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**Mapping Time and Salvation:
Early Christian Pilgrimage to Jerusalem**

The overall urban form of Jerusalem as a sacred city has always been difficult to discern: it does not have a sacred geometry. There are instead overlays of the three major monotheistic traditions in cycles of construction and destruction over more than three thousand years, and many of the holy places are shared. The physical unity and identity of the city is outwardly more apparent in its materials, light and relation to natural topography. Nonetheless, conceptions of space on an urban scale, which are unique and specific to each of the three religions, are manifested in various ways.

As far as the Christian city is concerned, it was characterised from the beginning by an extreme ambiguity between earthly and heavenly cities. During the first three centuries of Christianity, material representation of any sort, in any place, was minimal; when an ecclesiastical building programme was initiated in the fourth century by the Byzantine emperor Constantine, it was essentially a series of commemorative churches and shrines. However, it is my opinion that far from being an unrelated and loose collection of sacred sites, the notion of Jerusalem as a holy city, symbolised by architectural and urban form, was incipient as early as the latter part of the fourth century. Certainly it was during the early Christian and Byzantine period, which lasts from the proclamation of Jerusalem's honoured status in 325 at the Council of Nicaea¹ until the Muslim conquest in 638, that there evolved a well unified sense of a Christian holy city. This understanding was based on the establishment of a ritual topography that was related to the fourth century development of the Christian stationary liturgy founded on the holy sites and the Scriptural events associated with them.

In the same century pilgrimage to the Holy Land became

prevalent,² and while we cannot speak of pilgrimage in a sacramental sense or even as a theology, it is a phenomenon which was closely linked to the development of ritual topography, and, in its own participatory characteristics, can be extremely revealing in terms of what meaning the sacred space of the city had at the time. Early Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land was an embodiment of an itinerary of the soul and its salvation. In such a journey, or *peregrinatio*, pilgrims mediated the space between two worlds, the Earthly and Heavenly Jerusalems, and as they made their way they explored and mapped a landscape of both the biblical past and the eschatological future. Their territory is one of time interpreted by space, the temporality of the Earthly Jerusalem as it prefigures and aspires to the eternity of the Heavenly. This chapter attempts to investigate this territory and its mediative nature as manifested in pilgrimage.

Human representation – whether literature, art, architecture, or liturgy and pilgrimage – attempts to mediate the space between sacred and profane (Gadamer 1979: ch. 1.II.2, esp. 132–3). In Christianity, God's word is primarily and most explicitly revealed through Christ as Logos and transmitted to humanity in Scripture. In the Logos 'the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1: 14). Likewise, the traditional Hellenistic and Jewish notions of Temple and Holy City were also interpreted as spiritually residing in Christ (John 4: 21–4; Matthew 18: 20). However, the Christian city did eventually become embodied. As a reflection of the heavenly, the earthly city is less articulate and explicit than Scripture, but it is a more concrete form of representation.³

In Jerusalem such representation began in 326 with three Constantinian basilicas built on three sites: the Church of the Nativity to the south of Jerusalem in neighbouring Bethlehem⁴ on the site of the birthplace of Jesus; the Eleona Church to the east of the city on the upper slope of the Mount of Olives, marking the place where Jesus taught the Mysteries to his disciples; and the Martyrium basilica and Anastasis rotunda, today known as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, on the Hill of Golgotha in central Jerusalem on the site of the crucifixion and resurrection. It is significant that three holy places were chosen, breaking with the Jewish tradition of the Temple as a single, unique holy place. By the end of the fourth century, several more churches were added and the pattern of ritual topography had coalesced: major churches on three hilltops⁵ – Golgotha in the centre, Mount Sion⁶ to the south, and Mount of Olives to the east; a church beyond Mount Sion about eight kilometres to the south at Bethlehem and

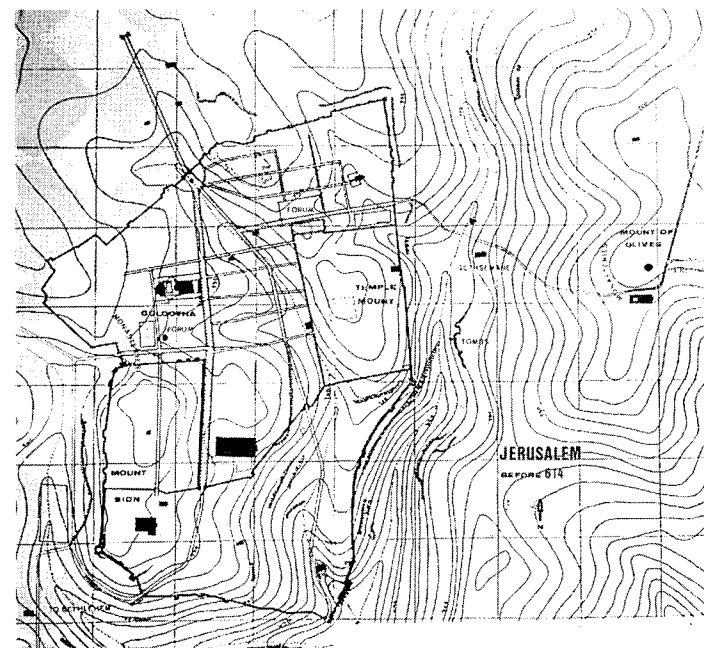


Figure 1 Map of Byzantine Jerusalem before the Persian invasion of 614.

one beyond Mount of Olives about five kilometres to the east at Bethany completed the pattern. Saint Jerome, who lived in Bethlehem from 386 until his death in 420, produced a map of the Holy Land which is no longer extant, but a twelfth century copy (Nebenzahl 1986: 19) shows Jerusalem as a circular walled city with these features of the landscape to the south and east.

The Persians destroyed much of Christian Jerusalem in 614, and today no buildings from the period are extant. But until the Persian invasion, churches were continually added to the landscape, in most cases on sites deemed to be holy by their connection to events in the passion and resurrection of Christ, or occasionally Old Testament events (Figure 1). The majority of these sites were established on or near the eastern and southern routes from Golgotha, their locations determined by a variety of means including common opinion and oral histories, the relocating of earlier New and Old Testament sites to a somewhat revised Christian configuration, and the discovery of relics often based on dreams and visions; the process can be characterised as a refining

of the ritual topography within an expanding mythology.⁷ Jerusalem became a city filled with holy places, yet far from fragmenting the city, this tendency appears to have unified it because of each site's revelatory status and place within the holy narrative. Described by Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem from c. 349 until 386:

It is particularly fitting that as we speak of Christ and Golgotha here on Golgotha, so also we should speak of the Holy Spirit in the Upper Church [on Mount Sion]; but since he who descended there shares the glory of Him who was crucified here, therefore we speak here also of Him who descended there, for their worship is indivisible. (Cyril 1970a: 16.4)

Continuity of place and time was further accomplished by Cyril's development of the Jerusalem liturgy (Dix 1986: 349–50). Catechetical lectures and early lectionaries⁸ attest to the importance of the holy sites in the Jerusalem liturgy, but it is the account of Egeria, a pilgrim to the Holy Land from 381–4 when Cyril was bishop of Jerusalem, which gives some of the most useful and vivid descriptions of the liturgy as it operated within the city. The Jerusalem liturgy is a stational liturgy, moving from church to church and site to site. Scriptural readings and prayers relating to the significance of a particular site were recited at that site, at the appropriate time of day, week or year. For example, on each Sunday the cave of the resurrection was filled with the smoke of incense and the bishop read the account of the resurrection at the opening of the cave (Egeria 1981: 24.10). But the Sunday Pentecost services, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit, were held at the basilica on Mount Sion at the same place where the event was believed originally to have taken place (Egeria 1981: 25.6). Easter week was spent moving from site to site: on Thursday, according to Egeria, to 'the church on Eleona which on this very day the Lord visited with the apostles' (35.2–3); and then the night at Gethsemane for 'a reading about the Lord's arrest' (36.3); Friday before dawn through the city to the hill of the crucifixion with a 'passage about the Lord being led away to Pilate' (36.3–4); and before the sun is up, 'those with the energy then go to Sion to pray at the column at which the Lord was scourged' (37.1); and so on. Egeria remarked a number of times on such appositeness.

And what I admire and value most is that all the hymns and antiphons and readings they have, and all the prayers the bishop says, are always relevant to the day which is being observed and to the place in which they are used. They never fail to be appropriate. (47.5)

Processions, often led by the bishop, linked the sites; usually they started, ended, or in some way focused upon the Anastasis and Martyrium on Golgotha. From there, the liturgy spilled out into the streets and hills and valleys; it filled the city with songs and lamentations, and with the flickering lights of candles and the smell of incense. It even entered people's homes during feast days where eating and sleeping were part of the general schedule (Egeria 1981: 35–6). It was truly a liturgy of the city; to worship in late fourth century Jerusalem was to be constantly and exhaustingly on the move.

Thus, the ritual topography of early Christian Jerusalem may be described as centring on its most important site, Golgotha, which is joined by processional routes, mostly to the east and south, to many other sacred sites. The movement from site to site links them and allows the continuity of Scriptural narrative; because of movement the city is given further unity and comprehensiveness. Ultimately, Christian unity derives from the person/God of Christ; in him the idea of movement is emphasised by his statement: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me' (John 14: 6). In these words are fused orientation, passage and centre, as well as the spectrum of time from history to eternity. It was this world in which the pilgrim to Jerusalem participated.

Early pilgrims to the Holy Land partook of the Jerusalem Liturgy, yet as *peregrini*, or foreigners,⁹ they also had their own agendas and rituals at the holy sites (Egeria 1981: 10.7). Gerhard Van der Leeuw wrote that in its broadest sense, any visit to a holy place may be called a pilgrimage (1986: 401). In early Christian Jerusalem such a wide understanding is necessary in considering who might be called a pilgrim: for example, Saints Jerome and Paula left Rome to live spiritual existences in Bethlehem, in a sense making pilgrimages of their whole lives. It is also worthwhile to acknowledge the scope which derives from the delicate balance between mental and physical pilgrimage: Sophronius, bishop of Jerusalem from 634–8, whose *Anacreontica* poems about walking through Jerusalem (Sophronius 1977), likely composed during a period of exile, can be regarded as a pilgrimage in memory and anticipation. But despite the advantages of a broad understanding, Van der Leeuw's definition is lacking for it does not emphasise the importance of the journey. Far from being simply a visit to a holy place, the idea of movement, a prime factor in the stational liturgy, is to an even greater extent the essence and determining factor of pilgrimage.

From site to site throughout the Holy Land, the pilgrim's

itinerary was within a continuum between sacred and profane; sometimes the journey included a more holy and sometimes a less holy place. Many of the sites themselves were defined by architecture, or at times only by local customs and claims to give a sort of mental boundary. These sites were not separated from the rest of the world in the Eliadian sense of opposition of sacred and profane (Eliade 1959: 10), but part of an extraordinary and charmed world in which pilgrims travelled. Accounts reveal dedication, captivity and even ecstasy upon the part of the *peregrini*; Jerome described Paula as 'visiting the holy places [where] so great was the passion and enthusiasm she exhibited for each, that she could never have torn herself away from one had she not been eager to visit the rest' (Jerome 1893: 108.9). Sophronius' poems are full of dynamic joy and yearning as he imagined himself moving through the city:

A divine longing for holy Solyma
presses upon me insistently.
Let me walk thy pavements . . .

Exultant let me go on to the place
where all of us
who belong to the people of God
venerate the glorious Wood of the Cross . . .

And, speeding on,
may I pass to Sion
where, in the likeness of fiery tongues,
the Grace of God descended . . .

And soon may I come, consumed
with the heat of a holy desire
to the townlet of Bethlehem,
birthplace of the King of All.

(Sophronius 1977: 19.5–7, 35–8, 55–8, 20.23–6)

A pilgrim's progress was dependent upon both a literal and symbolic understanding of Scripture and physical place. However, the meaning of pilgrimage appears to be not just a duality of embodiment and articulation, but to encompass a number of senses or levels of meaning. These may be described as: re-enactment, witness, salvation and eschatology.¹⁰

Re-enactment and witness are closely related; both are functions of time. Re-enactment works to bring paradigmatic time into the present while witness attests to the sacred events and, in doing so, is a confirmation of truth in the present. Cyril of Jerusalem saw

as witnesses to the events the sites themselves (1970a: 14.22–3), in addition to human witnesses who, by seeing the places, could testify to the faith (1970a: 13.23). According to Paulinus, the early fifth century Bishop of Nola, pilgrims visited the sites in order to 'see and touch the places where Christ was physically present' (1967: 49.14). But what they were really after was truth: like the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to 'touch as it were with their own hands the truth each day through the venerable places' (Cyril of Scythopolis 1991: 154.15). The Christian idea of witness, translated from the Greek *martus*, or martyr in English, was originally one who had seen the resurrected Christ (Luke 24: 46–8; Acts 1: 21–2), i.e. one who could bear witness, and in the later persecutions, bear witness to the faith even until death. After the early fourth century, martyrs were no longer made by pagan Rome, but the ideal of suffering with Christ remained: 'As Scripture says, if we suffer with Him we shall also reign with him' (Paulinus 1967: 31.2), and pilgrimage, as a long, arduous and often dangerous act, was regarded as an imitation of such suffering which might help to lead the pilgrim to Heaven (Jerome 1893: 46.13; Valerius 1981: 4a).

Reading the appropriate Scriptural passage at the site enhanced the meaning of both text and place, but sometimes re-enactment was more physical: Egeria followed the route of the children of Israel in the Sinai Desert (1981: 1.1ff.); the sixth century Piacenza Pilgrim threw stones at the place where David met Goliath (Piacenza Pilgrim 1977: 31). At times, re-enactment had a visionary element: Saint Jerome stated that in Bethlehem Paula 'protested in my hearing that she could behold with the eyes of faith the infant Lord wrapped in swaddling clothes and crying in the manger' (1893: 108.10). Emperor Constantine's mother Helena, who visited the Holy land in 326, was said to have located the cross of the crucifixion buried deep in the ground of Golgotha through a vision, and was then able to testify to its authenticity by resurrecting a dead person through its touch (Paulinus 1967: 31.5–6).¹¹ The visions of both Paula and Helena coupled past and present time, but Helena's went even further to reinforce a past tradition by recreating it in a present context on the same site; in the sense that her act is both imitative and creative it increases in its ontological reality (Gadamer 1979: 124).

In all these deeds of witness and re-enactment the pilgrim focused on past events; but salvation, the third sense of pilgrimage, is future oriented. This had to do particularly with the salvation of the soul. Augustine reflected on this general pre-occupation in his many attempts to describe and interpret the

progressive stages which human beings must pass through in order to find holiness (Augustine 1950: 33.70–6; 1961: 7.17); this is *peregrinatio animae*, pilgrimage of the soul. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, although a physical act, was very much a matter of the soul's salvation. A seventh century Galician monk called Valerius puts this clearly in a letter written to his brother monks in praise of Egeria, who after 300 years was still seen as a model for the holy life. Valerius wrote that in seeking salvation, Egeria's 'heart and her whole being were on fire with an earnest longing to seek the kingdom of heaven on high' (1981: 3). He believes she accomplished this progressively, 'for the more she had advanced in holy doctrine, the more insatiably her holy longing burned in her heart' (1b). Egeria's capacity for holiness and her longing for it are reciprocal, but so seems to be the relationship between the pilgrim's physical journey and the soul's journey. The physical journey could become a disposing of physicality; Paulinus described his friend Melania as:

Abandoning worldly life and her own country, she chose to bestow her spiritual gift at Jerusalem and to dwell there in pilgrimage from her body. She became an exile from her fellow citizens, but a citizen amongst the saints. With wisdom and sanctity she chose to be a servant in this world of thrall so as to be able to reign in the world of freedom. (1967: 29.10)

The fourth sense of pilgrimage is eschatological, which is closely connected to its soteriological meaning. The early Christian hope for salvation works on two levels: a personal one to which an individual can partially progress in this life, and one that involves all of humanity at the end of time. The individual is in the end connected to the whole human race in the reality of last judgement; the ultimate redemption and final destination of the soul's journey is eternity. This is soteriology become eschatology, and it must be seen in terms of time rather than space. We have already seen the element of time at work in pilgrimage's sense of witness and re-enactment, but this was essentially in terms of the past, whereas eschatology is hope for the future.

Valerius wrote of Egeria: 'Here, by her own will and choice she accepted the labours of pilgrimage, that she might, in the choir of holy virgins with the glorious queen of heaven, Mary the Lord's mother, inherit a heavenly kingdom' (1981: 4a). By pilgrimage, heaven might be attainable in eternity, but pilgrimage to the Holy City also had a more concrete meaning. Jerusalem plays a major role in the eschatological future both as the location of final judgement (Cyril 1970a: 14.16) and in its prefiguring of the Heavenly Jerusalem. The movement of the pilgrim through the

city was in itself a mapping of what will be met in heaven at the end of time; this is put explicitly by Valerius:

she [Egeria] will return to that very place where in this life she walked as a pilgrim, and there with the holy virgins and saints she will meet the Lord in the air at his coming. Her lamp will be alight with the oil of bright holiness . . . (1981: 4b)

We might ask if the eschatological role of Jerusalem is an abstract idea, or are more specific meanings attached to the physical city and identified with places in it? To explore this, it is necessary to return to the topography, both natural and ritual, as it was understood and interpreted in the early Christian period.

Jerusalem sits on a geographical divide between a relatively green and fertile Mediterranean landscape and climate to the west and the desert to the east (Kutcher 1973: 11). This edge is quite dramatic: from the peak of the Mount of Olives the direction of the city is green but the other way to the desert is brown. Mount Sion, at the south-west corner of the city, is fertile and green. Its crest is in the walled city and it juts out beyond the wall to an area which was enclosed by a wall built by the Byzantine Empress Eudocia in about 450. By its physical position, Mount Sion is very much part of the city, either densely built or cultivated through much of history. Eudocia's wall (which no longer exists) indicated that the early Christians perceived it as such, as does the construction of a wide classical street, the *Cardo*, from the area near Golgotha out to Mount Sion.¹² The Mount of Olives, on the other hand, was not uniformly considered part of Jerusalem in the fourth century (Walker 1990: 217ff). It is separated from the city by the Valley of Jehosephat (today usually known as the Kidron valley), and has always been reached by a narrow, twisting road going into the valley and up its slope. The Mount of Olives stands open on either side between Jerusalem and the Judaeian Desert; from the fourth century its peak was a favoured place for monasteries which were perched overlooking the history of the city and the eternity of the wilderness. At slightly over 800 metres, it is the highest point in the city. These two hills, Sion and Olivet, which along with Golgotha figure so strongly in the ritual topography of early Christian Jerusalem, are clearly contrasted in an urban and geographical sense. Mount Sion is earthly, associated with the vitality of the urban centre; Mount of Olives is chthonic and celestial, detached from the town and its life.

The Mount of Olives, as a place, is associated largely with death, ascension, the eschaton and eternity; it could be referred to as the 'eschatological' direction or route from Golgotha. We have seen how this corresponds to its natural topography; its religious

traditions also reflect these meanings. As the hill top where Jesus is believed to have ascended to heaven, it is a true Eliadian *axis mundi*; Paulinus wrote:

He was taken into a cloud That single place and no other is said to have been so hallowed with God's footsteps that it has always rejected a covering of marble or paving. The soil throws off in contempt whatever the human hand tries to set there . . . [and] preserves the adored imprint of the divine feet in that dust trodden by God, so that one can truly say: we have adored in the place where his feet stood. (1967: 31.4)

In the late fourth century the Church of the Ascension, a centrally planned building capped by a 'dome of heaven', was built over the imprinted ground. The concern with death and eternity extends to Bethany, on the eastern, desert side of the Mount of Olives, where a church was built to commemorate the raising from the dead of Lazarus. On the western side of Olivet is the Valley of Jehosephat, from the Hebrew 'God judges' (Joel 3.2,12). It contains Jewish cave tombs, including that of Zechariah which was adopted by subsequent Christian generations as the burial place of James, the first bishop of Jerusalem (Theodosius 1977: 9). Particularly important for fourth century Christians were eschatological prophecies for the Mount of Olives: Christ ascended from Olivet and the Second Coming is also supposed to come from the east, this having been prefigured in the past by Jesus' entry to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives on what is today known as Palm Sunday, and by post-ascension visions such as a luminescent cross suspended in the sky from Golgotha to Olivet (*Codex Armenien* 1971: 54; Cyril 1970b: 4, 6). In anticipation of the world to come, Jesus was said to have taught his disciples the eternal Mysteries in a cave just below the peak of Olivet, this marked in the fourth century by the Eleona Church (Sophronius 1977: 19.1–12; Eusebius 1920: 6.18.288). In general, Christ is symbolised by the easterly direction and the rising sun (Danielou 1960: 31–4); medieval maps and churches are oriented to the east, and liturgical movement in church is from west to east. The parousia will be from the eastern sky (Cyril 1970a: 14.30); in the meantime, we as humans on earth face towards the east and make our way towards its light, in hope and anticipation.

Mount Sion is associated with traditions which are very much part of the living city and temporal history, particularly in terms of the incarnation and the prefiguring and founding of Christianity as a religion for humanity on earth. It could be called the 'incarnational' axis or direction. Paulinus combined two passages from Psalms to describe Mount Sion: 'May the Lord bless you out of

Sion, and may you see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of your lives, so that our portion may be jointly in the land of the living' (1967: 40.12). By the fourth century, certain formulative aspects of the new religion, such as the descending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, were said to have occurred on Mount Sion, and by the fifth century the Armenian Lectionary (*Codex Armenien* 1971: 39) associates it with the Last Supper and the giving of the first eucharist. These two traditions – mediative action of Spirit and liturgical sacrament – aided in making Christianity operative for human practice. Considerable fourth and fifth century interest in the origins of Christianity enhanced certain Mount Sion traditions. Because of associations with primitive Christianity, Holy Sion Basilica was called the 'Mother of all Churches' (Cyril of Scythopolis 1991: 153) and the throne of Saint James was placed there.

Feast days for James (Jerusalem's first bishop), Stephen (the first Christian martyr) and even King David (both James and David were considered to have been relatives of Jesus) were held in the basilica (Limor 1988: 491–3). Also indicative of the concern with origins are a number of churches devoted to Mary. The route south from Mount Sion leads to Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity; along the way is the mid-fifth century Kathisma Church on the spot where Mary was said to have stopped to rest while in labour. In 543 the huge Nea Church of Maria Theotokos,¹³ i.e. the New Church of Mary the Mother of God, was built by the Emperor Justinian just north of Holy Sion Basilica. There is a tradition that Mary spent the rest of her life residing on Mount Sion, and writers spoke of Mary 'falling asleep' there (Wilkinson 1977: 172), and even her death is combined with her ability to give life: 'Rock [Sion] where Mary, handmaid of God, childbearing for all men, was laid out in death' (Sophronius 1977: 20.64–6). But, perhaps significantly, her tomb (as well as that of Saint James) is venerated on the eastern, eschatological side of the city in the Valley of Jehosephat.¹⁴

The third Christian hilltop, Golgotha, is gently sloped within the walled city.¹⁵ The early Christians saw it as the new Holy of Holies (Eusebius 1890: 3.33),¹⁶ the centre of the world (Cyril 1970a: 13.28); certainly, it was depicted as the centre of Jerusalem in the sixth century mosaic Madaba Map. It is where processional routes converged, in a sense the pivot point between the incarnational axis from Sion and the eschatological route from Olivet. As the site of both crucifixion and resurrection, it is indeed the point where historical time meets transcendent time, the centre of sacred space and time. Cyril stated that on this hill, because of

Christ's burial, 'peace was made between heaven and earth' (1970a: 14.3). Eusebius called it the New Jerusalem (1890: 3.33). Over the fourth to seventh centuries, ancient holy places, such as the site of the creation of Adam (*Breviarus* 1977: 2) and that of the sacrifice of Isaac (Theodosius 1977: 4) were 'relocated' to Golgotha, seemingly an attempt to reach back to the primordial, to unite historical events of the distant past with the transcendent future. Golgotha is the place where affirmation of the historical process, prefigured in Judaism and realised in the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ, leads to transcendence through redemption in Christ's resurrection. Golgotha was in Eusebius' words 'a monument to the Saviour's victory over death' (1890: 3.33; see also Eusebius 1976: 9.16).

Many pilgrims' accounts make it sound as if they accomplished all the sites of Jerusalem in a day's time. In fact, most pilgrims spent far longer than one day; Egeria made the city her base for three years (1981: 17.1). It is unlikely that they followed a neat pattern of movement between Sion, Olivet and Golgotha along the routes of sacred space and time. In addition to this, there were other sites in the city which did not fall so exactly into the pattern of incarnational and eschatological routes.¹⁷ Nonetheless, the pilgrims would have participated in liturgical processions which followed very distinct routes based on Scriptural narrative, and the traditions associated with the three hills and their churches were well known.¹⁸ As early as 335, Eusebius described the original three places of theophany: Bethlehem, Olivet and 'between these [Golgotha] at the scene of the great struggle, signs of salvation and victory' (1976: 9.17). The unifying sense of time is attested to by Cyril: 'For He descended from heaven to Bethlehem, but from Mount Olivet He ascended to heaven; He began in Bethlehem His struggles for men, but on Olivet He was crowned for them' (1970a: 14.23). The early Christians recognised that churches may have been built by emperors, but as Paulinus noted, the city was God's plan (1967: 31.4), and God is aware of all that is hidden there (31.5).

We have seen that this plan, revealed in Scripture, was embodied in the sites of the city; the narrative became comprehensible through the linking of the sites by processional routes and the movement between them. But in movement, not only historical narrative was related: in addition to this, the pilgrim mapped the journey of the salvation of his soul through temporal history to eternity. On earth, such cartography could only be a prefiguration, a symbol, but, in such action, the hope for the eschaton was made possible. The key was movement, backwards through history to

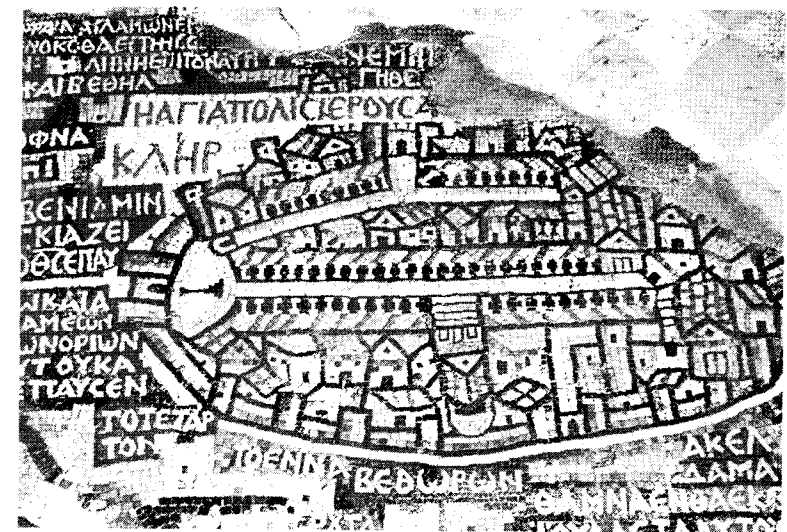


Figure 2 Jerusalem in the Madaba Map.

the founding holy events and forwards to the end of time. This is attested to not only by the stationary liturgy and the pilgrims' accounts but by the very revealing visual representation of the Madaba Map (Figure 2). This mosaic, laid in the floor of a church in Madaba, Jordan, is a depiction of the sacred topography in Palestine with Jerusalem in the centre (Avi-Yonah 1954: 10–16). Its meaning still leaves a lot to be deciphered and is far beyond the scope of this chapter; but one overwhelming aspect of the map should be noted here. In the vignette of Jerusalem, the Anastasis and Martyrium on Golgotha are shown in the centre of the city although this was not geographically accurate. However, the real centre piece is not the church but the road in front of it, the Cardo. Archaeological excavations have demonstrated that with a width of 22 metres and a colonnade on either side it would have been a monumental street. It has been depicted in the Madaba Map in such a manner that the street takes over Jerusalem; it shows a city perceived to be always 'on the way'.

NOTES

I am grateful to Peter Carl for his comments on this chapter.

- 1 Seventh Canon, Council of Nicaea, cited in Peters 1985: 131.
- 2 The first known Christian pilgrim to the Holy Land was Melito of Sardis in c. 160. There are records of a few others before the fourth century, but it was only after the Council of Nicaea that pilgrimage developed into a frequent and important practice.
- 3 See Vesely 1987: 31–5 for a discussion of the relationship between architecture and language within poetic mythos.
- 4 Bethlehem, although a separate town, was considered within the area of Jerusalem's ritual topography; see Cyril 1970a: 16.4.
- 5 A fourth hilltop, Mount Moriah, was the site of the destroyed Jewish Temple. Its desolation demonstrated, in the words of church historian Eusebius of Caesarea, 'the effect of Divine judgement on its impious people' (1890: 3.33).
- 6 Mount Sion or Zion has a long, complicated history, with three locations and two spellings. When transliterated from the Hebrew, it is spelled 'Zion' and when transliterated from the Greek, it is 'Sion'. As far as location is concerned, both the Davidic city and the Temple have been identified with Zion; these were two hills in the eastern portion of the city, today known as David's City and the Temple Mount. It is uncertain why Mount Sion of Christian tradition is on yet a third hill, the south-western hill. In the Byzantine period Mount Sion referred to both the area inside the city wall (today's Armenian Quarter) as well as what is today called Mount Zion on the southern portion of the hill outside the city wall.
- 7 Refining the ritual topography became a compacting of it as well; by the thirteenth century, many of the sites had been relocated along a portion of the eastern processional route now known as the Via Dolorosa.
- 8 For example: Cyril 1969, 1970; *Codex Armenien* 1969, 1971.
- 9 In classical Latin, *peregrinus* means 'of foreigners or foreign places, foreign' and 'of animals: a roaming, ranging' (*Chambers Murray Latin-English Dictionary*. London and Edinburgh, 1989: 524). In Early Christianity life on earth was seen as an exile from the Heavenly Jerusalem; the Greek *paroikia*, meaning 'the stay or sojourn of one who is not a citizen in a strange place', became 'parish . . . a community of strangers' (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early*

- Christian Literature*. Chicago University Press, 1979: 629), the basic unit of the Christian Church. The Latin *peregrini*, which implied wandering as well as exile, was used by the Christians: in Augustine, the soul has wandered from its true home and must return.
- 10 Many of the Church fathers, including Origen, Jerome and Augustine, wrote about the literal and symbolic senses of Scripture. John Cassian (c. 360–435) described four senses: historical, allegorical, tropological or moral, and anagogical, which he then applied to the city of Jerusalem. Historically, he said, Jerusalem is the city of the Jews; allegorically, the city of Christ; tropologically, the soul of man; and anagogically, the heavenly city of God, mother of us all (Cassian 1894: 14.8). Likewise, a pilgrim's understanding and interpretation of the holy places must be seen on various levels of meaning, and while there is not always a direct correspondence, it is useful to remember Cassian's four senses when looking at the pilgrim's symbolic world.
 - 11 The story of the discovery of the cross was not fully developed until around the end of the fourth century (Wilkinson 1977: 175.3). Eusebius does not mention it; if there really was such a discovery, and whether Helena was involved, is uncertain. Nonetheless, the story, and Helena's role in it, quickly became a popular and important tradition as shown in Paulinus' narrative.
 - 12 The *Cardo* was aligned by the Romans before AD 325, and they appear to have constructed its northern portion. But the southern extension from the centre of Jerusalem to Mount Sion was built in the Byzantine period, probably in the sixth century. For a summary of the archaeological excavations, see Avigad 1983: 211ff.
 - 13 The intention of the builders of the Nea Church, the largest Byzantine church in Palestine, is somewhat mysterious. It was one of a number of Theotokos churches constructed in the Byzantine Empire after the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) accepted the orthodoxy of Mary as mother of the son of God. The Nea Church has always been enigmatic because in Jerusalem it alone is located on a site which has no known holy tradition, and yet the difficulty of construction on the steeply sloped hillside would indicate that the building plot was chosen for a particular reason. If the church was intended as part of a Mary cult on Mount Sion, that would help to explain its position.
 - 14 Mary's tomb is located in Gethsemane towards the north end of the Valley of Jehosephat.

- 15 Wilkinson (1977: 177) notes that Golgotha 'was in no sense a hill or "mount".' Nonetheless, it is important to note that people perceived it to be a high place. Cyril described it as 'conspicuous in its elevation' (Cyril 1969: 10.19).
- 16 The Jews had understood the Holy of Holies in the Temple to be the centre of the world.
- 17 The two most significant sites which exist somewhat outside of the routes are the Pool of Siloam to the east of Mount Sion, and the Church of St Stephen north of the city wall.
- 18 Many of the traditions and mention of them in written sources have been compiled in the gazetteer in Wilkinson 1977: 148–78.

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Mapping the Sacred Geometry of Vijayanagara

INTRODUCTION

The Hindu empire of Vijayanagara was the largest and most effective in South Asian history, emerging at a time of considerable disarray in the south Indian political landscape. According to tradition the capital city of Vijayanagara was founded in 1336 CE by two warrior brothers of the Sangama family, Harihara I and Bukkaraya I. They constructed their capital city in an area which was already significant in local Hindu tradition but which had only limited political or economic significance.

Three successive dynastic families ruled the empire: Sangama from 1340 CE to 1486 CE, when control was wrested from the kings of the Saluva dynasty, who were themselves replaced by the Tuluva dynasty in 1503 CE, who then brought the empire to its apogee. The most effective rulers were Krishnadevaraya 1509–20 CE and Achutadevaraya 1520–29 CE. The city was sacked and burned following the disastrous battle of Talikota in 1565 CE.

At the time of its maximum power, Vijayanagara laid claim to approximately 360,000 km² and as many as 25 million people. Estimates of the population of the city itself range from 100,000 to 500,000, making it one of the major cities of the world at that time. The impregnable nucleus of the capital was protected by seven rings of massive walls and covered some 20 km². The surrounding urban environment encompassed more than 300 km².

The basis for this chapter is a series of measurements, undertaken during two field seasons, of the large scale organisation of the city and of orientations of temples, shrines and secular structures within it. On the basis of these measurements we find that Vijayanagara contains spatial organisation and symmetries not readily visible to the human eye. The Hindu temple appears to be a useful model for the city, partly because of the order and