‘Proper conduct’ is the translation for *derek ’ereš*, ‘inhabited world’ for *yāššūb* (= oikoumene?).

<sup>169</sup> *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 21 (37b Schechter); compare the prayer of Nehunyah b. Haqqanah in m. *Ber.* 4.2 with the amplification in the talmudim *ad loc.*

<sup>170</sup> m. *Abot* 3.14; *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 21 = B 34 (37a Schechter).

tibly with legislation concerning the latter.<sup>171</sup> Disdain towards the *‘am hā’āreš* is clearly in evidence.

In spite of their sinful inattention to certain rabbinic ordinances, the *‘ammē hā’āreš* did, the rabbis had to admit, observe many of the commandments, notably the prohibitions of eating priestly offerings and food grown during the sabbatical years. They also observed the sabbath.<sup>172</sup> The rabbis encouraged cooperation with the *‘ammē hā’āreš* (and the Gentiles) ‘for the sake of peace’.<sup>173</sup> The tannaim did not object to the marriage of *ḥabērīm* with the daughters of *‘ammē hā’āreš* as long as it was stipulated in advance that the wife (and her family in its dealings with her and her husband) would adhere to the rabbinic laws of purity.<sup>174</sup> The tannaim are even capable of using the term *‘am hā’āreš* neutrally and without any pejorative connotations.<sup>175</sup> The document which quotes the prayer uttered by R. Aqiba when he remembered what he had done in his youth fails to mention in its ‘biography’ of that sage that he was a rabbi-hater – *‘am hā’āreš* before becoming a rabbi himself. The tannaim do not pretend that the masses loved them or followed their every desire, but they give no indication that they hated the *‘ammē hā’āreš* or were hated by them.<sup>176</sup>

The evidence for hatred between the rabbis and the *‘ammē hā’āreš* derives exclusively from the Babylonian Talmud.<sup>177</sup> The Babylonian rabbis, whose attempts to promulgate rabbinic Judaism met the resistance of many of their co-religionists,<sup>178</sup> were very receptive to Palestinian traditions about tensions and hatred between the tannaim and the masses. Perhaps they were inventive too. The Babylonian Talmud has an entire folio page documenting this hatred. He who would marry the daughter of an *‘am*

<sup>171</sup> See the passages from t. *Demai* and t. *‘Abod. Zar.* listed in note 163. A contextual and sociological analysis of all rabbinic terms of abuse is a desideratum. In addition to *būr*, *ām hā’āreš*, *yōsēbē qērānōt*, the rabbis use *mōsāb lēšīm* (‘session of fools,’ m. *Abot* 3.2 and t. *‘Abod. Zar.* 2.5–6 (462 Zuckermannel)), and other terms. Compare the Greek and Latin terms of abuse collected by R. MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations*, pp. 138–41, and the opinions of the Graeco-Roman elites about the *pagani* documented by MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven 1981), p. 8. Of course, not all tannaim were equally disdainful; see e.g. R. Aqiba’s denunciation of the Jew who exalts himself on account of (or: above) the words of the Torah (*Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 11 (23b Schechter)), and the powerful story concerning R. Simeon b. Eleazar (*Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 41 (66a Schechter)).

<sup>172</sup> Sabbath and priestly offerings: t. *Dem.* 5.2 (85 Lieberman). Sabbatical year: t. *‘Erub.* 5.10 (113 Lieberman). In general see m. *Bek.* 4.10.

<sup>173</sup> m. *Šeb.* 5.9; m. *Giṭ.* 5.9.

<sup>174</sup> See especially t. *‘Abod. Zar.* 3.9–10 (464 Zuckermannel).

<sup>175</sup> m. *Soṭ.* 9.15 (an addition to the Mishnah); t. *San.* 7.7 (426 Zuckermannel).

<sup>176</sup> Biography of R. Aqiba: *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 6 = B 12–13 (14b–16a Schechter).

<sup>177</sup> The evidence is presented and discussed by A. Oppenheimer, *The Am Ha-Aretz* (Leiden 1977), pp. 172–88. The major passage is b. *Pes.* 49a–b.

<sup>178</sup> J. Neusner, *History of the Jews in Babylonia*, 5 vols. (Leiden 1965–70), *passim*.



*hā'āreṣ* or who would give his daughter to an 'am *hā'āreṣ* is denounced severely. Sexual relations with an 'am *hā'āreṣ* are akin to sexual relations with a donkey. R. Aqiba declares that when he was an 'am *hā'āreṣ* he could wish for no greater pleasure than sinking his teeth into the neck of a rabbi. Hyperboles of this type abound in the discussion. There is no way to verify the authenticity of this material, but the fact that these statements and the ethos they represent are completely absent from Palestinian texts raises serious doubts.

In sum, the rabbis were an easily differentiated element within second-century Jewish society. They had their own organizations, modes of piety and way of life. They could be recognized in the marketplace 'by their walk, their speech, and their dress'.<sup>179</sup> They were distinct from the masses of the Jews and looked down upon all those who did not share their outlook and follow their observances. Some rabbis even advocated separation from these Jews.<sup>180</sup> But the ethic of separation and distinctiveness was tempered by a democratic idealism which urged all Jews to study Torah and accept the rabbinic way. Let us now try to determine the extent of rabbinic power within society. Did the rabbis succeed in implementing their democratic ideal?

## XVII RABBINIC POWER

Tannaitic literature gives us frequent glimpses at the religious life of second-century Jewry. For example, the Jews of Tiberias observed the rabbinic sabbath limits; 'the people' followed R. Eliezer's opinion in the laws of menstruation; landowners distributed certain crops to the poor although they were not obligated to do so. Even the actions of the villagers of Kepharsogone and Shihin were regarded as valid precedents in rabbinic discussions. The literature also gives us glimpses at the irreligious life of Jewry. A Jew in Caesarea once slaughtered an animal for sacrifice to a pagan god; a murder was committed in order to gain an inheritance.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>179</sup> *Sifre* Deuteronomy 343 (399–400 Finkelstein). Compare m. *Yeb.* 16.7 = c 15 in appendix 29.2 below: a rabbinic student on his journey carries, and can be recognized by, a Torah scroll, cloak, and staff.

<sup>180</sup> The tannaim discuss whether Torah study or communal service is preferable (*Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 41 (65b and 67a Schechter; cf. A 4 (9b–10a Schechter) and *Sifre* Deuteronomy 41 (85 Finkelstein)), but the relevance of this debate to our topic is unclear.

<sup>181</sup> Tiberias: t. *'Erb.* 5.2–3 (111 Lieberman); R. Eliezer's opinion: t. *Nid.* 1.5 (641 Zuckermann). Landowners distribute crops: t. *Pe'a* 2.21 (49 Lieberman). Villagers: t. *Ter.* 3.18 (121 Lieberman) and t. *'Erb.* 3.17 (103 Lieberman). Caesarea: t. *Hul.* 2.13 (502 Zuckermann). Murder for inheritance: t. *Ket.* 11.4 (94 Lieberman). A full collection and analysis of all this material is a desideratum. See now Levine, *Class*, 120–4, and Goodman, *State*, 102–4.

Particularly important are those texts which describe the legal decisions rendered by the rabbis for Jews who are neither entitled 'rabbis' nor otherwise said to belong to the rabbinic class. In these texts the rabbis are not confined by the walls of the academy or the perimeter of the disciple circle. They are not discussing abstruse points of law, deciphering (and encoding) biblical passages, and legislating for themselves and their partisans. In these texts they are actively involved in the private lives of ordinary Jews. Since a complete description of all this material would be out of place here, I shall present a few examples followed by a summary analysis of the material as a whole.<sup>182</sup>

The texts are of three types.<sup>183</sup> In the first (type A), a case is brought before a rabbi (or rabbis) for a decision. Type A stories usually employ the formulae 'and the case came before rabbi X' or 'and they came and asked rabbi X'. The questioners voluntarily submit to rabbinic authority. Unfortunately the identity of the questioners is not always clear. They might be the actors of the incident but in some cases this is impossible or, at least, unlikely.<sup>184</sup> Other possibilities include rabbinic students, bystanders, and relatives of the actors. But if rabbinic students were the ones who came and asked the rabbis, the narrative documents the interaction not between rabbi and Jew but between members of the rabbinic estate. Since, however, this ambiguity can be resolved only rarely, and since all the questioners implicitly accept rabbinic legal authority, I have treated all these stories together. By contrast, in stories of the second type (type B) the rabbis assert their authority uninvited and unasked. We cannot even be sure whether the recipients of the rabbis' wisdom acted in accordance with the instructions which they received. There are no set formulae in these stories. The third type (C) consists of those numerous cases which, because of insufficient data, cannot be classified as either A or B. These narratives are not characterized by any single formula,

<sup>182</sup> See the complete inventory of the material in appendix 29.2 below. I omit from consideration those cases which involve only rabbis or rabbinic figures or which took place before CE 70. Not all of the cases studied here are actually 'legal' cases; see note 185 below.

<sup>183</sup> My classification is based on content, not literary form. A thorough study of all the literary forms of tannaitic narrative was prepared by Joel Gereboff, but not published.

<sup>184</sup> For example, it is very unlikely that the Jew who slaughtered a sacrifice to a pagan god asked the rabbis about the status of the meat (A 41). In the cases involving the remarriage of a wife after the unverified death of her husband (A 18, 19, 20, etc.), who brought the matter to rabbinic attention? In *Sifra* 94a and t. *B. Qam.* 6.5 (354 Zuckerman) two cases 'come before the sages,' who comment on the actions of two individuals, but it is clear that someone other than the individuals involved brought the matter before the sages. In C 24 and 34, the identity of Eleazar b. Taddai and the nature of his relationship with R. Gamaliel are obscure.

although many of them employ a simple past tense of a verb of action to describe the rabbinic response to a given situation (e.g. ‘Rabbi X instituted the practice’ or ‘Rabbi X ruled’).<sup>185</sup> These are type C.

The classification by content is neither rigid nor simple. Some texts ambiguously refer either to a real case with a *bona fide* legal ruling or to a hypothetical question with a hypothetical answer.<sup>186</sup> The details of some cases are so elusive that classification is difficult.<sup>187</sup> Some cases are transmitted in parallel versions, one A and the other C.<sup>188</sup> But for the most part the classification holds up rather well and serves to distinguish the different degrees of authority claimed by the rabbis of the tannaitic period (or, more precisely, claimed by the narrators of the stories about the rabbis of the tannaitic period). Here are two or three examples of each type.

Type A:

If a gentile separated heave offering (*těrumāh*) from the crop of a Jew (even) with the Jew’s permission, the heave offering is not valid. It once happened that in Pega a Jew instructed a gentile ‘Separate the heave offering from my granary!’ and the gentile did so, but the heave offering which he separated fell back into the granary. The case came before R. (Simeon b.) Gamaliel who said, ‘Since it was a gentile who separated the heave offering, the heave offering is not valid (and none of the grain is sacred).’<sup>189</sup>

If a man was upset because he did not know where his (deceased) father had left the money by which he had redeemed the second tithe (and the son was therefore afraid that he might accidentally use sacred money), and the angel in charge of dreams came and told him the amount and location of the money – this happened once, and they found the money there (in the place indicated by the dream). They came and asked the sages who replied, ‘The money (which was found) is not sacred because matters revealed in dreams are of no effect.’<sup>190</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Instituted the practice (*binhîg*): c 5–6. Ruled (*bōrah*): c 2, 26, and 40. I do not include references to enactments (*hitqîn* or *tiqēn*) unless the reference includes a narrative introduction. The A category presumes a judicial setting, B does not. The setting of the C texts is usually unclear.

<sup>186</sup> Examples of ambiguity: A 42–4; C 23 and 45 (which is more likely a theoretical question than a real case). Examples of theoretical questions and therefore not included in our catalogue of cases: *Mekilta Bešallah* 6 (235–7 Lauterbach = 106–7 Horovitz-Rabin); *Mekilta Sabbata* 1 (197–8 Lauterbach = 340 Horovitz-Rabin); *Sifre* Numbers 118 (138 Horovitz) and 124 (158 Horovitz) (a different version of c 45); t. *Yeb.* 6.7 (20 Lieberman); t. *Kelim B. Bat.* 5.6 (595 Zuckerman).

<sup>187</sup> For example, c 3 could be classified in the B category, c 37 in the A.

<sup>188</sup> See A 24 and 49. <sup>189</sup> A 3 = t. *Ter.* 1.15 (111 Lieberman).

<sup>190</sup> A 11 = t. *Maʿas. Š.* 5.9 (270 Lieberman). I am following Lieberman’s interpretation of *ʾiš bahālôm*, ‘angel in charge of dreams’.

In the first example we cannot be sure who brought the incident to the attention of R. (Simeon b.) Gamaliel. Was it the Jew who owned the granary? the pious citizens of Pega? rabbinical students who heard of the incident and wished to hear their master's opinion? There is no way to know. The second example has no such ambiguity. The people who found the money asked the rabbis (this text, like many others, does not name any individual rabbi as the authority figure). The first example shows that rabbis were assumed to be authoritative in the laws of heave offering; the second example shows that they were assumed to be authoritative in the laws of the second tithe (and dreams!). The A category has 71 cases.

Type B:

Once a man removed stones from his field (and placed them) in the public road (in contradiction to the mishnaic ruling). A pious fellow (*ḥāsīd*) ran after him (and said), 'Why do you remove stones from that which is not yours and place them in that which is yours?' He laughed at the fellow. Some time later he was impoverished and sold his field. He was walking at that very place and he tripped (on the stones which he had thrown there). He said, 'Not in vain did that *ḥāsīd* say to me, "Look, you are removing stones from that which is not yours and placing them in that which is yours."' <sup>191</sup>

There was once a certain man of Beth Ramah who cultivated a saintly manner (*ḥāsīdut*). R. Yohanan b. Zakkai sent a disciple to examine him. The disciple went and found him taking oil and putting it on a pot-range, and taking it from the pot-range and pouring it into a porridge of beans. 'What are you doing?' the disciple asked him. 'I am an important priest', he replied, 'and I eat heave offering in a state of purity.' The disciple asked, 'Is this range unclean or clean?' (After some discussion between the two) the disciple continued, 'If this is how you have been conducting yourself, you have never in your life eaten clean heave offerings!' <sup>192</sup>

In the first case the protagonist is not a rabbi but a *ḥāsīd* eager to enforce rabbinic norms. He utters the functional equivalent of a curse against a Jew who is creating a danger to the public and is violating rabbinic law. The malediction, of course, is realized. <sup>193</sup> In the second example the *ḥāsīd* is not a representative of rabbinic piety but is its opponent. (The story is quoted to illustrate the adage 'He who does not attend upon the sages deserves to die.') The crushing blow delivered at the end of the story, which resembles the final retorts of other B narratives, shows that pointed

<sup>191</sup> B 8 = t. *B. Qam.* 2.13 (349 Zuckerman).

<sup>192</sup> B 11 = *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 12 (28a–b Schechter); cf. version B 27 (28b–29a Schechter).

<sup>193</sup> Since the story concerns a *ḥāsīd* and not a rabbi, should it be included in our corpus? Miracle stories are relatively uncommon in tannaitic literature, as noted above.

outbursts were sometimes the rabbis' only weapons.<sup>194</sup> The B category has 11 cases.

Type C:

If a man fell into a body of water . . . his wife is forbidden (to remarry) . . . R. Yosi said, 'Once a blind man went down into a cave to immerse himself and his guide went down after him; and they waited time enough for life to become extinct and then permitted their wives to remarry.' Again, it once happened in 'Asya\* that they let a man down by a rope into the sea but only his leg came back up into their hands. The Sages said, '(If the recovered leg includes) the part above the knee, his wife may remarry; but if only the part below the knee, she may not remarry.'<sup>195</sup>

R. Tarphon ruled at Lydda that (nothing less than an overcharge of) eight pieces of silver out of a *sela'*, or one third of the purchase price, is considered defrauding and the merchants of Lydda rejoiced. He said to them, 'But he (that is defrauded) may retract anytime within a whole day.' They answered, 'Let R. Tarphon leave us as we were!' and they reverted to the ruling of the sages.<sup>196</sup>

It happened once that R. Tarphon fed the dogs with a cow whose womb had been removed (because he considered the cow ritually unfit) and the matter came before the sages and they permitted the cow to be eaten . . . R. Aqiba said to him, 'R. Tarphon, you are exempt (from paying restitution to the owner of the cow) because you are an expert approved by the court, and he that is an expert approved by the court is exempt from restitution.'<sup>197</sup>

(Asya (see Klein, *Sefer ha-Yishub* I, 122–3))

In the first case the subject of the verb 'and *they* permitted their wives to remarry' is not stated, a feature of many other C stories. In the second case R. Tarphon issues a ruling, but the text does not clarify his legal standing in the city of Lydda or the reasons for his edict.<sup>198</sup> The third case shows another facet of R. Tarphon's judicial authority and the judicial organization of the rabbis. R. Tarphon's ruling was overturned by 'the sages', a group which included R. Aqiba. Such second opinions, which might contradict or confirm the original decision, are attested elsewhere too.<sup>199</sup> The immunity which an expert enjoyed (why did not R. Tarphon know anything about this immunity?) implies some sort of 'official' or 'recognized' judiciary, a point to which we shall return below. None of

<sup>194</sup> Compare B 3 and 10; m. *Sukke.* 2.7. <sup>195</sup> C 11–12 = m. *Yeb.* 16.4.

<sup>196</sup> C 26 = m. *B. Mes.* 4.3. <sup>197</sup> C 32 = m. *Bek.* 4.4.

<sup>198</sup> The verb used is *bōrāb*. Was he the *agoranomos* of the city? (On a Jewish *agoranomos* in Joppa in the early second century, see n. 72 above.) Perhaps R. Tarphon's authority depended on the fact that he was the biggest landowner in the vicinity.

<sup>199</sup> Compare A 47; C 5–6, 7–8, and 22; B 1 and 2. Second opinions probably lie behind the accounts of C 16 and 38. The same phenomenon appears in the Babylonian Talmud; see I. Gafni, 'Court Cases in the Babylonian Talmud', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 49 (1982), 23–40.

the three texts explains how the rabbis came to be involved in these cases. In fact, in the case of the diver at <sup>6</sup>Asya, it is unclear whether the rabbis were directly involved at all. Did the recovered leg include the knee or not? The sages address the legal issue raised by the case but not, it seems, the case itself. C narratives often have these ambiguities. The C category has 46 cases. The 71 A cases plus the 11 B cases plus the 46 C cases yield a total of 128. Let us now investigate some aspects of this material.

### XVIII PERIODIZATION

Of the 71 A cases, 32 (or 45 per cent) centre upon a rabbi of the Yavnean period (from CE 70 to the Bar Kokhba war). Similarly, 5 of the 11 B cases (45.4 per cent) and 20 of the 46 C cases (43.4 per cent) concern Yavnean figures. In addition, three A and two B cases mention Jamnia-Jabneh as the site where the unnamed sages rendered their verdict and these cases too probably belong to the Yavnean period. By contrast, only 5 A (7 per cent), 1 B (9 per cent), and 7 C (15.2 per cent) cases involve figures of the Ushan period (from the Bar Kokhba war until Judah the Patriarch). Judah the Patriarch himself figures in only three cases altogether. The remaining cases, slightly less than half of the total, were adjudicated by anonymous sages or by the unidentified subjects of third-person plural verbs. Why the tradition is so skewed in favour of the Yavneans is a phenomenon which requires explanation – elsewhere. The material does not equally represent all the stages of the tannaitic period.<sup>200</sup>

### XIX GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

Before the tenure of Judah the Patriarch the rabbinic movement was primarily rural, anchored in the towns and villages rather than the cities (see above). This view is confirmed by our corpus of texts. In 57 cases<sup>201</sup> (of the total of 128) the incident which prompted the legal decision or the legal decision itself is assigned to a specific place. 19 of these 57 (exactly one third) are assigned to cities (6 in Lydda,<sup>202</sup> 6 in Sepphoris, 2 in Akko-

<sup>200</sup> Jamnia-Jabneh as the site of the decision: A 42–4 and B 1 and 2. In his unpublished study Gereboff points out that Ushans appear more frequently in the Tosefta than in the Mishnah. In three cases the generation involved is uncertain because of manuscript variants (A 3, 5 and 71). The periods of R. Hyrcanus (C 10) and Eleazar b. Taddai (C 24 and 34) are unknown.

<sup>201</sup> Kephars GGNH and SYKNY were considered as two places, as were Kephars PGY and PYGH; 'SY' and 'SY' were considered as one.

<sup>202</sup> I generously include Lydda among the cities although it did not become a *polis* until the early third century.

Ptolemais, 2 in Tiberias, 2 in Beth Shean (Scythopolis), and 1 in Caesarea), the other 38 to towns and villages. The only two cities where the rabbis wielded considerable legal power among their co-religionists in the Yavnean period, if not the entire second century, were Sepphoris and Lydda. Not Tiberias, not Caesarea, and not even Jamnia-Jabneh, the seat of the rabbinic court but home to not a single case involving a Jew outside the rabbinic establishment.<sup>203</sup> By a two-to-one margin the rabbinic movement had its followers in the towns and villages, not cities.

Many modern scholars assert that Galilee was not part of the rabbinic orbit until after the Bar Kokhba war. This view has come under increasing attack in recent years and is contradicted by our corpus.<sup>204</sup> The Yavnean rabbis rendered legal decisions in many Galilean settlements, notably Sepphoris, Tiberias, Sogane (Sikhnin), Meron, Kephars Mandi, Kephars Sasai (Sisi), Rum beth Anat, Kephars Aris, Arianah and others.<sup>205</sup> The transfer of the patriarchal court from the south to the north undoubtedly had many important consequences for the propagation of rabbinic power, but rabbinic influence extended to Galilee, at least to some extent, even before the Bar Kokhba war.<sup>206</sup>

## XX RANGE OF AUTHORITY

Of the 128 cases in our corpus, 122 treat single topics. The remaining six resist monothematic classification and seem to treat two topics apiece,<sup>207</sup> thereby raising the total for statistical purposes to 134. I have compiled from amoraic literature, both Palestinian and Babylonian, a corpus of 45 cases which centre upon R. Judah the Patriarch and whose topic profile can be compared with that of the tannaitic cases. Which types of cases were addressed by the tannaim, primarily of the Yavnean period, and which by R. Judah the Patriarch?<sup>208</sup>

<sup>203</sup> See A 42–4, 49, 60–1; B 1–2. In all of these, the case originates somewhere outside of Jamnia-Jabneh. The prominence of Sepphoris is surprising since in amoraic times there was great tension there between the rabbis and the local aristocracy. See Büchler, *Political and Social Leaders of Sepphoris*. For the cases in Sepphoris and Lydda, see above note 79.

<sup>204</sup> Freyne, *Galilee*, pp. 323–9; Oppenheimer, *Am Ha-aretz*, pp. 210–11.

<sup>205</sup> The location of some of these towns and villages is unknown. Many cases cannot be ascribed to any particular generation.

<sup>206</sup> In the Ushan period the rabbis did not have much influence in the south. See C 2 (set in Kephars PGY, perhaps identical with the PYGH of A 3 and C 16; Kephars PGY and/or PYGH were situated near Antipatris, just north of Lydda).

<sup>207</sup> A 16, 26, 62, 63, and 69; C 3.

<sup>208</sup> For the cases of Judah the Patriarch, see appendix 29.3. In his unpublished study Gereboff points out that the topic profile of the cases of the Mishnah differs somewhat from that of the Tosefta. I ignore the distinction among categories A, B and C, because the statistical differences in topic distribution among the categories are insignificant.



The five topics most frequently treated by the tannaim were: purities (27.6 per cent); marriage, divorce, and levirate marriage, especially the ability of a woman to marry after her husband's presumed but unverifiable death (19.4 per cent); oaths and vows, especially the release of an oath-taker from his obligation (8.2 per cent); avoidance of idolatry (7.4 per cent); and agricultural tithes (including the second tithe and the fourth-year offering of new plantings) and priestly offerings (5.9 per cent). The large gap between the second and third positions is noticeable, as is the remarkably poor showing of certain topics: civil cases (4.4 per cent); shabbat, especially *'êrub* (4.4 per cent); kosher slaughtering (2.2 per cent); festivals (2.2 per cent). For the 45 cases attributed by the talmudim and the 3 attributed by the Tosefta to Judah the Patriarch (a total of 48 cases), we obtain a completely different profile:<sup>209</sup> marriage, divorce and levirate marriage (18.8 per cent); civil law, especially contracts (14.6 per cent); kosher food, especially kosher slaughter (12.5 per cent); purities (12.5 per cent); and shabbat, especially *'êrub* (10.4 per cent). The decline of purities from a strong first to a tie for third, and the rise of civil cases from a low position to second place, are important developments. Remarkable too is the total absence of agricultural tithes, priestly offerings, and idolatry from the patriarch's casebook. And even when Judah and the earlier tannaim adjudicate the same topics, differences are apparent. The tannaim enforce virtually all aspects of the laws of purity: modes of purification, sources of impurity (especially menstruant women), and loci of impurity. The patriarch's range is much narrower; four of his six purity cases involve menstruation (or other bloody discharge) but the focal point is the sexual availability of the woman to her husband, not the impurity which she might have imparted. The sexual aspect of a menstruant woman never came before the previous tannaim. Similarly, of the nine marriage cases decided by the patriarch, three concern sex;<sup>210</sup> of the twenty-six marriage cases decided by the tannaim, none concern sex. I do not know how to explain this shift. Two of the patriarch's marriage cases involve the eligibility of the woman to collect her marriage contract, another area avoided by the tannaim. R. Judah's authority in this matter probably stems from his authority in civil matters generally, an authority not shared by his predecessors.

We do not know the criteria by which legal cases and other narratives were selected for inclusion in our rabbinic texts. Nor do we know whether

<sup>209</sup> I am not sure that I have located all the cases involving Judah the Patriarch; in some talmudic discussions it is hard to know which Judah the Patriarch is meant. I assume here Judah's topic profile was not affected by his status as patriarch, a debatable assumption.

<sup>210</sup> See appendix 29.3, cases A 16, 19, and 21.

the criteria for tannaitic corpora differ from those of the amoraic corpora. Nor can we confirm (or deny) the authenticity of any individual case.<sup>211</sup> But it seems reasonable to assume that the extant cases accurately reflect the areas of legal interaction between the rabbis and the people. The Yavneans' obsession with purity and disregard for civil law are confirmed by mishnaic tradition.<sup>212</sup> Judah the Patriarch restricted the applicability and lessened the severity of the laws of tithing, purity and separation from Gentiles,<sup>213</sup> and it is probably no coincidence that few cases in these areas were brought to him. If the topic profile fairly represents rabbinic activity, we can clearly see the development of rabbinic authority. The rabbis before Judah the Patriarch were acknowledged experts in the laws of purity and personal status, legal relics of the sectarian past of the rabbinic movement.<sup>214</sup> The rabbis also were sufficiently expert and holy to be able to cancel oaths and vows. But in matters of personal piety, e.g. shabbat, holidays, kosher food, prayer, and synagogue rituals, and in civil matters, the people apparently did not need the rabbis.<sup>215</sup> By contrast, R. Judah the Patriarch adjudicated civil matters. Marriage laws still figure highly but their emphasis is different. Purity laws no longer have their sectarian prominence. As we have already seen, the patriarchate of R. Judah marks a significant advance in the institutionalization of the rabbinate.

If second-century Jews rarely went to the rabbis for the normal day-to-day affairs of religion and commerce, to whom did they go? For religious matters, we do not know. Aside from the priests, the rabbis had no potential rivals about whom anything is known. For civil matters, however, there was an alternative: the municipal courts which, in the Jewish areas of the country, at least, would have consisted of Jewish judges. Tannaitic sources refer to 'the judges of Sepphoris' and 'the court of Tiberias'. These judges were Jews but they were not (necessarily) members

<sup>211</sup> Some of the cases of Judah the Patriarch seem legendary (appendix 29.3 A 22 and 29); none of the tannaitic cases seems legendary.

<sup>212</sup> Neusner, *Judaism: The Evidence of the Mishnah*, pp. 95–7 and 101–10.

<sup>213</sup> These are the 'enactments' (*taqqānôt*) of Judah the Patriarch. Tithing: m. *Šeb.* 6.4 + t. *Šeb.* 4.17 (183 Lieberman); p. *Dem.* 2.1 (22c–d). Purity: m. *Obol.* 18.9 + t. *Obol.* 18.18 (617 Zuckerman). Separation from Gentiles: m. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 2.6 + t. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 4.11 (467 Zuckerman).

<sup>214</sup> J. Neusner, *Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70*, 3 vols. (Leiden 1971).

<sup>215</sup> A similar conclusion is reached by Goodman, *State*, 101. Contrast the opinion of Safrai in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple*, p. 31. The Palestinian Talmud has two traditions for the date when the right to adjudicate civil law was 'taken from Israel,' in the time of either Simeon b. Setah (p. *San.* 1.1 (18a)) or Simeon b. Yohai (p. *San.* 7.2 (24b)). I assume that one of these is a textual corruption for the other, but I doubt whether either date has any historical worth.

of the rabbinic estate and their decisions were not (necessarily) consonant with rabbinic law.<sup>216</sup> These courts were backed by the power of the state. The rabbis in all likelihood merely had the status of arbitrators whose authority was based on moral suasion, nothing more. ‘Do you take it upon yourselves to accept the verdict which I shall pronounce for you?’ is the question which R. Yosi is supposed to have asked two disputants who came before him for judgement.<sup>217</sup> Tension between the two judicial systems is evident in the amoraic period.

In religious matters the rabbis certainly could rely only upon their powers of persuasion. When Judah and Hillel the sons of R. Gamaliel journeyed to the northern part of the country, they were criticized by the Jews of three communities for doing something which the local Jews prohibited but which the rabbis permitted. Judah and Hillel submitted to the local custom and did not appeal to rabbinic (or patriarchal) authority to justify their behaviour. A rabbi had to know when to attempt to persuade and when to remain silent. The men of the south left the corners of their vegetable fields unharvested for the poor, although the rabbis declared that charity of this type did not apply to vegetables. But the rabbis had no means of enforcing their decision. One wealthy landowner asked himself, ‘Shouldn’t we be concerned about the decision of the sages?’ Although rabbinic power increased during and after the tenure of R. Judah the Patriarch, even third-century rabbis lacked the legal competence to enforce their decisions in religious matters. When a disciple of R. Judah the Patriarch was served a dish of peacock and milk, he had no means short of excommunication by which to compel his host to refrain from mixing fowl with milk. One rabbi was powerless to stop a Jewish butcher in Sepphoris from selling non-kosher meat. The most he could do was to express satisfaction when the butcher died accidentally one Friday night, and to forbid his disciples from moving the corpse on the Sabbath, thereby exposing it to the dogs.<sup>218</sup>

<sup>216</sup> Sepphoris: m. *B. Bat.* 6.7. Tiberias: *Sifre* Deuteronomy 355 (419 Finkelstein). See Goodman, *State*, 119–26.

<sup>217</sup> p. *San.* 1.1 (18a). What does one do with the institution of ‘the expert’ who is immune from damages in cases of incorrect judgement (appendix 29.2, case c 26, cited above at note 196)?

<sup>218</sup> Judah and Hillel: t. *Mo’ed* 2.15–16 (372 Lieberman). Landowners and vegetables: t. *Pes.* 3.20 (157 Lieberman). Peacock and milk: b. *Šabb.* 130a = b. *Hul.* 116a. Butcher in Sepphoris: Leviticus *Rabbah* 5.6 (119 Margolioth) = p. *Ter.* 8.5 (45c). The rabbis are aware of local variations in customs, but occasionally they insist that some local customs are wrong. Contrast the story about Judah and Hillel in t. *Mo’ed* 2.15–16 (the Jews of the northern communities are wrong) with the version in b. *Pes.* 51a (they are simply defending their local custom).

Thus, in spite of all the reported cases and decisions; the enactments (*taggānôî*) of the patriarchs and their courts; the numerous references to judicial authority, appointment of judges, and supervision of the calendar;<sup>219</sup> in spite of all this evidence, the nature and status of the rabbinic 'judiciary' are very obscure. Two crucial points, however, are clear. First, many Jews were not committed to a rabbinic way of life and did not accept rabbinic authority. Second-century rabbis adjudicated purity cases far more frequently than cases of any other type, but second-century rabbis also tell us that the 'ammê hā'āreš, while observant in other respects, did not properly observe the laws of purity. The laws about which the rabbis were consulted the most are precisely those laws which were practised the least by a substantial segment of the population. Second, rabbinic authority depended upon the social status, the powers of persuasion, the charisma and the personality of the rabbi more than upon his institutional or bureaucratic setting.<sup>220</sup> It was a voluntary act for a Jew to accept the verdict of a rabbinic court or the authority of a rabbi. The tannaim had no means (aside from excommunication, about which the tannaim say little<sup>221</sup>) to enforce their decisions and decrees. They were not the agents of the state.<sup>222</sup> In sum: the rabbis did not control the religious and civil life of second-century Palestinian Jewry.

## XXI OTHER INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS

Various communal functionaries are mentioned by tannaitic literature: charity collectors, charity disbursers, the city council, archisynagogues,

<sup>219</sup> References to judicial authority (no case mentioned): *Mekilta Neziqin* 18 (141–2 Lauterbach = 313 Horovitz-Rabin), contrast *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 38 and B 41 (57b Schechter); *Sifre* Numbers 118 (143 Horovitz); *Sifre* Deuteronomy 16 (27 Finkelstein); t. *Yeb.* 12.11 (43 Lieberman); m. *Git.* 9.8; t. *Nidd.* 6.8–9 (647–8 Zuckerman). Appointment of judges: *Sifre* Numbers 92 (93 Horovitz) and parallels; *Sifre* Deuteronomy 17 (27–8 Finkelstein); on the phrase 'to seat in the session (or: school),' *lēbôsîb bayyēsîbāh*, see Lieberman, *Siphre Zutta*, pp. 87–8. Supervise the calendar: m. and t. *Roš. Haš. passim*; m. *Yeb.* 16.7.

<sup>220</sup> Cf. Levine, *Rabbinic Class* 131. Tannaim are rarely portrayed as holy men, charismatics or magicians, as I have noted several times, although amoraim in both Palestine and Babylonia often are; see Levine, *Class*, 105–9. Goodman, *State*, 108–9, argues that tannaim too were regarded as holy men, but all the cited evidence comes from amoraic sources.

<sup>221</sup> The tannaim mention excommunication only in passing, for example, m. *Mo'ed Qat.* 3.1; m. 'Ed. 5.6; m. *Nidd.* 2.2. On excommunication see Levine, *Class*, p. 97, n. 238.

<sup>222</sup> When did they become the agents of the state? This question is closely connected with the Roman recognition of the patriarchate, a question best avoided in this chapter.

and others.<sup>223</sup> As far as I have been able to determine, tannaitic sources never assert that any rabbi actually filled any of these posts. They do, however, frequently refer to rabbis who were ‘appointed over (or: for) the community’ or ‘involved in the needs of the community’.<sup>224</sup> What institutional setting is presumed by these phrases is not clear. In the period of Judah the Patriarch the power of the central rabbinic office greatly advanced. R. Judah was asked by the people of Simonias to appoint for them a man who would ‘deliver sermons; serve as judge, deacon (*baḥarān*), and scribe; teach us (rabbinic tradition); and fulfil all our desires’ – quite a request! A suitable Pooh-Bah was found. R. Judah also sent R. Romanus to check the family purity of the Jews in a certain distant place.<sup>225</sup> No such traditions are recorded for any of the previous patriarchs.<sup>226</sup> Before Judah, at least, the rabbis were not communal functionaries.

## XXII RABBIS AND SYNAGOGUES

If the rabbis served neither as ‘official’ judges nor as communal officials, did they have any institutional base to their power aside from their own schools? Synagogues are an obvious possibility, but we cannot automatically assume that all synagogues in second-century Palestine were controlled by rabbis or that all rabbis supported synagogue piety. The synagogue, whose origin antedates the rise of the rabbis by several centuries, was neither the invention nor the exclusive domain of the rabbis. In fact, the Mishnah has relatively little to say about regular daily prayer either in or out of synagogues.<sup>227</sup> The tannaim attempted to regulate various aspects

<sup>223</sup> On ‘charity collectors’ see above. *Parnasim* has a wide range of meanings: ‘disburser of charity’ (see above); local leader (*Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, vol. 2, p. 156, number 42; this usage is common in the Palestinian Talmud (Büchler, *Sepphoris, passim*, and Levine, ‘Patriarch’, pp. 92–3)); national leader (*Sifre* Numbers 139 and 141 (186–7 Horowitz); *Sifre* Deuteronomy 157, 162, 306, 334 and 344 (209, 212–13, 339, 384 and 400–1 Finkelstein)). The meaning of *heber ‘ir* (e.g. m. *Ber.* 4.7) is uncertain; see S. Hoening, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 48 (1957), 123–32.

<sup>224</sup> p. *Pe’ a* 8.7 (21a) portrays R. Aqiba as a *parnas*. ‘Rabbis appointed over the community’: for example *Sifre* Deuteronomy 41 (86–7 Finkelstein) and t. *Ta’an* 1.7 (324–5 Lieberman). Rabbis ‘involved in the needs of the community’: for example t. *Ber.* 1.2 and 2.6 (2 and 7 Lieberman).

<sup>225</sup> Simonias: p. *Yeb.* 12.7 (13a) = Genesis *Rabbah* 81.2 (969 Theodor-Albeck); cf. p. *Hag.* 1.7 (76c) and p. *Šeb.* 6.1 (36d). R. Romanus: p. *Yeb.* 8.2 (9b).

<sup>226</sup> According to one tradition R. Gamaliel removed from office the ‘head’ of Gader (Gezer?), but there is a conflicting tradition and the entire matter is very obscure. See p. *Roš. Haš.* 1.6 (57b) = b. *Roš. Haš.* 22a.

<sup>227</sup> Prayer: m. *Ber.* 1–5 and t. *ad loc.*

of synagogue life, but there is no way to determine whether these regulations were generally followed.<sup>228</sup> Some synagogues were public property and therefore susceptible to public regulation, rabbinic or otherwise. Others, however, were the private property of individuals or families.<sup>229</sup> In these private synagogues who but the owner would have had the right to conduct services or to appoint those who would do so for him? Although there is no indication that any organized group competed with the rabbis for power in the synagogues and the religious life of Jewry in the second-century, we cannot be sure that all synagogues were under rabbinic control.

Our doubts are confirmed not merely by the paucity of tannaitic laws regarding prayer and synagogues, a lacuna which is filled by the talmudim and post-talmudic collections,<sup>230</sup> but also by the almost total absence of narratives about rabbinic presence in, and control of, synagogues. Only three of the 128 (if we allow for double themes, 134) cases surveyed above deal with liturgical matters. Of these three, two concern the prayer service for a fast day and one concerns a contumacious individual who writes benedictions. Tannaitic literature also has several stories about rabbis reading the scroll of Esther on Purim: R. Yohanan b. Nuri in Sepphoris, R. Meir in Asya and Tib<sup>5</sup>on, R. Judah (when a child) in Lydda (in the presence of R. Tarphon), R. Judah the Patriarch (when a child) in Usha (in the presence of R. Judah).<sup>231</sup> On special occasions, then, like Purim and fast days, some rabbis performed or supervised liturgical functions, although it is not always clear whether the functions were performed in synagogues or somewhere else.<sup>232</sup> For normal daily liturgical functions, we have even less data. R. Aqiba, when praying with the community, would cut short his prayers so as not to prolong the service. R. Haninah b. Gamaliel once read the Torah in Cabul and instructed the translator of the reading to omit certain verses from his translation. Three

<sup>228</sup> Synagogues: m. *Meg.* 3–4 and t. *ad loc.*

<sup>229</sup> For example, the synagogue of Theodotus in Jerusalem (pre-70); N. Zori, 'The House of Kyrios Leontis', *Israel Exploration Journal* 16 (1966), 123–34 (not a private house but a house-like synagogue of the fifth–sixth century). Compare the early Christian 'house churches'. On the conversion of a private house to a synagogue see e.g. m. *Ned.* 9.2. On synagogues as public property see for example m. *Meg.* 3.1; m. *Ned.* 5.5; t. *Meg.* 2.12 (351 Lieberman); t. *B. Meṣ.* 11.23 (396 Zuckerman).

<sup>230</sup> Tractates *Soferim*, *Tefilin*, *Mezuzah*, *Sefer Torah*.

<sup>231</sup> Fast day: appendix 29.2, cases c 5–6. Writing benedictions: B 4. Reading scroll of Esther: t. *Meg.* 2.4, 5, 8 (349–50 Lieberman).

<sup>232</sup> On fast days prayer was conducted not in the synagogues but in the public square. See m. *Ta'an.* which does not even mention synagogues. Synagogues are, however, mentioned in t. *Ta'an.* 1.13 (327 Lieberman) and in several *beraitot* (compare b. *Ta'an.* 15b with m. *Ta'an.* 2.1). Prayers might also have been conducted in the rabbinic schools.

anecdotes illustrate the liturgical procedures of the school of R. Eliezer.<sup>233</sup> And even when the rabbis are praying with the community they are not necessarily able to dictate the procedures which must be followed. R. Aqiba testifies that he saw ‘all the people’ shake their palm branches at one point during the Sukkot service, although R. Gamaliel and R. Joshua, who were present, did not do so.<sup>234</sup>

In sum: few tannaitic narratives clearly place the rabbis in positions of leadership in communal synagogues for normal liturgical activities. Even the tenure of Judah the Patriarch did not mark a great advance in rabbinic power in this area. Judah appointed religious functionaries for communities who requested them (see above), and decided at least two cases involving public prayer,<sup>235</sup> but this evidence is more than offset by the numerous amoraic texts, both Palestinian and Babylonian, which attest to tension between the synagogue and the academy, between the piety of prayer and the piety of Torah study. Furthermore, the decorative art of the synagogues of the talmudic and post-talmudic periods does not seem to reflect rabbinic ideology and leadership. In sum, synagogues were not the institutional bastion of the ancient rabbinate.<sup>236</sup>

### XXIII CONCLUSION: THE ELUSIVE RABBIS OF THE SECOND CENTURY

The Mishnah records the legal and ethical dicta of 54 figures who flourished between c. CE 80 and the Bar Kokhba War (CE 132–5); of 29 figures who lived in the generation after the Bar Kokhba War; and of 16 figures who were the contemporaries of R. Judah the Patriarch. The other tannaitic corpora provide some additional names.<sup>237</sup> Who were these 100+ people? What were their origins and what was their social status? What role did they play in the Jewish society of second-century Palestine? These are the primary questions which were addressed in this chapter.

<sup>233</sup> R. Aqiba: t. *Ber.* 3.5 (12 Lieberman). R. Haninah b. Gamaliel: t. *Meg.* 3.35 (363 Lieberman). School of R. Eliezer: *Mekilta Wayassa* 1 (91–92 Lauterbach = 155 Horovitz-Rabin) and t. *Meg.* 3.34 (363 Lieberman).

<sup>234</sup> m. *Sukk.* 3.9. For ‘all the people’ (*kol hā‘ām*) in synagogue settings, cf. m. *Sukk.* 3.13; t. *Roš. Haš.* 2.17 (320–1 Lieberman); and t. *Meg.* 3.21 (360 Lieberman).

<sup>235</sup> See appendix 29.3 cases A 1 and 12; cases A 24 and C 2 do not really concern prayer. Judah once removed (or rebuked) a prayer leader but we do not know whether the incident took place in a public synagogue or in Judah’s own school; see p. *Ber.* 1.5 (3d).

<sup>236</sup> My debt to E. R. Goodenough in this section (and, indeed, throughout this chapter) is great; see Cohen, ‘Epigraphical Rabbis’.

<sup>237</sup> H. Albeck, *Introduction to the Mishna* (Jerusalem 1959), pp. 222–33 (I do not follow Albeck’s division of the Yavnean period into two). Why do the Yavnean figures far outnumber the rest?



According to the 'traditional' answer, the rabbis were the leaders of the Jews and the moulders of Judaism. Drawn from all segments of the population they were *the* elite of Jewish society. Their position as judges, teachers and synagogue leaders enabled them to propagate the way of Torah among the masses. In this view rabbinic Judaism is synonymous with Judaism, and rabbinic society is synonymous with Jewish society. In paradoxical fashion, however, this view admits (on the basis of the Babylonian Talmud) that the rabbis hated, and were hated by, the 'ammê *hâ'āreš*, because of the rabbis' insistence on the observance of the laws of purity and tithing. The mutual hatred is usually explained as the result of tensions between the urban rabbinate and some elements of the rural peasantry.<sup>238</sup> Aside from this aberration, however, rabbinic authority was secure.

This view is false in almost every detail. The rabbis were not the sole leaders of Jewry. Their status as elites depended as much, if not more, upon their wealth and birth as upon their intellectual and pietistic attainments. They had little inclination and availed themselves of few opportunities to propagate their way of life among their co-religionists. Their institutions were oriented not to the masses but to the select few. Their judicial authority extended only to a few circumscribed topics. The rabbis were but a small part of Jewish society, an insular group which produced an insular literature.<sup>239</sup> They were not synagogue leaders. Most of them were of rural origin, not urban. But in spite of their diminutive numbers and their aloofness, there is no evidence (aside from some allegedly tannaitic material quoted by the Babylonian Talmud) for hatred between them and the 'ammê *hâ'āreš*. Disdain yes, but not hatred.

There was great tension between rabbinic ideology and social reality. The rabbis argued that scholarship was more important than pedigree (a teacher takes precedence over a father), but in rabbinic society the primary means of identification was by one's father, not one's teacher. The rabbis said that Torah was to be studied by rich and poor alike, but they made no provision for the maintenance of poor students and created no institutions which might have enabled the poor to devote their lives to Torah. The economic status of most of the rabbis is obscure, but all those about whom any reliable data is preserved were well-to-do. There is no tannaitic evidence that any second-century rabbi was poor or of low birth. The rabbis declared that the Torah was to be the possession of all

<sup>238</sup> So for example L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees* (Philadelphia 1938, repr. 1962), pp. 32–6.

<sup>239</sup> In this respect the church fathers contrast markedly with the rabbis. The nature of Christianity in North Africa is a subject addressed by Tertullian and Augustine. The nature of Christianity in Antioch is a subject addressed by John Chrysostom. But the nature of Judaism in Palestine in the second-century is of little interest to the tannaim.

Israel, but their educational institutions were geared for the few, not the many. In small disciple circles they studied oral laws. They also formed associations, one of which had as its explicit purpose the separation between those who observed the laws of purity and tithing and those who did not. The rabbis claimed judicial authority in all areas of life, but they were consulted most often about the laws of purity and tithing, marriage and divorce, and oaths and vows, least often about the laws of daily prayer, Sabbath and holidays, and commerce and torts. In certain specific matters, then, the Jews recognized the rabbis as authoritative, while in other matters they had no need for them at all.

The gap between theory and practice did not begin to narrow until the tenure of Judah the Patriarch. Rabbinic judicial power now came to include civil cases as well as other concerns of daily life. Mechanisms were created for the support of needy students. The rabbis began to abandon their rural haunts in favour of the cities, notably Caesarea, Tiberias and Sepphoris. These developments probably resulted from the policy of Judah the Patriarch who, unlike his predecessors, enjoyed strong Roman support and attempted to make himself the *de facto* leader not merely of the rabbis but also of Jewish society as a whole. The full impact of Judah's tenure upon the social status of the rabbinate awaits investigation.<sup>240</sup>

The greatest enigma of all is the nature of the rabbinate itself. In some respects it resembled a sect, a guild, or a caste, but it was none of these. Its self-proclaimed segregation and superiority were tempered by its self-proclaimed openness and equality. Perhaps the second-century rabbinate can be defined best as an unsalaried profession. Wealthy men of the countryside devoted themselves to the study of Torah. They called themselves rabbis, enunciated legal opinions on a wide variety of subjects, and enjoyed a certain measure of prestige, as much for their social standing as for their erudition. With the increased recognition of the rabbinate by the state at the end of the century, rabbinic legal power expanded and the office of rabbi was opened to a broader section of the populace. Some rabbinic posts became salaried. If this account is correct, the development of the rabbinate closely mirrors the development of Roman jurisprudence. Originally the vocation of the nobility, Roman jurisprudence was gradually co-opted by the state during the early centuries of the principate and, with the creation of salaried positions, no longer remained

<sup>240</sup> In the interim see Levine's excellent article on the patriarchate in the third century (above note 67). For other recent studies of the patriarchate, see David Goodblatt, *The Monarchic Principle* (Tübingen 1994); Martin Jacobs, *Die Institution des jüdischen Patriarchen* (Tübingen 1995); and Lee Levine, 'The Status of the Patriarch in the Third and Fourth Centuries,' *Journal of Jewish Studies* 47 (1996) 1–32.

the exclusive preserve of the upper classes.<sup>241</sup> In second-century rabbinic Palestine, however, this process had not yet begun. In their own universe the rabbis were kings but their universe was still small and their kingship still limited.<sup>242</sup>

<sup>241</sup> W. Kunkel, *Herkunft und soziale Stellung der römischen Juristen* (Graz–Vienna–Cologne, 1967; second edition); A. Berger, 'Jurisprudentia', *Realencyclopädie*, ed. Pauly-Wissowa *et al.*, vol. 10.1 (1917), pp. 1169–71. A full comparison between jurists and tannaim remains a desideratum; the surface is skimmed by M. H. Prévost, 'Opinions des tannaim et responsa', *Revue internationale de la droit dans l'antiquité* 17 (1970), 68–80. The major difference between them is that the Roman jurists were public figures, who used their expertise and reputation to advance their political careers. The rabbis, in contrast were addicted to the *vita contemplativa*.

<sup>242</sup> I am grateful to Professor Lee Levine for allowing me to read an advance copy of his 'The Rabbinic Class of Third Century Palestine'. Although Professor Levine and I have reached very different conclusions, his essay clearly stated the questions which have to be asked for an understanding of the place of the rabbis in ancient Jewish society.

APPENDIX 29.1  
SOCIAL DIVISIONS BASED ON BIRTH (see text pp. 941ff)

m. Hor. 3.8      m. Qidd. 4.1      m. Šeq. 1.3–6      m. Zabim 2.1      t. Ber. 5.14–17      t. Zebaḥim 10.13  
t. Hor. 2.10–11      t. Qidd. 5                          t. Roš. Haš. 2.5      t. Zebaḥim 10.17  
                                                   t. Meg. 2.7

Priest Levite Israelite	Priest Levite Israelite blemished priests (see below) proselytes freed slaves (see above) <i>mamzēr</i> <i>neṭin</i> <sup>1</sup> <i>šetūqī</i> <i>āsūpī</i>	Levite Israelite		Priests Levites Israelites (see below)	Priests Levites Israelites (see below)
<i>mamzēr</i> <i>neṭin</i> proselyte freed slave		proselyte freed slave	proselytes freed slaves	(see below) (see below) proselytes freed slaves blemished priests <i>neṭin</i> <i>mamzēr</i>	(see below) (see below) proselytes freed slaves blemished priests <i>neṭin</i> <i>mamzēr</i>
(see above) (see above)		women slaves minors gentile Samaritan <sup>2</sup>	slaves (see below)	(see below) (see below) (see below)	(see below) (see below) (see below)
		(see above)	deaf mute mentally incompetent minor eunuch	(see below) eunuch mutilated genitalia without genitalia hermaphrodite half free-half slave <sup>3</sup>	(see below) eunuch mutilated genitalia
	(see above)	(see above) (see above) (see above)	without genitalia hermaphrodite	women slaves minors	Gentiles women slaves minors

NOTES

1 t. Qidd. places *neṭin* before *mamzēr*.

2 m. Qidd. omits 'Gentile and Samaritan'.

3 So t. Ber.; t. Roš. Haš. omits 'without genitalia, hermaphrodite, and half free-half slave;' t. Meg. omits 'half free-half slave'.

## APPENDIX 29.2

INTERACTION BETWEEN RABBIS AND JEWS:  
THE TANNAITIC EVIDENCE

In the text of the chapter I discuss the principles by which this material was collected and classified. After noting the primary Tannaitic source for each case (I do not provide complete documentation), I present a brief summary of the case itself. Wherever the information is provided, I note the place where the case originated, the place where the case was adjudicated, and the sage who rendered the decision.

## A

- 1 *Mekilta Pisha* 15 (127 Lieberman = 57 Horovitz-Rabin): the conversion of the maidservants of Valeria; the sages.
- 2 m. *Ter.* 4.13: mixture of priestly offering with non-sacred grain; R. Aqiba.
- 3 t. *Ter.* 1.15 (111 Lieberman): status of priestly offering separated by a gentile; at Pega; R. (Simeon b.) Gamaliel.
- 4 t. *Ter.* 2.13 (115 Lieberman): fourth-year vineyard offerings from land in Syria owned by a gentile; asked by Sebyon the archi-synagogue of Kezib; R. Gamaliel.
- 5 t. *Ter.* 7.15 (147 Lieberman): dead snake in vat of wine; R. Judah (b. Baba).
- 6 t. *Dem.* 4.13 (80 Lieberman): new shipment of vegetables to marketplace affects status of uncertainty with regard to tithes; at Meron; R. Aqiba.
- 7 t. *Šeb.* 4.13 (182 Lieberman): permissibility of food planted during the seventh year; at Sepphoris; R. Yohanan b. Nuri.
- 8 m. *Kil.* 4.9: mixed plantings in a vineyard; at Salmon; the sages.
- 9 m. *Kil.* 7.5: mixed plantings in a vineyard during the seventh year; R. Aqiba.
- 10 t. *Kil.* 3.5 (214 Lieberman): mixed plantings in a vineyard; R. Gamaliel, who refers the questioners to Yosi b. Giali.
- 11 t. *Ma'as. Š.* 5.9 (270 Lieberman): a man is instructed in a dream where his late father had deposited his second tithe money; the sages.
- 12 t. *Sabb.* 15.8 (70 Lieberman): the circumcision of a boy whose cousins (the sons of his mother's sisters) had died from the procedure; the sages (or R. Simeon b. Gamaliel).
- 13 t. *ʿErub.* 4.16 (110 Lieberman): on the Sabbath limits of Magdala; R. Judah the Patriarch. (= appendix 29.3, A 32 below)
- 14 t. *ʿErub.* 6.25 (125 Lieberman): carrying water on Shabbat; at PRTLYS (Traplis or Trablis); R. Simeon b. Gamaliel.

- 15 t. *Pesah.* 2.16 (147–8 Lieberman): release from a vow; at Kezib; R. Gamaliel.
- 16a m. *Beṣa* 3.5: moving a corpse of an animal on a holiday; R. Tarphon.
- 16b m. *Beṣa* 3.5: moving impure dough offering on a holiday; R. Tarphon.
- 17 m. *Yeb.* 12.5: the validity of *balisah* performed in private; R. Aqiba.
- 18 t. *Yeb.* 4.5 (11–12 Lieberman): the remarriage of a woman whose husband was killed; the murder took place in Lydda, the murderer was apprehended at Caesarea Mazaca (Cappadocia); the sages.
- 19 t. *Yeb.* 10.3 (32 Lieberman): the obligation of the wife of a mutilated priest to undergo levirate marriage upon her husband's death; the man lived at Kepar Mendon; R. Yohanan b. Nuri.
- 20 t. *Yeb.* 13.5 (47 Lieberman): the remarriage of a minor to her first husband after the death of her second; R. Judah b. Baba.
- 21 t. *Yeb.* 14.7 (53 Lieberman): a Gentile testifies that a Jew died; the sages.
- 22 t. *Yeb.* 14.7 (53–4 Lieberman): a group of Gentiles testifies that a certain Jew died at Antioch; the sages.
- 23 t. *Yeb.* 14.8 (54 Lieberman): the presumed death of sixty Jews at the siege of Betar; the sages.
- 24 t. *Yeb.* 14.10 (54–5 Lieberman): a Jew testifies about the death of a fellow traveller; R. Tarphon. (t. *Yeb.* preserves two versions of this incident; the first version belongs to the C category and does not mention R. Tarphon, referring instead to an anonymous 'they'.)
- 25 m. *Ned.* 5.6: a father is bound by oath not to derive benefit from his son; at Beth Horon; the sages.
- 26 m. *Ned.* 9.5: a man swears to derive no benefit from his wife and is obligated to divorce her and pay her marriage contract; R. Aqiba. (compare m. *B. Qam.* 8.6 (A 31 below)).
- 27 t. *Ned.* 5.1 (113–14 Lieberman): a man prohibits his wife on oath from going to Jerusalem; R. Yosi.
- 28 m. *Git.* 1.5: a writ of divorce with Samaritan witnesses; R. Gamaliel at Kepar Utnai.
- 29 t. *Git.* 1.3 (246 Lieberman): a writ of divorce is brought from Kephars Sisi; R. Ishmael and R. Ilai.
- 30 t. *Git.* 2.10 (252 Lieberman): a man in Garaba wrote out the fixed portions of writs of divorce, leaving blank the space for the names and date and place; the sages.
- 31 m. *B. Qam.* 8.6: a man bares a woman's head in public, thereby shaming her; R. Aqiba. (compare A 26 above.)
- 32 t. *B. Qam.* 8.16 (362 Zuckermann): a woman swears to marry the first available man; the sages.

- 33 m. *B. Meṣ.* 8.8: renting a bathhouse by the year; at Sepphoris; R. Simeon b. Gamaliel and R. Yosi.
- 34 m. *B. Bat.* 10.8: the responsibility of a guarantor for a loan; R. Ishmael and Simeon b. Nannus.
- 35 m. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 5.2: wine of pagan libation accidentally spilled on a shipment of figs; the sages.
- 36 t. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 4.11 (467 Zuckermandel): the permissibility of marked pieces of meat in Akko-Ptolemais; the sages.
- 37 t. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 7.4 (471 Zuckermandel): a gentile descends into a cistern of wine; the sages.
- 38 t. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 7.6 (471 Zuckermandel): the permissibility of a pot which was thought to contain oil but which really contained wine; the sages.
- 39 t. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 7.8 (471–2 Zuckermandel): a Jew prepares the wine of a gentile; R. Simeon b. Eleazar.
- 40 t. *Ḥul.* 2.4 (502 Zuckermandel): a blemish was discovered in a slaughtered animal; the sages.
- 41 t. *Ḥul.* 2.13 (502 Zuckermandel): a Jew slaughters an animal in Caesarea and dedicates its blood and fat to a pagan god; the sages.
- 42 t. *Ḥul.* 3.10 (504 Zuckermandel): a question asked at Jamnia-Jabneh by the men of Asya about slaughter; ‘they pronounced it fit’.
- 43 t. *Miqw.* 4.6 (656 Zuckermandel): a question asked at Jamnia-Jabneh by the men of Asya about an immersion pool; ‘they pronounced it fit’.
- 44 t. *Para* 7.4 (636 Zuckermandel): a question asked at Jamnia-Jabneh by the men of Asya about the waters of purification; ‘they pronounced it fit’.
- 45 m. *Bek.* 5.3: on the mutilation of first-born animals, intentional and accidental; the sages.
- 46 m. *Bek.* 5.3: on the mutilation of first-born animals, intentional and accidental; the sages. (distinct from no. 45)
- 47 t. *Bek.* 4.8 (539 Zuckermandel): on a deformity in a first-born animal; R. Aqiba and R. Yohanan b. Nuri. (m. *Bek.* 6.6 has a C version of the story.)
- 48 t. *Bek.* 5.6–7 (540 Zuckermandel): on a deformity of a priest; R. Tarphon and R. Yosi.
- 49 m. *Kelim* 5.4: a fire in an oven at Kepar Sogane; R. Gamaliel. (t. *Kelim B. Qam.* 4.4 (572–3 Zuckermandel) has a C version of the incident.)
- 50 t. *Kelim B. Meṣ.* 5.3 (583 Zuckermandel): the susceptibility to impurity of wicker baskets which are given on loan; the sages.
- 51 t. *Kelim B. Meṣ.* 11.2 (589 Zuckermandel): from Kepar Aris they brought sixty troughs for R. Gamaliel to measure.



- 52 t. *Kelim B. Bat.* 1.2 (590 Zuckermann): the ritual cleanness of a garment woven by a woman; R. Ishmael (apparently a doublet of number 53).
- 53 t. *Kel. B. Bat.* 1.3 (590 Zuckermann): the ritual cleanness of a garment woven by a woman; R. Ishmael (apparently a doublet of number 52).
- 54 t. *Kel. B. Bat.* 2.1 (591 Zuckermann): on the susceptibility to uncleanness of an impromptu chair made of palm leaves; the sages.
- 55 t. *Kel. B. Bat.* 2.2 (591 Zuckermann): on the susceptibility to uncleanness of an impromptu chair made of olive leaves; R. Aqiba and his disciples (compare A 58).
- 56 t. *Kel. B. Bat.* 2.2 (591 Zuckermann): the susceptibility to uncleanness of a bridle used as a chair; at Sepphoris; R. Eleazar b. Azaryah, R. Huspit, R. Yesebab, R. Halapta and R. Yohanan b. Nuri.
- 57 t. *Obol.* 16.13 (614–15 Zuckermann): a priest looks into a pit in which a dead infant was thrown; at Rimmon; the sages.
- 58 m. *Nid.* 8.3: the purity of a menstruant woman; R. Aqiba and his disciples (compare number 55).
- 59 t. *Nid.* 1.9 (642 Zuckermann): the purity of a menstruant woman; at HYTLWT; the sages.
- 60 t. *Nid.* 4.3–4 (644 Zuckermann): on the impurity of a woman who miscarried; R. Sadoq was asked about this matter in Tib'on, and went to Jamnia-Jabneh to consult the sages.
- 61 t. *Nid.* 4.3–4 (644 Zuckermann): on the impurity of a woman who miscarried; R. Sadoq was asked about this matter in Tib'on, and went to Jamnia-Jabneh to consult the sages (numbers 60 and 61 do not appear to be doublets).
- 62 t. *Nid.* 5.16 (646–7 Zuckermann): a child dedicates a spade to God; R. Aqiba.
- 63 t. *Nid.* 5.17 (647 Zuckermann): as in no. 62, this case concerns the competence of a child, but the actual incident is obscure; the sages.
- 64 t. *Nid.* 7.3 (649 Zuckermann): blood was discovered on a pot-stand between two women; the sages.
- 65 t. *Miqw.* 6.3 (658 Zuckermann): 2000 *kur* of water gathered in a pit at Rum Beth Anat; R. Hananya b. Teradion.
- 66 T. *Tobar.* 6.1 (666 Zuckermann): blood was discovered on loaves of (bread which was baked from wheat which was) priestly offering; the sages.
- 67 t. *Tobar.* 6.7 (666 Zuckermann): a sick person died while being transported from Ginosar to Hamtan; the sages.
- 68 t. *Tobar.* 8.10 (669 Zuckermann): a person forgot some utensils in the synagogue; the sages.

- 69 t. *Tobar.* 8.15 (669 Zuckermandel): a woman refined pure and impure liquids into a vat of priestly offering; the sages.
- 70 m. *Yad.* 3.1: a woman inserted her hand into an impure vessel; R. Simeon b. Gamaliel (or R. Gamaliel) reports that this case was heard by his father.
- 71 t. *T. Yom.* 2.5 (685 Zuckermandel): an impure person touched a leaky wine barrel; R. Judah (b. Baba).

## B

- 1 t. *Kil.* 1.4 (203–4 Lieberman): a disciple told the people of Ariaḥ that it is forbidden to graft two types of apple together; they cut it down. They asked at Jamnia-Jabneh and were told that the disciple was correct.
- 2 t. *Kil.* 1.4 (203–4 Lieberman): a disciple told the people of šwqy of Sepphoris that it is forbidden to graft two types of pear together; they cut it down. They asked at Jamnia-Jabneh and were told that the disciple was incorrect.
- 3 t. *Maʿas.* Š. 3.18 (261–2 Lieberman): R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, R. Judah, and R. Yosi told a housholder at Kezib that he has never separated the second tithe correctly.
- 4 t. *Šabb.* 13.4 (58 Lieberman): R. Ishmael surprises a man in the act of writing benedictions.
- 5 m. *ʿErub.* 10.10: at the synagogue in Tiberias they used to construct the Sabbath perimeter in a certain way until R. Gamaliel and the elders came and prohibited it. (R. Yosi narrates a different version: R. Gamaliel and the elders permitted a practice which the Tiberians had regarded as prohibited.)
- 6 t. *ʿErub.* 1.2 (87 Lieberman): R. Eliezer tries to persuade Joseph b. Peridah of Abelin to construct the Sabbath perimeter correctly.
- 7 t. *Qidd.* 3.6 (287 Lieberman): a man betrothed a woman on condition that his father approve and the man died; ‘they’ told the father to invalidate the betrothal.
- 8 t. *B. Qam.* 2.13 (349 Zuckermandel): a *basid* rebukes someone who removes stones from his field and throws them upon public property; the *basid*’s curse is fulfilled.
- 9 t. *Obol.* 16.12 (614 Zuckermandel): in the district of ʿOny, Judah and Hillel the sons of R. Gamaliel advise a man how to purify his field from scattered bones.
- 10 m. *Maks.* 3.4: the men of Maḥoz used to wipe their fruit with sand; the sages told them that they never ate ritually pure food.
- 11 *Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* A 12 and B 27 (28a–29a Schechter): a priest from Beth Ramah (or: Ramat bene ʿAnat) used to affect a

saintly air, but an emissary of R. Yohanan b. Zakkai (or R. Joshua) demonstrated that he never ate ritually pure heave offering.

## C

- 1 t. *Šeb.* 5.2 (186 Lieberman): R. Simeon b. Gamaliel reports that he saw Simeon b. Kahana drinking Cilician wine at Akko-Ptolemais and that ‘they’ decreed that he should drink it on the boat because the wine was made from grapes which were priestly offering.
- 2 t. *Kil.* 2.12 (211 Lieberman): a case of mixed breeding of crops at Kepar PGY; R. Nehemiah.
- 3 m. *Šabb.* 3.4: the men of Tiberias mixed hot and cold water on the Sabbath; the sages.
- 4 m. *‘Erub.* 8.7: the men of Abel would take water from a water-duct on the Sabbath under the supervision of ‘the elders’.
- 5 t. *Ta’an.* 1.12 (327–8 Lieberman), cf. m. *Ta’an.* 2.5: at Sepphoris R. Halapta instituted a certain variation in the liturgy for a fast day. When the variation was reported to the sages, they disapproved.
- 6 t. *Ta’an.* 1.12 (327–8 Lieberman), cf. m. *Ta’an.* 2.5: at Sikni R. Hananya b. Teradyon instituted a certain variation in the liturgy for a fast day. When the variation was reported to the sages, they disapproved.
- 7 m. *Ta’an.* 3.9: R. Tarphon told the Jews of Lydda to change a fast day to a holiday after their prayers for rain had been answered.
- 8 t. *Ta’an.* 2.5 (331 Lieberman): ‘They’ decreed a fast day at Lydda on Hanukah. R. Joshua told them that they should fast (for atonement) because of their fast on a holiday.
- 9 t. *Hag.* 2.13 (386 Lieberman): when Aleksa died in Lydda, the men of the city wanted to eulogize him but R. Tarphon forbade it because it was a holiday.
- 10 m. *Yeb.* 12.6: R. Hyrcanus supervised a *ḥališab* ceremony (the rejection of a levirate marriage) at Kephars *‘YTM*.
- 11 m. *Yeb.* 16.4: a blind man and a would-be rescuer disappeared in a pool in a cave, and ‘they’ permitted their wives to remarry.
- 12 m. *Yeb.* 16.4: at *‘Asya* a man was let down into the sea but only his leg was brought back up; the sages.
- 13 m. *Yeb.* 16.5: on the remarriage of a wife the death of whose husband was broadcast by an anonymous informant from a hill top.
- 14 m. *Yeb.* 16.5: on the remarriage of a woman whose husband was bitten by a snake at *Šalmon*.
- 15 t. *Yeb.* 16.7: on the remarriage of a woman whose husband, one of the sons of Levi, died at an inn at *Šo’ar*, the city of palms (the phrase is borrowed from Deuteronomy 34:3).

- 16 t. *Yeb.* 1.8 (21 Lieberman): a case of levirate marriage at PYGH; the legal issue is debated by R. Eleazar b. Zadoq and the sages, but there is no indication that they were actually involved in the case itself.
- 17 t. *Yeb.* 12.9 (42 Lieberman): R. Ishmael once supervised a *ḥaliṣab* ceremony at night.
- 18 t. *Yeb.* 12.15 (45 Lieberman): R. Tarphon once supervised a *ḥaliṣab* ceremony.
- 19 m. *Ket.* 1.10: a young girl was raped – can she marry a priest? R. Yohanan b. Nuri gives his opinion.
- 20 m. *Ned.* 9.10: a man swore not to derive any benefit from his wife who was also his niece; R. Ishmael arranged for the vow to be nullified.
- 21 m. *Nazir* 2.3: a drunk woman vowed that she would become a Nazirite; the sages.
- 22 m. *Nazir* 5.4: Nahum the Mede told a group of Nazirites who came to Jerusalem and found the temple to have been destroyed, that they were not bound by their vows. When the sages heard of this decision, they disapproved.
- 23 m. *Git.* 6.6: a man ordered a divorce to be written for his wife but fell off a roof before his orders were executed – did he commit suicide? R. Simeon b. Gamaliel gives the legal opinion of the sages. In t. *Git.* 4.8 (261 Lieberman) the case is theoretical; in the Mishnah it is presented as a real case.
- 24 t. *Git.* 5.4 (265 Lieberman): on a divorced woman consorting with her previous husband; R. Eleazar b. Tadday brought the question to the sages.
- 25 m. *Qidd.* 2.7: a man gave a bunch of figs to a woman and said that he was thereby marrying her and all of her friends standing with her; the sages.
- 26 m. *B. Mes.* 4.3: at Lydda R. Tarphon made two rulings affecting commerce, but the view of the sages prevailed.
- 27 m. *B. Bat.* 9.7: on the validity of oral deathbed disposition of property.
- 28 m. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 1.4: on trading with shops that are, and shops that are not, decorated for a pagan holiday; at Beth Shean (Scythopolis); the sages.
- 29 m. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 4.10: on the usability of wine touched by a gentile.
- 30 m. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 4.10: on the usability of wine touched by a gentile.
- 31 m. *ʿAbod. Zar.* 4.12: on the usability of wine owned by a gentile but prepared by a Jew; at Beth Shean (Scythopolis); the sages.
- 32 m. *Bek.* 4.4: on the *kasbrut* (fitness for eating) of a cow whose womb had been removed; R. Tarphon made a ruling but when the sages learned of it, they disapproved.

- 33 m. *Bek.* 6.9: does a protruding lower cheek render a first-born animal unfit? R. Simeon b. Gamaliel asked the sages.
- 34 t. *Bek.* 3.7 (537 Zuckermandel): a non-expert supervised the inspection of a first-born animal; R. Eleazar b. Tadday asked the sages. Compare no. 24 above.
- 35 t. *Bek.* 6.10–11 (540–1 Zuckermandel): a man prohibited his son on oath from doing any work for him so that he (the son) might devote himself to Torah; R. Yosi.
- 36 m. *Obol.* 17.5: the sages did not concern themselves about the impurity of the wax seals on letters from abroad to priests.
- 37 t. *Obol.* 4.2 (600 Zuckermandel): a box of bones was brought from Kepar תבִי' and deposited in the synagogue of Lydda; R. Aqiba.
- 38 t. *Para* 5.6 (634 Zuckermandel): on the susceptibility to ritual uncleanness of a small horn; at Beth Shearim; dispute between R. Simeon and the sages.
- 39 t. *Nid.* 5.14 (646 Zuckermandel): on the menstrual impurity of an infant; at 'en Bul.
- 40 t. *Nid.* 6.3 (647 Zuckermandel): Rabbi (Judah the Patriarch) ruled that a girl thirty days shy of her eighteenth birthday should be considered as an eighteen-year-old (for menstrual and matrimonial law); = appendix 29.3 C 13.
- 41 t. *Nid.* 6.17 (648 Zuckermandel): uncertainty whether blood is menstrual or from another source; R. Meir.
- 42 t. *Nid.* 6.17 (648 Zuckermandel): uncertainty whether blood is menstrual or from another source; Rabbi (Judah the Patriarch); = appendix 29.3 C 14.
- 43 m. *Miqv.* 7.1: on the use of snow for an immersion pool; R. Ishmael and the men of Medeba testifying in R. Ishmael's name.
- 44 t. *Miqv.* 7.10 (660 Zuckermandel): on immersion; five elders in Lydda.
- 45 t. *Miqv.* 7.11 (660–1 Zuckermandel): a cow which drank the waters of purification and was slaughtered; thirty-two elders in Lydda; in *Sifre* Numbers 124 (158 Horovitz) the case is decided by thirty-eight elders at the vineyard of Jamnia-Jabneh.
- 46 t. *Tobor.* 9.14 (670–1 Zuckermandel): a pigeon drowned in a wine press; five elders.

## APPENDIX 29.3

## THE CASES OF RABBI JUDAH THE PATRIARCH

In this appendix I attempt to collect all of the cases involving Rabbi Judah the Patriarch. I have no doubt that the catalogue omits some relevant material and includes some material which ought to be excluded

(it is not always easy to determine which Rabbi Judah the Patriarch is intended; we are interested here in Rabbi Judah the Patriarch the First, the putative editor of the Mishnah), but I assume that the material here collected fairly represents R. Judah's casebook. For an analysis of some aspects of this material, see the text of the chapter above.

## A

- 1 b. *Ber.* 27b: the people mistakenly thought that the Sabbath was over and said the evening prayers early; a slightly different version of the incident seems to be recorded at p. *Ber.* 4.1 (7c).
- 2 p. *Kil.* 2.11 (28b): a question about mixed plantings was asked of R. Gamaliel b. R. Judah who, in turn, presented the question to his father.
- 3 p. *Ter.* 8.5 (45d): a snake uncovered a vat of water, drank from it, and covered it again.
- 4 p. *Ter.* 10.10 (47b): a chick was found among some boiled eggs – may the eggs be eaten?
- 5 p. *Šabb.* 17.3 (16c): the maidservant of Bar Qappara asks whether she can cut the umbilical cord on the Sabbath.
- 6 b. *‘Erub.* 65b: the participation of a courtyard owned by a gentile in the Sabbath perimeter.
- 7 b. *‘Erub.* 99b: a Shabbat perimeter involving a certain alley.
- 8 p. *Pes.* 4.1 (30d): are the sons of מַיִסִּים bound by an ancestral oath not to travel on the sea?
- 9 p. *Šeq.* 7.4 (50c): the *kashrut* of a butcher's shop in Sepphoris.
- 10 b. *Yom.* 82b: a pregnant woman wants to eat on the Day of Atonement.
- 11 p. *Ta’an.* 3.1 (66b–c): a school teacher (?) suspected of not observing the agricultural laws of the seventh year.
- 12 b. *Ta’an.* 14b // p. *Ta’an.* 1.1 (63d): the men of Naweh asked about the prayer for rain.
- 13 b. *Mo’ed Qaṭ.* 18a: cutting one's nails on the intermediate days of the festivals; asked by two people from Ḥamtan.
- 14 p. *Yeb.* 15.1 (14d): establishing the presumption of death upon the testimony of a single witness.
- 15 b. *Yeb.* 105b: a case of levirate marriage.
- 16 p. *Ket.* 1.1 (25a): a bride was found not to have been a virgin.
- 17 p. *Ket.* 7.6 (31c): the ability of a woman, who was divorced for improper conduct, to collect her marriage settlement.
- 18 p. *Ket.* 11.6 (34c) // b. *Ket.* 100a: sale of property to support a widow in accordance with her marriage contract.
- 19 b. *Ket.* 10b: a bride was found not to have been a virgin.

- 20 b. *Ket.* 107b: a case (or two cases?) came before Judah the Patriarch at Beth Shearim concerning the marriage contract of a minor.
- 21 b. *Ned.* 20b: a wife complains that her husband prefers unusual sexual positions.
- 22 b. *Ned.* 50b: a man contracted for his servant to be taught 1000 varieties of fig-stew, but the servant was taught only 800.
- 23 p. *Qidd.* 1.1 (58c): the validity of a divorce document written on something from which a Jew is prohibited from deriving any benefit.
- 24 b. *B. Bat.* 13b: a scroll consisting of the Torah, Prophets, Hagiographa pasted together.
- 25 b. *B. Bat.* 164b: on the validity of one or two contracts which appeared to be post-dated.
- 26 b. *B. Batra* 164b (in part also 160b): a contract which seemed to lack a date.
- 27 b. *San.* 31a: the discordant testimony of two witnesses in a monetary matter.
- 28 p. *Šebu.* 6.2 (37a): collecting a loan in front of witnesses.
- 29 b. *Men.* 37a: a child was born with two heads – how many *sheqels* must be given to the priest, five or ten?
- 30 b. *Hul.* 51a: on the *kasbrut* of an animal in whose stomach a needle was found.
- 31 b. *Nid.* 66a: a woman had an emission of blood after intercourse.
- 32 t. *‘Eruv.* 4.16 (110 Lieberman): the Sabbath limits of Magdala; = appendix 29.2 above, A 13.

## B

- 1 p. *Bik.* 1.5 (64a) = b. *Yeb.* 60b: Rabbi sent R. Romanus to investigate the pedigree of the citizens of a certain town (RODOS? a corruption for *Darom* = the south?).
- 2 p. *Šeb.* 6.1 (36b–c) // b. *San.* 5b: the men of Akko-Ptolemais think that ‘egg-waters’ (or ‘swamp-waters’) do not make food susceptible to impurity.

## C

- 1 b. *Šabb.* 46a: Rabbi taught at DYWSPR<sup>7</sup> about a candelabrum on the Sabbath.
- 2 b. *Ta’an.* 24a: decreed a fast.
- 3 b. *Yeb.* 59b: a girl at HYTLW was raped by a dog – can she marry a priest?
- 4 b. *Ket.* 27b: determining the adequacy of one’s lineage for marriage with the priesthood. (According to one opinion in the Talmud the respondent was not R. Judah but R. Joshua b. Levi.)
- 5 p. *B. Meṣ.* 2.9 (8c): the responsibility of the finder of a lost object.



- 6 p. *B. Meş.* 3.13 (9b): the prohibition of using an object given as security.
- 7 b. *Hul.* 45b: improper slaughter.
- 8 b. *Hul.* 86b: the validity of slaughter by an unsupervised deaf-mute, idiot or minor; R. Judah once decided in accordance with R. Meir (not valid).
- 9 b. *Hul.* 86b: in the same matter as number 8, R. Judah once decided in accordance with the sages (the slaughter might be valid).
- 10 p. *Nid.* 1.5 (49b) // b. *Nid.* 6b and 9b: menstruation.
- 11 p. *Nid.* 2.6 (50b) // b. *Nid.* 20b: checking menstrual blood during the night.
- 12 b. *Nid.* 64b: availability of a menstruant woman for sexual relations.
- 13 t. *Nid.* 6.3 (647 Zuckerman): a girl thirty days shy of her eighteenth birthday is to be considered as an eighteen-year-old (for menstrual and matrimonial law): = appendix 29.2 above, c 40.
- 14 t. *Nid.* 6.17 (648 Zuckerman): uncertainty whether blood is menstrual or not; = appendix 29.2 above, c 42.

## CHAPTER 30

THE HELLENISTIC–ROMAN DIASPORA  
 CE 70–CE 235: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
 EVIDENCE

The importance of archaeological finds in enhancing our knowledge of the past is never more clearly demonstrated than in the late Hellenistic and Roman periods. The information from literary sources relating to this period is limited, and while the archaeological material is likewise far from abundant, it nevertheless contributes significantly to our understanding of specific Jewish communities.

The archaeological data from this period are diverse and include synagogue and funerary remains, as well as inscriptions, artistic representations, and small finds (glass, pottery, lamps, coins, medallions and amulets). The geography of these finds is equally diverse; material has been uncovered from the eastern frontiers of the Empire (Dura Europos) to the Bosporan kingdom, Delos, Asia Minor, Italy, North Africa and Egypt. Most remains from this period relate to the synagogue or *prosenche* (lit., house of prayer). A number of ancient Diaspora communities, particularly those of Alexandria and Egypt, have provided us with a significant amount of material regarding this Hellenistic and early Roman institution. Epigraphical evidence hails from as early as the third century BCE, papyrological and archaeological data from the second century BCE onward, and literary sources from the first century CE. Together they afford an intriguing, if only partial, picture of the role and status of this institution throughout the Hellenistic–Roman Diaspora.

The external appearance and internal organization of the synagogue bore some significant differences in various regions. The names by which communities referred to the synagogue may well reflect diverse perceptions of the institution and its place in society. Nevertheless, the Diaspora synagogue fulfilled much the same function as a communal and religious centre within each Jewish community.

## I EGYPT

No synagogue building has been discovered in Egypt to date. However, the epigraphical material that has been recovered, supplemented by a

number of papyri,<sup>1</sup> has contributed immensely to the study of this institution in the Ptolemaic–Roman era. This material is considerably earlier than any other Diaspora source known to date.<sup>2</sup> Altogether, the synagogue is mentioned explicitly in fifteen documents and is implied in five more.

The most common type of synagogue inscription was dedicatory in nature and appears, with minor differences, about eight times throughout the Ptolemaic era. To cite several examples:

On behalf of king Ptolemy and queen Berenice his sister and wife and their children, the Jews (dedicated) the *proseuche*.<sup>3</sup>

On behalf of king Ptolemy and queen Cleopatra the sister and queen Cleopatra the wife, Benefactors, the Jews in Nitriai (dedicated) the *proseuche* and its appurtenances.<sup>4</sup>

The geographical and chronological distribution of such inscriptions throughout Egypt clearly indicates that it was a common Egyptian Jewish practice to dedicate synagogues to a ruling family. It expresses the loyalty and gratitude of the Jewish community to the king and queen, as well as the dependence of the Jews upon them. The acknowledged status of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt as members of the class of ‘Hellenes’ (resident aliens and not native Egyptians) may have been due, in part, to their service to the king and his subsequent protection.<sup>5</sup>

Egyptian Jewry was dependent upon royal recognition and support for the existence of its communal institutions, for its right to own and administer property and assets, as well as for the legitimization and authority of its communal activities and decisions. Such royal backing is reflected in a number of inscriptions; in one inscription, the ruling couple is referred to as ‘benefactors’, they declare a synagogue ‘inviolable’ (*ἄσυλος*), and they order the restoration of an earlier dedicatory inscription.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> V. Tcherikover *et al.*, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum (CPJ)*, 3 vols. (Cambridge 1957–64), I, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> The epigraphical material has been conveniently collected and extensively analysed by W. Horbury and D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Greco-Roman Egypt* (Cambridge 1992). Previously, most of these inscriptions had appeared in J.-B. Frey’s *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum (CIJ)*, 2 vols.; Rome 1936–52; II, reprint; New York 1975) and were later edited by D. M. Lewis in vol. III of Tcherikover *et al.*, *CPJ*. The last-mentioned work remains basic for papyrological material. See also V. Tcherikover, ‘Prolegomena,’ in *CPJ*, I, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, no. 22. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* no. 25.

<sup>5</sup> See E. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge 1988), pp. 83–5; Modrzejewski, *The Jews of Egypt: From Ramses II to Emperor Hadrian* (Philadelphia 1995), pp. 73–87.

<sup>6</sup> Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, no. 125. See also A. Kasher, ‘Three Jewish Communities of Lower Egypt in the Ptolemaic Period’, *Scripta Classica Israelitica* 2 (1975), 115–16.



Fig. 30.1 *Prosenche* inscription from Ptolemaic Egypt.  
In W. Horbury and D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, 1992.

The terms used to refer to the Egyptian synagogue are of interest. The overwhelming majority of references call it a *proseuche*, and the term appears ten times in the inscriptions and four times in the papyri;<sup>7</sup> the word *synagoge* appears only once, and in connection with officials twice; and the designation *eucheion* appears on one occasion.<sup>8</sup> The Jews of Ptolemaic Egypt borrowed terminology associated with pagan contexts in other instances as well. The phrase used to describe the God of Israel (θεός ὑψιστος) is documented in pagan as well as Jewish contexts, as are various terms for synagogue officials, such as the archisynagogue and *nakoros*.<sup>9</sup>

The religious dimension of these *proseuchae* is reflected in the sanctity accorded them. A number of inscriptions specifically refer to the 'holy' or 'great place';<sup>10</sup> another source associates the institution with the 'Most High God';<sup>11</sup> and yet another describes a *proseuche* as follows:

On the orders of the queen and king, in place of the previous plaque about the dedication of the *proseuche*, let what is written below be written up: King Ptolemy Euergetes (proclaimed) the *proseuche* inviolate (ἄσυλον). The queen and king gave the order.<sup>12</sup>

This last inscription is usually dated to the latter part of the second century BCE, thus attesting to the holy status enjoyed by the Egyptian synagogue from an early period. Such a status may already have been anticipated in a papyrus from Alexandrou-Nesos in the Fayyum dated to 218 BCE, where it is stated that a Jew named Dorotheus was accused of stealing a cloak and took refuge in a *proseuche*. Only after the intervention

<sup>7</sup> Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, nos. 9, 13, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 117, 125, 126; Tcherikover *et al.*, *CPJ*, I, nos. 129, 134, 138; II, no. 432. On the term *proseuche* as referring to a Jewish communal institution, see I. A. Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting* (Grand Rapids 1996), pp. 207–25.

<sup>8</sup> *Synagogue: ibid.* Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, no. 20. Inscription no. 138 (Tcherikover *et al.*, *CPJ*, I) seems to refer to a meeting held in the *proseuche*, and not a synagogue proper; *Synagogue officials*: Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, nos. 18, 26; *Eucheion*: Tcherikover *et al.*, *CPJ*, II, no. 432.

<sup>9</sup> *Theos Hypsistos*: C. Roberts *et al.*, 'The Gild of Zeus Hypsistos', *Harvard Theological Review* 29 (1936), 55–72; M. Simon, 'Theos Hypsistos', *Ex Orbe Religionum*, eds. J. Bergman *et al.* (Leiden 1972), pp. 372–85; Levinskaya, *Diaspora Setting*, pp. 51–103. See also the material gathered by P. E. Dion, 'Synagogues et temples dans l'Égypte hellénistique', *Science et Esprit* 29 (1977), 65–73; G. H. R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*, 7 vols. (North Ryde, NSW 1981–94), IV, pp. 49–52.

<sup>10</sup> Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, nos. 16, 17, 127. Although the term *proseuche* does not appear in these fragmentary inscriptions, there can be little doubt that such a building was intended.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* nos. 19, 27, 105.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* no. 125; Tcherikover *et al.*, *CPJ*, I, no. 125; Dion, 'Synagogues et temples', 57–9; Modrzejewski, *Jews of Egypt*, pp. 97–8.

of a third party did Dorotheus agree to leave the cloak with the *nakoros* of the *proseuche* until final adjudication.<sup>13</sup>

A further indication, albeit indirect, of the synagogue's sanctity is reflected in the use of terms such as *temenos* and *ἱερόν περιβόλον* for 'sacred precinct' in connection with a *proseuche*.<sup>14</sup> Finally, a second-century papyrus describes a plot of land attached to a *proseuche* in Arsinoe-Crocodilopolis as a 'sacred grove or garden' (*ἱερά παράδεισος*).<sup>15</sup> All the above would thus seem to imply that the synagogue building itself was considered sacred.

## II LEONTOPOLIS

According to Josephus, Onias (IV), scion of the Zadokite line of high priests, fled to Egypt in the wake of the Hasmonaean ascendancy to power.<sup>16</sup> Despite some discrepancies between his accounts in *War* and *Antiquities*, the basic outline of Onias' career in Egypt is identical; he received permission to settle in the area of Leontopolis; he built a temple to the God of Israel on the ruins of a pagan shrine in response to the profanation of the Jerusalem sanctuary; he also established a military colony which came to play a pivotal role in subsequent Ptolemaic politics.

It is universally accepted that the site of ancient Leontopolis is Tell el-Yehoudieh, north of Heliopolis and, some 35 km north of Cairo. The early excavations there, including that of the famous Flinders Petrie, were said to have uncovered traces of Onias' temple; however later archaeologists have been rather sceptical of this identification. Thus, we have to rely on Josephus' description of Onias' temple:

Induced by this statement, Ptolemy gave him a tract, a hundred and eighty furlongs distant from Memphis, in the so-called nome of Heliopolis. Here Onias erected a fortress and built his temple (which was not like that in Jerusalem, but resembled a tower) of huge stones and sixty cubits in altitude. The altar, however, he designed on the model of that in the home country, and adorned the building with similar offerings, the fashion of the lampstand excepted; for, instead of making a stand, he had a lamp wrought of gold which shed a brilliant

<sup>13</sup> Tcherikover *et al.*, *CPJ*, I, no. 129.

<sup>14</sup> Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, nos. 9, 129; Frey, *CIJ*, II, 1433; B. Lifshitz, *Donateurs et fondateurs dans les synagogues juives*, Cahiers de la Revue Biblique 7 (Paris 1967), no. 87; Dion, 'Synagogues et temples', pp. 59–60.

<sup>15</sup> Tcherikover *et al.*, *CPJ*, I, no. 134.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 44–6; M. Delcor, 'Le temple d'Onias en Egypte', *RB* 75 (1968), 188–205; R. Hayward, 'The Jewish temple at Leontopolis: a reconsideration', *JJS* 33 (1982), 429–43; Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, nos. 29–105; D. Noy, 'The Jewish Communities of Leontopolis and Venosa', *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy*, ed. J. W. Van Henten and P. W. van der Horst (Leiden 1994), 162–82; Modrzejewski, *Jews of Egypt*, pp. 121–33.

light and was suspended by a golden chain. The sacred precincts were wholly surrounded by a wall of baked brick, the doorways being of stone. The king, moreover, assigned him an extensive territory as a source of revenue, to yield both abundance for the priests and large provision for the service of God.<sup>17</sup>

The temple was erected in the mid-second century BCE and destroyed by the Romans in the aftermath of the first Jewish revolt, c. CE 74.

The primary archaeological remains from Leontopolis consist of 77 epitaphs, dating mainly from the Roman period, but undoubtedly including burials from the Ptolemaic era as well. Some 40 per cent of those commemorated were women. Most of the epitaphs are inscribed on rectangular stelae, usually within a narrow frame and surmounted by a pediment. Over 50 per cent of the preserved names are either biblical or hellenized Hebrew names, such as the Greek theophoric names Dositheus and Theodosius. Other Greek names were likewise popular and include Aristobulus, Philip, Eirene and Hilarion. The language of the community was Greek; Aramaic and Hebrew do not appear, nor do any Jewish symbols such as the menorah. The city itself is referred to as a *polis* and its inhabitants as 'citizens' and 'fellow-townsmen'.

Twelve of these epitaphs are written in metrical form, as are several hundred others from non-Jewish Egypt. In contrast, very few metrical Jewish epitaphs have been found elsewhere; in fact, over two-thirds of those known come from Leontopolis. A few specifically take note of the 'land of Onias'. One such inscription, referring to a young woman named Arsinoe, is written in a highly literate Doric dialect in dialogue form:

The stele bears witness.

'Who are you that lie in the dark tomb? Tell me your country and your father.'  
'Arsinoe, daughter of Aline and Theodosios. The famous land of Onias reared me.'

'How old were you when you slipped down into the shadowy region of Lethe?'  
'At twenty I went to the mournful place of the dead.'

'Were you married?'

'I was.'

'Did you leave him a child?'

'Childless I went to the house of Hades.'

'May the earth, the guardian of the dead, be light on you.'

'And for you, stranger, may she bear fruitful crops.'

In the sixteenth year, Payni 21.<sup>18</sup>

The entrance to the Leontopolis tombs usually consisted of a descent by a slope or a flight of stairs to a doorway sealed by a limestone slab. Inside was a chamber containing a number of loculi (horizontal niches

<sup>17</sup> *Bell.* VII.426–30. <sup>18</sup> Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, no. 38.



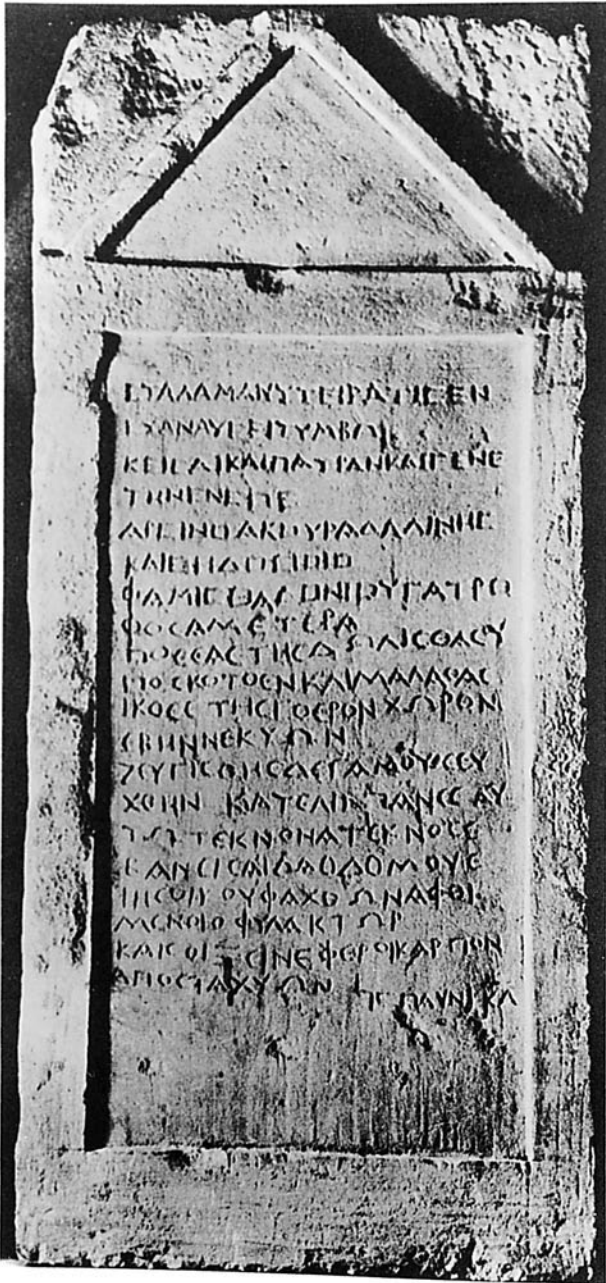


Fig. 30.2 Funerary inscription from Leontopolis.  
In W. Horbury and D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, 1992.

cut into the wall) where bodies were placed. A brick was often placed under the head of the interred.

Finally, mention should also be made of the remains of a Jewish cemetery in nearby Demerdesh, a suburb of ancient Heliopolis, where nine inscriptions were found, attesting probably to another Jewish community.<sup>19</sup>

### III BERENICE (CYRENE)

Three important Greek inscriptions relating to the synagogue were found in this North African city, and together they contain not a few surprises.<sup>20</sup> First and foremost is the very nature of these inscriptions, which are decrees of the local Jewish *politeuma* honouring various individuals who benefited the community in one way or another. These decrees not only refer to the same community, but they span a period of approximately sixty-five years, offering a repeated glimpse into the workings and concerns of this synagogue. Moreover, the inscriptions refer to the synagogue as an institution (or, as we shall see below, use an alternative term) and therefore furnish valuable information regarding this institution.<sup>21</sup>

The earliest of these inscriptions, discovered several centuries ago, is the most poorly preserved of the three. It records a resolution of the Jewish community (here called *politeuma*) and its archons to honour one Decimus Valerius Dionysios in gratitude for his benefactions. The following is the text of the inscription:

In the year (?) 3, on the 5th of Phamenoth, in the archonship of Arimmas son of . . . , Dorion son of Ptolemaios, Zelaïos son of Gnaius, Ariston son of Araxa . . . , Sarapion son of Andromachos, Nikias son of . . . , . . . son of Simon. Whereas Dec(ì)mus Valerius Dionysios son of Gaius . . . remains a noble and good man in word and deed . . . , doing whatever good he can, both in a public capacity and as a private individual, to each one of the citizens, and in particular plastering the floor of the amphitheatre and painting its walls, the archons and the *politeuma* of the Jews at Berenice resolved to register him in the . . . of the . . . and (resolved)

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 106–14.

<sup>20</sup> On the history of the Jewish community of Cyrene generally, see S. Applebaum, *Jews and Greeks in Ancient Cyrene* (Leiden 1979), pp. 130ff.; H. Z. Hirschberg, *A History of the Jews in North Africa*, 2nd edn 2 vols. (Leiden 1974–81), I, pp. 21–86.

<sup>21</sup> Published originally by G. and J. Roux ('Un décret du Politeuma des Juifs de Béréniké en Cyrénaïque', *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 62 (1949), 281–96), these inscriptions have been analysed by J. Reynolds ('Inscriptions', *Excavations at Sidi Kbrebish Benghazi (Berenice)*, I, ed. J. A. Lloyd (Tripoli: 1977), pp. 242–7) and G. Lüderitz (*Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika*, Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients, Reihe B, Nr 53, pp. 147–58). See also Horsley, *New Documents*, IV, pp. 202–9.

that he be exempted from liturgies of every kind; and likewise (they resolved) to crown him with an olive wreath and a woollen fillet, mentioning his name at each assembly and at the new moon. After engraving this resolution on a stele of Parian marble the archons are to set it in the most visible place in the amphitheatre.

All (the stones cast were) white (i.e., the decision was unanimous).

Dec(i)mus Valerius Dionysios son of Gaius plastered the floor and the amphitheatre and painted (it) at his own expense as a contribution to the *politeuma*.<sup>22</sup>

Dating to the end of the first century BCE, this inscription is remarkable on a number of counts. We learn that the Jewish community was led by archons and organized as a *politeuma*. The honoree, Decimus Valerius Dionysios, son of Gaius, bears a Roman name and thus appears to have been a Roman citizen.

It appears certain that Decimus was a member of the *politeuma*, since the decree notes that he was to be exempt from communal liturgies. The honour accorded him consisted of an olive crown and fillet, and the mention of his name during assemblies and on the new moon. These assemblies may well refer to Sabbath gatherings, well known in first-century sources. However, taking special note of monthly meetings is unusual, as new moon celebrations are unknown elsewhere in the Diaspora.

The reference to Decimus' significant impact on a great many people (the citizens of Berenice generally? the Jewish community only?) may have been the result of his holding public office. In particular, he is recognized as having contributed to the Jewish community by plastering the floor of the amphitheatre and painting its walls.

Of the two specific benefactions noted, the painting of walls is most intriguing. The Greek word *ζωγραφέω* can convey two possible meanings: to paint generally or to paint figures (human or animal). If the former was intended, then the paintings may have been similar to those of Pompeii, Herodian Jerusalem or Masada. If the latter was intended, then the amphitheatre would have boasted more striking decorations, and if it indeed served as a synagogue, as we will argue below, then it might have been similar to other Diaspora synagogues such as the third-century walls at Dura Europos or the sixth-century mosaic floor at Hammam Lif in North Africa. At this juncture, certitude is elusive.

Perhaps the most significant detail in this inscription is the thrice-mentioned term 'amphitheatre': To what does it refer? Was it a civic building which served all citizens as a place of sports, entertainment or assembly? Or was this the synagogue of the *politeuma*? Although scholars have been divided over this issue for generations, what appears decisive is the fact that Decimus Valerius Dionysos' benefactions noted above

<sup>22</sup> Translation based on *ibid.* 203, with some changes.

were given to the *politeuma*, thus seeming to indicate that this was most probably a Jewish building. A second inscription from Berenice (see below) likewise associates the Jewish community with an amphitheatre, further reinforcing this connection. If, on the other hand, one were to assume that the amphitheatre referred to was a civic institution, then why were the Jews using it regularly for their communal purposes? While certitude in this matter is impossible, to assume that this inscription refers to honours bestowed by the Jews on one of their own in return for benefactions to the city's amphitheatre, and then to call this a contribution (*ἐπίδομα*) to the *politeuma*, is even more difficult. Such a line of reasoning requires an enormous stretch of the imagination.

It seems, therefore, that the most likely interpretation is that this was indeed a Jewish institution. We cannot be sure why exactly it was called an amphitheatre. The most likely explanation is that the name was related to the shape of the building. The word *ἀμφιθέατρον* seems to indicate a circular or elliptical arena where people sit in the round or, as per Dionysius of Halicarnassus, it could refer to a U-shaped building with seating on three sides.<sup>23</sup>

The second Berenice inscription, from the year CE 24–5, contains a further resolution of the community – this time in the name of nine archons and the *politeuma* at large – taken on the festival of Sukkot. The inscription notes the honours bestowed upon a Roman official, Marcus Tittius, for his support of the Jewish community, as well as his kindness to the Greek citizens of the city.

The dating of this document is certain; the year 55 of the Actium era, that is, CE 24–5. The document is clearly a Jewish one. It begins with a list of archons and a decree taken on the Sukkot holiday. The benefactions of Marcus Tittius to the Jews may have been appreciably more significant than those he bestowed on the Greeks; at least the Jews seem to have thought so. That such a declaration is made by the Jewish community at its regular weekly (?) and monthly meetings in the amphitheatre once again suggests that this was a Jewish building.

A third inscription, from the year CE 55, commemorates a series of donations made by at least eighteen individuals (part of the slab is broken and part is missing) for restoring their synagogue (here referred to as a *συναγωγή*).

Compared with the two previous inscriptions, this one is unique in a number of ways. The list of donors reveals a wealth of names unmatched in the other Cyrenian inscriptions. Once again, Greek names predominate, with many characteristic Greek Cyrenian (Karnedas, Kartisthenes,

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, *Roman Antiquities* 3, 68, 3.

Pratis, Pratomedes), Egyptian (Ammonios, Serapion), Roman (Cornelius), and Hebrew (Jonathan) names.

Of the eighteen donors, the first ten are archons – as compared to seven and nine respectively in the two earlier inscriptions – a factor which may indicate growth in the local Jewish community or perhaps an administrative reorganization that had taken place in the three decades between the second and third inscriptions. Either of these possibilities is likely in light of the fact that the word *synagoge* appears twice here, once in relation to the community itself (instead of the previously used term, *politeuma*) and once with reference to the community building (instead of amphitheatre).

#### IV OSTIA

This synagogue is located near the wall of this port city of Rome, not far from the harbour and adjacent to the important coastal artery, the Via Severiana. The synagogue which remains visible today dates to the fourth century CE; however there clearly were earlier stages, as far back as the first century CE.<sup>24</sup> Several distinct stages of construction mark the building's history: from the very outset, it was erected as a synagogue building and not, as was the case elsewhere, a private home which was later converted into a synagogue. The walls of the main hall (*c.* 12.5 × 24.9 m) were built in typical first-century *opus reticulatum*. Thus, this room, and perhaps also its adjoining kitchen, date from the first century. Later stages featured the *opus vittatum* and *opus listatum*, which were common styles in the later empire (third–fourth centuries). A well covered with a small basin was found at the entrance to the building in its first stage.

The Ostia synagogue was extensively renovated around the start of the third century. The kitchen was relaid with black and white mosaics, and a *bema*, measuring 6.2 × 1.25 metres and 0.79 metres high, was built against the north-western wall of the main hall. The eastern entrance to the hall was completely remodelled, and the *propylaeum* contained four grey 4.7-metre-high marble columns with Corinthian capitals. These renovations are attested by an important inscription found in the course of

<sup>24</sup> On the earlier stage of this building, see M. F. Squarciapino, *The Synagogue of Ostia* (Rome 1964), p. 25; U. Fortis, *Jews and Synagogues* (Venice 1973), pp. 124–5; A. T. Kraabel, 'The Diaspora Synagogue: Archaeological and Epigraphic Evidence since Sukenik', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, 11, 19.1, eds. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin and New York 1979), pp. 498–9; L. M. White, *Building God's House in the Roman World: Architectural Adaptation among Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (Baltimore 1990), p. 69.

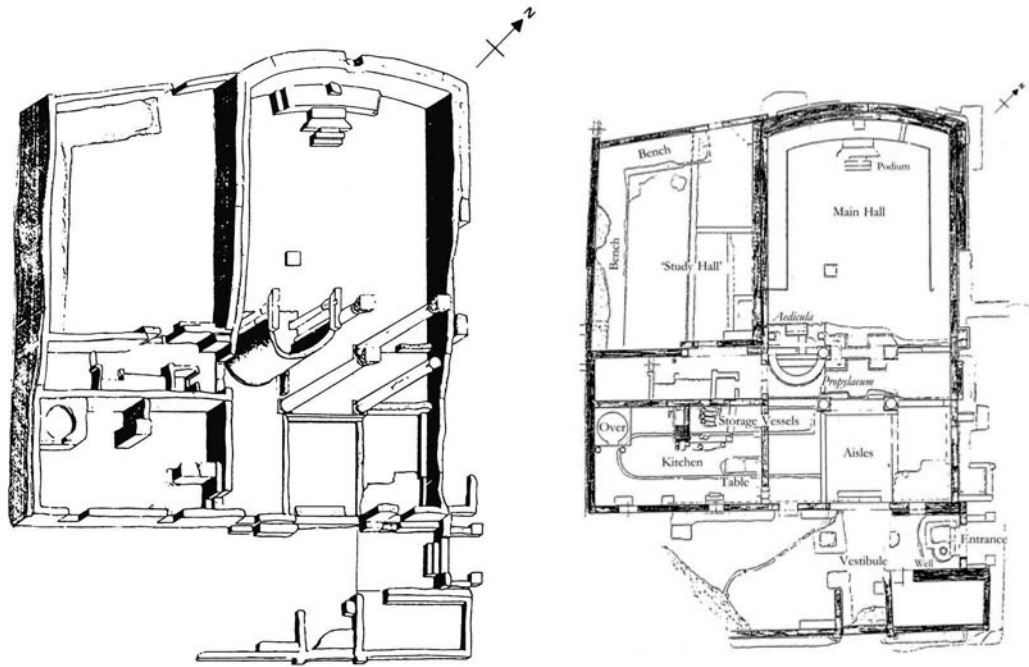


Fig. 30.3 (Left) Isometric drawing and (right) plan of Ostia synagogue.



excavations. The inscription consists of four lines in Greek and one (the first) in Latin (*pro salute Aug . . .*):

For the well-being of the emperor!

Mindi(u)s Faustos established and built (the synagogue) with his own funds and set up the ark (*κειβωτόν*) of the sacred Law.<sup>25</sup>

The inscription is dated on palaeographic grounds to the late second–early third centuries. It was found in secondary use in the synagogue vestibule of the subsequent fourth-century building. The inscription attests to a wealthy donor, Mindius Faustos, who contributed to the remodelling of the synagogue. Moreover, it seems clear that at this stage, that is, at least a century before the final renovations, the synagogue had a permanent Torah shrine.<sup>26</sup>

The building measured 23.5 × 36.6 metres when it assumed its present fourth-century form and plan. The mosaic kitchen floor was replaced by one of earth, and it may have been at this juncture that the windows in the main hall were blocked. A second wall was constructed around the sanctuary's original one, and a large *opus vittatum* apse (3.62 m wide) was introduced and served as an *aedicula* for Torah scrolls. Finally, three small rooms were partitioned off east of the *propylaeum*, and a new entrance to the complex, together with a narthex and adjoining rooms, were completed. Either at this time, or perhaps in the previous renovation, a large room with benches along two walls was annexed to the kitchen.

## V ROME

The most extensive archaeological remains from the Roman Diaspora are the catacombs of Rome. To date, six catacombs have been discovered, although only three have produced significant finds. Some six hundred inscriptions were recovered from the various excavations, beginning with the discovery of the Monteverde catacomb in 1602; most of these discoveries, however, were made in the period between 1859 and 1919.<sup>27</sup> We know of three large communal catacombs: Monteverde in Transtiberinum

<sup>25</sup> Translation by R. Brilliant in V. B. Mann, *Gardens and Ghettoes: The Art of Jewish Life in Italy* (Berkeley 1989), pp. 210–11. See also D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe*, 2 vols. (*JJWE*) (Cambridge 1993–5), I, no. 13; Horsley, *New Documents*, IV, 112, and generally, pp. 105–12.

<sup>26</sup> According to Noy's interpretation of this inscription, there may have even been a permanent ark in the synagogue prior to Mindius Faustos' donation (Noy, *JJWE*, I, 24–6).

<sup>27</sup> L. V. Rutgers, *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome: Evidence of Cultural Interaction in the Roman Diaspora* (Leiden 1995), pp. 1–49.



on the Via Portuense, in the southwestern section of Rome, near the Trastevere; Vigna Randanini near the Via Appia, in the southern part of the city; and the Villa Torlonia near the Via Nomentana, in the north-east. Three hypogea were also found in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

In the past, these catacombs were dated to the first centuries CE. Of late, however, there is a consensus that they date from the late second to fifth centuries CE. Solin has proposed this date on the basis of epigraphical and palaeographical considerations, Konikoff on the basis of the style and artistic work in the forty-odd sarcophagi, and Rutgers on the basis of the overall material culture of the catacombs, that is, their plans, building techniques, burial styles, art work (wall paintings, gold glass), lamps, as well as the various types of sarcophagi and inscriptions found therein.<sup>28</sup> Thus, although the catacombs discovered go beyond the chronological limitations of our discussion, some of their remains indeed point to earlier, first-century, institutions.

The synagogues of Rome are mentioned in some forty inscriptions.<sup>29</sup> The precise number of attested Roman synagogues, however, is unclear and depends on the interpretation of a number of terms and the reconstruction of fragmentary references. Some identifications are universally acknowledged; others are problematic and controversial.

Some of these synagogues (the number eleven is most often cited, but estimates range anywhere between ten and sixteen) date back to the first century and were either named after prominent individuals (Augustus, Agrippa, Volumnius, Herod?) or referred to as the 'Synagogue of the Hebrews' or that of the 'Vernaclesians' (native-born Jews). These latter names are usually understood as referring to some of the earliest, first-century, synagogues in the city. In later centuries, synagogues might have been named after the congregants' places of origin (Tripoli? Rhodes? Elaea? Secenia? Arca of Lebanon?), trades (Calcaresians), or local residential districts (Campsians, Siburesians). One late midrash names a 'synagogue of Severus' in Rome which, if historical, would have honoured one of the rulers of this dynasty, quite possibly Alexander Severus.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> H. Solin, 'Juden und Syrer im westlichen Teil der römischen Welt', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II, 29.2 (Berlin and New York 1983), pp. 654–721; A. Konikoff, *Sarcophagi from the Jewish Catacombs of Ancient Rome. A Catalogue Raisonné* (Stuttgart 1986), pp. 13–58; and L. V. Rutgers, 'Überlegungen zu den jüdischen Katakomben Roms', *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 33 (1990), 140–57; 'Archaeological Evidence for the Interaction of Jews and non-Jews in Late Antiquity', *American Journal of Archaeology* 96 (1992), 101–18; and now his comprehensive *Jews in Rome*; and P. Richardson, 'Augustan-Era Synagogues in Rome', in *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*, eds. K. P. Donfried and P. Richardson (Grand Rapids 1998), pp. 17–29.

<sup>29</sup> Noy, *JJWE*, II, 539–40.

<sup>30</sup> Genesis Rabbati 45:8, ed. Ch. Albeck (Jerusalem 1967), p. 209.

## VI DELOS

Discovered in the early part of the twentieth century, the nature and identity of the building at Delos, an Aegean island lying to the south and east of the Greek mainland, has for decades been a subject of debate. Only since the seventies has a consensus emerged that views the building as a synagogue – the earliest known to date and the only building complex identified as such with certitude from the pre-70 Diaspora.<sup>31</sup>

It is unclear when precisely the local Jewish community built or occupied this building as a synagogue. The *terminus a quo* is the second century BCE, the *terminus ad quem* the mid-first century BCE; the building continued to function as a synagogue down to the second century CE. It was located on the eastern shore of the island, some distance from the harbour and city-centre and near a stadium, gymnasium and residential area. In fact, the synagogue building itself may have originally been a private home, later transformed by the local Jewish community into its religious and social centre. A similar phenomenon held true for several pagan associations in Delos, and it also seems to have been the case in other Jewish communities of the Diaspora in subsequent centuries. Utilizing a building first designated as a private home may be a reflection of the (limited) size of a community and, secondarily perhaps, of the financial resources at its disposal.

The Delos synagogue included a courtyard to the east, fronting the sea (c). The building itself was divided into three parts, with a peristyle court to the east:

*Room A* had one entrance to the east and three to the south, and contained white marble benches along its northern and western walls. In the middle of the western wall stood an ornate white marble throne and footstool, similar to the throne used by the priest in the theatre of Dionysos in Athens.

*Room B* was connected to Room A by three doors and also had one entrance to the east. Remains of marble benches were found along its southern and western walls. The floor here, as in Room A, was made of stone slabs. Below the partition wall separating the two rooms were the remains of a square base, which was undoubtedly in use at some point in the building's history.

<sup>31</sup> Overviews of the history of this debate have been offered on a number of occasions; see, for example, P. Bruneau, *Recherches sur les cultes de Délos à l'époque hellénistique et à l'époque impériale* (Paris 1970), pp. 486ff; “Les Israélites de Délos” et la juiverie délienne’, *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 106 (1982), pp. 489–95; Kraabel, ‘Diaspora Synagogue’, p. 491; L. M. White, ‘The Delos Synagogue Revisited. Recent Fieldwork in the Graeco-Roman Diaspora’, *HTR* 80 (1987), 137–40. Cf. also E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, Bollingen Series, 37; 13 vols. (New York 1953–68), II, 71–5.

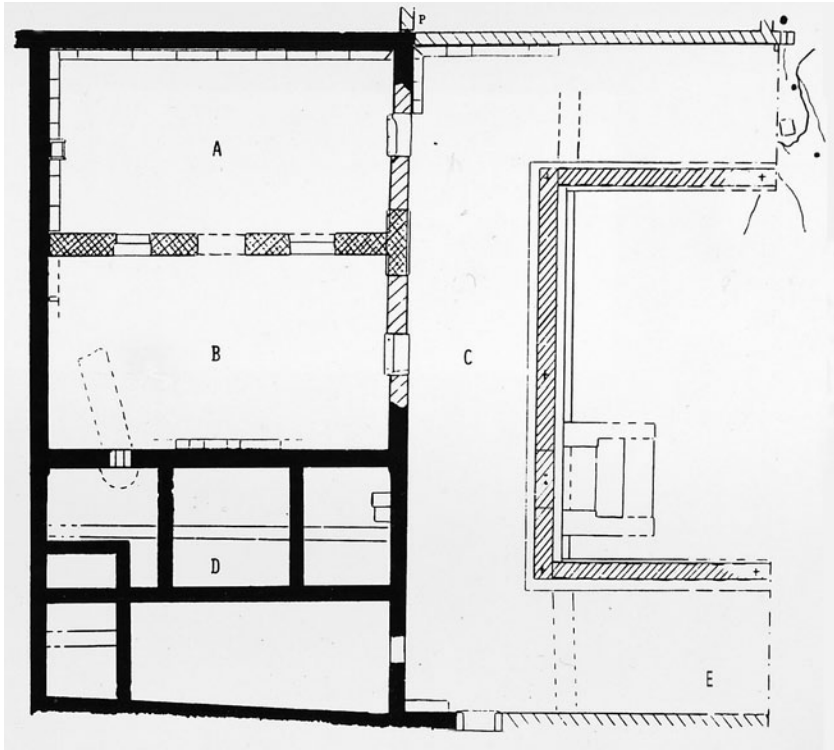


Fig. 30.4 Plan of Delos synagogue.

*Room D* was entered from a single door to the east. It was divided in the north into three smaller areas, under one of which was a cistern that extended beneath *Room B* as well. Some sixty lamps were found in this cistern, many bearing pagan motifs of various deities. Some date to the late second and first centuries BCE, but most derive from the first centuries of the Empire.

The identification of the Delos building as a synagogue has been based on a number of factors, some of secondary importance, others even less. In the former category are the following considerations: Jews were already living in Delos in the later Hellenistic period; the building was located close to the sea, a common occurrence among synagogues in many communities at the time; the building plan has some characteristics reminiscent of Galilean-type synagogues; the marble chair was probably a Seat of Moses; the building faced east, towards Jerusalem; and the cistern

found at the site might have functioned as a *miqveh*. However, the above considerations are not of equal weight; some are either inconsequential, speculative or wrong.

The most telling evidence for the building's identification as a synagogue are the inscriptions found in or near the building.<sup>32</sup> Four were inscribed on column bases found in Rooms A and B, each mentioning 'Theos Hypsistos':

- (1) Zosas of Paras to Theos Hypsistos (the most High God) has made a vow;
- (2) Laodice to Theos Hypsistos, saved by his treatments, has made a vow;
- (3) Lysimachus, on behalf of himself, a thanks-offering to Theos Hypsistos;
- (4) To Hypsistos, a vow, Marcia.

A fifth inscription found in a nearby house mentions a *proseuche*: 'Agathocles and Lysimachus (have made a contribution) to the *proseuche*.'

As noted above, both terms – *proseuche* and *Theos Hypsistos* – could have been used in a pagan context, but this was not usually the case. Thus, when combined with the above-mentioned ancillary considerations, an identification of the building as a Jewish *proseuche* becomes more compelling. The absence of Jewish symbols and a Torah shrine has rightfully been dismissed as irrelevant. There is no reason to assume that such an early synagogue building would have had them; places like Gamala, Masada and Herodion did not.

The likelihood that this building was, in fact, a Jewish *proseuche* was significantly enhanced by the discovery and publication in the early 1980s of two inscriptions found about 100 metres north of the building. Inscribed on marble stelae, they reveal the existence of a Samaritan community as early as the third or second century BCE.<sup>33</sup> Calling themselves the 'Israelites on Delos', who make offerings to the sacred Mount Gerizim (lit., Argarizein), these Samaritans honoured several benefactors of their community. Moreover, one inscription mentions a Samaritan *proseuche*, which would seem to indicate that the other Samaritan inscription refers to a synagogue as well. The fact that Samaritans lived in the vicinity only

<sup>32</sup> These inscriptions appear in Frey, *CIJ*, 1, nos. 726–30; Lifshitz, *Donateurs et fondateurs*, nos. 3–7.

<sup>33</sup> These inscriptions were first published by Bruneau, "‘Israélites de Délos’", 467–75. See also A. T. Kraabel, 'New Evidence of the Samaritan Diaspora has been found on Delos', *Biblical Archaeologist* 47 (1984), 331–2; 'Synagoga Caeca. Systematic Distortion in Gentile Interpretations of Evidence for Judaism in the Early Christian Period' in *To See Ourselves As Others See Us: Christians, Jews, 'Others' in Late Antiquity* (eds.) J. Neusner and E. Frerichs (Chico 1985), pp. 36–40; White, 'Delos Synagogue', 141–4.

strengthens the likelihood that this residential area served Jews as well; in second-century Ptolemaic Egypt both of these communities lived side by side and even shared the same charity funds.<sup>34</sup> Whether these were two separate *proseuchae* (one Jewish and one Samaritan), as seems likely, or perhaps one *proseuche* serving both communities is an intriguing question. However, nothing more definitive is forthcoming at present.

## VII ASIA MINOR

The region of Asia Minor has left us with an unusually rich trove of epigraphical evidence. Although practically all these inscriptions date from late antiquity, one of the most important among them comes from first-century CE Acmonia. Located inland, in Phrygia, this city's importance was in large measure due to its strategic position on the Persian Royal Road. The inscription reads as follows:

This building was erected by Julia Severa; P(ublius) Tyrronios Klados, the head for life of the synagogue, and Lucius, son of Lucius, head of the synagogue, and Publius Zotikos, archon, restored it with their own funds and with money which had been deposited, and they donated the (painted) murals for the walls and the ceiling, and they reinforced the windows and made all the rest of the ornamentation, and the synagogue honoured them with a gilded shield on account of their virtuous disposition, goodwill, and zeal for the synagogue.<sup>35</sup>

The items of interest here are manifold. Most striking, of course, is the fact that the synagogue building itself was built by one Julia Severa a number of years prior to the date of this inscription, which itself deals with the restoration of the structure. Even more unusual than the nature of this woman's benefaction is the fact that she was a well-known pagan personality. Coming from 'a nexus of leading families', the local coinage celebrates Julia Severa as politically active in the mid-first century, holding the positions of *agonothete* and *ἀρχιέρεια* (high priestess) of the local Imperial cult.<sup>36</sup> Pagan donations to synagogues are known elsewhere in Asia Minor as well, but donating an entire building is indeed rare.

Perhaps several decades after the initial contribution by Julia, repairs of the synagogue were undertaken by three leading officials – two *archisynagogoi* and one archon. The funds used for restoration of the building appear to have been matching grants (whatever the relative percentages) from these

<sup>34</sup> *Antiquities* XIII.74–9.

<sup>35</sup> The translation of this inscription is taken from P. R. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1991), pp. 58–9.

<sup>36</sup> B. M. Levick, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor* (Oxford 1967), p. 107; Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, p. 59.

three leaders and the community at large. The wall and ceiling paintings are noteworthy, although the nature of these paintings – of geometrical, floral, or figural motifs – is unknown. Depending on the lavishness of the ornamentation, which the inscription appears to emphasize, this synagogue may have been similar to contemporary Berenice, or to Sardis and Dura Europos later on. Finally, the three major donors were honoured in ways typical of Greek donors generally. Not only did they merit the above inscription, but they were also awarded a gilded shield.

### VIII APHRODISIAS

A *sui generis* inscription was discovered in the mid-seventies of the twentieth century in the city of Aphrodisias located in south-western Asia Minor, south of the Maeander River Valley, in what had once been ancient Caria. This monumental inscription was found on a marble block and records the names of Jews, proselytes and gentile God-fearers who contributed to a memorial erected by their association (*dekany*) in the early third century.<sup>37</sup> The first lines of the inscription read as follows:

God our help. (Givers to) the soup kitchen. Below (are) listed the (members) of the dekany of the (students) of the law, also known as those who (fervently) praise God, (who) erected, for the relief of suffering in the community, at their personal expense, (this) memorial (building).<sup>38</sup>

The memorial (*μνημα*) was presumably a building, or part of one, that was used as a *patella* (lit., dish), very likely referring to a soup kitchen ‘for relief of suffering in the community’. Thereafter follows a list of some 130 names of donors; one side of the stone lists the Jewish members of this *dekany*, which concludes with a number of people identified as proselytes. The other, following a break in the text, lists the names of fifty-four people identified as *theosebeis*, that is, ‘God-fearers’ – pagans who had adopted Jewish practices but had not actually converted to Judaism. The first nine names in this latter list are identified as city councillors (*βουλευταί*). Thus, we have conclusive proof of a group of gentile God-fearers of high rank and significant numbers who were publicly and actively associated

<sup>37</sup> J. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and God-Fearers at Aphrodisias* (Cambridge 1987), p. 41.

<sup>38</sup> E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, revised edn, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark 1973–87), III, 37–8; E. R. Goodenough, ‘Bosphorus Inscriptions and the Most High God’, *JQR* 47 (1957), 221–45; Levinskaya, *Diaspora Setting*, pp. 105–16; I. A. Levinskaya and S. R. Tokhtas’yev, ‘Jews and Jewish Names in the Bosphoran Kingdom’, *Studies on the Jewish Diaspora in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods*, Te’uda 12; eds. B. Isaac and A. Oppenheimer (Tel-Aviv 1996), pp. 55–73.

with the local Jewish community. Similarly, according to one interpretation of a second-century inscription from Panticapaeum in the Crimea, God-fearers are noted alongside Jews as witnesses to manumission procedures in the local synagogue.

Although this is never clearly stated, it would seem that this group of people met, and their various activities took place, in the local synagogue. Given the fact that study as well as charitable activities are usually associated with this institution, such a setting is all but certain. The prosopography in this inscription, as can be imagined, is indeed rich, as are the names of various professions, trades and the official titles of many members of this *dekaný*.

## IX THE BOSPORAN KINGDOM

Jews probably reached this kingdom on the northern shore of the Black Sea via Asia Minor, owing to the political and economic ties between these two regions. By the first century CE, with the Bosphorus serving as a vassal kingdom of Rome, the presence of Jews and the influence of Judaism on its surroundings were well attested. This religious influence continued to grow until the fourth century at least, when the worship of Theos Hypsistos became one of the most popular cults in the region. Excavations now under way in Chersonesus in south-western Crimea have uncovered remains of what may be a first-century CE synagogue.<sup>39</sup> Seven inscriptions dating from the first and early second centuries have been found, each referring to the manumission of slaves. This procedure appears to have been regularly carried out in the local *proseuche*; in one instance, the synagogue itself (in this case, the congregation) was appointed guardian.<sup>40</sup>

To date, three inscriptions – from CE 41, CE 59 and CE 67 – were discovered in Gorgippia (modern Anape). The first of these reads:

To the Most High God, Almighty, blessed, in the reign of the king Mithridates, the friend of ? and the friend of the fatherland, in the year 338 (= 41 CE), in the month Deios, Pothos, the son of Strabo, dedicated to the prayer-house in accordance with the vow of his house-bred slave-woman, whose name is Chrysa,

<sup>39</sup> R. S. MacLennan, 'In Search of the Jewish Diaspora', *Biblical Archaeology Review* 22/2 (1996), 49–51.

<sup>40</sup> These inscriptions are to be found in one or more of the following collections: Frey, *CIJ*, 1, nos. 683, 684, 690; *Corpus Inscriptionum Regni Bosporani* (I. Struve 1965), nos. 64, 70, 71, 72, 73, 985, 1123, 1124; B. Lifshitz, 'Prolegomenon', Frey, J.-B., *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum*, 1 (New York 1975), pp. 65–9. Cf. also Levinskaya, *Diaspora Setting*, pp. 231–42.





Fig. 30.5 Crimea (Bosporan kingdom).

on condition that she should be unharmed and unmolested by any of his heirs under Zeus, Ge, Helios.<sup>41</sup>

Noteworthy, in the first place, is the threefold invocation of God, in typical Jewish form (*θεῶι ὑψίστῳ παντοκράτορι εὐλογητῶι*).<sup>42</sup> The Greek names of the Jews, both father and son, should not surprise us, as elsewhere in the Diaspora Jews adopted the regnant nomenclature of their surroundings as a matter of course. The fact that this and similar manumission ceremonies were performed in the synagogue is indeed unique. Clearly, this was an act with religious as well as social implications, as the manumission formula itself attests.

At first there was some scepticism about the Jewishness of this text owing to the pagan formula, summoning Jupiter, the earth and the sun to witness the transaction. However, such usage should not be overly surprising; similar formulas appear frequently in Bosphoran documents (and in other Jewish ones as well – see below) and undoubtedly had become so common an occurrence that it had lost all blatantly pagan associations. Moreover, in many other instances, from fifth-century Elephantine through Josephus' writings, and down to third-century CE Beth Shearim and Hungary, we find Jews utilizing formulas with distinctly pagan connotations.<sup>43</sup>

Three other inscriptions from the first and early second centuries come from the area around the ancient city of Panticapaeum (near modern-day Kerch).<sup>44</sup> While similar in many ways to the inscriptions from Gorgippia (i.e., a manumission ceremony in the synagogue and a vow that the slave will not be reclaimed), they nevertheless display several unique features. To cite one example:

I release in the *proseuche* Elpias the son (?) of my slave, bred in my house; he shall remain undisturbed and unassailed by any of my heirs, except for (his duty) to visit the *proseuche* regularly; the community (*synagoge*) of the Jews and the God-fearers (?) will be (together with me) guardian (of the enfranchised).<sup>45</sup>

We note here use of both terms, *proseuche* and *synagoge*; the first clearly refers to the building, as do other inscriptions from the region, the latter to the community. Unique to these Panticapaeum inscriptions are two

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 239–40.

<sup>42</sup> See also Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, no. 116, and comments, p. 200.

<sup>43</sup> Schürer, *History*, III, 37; S. Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, reprint (New York 1962), p. 214; Levinskaya, *Diaspora Setting*, p. 222; A. Scheiber, *Jewish Inscriptions in Hungary from the 3rd Century to 1686* (Leiden 1983), pp. 37ff.

<sup>44</sup> Frey, *CJ*, I, nos. 683, 684; Lifshitz, 'Prolegomenon', 65–6; MacLennan, 'Jewish Diaspora', 44–7.

<sup>45</sup> Lifshitz, 'Prolegomenon', p. 66; Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, pp. 155–6.

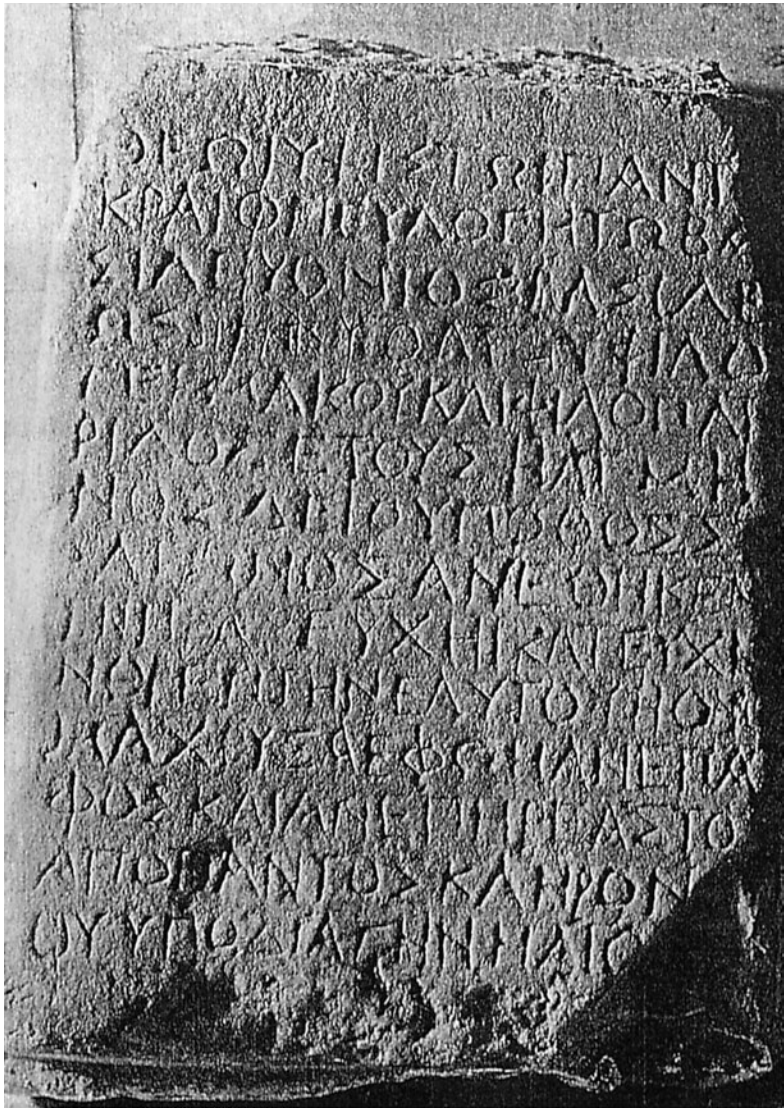


Fig. 30.6 Inscription from Bosphorus.

stipulations: that the emancipated slave is to frequent the synagogue in the future, and that the synagogue (i.e., the community) is to assume (joint) responsibility as a guardian (*ἐπιτροπεύουσης*) for the act of manumission. All of these elements appear in each of the Panticapaeum inscriptions, as well as in a more fragmentary one from Phanagoria, dating, perhaps, to CE 16.

Of interest here is the reference to a group of ‘God-fearers’ (*θεὸν σέβων*) mentioned together with the Jews. If this interpretation is correct, it would indicate that Godfearers held a legally-recognized position in the synagogue alongside the regular Jewish community, a presence even more institutionalized than later on, in third-century Aphrodisias. Such a situation has far-reaching implications regarding these God-fearers’ numbers as well as social and political standing.

## X DURA EUROPOS

Undoubtedly the most sensational of ancient synagogue finds to date is that of Dura Europos, a city located on the Euphrates River at the eastern extremity of the Roman Empire. Around the turn of the third century, the Jewish community of Dura built this communal institution which had existed for fifty years or more, until the destruction of the city in 256, or soon after. The uniqueness of this synagogue is manifold. First of all, much of the building has been recovered and can be dated with relative precision. Moreover, it is rich in epigraphic evidence, with nineteen Greek inscriptions, twenty-two in Aramaic, and fifteen in Iranian. Most striking, however, are the elaborate wall paintings that covered the interior of the main prayer hall.<sup>46</sup>

These features in and of themselves would be enough to guarantee Dura’s claim to prominence. The uniqueness of Dura, however, extends beyond the synagogue itself. Numerous other buildings throughout the city have likewise survived, all owing to the fact that the city was never resettled after its conquest by the Sassanian army. Thus, the desert sands achieved for Dura what Vesuvius did for Pompeii, preserving it in large measure for posterity. As a result, we are able to compare the synagogue remains of Dura with those of the local temples, Christian church, and

<sup>46</sup> The bibliography for this synagogue is understandably extensive. The two basic works are: C. H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, VIII, Part 1: *The Synagogue* (New Haven 1956; reprint New York 1979); and Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, IX–XI. See also White, *Building God’s House*, pp. 93–7. For a listing of many of the major contributors in this regard, see J. Gutmann, ‘Early Synagogue and Jewish Catacomb Art and Its Relation to Christian Art’, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II, 21.2, eds. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin and New York 1984), pp. 1338–42.

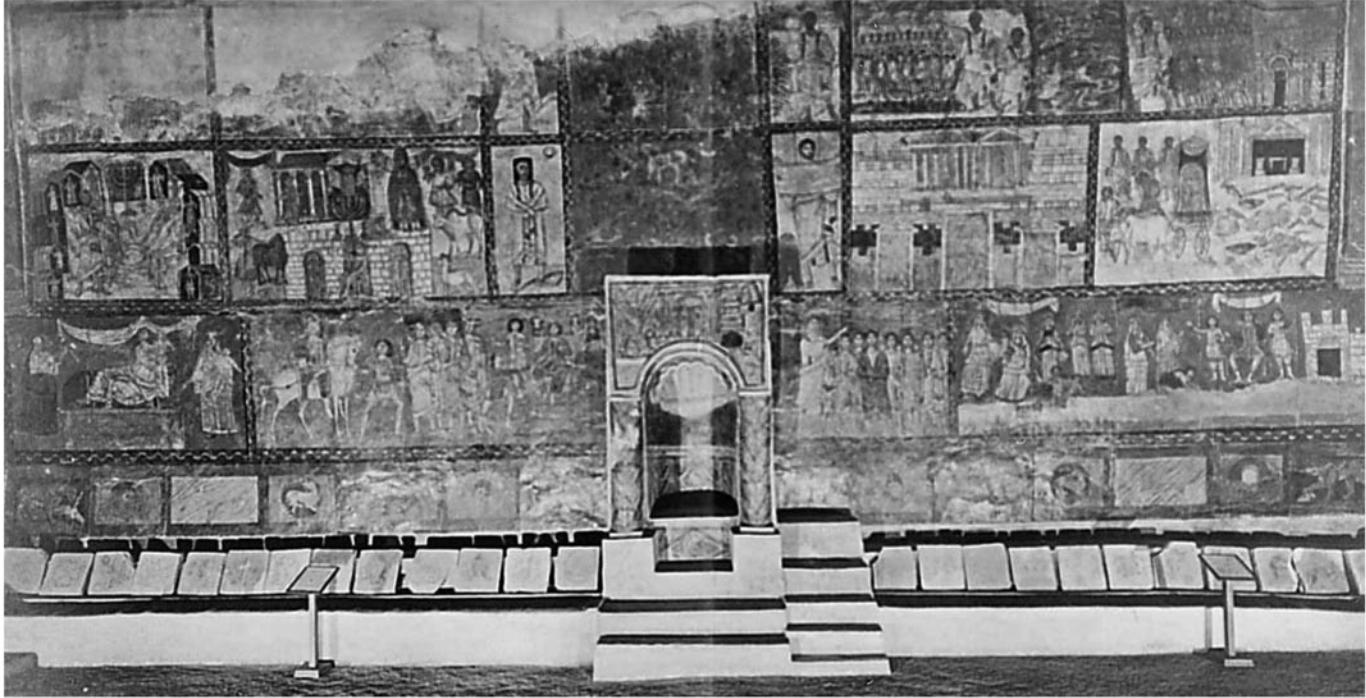


Fig. 30.7 Dura Europos, western wall.



other public buildings. Nowhere else is there such an opportunity to view a Jewish building in the larger context of its urban setting. Wall paintings and inscriptions were not a monopoly of the Jewish buildings. What is unique, however, are the elaborate and highly developed portrayals in the synagogue murals. This, in turn, raises a myriad of questions regarding the nature, extent and impact of Jewish art in antiquity.

The synagogue building itself went through two stages, the last of which can be precisely dated. Inscriptions found on ceiling tiles record that the rebuilding of the second stage took place in 244–5. Thus, the synagogue appears to have been in existence for some twelve years. However, the *terminus a quo* for the earlier stage is difficult to ascertain. It seems that the building was constructed around the year 200 and existed for about a generation. Dura thus provides us with the earliest identifiable synagogue built in the post-70 period.

The earlier synagogue consisted of a series of rooms encompassing a central courtyard, 6.55 × 6.05 metres. The peristyle court, paved with tiles, was entered from the north-west via a passageway. The rooms east and south-east of the courtyard apparently played no role in the synagogue ritual and were probably intended as a residence for the synagogue custodian, a hostel for wayfarers, or both. On the other hand, Room 2 to the west clearly served as the sanctuary or main hall. It was somewhat irregular in shape, but was generally a rectangle ranging from 10.65 metres to 4.60–5.30 metres. There were two entrances into the sanctuary, one near the centre of the eastern wall, and a second at the very southern extremity of that same wall. Benches were located on all four sides of the room, and in a few places there was an additional low pedestal which might have served as a footrest, thereby compensating for the greater height of the benches in those places. In the middle of the room was a patch of white plaster which probably concealed the foundation of a projecting object that was subsequently removed. The focal point of the room was an *aedicula* used as a Torah shrine, that was located in the western wall opposite the main entrance. Between the courtyard and the southern entrance of the sanctuary was Room 7, whose precise function remains elusive. It appears to have served as more than a passageway into the main hall, as benches were built along three of its walls. This room was probably used for assorted religious, educational or social purposes.

The later synagogue building was larger and more ornate, indicating the heightened prosperity of the Jewish community. In a number of features, this later building followed the pattern of the earlier structure: a 'broadhouse'-type building with worship oriented toward the long wall in the west, an adjacent courtyard leading to the main sanctuary on an east–

west axis, two entrances to the main hall from the east, and an *aedicula* in the western wall of the sanctuary. At the same time, significant changes were also in evidence. The entrance to the entire complex was now relocated in the east, and the sanctuary proper and adjacent courtyard were expanded to include the entire width of the former building (14 × 8.7 m). The assembly room was surrounded by additional benches, thereby trebling the seating capacity. Next to the *aedicula* were five steps leading to a special seat, which was clearly a place of honour and dignity in the room. This may have been Dura's version of the 'Seat of Moses', already noted at Delos. Room 7 of the earlier stage was absorbed by the enlarged courtyard.

The major structural change of the synagogue complex involved an expansion to the east and the inclusion of House H (26 × 18 m) in the building. From an alleyway which branched off the street to the east, one entered a series of rooms which appear to have been divided into two separate suites. The first gave entry into the synagogue forecourt, through Rooms H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>3</sub> (a courtyard), and H<sub>4</sub>. H<sub>5</sub> was a side room that was obviously associated with this suite. In addition, there was an inner suite to the south, consisting of five rooms with its own large courtyard, H<sub>9</sub>. This area, more isolated from the regular flow of traffic to the courtyard and sanctuary, probably served as the residence for a synagogue official as well as a hostel for wayfarers.

Together with Sardis, Dura is the richest of ancient synagogues with regard to its epigraphical material. The data provided by these inscriptions are a wealth of information.<sup>47</sup> There appears a series of names of synagogue leaders, their offices, dates of construction, and, according to one interpretation, a list of appurtenances to be found within the synagogue building. Some of the Greek and Aramaic inscriptions are dedicatory in nature and overlap one another. For example, one Aramaic inscription reads as follows:

This house was built in the year 556, corresponding to the second year of Philip (Julius) Caesar, in the ministry of the priest Samuel, son of Yedai'a, the archon. Those in charge of this work: Abram the treasurer, and Samuel (son of) Sapharah, and . . . the convert. With a willing spirit they (began to build) in this 56th year and they sent to . . . and hurried . . . and they laboured . . . a blessing from the elders and all the children of . . . laboured and toiled . . . Peace (to them and to) their wives and children all . . .

One of the Greek inscriptions records the following: 'Samuel, son of Idaeus, elder of the Jews, built it.'

<sup>47</sup> Kraeling, *Synagogue*, pp. 261–317.



These dedicatory inscriptions were found on ceiling tiles. Other inscriptions identified figures appearing on the wall paintings. Moreover, several prayers are recorded, reminiscent of prayers subsequently incorporated into Jewish religious practice. One is a prayer for the well-being of the community, the other is a version of the Blessing after Meals.

The Iranian inscriptions are an enigma. They were all written on the lowest of the synagogue's three registers and appear to bear the names of officials who examined the paintings. Who these people were, why they came, who authorized their visit, what the nature of their relationship was to the synagogue or to the local Jewish community, and why they recorded their visit on the walls of the building are all questions which have not been satisfactorily been answered to date. One such Iranian inscription reads as follows:

In the month *Miθr*, in the year fourteen, and on the day *Šaθrevar*, when Yazdanpese, the scribe of the *radak* to this house came (and by them) this picture (was looked at) (and) by them praise was made.

The *pièce de résistance* of the Dura synagogue, however, is its art. The walls of the main prayer hall are covered with scenes drawn from the biblical narrative and organized in three registers. About one half of the original paintings have been preserved, the western side being more complete than the eastern side. This is indeed fortuitous, as the focus of the prayer hall was along its western wall. The Torah shrine was located in the middle of this side, and undoubtedly the most important scenes appeared here.

The area above the shrine is unique. Whereas the remainder of the synagogue contains scenes from the biblical narrative, this section features symbols. Immediately above the Torah shrine are representations of the Temple menorah, the Temple façade, and the *Aqedab* (Binding of Isaac – Gen. 22). Above is a series of scenes: Jacob blessing his grandsons, Ephraim and Manasseh; Jacob blessing his sons; and David playing a lyre. Above these is a seated messianic figure surrounded by his court or by the tribes of Israel. Surrounding these scenes are four figures. That on the top right-hand side is Moses as indicated by an inscription. The identity of the other figures has been the subject of scholarly dispute. Goodenough identifies them all as Moses, Sukenik sees the two on the right as Moses and the two on the left as Joshua, while Kraeling associates each figure with a different biblical personality (Moses, Joshua, Ezra and Abraham).

The following are the narrative scenes appearing in the Dura synagogue, and their location:

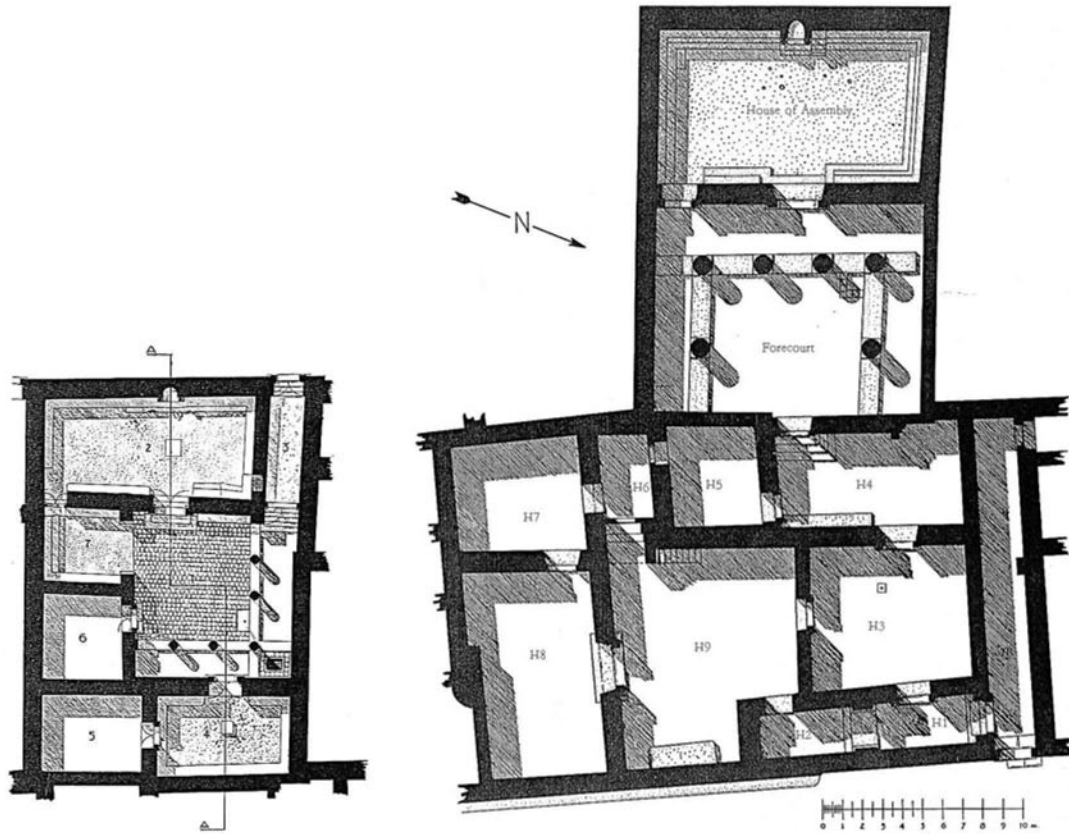


Fig. 30.8 Plan of Dura: (left) earlier building; (right) second stage.



Fig. 30.9 Dura Europos, Torah shrine.

## West wall

## Upper register

North Exodus

South Solomon and the Queen of Sheba

Extreme left-hand panel is unidentifiable

## Middle register

North The return of the ark from the land of the Philistines  
Jerusalem and the Temple of SolomonSouth Dedication of the Tabernacle with Aaron and his sons  
Israelite desert camp and the miracle of the well

## Lower register

North Pharaoh and the infancy of Moses  
Samuel anointing David

South Mordecai and Esther

Elijah resuscitates the widow's child

## South wall

Upper register Obliterated

Middle register Consecration of the Tabernacle  
Left-hand side obliteratedLower register The prophets of Baal on Mt Carmel  
Elijah and the widow of Sarepta  
Extreme left-hand panel unidentifiable

## North wall

Upper register Right-hand side obliterated  
Jacob at BethelMiddle register Hannah and Samuel at Shiloh (partially destroyed)  
The battle at Even-ezerLower register Death of an important personage at the altar (identification  
problematic)  
Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones

## East wall

Upper and middle registers: Obliterated

## Lower register

North David and Saul in the Wilderness of Zin

South Belshazzar's feast (?)

Most of the scholarly literature on Dura has been devoted to the meaning of these scenes. All agree that they represent high points of the biblical narrative, when the hand of God was evident in guiding the destiny of the Jewish people. Opinion is divided, however, on a number of issues. Is there one dominant theme, or a series of themes, which influenced the selection of the various scenes? Were they selected at

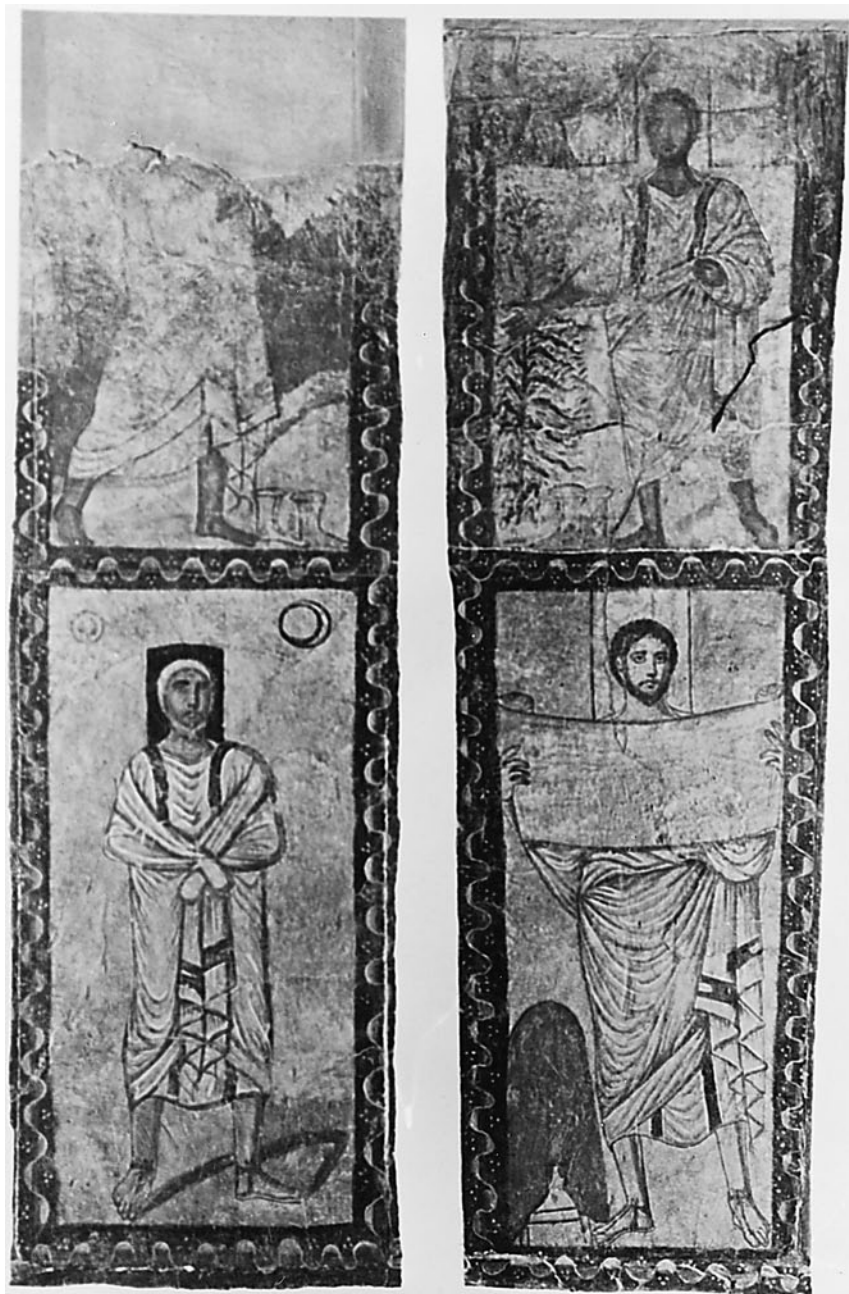


Fig. 30.10 Dura, four figures over Torah shrine.



random, or is there a fundamental organizing principle underlying the choice?<sup>48</sup> Were the Dura artists influenced by any particular external sources? Is there a clear-cut connection between rabbinic midrashic material and the Dura paintings, as Kraeling believes? If so, what does it tell us about the Judaism of this local community? Or is the art work at Dura incompatible with known rabbinic attitudes, as Goodenough thought? If so, what implications does this have for our understanding of the Judaism at Dura? Finally, there are sharply differing approaches regarding the iconographic tradition reflected in these paintings. Do they stem from Roman Imperial, local Oriental, or Sassanian models? And if a combination of influences is postulated, what were the various elements, and which predominated?

Little consensus has been reached, and such questions may be assuming a far more ambitious agenda than the Dura Jews had ever dreamed of. It might well be, as Bickerman noted decades ago, that what is represented here is a kind of *Heilsgeschichte*, drawing exclusively on biblical motifs. According to this approach, each individual depiction or set of depictions represents its own meaning and significance, with no necessary assumption of one overall theme.<sup>49</sup>

Whatever the case, the implications of the Dura synagogue representations *vis-à-vis* Jewish art are enormous. Studies abound not only with regard to the paintings themselves, but the latter have also sparked renewed interest in the field of ancient Jewish art generally. The synagogue constitutes an impressive example of Jewish art and presumably of ‘midrashic’ traditions of the Bible, which certainly did not originate there. Lying on the fringes of the eastern empire, the Dura community was too small and peripheral, and its history too short, to have created such a rich tradition *ex nihilo*. Clearly, these motifs were found elsewhere – in both Jewish and non-Jewish settings – and undoubtedly in many other synagogues of the Diaspora as well. If there were any doubts beforehand as to whether such an art existed in antiquity, then Dura put them to rest. To date, however, nothing even remotely comparable has been recovered

<sup>48</sup> L. I. Levine, ‘The Synagogue at Dura Europos’ in *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*, ed. L. I. Levine (Jerusalem 1981), pp. 172–7; Gutmann, ‘Early Synagogue and Jewish Catacomb Art’, 1322–8.

<sup>49</sup> E. Bickerman, ‘Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue: A Review Article’, *HTR* 58 (1965), 127–51. Carrying this idea even further, Wharton suggests that the Dura narratives are a ‘pastiche’ and should be viewed ‘as postmodernist (deconstructive, circumstantial, local and multicultural)’; see A. J. Wharton, ‘Good and bad images from the synagogue of Dura Europos: Contexts, subtexts, intertexts’, *Art History* 17 (1994), 1–25; *Refiguring the Post-Classical City: Dura Europos, Jerash, Jerusalem and Ravenna* (Cambridge 1995), pp. 38–51.

elsewhere. Thus, while the euphoria over the first revelations of Dura has waned somewhat in the sixty-five years that have passed since the original discovery, these finds clearly indicate that a wider Jewish artistic tradition must have existed, one which will inevitably come to light, sooner or later.

## XI CONCLUSION

Our survey of archaeological finds from the Diaspora defies any sweeping conclusions or generalizations. Each discovery, be it a building or inscription, is unique, and there is relatively little which unites the different sites, either architecturally or artistically. Clearly, Diaspora Jewish communities were heavily influenced by local models as regards the decorations and plans of their buildings, as well as the lingua franca of their surroundings. Dura especially provides us with a striking example of the significance of the local context.

Almost all the sites surveyed above were synagogues. This institution's activities encompassed a broad agenda: religious worship, study, social, judicial, and political activities, charity, and more. Archaeological material has supplemented and augmented our knowledge of this institution on many fronts. Until now, the study of Diaspora Judaism has depended almost entirely on literary sources. With the aid of the above archaeological sites, as well as the many remains of both synagogues and cemeteries from late antiquity, we can now begin to gain a fuller and more balanced picture of what was undoubtedly an extensive, far-flung, and well-organized network of Jewish communities throughout the Roman Diaspora.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> For a more extensive discussion of Diaspora archaeological remains, see my *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven forthcoming).



## CHAPTER 31

## THE LEGACY OF EGYPT IN JUDAISM

Whereas Judaism represents a highly distinctive phenomenon, especially in the history of religions, in several phases of its evolution it was exposed to outside influences. Already in earlier eras the geographical position of Syria and Palestine meant that the area was very open to commercial and cultural penetration from the direction of both Mesopotamia and Egypt, and of this there is abundant archaeological evidence.<sup>1</sup> The early Israelite experience of Egypt is reflected in the traditions concerning Abraham's sojourn in that country and Joseph's splendid career there, however shadowy the historical background may seem,<sup>2</sup> as well as in the much more fundamental impact of the tradition concerning Moses and the Exodus. Judaism belongs to a period of increasingly intimate contacts with other peoples. During the Persian period Jewish soldiers served their Persian masters in many areas, and their garrison at Elephantine<sup>3</sup> on Egypt's southern border has well illustrated the tendencies which were apparent in the Diaspora. When Persian power yielded to Alexander and his successors, an era of quickened converse between nations ensued; and under Rome and Byzantium the process gathered still further momentum.

## I SOME EGYPTIAN RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS

It was in religion that Egypt exercised her most potent attraction. For close on three thousand years the religion of Pharaonic Egypt was pre-eminently a national religion. Theologically it was firmly linked to kingship, for each Pharaoh was in life equated with the national god Horus,

<sup>1</sup> Raphael Giveon, *The Impact of Egypt on Canaan* (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, 20; Freiburg 1978), pp. 9–14.

<sup>2</sup> For Egyptological discussions see J. Vergote, *Joseph en Egypte* (Orientalia et Biblica Lovaniensia, 3; Louvain 1959); Siegfried Morenz in *TLZ* 84 (1959), 401–16; Donald B. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph* (*VTSup* 20; Leiden 1970); R. J. Williams in *The Legacy of Egypt* (2nd edn, ed. J. R. Harris, Oxford 1971), p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> See Morton Smith, in I, 223–33; E. Bresciani, in I, 367–9; and B. Porten, in I, 376–400. Cf. W. D. Davies, *The Territorial Dimension of Judaism* (Minneapolis 1991, repr. of 1982), pp. 61ff ('Exile and Dispersion').

while in death he became Osiris, the father of Horus; he was also called *the son of Rê*. Divine kingship, however, does not give an explicit role to the people, and here there is a contrast with Judaism, where a covenant between Yahweh and his people is so basic a concept.

Another point of contrast was Egypt's intense polytheism, although this was not inherently offensive to most non-Egyptians. Deities were grouped in an Ennead or an Ogdoad, but by the New Kingdom (1551–1070 BCE) a grouping which became increasingly popular was the Triad, often arranged on the basis of father, mother and child. This concept achieved considerable influence. Associated with the name of Akhenaten (Amenophis IV) was the attempt to overthrow Egypt's traditional polytheism and establish a true monotheism.<sup>4</sup> Although the movement ended with Akhenaten's death and a brusque return to the previous polytheism, later developments showed a lively concern with the problem of the unity of the divine.<sup>5</sup> Akhenaten's religion had sun-worship as its core, and so it is unlikely to have influenced early Israelite experience. Yet the affinities between Psalm 104 and Akhenaten's 'Great Hymn' are incontrovertible.

A feature of Egyptian religion which often caused embarrassment and offence to peoples of other nations was the fervent worship of animal deities. What is surprising in the evolution of the Egyptian animal cults is that they witnessed a strong revival and extension in the Late Period – the very era when Greeks and Jews and other strangers became more thoroughly acquainted with Egypt.<sup>6</sup> Of course Greeks and Jews were not themselves immune to animal-worship. In an earlier phase the account of the worship of the 'Golden Calf' in the wilderness may reflect an Egyptian cult of Hathor<sup>7</sup> or of Apis<sup>8</sup> unless it is a projection into the past of later bull-worship under Jeroboam I.<sup>9</sup>

Magic was always an important aspect of Egyptian religion. The multitude of amulets in constant use bear witness to this, and they have appeared in many peripheral regions. Ethically the most significant element

<sup>4</sup> Siegfried Morenz, tr. A. E. Keep, *Egyptian Religion* (Stuttgart 1960; tr. London 1973), 146–56; Erik Hornung, tr. J. Baines, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* (London 1983), p. 246: 'Now, for the first time in history, the divine has become one, without a complementary multiplicity; henotheism has been transformed into monotheism.'

<sup>5</sup> Jan Assmann, *Re und Amun* (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, 51; Freiburg 1983), p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Philo's analysis of noble emotions in animals in his *Animal*. 61; *Decal.* 113ff; and *De opificio mundi*, 73, on which see E. R. Goodenough, *By Light, Light* (New Haven 1935), p. 67. Quite different, of course, is Philo's allegorical interpretation of the serpent in Eden as representing pleasure; cf. Samuel Sandmel, *Philo of Alexandria* (Oxford 1979), p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> W. O. E. Oesterley, in *The Legacy of Egypt*, ed. S. R. K. Glanville (Oxford 1942), pp. 239–40.

<sup>8</sup> J. Gwyn Griffiths in *Exp Tim* 56 (1945), 110–11.

<sup>9</sup> Helmer Ringgren, *Israelitische Religion* (2nd edn, Stuttgart 1982), p. 206.

was undoubtedly that associated with Mâat, a word which appears both as an abstract idea and as the name of a goddess (sometimes a pair of goddesses). Truth, justice, integrity – these are the primary meanings. Since the process of creation was deemed to be linked to the establishment of *mâat*, the idea of cosmic concord and harmony comes in. It is obedience to Mâat that maintains both the order of the universe and the well-being of the individual, and upright living is her first demand. It was, however, the doctrine of survival after death that provides the strongest point of contrast between the religion of Egypt and that of Israel. Such a doctrine became a part, eventually, of the traditions of Judaism, and the precise location of its source has been a problem of long standing. In Egypt the gods Osiris and Rê contribute to the doctrine, which embraces both chthonic and celestial spheres; in fact the plethora of varying concepts may betray a sense of doubt as to their validity.<sup>10</sup> Inherent in the Osirian tradition, which eventually dominated, was the practice of embalming the body. Egypt's soil and climate were conducive to this practice, and it was rarely followed outside Egypt.<sup>11</sup>

In the Hellenistic era Egyptian religion entered a kind of missionary phase. It penetrated the orbit of Alexander's empire and its success was most prominent in Greek lands; and these embraced, of course, many Jewish communities. At the same time there was an influx of foreign elements into Egypt itself, especially into Alexandria. From the Egyptian side the strongest appeal was undoubtedly exerted by the Osiris religion with its firm assurance of eternal life. In the world of the Mystery Religions it could compete on favourable terms. Yet two changes were made in the scene of the divine protagonists. Under the Ptolemies Sarapis tended to replace Osiris as the spouse of Isis, probably because he was presented as a Zeus-like figure with more appeal to the Greeks; and Isis herself occupied the centre of the stage, introduced now as a universal nature-goddess and as a mother-figure who offered love (*agapê*)<sup>12</sup> and salvation (*sôtêria*; *salus*). Here the idea of salvation denoted a double deliverance: from sin and from death.

<sup>10</sup> J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and his Cult* (Leiden 1980), p. 217. The underlying dominance of Mâat is imposingly expounded by Jan Assmann in his *Ma'at: Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit im Alten Ägypten* (Munich 1990); While he accepts the import of the concept in relation to cosmic order (pp. 218–19), he stresses 'righteousness' as the core and original meaning (p. 33).

<sup>11</sup> Jacob is said to have been embalmed although he was buried outside Egypt (Gen. 50:1–3). For examples of mummification in Roman Hungary see V. Wessetzky, *Die ägyptischen Kulte zur Römerzeit in Ungarn* (EPRO 1; Leiden 1961), pp. 11–13; and for an example in Rome, of the second century BCE, see Jean Leclant *Inventaire bibliographique des Isiaca* (EPRO 18; Leiden 1972), p. 76, no. 210.

<sup>12</sup> J. Gwyn Griffiths, 'Isis and "The Love of the Gods"' in *JTS* NS 29 (1978), 147–51.

Deliverance from sin was bound up with the concept of judgement after death, which was the most notable ethical achievement of the Pharaonic religion. Even in the earliest texts there are allusions to possible litigation after death, and these culminate in the belief that every man will eventually face a tribunal in which his life's record will be rigorously examined through the process of the weighing of the heart. The hope of future happiness in a new life and the fear of total destruction of both soul and body were associated with this test. A magical element was often present in the application of the idea, but the presentation of it by Petosiris, a priest of the fourth century BCE, is impressively dedicated to the moral interpretation. We shall return to this concept since it was abundantly influential in the areas of apocalyptic and eschatology.

## II EGYPT AND THE ORIGINS OF THE SYNAGOGUE

A theory often put forward locates the origins of the synagogue in Babylon, where 'worship at the Temple was no longer possible'.<sup>13</sup> That condition applied equally, however, to other sections of the Diaspora, and the forms of worship in the exilic situation have been well described as 'a matter of hypothesis'.<sup>14</sup> By way of contrast there is firm evidence for the existence of synagogues in Egypt in the third century BCE. Even before this the Jews in Egypt, at Elephantine, had established a temple of Yahweh (in the form Yah or Yaho), and it is relevant to our theme that there are clear signs of the penetration of Egyptian religious cults into the life of the community. A triad of deities worshipped in the native cult of Elephantine consisted of Khnum, the ram-headed creator-god, his consort Satis, goddess of the First Cataract, and Anukis, their daughter. It has been claimed<sup>15</sup> that Khnum (or Khnub) is named in conjunction with Yaho on a benedictory Aramaean ostrakon from Elephantine which was discovered in 1907; the last letter, however, has been restored, and Kraeling<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Morton Smith, above in I, 258. He notes that the theory is 'supported only by plausibility'.

<sup>14</sup> P. R. Ackroyd, in *Tradition and Interpretation*, ed. G. W. Anderson (Oxford 1979), pp. 323–4. Cf. E. J. Bickerman, above in I, 349. ('Did Tobit ever go to a synagogue? The author of his story passes over such matters.')

<sup>15</sup> A. Dupont-Sommer, in *Rev. Hist. Rel.* 130 (1945), 17–28.

<sup>16</sup> Emil G. Kraeling, *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri* (New Haven 1953), p. 86. Cf. above I, 229. P. Grelot, *Documents Araméens d'Égypte* (Paris 1972), p. 349, no. 87, 3, favours the reading *Ḥnūm* rather than the induction of a Mesopotamian god. Yet he notes that *Hānu* is named in another of these texts (no. 36, 15, p. 187). Ronald J. Williams, in *The Legacy of Egypt*<sup>2</sup> (1971), p. 261, n. 1, prints 'Khnub' (and 'Khnun' in his text) without indicating the doubt about the last letter. See also B. Porten, in I, 385–93; and Morton Smith, in I, 224 on the girl Isiwir ('Great is Isis').

prefers to see a god Ḥan or Ḥun in the name. A Jewess is said in one document (*Aramaic Papyri*, 4, 5) to swear an oath by the Egyptian goddess Sati(s). Admittedly the oath may have been imposed by the court.<sup>17</sup> The Jewish colony at Elephantine had built a temple (*gōrā*); and since it was used for sacrifices, it could not have been a synagogue.<sup>18</sup>

However, the existence of synagogues in the Egypt of the third century BCE is firmly attested in the archaeological and epigraphic record, and the attestation includes an assured date. One inscription on a limestone slab now in the Alexandria Museum comes from Schedia, and according to G. Botti, who acquired it for the museum and provided the earliest description of it,<sup>19</sup> it was brought to him with a funerary epitaph of the early Ptolemaic era, but with no details of an archaeological context beyond its being discovered in Schedia. This is a disappointing gap, for the inscription must have figured in the synagogue itself, whose foundation it expressly refers to. No architectural concomitants are therefore indicated. The inscription begins<sup>20</sup> with the expression *In honour of* (ὕπέρ) *King Ptolemy and Queen Berenicē, his sister and wife, and their children*, the reference being to Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–221 BCE). Although the reigning royal family are thus honoured in the opening words, it is noteworthy that expressions denoting their divinity, such as *Theoi Adelphoi*, are not used. The honorific terminology<sup>21</sup> doubtless sought the protection of the ruling dynasty for the synagogue (*proseuchē*) which the Jews are briefly said, at the end of the inscription, to have founded.<sup>22</sup> Schedia, near the modern Kôm el-Gizeh, was some twenty miles from Alexandria,<sup>23</sup> but was connected with the capital by canal, being a commercial centre of some importance where Jews were in charge of collecting dues payable

<sup>17</sup> Kraeling, *The Brooklyn Museum*, p. 87; cf. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century BC* (Oxford 1923), p. 43, on the goddess ('a definitely foreign deity').

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 100.

<sup>19</sup> G. Botti, in *Bull. de la Société Royale d'Archéologie d'Alexandrie* 4 (1902), 46–50.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 49. See also P. Jean-Baptiste Frey, *CII*, II (Vatican 1952), 366, no. 1440; D. M. Lewis, in V. A. Tcherikover and A. Fuks, *CPJ*, III (1964), 141, no. 1440.

<sup>21</sup> A 'diluted form of devotion' according to P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* I (Oxford 1972), p. 116. He shows (p. 217) that the cult of the royal family had been established before this.

<sup>22</sup> Actually the verb is omitted.

<sup>23</sup> André Bernand, *Le Delta égyptien d'après les textes grecs* (MIFAO, 91; Cairo 1970), pp. 406–31, this stela on p. 414, no. 3, with full lit.; also his *Cartes XIII and XVI* in the *Atlas* vol. E. L. Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece* (Schweich Lectures 1930; London 1934), p. 1, n. 2, therefore misleads when he refers to this inscription as being 'from the ancient Schedia quarter of Alexandria'. Nor is Fraser's 'in the neighbourhood of Alexandria' (*Ptolemaic Alexandria*, I, 57) quite acceptable. Kafr ed-Dawar, mentioned by D. M. Lewis and others, is on the opposite side of the canal. Botti points out that in Christian times Schedia was a bishopric under the patriarch of Alexandria.

for use of the Nile and local canals,<sup>24</sup> so that the recognition of the royal favour may have been a *quid pro quo*. The same date must be assigned to the dedication of a synagogue in Arsinoë-Crocodilopolis, the flourishing city in the Fayyum, where the inscription again uses the term *proseuchê*, the synonymous *eucheion* being only once used in the inscriptions from Egypt.<sup>25</sup> The opening formula is identical and in the following century (the second BCE) a land-survey at Arsinoë-Crocodilopolis refers to a synagogue there, although it is not certain whether the same one is implied.<sup>26</sup> In the second century also occurred the building of a synagogue at Xenephyris (Kôm el-Akhdar, about thirteen miles south-west of Damanhûr), as attested by a marble block found on the site in 1912 which dates the edifice to the reign of Ptolemy VII Euergetes II (145–117 BCE);<sup>27</sup> and to the same reign is dated a synagogue at Nitriæ, south-east of Alexandria.<sup>28</sup> During a previous reign, that of Ptolemy VI Philometor (181–145), had probably occurred the erection of the Temple of Onias IV at Leontopolis in the south of the Delta,<sup>29</sup> following the desecration of the Jerusalem Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes. This, however, was intended to function, on a small scale, on the lines of the Jerusalem Temple, with the maintenance of sacrifices. It does not stand, thus, in the sequence of synagogues in Egypt, but bears witness to Jewish religious vitality in Lower Egypt.<sup>30</sup>

Two other areas of the Diaspora could boast of synagogues in the second century BCE. One was Syrian Antioch;<sup>31</sup> the other the Greek island of Delos.<sup>32</sup> It was not until the following century that the earliest syna-

<sup>24</sup> Botti, *Bull.* 48.

<sup>25</sup> On the Greek and Hebrew terminology cf. S. Krauss, *Synagogale Altertümer* (Berlin–Vienna 1922), pp. 2–17; and L. L. Grabbe, in *JTS* NS 39 (1988), 401–10.

<sup>26</sup> *CPJ*, III, 1532 A, with a ref. also to I, 134. Both inscriptions use the name Crocodilopolis, which was a flourishing town in the Arsinoïte nome of the Fayyum, well outside the orbit of Alexandria.

<sup>27</sup> Frey, *CIJ*, II, 367, no. 1441; the inscription refers to *the pylon of the synagogue* (τὸν πυλῶνα τῆς προσευχῆς). This points to an Egyptian mode; see Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, II, p. 443, n. 773 (end). But see also W. Horbury in Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions from Graeco-Roman Egypt* (1992), p. 42.

<sup>28</sup> *CIJ* 1442; Emma Brunner-Traut, *Ägypten* (4th edn, Stuttgart 1982), p. 197, with map on p. 198. D. M. Lewis, *CPJ* 1442 locates 'Nitriai' in the Wadi Natrûn; cf. Schürer (rev.) *Hist.* II (1979), p. 426, n. (f): 'in the south-west of the Delta'. But the desert of the Wadi Natrûn was an unlikely venue for a synagogue; in spite of the plural form, the place was probably the same as the later Nitria, south-east of Alexandria.

<sup>29</sup> V. Tcherikover, tr. S. Applebaum, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (Philadelphia 1961), 275–8; cf. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, II, 162–3.

<sup>30</sup> And to a certain tolerance of Egyptian tradition, for it was built within the ancient sanctuary of the cat-goddess Bastet; see Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 278.

<sup>31</sup> S. Krauss, *Synagogale Altertümer*, 63.

<sup>32</sup> E. L. Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece*, pp. 1 and 4off. See also Lee Levine, pp. 1005–8 above.

gogue appeared in Palestine according to the archaeological record.<sup>33</sup> By this time synagogues in Egypt had multiplied still further. In Alexandria alone they were numerous and spread over many areas. Describing the desecration of the synagogues in CE 38, Philo (*Leg.* 20.132) says that there were many of them in each section of the city; and since there were five official sections, the total of synagogues was probably large,<sup>34</sup> the chief among them becoming an object of admiring praise in the Talmud.<sup>35</sup> It is accordingly clear that the dedications in the third century BCE were no mere 'flash-in-the-pan'. As the Jewish community steadily increased, so did the urge to establish the synagogue as a constant feature of religious and social life. By the end of the first century CE the number of synagogues in Egypt must have been considerable; that is true even of those which are firmly attested.<sup>36</sup> The localities named are almost all in Lower Egypt and the Fayyum.

There is, of course, an element of chance in archaeological discovery, and the evidence here cited, albeit abundant and unequivocal, does not prove beyond question that the synagogue had its origin in Egypt. But it does indicate this as a distinct probability. 'Essentially, then', according

<sup>33</sup> At the Ophel, the eastern hill of Old Jerusalem. See Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues*, 1 and 69 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. E. Mary Smallwood, *ad loc.* (2nd edn, Leiden 1970), 220.

<sup>35</sup> See refs. in A. Tcherikover, *CPJ*, 1, 8.

<sup>36</sup> See the lists given by Tcherikover, *CPJ*, 1, 8; by Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, II, 164, n. 316; and by Schürer (rev.) *Hist.* II (1979), p. 425, n. 5. See further J. Gwyn Griffiths, 'Egypt and the Rise of the Synagogue', in *JTS* NS 38 (1987), 1–15 = Griffiths, in *Atlantis and Egypt* (Cardiff 1991), pp. 99–113 and also in Dan Urman and Paul V. M. Flesher, *Ancient Synagogues: Historical Analysis and Archaeological Discoveries*, vol. 1 (Leiden 1995; *Studia Post-Biblica*, 47 (1), pp. 3–16. On pp. xxiv f of the last-named work the main conclusions of this study are accepted, and P. V. M. Flesher is cited as showing that the synagogue is not assuredly attested in Palestine until the first century CE and 'possibly at the end of the first century' BCE. It is also stated that 'the sources speak of no synagogue as an indigenous, Palestinian institution'. The second volume in the series (also Leiden 1995) devotes its first section to 'The Synagogue's Internal Aesthetics', but without allusion to the examples in Egypt. Cf. Lester L. Grabbe, 'Synagogues in pre-70 Palestine: a Re-Assessment', *JTS* NS 39 (1988), 401–10, where the origin in Ptolemaic Egypt is accepted; the Theodotus inscription found on Mt. Ophel is interpreted as evidence of a synagogue there before the fall of the temple in CE 70, but the view is stated (p. 410) that 'the synagogue as an institution came into Palestine only very late, well into post-Maccabean times'. Cf. also Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian* (London 1994, first published Minneapolis 1992), pp. 529 and 531.

An important re-edition, with translations and commentary, of Jewish texts from Egypt is given by William Horbury and David Noy in *Jewish Inscriptions from Graeco-Roman Egypt*. With an index of the Jewish inscriptions of Egypt and Cyrenaica (Cambridge 1992). There are also a number of additional entries as compared with those dealt with by previous editors.



to Reicke, 'the Jewish synagogue system can be derived from Ptolemaic Egypt, where the Hellenistic associations, with their meeting places, influenced its development'.<sup>37</sup> I shall return to the latter point, but quote first the opinion of a well-known Semitic scholar:

It is no accident, to my mind, that it is in Egypt, and in a Hellenistic background, that we find the remains of the oldest synagogue among the Jews; for in its essence the synagogue is a school, and an institution that belongs more to the Greek ideal than the Jewish. Of course, after this the synagogue became an important medium of Jewish orthodoxy, but through this development the synagogue also became a place of worship. At any rate, it is time for us to realize that the idea that the synagogue is the child of the Babylonian exile is a hypothesis – and one without foundation, in my view. It goes back to the custom of the Hellenistic Jews in Egypt, by which they came together to teach about Jehova in their own distinctive way, including much allegorizing under Philo and his like.<sup>38</sup>

The actual 'remains' of the oldest synagogues are not extant, as we have noted, with the exception of the very important dedications which allow them to be dated. The question which Roberts raises about the educational role of the synagogue has some significance, and it is remarkable that, in company with most other scholars, he refers only to possible Greek influence. An Egyptian dimension should certainly be considered too.

The inscriptions from Egypt lay the first stress on worship, as the designations *proseuchê* and *eucheion* show. Whereas allusions to furniture and other externals are often similar to those given in pagan dedications,<sup>39</sup> there are some signs of the very distinctive faith which was followed, including the quite striking avoidance of the tetragrammaton by

<sup>37</sup> Bo Reicke, tr. D. E. Green, *The New Testament Era* (London 1969, German edn 1964), pp. 119–20. Cf. F. Hüttenmeister, above, who describes the synagogues as 'known in the Diaspora at the earliest in Egypt in the 3rd century BC and in Israel only from the 1st century AD onwards'.

<sup>38</sup> Bleddyn J. Roberts in an essay on 'Hellenism and Judaism' in *Cefndir y Testament Newydd*, ed. J. Gwyn Griffiths (Llandysul 1966), pp. 31–2 (here translated from the Welsh). His last point may be questioned. It is not easy to show that Philo's allegorizing influenced the synagogues in Egypt, although allegory was deeply rooted in Egyptian tradition: see J. Gwyn Griffiths, 'The Tradition of Allegory in Egypt' in *Religions en Égypte hellénistique et romaine* (Paris 1969), pp. 45–57; also 'Allegory in Greece and Egypt', in *Atlantis and Egypt* (1991), 295–324.

<sup>39</sup> Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, I, 283. The *exedra* of CPJ 1444 may be, according to him, 'a raised podium or bema at the back of a synagogue'. Goodenough's idea in *Jewish Symbols*, 2, 85 (an early example of the wall-bench found in later synagogues) is more cogent. W. Horbury in *Jewish Inscriptions from Graeco-Roman Egypt* (1992), pp. 42 and 49, argues with some force for the wider sense of 'an annexed structure' – 'a room with one open side, annexed to the main hall, provided with seating, used for meeting and discussion, perhaps including judicial and teaching sessions . . .'

referring rather to 'the Most High God' (*Θεῶν Ἐψίστω*).<sup>40</sup> It is true that Theos Hypsistos and Zeus Hypsistos had a wider and non-Jewish currency, although these appellations too may well show Jewish influence.<sup>41</sup> But there is no trace of syncretism in the synagogal use of the term.<sup>42</sup> The absence of Hebrew from the relevant inscriptions and the regular use of Greek indicate that Greek was the main public language of the communities. It would be rash, at the same time, to assume that the inscriptions reveal everything about the linguistic situation. They had a partly political purpose *vis-à-vis* the authorities. One might recall that almost all the inscriptions of Roman Britain are in Latin, and yet we know that the great majority of the people spoke a Celtic language. What does argue for the use of Greek even in the worship of the synagogue is that it was the clamant need of the Jewish communities in Egypt that led to the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek in the form of the Septuagint,<sup>43</sup> the Pentateuch having been already translated by the later third century BCE.<sup>44</sup>

In time the synagogue developed many functions including those of prayer-house, public assembly-room, tribunal, school, hostel, court, judicial office, and place of asylum.<sup>45</sup> The last-named function, conferred in limited instances, was a direct transference of a right enjoyed by Egyptian temples.<sup>46</sup> Yet the two functions that stand out are those of worship and instruction, and it is a striking fact, for all that has been written about the extensive impact of Greek culture upon Judaism, that no Greek institution fully displayed this combination of worship and instruction. The school and the gymnasium were the basic media of Hellenization,<sup>47</sup> but

<sup>40</sup> *CPJ* 1443, synagogue at Athribis (Benha). D. M. Lewis there (p. 142) regards the date as uncertain ('second or first century BC'). For other examples see Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, II, p. 441, n. 766.

<sup>41</sup> For a contrary view see A. D. Nock, *Essays on Religion in the Ancient World*, ed. Zeph Stewart, I (Oxford 1972), p. 423.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Martin Hengel (tr. John Bowden), *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians* (London 1980), p. 164, n. 15.

<sup>43</sup> Hengel, *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians*, pp. 126ff.

<sup>44</sup> Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, I, 690. In I, 284 he states that this had become an 'urgent necessity', although Hebrew perhaps continued to be used for part of the service in the early Ptolemaic period. Some papyri of uncertain date have preserved fragments of Hebrew prayers, as Fraser shows in II, 443, n. 777. Cf. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, pp. 12, 53, referring to two inscriptions which include Hebrew, 'a few kept their Hebrew, even in Egypt'.

<sup>45</sup> Tcherikover, in *CPJ* I, 8. Cf. p. 269 above: 'just as much for cultural, political and social purposes, such as the lodging of guests, as for prayer and worship'.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, I, 283 (of Euergetes II).

<sup>47</sup> See Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (tr. John Bowden, London 1974), I, pp. 65–83 (concerned mainly with Palestine); Schürer (rev.), *History of the Jewish People*, II (1979), pp. 415–63.

neither was in any special sense a place of worship. The gymnasium had, to be sure, its tutelary deities, usually Hermes and Heracles, but little heed was paid to them outside the dedications and the allusions to sacrifices made.

In this matter terminology is no comprehensive guide. The Greek *synagōgē* leaves the guiding purpose quite open. Already in the early second century BCE Ben Sirach<sup>48</sup> uses the terms *beth ha-midrash*, 'house of study' and *yeshiba*, 'seat' (of the teacher). One might be tempted to invoke these expressions as indicating the contemporary existence of the synagogue in Palestine,<sup>49</sup> but this seems a hazardous procedure since they might refer to schools only. Like most of the dedicatory inscriptions in Egypt, Philo (*Leg.* xx.132) once uses the term *proseuchē*; elsewhere he puts the emphasis on instruction, but combines the two ideas when he asks (*Vita Mos.* II.216), 'What are our houses of prayer (*proseuktēria*) throughout the cities but schools (*didaskaleia*) of prudence and courage . . . ?' To Josephus the weekly assembly is for the purpose of study: the basis of the *paideuma* is the Torah.<sup>50</sup>

In the Egyptian society which the Jews encountered both in the *chōra* and in Alexandria a conspicuous feature of education was that it was bound up with the temples.<sup>51</sup> It was especially concentrated in the Ptolemaic era in the institution called the *Per Ankh*, 'The House of Life', an adjunct of the temple which contained a collection of books relating to all religious knowledge and indeed to knowledge in a wider sense.<sup>52</sup> The learned scribes who were in charge dealt with questions of cult and ritual and could be said to conduct a spiritual ministry in a comprehensive manner. Among their activities, probably, was the production of copies of the Book of the Dead, without which death could not be confidently faced. The 'House of Life' was also an important centre of ritual, especially of

<sup>48</sup> Ecclus. 51:23, 29; cf. Hengel, *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians*, I, 79 and II, 54, n. 165; Schürer, *Jewish People*, II, 419, n. 31.

<sup>49</sup> As Hengel does, *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians*, I, 79. He obviously misleads when he goes on to say, *ibid.* 'We have the first report from a synagogue in the Diaspora at a rather later period.' Yet in II, 54, n. 165 he gives the correct dates for the earliest synagogue inscriptions in Egypt ('246–222 BC'; more exactly 221). Jesus ben Sirach was writing about 180 BCE.

<sup>50</sup> *C. Ap.* 3.175; cf. *Ant.* IV.12 and XVI.43.

<sup>51</sup> Hengel, *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians*, I, 78, rightly observes that 'in the Hellenistic period the temple had become the stronghold of the old national language and tradition in both Babylonia and Egypt', but he does not pursue the Egyptian parallel.

<sup>52</sup> Hellmut Brunner, *Altägyptische Erziehung* (Wiesbaden 1957), 28, listing among the subjects presented theology, hymnology, magic, medicine, astronomy and interpretation of dreams. See also his article 'Erziehung' in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, II (Wiesbaden 1977), 22–7.

the Osirian ritual which bestowed life in the afterworld.<sup>53</sup> In such rites the reading of sacred texts was of basic import, as it became also in the Mystery cult attached to Isis. Even in distant Cenchræe, the harbour of Corinth, in the second century CE, the Isiac priest was expected to read from a sacred Egyptian text written in hieratic or in hieroglyphs.<sup>54</sup> In these matters there is clear affinity between the synagogue and the Egyptian temple, but the Greek gymnasium offered nothing similar. After all its primary emphasis was on athletics.

Among the secondary functions of the synagogue was its role as a social centre, and in this respect there can be little doubt that the associations of worshippers, which were so fashionable in the Hellenistic world, had a significant impact.<sup>55</sup> Yet here again the Egyptian dimension has been usually neglected.<sup>56</sup> The evidence for the popularity of these associations in Graeco-Roman Egypt is massive,<sup>57</sup> and they have antecedents, though on rather different lines, in the Pharaonic era.<sup>58</sup> Outside Egypt too they are well attested in the Graeco-Roman era in connection with Egyptian cults.<sup>59</sup>

It seems likely that in this aspect of its activity the synagogue in Egypt reflected the impact of Egyptian practice, as well as in the more important matter of the nexus of religion and education. The whole development was favoured by the semi-autonomous *politeumata* which the Jews in Egypt were allowed to organize in specific areas. But these communities were not rigidly insulated enclaves, and they must have had contact with

<sup>53</sup> See Philippe Derchain, *Le Papyrus Salt 825* (Brussels 1965), I, 48ff. The papyrus probably derives from the early Ptolemaic era.

<sup>54</sup> Apuleius, *Metam.* 11.22; cf. J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Comm. ad loc.* (Leiden 1975), 285. On comparative attitudes to sacred texts see W. D. Davies in *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 74 (1983), 105–36 (Philadelphia).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. n. 37 above and the remarks of Bo Reicke. On the Hellenic tradition see F. Poland, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens* (Leipzig 1909). For the occasionally political use of the synagogue see G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, III (Cambridge, MA 1930), p. 89.

<sup>56</sup> Bo Reicke, *The New Testament Era*, p. 120, n. 5 notes that temples in Egypt were sometimes used for the meetings of associations. He is quoting F. Poland in *PW* s.v. Synagoge 1 (1932), 1285.

<sup>57</sup> See Mariano San Nicolò, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen zur Zeit der Ptolemäer und Römer* (2 vols., Munich 1913–15); W. Erichsen, *Die Satzungen einer ägyptischen Kultgenossenschaft aus der Ptolemäerzeit* (Copenhagen 1959); A. E. R. Boak, in *TAPA* 68 (1937), 212–22; A. F. Shore, in *BM Quarterly* 36 (1971), 16–19; Françoise de Cenival, *Les Associations religieuses en Égypte d'après les documents démotiques* (Bibl. d'Étude, 46; IFAO, Cairo 1972).

<sup>58</sup> B. Bruyère, *Mert Seger* (MIFAO 58; Cairo 1930), pp. 57 and 85–6; Erich Lüddeckens, 'Gottesdienstliche Gemeinschaften im Pharaonischen, Hellenistischen und Christlichen Ägypten', *Z. f. Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 20 (1968), pp. 193–211. Like Bruyère he stresses the evidence from Deir el-Medinah.

<sup>59</sup> J. Leclant, in *BIFAO* 55 (1955), 178; K. Parlasca, *Die römischen Mosaiken in Deutschland* (Berlin 1959), pp. 56–7; J. Gwyn Griffiths, in *JEA* 59 (1973), 233–6.

the society around them.<sup>60</sup> In general it is true that Greek culture had a greater attraction, particularly through its link with the ruling classes. Evidence of interest in the culture and language of Egypt is hard to come by.<sup>61</sup> A distinction should probably be drawn between Alexandria and the *chôra*; if Greek was irresistible in Alexandria, in the *chôra* that was the position of Egyptian, and Jews there are likely to have spoken Egyptian, 'as it was the general language of the entire country around them'.<sup>62</sup> At the same time we should bear in mind that the whole question is not merely linguistic in scope. Language is not a total bar to the flow of ideas and practices.

### III ART, RITUAL AND MAGIC

Whereas Jewish attitudes to Egyptian culture and religion naturally varied according to circumstances, there are plentiful signs that Jews who had lived in Egypt were impressed by the land and its scenery. Perhaps the best-known example of an Egyptian theme in Jewish art is the group of paintings depicting Egypt in the synagogue of Dura-Europos.<sup>63</sup> These paintings are of course slanted by the anti-Egyptianism of the biblical narrative. Egypt itself is represented by a crenellated walled city, a feature which puzzled Goodenough.<sup>64</sup> It may indicate 'mere convention', he suggests; certainly it was a convention displayed in battle-scenes in the art of both Mesopotamia and Egypt.<sup>65</sup> A figure of a helmeted man with a staff or sceptre (Kraeling's figure 16, p. 77) and holding a globe is interpreted by Goodenough as Ares, and in favour of this are the winged victories accompanying him; but he would prefer to view the staff as a spear and the globe as a shield; and he makes Ares into a mystic figure, 'Ares the Logos' (p. 116), following Philo, and this is not easily credible of a Jewish artist at Dura-Europos in the third century CE.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Lee I. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Rule* (Leiden 1975), p. x ('What is becoming ever clearer is that a Jewish community in a cosmopolitan setting is invariably influenced by its immediate surroundings').

<sup>61</sup> M. Hengel, *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians*, p. 127, remarks that there is little evidence that Egyptian-Demotic was learnt by the Jews, though he admits that Egyptian names were sometimes taken by them.

<sup>62</sup> Tcherikover, in *CPJ* I, 44. On p. 43 he refers to 'Jews in the papyri calling themselves by Egyptian names'.

<sup>63</sup> Carl H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos. The Synagogue*. Final Report, VIII, part 1 (New Haven 1956), pls. 52, 53 (The Exodus), pls. 67, 68 (Pharaoh and the infancy of Moses), and pl. 76 (Moses and the burning bush).

<sup>64</sup> *Jewish Symbols* 10, 117. The illustrations are in 11, pl. 14 and fig. 330.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Kraeling, *Excavations*, 360 on the modes of dress depicted. See also Henri Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (4th edn, Harmondsworth 1970), figs. 200, 206, 207; K. A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant* (Warminster 1982), figs. 18, 19, and 20 b.

A tradition of Jewish art is doubtless behind the exquisite mosaics at the basilica of Tabgha on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Those in the panels of the transept wings ostensibly portray the fauna and flora of the immediate vicinity, but Nilotic motifs are prominent among them, with the lotus and papyrus among the plants and even a Nilometer conspicuously depicted.<sup>66</sup> One sees ‘animals and plants that are clearly derived from Alexandria’.<sup>67</sup> Jewish reminiscences of Egypt clearly contribute to these fine depictions, which are comparable with the mosaics at Praeneste. They may derive from the early fifth century CE, but they probably transmit an earlier tradition; they appear in a Christian basilica and so exemplify one of the problems in defining Jewish art when it is subsumed into the Christian stream.<sup>68</sup>

In the area of ritual and magic a debt to Egypt has often been traced by Erwin R. Goodenough, whose remarkable collection of material merits close attention even if his interpretations have sometimes invited challenging responses. One of his more cogent instances of Egyptian influence relates to the symbolic use of scrolls in Jewish burials. He cites an example in the synagogue of Priene,<sup>69</sup> from which a relief represents a Menorah flanked by an Ethrog, Lulab and Shofar, and also, on either side of the Menorah’s shaft and beneath its branches, two rolled-up scrolls.<sup>70</sup> These are doubtless intended to represent scrolls of the Torah, and they are shown more often on Jewish monuments in Rome, especially in the Catacomb Monteverde<sup>71</sup> and elsewhere; portrait busts are also figured with a scroll held in the hand.<sup>72</sup> Goodenough notes the frequent connection of the Torah shrine with the scroll, remarking that both seem to have brought to Jews a sense of ‘the living and saving presence of their God’. But for the custom of placing sacred texts in the tomb he rightly turns to Egypt, where the inclusion of the Book of the Dead in the tomb was deemed to be of vital significance and persisted in the Graeco-Roman era.<sup>73</sup> Goodenough is careful to consider other possible

<sup>66</sup> M. Avi-Yonah, in *Encycl. of World Art* 8 (New York 1963), p. 366.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* 9 (1964), 133; also in *EncJud* (Jerusalem 1972), pp. 688–9. Cf. André Grabar, *Byzantium* (London 1966), pp. 57 and 112 with fig. 121; Ernst Kitzinger, *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West* (Bloomington 1976), p. 54 with fig. 5. It is strangely stated, however, on p. 54 that ‘the only specifically Egyptian object is a Nilometer’.

<sup>68</sup> Compare also the probably fifth-century CE Nile Festival mosaic discovered in 1991 at Sepphoris; see E. Netzer and Z. Weiss, *Zippori* (Jerusalem 1994), pp. 45–54, with photographs.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. E. L. Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece*, 42–3.

<sup>70</sup> Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols* 4, 142 with 3, fig. 878.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* with 3, figs. 710, 712, and 718.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* 3, fig. 821; another example remains unpublished.

<sup>73</sup> The slaves with scrolls in Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, pl. 35, have, however, nothing to do with this idea.

influences, such as the Orphic 'gold leaves' used in Greek burial in Magna Graecia in Italy.<sup>74</sup> His conclusion is convincing, and the likely explanation is that Jews were implicated who had connections with Alexandria or had lived in Egypt themselves.

One is struck by the expansive quality of Goodenough's method. Thus, in discussing the Jewish use of symbols of fish, bread and wine in graves and synagogues (vol. 5), he wisely states (p. x) that 'because we must not prejudge that Jewish usage kept pagan values, an examination of the pagan material is essential before any opinion on the matter is formed'. This leads him to explore the relevant symbolism of practically the whole of the ancient world. Eventually, on the use of fish, he opts (p. 52) for the basic significance of the Jewish *cena pura* of a fish meal on the Friday night before the Sabbath, but with a borrowed Greek idea of 'a mystic meal – that is, a sacrament of divine participation'. What is surprising is that after a survey of so many varying traditions no place is given to the influence of regional and local ideologies. For instance, the fish as a symbol of immortality in Egypt, described on p. 14, might be expected to influence synagogal practices in that country.

In his discussion of Jewish symbolism about wine Goodenough is even more expansive. He deals also with water. Treating of the 'divine fluid in Ancient Egypt' he explains water as representing 'the spermatic flow from the divine phallus' (p. 148). While he indulges effectively in a note (p. 149, n. 53) on the Egyptian doctrine that 'the divine king is really the son of the God', his merging of disparate ideas about fluids is misleading. Phallicism is an important element, certainly in the Osirian system, but it is explicitly presented as such, as in the occasionally ithyphallic form of Osiris. Water is associated, on the other hand, especially Nile water, with the Osirian gift of the fertility of vegetation. A foray is made later (pp. 176–9) into 'hermaphroditism', but with errors of interpretation such as the allusion (pp. 176–7) to the Nile gods as figures 'with female breasts and a man's beard' and thus hermaphrodites; they are male figures with large breasts as marks of fecundity.<sup>75</sup> Still, this was an error once shared by Egyptologists. A good instance of the obsessive phallicism in the interpretations is the rebuke administered to Blackman (p. 182) for explaining the moisture which 'came from thee' (Osiris) as 'body moisture'; it must rather be 'seminal fluid', argues Goodenough, and that alone. The exudations of a male body are surely several, including water, urine, blood, spittle, and sweat, as well as semen. Happily, the following section concerns 'milk', but even here we cannot escape a 'jar of seminal

<sup>74</sup> That this usage also came from Egypt, in spite of the differences, is shown by G. Zuntz, *Persephone* (Oxford 1971), pp. 370–6.

<sup>75</sup> See J. R. Baines, *Fecundity Figures* (Warminster 1984).



fluid which is on the head of the attendant' of Nut (p. 184). Actually (figure 177) it is a simple water-jar. Dionysus and Dionysus-Osiris are then discussed, and the phallic element is here beyond question.<sup>76</sup> When the content and meaning of Jewish rites are examined, no detailed impress is traced from the direction of Egypt or Greece.<sup>77</sup> In later Jewish ritual a 'custom of wine with the bride' is described as 'clearly phallic'; 'the wine seems to be the seminal fluid, the fluid of life' (vol. 6, 157), and this tallies well with the exposition, unsound though it is, of Egyptian rites. But the final summation is both wider and wiser. In Jewish rites 'the wine was a vehicle of fertility and life in a literal sense, as well as in a mystical sense, in the sense of the future life, and of the coming messianic kingdom'.

What is often implied in these comparative studies is that parallels and analogies may be found in the Egyptian material rather than clear instances of influence. This applies to the Egyptian use of the tree as a symbol (7, 96) and of the rosette (7, 183), as well as of incense (4, 198). The Jewish High Priest, according to Philo, wore a robe of white linen when entering the Holy of Holies, but otherwise used an ornate robe; and Goodenough (4, 207f) compares the variegated robe worn at first by devotees of Isis, whereas the robe of Osiris was of one simple colour, 'the colour of light'.<sup>78</sup> It is not clear whether direct Egyptian influence is suggested.<sup>79</sup> A conscious borrowing is of course ruled out.

In matters of ritual a more tangible instance of Egyptian influence, even though it refers to eventual rejection, is seen in one of the 'Three Abrogations of Johanan the High Priest' (John Hyrcanus) in the second century BCE.<sup>80</sup> The third abrogation concerns the 'Awakeners' who opened the Temple in the morning with the recitation of Psalm 44:24, *Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord?*<sup>81</sup> In Egyptian practice it was with a cry *Awake in peace!*, addressed to the god, that the temple was opened,<sup>82</sup> and it was doubtless the resemblance to pagan worship that led to the rejection. Rabbinic sources often refer, when condemning pagan idolatrous rites, to

<sup>76</sup> A Dionysiac element was probably imported into the Egyptian rites of Osiris. See J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride* (Cardiff 1970), p. 299.

<sup>77</sup> A debt to Dionysiac rites in the idea of the sacramental meal is overstated; cf. Morton Smith, in *JBL* 86 (1967), 57, quoting A. D. Nock.

<sup>78</sup> Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 3 and 77; and my Comm. *ad loc.*, pp. 367 and 562.

<sup>79</sup> See also Goodenough's *By Light, Light* (New Haven 1935), 113–20, citing Joseph Pascher, *H ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΗ ΟΔΟΣ* (Paderborn 1931), 53, who also refers, very relevantly, to Apuleius, *Metam.* 11.23f. Goodenough argues that while Philo and his school were attracted to these Egyptian ideas, yet Philo does not accept 'any mythological conception of Deity.'

<sup>80</sup> Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (2nd edn, New York 1962), pp. 139–46.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* 142, citing Rabbinic sources; cf. J. H. Eaton, *Psalms* (London 1967 and 1976), 121.

<sup>82</sup> Lieberman, *ibid.*; cf. Apuleius, *Metam.* 11.20 and my Comm. *ad loc.*, pp. 274–5.

Egyptian deities, particularly to Isis and Sarapis and to animal worship; and we find an intriguing equation of Isis with Eve, and of Sarapis with Joseph, as well as a rebuke about temple customs which are clearly Egyptian and had obviously proved attractive to some Jewish believers.<sup>83</sup>

It is not surprising, at the same time, that the powerful magical tradition of Egypt made some impact. Not, of course, on any official Jewish dogma, but on the lower echelons of folk practice.<sup>84</sup> Through the medium of amulets Jews 'could call upon Aphrodite or Isis'.<sup>85</sup> A popular amulet was the Eye of Horus. In Egyptian mythology it was injured and removed by Seth, but restored and healed,<sup>86</sup> his other eye too, which remained unimpaired, the *sound eye* (*wedjat*), was a potent means of defence and healing.<sup>87</sup> When it figures with the motto *Iao, Sabaoth, Michael, help*,<sup>88</sup> a fervent Jewish take-over is indicated. Still more significant (and more so than Goodenough's 'amulet I bought in a shop in Athens', 2, p. 238 with fig. 1064, with no date or provenance) are the two ceiling tiles in the Dura synagogue that used the symbol.<sup>89</sup> A neat piece of syncretism which was probably favoured by both Jews and Egyptians is a little amulet with four faces, inscribed with *Iaô, Sabaô, Michaël, Thôth*, illustrating the 'confluence of Thoth with Judaism'.<sup>90</sup> Among the Egyptian deities represented on amulets and seals with a Jewish connection<sup>91</sup> are Osiris,<sup>92</sup> Harpocrates and Khnoubis (Knêph).<sup>93</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Lieberman, *ibid.* 136–8.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. II Macc. 12:32–45 on the use of pagan amulets by soldiers. Cf. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 2, 216. On the general popularity of Egyptian amulets see Campbell Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets* (Ann Arbor 1950), pp. 7–8.

<sup>85</sup> Goodenough, *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth* (Liverpool 1960), pp. 28–34.

<sup>87</sup> Griffiths, in *Chronique d'Égypte* 33 (1958), 182–93.

<sup>88</sup> Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 3, fig. 1049 and 2, 238. Cf. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets*, figs. 298–300.

<sup>89</sup> See C. H. Kraeling, *Excavations at Dura-Europos. The Synagogue*, pl. 14, 3 = Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 3, fig. 1066; another is shown *ibid.* fig. 1065.

<sup>90</sup> See Bonner, 314 with fig. 361 A–D; Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 2, 243.

<sup>91</sup> Goodenough, *ibid.* 2, 269–84.

<sup>92</sup> On p. 275 *ad* fig. 1159 Goodenough refers to 'the mummified Osiris with the whip of Helios'. It is far more likely to be the traditional flail of Osiris. Apart from the context of posthumous judgement, the Osirian afterlife is not clearly reflected. Nor do the Jewish funerary inscriptions from Egypt reveal a firm belief in life after death: cf. W. Horbury in *Jewish Inscriptions from Graeco-Roman Egypt* (1992), xxiv: 'on the whole the epitaphs suggest the continuing acceptability among Jews in Egypt of what may broadly be called Sadducaic views.' He also sees the impact of the views expressed in Job, Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus, while 'the hope of immortality found in the Wisdom of Solomon and Philo is much less strongly represented.'

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Bonner, 53. In 8, 148–57 Goodenough deals with the Jewish funerary depiction of ladders, with Egypt as a likely source; cf. J. Gwyn Griffiths in *Exp Tim* 76 (1965), 229–30 and 78 (1967), 54–5.

## IV WISDOM LITERATURE

Many general similarities can be adduced between the wisdom literature of Egypt and Israel, and indeed the tradition of other Ancient Near Eastern countries is also comparable in this field.<sup>94</sup> The Book of Job well exemplifies the kind of analogies that arise. It has been rightly compared both with the Egyptian ‘Dispute of a Man with his Soul’<sup>95</sup> and with ‘The Babylonian Theodicy’,<sup>96</sup> but without maintaining direct connection. A prevailing mood of pessimism is common to the three writings, and one may well infer that they derive from a ‘common intellectual background’.<sup>97</sup> It is rather significant too that they share a particular formal characteristic,<sup>98</sup> that of dialogue.

Often, however, the emphasis is on a more practical type of wisdom. Prudence is the word that suits such contexts. A man is advised, if he wants to prosper, to show due deference to his superiors. Rarely does this descend to the level of a purely profane utilitarianism;<sup>99</sup> a religious sanction is often invoked. A saying which involves good advice about tomorrow illustrates the religious foundation while providing also an instance where Egypt presents the earliest known source of the idea. In Sanhedrin 100<sup>b</sup> (Soncino ed.) occurs the saying:<sup>100</sup>

Fret not over tomorrow’s trouble, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth, and peradventure tomorrow be no more: thus he shall be found grieving over a world that is not.

Another dictum,<sup>101</sup> in B<sup>r</sup>rakh. 9<sup>b</sup> (Soncino ed.), includes the words *sufficient is the evil in the time thereof*. The two Jewish sayings from tractates of the Mishnah are doubtless the immediate source of Matt. 6:34, and they

<sup>94</sup> See the selections in *ANET*, Section vi, ‘Didactic and Wisdom Literature’ with translations from Egyptian, Akkadian and Aramaic; D. Winton Thomas (ed.) *Documents from Old Testament Times* (London 1958); Walter Beyerlin (ed.) tr. John Bowden, *Near Eastern Religious Texts relating to the Old Testament* (London 1978). Cf. the presentations in Wolfgang Röllig (ed.) *Altorientalische Literaturen* (Wiesbaden 1978): and Irving M. Zeitlin, *Ancient Judaism* (Cambridge 1984), pp. 164–5.

<sup>95</sup> See T. W. Thacker in D. Winton Thomas, *Documents*, p. 163.

<sup>96</sup> W. G. Lambert, *ibid.* 97.

<sup>97</sup> Lambert, *ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> See Kenneth A. Kitchen on ‘Discourses’ in Hornung and Keel (eds.) *Studien usw.* (1979), p. 239.

<sup>99</sup> See Hartmut Gese, *Lehre und Wirklichkeit in der alten Weisheit* (Tübingen 1958), pp. 7–11; Jan Assmann, ‘Weisheit, Loyalismus und Frömmigkeit’ in *Studien zur altägyptischen Lebenslehre* (eds.) Hornung and Keel (1979), esp. 12–13.

<sup>100</sup> Quoted by H. L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus erläutert aus Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich 1922), 441. Cf. Prov. 27:1.

<sup>101</sup> Quoted *ibid.*

probably represent Jewish proverbial lore.<sup>102</sup> It is rather striking that there are several Egyptian forms of the saying, all of much earlier date. Two are as follows:

Do not prepare for tomorrow before it is come. One knows not what evil may be in it. The Eloquent Peasant, 183.  
(c. 1800 BCE)

Prepare not thyself on this day for tomorrow before it comes. Yesterday is not like today in the hands of God. Hieratic Ostrakon, Černý and Gardiner,  
(Oxford, 1975), pls. I and IA.  
(c. 1300 BCE)

Such statements<sup>103</sup> were probably disseminated from Egypt to other parts of the Near East not so much through literary borrowing as by word of mouth.

Evidence for literary borrowing is, nonetheless, forthcoming, and one should not assume that it was one-way traffic. The Demotic Chronicle (of the third century BCE) with its remarkable stress on the perils of not following ‘the Law’ (*hḫ*) is certainly reminiscent of the Jewish attitude to the Torah.<sup>104</sup> On the other hand the Book of Job seems to contain some indubitable Egyptian elements (see our next section), and the Teaching of Amenemope<sup>105</sup> includes one section which corresponds closely to Proverbs 22:17–23:14. The text of Amenemope may derive from the thirteenth century BCE; it is certainly not later than about 1000 BCE. It is

<sup>102</sup> W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge 1964), p. 300, sees in the Matthaean saying ‘conscious criticism of the caution of the Sages’, adding that the words ‘would strike them as irresponsible’.

<sup>103</sup> For others see J. Gwyn Griffiths, ‘Wisdom about Tomorrow’, *HTR* 53 (1960), 219–21.

<sup>104</sup> The idea is not entirely absent before this in Egyptian thought, but the term *mâat* is usually invoked. Cf. J. Gwyn Griffiths, in David Hellholm (ed.) *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (Tübingen 1983), 282; and S. Morenz, in *Hdb. der Orientalistik* ed. B. Spuler. 1. 1. 2. *Ägyptologie: Literatur* (2nd edn. Leiden 1970), 234, comparing the treatment of kings in the Demotic Chronicle with the Deuteronomistic mode of historical writing.

<sup>105</sup> This is the constant written form of the name, save for the end of the last syllable. Alan H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, 1 (Oxford 1947), p. 24, argued that it should be transcribed Amenope because it was, he believed, pronounced thus – a risky and misleading procedure. Cf. Irene Grumach, *Untersuchungen zur Lebenslehre des Amenope* (Münchener Ägyptologische Studien 23; 1972), 64–5; R. J. Williams in *The Legacy of Egypt*,<sup>2</sup> pp. 277–8. For other literary affiliations see J. B. White, *A Study of the Language of Love in the Song of Songs and Ancient Egyptian Poetry* (Missoula 1978); M. V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Wisconsin 1985); J. T. Sanders, *Ben Sira and Demotic Wisdom* (Chicago 1983); M. Lichtheim, *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature in the International Context* (Freiburg 1983).

hard to date Proverbs in view of its composite make-up. Parts may relate to the eighth century, and a long oral tradition may precede the final redaction of other parts.<sup>106</sup> In general, a process of integrating 'international wisdom' into the Yahwistic faith presumes the priority of the former element.<sup>107</sup> At first Amenemope was generally accepted to be the prototype of the section of Proverbs noted above, and indeed of several other sporadic sayings.<sup>108</sup> Attempts have been made, however, to reverse the relationship or to argue that Amenemope and Proverbs both derive from a common Semitic source, whether Hebrew or Aramaic. A careful and decisive rebuttal of the most ambitious of these attempts has restored the former *communis opinio*.<sup>109</sup> The idea that the Jewish colonies at Elephantine and Aswân may have produced the original Semitic work during the Persian period falls to the ground in view of the earlier date of Amenemope.<sup>110</sup>

In the later wisdom literature of the Jews Greek influence is increasingly apparent, as in the development of abstract concepts; but in other ways the impact of Greek writings conspicuously conveyed sources which the Greeks themselves had zealously imbibed from 'the mythology and wisdom of the ancient East'.<sup>111</sup> A clear example is found in the Book of Wisdom, probably written in the first century BCE. Here the figure of Sophia is presented in a way that strongly recalls the treatment of Isis in the Aretalogies; and Isis was herself identified with Wisdom. This relationship, after being hesitantly put forward,<sup>112</sup> has been elaborately demonstrated.<sup>113</sup> Nor is it simply a matter of form and style; Sophia resembles

<sup>106</sup> J. A. Soggin (tr. John Bowden), *Introduction to the Old Testament* (2nd edn London 1980), pp. 384–5.

<sup>107</sup> W. McKane, *Proverbs* (London 1970, repr. 1980), p. 291, in a study whose first part gives much space to 'international wisdom' from Egypt and Mesopotamia.

<sup>108</sup> For Egyptian influence on many other OT expressions see R. J. Williams, in *The Legacy of Egypt*,<sup>2</sup> pp. 264ff; and esp. on the impact of the royal romance (273–4) and of the love poetry (284–5). See his p. 174, n. 1 for a study by Siegfried Herrmann.

<sup>109</sup> R. J. Williams, in *JEA* 47 (1961), 100–6, where he deals with studies by Etienne Drioton and disposes effectively of the claim that the Egyptian work contains Semitic expressions. Another telling point is his reference (p. 106) to several cases of paronomasia in the text, 'involving words which are not amenable to word-plays in Semitic'. See also B. Couroyer in *RB* 70 (1963), 208–24 and H. Gese above in 1, 203.

<sup>110</sup> R. J. Williams, *op. cit.* 106.

<sup>111</sup> Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1, 107.

<sup>112</sup> Wilfred L. Knox, *Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity* (Schweich Lectures 1942; London 1944), p. 51; cf. his remarks on p. 78, n. 2 on 'Egyptian religion in a Greek dress'.

<sup>113</sup> James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences* (Analecta Biblica, 41; Rome 1970), pp. 44–50. For the equation of Wisdom and Torah see W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (2nd edn London 1955, and revised edn 1980), 168–9.

the universalized Isis who controls nature and bestows civilization. The Aretalogies of Isis are admittedly not entirely Egyptian in content, but much of their basic doctrine is of Pharaonic origin.<sup>114</sup> Yet the later Jewish Wisdom books are more indebted to Egypt in the areas of eschatology and apocalyptic.

## V ESCHATOLOGY AND APOCALYPTIC

Egyptian religious texts do not pay a great deal of attention to cosmic eschatology. When they do refer in this sense to the end of the world, what is indicated is a return to primal darkness and chaos. The eschatology of the individual, on the other hand, is a frequent theme in funerary literature and on the whole it is decidedly more serene, although one's fate in the afterworld is determined by a stringent test in the tribunal which everyone is deemed to face after death. A belief in life after death is plainly a prerequisite of such an approach. Judaism came in time to accept a doctrine of immortality, and the possibility therefore arose of accepting also certain associated ideas. Among these ideas was that of posthumous judgement, which might well be recognized in Psalm 1:5:

Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement. (RSV)

This psalm has been dated by Oesterley and others to the middle of the third century BCE and ascribed by G. W. Anderson to 'late Jewish piety'. Yet most commentators seem to agree with Mowinckel<sup>115</sup> that the judgement mentioned relates to retribution in this life.

It seems that the Book of Job provides clearer instances of the idea, although in date it is probably earlier.<sup>116</sup> An obviously relevant passage is the one beginning with the words *But in my heart I know that my vindicator lives and that he will rise last to speak in court* (19:25). The whole passage is difficult and corrupt, but most scholars agree that the sense of a legal vindicator is present. A similar judicial background appears in Job's words

<sup>114</sup> See Dieter Müller, *Ägypten und die griechischen Isis-Aretalogien* (Abh. Leipzig 53, 1; Berlin 1961); and Jan Bergman, *Ich bin Isis* (Acta Universitatis Upsal.; Historia Religionum, 3, Uppsala 1968). The latter gives a higher estimate of the Egyptian *Gedankengut* than the former, and on several matters rightly so. Cf. the searching analysis by Louis V. Žabkar in his *Hymns to Isis in Her Temple at Philae* (Hanover NH, and London 1988), pp. 135–60 (an Epilogue devoted to these Hymns and the Isiac Aretalogies).

<sup>115</sup> Tr. D. R. Ap-Thomas, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (Oxford 1962), II, p. 112. See further J. Gwyn Griffiths, 'The Idea of Posthumous Judgement in Israel and Egypt' in *Fontes atque Pontes* (Wiesbaden 1983), pp. 186–204. J. H. Eaton, *Psalms* (1976), p. 30, suggests a context of admission or purging in Temple assemblies; cf. A. R. Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet and Israel's Psalmody* (Cardiff 1979), p. 23, on 'a summons to judgement'.

<sup>116</sup> H. Gese above, I, 211: 'from the early post-exilic period'. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, II, 74, n. 15, gives varying views, while himself favouring the fourth century.



(31:37), *I would plead the whole record of my life and present that in court as my defence*. Here the New English Bible has dealt boldly with textual difficulties and the phrase *the whole record of my life* points clearly to a Last Judgement. Another saying revealingly uses the Egyptian image of weighing the heart: *Let God weigh me in the scales of justice and he will know that I am innocent!* (31:6) What is even more striking is that a series of statements presenting Job's claim to good deeds (29:11ff) is directly parallel to the Egyptian 'Declarations of Innocence' which are a constant concomitant of the tribunal scene in Spell 125 of the Book of the Dead.<sup>117</sup>

When we move on to the Jewish literature of the second century BCE and afterwards, we find that the theme is much expanded and elaborated. In the Book of Daniel (7:9–10) an account of judgement refers to thrones and to one venerable president, much as Osiris presides over the Egyptian tribunal aided by forty-two enthroned assessors.<sup>118</sup> Mention is made of the opening of the books, a detail that recalls the Egyptian emphasis on Thoth as the Recorder. Elsewhere (12:2) Daniel's people are promised deliverance; many of the dead are promised resurrection with a fate awaiting them of either life or shame for ever. It is in another context that this book (5:27) uses the symbol of weighing in the word *Tekel*: Belshazzar has been weighed in the balance and found wanting, with a total judgement, therefore, on his life and record. But in other works the symbol is applied to a general judgement of the actions of men. Thus Enoch in 1 Enoch 41: 1 sees *how the actions of the people are weighed in the balance*;<sup>119</sup> cf. 61:8.

In ch. 12 of the Testament of Abraham a scene of weighing souls includes two angels with papyrus, pen and ink, the one recording righteous deeds, the other sins;<sup>120</sup> and Abraham is told that the process means *judgement and recompense*. These texts<sup>121</sup> indeed give much attention, even when no mention is made of weighing,<sup>122</sup> to a system of rewards and

<sup>117</sup> Paul Humbert, *Recherches sur les sources égyptiennes de la littérature sapientiale d'Israel* (Neuchâtel 1929), 91ff.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Divine Verdict* (Leiden 1991), 229; 242; 351. On the Book of Daniel see H. L. Ginsberg, *CHJ* 11 504–23; J. J. Collins, *Daniel* (Hermeneia Commentary, Minneapolis 1993).

<sup>119</sup> Tr. E. Isaac in J. H. Charlesworth (ed.) *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (London 1983), 1, p. 32.

<sup>120</sup> M. R. James, *The Testament of Abraham* (Cambridge 1892), p. 91; tr. G. H. Box, *The Testament of Abraham* (London 1927), p. 20; tr. E. P. Sanders, in Charlesworth, 889.

<sup>121</sup> For other apocalyptic texts with judgement a main theme see J. J. Collins in David Hellholm (ed.) *Apocalypticism*, pp. 531–47, esp. on 2 (Slavonic) Enoch and 3 Apoc. Baruch; cf. E. P. Sanders, *ibid.* pp. 447–59.

<sup>122</sup> For an example of the motif in late Roman or early Byzantine art, now in Jerusalem and probably deriving from Egypt, see Martin Hengel, *Achilleus in Jerusalem* (Sitzb. Heidelberg 1982), with a discussion of the Egyptian background on pp. 28–30.



punishments. In the Egyptian tradition such an emphasis is constant, on the lines of a Heaven and Hell, and it is closely linked to the judgement after death – especially the terrifying alternative.<sup>123</sup> The whole concept persisted vigorously into the Hellenistic and Roman eras.<sup>124</sup> Its incorporation into the Book of the Dead and also into tomb-representations invites an idea of dependence on mere magic,<sup>125</sup> but biographical inscriptions, particularly those of Petosiris at the end of the fourth century BCE show that an educated minority regarded the judgement as the supreme moral test which every man and woman, whatever their status, had to face at life's end.

It is not surprising that the evidence points to the author of the Testament of Abraham as having been a Jew who lived in Egypt and wrote in Greek.<sup>126</sup> The question of provenance, however, while highly suggestive, is not crucial, since the Jews of the Hellenistic and Roman eras, whether they lived in Palestine or in the Diaspora, were eminently amenable to non-Jewish influences. Indeed Hengel<sup>127</sup> points to the composite nature of Jewish apocalyptic in its concept of a final judgement and new life. Astral immortality (cf. Dan. 12:3) he finds attested in Greek literature (Aristophanes); but it is found much earlier in both Babylon and Egypt,<sup>128</sup> a fact which raises the question, in discussing influences, of whether one is seeking the immediate or the ultimate source. Thus Martin Nilsson<sup>129</sup> once claimed that 'hell is a Greek invention'. He admitted that there may have been oriental influences, but here he is thinking only of Cumont's claim for Iran; he ignores Egypt's claim entirely, although Egypt provides a hell which is so much earlier, and conspicuously equipped, too, with a lake of fire.

<sup>123</sup> Erik Hornung, *Altägyptische Höllenvorstellungen* (Abh. Leipzig 59, 3; Berlin 1968); *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* (1983), pp. 205–6.

<sup>124</sup> See in particular the admirable study by Emma Brunner-Traut, 'Altägyptische und mittelalterlich-christliche Vorstellungen von Himmel und Hölle, Gericht und Auferstehung' in *Gelebte Mythen* (Darmstadt 1981), pp. 55–98; see also L. Kákosy, *Selected Papers* (Studia Aegyptiaca, 7; Budapest 1981), pp. 227–37.

<sup>125</sup> It is unfortunate that Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 5, 189, followed a dictum by Gardiner (in Hastings, *ERE* 5, 479) which described the Egyptian 'Negative Confessions' as 'essentially, though perhaps not quite consciously, anti-ethical'. A belief in the efficacy of ritual does not necessarily imply a moral vacuum, still less a denial of morality.

<sup>126</sup> E. P. Sanders, in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 875. J. J. Collins, in David Hellholm (ed.) *Apocalypticism*, 533–4, accepts the attribution of 2 Enoch to 'Egyptian Judaism'; on p. 538 he reaches a similar conclusion on 3 Apoc. Baruch.

<sup>127</sup> *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1, 196–205.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford 1971), p. 188, n. 2.

<sup>129</sup> *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, II (Munich 1950), 535; cf. Hengel, *Achilleus*, 1, 201.

Different borrowed elements may, of course, exist side by side. Thus, in the judgement scene in the Testament of Abraham (ch. 12), some details have been recognized as Egyptian.<sup>130</sup> The angel with a trumpet which holds fire intended to test the sinners hardly suits the Egyptian background, where fire is a means of punishment, not of testing; and the same angel is later said to test the souls. Testing by fire is indubitably an Iranian idea.<sup>131</sup> In general Iran's contribution to Judaism has been much discussed and often highly evaluated.<sup>132</sup> Problems of chronology figure prominently in the discussions, and the question of when Iranian influence could have been most easily exerted has been attractively answered with a pointer to the Parthian period (c. 141 BCE–CE 224).<sup>133</sup> Conceptually there are several themes in Jewish apocalyptic which invite parallels in the traditions of Iran and Egypt. The importance of the devil finds a stronger parallel in Iran; although a kind of Satanism attaches to the Egyptian Seth in Graeco-Roman times, it is not allied to a thoroughgoing dualism.<sup>134</sup> Again, the Zoroastrian belief in a type of saviour, the Saoshyant, may have coloured Jewish Messianism;<sup>135</sup> yet Egypt also knows of deliverers promised for the last days<sup>136</sup> and of the significant doctrine of divine

<sup>130</sup> E. P. Sanders *ad loc.* He also notes Rabbinic parallels.

<sup>131</sup> Mary Boyce, in I, 296–7 and in *A History of Zoroastrianism*, I (Leiden 1975), pp. 29; 35–6; also in *Zoroastrianism* (Manchester 1984), pp. 29–30.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. S. Shaked in *CHJ* I, 308–325; Sven S. Hartman in David Hellholm (ed.) *Apocalypticism* (1989), pp. 61–75; Geo Widengren, *ibid.* 77–162; A. Hultgård, *ibid.* 387–411. For a brief and guarded study see J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Western Response to Zoroaster* (Oxford 1958), pp. 86–96.

<sup>133</sup> John R. Hinnells, 'Zoroastrian Influence on the Judaeo-Christian Tradition', *JCOI* 45 (1976), 1–23; see also his 'Zoroastrian Influence on Judaism and Christianity: Some Further Reflections'. On 'a Parthian party among Palestinian Jews' see W. D. Davies, in *Peake's Comm. on the Bible* (1962, repr. 1981), p. 687.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. the Qumran Manual of Discipline and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs; see Shaked, in *CHJ* I, 315; G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Harmondsworth 1997), p. 74; W. D. Davies, in *The Scrolls and the New Testament* ed. Krister Stendahl (London 1958), pp. 164–5. J. Carmignac, in *Revue de Qumran* 10 (1979), 23, denies that this dualism has any relation to apocalyptic. But see also the able exposition by John J. Collins in his *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (1997), chapter 3, esp. pp. 38ff on Zoroastrian influence and the 'Instruction on the Two Spirits' in the *Manual of Discipline*; he concludes (p. 44) that the latter text reveals a 'softened' dualism in which the Two Spirits are 'subordinate to a transcendent God'.

<sup>135</sup> Hinnells, in *JCOI* 45, 4; cf. Mary Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* (1984), p. 90 (a text from Yasht 19) and above, in I, 301. J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Western Response to Zoroaster* (1958), p. 89, tends to reject the equation of the Saoshyant and the Messiah, and also of the Son of Man and Gayomard. On the latter pair see Shaked, in *CHJ* I, 323.

<sup>136</sup> J. Assmann, in David Hellholm (ed.) *Apocalypticism* (1989), pp. 370–4; M. Hengel *ibid.* 681–2; J. Gwyn Griffiths, *ibid.* 273–93; Martin Krause, *ibid.* 623–37 (on texts from Nag Hammadi, with a note on p. 634 on the Coptic Asclepius).

incarnation.<sup>137</sup> In other respects Egyptian tradition shows closer affinity. In Judaism the doctrine of immortality includes the resurrection of the body,<sup>138</sup> and this tenet is missing from the earliest Iranian tradition.<sup>139</sup> While the Egyptians tended the dead body with care, Zoroastrians maltreated it as diabolic.<sup>140</sup> The Jews, admittedly, did not follow the practice of mummification, but their burial rites showed an attitude closer to that of the Egyptians. The cosmic *eschaton* is much more prominent in Iranian doctrine; yet the whole concept of judgement after death, with the sequel of recompense, finds more constant and coherent expression in Egypt. Zoroastrian tradition connects judgement with the bridge Chinvat and with the pouring of molten lead; and neither of these ideas appears in Judaism. What is distinctive about Jewish scenes of judgement is that they often concern the nations of the world, whereas both Egypt and Iran treat of the judgement of the individual. A logical adaptation emerges here since the covenant between Yahweh and the nation<sup>141</sup> is basic to the world-view of Judaism.

In Egyptian tradition ideas and representations of the punishment of the damned are often lurid and frightful, and their impact on Judaism and Christianity, as well as on Islam, has been forceful and enduring.<sup>142</sup> The doctrine of eternal torment does not, however, stem from Egypt, for the fate of the damned there is total annihilation of both body and soul. In his *Altägyptische Höllenvorstellungen* (1968) Erik Hornung examined the evid-

<sup>137</sup> Hellmut Brunner, *Die Geburt des Gottkönigs* (Wiesbaden 1964), esp. pp. 213–15; cf. Emma Brunner-Traut, 'Pharao und Jesus als Söhne Gottes' in *Gelebte Mythen* (1981), 34–54.

<sup>138</sup> M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, I, 196–200, with remarks on the occasional vagueness shown.

<sup>139</sup> Mary Boyce above, in I, 301, does not admit this, but in her *History of Zoroastrianism*, I, 236, she emphasizes the 'tradition', implying later sources. Cf. Hengel, *Judaism*, II, 130, n. 574: 'The Gathas do not know the resurrection, but only the later Avesta . . .' On the other hand, Theopompus in the fourth century BCE ascribes to Zoroaster the belief in 'the resurrection of all bodies' (πάντων νεκρῶν ἀνάστασις): see Clemen, *Fontes Hist. Religionis Persicae* (Bonn 1920), p. 95 *sub* Aeneas Gazaetus. Aeneas of Gaza, the Christian sophist of the fifth century CE, is here, however, using the typical New Testament phrase for the resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:13 and Phil. 3:11) and one must therefore suspect Christian influence.

<sup>140</sup> Mary Boyce, *Zoroastrianism*, I, 300–1.

<sup>141</sup> The Hebrew 'am is admittedly a more comprehensive term, as it includes 'the family, the kinship group, and the nation' according to Joachim Wach, *Sociology of Religion* (Chicago 1944, reprinted 1962), p. 93. On the emerging of a loose confederation of tribes into a 'united nation' see Eric W. Heaton, *Solomon's New Men. The Emergence of Ancient Israel as a National State* (London 1974), p. 146. W. D. Davies prefers the term 'people' or 'community': see his 'Paul and the People of Israel' in his *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia 1984), pp. 123–52, esp. 147.

<sup>142</sup> See Alan E. Bernstein, *The Formation of Hell* (London 1993) and the review in *Classical Review* 45 (1995), 73–4.

ence in detail. He aptly quotes from the Setna-romance (II) concerning such a fate: *His soul is destroyed together with his body, and he is not allowed to breathe ever again.*<sup>143</sup> It is a ruthless end, but an end also to pain and torture. One could argue, of course, in spite of the clear doctrine, that the abundant pictorial displays of divinely ordered torture were misinterpreted. Eternal torment is certainly attached conspicuously to the role of Gehenna in Hebraic, Judaic, and Christian sources.<sup>144</sup> Perhaps a Greek influence should be pondered, since an early Greek tradition presents Tityus, Tantalus and Sisyphus as sinners who are tormented ceaselessly.<sup>145</sup> The role of Gehenna exhibits a strongly localized focus, but with some variety of emphasis. Whereas *Aboth* 5.22 speaks of Gehinnom and its ‘pit of destruction’, the Manual of Discipline (Section 2) in the Qumran Scrolls refers to damnation in ‘the shadowy place of everlasting fire’ and a little later of ‘everlasting destruction’. In Christian iconography the idea contributed a nightmarish quality to mediaeval art. In Rabbinic Judaism, on the other hand, it produced a moderating reaction: shorter, defined periods of punishment were suggested.<sup>146</sup> A comparable development in Christian thought was the concept of Purgatory.<sup>147</sup>

Some questions arise which invite a rather negative response. We have remarked above that Iran rather than Egypt had probably the greater impact on the Judaic concept of Satan or the Devil.<sup>148</sup> Elaine Pagels in *The Origin of Satan* (1996) seeks to write ‘the social history of Satan’ and

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, III (1980), 140. Norman Cohn, *Cosmos, Chaos and the World to Come* (New Haven and London 1993), p. 30, although he cites Hornung’s work, misleads on this point.

<sup>144</sup> E.g. Isaiah 66:24; 1 Enoch 27:1–2; Mark 9:47. Bernstein, *The Formation of Hell*, pp. 178–202 offers a valuable study.

<sup>145</sup> Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, *‘Reading’ Greek Death* (Oxford 1995), pp. 67ff.

<sup>146</sup> Isidore Epstein, *Judaism* (1959), p. 143, referring to the idea of a period of twelve months only, after which the wicked may join the righteous in everlasting life. Cf. Schürer (rev.), *History of the Jewish People*, II (1979), p. 545, n. 110, quoting R. Akiba. See further J. Gwyn Griffiths, “‘Eternal Torment’ in the Hermetic *Asclepius*”, in *Jerusalem Studies in Egyptology*, ed. I. Shirun-Grumach (Wiesbaden 1998), pp. 45–55.

<sup>147</sup> Hans Küng (tr. Ed. Quinn 1982), *Eternal Life* 137 remarks that to many Christians today, both Catholic and Protestant, the idea of eternal punishment seems ‘absolutely monstrous’. It is rejected by Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (London 1994), p. 185, quoting the words of 1 Tim. 2:4 which say that God desires all men to be saved; at the same time he accepts the need for Purgatory. On the attitudes found in modern Judaism see Jacob Neusner, *The Way of Torah* (1979) and Jonathan Sacks, *Faith in the Future* (1995). Alan Bernstein, *Formation of Hell*, pp. 175–7, discussing the present theme, emphasizes the ‘considerable latitude’ shown in the views expressed over the centuries and within the Hebrew Bible itself.

<sup>148</sup> Angra Mainyu or Ahriman in Zoroaster’s system was, unlike the Egyptian god Seth, regarded as an independent creative power, at least until the advent of Zurvanism. See Norman Cohn, *Cosmos*, p. 221 (n. 143 above).

expressly disavows an interest in the Egyptian and Iranian or other possible influences. She discusses ‘the struggle between God’s spirit and Satan’ in the life of Christ, devoting much space to the trial which led to his death. This trial is relevant to our theme in another way. It is much concerned, as the Roman superscription on the Cross shows, with the claim that Jesus was the King of the Jews, The Johannine account of the trial focuses on this claim;<sup>149</sup> which is clearly related to the other claim that he was the Son of God. A divine kingship, as we have noted above (*ad init.*) was a basic feature of the Egyptian polity and it was subsumed into the Hellenistic and Roman ideology ever since Alexander was said to have been greeted at Siwa as the son of Ammon (Amûn). The divinity of the Pharaoh was even buttressed by the belief that he was physically a divine incarnation.<sup>150</sup> In Egypt the Jews of the Diaspora were doubtless aware of this; and the cult of the Roman emperors owed something also to earlier Greek tendencies. When a Roman centurion, after the crucifixion, said (Mark 15:39; Matt. 28:54) that the dead man was truly *the Son of God* (or *a Son of God*) he represented the Gentile world, whatever his country of origin; but no specific connection with Egypt emerges. The possible background is remarkably wide and complex.<sup>151</sup> A Palestinian nexus is likely, particularly in royal messianism.

There arises, finally, a question relating to the evolution of doctrine in the early Christian centuries. Although the New Testament refers to the Trinity in formulae concerned with baptism and salutation, it offers no explicit Trinitarian doctrine. Indeed its implicit doctrine is binitarian, presenting a close bond between God the Father and his Son Jesus. In a general sense it is Judaism that has provided the matrix of Christian theology, so that there has been a natural urge to seek the seeds of Trinitarianism there. Whereas a pluralistic concept of God was inherited by Judaism (as, for instance, in the plural form *’Elobôm*), a firm monotheism was eventually achieved. It is true that several early Christian writers interpreted some features of Hebrew narratives as pointers to Trinitarianism, as with Abraham’s Three Visitors or the thrice uttered ‘Holy!’ of Isaiah’s seraphîm. This kind of exegesis is of course very wide of the mark.

<sup>149</sup> D. R. Griffiths, *The New Testament and the Roman State* (Swansea 1970), 70: ‘Everything turns on the title *basileus*’ (quoting C. H. Dodd).

<sup>150</sup> Martin Hengel (tr. J. Bowden), *The Son of God* (London 1976, German original 1975), p. 23, n. 47, mentions this without further discussion.

<sup>151</sup> See William Horbury, ‘The Passion Narratives and Historical Criticism’, *Theology* 75 (1972), 58–71; E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London 1985), pp. 294ff; Geza Vermes, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (London 1993), pp. 167ff; on his earlier book, *Jesus the Jew* (1973) see William Horbury in *Theology* 77 (1974), 227–32.

It has been observed that many religions of the ancient world embraced triadic groupings of deities. Egyptian religion went further than this in its development of trinities, in the sense of groups of three joined in unity. Such groups were often based on a family, as with Osiris, Isis and Horus, or with Ptah, Sakhmet and Nefertem at Memphis.<sup>152</sup> Some of these groups, especially those figuring Isis and Sarapis, became popular not only in Egypt, but also in many countries of the Mediterranean. A potent influence resulted on early Christian thought.<sup>153</sup> Greek philosophy also made an impact, and Graeco-Egyptian religion, particularly in Alexandria, promoted an interest in the same direction. A study of the Patristic material richly confirms this approach.<sup>154</sup>

Apart from the influence of Philo, Judaism was not a channel of trinitarian ideas.<sup>155</sup> On the level of folk religion and magic the Jews did show a keen interest in the Egyptian deities; see above on 'Art, Ritual and Magic'.

However it may be assessed in the areas discussed, the legacy of Egypt in Judaism was transmitted above all through the Jewish communities in Egypt, particularly in those of Alexandria and parts of Lower Egypt.

<sup>152</sup> H. te Velde, in *JEA* 57 (1971), 83; another Memphite triad is described by L. Kákosy, in *JEA* 66 (1986), 48–53.

<sup>153</sup> Siegfried Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion* (Stuttgart 1960, repr. 1977), 150ff and 270ff; *Egyptian Religion* (tr. Ann E. Keep, London 1973), pp. 142ff and 255ff.

<sup>154</sup> See J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Triads and Trinity* (Cardiff 1996), pp. 209ff, on Tertullian, Clement, Origen and Philo.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* 193ff ('Possible Hebraic Antecedents').

## CHAPTER 32

# JEWISH ELEMENTS IN GNOSTICISM AND MAGIC c. CE 70–c. CE 270

## I GNOSTICISM

## I JEWISH ELEMENTS IN GNOSTICISM: THE PROBLEM DEFINED

It should be obvious even from a cursory reading of Gnostic literature that there are Jewish elements in Gnosticism. These elements are of many different kinds, and may be classified in many different ways, but for our present purposes it will be sufficient to distinguish two broad categories – biblical and non-biblical. To the first category belong the quotations from, or allusions to, the Old Testament in the Gnostic texts. (For convenience we may include here also much Gnostic exegesis of the Old Testament.) Into the second category may be put all those Gnostic ideas, motifs, literary genres, technical terms and formulae which have been paralleled more or less convincingly in post-biblical Jewish literature. It is important to realize that the significance of an element will vary according to the category into which it falls. The Jewishness of elements in category one is not, in the last analysis, open to question. We may speculate on how Old Testament materials found their way into Gnosticism (whether through Christianity, pre-Christian Jewish Gnosticism, or by direct borrowing from Judaism), but that they are Jewish can hardly be disputed. The Jewishness of elements in category two, on the other hand, is often problematic. We are dealing here in the first instance with parallelism, and that creates a host of problems. We must establish that the parallelism we perceive is real and significant – in itself no small task. Then we must face the question of origins: who has borrowed from whom? There is a tendency for scholars to assume that in cases of parallelism Gnosticism is indebted to Judaism. This may not be so: the possibility should always be left open that Judaism borrowed from Gnosticism (in which case we would have a *Gnostic* element in *Judaism*), or that Judaism and Gnosticism derived the element from a common source.

An illustration may clarify this point. In Valentinian Gnosticism ‘Place’ (Τόπος) is used as a title of the Demiurge.<sup>1</sup> This curious locution recalls

<sup>1</sup> Hippolytus, *Refutatio* vi.32.7–8; Clement, *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 38.1.



the use of the Hebrew *Maqom* ('Place') as a title for God in Rabbinic literature. Assuming for the sake of argument that this striking verbal parallelism is not accidental, we must be careful not to jump to the conclusion that we have identified a Jewish element in Gnosticism. The origin of the Rabbinic title *Maqom* is far from clear: it is not biblical, though the Rabbis tried to find a biblical basis for it (e.g. in Gen. 28:11 and Exod. 33:21).<sup>2</sup> The possibility cannot be ruled out that this expression originated in Gnosticism, and passed over into Rabbinic usage, or that Gnosticism and Rabbinic Judaism borrowed it independently from the same source (say Alexandrian Judaism).<sup>3</sup> Such non-biblical parallels between Judaism and Gnosticism are interesting and important. They should feature in any discussion of the Jewish elements in Gnosticism. But their ambivalent character must be clearly recognized.

## II GNOSTICISM AND THE OLD TESTAMENT: THE CASE OF THE HYPOSTASIS OF THE ARCHONS

To the defenders of early Christian orthodoxy the heresy of the Gnostics was a 'polymorphic hydra'. This image is worth bearing in mind, for it graphically symbolizes the immense diversity of what we now call 'Gnosticism'.<sup>4</sup> It is important to realize that Gnosticism, as a unified subject of study, is a modern invention, which embraces many different and contradictory world-views. The term Gnosticism itself, though of Greek formation, is not actually found in the early sources. The Patristic haeresiologists describe different schools of Gnostics, but nowhere do they attempt an abstract definition of *Gnosticism*. It is far from clear to what extent the Gnostics themselves would have acknowledged the validity of the Patristic classifications, or felt an affinity with members of other 'schools'.

The problems caused by the diversity of Gnosticism are well illustrated by the Nag Hammadi documents which constitute our primary source for Gnostic teaching. All the Nag Hammadi manuscripts were found at a single location, and are in the same language – Coptic. Though written by different hands, all were copied at roughly the same period (fourth

<sup>2</sup> In Gen.R. LXVIII 9 (to Gen. 28:11) it is explained as meaning that 'the Holy One is the place of his world, but his world is not his place' – הקב"ה מקום עולמו ואין עולמו מקומו.

<sup>3</sup> See Philo, *De somniis* 1.63: αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς καλεῖται τόπος, τῷ περιέχειν τὰ ὅλα – 'God himself is called a place, by reason of his containing things.' Cf. *Corp. Herm.* II.12, with Scott's note *ad loc.*, *Hermetica* II (Oxford 1925), 89–91. See further B. P. Copenhaver, *Hermetica* (Cambridge 1992), pp. 126–7.

<sup>4</sup> The Christian haeresiologists, of course, played up the diversity of Gnosticism for polemical purposes – in order to contrast it with the unity of Catholic truth. See Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* I.10; Clement, *Strom.* VII.17 (107, 4).

century CE). Presumably they represent the treasured Scriptures of a Gnostic community that lived in the Nag Hammadi region of Upper Egypt (perhaps at the ancient Chenoboskion) in late antiquity – in much the same way as the Dead Sea Scrolls represent the Scriptures of the Qumran community. These Gnostics used, and, one supposes, approved of all the texts in their little library. Yet those texts appear to belong to very different Gnostic schools (at least if we follow the patristic classifications), and to advocate logically contradictory systems. Perhaps the Gnostics of Chenoboskion did not put a high premium on logical coherence. But such incoherence makes it difficult – and perhaps wrong in principle – to talk about Gnosticism in general. If we cannot define satisfactorily the Gnosticism of so unified a corpus as the Nag Hammadi library, what chance have we of producing a definition of a Gnosticism which embraces all the Patristic testimonia, Manichaeism and Mandaeism as well. There have been, of course, many attempts to discover the core-beliefs of Gnosticism, but none has been very successful.<sup>5</sup> It always seems possible to find some Gnostic systems which omit at least one of the alleged basic principles, or which interpret a principle in mutually exclusive ways. The disunity of Gnosticism is nowhere better seen than in its lack of an agreed terminology. Even where two systems appear to agree on the substance of an idea, they will not necessarily put that idea across in the same technical vocabulary.

To avoid the pitfalls of generalizing about Gnosticism and of creating an artificial synthesis out of diverse materials, our investigation of Gnostic use of the Old Testament will focus on one specific text – the Hypostasis of the Archons (= HA).<sup>6</sup> HA divides into two large sections. The first (86, 27–92, 18) is a myth of origins recounting the creation of the world and the primal history down to the Flood. The second (92, 18–97, 22) is an apocalypse which tells how the great angel Eleleth came down from heaven and revealed to Norea, daughter of Eve, the true nature of the Archons. These two distinct sections may go back to two originally independent documents. In the present text, however, they have been

<sup>5</sup> W. Foerster, *Gnosis 1* (Oxford 1972), p. 9, lists the five ‘main points’ of Gnosticism. His fifth point (‘only at the end of the world does the divine element in man return again to its home’) is particularly open to question. Gnosticism persists in academic discourse as a useful descriptive category, despite numerous attempts to deconstruct it. M. A. Williams, *Rethinking ‘Gnosticism’: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton 1996) is unlikely to be any more successful than earlier attempts to lay it to rest.

<sup>6</sup> HA is one of the Nag Hammadi codices, NHC II.4. Commentaries: R. A. Bullard, *The Hypostasis of the Archons* (Berlin 1970); B. Layton, ‘The Hypostasis of the Archons or the Reality of the Rulers’, *HTR* 67 (1974), 351–425; 69 (1976), 31–101; B. Barc, *L’Hypostase des Archontes* (Louvain 1980). Barc offers a perceptive analysis of how HA has read the biblical text.

rather carefully joined to form a reasonably coherent whole. The myth of origins moves smoothly into the apocalypse of Norea by dating Eleleth's encounter with Norea to the time of the Flood. The short theogony in the myth of origins (86, 27 – 87, 23) appears to be based on the longer theogony in the apocalypse of Norea (93, 32–96, 17). The author of the myth of origins seems to have known the apocalypse of Norea. Indeed, he may have been the final redactor of HA, responsible for putting the two sections of the work together.

HA as it now stands contains clear Christian elements: e.g. 86, 20–7 quotes from Col. 1:13 and Eph. 6:12; 91, 1 probably alludes to Eph. 4:13 (note the use of the term *τέλειος*); 96, 31–97, 23 is largely made up of a catena of Johannine allusions. But the Christian elements are few and far between, and from a source-critical point of view easily bracketed out of the text. This opens up the possibility that HA is a Christian reworking of an originally non-Christian, probably (as we shall see) *Jewish* Gnostic text. The closeness with which HA adheres to the Old Testament is unusual. At a number of points it simply quotes the Bible and makes little effort to impose an interpretation on it (see e.g. 91, 11–30). The parallel traditions in the treatise *On the Origin of the World* (NHC II 5) are more thoroughly integrated, more fully Gnosticized. These undigested gobbets of Bible may indicate that HA represents a comparatively primitive stage in Gnostic use of the early chapters of Genesis.

The relationship between HA's myth of origins and Genesis 1–6 may be set out as follows:

<i>HA</i>		<i>Genesis</i>
(1) 86, 27–87, 23	Theogony	Allusions to 1:1–3
(2) 87, 23–88, 17	The creation of man	1:26; 2:7
(3) 88, 17–24	The naming of the animals	2:18–20
(4) 88, 24–89, 3	Adam in Paradise	2:15–17 (cf. 3:3, 10)
(5) 89, 3–30	The creation of Eve	2:21–3; 3:20
(6) 89, 30–90, 19	The temptation and fall	3:1–7
(7) 90, 19–91, 11	The expulsion from Paradise	3:8–16, 22–3, 17–19
(8) 91, 12–30	Cain and Abel	4:1–15
(9) 91, 30–92, 3	Seth and Norea	4:25; 5:3
(10) 92, 4–18	The Flood	6:1, 5, 7, 14, 18–20

HA's myth of origins involves numerous and direct quotations from, or allusions to, Gen. 1–6. Unlike some other Gnostic texts, it is not simply a fantasia on a few themes drawn from these chapters. What HA offers is, in effect, a commentary, presented in the form of a retelling of the biblical narrative. Typologically this commentary belongs with the so-called 'rewritten Bible' texts – Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon, and

Pseudo-Philo, *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*. The care with which the Gnostic author follows the biblical sequence of events is noteworthy. Where he departs from the biblical order (as in items 3 and 4 above), he probably has exegetical reasons for doing so. The reading of the Bible which HA produces is, indeed, strange. It involves a total reversal of the values of the biblical text, at least as traditionally understood: elements normally seen as good (the Creator, the world he created, the Garden of Eden, the commandment not to eat the fruit) are portrayed as bad by the Gnostic; while elements traditionally taken as bad (the serpent and man's disobedience) are portrayed as good.<sup>7</sup> The reason for this reversal is quite simple: it was dictated by the exegetical standpoint from which the Gnostic read the text. He came to the text with the fundamental belief that the material world is evil, the domain of malevolent powers: man's only hope of salvation lies in escaping from it. The Gnostic exegete used this doctrine as a hermeneutical key to unlock the 'true', esoteric meaning of the Bible. Given his assumptions, his reading is logical and consistent.

Like the other 'rewritten Bible' texts HA does not make explicit its exegetical reasoning: it presents a smoothly flowing restatement of the biblical narrative, in which the exegesis is 'dissolved'. However, that it presupposes a process of exegesis is certain. The underlying reasoning often becomes clear when we set HA side by side with Rabbinic midrash. Three examples should suffice to illustrate this point.

(1) The Gnostic exegete used the plurals in Gen. 1:26 ('God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness') to justify his view that a plurality of beings was involved in the creation of man: 'The Archons laid plans and said: Come, let us create a man that will be soil from the earth' (87, 23–6). Cf. Gen.R. xvii 4: 'R. AHa said: When the Holy One, blessed be he, came to create Adam, he took counsel with the ministering angels, saying to them: "Let us make man" (Gen. 1:26).' In general, Rabbinic exegetes were embarrassed by these plurals, and concerned lest they should be exploited to impugn the unity of God (see Gen.R. viii 6, 8, 9; y.Ber. 9:1 (12d.59–66)).

<sup>7</sup> Taken on its own, the story of the Fall (Gen. 3) is, in fact, remarkably ambiguous. It could be read as a Hebrew equivalent to the Greek myth of Prometheus stealing fire from heaven for the good of man: the jealous gods tried to keep knowledge from man, but their purpose was frustrated by the wily serpent. However, to achieve such a reading the story has to be taken out of its biblical context, and it is unlikely the Gnostic exegete would have thought of doing that. He probably believed that he was reversing the values actually inherent in the biblical text. See further P. S. Alexander, 'The Fall into Knowledge: The Garden of Eden/Paradise in Gnostic Literature' in P. Morris and D. Sawyer (eds.) *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden* (Sheffield 1992), pp. 91–104.

(2) In Gen. 2:17 God commands Adam not to *eat* of the tree of knowledge. In Gen. 3:3 Eve tells the serpent that man has been commanded neither to eat of the tree *nor to touch it*. The Gnostic exegete noted the discrepancy between the two versions of the divine prohibition (cf. 90, 2–5), and used it to good effect. His account is as follows. The original commandment was issued by the Chief Archon (? Sabaoth) in the form, ‘Do not *eat*’ (see 90, 24–6; cf. 89, 34–90, 2). The other Archons, however, conveyed it to Adam in the form: ‘Do not eat or *touch*’ (88, 26–33). This small, unwarranted change led, through divine providence, to man’s disobedience, and hence to his enlightenment: ‘They (the Archons) did not understand what they said to him; rather, by the Father’s will, they said this in such a way that he might (in fact) eat, and that Adam might <not> regard them as would a man of exclusively material nature’ (88, 33–89, 3). We have here a case of the Gnostic motif that the Archons were tricked by divine providence, and their malevolent purposes frustrated. But just how their unwitting change of the commandment brought all this about is not expressed. Here, as at other points in HA, one has the feeling that there is a fuller form of the tradition to which the Gnostic text is merely alluding. Rabbinic midrash gives us an insight into what that fuller form of the tradition may have said. God originally commanded man not to *eat* of the tree of knowledge, but Adam, adding to the commandment, conveyed it to Eve in the form: ‘Do not eat or *touch*.’ The serpent cleverly exploited the unauthorized addition. He showed Eve that he could *touch* the tree with impunity. Thus he sowed doubt in Eve’s mind as to God’s veracity, and persuaded her to eat the fruit (see Avot d’Rabbi Natan I (ed. Schechter pp. 4–5); Gen.R. XIX 3; b.Sanh. 29a). A similar tradition, with the usual Gnostic inversion of values, probably lies behind HA’s account of this episode.

(3) In HA’s version of the creation-story, as in many other Gnostic cosmogonies, Sophia plays a crucial role (see 87, 4–11; cf. 94, 4ff). Behind the figure of Sophia lies Prov. 8, where wisdom is described as the ‘architect’ or ‘craftsman’ (*amon*) who assisted God in creation (Prov. 8:30). How did the Gnostic expositor manage to introduce Sophia into his interpretation of Gen. 1, at the point in his exposition corresponding to Gen. 1:1–3? Perhaps there is no great mystery here: he simply felt that Gen. 1 and Prov. 8 could be harmonized on the grounds that both passages are concerned with the subject of creation. Jewish tradition, however, suggests another possibility. According to a well known Rabbinic midrash the word *re’shit* (‘beginning’) in Gen. 1:1 alludes to wisdom, which in Prov. 8:22 is called the ‘*re’shit* of God’s way’ (see Gen.R. I 1). This tradition is reflected in the translation of Gen. 1:1 in the Fragmentary Targum (MS Paris): ‘With wisdom (בַּחֲכָמָה) the Lord created and

perfected the heavens and the earth.<sup>8</sup> It is, of course, impossible to prove that the author of the myth of origins in HA knew this interpretation of *re'shit* in Gen. 1:1. But such speculation is not entirely without value, for it shows how closely HA may be based on precise exegesis even in a section where it apparently treats the biblical text with great freedom.

The implication of these, and of the many similar cases that could be brought, is clear. Behind HA's myth of origins lies a highly erudite exegesis of Gen. 1–6, albeit from an unusual hermeneutical standpoint. The author of the myth of origins knew the opening chapters of Genesis extremely well, and subjected them to careful analysis. It is unlikely, however, that he stumbled by accident on the Jewish Bible and started to expound it unaided. He knew an elaborate tradition of Bible-exegesis which proved crucial to his reading of the biblical text. The numerous striking correspondences between his underlying exegesis and Rabbinic midrash suggest that the exegetical tradition which he knew was Jewish.

That HA has drawn on Jewish sources is corroborated by certain linguistic indications that some of the traditions contained in it circulated at one time in Aramaic. It has long been recognized that HA 89, 11–90, 12 contains a series of Aramaic puns on the name *Havvah* (Eve).<sup>9</sup> The more obvious of these are as follows: (1) Eve is addressed as 'the Physician', or, possibly, 'Midwife'. Cf. the Aramaic *ḥayyēta* = 'midwife'. (2) She is also addressed as 'She who has given birth' – another possible sense of the Aramaic *ḥayyēta*. (3) Eve becomes a tree to escape from the Archons. Presumably the Tree of Life (Aramaic *'ilan ḥayyayya*) is meant. The similarity between *Havvah* and *ḥayyayya* was surely the basis for positing some sort of connection between Eve and the tree. (4) The 'Female Spiritual Principle', or, as it is also called, 'the Female Instructing Principle' (Aramaic *mēḥavv'ya*) enters into the serpent (Aramaic *ḥiyva*), after spiritual Eve is metamorphosed into the tree. Thus the serpent becomes an 'instructor' (Aramaic *mēḥavve*).<sup>10</sup> A number of these puns occur in a fragment of a confession quoted at HA 89, 16–17. A fuller version of this confession is given in *On the Origin of the World* (NHC II 5) 114, 8–15. It is possible that we have here a remnant of the liturgy of a group of Aramaic-speaking Gnostics. Jews, of course, were not the only Aramaic speakers in the east Mediterranean in late antiquity, but given the content of the traditions involved here, it is surely natural to conclude that the members of this

<sup>8</sup> The exegetical connection between Gen. 1:1 and Prov. 8:22 can be made just as easily through the Greek version, as through the Hebrew original: Gen. 1:1, ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεός κτλ; Prov. 8:22, κύριος ἔκτισεν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ κτλ.

<sup>9</sup> See Layton's note *ad loc.* HTR 69 (1976), 55–6.

<sup>10</sup> The word *ḥiyva* ('serpent') shows that the exegesis must have originated in Aramaic, not Hebrew. The Hebrew for serpent is *nāḥash* – the term actually used in Gen. 3:1.





Well before World War I Gaster compared the Jewish Shi'ur Qomah speculation on the mystical body of God with the Gnostic Marcus' description of the Body of Truth.<sup>14</sup> He also pointed out that the interest shown by Marcus and other Gnostics (see now the *Marsanes* treatise, NHC XI 1, pp. 25–42) in letter and number mysticism is shared by the *Sefer Yeşirah* and the *Otiyyot d' Rabbi Aqiva* – two early Jewish works related to the Merkavah literature. Between the wars Odeberg argued for significant similarities between Metatron, the Lesser YHWH, in the Merkavah texts (3 Enoch 12:1–5), and the figure of the Little Jao found in the Pistis Sophia (I 7; II 86) and the Second Book of Jeu (50).<sup>15</sup> It was Scholem, however, who, in a series of studies published before and after World War II, made out a detailed case for an especially close relationship between Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism. So impressed was Scholem by the parallels that he concluded that Merkavah mysticism was a kind of Jewish Gnosticism – ‘a truly rabbinic Gnosis’, in which ‘the illuminations and revelations granted to the adepts are such as conform to the Jewish hierarchy of beings’.<sup>16</sup> Two Gnostic texts – HA 94, 2–96, 14 and Origen, *Contra Celsum* VI.31 – will serve to illustrate the nature of the parallelism.

### 1 *The elevation of Sabaoth*<sup>17</sup>

In HA 94, 2–96, 14 the angel Eleleth explains to Norea about the origin of the Archons, and tells her how, after the First Archon Ialdabaoth had been cast down to Tartarus, his place in the seventh heaven was taken by his offspring Sabaoth. The following points are worth noting:

(1) HA 94, 9–10 (cf. 95, 20): ‘A veil (καταπέτασμα) exists between the World Above and the realms that are below.’ This veil may be compared

<sup>14</sup> M. Gaster, ‘Das Schiur Komah’, *Studies and Texts* II (London 1925–8), pp. 1344ff, reprinted from *MGWJ* for 1892. For Marcus’s description of the Body of Truth, see Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I 14,3. For more recent study of the Shi’ur Qomah see M. Cohen, *The Shi’ur Qomah: Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Qabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (Lanham 1983).

<sup>15</sup> H. Odeberg, *3 Enoch* (Cambridge 1928), pt 1, pp. 188–92.

<sup>16</sup> G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition*, 2nd edn (New York 1965), 10. What precisely Scholem meant by the term ‘Jewish Gnosticism’ has become a matter of intense debate. See J. Dan, ‘Jewish Gnosticism?’, *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 2 (1995), 309–28.

<sup>17</sup> On this section of HA, in addition to the commentaries listed in note 6 above, see: F. T. Fallon, *The Enthronement of Sabaoth* (Leiden 1978); I. Gruenwald, ‘Jewish Sources for the Gnostic Texts from Nag Hammadi?’, *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies* III (Jerusalem 1977), 45–56. For parallels to Gnosticism in Merkavah mysticism I have cited, wherever possible, 3 Enoch. My notes on 3 Enoch in J. H. Charlesworth (ed.) *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* I (New York 1983), pp. 223–315, should be consulted for further discussion of the various elements, and for cross-references to the other Merkavah texts.

with the *Pargod* of the Merkavah texts – the heavenly curtain which conceals from human and angelic gaze the ultimate mysteries of the godhead (see e.g. 3 Enoch 45). The Rabbinic ideas about the *Pargod* are particularly closely paralleled in another Gnostic text, the *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 38, 1–2: ‘Topos itself is fiery. Therefore . . . it has a curtain, in order that the spirits may not be devoured by the sight of it. Only the archangel goes into it, according to the likeness of whom the high priest enters once a year into the Holy of Holies (Heb. 9:7)’.

(2) Both HA and the Merkavah texts have a seven-heaven cosmology, each heaven being assigned to the control of an Archon/Prince (cf. HA 95, 20 with 3 Enoch 17). HA 95, 34 speaks also of an ‘eighth heaven’ (the Ogdoad). This corresponds to the world above the veil. The Ogdoad recalls Merkavah speculation on the heavens above the seventh, from which God descends daily to take his seat upon his throne in the seventh (3 Enoch 48A:1). b.Hag. 13a links the speculation about an eighth heaven with Ezek. 1:22, ‘There was a likeness of a firmament *above* the heads of the living creatures.’ Scholem suggested that the name *Az̄bogab* (3 Enoch 18:22), known to later Jewish mystics as *shem ba-sh’ miniyut* (‘the eightfold name’) because it is made up of three groups of letters, each adding up by gematria to eight, was originally a Jewish designation for the Ogdoad.<sup>18</sup>

(3) The elevation of Sabaoth (HA 95, 13–96, 3; cf. *On the Origin of the World* 103, 33–105, 19) may in general terms be compared with the elevation of Metatron in 3 Enoch 3–15. The instruction of Sabaoth and Metatron is described in notably similar language. HA 95, 31–5: ‘And Sophia took her daughter Zoe and had her sit upon his (Sabaoth’s) right to teach him about the things that exist in the Eighth (Heaven); and the Angel (of) Wrath she placed upon his left.’ 3 Enoch 10:5: ‘I have committed to him (i.e. to Metatron) the Prince of Wisdom and the Prince of Understanding, to teach him the wisdom of those above and those below, the wisdom of this world and of the world to come.’

(4) HA 95, 26–31, ‘Sabaoth made himself a huge four-faced chariot (*ἄρμα*) of cherubim, and infinitely many angels to act as ministers, and also harps and lyres’, contains a number of highly compressed allusions to Merkavah speculation. The word ‘chariot’ is highly revealing. It is not biblical in origin, for although the Merkavah tradition is based on Ezekiel’s vision of the glory of God (Ezek. 1), the term ‘chariot’ (*merkavah*) is nowhere to be found in Ezekiel’s text. The ‘four faces’ of the chariot recall the *Hayyot* – the four creatures of Ezek. 1:5 (cf. 3 Enoch 21). The

<sup>18</sup> Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, pp. 65–71. See further J. Dan, ‘“Azboğa”, the Name of the Eights’ in D. Dimant, M. Idel and S. Rosenberg (eds.) *Minḥa le-Sarah: Studies in Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah in Honor of Prof. Sarah O. Heller-Willenski* (Jerusalem 1993), pp. 119–34.

expression ‘chariot of cherubim’ suggests that the chariot is somehow made up of cherubim. In the Merkavah texts the Chariot is not depicted as a material structure; rather it is defined in terms of angelic hierarchies. For the specific idea of cherubim forming the Chariot see 3 Enoch 22:11, 13 and 24:1. The hosts of ministering angels are a standard feature of the Merkavah texts: they make up the choirs which perform the celestial *Sanctus* (Isa. 6) – hence, presumably the mention of harps and lyres in the Gnostic text (cf. 3 Enoch 35–40).

## 2 *The ascent of the soul*

As part of his exposition of the teachings of the Gnostic sect of the Ophians, Origen, *Contra Celsum* VI.31, gives an Ophian liturgy for the ascent of the soul. His account is slightly garbled but the general picture is clear. The soul’s destination is the Ogdoad – the realm of the Son and the Father. To reach this goal the soul must pass through ‘the barrier of evil – the gates of the Archons which are shut for ever’. There are seven Archons (some with Semitic names – Adonaeus, Sabaoth, Iao, Ialdabaoth), controlling seven aeons, or heavens. To get past the Archons the ascending soul must address them by name, recite the appropriate prayer, and show them the correct ‘symbol’ (σύμβολον). This is all very reminiscent of the description of the Great Séance in Hekhalot Rabbati 15–22, at which R. Neḥunyah ben Ha-Qanah revealed the secret of how to ascend to the Merkavah. According to Neḥunyah the adept must pass through the doors of seven concentric palaces (*bekhalot*), each of which is guarded by fierce angelic doorkeepers. To get past the doorkeepers he must know their names, and show them the appropriate ‘seals’ (חותמות), containing magical formulae which are able to neutralize the power of the hostile angels.<sup>19</sup>

It is important not to forget that there are differences between Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism, as well as similarities. For example, the ascent of the soul in Hekhalot Rabbati is followed by descent: it is something that can be repeated again and again during life. In Gnosticism, however,

<sup>19</sup> For a convenient English translation of the account of the Great Séance, see P. S. Alexander, *Textual Sources for the Study of Judaism* (Manchester 1984), pp. 120–5. German translation: P. Schäfer, *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur*, vol. II (Tübingen 1987). Further discussion and bibliography: Alexander, ‘Incantations and Books of Magic’ in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* III.1, revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman (Edinburgh 1985), pp. 362–3; M. Himmelfarb, ‘Heavenly Ascent and the Relationship of the Apocalypses and the Hekhalot Literature’, *HUCA* 59 (1988), 73–100; Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York – Oxford 1993); A. Kuyt, *The ‘Descent’ to the Chariot* (Tübingen 1995).

the ascent of the soul appears to be accomplished once for all after death. Moreover the radical dualism of Gnosticism is not easily paralleled in the Merkavah texts: Merkavah mysticism does not make a sharp distinction between the incorruptible World Above, the domain of 'the Holy One, the God of the Entirety', and the World Below, ruled over by the malevolent Archons. It should also be noted that many of the similarities between Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism (e.g. the seven-heaven cosmology and the doctrine of the ascent of the soul) are not exclusive to these two systems, but are found in other religious traditions of late antiquity – e.g. in the Hermetica, in Roman Mithraism, and in Neopythagoreanism.

These are undoubtedly important qualifications which help to set the parallelism between Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism into proper perspective, but they should not be overstressed. It is true that the ascent of the soul in Gnosticism is achieved after death, but some Gnostic texts imply that that final ascent can be anticipated in various ways during life.<sup>20</sup> It is also true that, broadly speaking, Gnosticism is sharply dualistic whereas Merkavah mysticism is not, but we must be careful not to make this contrast too clear-cut. Many regard a radical dualism as absolutely fundamental to Gnosticism, but in some Gnostic systems (e.g. those of Basilides and the Valentinian Ptolemaeus) the dualism is very muted: it is arguably no stronger than the dualism of some Jewish texts. The sympathetic treatment of Sabaoth in HA should not be missed. HA does offer a sharp contrast between the true God and the First Archon, Ialdabaoth, but, as we have seen, this mirrors the contrast within Jewish tradition between God and Satan. The actual ruler of the world in HA is Sabaoth, and he is by no means all bad. He repents and disowns his father Ialdabaoth. As a reward he is caught up to the seventh heaven and enthroned there by Sophia. He is instructed by Zoe, the daughter of Sophia, about the mysteries of the Ogdoad (95, 13–35).<sup>21</sup> He is not, therefore, entirely blind and ignorant. And so, by implication, the Torah which he revealed at Sinai is not totally false. This last point is crucial for an understanding of the author of HA's attitude towards Scripture. The care with which he expounds Scripture is a measure of his respect for it. He tries to validate Gnostic teaching from Scripture, and this would make no sense if he

<sup>20</sup> A number of the Gnostic apocalypses, e.g. *Zostrianos* (NHC VIII 1), *Marsanes* (NHC XI) and *Allogenes* (NHC XI3), appear to describe ascent to heaven, followed by descent. Note also *Apocryphon of James* (NHC 12) 15, 5–16, 2. These ascents are, perhaps, achieved through the exercise of the intellect, or imagination. Nevertheless, they are anticipations of the final ascent of the 'soul' after death.

<sup>21</sup> Note also how Sabaoth thwarts the other Archon's plan to destroy man, by instructing Noah to build the Ark (HA 92, 8–14).

regarded Scripture as all lies. We must be careful not to exaggerate the anti-Judaism of Gnosticism.<sup>22</sup>

If Gnosticism is not inevitably marked by radical dualism, neither is Merkavah mysticism uncompromisingly monistic. It is not hard to find dualistic tendencies in the Merkavah texts. Merkavah mysticism distinguishes sharply between the *deus absconditus* and the *deus revelatus*. What the mystic sees on the throne in the seventh heaven is not, in a sense, God himself, but only the divine effulgence – the *Kavod* or *Shekhinah*. God himself dwells in ultimate mystery in the heavens beyond the seventh. Here we have a dualism internalized within the being of God, but it would not take much to externalize the *Kavod* or *Shekhinah*, and give it some sort of independence of God. In 3 Enoch we can see a tendency to replace the *deus revelatus* by another being, the archangel Metatron – the Lesser YHWH: God announces that he is withdrawing from the world to the upper heavens, and leaving his viceregent Metatron to run affairs (3 Enoch 10).<sup>23</sup> There is no abrupt discontinuity between Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism on the question of dualism. Rather, what we find is a series of fine gradations which imperceptibly shade off into each other.

What, finally, are we to do with the fact that many features shared by Gnosticism and Merkavah mysticism are attested also in other religious traditions of late antiquity? It is certainly possible to take the parallels between Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism one by one and find most of them in some third religious tradition, but what is significant here is not the single elements in isolation, but the phenomenon of ‘clustering’. Why is it that *so many* parallels to Merkavah mysticism are to be found in Gnosticism? No other religious tradition of late antiquity outside Judaism

<sup>22</sup> According to Jonas, ‘the nature of the relation of Gnosticism to Judaism . . . is defined by the *anti-Jewish animus* with which it is saturated’. He claims that Scholem once referred to it in conversation as ‘the greatest case of metaphysical anti-Semitism’ (J. P. Hyatt (ed.) *The Bible in Modern Scholarship* (Nashville-New York 1964), p. 288). This is much too extreme. Certainly it is hard not to feel the anti-Jewish animus of a passage such as the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth* (NHC VII 2), 62, 27–65, 1, but the abusive language used there is *not* typical. The attitude towards the Old Testament implicit in HA may be compared with that expressed in the Letter of Ptolemaeus to Flora (Epiphanius, *Panarion* xxxiii.3, 1–7.10).

<sup>23</sup> These dualistic tendencies become more pronounced in the mediaeval Qabbalah. For Metatron in Qabbalistic literature see Odeberg, *3 Enoch*, Pt. I, pp. 111–25; I. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, vol. 2 (Oxford 1989), 625–32, 643–5; M. Idel, ‘Enoch is Metatron’, in: *Proceedings of the First International Conference on the History of Jewish Mysticism: Early Jewish Mysticism*, Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought 6.1–2 (Jerusalem 1987). In Hebrew. A French translation may be found in C. Mopsik, *Le livre hébreu de Hénoc* (Paris 1989), pp. 381–406; D. Abrams, ‘The Boundaries of Divine Ontology: the Inclusion and Exclusion of Metatron from the Godhead’, *HTR* 87 (1994), 291–321.

can begin to match Gnosticism in providing parallels to Merkavah mysticism. All things considered, then, while we should not deny that there are important differences between Gnosticism and Merkavah mysticism, the evidence points to some sort of relationship between the two traditions.

#### IV JEWISH ELEMENTS IN GNOSTICISM: TWO HYPOTHESES<sup>24</sup>

How can the use of the Old Testament by the Gnostics be explained? And what light is thrown on the question of Gnostic use of the Old Testament by the parallels between Gnosticism and Merkavah mysticism? There are two hypotheses to be considered. The first is that Gnosticism originated *within* Judaism, and when it moved beyond Judaism it carried with it a considerable cargo of Jewish tradition. Can we identify its precise point of origin within Judaism? It is tempting to see it as a development of Rabbinic Merkavah mysticism, but this suggestion runs into a serious problem of chronology: Gnosticism is documented by the mid second century CE, *before* we have clear evidence of the existence of Merkavah mysticism, at least of the type attested in the Hekhalot literature. Attempts to trace Merkavah mysticism back to an esoteric tradition in pre-70 Pharisaism are highly speculative.<sup>25</sup> The extant Merkavah literature is Amoraic at the earliest. 3 Enoch, from which we adduced many parallels to Gnosticism, is fifth- or sixth-century in date. Gnostic motifs have, indeed, been found in earlier Jewish literature, e.g. in apocalyptic and the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the light of these we might argue that the parallels between Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism are due to common ancestry, both having drawn on the same early Jewish tradition. However, not all the elements shared by Merkavah mysticism and Gnosticism are documented in earlier Jewish sources. The problem is that in Judaism at the relevant period (late first/early second century CE) there is nothing that closely resembles full-blown Gnosticism, so if Gnosticism did originate within Judaism, its precise point of origin is now concealed from us. Scholars who favour this position are forced to talk vaguely about Gnosticism emerging in Palestine 'at the fringes of Judaism', 'among rebellious, heterodox Jews'.<sup>26</sup> It is also hard to see how the hypothesis of

<sup>24</sup> See further, P. S. Alexander, 'Comparing Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism: An Essay in Method', *JJS* 35 (1984), 1–18.

<sup>25</sup> G. Quispel, *Gnostic Studies* I (Istanbul 1974), 222: 'As Gershom Scholem demonstrated, there were even a number of Pharisees in Palestine who handed down esoteric traditions known to the Gnostics and which later gave rise to a truly Jewish form of Gnosis, the *Kabbalah*.' This is an oversimplification of Scholem's position.

<sup>26</sup> Quispel, *Gnostic Studies* I, p. 219.

a Jewish origin for Gnosticism can cope with the problem of the diversity of Gnosticism. By no means all forms of Gnosticism contain Jewish elements, or have a Jewish character. HA with its clear Jewish content speaks for only a proportion of the texts. It is not obvious how, if it emerged from within Judaism (whether directly or via Christianity), Gnosticism came to develop its non-Jewish, and non-Christian, forms.

The second hypothesis – which, perhaps, offers a better explanation of the data – is that Gnosticism originated *outside* Judaism, but somehow managed to penetrate Judaism and influence certain strands of Jewish tradition, notably Merkavah mysticism. Gnosticism is marked by a profound acosmic pessimism: it breathes a deep sense of alienation from the world and revolt against its gods. What socio-historical factors produced this pessimism we cannot now say.<sup>27</sup> One thing is reasonably certain: the pessimism was caused by direct experience of life: it was not deduced by exegesis from religious texts. Gnosticism probably arose among pagan intellectuals strongly influenced by later Platonism.<sup>28</sup> It was a learned, scholarly movement. The circles in which it arose were syncretistic, and had a strong interest in myth, especially the exotic myths of the Egyptians, the Persians and the Jews.<sup>29</sup> Such interest in alien wisdom might be compared with the fascination which the sacred books of the east held for the Victorian theosophists. Like Casaubon in *Middlemarch*, the Gnostics decided that the different mythologies of the world were at bottom saying the same thing – expressing the same perennial philosophy – and that (unlike Casaubon) they had found the key. They read their world-view into these mythologies, and used their language and imagery as vehicles of their thought. Gnosticism was not a centralized religion: it probably had no single founder (despite what the Fathers say about Simon Magus), no Church, no fixed canon of Scripture. It began as a trend within the chaotic, syncretistic paganism of late antiquity, and it crystallized into different forms. Some Gnostics of a philosophical bent expressed their world-view largely in terms of Greek ideas, particularly Platonism. Others were drawn to Christianity, and recast Christianity in a Gnostic mould. In so doing they presumably made Gnosticism attractive to some Christians, and so converted them to Gnosticism. Yet others were interested in Judaism, and found Jewish myths, especially the story of creation, useful for their purposes. Their Gnosticizing of Jewish mate-

<sup>27</sup> For a discussion of the sociology of Gnosticism see K. Rudolf, 'Das Problem einer Soziologie und "sozialen Verortung" der Gnosis', *Kairos* 19 (1977), 35–44.

<sup>28</sup> K. Rudolf, *Gnosis* (Edinburgh 1977), pp. 284–5, gives a brief assessment of the contribution of Platonism to Gnosticism. Note NHC v15 is a rather garbled version of Plato, *Republic* 588B–589B.

<sup>29</sup> A. D. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom* (Cambridge 1975) discusses the interest of the Greeks in barbarian cultures.



rials may have won Jewish converts to Gnosticism. That there were Jewish Gnostics seems beyond any real doubt. It is hard otherwise to explain the learned input of Jewish tradition into such a work as HA. It was these Jewish Gnostics who may have mediated certain Gnostic ideas to Rabbinic circles, and influenced the literature of the Merkavah mystics.

## II MAGIC

### I EARLY JEWISH MAGIC: THE EVIDENCE

Although magic in most of its forms is roundly condemned in the Torah,<sup>30</sup> there is incontrovertible evidence that Jews practised magic in the Mishnaic era, and, indeed, enjoyed something of a reputation for being good at it. Many writers of the period – Jewish and non-Jewish – testify to Jewish involvement in magic. Acts 19:13–20 tells of some itinerant Jewish exorcists at Ephesus who tried unsuccessfully to drive out demons in the name of ‘Jesus whom Paul preaches’ (cf. Acts 8:9; 13:6–12). Josephus gives a vivid description of an exorcism which he saw performed by the Jew Eleazar in the presence of Vespasian (*Ant.* VIII.46–9). Justin Martyr asserts that Jewish ‘exorcists . . . make use of craft when they exorcize, even as the Gentiles do, and employ fumigations and incantations’ (*Trypho* 85).<sup>31</sup> Juvenal refers scathingly to the Jewess who will interpret your dreams, if you cross her palm with silver (*Satire* VI.542–7). Lucian, that implacable foe of quackery, mocks those who resort to Jewish incantations to cure the gout (*Tragadopodagra* 173).<sup>32</sup> Celsus claims that ‘Jews worship angels and are addicted to sorcery, of which Moses was their teacher’ (Origen, *Contra Celsum* I.26). It is clear from early Rabbinic literature that fear of demons was widespread in Rabbinic society, and that many illnesses were put down to their malevolent activity.<sup>33</sup> There is

<sup>30</sup> See Exod. 22:17 (Hebrew 18); Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:10–11. The condemnations are repeated in post-biblical Jewish literature: 1 Enoch 7–8; 2 Macc. 12:40; Sibylline Oracles III 218–30; Pseudo-Philo, *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*, m.Sanh. 6:6; 7:7, 11; 10:1; t.Sanh. 10:6–7. It is interesting to note that the Rabbis distinguish between ‘conjuring’ (i.e. creating an illusion) and ‘sorcery’ (i.e. causing real effects by using dark powers). The latter was culpable, the former not. Rabbinic literature mentions a number of conjuring tricks: ‘gathering cucumbers’ (m.Sanh. 7:11); ‘blowing silk-streamers out of one’s nose’ (b.Sanh. 67b), and ‘cutting the camel in half’ – presumably an early version of the trick of sawing the lady in two. See further, *Ensiqlopedia Talmudit* I (Jerusalem 1951), pp. 214–15, sub <sup>a</sup>*hizat ‘enayim*.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* II.6, 2; P<sup>e</sup>siqta d<sup>e</sup>Rav Kahana IV7.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Lucian, *Philopseudeis* 16 and *Alexander Pseudopropheta* 13.

<sup>33</sup> On Rabbinic demonology see P. Billerbeck, ‘Zur altjüdischen Dämonologie’ in Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* IV.1 (Munich 1928), pp. 501–35; J. Maier, ‘Geister (Dämonen)’, *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* IX (1976), cols. 579–85, 626–40, 668–88.

every reason to believe that the usual means of defence against demons – amulets and incantations – were widespread in Rabbinic society as well.

Few Jewish magical texts that survive from antiquity can be dated with any certainty to the Mishnaic era. However, that an extensive magical literature circulated among both Rabbinic and non-Rabbinic Jews at this period is beyond reasonable doubt. Several Hebrew and Aramaic fragments from the Dead Sea Scrolls attest an interest already at Qumran in incantations against demons and in various forms of divination.<sup>34</sup> The Greek Testament of Solomon, a comprehensive manual of demonology, though Christian in the forms in which we now have it, may go back to a Jewish work of the Mishnaic period.<sup>35</sup> There is also indirect evidence to be considered. For example, m.Pes. 4:9 states that ‘King Hezekiah hid away the Book of Cures (ספר רפואות), and the Sages approved.’ The Book of Cures envisaged here was probably a work on healing magic, like *Harba d’Mosheb* (on which see below). The Rabbis were probably well acquainted with such literature from their own day, and wished to indicate their disapproval of it. According to later Jewish tradition, the Book of Cures which Hezekiah hid away had been composed by Solomon.<sup>36</sup>

For our purposes the precise dates of the various early Jewish magical texts are immaterial. The magic they contain can certainly be used to illustrate Jewish magic in the period of the Mishnah, even if they were composed somewhat later. Magic is notoriously conservative, and it is not hard to demonstrate how many of its basic principles, praxis and even formulae remained unchanged over centuries. Early Jewish magical texts – at least those in Hebrew and Aramaic whose Jewishness is not in doubt – fall into two groups: handbooks and actual amulets. The former are magicians’ manuals which contain recipes for various purposes, and

<sup>34</sup> Two main types of magic are attested at Qumran, viz. (1) exorcism, healing and protection against demons (4Q560; 4Q510; 4Q511; 11Q11); and (2) divination, augury and prediction of the future, specifically physiognomy (4Q186; 4Q561), brontology (4Q318) and astrology (4Q186; 4Q318). See P. S. Alexander, ‘“Wrestling against Wickedness in High Places”: Magic in the World View of the Qumran Community’, in S. E. Porter and C. A. Evans (eds.) *The Scrolls and the Scriptures* (Sheffield 1997), pp. 318–37; Alexander, ‘Physiognomy, Initiation and Rank in the Qumran Community’ in H. Cancik et al. (eds.) *Geschichte–Tradition–Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag* (Tübingen 1996), 385–94; Alexander, ‘Magic and Magical Texts’ in L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam (eds.) *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York/Oxford forthcoming).

<sup>35</sup> Text of the Testament of Solomon: C. C. McCown, *The Testament of Solomon* (Leipzig 1922). Translation, D. C. Duling, ‘Testament of Solomon’ in Charlesworth, O. T. *Pseudepigrapha* 1, pp. 960–87.

<sup>36</sup> See Maimonides’ commentary on m.Pes. 4:9. Further, Alexander, ‘Incantations and Books of Magic’, p. 378.

which explain the different rituals which are meant to accompany the recipes. The latter are actual charms on which incantations extracted from a manual have been inscribed by a magician, and ‘personalized’ for a specific client’s use.

*Sefer ha-Razim* (‘The Book of Secrets’) is the most important of the early Jewish magical manuals. This Hebrew work contains a collection of magical recipes, with instructions as to their use, inserted into a description of the seven heavens reminiscent of the Merkavah texts. *Sefer ha-Razim* was probably composed in Palestine in the fifth or latter part of the fourth century CE.<sup>37</sup> Another manual is the *Harba d’Mosheb* (‘Sword of Moses’). Though of Talmudic or Gonic date, its precise time and place of origin are alike most uncertain. In the version published by Gaster *Harba d’Mosheb* falls into three parts. Part I (in Hebrew) describes how the ‘Sword’ was revealed to Moses, and how the adept should prepare himself for its safe and effective use. Part II gives the ‘Sword’ itself, which is a long, magical name of God. Part III (in Aramaic) contains detailed information on how various parts of the ‘Sword’ can be used for specific purposes, mainly the curing of illness.<sup>38</sup>

The surviving amulets are of two types, distinguished by the material on which the incantation is written. The first type comprises the Aramaic incantation bowls. These are shallow, unglazed earthenware dishes, on which a charm has been inscribed in ink, normally on the inside of the bowl, but sometimes running over onto the back. The bowls were used as domestic phylacteries: they were buried at various points in the house to ward off evil spirits. Bowl magic seems to have been a distinctively Mesopotamian phenomenon. In the other type of amulet the incantation (in Aramaic, or a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic) was incised with a stylus on a thin sheet of metal (usually lead), which was rolled up and inserted into a small container. It was then worn on the person, hung up in the house, or buried at some strategic spot in the ground. These metal amulets are western in origin: they come from Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Turkey. The magic exhibited in all of these sources (handbooks, bowls and metal amulets) is basically the same – both as to principles and praxis.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Text: M. Margolioth, *Sefer Ha-Razim* (Jerusalem 1966). Translation: M. A. Morgan, *Sefer Ha-Razim: The Book of Mysteries* (Chico, California 1983). Further, Alexander, ‘Incantations and Books of Magic’, pp. 347–50.

<sup>38</sup> Text and translation: M. Gaster, *Studies and Texts* (London 1925–8), I, pp. 288–337; III, pp. 69–103. German translation: P. Schäfer, *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur*, vol. IV (Tübingen 1991), 1–17. Further, Alexander, ‘Incantations and Books of Magic’, pp. 350–2.

<sup>39</sup> For collections of Jewish amulets see the bibliography below. For general discussion see Alexander, ‘Incantations and Books of Magic’, pp. 352–7.

## II THE PROBLEM OF SYNCRETISM

Jewish magicians operated in the open market, prepared to sell their expertise to anyone – whether Jewish or non-Jewish – who was willing to pay. They rubbed shoulders with, and competed against, magicians from other religious and cultural backgrounds. It would not be surprising, therefore, if Jewish elements had entered the body of general magical lore in late antiquity. However, identifying those elements is not an easy task. We face here a problem similar to the problem of the Jewish elements in Gnosticism. Certain elements in the early magical texts are clearly Jewish in some sense of that term: quotations from, or clear allusions to, the Old Testament are a case in point. But once we go beyond these we run into difficulty. There are numerous and detailed parallels between the Jewish and non-Jewish magical texts, but where a given element originated can be a matter of great dispute. Magic is highly syncretistic: magicians were prepared to use names and formulae, whatever their source – Jewish, Christian, Egyptian or Persian. Eclecticism was pursued as a matter of deliberate policy: by invoking diverse ‘gods’ the magician increased his chances of tapping into a tradition of genuine magical power.

The eclecticism of magic is well illustrated from indubitably Jewish magical texts such as *Sefer ha-Razim*. *Sefer ha-Razim* is full of ‘Greek’ magical elements: it recommends writing amulets on ‘hieratic papyrus’ – *χάρτης ἱερατικός* (1.95), or on ‘lead taken from a water-pipe’ – *πέταλον ψυχροφόρον* (2.64), and it contains a long Greek invocation of Helios transcribed into Hebrew script (4.61–3). A magical text in Hebrew or (to a lesser degree) in Aramaic can be identified as Jewish on *linguistic* grounds, but not necessarily on the grounds of its actual magical content, for in a very important sense there was no distinctively Jewish magic in late antiquity: the principles, praxis and even the formulae of Jewish and non-Jewish magic were the same. If *Sefer ha-Razim* had been written in Greek its Jewishness would probably have been a matter of intense scholarly debate, just as scholars have debated for decades the Jewishness of certain Greek magical texts which appear to contain numerous Jewish elements. Even quotations from, or allusions to, the Old Testament may not be sufficient in themselves to identify a Greek magical text as Jewish, for it is not inconceivable that a gentile Greek magician could have got hold of a Greek Bible and taken material from it to enhance the power of his incantations.

## III SOME JEWISH ELEMENTS IN EARLY MAGIC

The following are some of the more obviously Jewish elements in the early magical texts.

1 *Moses and Solomon as masters of magic*

Old Testament personalities are mentioned from time to time in early magical literature. The two commonest names are those of Moses and Solomon, both of whom were honoured by magicians of all persuasions as masters of the occult arts. Apuleius puts Moses among the great magicians of history – alongside Carmendas, Damigeron, Iohannes, Apollobex, Dardanus, Zoroaster, and Ostanes (*Apologia* 90). His reputation was based, of course, on the biblical account of his miraculous exploits at the court of Pharaoh, and his defeat of the Egyptian magicians (see e.g. Exod. 7:8–12). According to the *aggadah* the names of his Egyptian opponents were Jannes and Jambres (cf. 2 Tim. 3:8). Numerous magical treatises are attributed to Moses, and he is also credited with the composition of certain specific charms and spells.<sup>40</sup> Solomon's magical prowess was an aspect of his great wisdom – a wisdom said to surpass that of 'all the people of the east, and of Egypt' (1 Kgs 4:29–34, Hebrew text 5:9–14). Like Moses, an extensive magical literature was passed down in his name. Solomon's 'ring' (Josephus, *Ant.* VIII.45–9), and his 'seal' (see below) were both famous in magical circles.<sup>41</sup>

2 *The Old Testament in magic*

In the Hebrew and Aramaic magical texts whole verses are lifted out of the Old Testament and used as charms or curses. Particularly popular for purposes of healing was Exod. 15:26: 'I shall inflict on you none of the diseases that I inflicted on the Egyptians, for it is I, the Lord, who gives you healing.'<sup>42</sup> m.Sanh. 10:1 expressly forbids the use of this verse as a charm: 'R. Aqiva says: He who utters a charm over a wound and says, "I will inflict on you none of these diseases" . . . has no part in the world to come.' Some incantations consist of little more than catenae of biblical verses.<sup>43</sup> Direct, substantial quotations from the Old Testament are not common in the Greek magical texts. What we do find from time to time are allusions to biblical history, or echoes of biblical phraseology and language. Examples of this will be found below in the discussion of the 'Hebraikos logos' and the Hadrumetum Tablet.

<sup>40</sup> See J. G. Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Nashville 1972), pp. 134–61.

<sup>41</sup> K. Preisendanz, 'Salomo' in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie Supplement-Band VIII* (1956), cols. 660–704; Alexander, 'Incantations and Books of Magic', pp. 375–6.

<sup>42</sup> See, e.g. J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magical Bowls* (Leiden–Jerusalem), Amulet 13.12–22. Cf. 3 Enoch 48D:10.

<sup>43</sup> E.g. Naveh and Shaked, *Amulets and Magical Bowls*, Bowl 9.

### 3 *God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*

The Jewish God is invoked in the Greek magical papyri under a variety of names: e.g. ‘Lord God of the Hebrews’ (PGM xxii.b.18); or ‘Him who dwells in Jerusalem’ (PGM iv.3069); or ‘God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob’ (PGM iv.1230–5; xii.287; xiii.815–19, 975–6). The latter is particularly common, as Origen (*Contra Celsum* iv.33) notes: ‘The Jews trace their genealogy back to the three fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Their names are so powerful when linked with the name of God that the formula “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” is used not only by members of the Jewish nation in their prayers to God and when they exorcize demons, but also by almost all those who deal with magic spells. For in magical treatises it is often found that God is invoked by this formula, and that in spells against demons God’s name is used in close connection with the names of these men.’

### 4 *Semitic Nomina Barbara*

Some of the *nomina barbara* which abound in the Greek magical texts are probably Semitic in origin and conceal intelligible Hebrew and Aramaic names and sentences. As Origen (*Contra Celsum* i.24) explains, it was deemed necessary to keep formulae in their original language: ‘On the subject of names I have to say further that experts in the use of charms relate that a man who pronounces a given spell in its native language can bring about the effect that the spell is claimed to do. But if the same spell is translated into any other language whatsoever, it can be seen as weak and ineffective.’ The existence of Greek formulae in Hebrew magical texts has been successfully demonstrated: note again the Greek invocation of Helios in *Sefer ha-Razim* (4.61–3).<sup>44</sup> Identifying Semitic formulae in Greek, however, has proved rather more problematic. Divine and angelic names such as Iao, Ioel, Sabaoth, Adonai, Michael, Gabriel and Ouriel in Greek texts are obviously Semitic in origin and easily deciphered. Some names of the same type (ending in –(ι)ηλ and –(α)ωθ) may be pseudo-Semitic: i.e. they could have been invented by Greek magicians on the analogy of genuine names like Sabaoth and Gabriel. Outside such elements, however, there have been few successes in discovering Semitic originals for Greek *nomina barbara*. One of the more plausible efforts is Scholem’s explanation of the common formula *ακραμαχαμαρει σεσεγγεν*

<sup>44</sup> Hans Lewy, ‘Remnants of Greek Sentences and Names in *Hekhalot Rabbati*’ in Lewy, *Studies in Jewish Hellenism* (Jerusalem 1969), 259–65 (Hebrew), has tried, with some success, to read some of the *nomina barbara* in the Merkavah texts as Greek.

βαρφαραγγης (see e.g. PGM VII.311–12). On the basis of the appearance of this formula in an Aramaic amulet from Turkey (in which it is written עקרמכמרי סיסגין ברפרונגס) he resolves it into two elements: (1) עקר מכמרי = ‘uproot (i.e. destroy) the nets (i.e. spells)’; and (2) סיסגין בר פרונגס = ‘Sese(n)gen, the son of (bar) Pharanges’ – the name of a demon.<sup>45</sup>

#### IV NON-JEWISH USE OF JEWISH MAGIC: THREE CASE STUDIES

The following three texts illustrate how Jewish magic was taken up and used by non-Jewish magicians, and so entered the broad tradition of early magic.

##### 1 A ‘Hebrew spell’ against demon-possession<sup>46</sup>

The Great Magical Papyrus of Paris (PGM IV) contains a large collection of magical recipes from different sources. The manuscript was copied around 300 CE, but the work itself was probably composed in the late second century CE. Lines 3009–85 form a self-contained unit which offers a charm against demon-possession, referred to at the end as a ‘Hebrew spell’ (Ἑβραϊκὸς λόγος). The demon is adjured by ‘the God of the Hebrews’ (3019), by ‘the Great God Sabaoth’ (3052), and by ‘Him that is in Jerosolymum’ (3069). There are numerous allusions to the Old Testament, especially to God’s power over nature (e.g. 3045–50; 3062–4), and to the miracles associated with the Exodus, the parting of the Red Sea, and the crossing of the Jordan into the Promised Land (3033–7; 3052–5).

The text also contains some noteworthy *aggadot*:

(1) 3024–7: ‘Let your angel descend, the implacable one, and let him draw into captivity the demon as it flies round this creature (i.e. the demoniac), whom God has formed in his holy paradise.’ The implication here probably is that the souls of all men were formed by God at the time of creation, and are kept in a heavenly storehouse awaiting birth into this world. Cf. Tanhuma, *P’qude* 3 (ed. Zundel 133a): ‘R. Yoḥanan said: . . . Know that all the souls which have been since the first Adam and which shall be till the end of the whole world, were created in the six days of creation. And all of them are in the Garden of Eden.’ Rabbinic tradition sometimes refers to the storehouse of souls as the *Guf*.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, pp. 94–100. The Aramaic amulet has been re-edited by Naveh and Shaked (see Naveh and Shaked, *Amulets and Magical Bowls*, Amulet 7).

<sup>46</sup> Text and German translation: K. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae* 2nd edn, I (Leipzig 1973), pp. 170–2. Further, Alexander, ‘Incantations and Books of Magic’, pp. 357–9.

<sup>47</sup> See 3 Enoch 43:3, with Alexander’s note *ad loc.*



(2) 3039–41: ‘I adjure you by the seal which Solomon laid upon the tongue of Jeremiah and he spoke.’ Solomon’s seal is well known in magic (see below), but the *aggadah* alluded to here is otherwise unattested.

(3) 3044: ἡ Ἐβουσαῖον ἡ Χερσαῖον ἡ Φαρισαῖον – ‘whether an Ebusaeon, or a Chersaeon or a Pharisee’. The names of these three classes of demon are derived from the names of three of the peoples driven out by the Israelites when they conquered the Land – the Jebusite, Hittite and Perizzite (see e.g. LXX Gen. 15:20; Exod. 3:8, 17). Presupposed here may be an *aggadah* identifying the seven Canaanite nations with orders of demons.

(4) 3056–8: ‘I adjure you by him who revealed the 140 tongues and divided them by his command.’ The standard Rabbinic enumeration is 70 tongues, derived from counting Noah’s descendants on the Table of the Nations (Gen. 10).<sup>48</sup>  $140 = 70 \times 2$ . How this was arrived at is not clear, but that Gen. 10 lies behind the number is strongly suggested by the reference immediately following to the division of tongues (Gen. 11).

(5) 3058–60: ‘I adjure you by him who with his lightnings consumed the (race?) of stiff-necked giants.’ This is probably based on Gen. 6:4, the Nefilim being taken as ‘giants’. The destruction by lightning may echo the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen. 19:24. It may also have been influenced by Greek mythological accounts of Zeus’ battle with the Titans.

(6) 3061–2: ‘(I adjure you by him) . . . to whom the wings of the Cherubim sing praises.’ The idea is that the Cherubim sing to God by moving their wings. Cf. 3 Enoch 24:15: ‘They (the Cherubim) spread their wings to sing with them the song to him who dwells in clouds, and to praise with them the glory of the King of kings.’

Despite these strong Jewish elements, which prove the Jewish *origin* of the text, there are clear signs that the text as it now stands was not copied by a Jew. No Jew (or, for that matter, Christian) would have referred to ‘Jesus, the God of the Hebrews’ (3019–20), or misspelt ‘Israel’ as ‘Osrael’ (3034). Nor is a Jew himself likely to have referred to the incantation as ‘a Hebrew spell’ (3084–5). The text at the beginning is actually described as ‘a sovereign remedy of Pibechis’ (Πιβήχεως δόκιμον). Thus it is attributed to a magician with an Egyptian name.

## 2 *A love-charm from Hadrumetum*<sup>49</sup>

In 1890 a third-century CE Greek love-charm was discovered at Hadrumetum in North Africa, inscribed on a sheet of lead which had

<sup>48</sup> See D. Sperber, ‘The Seventy Nations’, *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (1971), xii, cols. 885–6.

<sup>49</sup> Text: A. Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellae* (Paris 1904), 373–7. Translation: A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies* (Edinburgh 1903), pp. 271–300. Further, Alexander, ‘Incantations and Books of Magic’, pp. 358–60.

been rolled up and deposited in a tomb in the town's necropolis. The spirit residing in the tomb is powerfully invoked to inspire Urbanus with undying love for Domitiana. The opening adjuration contains an elaborate magical variation on the formula, 'God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob': 'I adjure you, demonic spirit who rests here, by the sacred name Aoth, Abaoth, the God of Abraan (=Abraam, i.e. Abraham), and the Iao of Iakos (=Isakos, i.e. Isaac), Iao Aoth Abaoth, God of Israma (=Israel, i.e. Jacob).' This God is described in the adjurations that follow in a series of phrases drawn from various parts of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah and the Psalms), which largely emphasize his power over creation: he is 'the great and eternal God' (cf. LXX Isa. 26:4), who 'created (τὸν κτίσαντα) the heaven and the sea' (cf. Aquila to Gen. 1:1), 'divided the light from the darkness' (cf. LXX Gen. 1:4), and 'set a lamp and stars in the heaven by the command of his voice, so that they might give light to all men' (cf. LXX Gen. 1:16–17).

There are no straightforward quotations from the Old Testament, only allusions. But this is revealing. Whoever composed this piece was at home in the Bible: he was not mechanically copying out verses from an unfamiliar sacred text for magical purposes, but drawing on a well-stocked memory. This, together with the fact that there is nothing overtly pagan, or even Christian, in the text, indicates that it must be Jewish in origin. However, there is no reason to suppose that the client Domitiana, for whom it was written, was Jewish: neither she, nor her beloved Urbanus, bear typically Jewish names, nor can there have been many Jews in Hadrumetum.<sup>50</sup> Doubtless Domitiana would not have been bothered about the origin of the charm – so long as it worked. The magician who wrote out the version of the charm which we now have was almost certainly not Jewish. It is surely inconceivable that a Jewish (or Christian) copyist would have seriously misspelt the names Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not once, but twice (1–3 and 38–9), or written such a garbled sentence as: 'I adjure you by him who divided the staff in the sea' – an obvious mistake for, 'I adjure you by him who divided the sea with the staff' (11–12).<sup>51</sup> The text, then, as we have it, was written by a pagan magician, who probably took it from a book of magical recipes similar to the Great Magical Papyrus of Paris – without any thought for its Jewish origin. To the magician it was simply a sonorous and effective incantation with which to impress a client.

<sup>50</sup> For evidence of Jews living in the area see Schürer, *History* III.1, rev. Vermes, Millar and Goodman, pp. 358–60.

<sup>51</sup> That is, for ὀρκίζω σε τὸν διαστήσαντα τὴν ῥάβδον ἐν τῇ θαλάσσει, read ὀρκίζω σε τὸν διαστήσαντα τὴν θάλασσαν ἐν τῇ ῥάβδῳ. This emendation was first proposed by Deissmann.

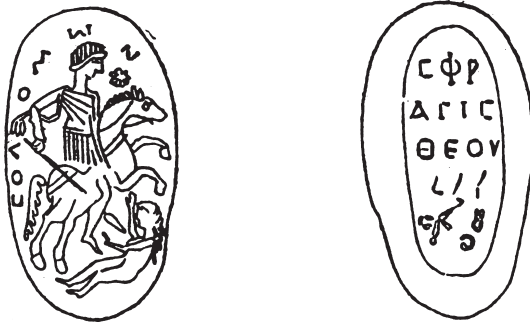


Fig. 32.1 Amulet: (obverse) Solomon the Cavalier slaying Lilith, *Σολομῶν*; (reverse) *Σφραγίς θεοῦ*.

### 3 *Solomon the Cavalier*

A well-known group of early amulets depicts a horseman spearing a recumbent figure. In the simplest form of the amulet the horseman, on the obverse, is identified by the legend *Σολομῶν*, while on the reverse appears the inscription *Σφραγίς θεοῦ* – ‘seal of God’ (see figure 32.1).<sup>52</sup> In the better executed examples the prostrate figure is clearly female, and she is often shown with one arm raised in vain entreaty, or in a futile gesture of self-defence. There are many developed forms of this amulet. For example, one version (Newell 49) replaces the name Solomon with the words, *εἰς θεὸς ὁ νικῶν τὰ κακά* – ‘One God who overcomes evil’, and adds a lion beneath the recumbent female figure. The back bears the inscription: *Ἰαω Σαβαωθ Μιχαηλ βοήθι*, ‘*Iao Sabaoth Michael, help*’, above a representation of ‘the much suffering eye’, which is being attacked from below by five animals (a lion, ibis/stork, snake, scorpion, spotted dog/leopard).<sup>53</sup>

Campbell Bonner persuasively argues that this type of amulet was Jewish in origin. It invoked the help of Solomon, the master magician, against the demonic powers. Solomon is fittingly depicted, following the conventions of royal iconography, as a victorious king administering the *coup de grâce* to a vanquished foe. The recumbent figure is Lilith – a female demon well known from Jewish magical texts. Liliths are often said to attack children, or women in childbirth, so Bonner may be right to

<sup>52</sup> Taken from P. Perdrizet, ‘ΣΦΡΑΓΙΣ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝΟΣ’, *Revue des Études Grecques* 16 (1903), 50.

<sup>53</sup> C. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets* (Ann Arbor–London 1950), p. 302 (no. 298).



Fig. 32.2 Amulet: (obverse) St Sisinnius slaying Gylou(?), *Φεῦγε, μεμισμένοι Σολομὼν σε δίοκι. Σισίννιος Σισιννάριος*; (reverse) The Much Suffering Eye, *Φθόνος. Σφραγὶς Σολομῶνος. Ἀποδίοξον πᾶν κακὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ φοροῦντο(ς)*.

suggest that this class of amulet was intended ‘primarily for the protection of the young’.<sup>54</sup>

Though Jewish in origin, Solomon the Cavalier amulets spread far beyond Jewish circles, and their iconography was reinterpreted in various ways. For example, in the Byzantine period the horseman was sometimes identified as St Sisinnius, and the female figure as Gyllou, the destroyer of children.<sup>55</sup> The transition to this type is well illustrated by figure 32.2.<sup>56</sup> The Christian character of this amulet is clearly established by the transformation of the spear into a cross, and by the insertion of the *signum crucis* into the inscription on both obverse and reverse. Round the horseman is the legend: *Φεῦγε, μεμισμένοι, Σολομὼν σε δίοκι. Σισίννιος Σισιννάριος* – ‘Avaunt, hateful one, Solomon pursues you. Sisinnius Sisinnarius.’ On the reverse the evil eye is depicted being attacked by a number of animals, beneath the inscription *Φθόνος*. The legend round the rim reads: *Σφραγὶς Σολομῶνος. Ἀποδίοξον πᾶν κακὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ φοροῦντο(ς)* – ‘Seal of Solomon. Chase away all harm from the wearer.’ Later representations of St George killing the dragon<sup>57</sup> probably mark a

<sup>54</sup> Bonner, *Magical Amulets*, p. 210.

<sup>55</sup> See H. Leclercq, ‘Sisinnios’, *Dictionnaire d’Archéologie et de Liturgie* xv.1 (1950), cols. 1497–8; C. Weigert, ‘Sisinnius’, *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie* VIII (1976), col. 376. Further, Naveh and Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls*, pp. 111–22.

<sup>56</sup> Taken from Perdrizet, *Revue des Études Grecques* 16 (1903), 48.

<sup>57</sup> On St George see L. Réau, *Iconographie de l’Art Chrétien* III. 2 (Paris 1958), pp. 571ff. The motif of George slaying the dragon is much earlier than the reader of Réau might suppose: see E. Lucchesi Palli, ‘Georg’, *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie* VI (1974), cols. 369–70.

further transformation of the same tradition. The contribution of the Jews to general magic could not, perhaps, be better symbolized than by the fact that behind the ubiquitous Christian image of St George and the dragon stands the shadowy Jewish figure of Solomon the Cavalier.

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## 19 GALILEAN JUDAISM AND JUDAEAN JUDAISM

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## 20 JESUS: FROM THE JEWISH POINT OF VIEW

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## 29 THE RABBI IN SECOND-CENTURY JEWISH SOCIETY

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I have not attempted to update everything or to include everything. For some of the bibliographical updating I have drawn on my essay 'The Place of the Rabbi in Jewish Society of the Second Century', in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lee Levine (Cambridge: Harvard University Press for the Jewish Theological Seminary 1989), pp. 157–73, which is a revision and condensation of the essay that is published in full here. I have made no attempt to update the bibliography for sections 13 (Inscriptions), 111 (The social history of the Roman Empire), and 113 (The social history of the Semitic east).

The determination of the place of the rabbis in the Jewish society of second-century Palestine remains a difficult question. In this essay I argue that the rabbis neither were, nor attempted to be, the leaders of the community at large; that they enjoyed a measure of influence and prestige, especially in certain spheres of activity in which they were recognized as expert, but did not control the public institutions of society (synagogues, courts, municipal government, etc.); that most of the rabbis in the second century were prosperous, rural and landowning – not poor, urban or mercantile; and that within rabbinic society birth, alongside piety and erudition, was an important determinant of one's status. I believe that these conclusions are still correct, even if I now think that I may have overstated my thesis in various places. In particular, I may have overdrawn the rural–urban contrast in the second century, and the urbanization of the rabbinate in the third. My classification system of the legal cases reported in Tannaitic literature was a good first attempt, but now I would probably classify them by literary form and formulae, rather than by content. Were I to write this essay today, I would take into account the work of Catherine Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine*, TSAJ 66 (Tübingen 1997) which puts the discussion of all these matters on a new footing.

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### 32 JEWISH ELEMENTS IN GNOSTICISM AND MAGIC

#### I Gnosticism

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## II Magic

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