# Buried History

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Cover: The Siloam Inscriptionfrom the Istanbul Museum

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# Editorial

The Institute's move to LaTrobe University has started and will be largely complete by the time this issue of *Buried History* is being read. While it will be some time before the museum is re-established, the library and the artefacts themselves are available for research and study.

This edition of *Buried History* begins with a paper that was partly delivered as the 2005 Petrie Oration. Emeritus Professor Edwin Judge has kindly allowed us to publish his paper in full. While it is longer than normal, the paper presents the basic arguments supporting Professor Judge's view about the context of early Christian development in the light of current scholarship. As such it is an important work. The relevance of the paper to the early twenty-first century will also not escape many readers who are aware of the exploration of church and societal models.

Professor Judge has a classical background and became Australia's first Professor of Ancient History at Macquarie University in 1967. In the twenty-five years that he held the chair he changed the teaching environment for ancient history in tertiary and secondary education in Australia. His broad publishing record has advanced many fields of knowledge, especially the understanding of the first century world in which the early Christians lived. Professor Judge has many honours and distinguished awards and we were delighted that he accepted an Honorary Fellowship of the Institute.

The paper by Albrecht Gerber is a fascinating discussion about a most important philologist and archaeologist, the German theologian Gustav Adolf Deissmann. As Gerber explains, Deissmann was also important outside these disciplines. It is interesting to realize that in spite of his significant contribution to New Testament studies and international diplomacy, Deissmann has been all but forgotten.

We are indebted to Albrecht for this scholarly resurrection of the man. Albrecht himself is a doctoral student at the University of New England.

The paper on the Siloam Tunnel inscription by Terence Mitchell was previously published in *Faith and Thought* without illustrations and we are pleased to include it in this edition of *Buried History.* Before his retirement, Terence was for many years a Keeper of Western Asiatic Antiquities at the British Museum.

We are again pleased to have another paper about Kellis which is in the Dakhleh Oasis of the Western Desert of Egypt. Thomas Chandler and Derrick Martin have applied their virtual reality skills to the archaeological evidence. At this site the remaining walls are comparatively high giving a much greater reliability to their reconstructions than would often be the case.

A number of book reviews follow. In subsequent years we hope to increase this section of the journal.

This edition of *Buried History* was delayed because of the near end of year date for the Petrie Oration. That will not be the case this year so we expect that Volume 42 will be ready before the end of 2006. I am pleased to inform readers that the 2006 Petrie Oration will be delivered by Dr Kathryn Eriksson on the comparative dating during second millenium BC and the Exodus tradition.

*Buried History* is being included in a number of electronic databases so that its contents will have circulation well beyond our current subscription base. This will also increase its international circulation which has been growing in recent years.

Christopher Davey



*The research library of the Australian Institute of Archaeology*

# On this rock I will build my *ekklesia*: Counter-cultic springs of multiculturalism?

## Edwin Judge

**Abstract:** What we now mean by 'religion' embraces both worship ('cult') and an alternative life-style ('community'). But the two pull in opposite directions. Worship is typically conservative, securing the established order, while an alternative life-style is potentially innovative, challenging it. The *ekklesia* Jesus was to build expressed this challenge by rejecting formal worship. They used it only as a metaphor for the new life-style. But once that came to dominate the Roman empire, the metaphor was taken literally, with worship ('cult') now securing the newly established order. Was there any precedent for this? Only very rarely, and never for long, did ancient cults threaten to produce a new community life. Philosophical schools, like the *ekklesiai*, often criticised cultic worship, but never produced an ongoing community. The Christian innovation lies behind the cultural dynamism of the West. Multiculturalism stretches this paradox by respecting any traditional worship even though the implied life-style may seem to challenge public values.

The term 'multiculturalism' is first cited by the *Oxford English Dictionary* from a Royal Commission of 1965 on what was also called 'the Canadian mosaic'. It had arisen as a way of referring to the co-existence in one national state of three cultures (Inuit, French and English) marked off by language, ethnicity and territory. In Australia any distinctives of language and territory are breaking down, yet ethnic tradition is being entrenched. So we may not mock each other's inherited beliefs or life-style any more, only our own. We are however allowed to switch over to someone else's lot, with reactions ranging from strained endorsement to resentment or even vengeance. This is not quite how the Romans did it. They mocked other people's cults, while taking care formally to respect them, as well as sometimes making it unlawful for their own people to join in with aliens.

The term 'counter-cultic' is devised by me to refer to cults in this sense. 'Cult' is the cultivation of an inherited tradition, always focussed on the correct way of worshipping the deity, the necessary safeguard of the existing order of things. Cult is thus conservative, and nothing should change. But Australian culture derives momentum from the assumption that difference is good and change may be better. So we are in a bind. Multiculturalism is supposed to create opportunity while entrenching tradition. The purpose of what follows is to explore the archaeology of this paradox. A condensed version of this paper is scheduled to appear at the end of 2006 in the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* s.v. 'Kultgemeinde'.

The saying of Jesus (Matt. 16:18) in the title confronts us with three novelties. The 'rock' of course is Peter, under the nickname Jesus gave Simon son of John (John 1:42) when he was the first to salute Jesus as the Messiah. The novelty however lies not only in the name (Peter being the only uniquely Christian name to last the distance), but in the (unprecedented?) adoption of a theological confession as the basis for a new movement. The second innovation is to conceive of that movement as a building. Such a metaphor also seems unprecedented, in contrast, for example, with that of the body, which is freely used as a figure of the social order. The most intriguing novelty however is the unexplained appearance of the prosaic term *ekklesia*. It occurs in the Acts of the Apostles when things were already well on the way, but without comment. It is the ordinary word for a meeting. In spite of the huge weight of meaning built upon the community it came to denote, neither its members nor their critics seem to have thought the term called for any discussion.

It is tempting to project the NT concept of community on to the many Greek and Roman associations linked with the cult of a god. But since in classical culture any public or private activity, whatever its concern, had to be placed under divine auspices, the analogy with NT communities has little point where the effective (as distinct from formal) purpose is not centred in the cult. Offering sacrifice on the altar, in sight of the image or emblem of the god, was simply the guarantee of security. Thus we should not seek a parallel in those based on family, class or civil commitments, or serving mainly occupational, convivial or funerary ends. In addition, to count as members of a community rather than a routine cult-group we should expect people to have joined it voluntarily, with a personal interest in the cult, and above all to be forming a new and shared pattern of life around that. It may not be easy to find parallels to the distinctively Pauline ethos of social reconstruction.

If the term community may seem implausible when applied to the classical cults, so should the term cult when applied to the NT communities. As with the synagogues, the

*ekklesiai* were primarily engaged with fostering the correct understanding of a learned tradition, and with moral behaviour. Theology and ethics belonged to philosophy, not to cult, which was preoccupied with correct ritual procedure and with ceremonial purity. The *ekklesiai* painstakingly distanced themselves from the cultic practice both of ancient Israel and of the Greeks, and denounced the latter as demonic. From the classical side equally the 'meetings' were seen as foreign to proper cult, and indeed as atheist. It was only slowly, across the first four centuries, and not decisively until after Constantine, that the Christians began to accept some analogy with cultic attitudes (for example, over the securing of the established order), and to adopt some of the relevant practices and terminology. But in doing so they were creating a combination of forces alien both to classical and (to some extent) to biblical culture, enshrining an openly radical and didactic approach to social relations within the conventional security of cultic practice. From this hitherto unparalleled (and inherently ambiguous and unstable) compromise arose what came belatedly (in the seventeenth century) to be classified as a series of 'religions', that is alternative commitments of belief and life potentially critical of the civil community. What we choose to call 'religions' in antiquity are profoundly different in each of these respects. They made no great demand on belief or life, and were pursued primarily to safeguard the established order of things, not to question it.

## Greek cult-groups

Private initiative in establishing cultic rites (ὄργια) at Athens seems to be implied when Suidas (s.v.) defines ὀργεῶνες as οἱ τοῖς ἰδίᾳ ἀφιδρυμένοις θεοῖς ὀργιάζοντες. Ziebarth (*RE*, s.v.) held that they were groups of citizens whose descent excluded them from the phratries that managed the cultic life of the civil community at the local level. But they were clearly linked in some way with the public system (Parker 1996:109-11). A law of Solon (*Digest* 47.22.4) alludes to them amongst the partnerships, including business ones, whose agreements are valid unless contrary to law. Athenaeus 186a itemises their dinners separately from those of both phratries and θίασοι. Ferguson shows from the inscriptions that they were at first devoted to the cult of heroes. From the inscriptions also we know that the introduction of the Thracian cult of Bendis (with which Plato opens his *Republic*) was entrusted to ὀργεῶνες, applied now for the first time to foreigners. There are a few other such cases, the goddess Belela being supported by ὀργεῶνες as late as the early third century AD (*SIG*[3] 1111). But Aristotle makes no mention of them when classifying the several forms of κοινωνία (community) that are sub-sets of the πόλις (*Eth. Nic.* 1160a). They may already have been subsumed under the θίασοι and ἔρανοι, which arise 'for the sake of pleasure' in the form of sacrificial 'gatherings' (σύνοδοι) combined with 'companionship' (συνουσία) (Arnaoutoglou 1993).

These three sorts of group were identified by Foucart as the main prototypes of the Greek cult-group. The com-

prehensive term was κοινόν. Members used scores of other collective terms for themselves (Poland 1909:5-172). Although θίασος is supposed etymologically to allude to the god and ἔρανος to the companionship, Aristotle seems to be treating the combination as applying indifferently to either. This is certainly the conclusion one is driven to by any attempt to distinguish them historically (Parker 1996). Could the same group (as implied in Athenaeus 8.64, 362e) be referred to as an ἔρανος in relation to their club-like functions (membership, shared funding, entertainment) and as a θίασος in relation to the cult (cf. Poland 1909:30f)? It is certainly not easy to envisage an ἔρανος without the patronage of a god. *Thiasos* became the customary term for the associations of foreigners that became more frequent at Athens in the third century BC, some largely composed of slaves. Mikalson (1998) lists 24 such cults. By the second century groups with mixed citizenship became common. The term θίασος goes out of currency at Athens by the first century. A common way of referring to the members of an assocation however was by the name derived from their patronal god. Already by 1908 Poland (1909:57-62) had registered over 50 such names, the most frequently attested being Ἑρμαϊσταί, Ἀφροδισιασταί, Διονυσιασταί, Ἀσκληπιασταί, and Παναθηναϊσταί. Athens, Delos and Rhodes are the places where such groups are most often found. They seem all to be strictly localised, mostly with small memberships, say 30 on average. (Poland 1909:287).

From across the 600 years of the Macedonian and Roman imperial hegemony we possess the commemorative inscriptions of many hundreds of such cult-groups. The uncertainty over what they were mainly doing persists (Freyburger-Galland 1986; Price 1999). A stele of AD 250 from Pydna in Macedonia records 'the assembled worshippers (θρησκευταί) of the god Zeus Hypsistos' (*NDIEC* 1,1981:26f). Five office-bearers are named *logistes, archon, archisynagogos, prostates, grammateus*, with twenty-nine others. There are 20 Aurelii, 3 Aelii, 2 Claudii and 7 more with Roman citizenship in different families. Most have Greek *cognomina*; three are women and two will have been in slavery. They have Greek names only, their occupations being *oikonomos* and *oiketes*. The cult of Zeus Hypsistos can hardly have required such elaborate administration. Common funds and detailed records are implied. They want and can afford a standing monument. This is not a men's drinking club, nor is it tied to any family or occupation. The recording of the names implies that one paid to belong, and that there were benefits. But there is no hint of any broader interests such as might have justified our calling this group a community.

Of the 400 epigraphic (and often fragmentary) cult-rules assembled in the three volumes of Sokolowski hardly more than 20 preserve evidence of an accompanying association (5 called ὀργεῶνες, 7 θίασος, 2 ἔρανος; other terms, partly overlapping, include 6 κοινόν, 6 σύνοδος). This need not imply that there was no such group in most cases, but it does imply that a club was not essential to the

cult. What had to be prescribed in the cult-rule were such necessities as the selection and qualification of priests, the calendar of sacrifices, the ritual cleanliness of those who offered them, and the division of the meat amongst those with a claim to it. The cult-group, if any, is not primarily responsible for these vital matters. In two cases of the fourth century BC from Piraeus and Axos (Crete) restrictions are placed on meetings of any θίασος (Sokolowski 1969:36, 145).

Certain ὀργεῶνες, however, of Bendis in fourth-century Piraeus were allowed to sacrifice without charge, while they ruled that private individuals doing so must assign part of the meat to the priestess or priest. All ὀργεῶνες had to contribute by a fixed date to the monthly gathering (ἀγορά). Anyone was invited to enrol (Sokolowski 1969:45). Thracians were at first the only ethnic group permitted to own land and set up a sanctuary at Piraeus. A third-century decree of their ὀργεῶνες granted privileges to the Athenian ones in return for a share in their procession (Sokolowski 1969:46). One group let out their hero's sanctuary, with related buildings and grounds, for ten years (Sokolowski 1969:47). The common funds provided loans, and family members were allocated shares in the sacrificial meat (Sokolowski 1962:20). Second-century orgeonic decrees from Piraeus provided benefits to the priestesses of the Great Mother of Phrygia (Cybele) (Sokolowski 1969:48).

Third-century BC θίασοι are mentioned in cult-rules from Chalcedon, Miletus and Halicarnassus (Sokolowski 1955:2, 48, 72). A third or second-century θίασος from Piraeus imposed on its members an elementary form of the *Kanon der zwei Tugenden,* the two virtues being piety and philanthropy (Dihle 1968). The interests of relatives as well as members are protected, along with those of 'all our friends, so that everyone may know that we show piety both to the gods and to them'. Nothing is to take priority over this law. Anyone acting or speaking against it may be prosecuted by any member and subjected to a fine (Sokolowski 1962:126). A Dionysiac θίασος of the second century AD from Physcus in West Locris was, like any ordinary association, concerned to stop its maenads and *boukoloi* from provoking or abusing each other (Sokolowski 1969:181), a far cry from the libertarian ecstasies of the literary sources.

In second-century AD Attica, the Lycian slave of a Roman citizen, Xanthus, who worked in the mines at Sunium, founded a cult of Men Tyrannus. His national god had chosen him for this, and he was to name his own successor. The cult-rule specified conventional tests of ritual purity. The usual sharing out of the meat is prescribed. No one is to sacrifice unless Xanthus is present as it would not be accepted by the god. But Men is easily propitiated by those who cultivate him in 'singleness of soul'. It was open to those who so wished to form an ἔρανος, on the usual condition of providing the god's share when they dined (Sokolowski 1969:55). It has been said this may have been an emancipation society, but nothing is recorded about the

financing of that. Another second-century Attic ἔρανος, however, publicly sought benefactions. It was formed by a group of 'friends', under the patronage of the trustee of a man's tomb (the opening section of the inscription is lost). No one was to attend their σύνοδος without being examined and found honest (ἁγνός, sc. financially clean?), pious (εὐσεβής) and respectable (ἀγαθός). For fighting and uproar a fine was prescribed, or a double flogging, probably for servile members. This was presumably a burial society (Sokolowski 1969:53).

The moral tone of these rules need not imply that the members constitute a community. They are not seeking to reconstruct their lives and have no mission to the wider society. Their ethical stance is strictly conservative, protecting a carefully regulated island of convivial goodwill for limited purposes. But one may argue for a more critical and active ethos in the case of the late second or early first-century cult inscription from Philadelphia in Lydia (Sokolowski 1955:20). The usual purity rules are perhaps implied in τὰ πάτρια covering the need for a lapse of time between certain activities and the offering of sacrifice, no doubt.

But the added *parangelmata* given by Zeus to Dionysius in his sleep impose a strict and wide-ranging commitment to good behaviour in the future. Moreover, those seeking access (to the monthly sacrifices?) must inform on any delinquents. The main constraints relate to drugs and promiscuity. There is a visible signal of one's having met the standard. On entering the οἶκος one must touch the inscription itself. Barton & Horsley (1981:11) class this 'as moral propaganda on the one hand, and as private discipline on the other'. They cite the authority of L. Robert as well as of Sokolowski for their argument that the inscription documents a cult-group, and that the term οἶκος can imply that. But Stowers (1998) argues that the apparent universalism embracing slaves and women simply reinforces the traditional household order. Dionysius is extending the hospitality of 'his own' οἶκος but within its familiar norms. Whether so serious a disciplinarian would have allowed his guests to form a dining club may be doubted. None of the usual marks of a cult-group is indicated. He has however looked beyond such narrow horizons. In binding everyone to show their hand at the door he is not only relying on their watching each other. The goddess Agdistis also guards the house. For each of them she will 'supply the good intentions' needed if they are to 'have confidence in themselves'. This sounds more like the ideals of a philosophical community, presented as it is in a 'carefully written, educated Koine', or of a mystery cult. In two passages stating its intentions, editors have restored the term μυστήρια to the inscription (ll. 13, 41).

## Mystery cults

From the social point of view one may adapt the threefold categorisation of Greek μυστήρια proposed by Bianchi (xv) in the following way: those tied to a given site, those practised wherever the cult was celebrated, and those whose practice centred on a written philosophical tradition. The

primary focus of all μυστήρια is individual: the μύστης is to be personally initiated, and to keep the details to himself. In spite of the huge variety and interest in mystery practice in antiquity, the secrets have been well kept. The Eleusinian mysteries, celebrated at Athens for 1200 years, are the prototype. Honouring Demeter and Kore (Persephone), goddesses of harvest and spring, they formed part of the annual calendar of public festivals. Most Athenians probably took initiation. Greeks also came from all over the world for it. Yet we do not know exactly what they saw or heard at the ritual climax. This secretiveness, however, did not give rise to any Eleusinian group or community. The benefit was presumably existential. There was no change of life (Mylonas 1961:280). If Dionysius of Philadelphia had indeed included μυστήρια in his οἶκος-cult, that would not of itself have constituted it as a cult-group. But, as noted in Plato's *Seventh Epistle* (333e), μύησις and ἐποπτεία help to forge the bonds of ἑταιρεία that tie political action groups. He proposed to ban sanctuaries in private houses (*Laws* 10.909d-910c).

Second only to the Eleusinian mysteries in sanctity, according to Pausanias (4.33.5), were those of the Great Goddesses (Demeter and Kore?) of Andania, in Messenia. In 92/91 BC a revised set of rules was published (Sokolowski 1969:65, Eng. tr. Meyer, M.W. 1987:52-9). The festival is now under public control through the συναγωγῆι τῶν συνέδρων, l.49. Elaborate procedures are laid down for its administration, including the appointment, dress and behaviour of the various officials. The details of the actual rites are of course not given. There is no allusion to any association or other social bond that might be formed amongst the participants. In the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Corinth, however, fifty-two small dining rooms have been excavated. Exactly how these were linked with the cult has not been determined (Bookidis 1990:86-94).

The most famous mystery site after Eleusis was the sanctuary of the Great Gods at Samothrace, with whom Demeter also came to be associated. Across 1000 years it attracted many foreigners. Unlike those initiated at Eleusis, they appear sometimes to have kept their link by making dedications elsewhere to the 'Samothracian gods' or Kabeiroi (Cole 1984:78). Eleven groups (*koina*) of *Samothrakiastai* are attested amongst over fifty such inscriptions. (These are published by Cole (1984:83, 139-68).) Inscription No. 48, from second-century BC Teos, bears fourteen titles set in wreaths, each apparently recording a group. Some of these are identified by their patron's name; one lot is called *orgeones*, one *mystai*, and one *Samothrakiastai*, in each case under the same patron. A *thiasos* is registered under a different patron. No. 42, another second-century BC inscription, from Karpathos, listed the names of up to 39 priests of the Samothracian gods. It is not to be assumed, however, that the mysteries were celebrated outside Samothrace. Commemorations extend from the Black Sea to the Nile. The gods were valued in particular by those in peril on the sea (no. 57, Koptos). Later a third of the μύσται were Romans, and Samothrace even went bilingual (Cole 1989:1564-98).

The fact that μυστήριον was rendered in Latin by *initium* is taken by Turcan (*RAC* s.v. Initiation, 90) to imply that the rite sanctioned reception into a particular group. The privilege of group membership is rated first in his list of the benefits of initiation. While this may not be easily demonstrated for mysteries established at a national site, it is more plausible for those that multiplied themselves abroad (see in general Burkert 1987).

## Dionysus / Bacchus

On one version the son of Kore (Persephone), later identified at Rome with Liber Pater, himself linked cultically with Ceres, the Latin counterpart of Demeter, Dionysus occupied a conspicuous and ancient place in Athenian public ritual, with seven annual festivals. Wine, ecstasy, drama and the after-life were his four main provinces (Henrichs, *OCD*[3] [1996] s.v.). They mark him as the god who takes people beyond normal limits. But the *thiasoi* of frantic maenads who took to the hills and ate flesh raw existed primarily in the literary imagination. The risk of life imitating art, however, haunted the imagination of observers when a cult-group was formed with initiatory rites inspired no doubt by the concern of Dionysus with the after-life. Plato dismissed the dancing of Bacchus (the cult-name of Dionysus) as not civil (*Laws* 7.815c). Demosthenes ridiculed Aeschines for having helped his mother at night with her initiations, and with the day-time processions of her *thiasos* (18.259/60). He led the chorus, crying ἔφυγον κακὸν, εὗρον ἄμεινον ('I fled from evil and discovered good'). This profession of a converted life was demeaning. But the vitality of the cult produced very diverse manifestations, reviewed at the 'round table' introduced by De Cazanove (1986).

In 186 BC the Roman senate gave the consuls authority to suppress an alleged Bacchanalian conspiracy. Livy (39.8-19) says 5,000 people were involved. The key complaint was that young men were being enticed by women into obscene rites practised after dark. Instead of the three annual festivals observed when the women had kept it to themselves, there were now clandestine sessions at weekly intervals. The long bronze inscription of the ager Teuranus in southern Italy (*ILLRP* 511), the oldest extant record of senatorial policy-making and oldest lengthy display of legal Latin, confirms the fact that the crisis was pursued throughout the peninsula (Pailler 1988). The senate had perhaps seized on the scandal to entrench its collective ascendancy nationally (Gruen 1990:34-78). The cult was plainly well established. The senate respected the *sacra*, but ordered demolition of the *bacchanalia,* presumably conventicles, within ten days. Women who were cultically dedicated to the priesthood might be permitted to continue their rites, but no man could be a priest, and no more than two men and three women could be present and then only with explicit permission of a quorate senate. There were to be no oaths, no elections and no common fund. The point of this precisely calculated ruling is clear. No association could be added to the cult because it had turned into something that challenged the community as a

whole – the first recorded cult-community. The consular rhetoric reflected in Livy's speech dramatises the threat. The public assembly (*contio*) of the Roman people will face a rival assembly (39.16).

In 176/5 the Dionysiasts of Piraeus met to appoint a new priest (Sokolowski 1969:49). The previous one had provided the *orgeones* with premises for their monthly celebration, and with their statue of Dionysus. They now resolve to appoint his son, also for his lifetime. Such an effortless succession in the patronal family ensures regular fellowship within safe conventions. Even the second-century AD rule from Physcus (Sokolowski 1955:181) solemnly maintaining night-time rites in the hills, found it necessary to impose fines on those who failed to attend.

A very different kind of *koinonia* is seen in *IGUR* 1.160 from Torre Nova near Rome (Vogliano & Cumont 1933:215-63; McLean 1993). On three sides of a statue base were recorded the names of 411 μύσται honouring Agrippinilla as priestess. They are grouped under 22 different titles, in descending (processional?) order of cultic rank, some attested in Bacchic circles elsewhere. Just over a quarter of the initiates are women. Agrippinilla has been identified as a descendant of Theophanes of Mytilene, married to Gallicanus the consul of AD 150 and proconsul of Asia in 165. He, their daughter, his father, and Agrippinilla's brother and nephew all appear, the first five names on the list. Four-fifths of the others bear Greek names. Everyone has only the single name, except for two women with Roman *gens*-names as well. It is likely that many will have been of freedman or servile rank, for this must surely be a domestic cult practised amongst the staff of a large suburban estate. Nothing suggests that they had constituted themselves as a cult association, and if the cult is being applied to reinforce the household structure it can hardly be called a cult-community either. The Villa dei Misteri at Pompeii offers vivid murals that show how such an οἶκος might literally envelop itself in scenes of Dionysiac initiation (Nappo 1998:152-7).

At much the same time as Agrippinilla was honoured, the ancient βακχεῖον of Athens published the minutes of its meeting at which new rules had been adopted to revive the association (Sokolowski 1969:51, Eng. tr Meyer. M.W. 1987:96-9). The new priest is Claudius Herodes, the great patron and sophist, consul in AD 143, who was to die in 179 (Ameling 1983). The collective name for the association is *Iobacchoi*. A dozen titles of office occur in the rules, none exactly matching the name of any of Agrippinilla's grades. There is to be a monthly meeting (*agora*), and others on festival days. Very detailed regulations are laid down with penalties against disorder on such occasions. But anyone who sues a member for assault in the public courts is also to be fined by the *Iobacchoi* (ll. 91-5), while those who absent themselves from the *agora* called to deal with internal conflict are subjected to double the fine, and excluded until it is paid. The priest is to perform the customary *litourgiai*, including the libation for the bringing back of Bacchus. On that occasion, following the public-spirited

innovation of his predecessor, he is to offer a eulogy of the god (*theologia*, l. 115). Members are to mark events in their family and civil lives by libations. The treasurer is to be chosen for two years by secret ballot (l. 147), as with the election of new members (l. 35). Those who attend each other's funerals receive one jar of wine (l. 162). All this represents a determined effort, presumably amongst people already prominent, to create a self-regulating club, set apart a little from the civil community, and ostentatious in its display of cult-loyalty, promising members the privileges of a convivial social routine and a demise with honour. Pseudo-bucolic indulgence amongst the privileged is characteristic of the cult as practised in later Roman times according to Merkelbach (1988).

The artists (τεχνῖται) of Dionysus formed themselves into a series of cult-groups across the Hellenistic world. They provided Athenian-style dramatic performances for many cities under royal patronage. From the time of Claudius Caesar they were organised through the 'intercity, ecumenical' synod with a central board in Rome that certified victors in the sacred contests for membership in their home σύνοδος. This honour won them tax-privileges. By the third century membership could also be gained by undertaking a costly magistracy (Frisch 1986). Diocletian tightened the rules, which applied also to the parallel organisation of athletic victors (*Cod. Iust.* 10.54.1). The ecumenical synods acted as sovereign states, sending their own embassies to the cities. They were easily the most successful of the innumerable trade and professional associations that functioned under a patron deity, and unique in their international network, anticipating that of the *ekklesiai*. Over 3000 members are known by name, across 1000 years (Stephanis 1988; Poland 1934; Roueché 1993:49-60, 223-37). But with their exclusive membership, imperial sponsorship and strictly professional purpose they can hardly be classed as a cultic community.

## Sarapis and Isis

Like Dionysus, Sarapis was in origin a god of the underworld, his name a merger of Osiris and Apis at Memphis in Egypt. Promoted by the Ptolemies at Alexandria, he became the pathfinder for Isis through the Greek world. She even takes Sarapis as her consort (Grandjean 1975:17, l. 17), becoming the dominant figure in Roman times, though Latin Serapis remains prominent in African provinces. The mortuary figure of jackal-headed Anubis was linked with the cult and also attracted particular attention in the Latin West. In their Hellenistic forms both Sarapis and Isis were celebrated as universal gods, accumulating functions that had been under other auspices.[1] The whole natural and social order is sustained by Isis, who actively promotes the best interests of all against both fate and fortune (so Apuleius, *Met.* 11.25). Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 3.352c, saw her cult as leading to philosophic enquiry. Her rites contained ἠθικὰς ... αἰτίας, nothing irrational, mythical or superstitious (8.353e). There was no risk of innovation, for Isis blocked the evil Typhon from this (13.356b).

Through λόγος Isis assumes all forms and ideas, being of ten thousand names (53.372e).[2]

From the second century there are literary tributes to Sarapis by Aelius Aristides (8.47-56 Dindorf) and to Isis by Apuleius (*Metamorphoses* 11). The romance of Habrocomes and Antheia by Xenophon of Ephesus refers to the cult of Isis and has been construed as figuring their initiation into it (Merkelbach 1995), although O'Sullivan (1995) has a contrary view. In spite of the brilliant public ceremonial, its community structure remains unclarified. The *reformatio* of Lucius in Apuleius (11.27) is of course a literal reversion to his human form, but it leads to his initiation and total personal commitment to 'this holy campaign' (*militia*, 11.15), including a public baptism surrounded by an 'escort' (*cohors*, 11.23) of devotees. Yet no cause is being fought. Although Lucius was not rich, he had enough to pay the costs of admission. He planned to resume his profitable legal career, and on the strength of that was admitted at Rome to the ancient *collegium* of *pastophori* founded under Sulla, and to its quinquennial decurionate (11.30).

Nowhere in the epigraphic record is there decisive evidence for the development of Isiac cult-groups that go beyond the service of the cult itself.[3] In the early second-century 'litany of Oxyrhynchus' (P.Oxy. 11.1380) all the sites at which Isis was worshipped are listed (fifty-five survive beyond Egypt itself), each with its distinctive titles of honour for her. Amongst her many general titles, presumably applicable anywhere, she is called 'the one who supplies pleasures in the σύνοδοι' (l. 132). This should be taken to refer to the cult ceremonies at which a congregation was present. Apuleius provides vivid evidence of the joy on such occasions, solemn yet exhilarating. A fresco at Herculaneum shows some forty people aligned in two choirs as the priests perform the ritual (Figure 1; Merkelbach 1995: Abb.72). Outside Delos there is not much evidence for the use of σύνοδος for an association of priests. The Athenian Sarapiasts in 215/14 BC decree honours for various office-holders, including a προερανίστρια (Vidman 1969:no.2). She is complimented for performing the sacrifices at the set times. The participation of women in the cult of Isis seems to vary greatly with time and place, never rising above 50%.[4] One may ask whether the ἔρανος at Athens is not conceived as a primarily cultic body. Similarly with the κοινόν of Ἰσιασταὶ ἐρανισταί who confer honours in first-century Rhodes (Vidman 1969:no.177). The κλισία referred to by the Sarapiasts of second-century Thasus in their decree is to be taken as a cultic meal (Vidman 1969: no.265, cf. 275, 291, 720 and 120). Invitations to the κλίνη of Sarapis are found amongst the papyri, in one case being issued in the name of Sarapis himself (Horsley 1981:1).

At Tenus in the first century AD a dedication was made by a συμβίωσις φιλία. It consists of five office-bearers headed by an Isiac ναύαρχος along with five 'friends' (Vidman 1969:no.154). This seems like a classic association primarily concerned with its club-life. The same goes for the *sodalicium vernarum colentes* (sic) *Isidem* (Vidman



**Figure 1:** *The worship of Isis scene found at Herculaneum. (Museo Nazionale Naples)*

1969:no.762) of Valencia in the same period. Slaves could hardly afford the expenses of full initiation and priesthood. On the other hand, the *Isiaci universi* who canvassed for votes on the wall opposite the temple of Isis at Pompeii (Vidman 1969:nos 487-9) will probably have been those in priestly grades. There is no reason to think that uninitiated followers would use this name, or carry any weight in the election. In the third century at Ostia the worshippers of Serapis funded a *schola* (Vidman 1969:no.557, cf 527 from Praeneste in AD 157), while the *Isiaci* restored at their own cost a *margar(um)* (i.e. *megaron*?) (Vidman 1969:no.560). These buildings imply community activities beyond those of the temple proper. Yet we have no direct evidence of ethical or theological training being attempted under the auspices of Isis. In spite of the intense emotional bonding created internationally by public rituals and private experience of the cult, the focus seems to be entirely on the ceremonial life, leaving little room for what we understand by a cultic community. Isis was for life at its best, but not for changing it.

## Mithras

Several cults brought to the West from Asia may have taken on Greek-type mystery practice. Most conspicuous was that of Cybele, the Mother of the gods (Magna Mater from Phrygia) (Roller 1999). Her cult is the most frequently attested epigraphically amongst the 52 recorded at the Piraeus from the fifth to the first centuries BC (Garland 1987:228-41). Only a fifth of these can be seen to have had an associated cult-group, this being most common with her *orgeones* or *thiasotai*. These groups come mostly

from 222-174 BC, the same period which saw Magna Mater publicly introduced to Rome (204 BC). But only a single cult-group (*CIL* 6.494 col(*legii*) culto(*rum*)) stands out as no. 303 amongst the 449 artefacts and documents from Rome and Ostia recorded by Vermaseren (1977). Official celebrants of the cult are of course not uncommon, e.g. Vermaseren (1978:no.2) (*CIL* 10.3699) recording 87 *dendrophori* appointed at Cumae in AD 251. One may suppose that a cult attractive of associations in its heyday in cosmopolitan Piraeus was confined at Rome largely to public ceremonial. With Mithras the position is very different in several ways.

At Arsameia on the Nymphaios in Commagene Mithras was featured in an enormous ritual system in honour of Mithradates I (ob. *c*. 70 BC). Twice a month in perpetuity the public feasting was to be open to all who met the challenging test of personal integrity (Waldmann 1973). Plutarch, *Pomp*. 24.5, says the rites of Mithras were first celebrated by the pirates (resettled by Pompeius in Cilicia after 67 BC?). But the extraordinary uniformity of the monuments from the Roman empire, their dating and distribution, all imply the creation of an independent cult at Rome itself late in the first century AD (Merkelbach 1984; Jacobs 1999). There must have been official goodwill, but there was no public or open ceremonial at all, and it attracted little attention at the literary level (αἵρεσις ἀσημοτάτη: Origen, *Contra Celsum* 6.22).

The typical Mithraeum, conceived as a cavern, was concealed from view, and furnished as a small dining-room. Its vaulted ceiling and the relief of Mithras slaying the bull represented an astrology of the descent and ascent of the soul. Only about twenty people could be present in it at the one time. It could hardly have been the scene of any full-blown sacrifice or festivities.[5] The period of greatest concentration is AD 150-250. Men from the army and public service are the typical initiates. There are seven grades of membership, none sacerdotal. *CIL* 14.286 from Portus is an album *sacrato*[*rum*] listing 27 names. *CIL* 11.5737 from Sentinum lists 37 *cultores*. The occasional references to a *collegium* or *sodalicium* need not refer to a Mithraic cult-group. The general assumption is that we are dealing with a series of tight-knit semi-professional fraternities that promoted imperial loyalty, neither cult nor community being their main concern (Beck 1992; 1996; Mitthof 1992; Clauss 2000).[6]

Known only from monuments and documents of the second and third centuries AD, and sometimes coupled with that of Mithras, was the worship of Jupiter of Doliche in Commagene (Merlat 1960). It seems to have been unofficially fostered within the Roman army, yet extending into the frontier communities of the Rhine-Danube provinces, since women were included (Speidel 1978). The distinction between *colitores*, *candidati*, *sacerdotes* and *fratres* (Hörig & Schwertheim 1987:no.381) (*CIL* 6.406/30758), along with the small dining-rooms and the term *schola* (Hörig & Schwertheim 1987:no.409), suggest limited groups under instruction, but the lack of any surviving literary treatment leaves unclear whether they might be classified as cultic communities.

## Philosophical movements

It was in the philosophical schools of classical antiquity that one might have expected to meet one of the two main requirements for a cultic community. They offered a critique of the established patterns of life and thought, including theology, and thus opened the way to an alternative community (Mason 1996). But their students were mostly not bound into a collective effort to attain that, using their privileged philosophical training rather as an individual higher education that might enlarge their awareness of the world before inheriting their assured position in society (Dorandi 1999). Moreover, while like any ancient institution they sought divine patronage, the cult was not their driving force.

For cosmic and cultic wisdom alike, Greeks looked back especially to Orpheus. Orphic hymns and ritual texts were taken up by travelling diviners. There was a βίος Ὀρφικός, where one renounced animal sacrifice and the eating of meat (Pl., *Leg*. 6, 782e) (Guthrie 1935:205, 254, 261). The Derveni papyrus reveals a pre-Socratic Orphic practice of argumentative interpretation (Laks & Most 1997). Initiation was central (Graf 1993). By late antiquity the Neoplatonists counted Orphism as a primary source for theosophy. But there is no decisive evidence that the Orphic movement ever produced a cultic community.

Yet under Orphic influence the Pythagoreans set the pace (Zhmud 1997). Migrating from Samos to Croton, Pythagoras is credited with founding a socially active community there after 530 BC (Burkert 1982). Nicomachus of Gerasa (*c*. AD 100) held that this very public movement went underground *c*. 450 BC after the political revolt against it (Iambl., *VP* 35, 252/3). Our understanding of it is conditioned by the introduction of Iamblichus (*c*. AD 300) to the βίος Πυθαγορικός. The Pythagoreans of Croton were κοινόβιοι, practising ὁμοδημία (VP 6, 29.32). These terms are not found earlier and may arise from a reaction to and retrojection across 800 years of the new ideals of Christian monasticism. The letters of the prominent Pythagorean women uphold a patriarchal order. The discovery (from the imperial period) of a *koine* paraphrase (P.Haun. 2, 13) from the Doric however confirms the continuing or revived appeal of Pythagorean ethics (Judge, 1992). But it need not then have been much more than an intellectual fashion (Sen., *Ep*. 108, 17/22).

The students of Plato or Aristotle met in the gymnasium of the Academy or Lyceum, open parks just outside Athens. Wilamowitz (1881) conjectured that they were constituted as *thiasoi* of the Muses, which he thought also to apply to the students of Epicurus in his Garden though not to those of Zeno in the public Stoa. There is however no adequate evidence that their schools needed to have any formal structure (Lynch 1972: 108-127). The four historic schools were granted salaried posts at Athens by Marcus Aurelius,

but institutional continuity is not to be concluded from that (Lynch 1972: 163-207): *tot familiae philosophorum sine successore deficiunt* (Sen. *NQ* 7, 32, 2). St Paul was interviewed only by Epicureans and Stoics (Acts 17:18). The Cynic origins of Stoicism no doubt worked against any formally structured community. A many-sided public intellectual program developed by Roman times without systematic organisation.

But with the Epicureans there was from the beginning (Diog. Laert. 10, 9) a collective commitment to a withdrawn and consciously alternative life (Schmid, *RAC* s.v. Epicurus 746/55). Devotees sacrificed on the birthday of their god-like founder, carried around his image with them and displayed it in their bedrooms (Plin. *NH* 35, 5). By his will there was a monthly *synodos* on the twentieth day (Diog. Laert. 10, 18). The εἰκάδες may be compared with the Christian ἀγάπη. Both movements developed their quasi-cult while repudiating en bloc the cultic ritual of the broader society. In both cases their moderate asceticism was mocked as a cloak for indulgent vice. At Herculaneum details have been found of the Epicurean organisation and fees (P.Herc. 1418e, 310) (Militello 1997). While public life was rejected, the Epicurean communities were open to all, including women (Frischer 1982). The vast inscription of Diogenes of Oenoanda (ed. M.F. Smith, 1993) put Epicurean doctrines on permanent display.

The school of Plotinus in the mid-third century AD also came close to constituting a philosophical community (Goulet-Cazé 1982:231-57). It did not moreover concentrate upon the training of students, but was open to all, while attracting both ζηλωταί and ἀκροαταί from Rome's élite (Porph., *Plot.* 2). Plotinus himself resided in the house of the noble Gemina, where he offered solutions to other people's disputes, and accepted trusteeship of their children and estates on their death (9). The plan to revive (or create?) a city of philosophers (Platonopolis) in Campania under the patronage of Gallienus was blocked by political opponents (12). Plotinus sacrificed and entertained on the birthdays of Plato and Socrates (2), but rated his own συνουσίαι (1.5.14) of more value than cultic ritual (10). But there is no evidence that the Neoplatonic school was institutionalised after his death.

There is only an indirect impression of any community structure for the Gnostic movement (Rudolph 1987), criticised tenaciously by Plotinus (Porph. *Plot.* 16) and the orthodox Fathers alike, or for Hermetism (Fowden 1986). Hermetic communities were proposed by Reitzenstein (1904:248), but rejected by Festugière (1944:82ff). In spite of their intellectual drive, no philosophical movement matched the dynamic bonding of cult to community which was to become historically formative with the Christians (Dihle, *RAC* s.v. Ethik 680).

### *Roman* collegia

The twelve tables granted to the *sodales* in a *collegium* (*hetairia*) the power to settle their own terms of agreement, just as Solon had allowed (*Digest* 27, 22, 4), provided no public law was broken. By a lex Julia and senatus consultum this was later limited to associations meeting only once a month to collect fees towards the burial of the subscribers. Such an association was created by the patron of the municipality of Lanuvium in AD 136, who published its rules in the temple of Antinous (*CIL* 14, 2112). Burial was guaranteed to anyone who kept up the monthly payments. Non-servile subscribers took turns at funding six dinners in the year, on four anniversaries of the patronal family and those of Antinous and Diana. At these everyone had to stay in his prescribed place to avoid *seditio*. The magistrate (*quinquennalis*) offered incense and wine, receiving a double share of the distribution. If he acted without corruption (*integre*) he would thereafter receive one and a half shares. To keep the peace, business questions could only be raised at the regular monthly meetings.

Such rules reflect a fear of political manipulation and embezzlement going back to the street fighting of Cicero's time. Trajan likewise banned the city of Nicomedia from creating a *collegium fabrum* for firefighting (Plin., *Ep.* 10, 34). The weekly meeting of the Christians was abandoned lest it also be construed as a political faction (*hetairia*: 10, 96). Even *eranoi* designed for self-help by the poor (*tenuiores*) were banned (10, 93). Under Severus *religio* was allowed as a valid basis for meetings (*Digest* 27, 22, 1). The Christians apparently did not see themselves covered by that. All *collegia* will have offered sacrifice to a divine patron. Amongst the 300 cases noted by Waltzing where the cult is identified, over 40 different deities are found, the commonest (in order of frequency) being Hercules, Jupiter, Lares, Liber, Silvanus, Mithras, Mars, Isis, Diana and Ceres. Most *collegia* were no doubt based on occupational or family bonds, and can hardly have sought to create any new community. The tightly structured rules and frequent commemorations (*ILS* 7211-7365) show them to have been closely correlated with the ethos of public life. Mommsen considered that their planned conviviality would have led to group support for other social needs. He was followed in this by Liebenam (1890) and Kornemann (1900:402f) but Waltzing used his massive study to oppose it (*Diz. Ep.* 356. 365; *DACL* 2122/3). He noted that Trajan's acceptance of the special case made by Amisus in Bithynia shows that a particular Greek proposal ought not to be used to interpret the way Roman *collegia* functioned. De Robertis (1971,2:21-3) agreed that there was no evidence that they were social welfare institutions but took it as obvious that this must have been the case. Kornemann's analogy from the more elaborate practice of military *collegia* was explored by Schulz-Falkenthal (1971). But the *collegia* were far too precisely structured to have developed a fuller community life of their own.

### Ancient Near East: Egypt

The possibility that a cult-group might take on a social welfare function does arise in Egypt. From the third-millennium national community that must have built the

pyramid of fourth-dynasty Cheops to Pachomian monasticism's subjection of the individual to the whole there is a collectivist continuity, according to Lüddeckens (1968). Muszynski (1977) could identify no evidence prior to the twenty-sixth (Saite) dynasty of the sixth century BC, but did consider that there was a distinctively Egyptian type of *confrérie*, anticipating the *philoponoi* of Byzantine times. Préaux (1948) had also considered these bodies peculiar to Egypt, though using Greek terminology, in their contractual structure.

The indigenous texts are reviewed by De Cenival (1972:3-10). P.dém.Lille 29 is the annually renewable contract for the collective supply of sacrificial goods, with sanctions against default or misbehaviour. Disputes are to be settled within the cult-group. Support is guaranteed for members unjustly imprisoned but not for outsiders. P.Mich. 5, 243, 6-9 specifies a fine for members of the group who do not come to the aid (συνεπισχύειν) of someone seen to be in distress (ἀηδία) and join (συλλύειν) in its relief. The degree to which an *eranos* might function as a credit union (as the use of the Greek word implies) was considered by San Nicolò (1972). This possibility was not taken up by Brashear (1993). It finds a parallel in the practice of *isophorion* identified by Rathbone (1991:121-3, 133f, 405f), whereby the estate met the unpredictable liturgical burden of employees, recovering the cost from them on a more systematic basis. This practice was no doubt superseded by the collective responsibility imposed upon occupational corporations when made hereditary after the reforms of Diocletian. The entrenched priestly structure of Egyptian temples probably also limited the development of any voluntary cultic community (Evans 1961; Whitehorne, 1995).

## Mesopotamia and Israel

Archaeological and onomastic evidence for craftsmen occupying dedicated quarters since the third dynasty of Ur (mid third-millennium) was assessed by Mendelsohn (1940a; 1940b). In Palestine the evidence begins as early as the Hyksos period (mid second-millennium). Particular crafts (e.g. iron-working), along with ethnic or family ties, may have shaped the distinctive social practice of the Kenites, Rechabites and, less likely, Nazirites. A cult-group of high-status drinkers, enjoying public recognition, is attested from late-third millennium Ebla and late-second millennium Ugarit. According to McLaughlin (2001), it is referred to in Amos 6:7 and Jeremiah 16:5, and may well identify also the revellers denounced in some other passages in the prophets.

Uffenheimer (1999:271-5, 473-9) argues against Hölscher (1914) that the prophetic tradition itself has ancient roots in the Hebrew phenomenon of collective ecstasy (Numbers 11:25). The 'school of the prophets' (I Samuel 19:18/24) was fostered to broaden the popular basis for the initiatives of Samuel. Ahab was confronted by 400 prophets under Zedekiah (I Kings 22: 1/36). In Elisha's time the 'sons of the prophets' formed a community that shared meals (II Kings 4: 38/41) and even lived together (6:1). The rebuilding of Jerusalem under foreign protection created a new kind of cultic community, expressed in a limited assembly which committed itself to a stricter revival of the law (Nehemiah 8:2), mixed marriages again being banned (13:25). This no doubt set the pattern for the sectarian zeal that was to seek the renewal of the Davidic kingdom by isolating the faithful remnant (foreshadowed in Ezekiel 11:13/25) (Vogt 1966:157-60; Williamson 1977:132-40; Hogland 1992:241-7).

## Jewish sects and Qumran

The Maccabean revolt against Hellenisation attracted the support of a συναγωγή apparently calling themselves Hasidim ('saints', the Ἀσιδαῖοι of 1 Macc. 2:42. 7:13. 2 Macc. 14:6). Their name perhaps echoed Psalm 149:1. They may have been forerunners of the Pharisees and Essenes, whom Josephus identifies 'at this time' as *haireseis* within Judaism (*Ant.* 13, 171/2) along with the Sadducees (the latter may have derived their name from the 'sons of Zadok' of Ezekiel 48:11). The dating of such distinctions to such an early period has been confirmed by the recovery of the halakhic manifesto (unique at Qumran) (Qimron & Strugnell 1994:4Q394/9). The editors claim that three 'groups' are distinguished in the letter: 'we', 'you', and 'they', identified as those who were to become known respectively as Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees by Deines (2001; Baumgarten 1997; Stemberger 1995).

Josephus distinguishes the three sects in terms of their views on philosophical questions. At the age of 16 (*c.* AD 54) he had undertaken the training provided by each of the three, and found it a burdensome experience (*Vita* 10/11). He calls the Essenes a *genos* practising the same discipline as the Pythagoreans (*Bell.* 2, 113; *Ant.* 15,371). Pliny calls them a *gens*, and assumes they have lived on the western shore of the Dead Sea for 'thousands of ages' (*NH* 5, 15, 73). Philo, however, though he spoke of them as tens of thousands in number living in many towns, villages and large crowded throngs (ὅμιλοι), says they cannot be called a *genos* since they are volunteers (*Hyp.* ap. Eus. *Praep. ev.* 8, 1, 2). They arrange celebrations (ἑταιρίαι) and shared meals (συσσίτια) on the basis of θίασοι (*ibid.* 5), which are also open houses (*Q.o.p.* 85). But they offer no animal sacrifices (*Q.o.p.* 75), concentrating upon ethical training through study of their inspired ancestral laws. This is done especially on the seventh day, which is ἱερά, in ἱεροὶ τόποι called συναγωγαί (*Q.o.p.* 80/81). Josephus notes the same feature. They approach their dining room καθάπερ εἰς ἅγιόν τι τέμενος (*Bell.* 2, 119). Although they send offerings to the Temple in Jerusalem they are excluded from it, and sacrifice separately (*Ant.* 18, 19/20), which apparently refers to the sanctified dining. Josephus mentions a second order (τάγμα) of Essenes who even sanctify marriage (*Bell.* 2, 160) which the main body had merely shunned. There is clearly here a conscious transfer of cult to life, creating what may plausibly be called a cultic community. Koffmahn (1963) sees it as a 'kleine

Stadtordnung', but based on pre-exilic patterns and not on any Greek model. Baumgarten(1998) stresses the full-time commitment of the Essenes, who transferred to daily life ideals such as Greeks and Romans would have kept for Utopia while celebrating their dedicated fellowship only on a periodic basis (e.g. monthly).

In spite of their later *haburoth* ('associations'), however, it is not clear that one should apply the term cult-group to first-century Pharisees, let alone the Sadducees (Saldarini 1988), or to the 'fourth philosophy' noted by Josephus (*Ant*. 18, 23), the Zealots or Galileans. But Hengel (1989) stressed that all four combined political with religious interests. This no doubt applies also to the Boethusians (Herodians?). Hegesippus, ap. Eus. *HE* 4, 22, 7, lists three other *haereseis*, the Hemerobaptists, Masbotheans (also baptist? Thomas, *RAC* s.v. Baptistes 1171), and Samaritans, while a Jewish monastic sect across Lake Mareotis from Alexandria, the Therapeutae, somewhat resembling the Essenes, is described by (pseudo–?) Philo, *Vita contempl*. 11/40, 63/90. The presence there of female *therapeutrides* (88) led Richardson and Heuchan (1996) to propose that the Jewish temple at Leontopolis in the Delta (*c*. 160 BC-AD 73) was also the site of a distinctive community.

The 'Qumran community' was alienated from the Temple in Jerusalem. Instead they reached back to the ancient covenant, seeking its present renewal in the rituals of their common life, where abstinence for example symbolised sacrifice, and which in turn looked forward to the restoration of the Temple after the ultimate victory of the righteous. The community is formed to anticipate the cult (Klinzing 1971; Ego 1999). The covenant is not 'new', but it is now 'eternal', and entered not by descent but by commitment. In this radical change it challenges the contemporary national cult with an alternative ideal, surely at the heart of what we must understand by cultic community (Christiansen 1998).

In its 200-year history the community collected in the Dead Sea Scrolls a variety of treatments of these themes which need not all be part of a unified system, or have come from the same source. 'The Damascus Document' (CD, the 'Zadokite fragments') is important for its historical retrospect, the 'Rule of the Community'(1QS 'The Manual of Discipline') for contemporary arrangements at Qumran, and the 'Rule of the Congregation' (1QSa) for the ideal to come at the end, on which see Schiffman (1989). These and related texts (incl. 1QM the 'War Scroll' and 11QT, the 'Temple Scroll') disclose an elaborately organised commune, enclosed and full-time, but not permanent, which cannot easily be identified from the literary sources, though an Essene link is often proposed. Talmon (1966) notes as unique, amongst other features, the identification of the ψα αδ with the Bible as a 'living' authority as distinct from the closed rabbinic canon, still not textually crystallised and open to imitation. A solar, as distinct from lunar, calendar also marks Qumran off. The common usage of the times, however, is assumed as the source of many disciplinary and other routines of life by Weinfeld (1986).

Yet the sacrifices, burial rules and membership dues regular elsewhere are all absent, while Qumran offers uniquely the covenant blessings, moral and emotional pressure and hymns of the biblical tradition. But because of its separation from wider society and focus on the *eschaton*, this cultic community lacks any concern (e.g.) for the poor (Walker-Ramisch 1996).

## Synagogues

As the name implies, synagogues must have begun as assemblies. Open-air meetings were held at the town gates (Deut. 21:9. 1 Kings 22:10. Prov. 31:23). Ezra's reading of the law took place in the square before the Water Gate (Neh. 8:2). Since various kinds of business were handled this way and thus open to all, such an assembly can hardly constitute a cultic community, and especially since the sacrificial cult itself was confined to the Temple in Jerusalem. The public reading of the law in other communities was held to go back to ancient times (Acts 15:21), perhaps to Josiah's purge of local cults after his reinstatement of it (2 Kings 23:24). Alternatively it could have arisen in the Babylonian captivity or after Ezra's restoration. But a common assumption now makes the synagogue a Pharisaic reaction to the Hellenisation of the Temple cult in the Maccabean era (Binder 1999:155-226; Levine 2000:42-73). Lack of access to the Temple may also explain why the earliest synagogues seem to have been formed abroad (esp. in Egypt where the inscriptions document eight Ptolemaic *proseuchai*) or in Galilee. The first referred to in Jerusalem is the synagogue of the Freedmen (Acts 6:9), apparently formed amongst Hellenistic immigrants. This may also explain the synagogue built by Theodotus (*CIJ* 2, 1404, often assumed to predate the fall of Jerusalem) 'for reading law and teaching commandments'. It contained 'guest-rooms and water-supply to meet the needs of those from foreign parts' (Riesner 1995).

The first buildings explicitly referred to as synagogues are at Capernaum (Luke 7:5), endowed by a God-fearing centurion and Corinth (Acts 18:7), next door to the house of Titius Justus, Paul's God-fearing host. Roman observers seem to have viewed the synagogues as cult centres. An epitome of Valerius Maximus 1, 3, 3, based ultimately on a lost book of Livy, even speaks of the praetor of 139 BC destroying the 'private altars' put up by Jews in public places in Rome (Stern 1974:no.147). Seneca and Juvenal also use sacral terminology of the Jewish community, although more concerned with its intellectual persuasiveness (Stern 1974:186, 189, 301). The Jews are aware of the origin and meaning of their rite (*causas ritus sui*), says Seneca. Josephus on occasion uses *hieron* of synagogues, presumably accepting the Greek view of them as sanctuaries, and the Ptolemaic Jewish inscriptions sometimes refer to a *hagios topos* (Lifshitz 1967: nos 88-90).

The synagogue came into its own as a result of the destruction of Jewish national aspirations in three Roman wars (AD 70-135). The Temple levy that had once been sent to Jerusalem was applied by the Romans to the restoration

of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. It presumably fell to the synagogue authorities to identify those liable to pay this tax (*CPJ* 2, 160/229). In return Jews were exempted from liturgies and military service, which would have compromised their ban on idolatry. Philo had already distinguished the Jewish communities from Hellenic associations (Seland 1996). All Jews could by right of birth enjoy the privileges of their local synagogue. They had secured in defeat a subordinate form of national identity that was unparalleled and cannot readily be classified as a cultic community given its public status. Gentiles were free to attend (Schiffman 1985).

Romans already believed prior to AD 70 that they were being taken over by the Jews. Like them, laughs Horace, we poets will compel you to 'join our crowd' (*Sat.* 1, 4, 143 *in hanc concedere turbam*). The 'life-style' (*consuetudo*) of this 'vicious race' (*gens sceleratissima*) has become so 'influential' (*convaluit*) that it is accepted worldwide. *Victi victoribus leges dederunt* (Seneca on superstition, cited by Augustine, *CD* 6,11). The Acts of the Apostles features Gentiles who attached themselves to the synagogues, 'fearing God' yet often stopping short of circumcision (Acts 17:4.12). It has been thought a tendentious fiction, designed to legitimise the breakaway churches they then formed. Levinskaya (1996) has however comprehensively demonstrated its plausibility. She also confirms the close links with Judaism of those whose cult honoured Θεὸς Ὕψιστος (Acts 16:17).

The capacity of the synagogue to generate a body that can more obviously be treated as a cultic community is seen in the recently discovered inscription from Aphrodisias (Judge 2002). A *dekania* (decury?) was formed, originally of ten men, five with Hebrew names, two more called as well 'proselyte', two with Greek names identified as *theosebes* ('God-fearer'), and one as *palatinos* ('official') and thus not likely to have been a Jew. They can hardly have been the statutory synagogue quorum, since the God-fearers are presumably not Jews either. Rather, it appears to be an association formed equally of those born to Judaism and those who have acquired an interest in it. The dean is a proselyte. Their objective is to 'love learning' (as in Sirach, Prologue) to be 'constant in blessing' and to 'prevent grief'. This inscription appears to have been added later to a much longer second-century list of what must be donors, divided into two groups (arranged in order of wealth?), one with 55 overwhelmingly Jewish names, the other with 52 Greek names headed by nine (city) councillors. The latter group are explicitly classified as 'God-fearers'. The easiest interpretation is that there is a joint synagogue-city foundation for poor-relief from which a select cult-group of dedicated believers has arisen.

## The followers of Jesus

The immediate followers of Jesus might have been taken for the school of a prophet or the disciples of a rabbi (Mt. 9:14). But they were called at once to let go of the old order completely, tasting already that 'beginning again'

(*palingenesia*, Mt. 19:28) in 'the kingdom of the heavens', where even foreigners would sit at table with Abraham (Mt. 8:11). Following Jesus had to be literal and total (Mt. 19:27). He had no regular home-base, and was not the head of a household. But he indiscriminately accepted the hospitality of others, defending himself for eating and drinking when John (who baptised him) had fasted (Mt. 11:19). Crowds of other people flocked to him, and there were secret disciples who could not face the cost of actually following (Jn 19:38). There was no security because there was no recognised model for such a movement, political yet pacifist, fundamentally challenging yet unstructured (Mt. 23:8-12). The twelve may have symbolised the tribal structure of Israel (Mt. 19:28), yet they were not chosen according to tribe. The seventy (Lk. 10:1) hardly match either the seventy elders of Moses (Num. 11:16) or the seventy-member Sanhedrin. Since it looked to a momentous change (Dahl 1941:161) there was not even an appeal to the traditional motif of the remnant (Rom. 9:27). Jesus interacted closely with synagogues, Pharisees, Zealots, and the disciples of John, but conspicuously set aside the main preoccupations of each of them. Even the open practice of personal piety was to be avoided (Mt. 6:1-6) (Hengel 1981; Theissen 1978; Bolyki 1998).

Where possible ('always', Jn 18:20) Jesus taught in the Temple as well as in synagogues, and the former was the focal point. The claim that he could pull down the Temple of God (Mt. 26:61) and in three days build another (Mk 14:58) was turned into a threat to change the customs which Moses had delivered (Acts 6:14). Rebuilding the Temple became a key figure for Peter (1 Pet. 2:5), Paul (1 Cor. 3:9.16/17; Eph. 2:21) and others (Heb. 3:6), transposed, like the image of the body, to the believing community. So vital was the idea that the routine verbal noun for the construction of a building was now (e.g. 1 Cor. 14:12) also pressed into metaphorical service (Vielhauer 1940). Yet the community being built was not called a temple, but *ekklesia* (Mt. 16:18). The adoption of this inadequate name (an assembly has no ongoing existence such as the building metaphor implies) was not explained. One must question the general assumption that it echoes the *'ekklesia in the wilderness'* (Acts 7:38) under Moses, which also had no ongoing life. Moreover, the concept of a new *laos* of God (Rom. 9:25; 1 Pt. 2:10) is most elaborately developed without any use at all of the term *ekklesia*. A more plausible trigger is the use of the word in the Psalms and Sirach, where it often seems to refer to those assembled to praise God in the Temple (Ps. 68:24-6, Sir. 50:1-21).

To Greeks it may have seemed to echo the regular political *ekklesia* of the Hellenistic citizen body (Acts 19:39-41) which had long been promoted as a sounding board of the royal or imperial will (cf. 'my' *ekklesia*, Mt. 16:18). Paul's early identification of the *ekklesia* as being 'of God' (e.g. Gal. 1:13) may then have been needed to guard the term against this ubiquitous ambiguity. Yet he is apparently already using *ekklesia* for the community that persists beyond its periodic meeting. Such a meaning may

explain the somewhat belated appearance of the term in Acts, in connection with the pooling of property amongst the community (5:11, cf. 8:3, 9:31). The dispersal of this community in turn perhaps gives rise to the plural use of *ekklesiai* by Paul for its geographically parallel replication (e.g. 1 Thess. 2:14). The plurals in Psalms and Sirach by contrast represented the repetition of the same assembly in a chronological series. The remarkable NT expansion in the meaning of the word matches the implicit force of the dictum 'I will build my *ekklesia*' (Mt. 16:18; cf. 18:17), looking no doubt also to the *panegyris/ekklesia* of the 'heavenly Jerusalem' (Heb. 12:22/3) (Dahl 1941; Campbell 1948; McKelvey 1969; Berger 1976).

## Pauline and other communities

After Pentecost the twelve apostles (led by Peter and John) baptised a rapidly growing *plethos* of believers. Many priests joined them (Acts 6:7). In the Temple they praised God daily (cf. Luke 1:10), at home they shared their meals and goods, and in both places taught and preached Christ (Acts 2:42/7; 5:42), surely the very prototype of a cultic community. But the criticism of the Temple cult by Stephen (Acts 7:48), a representative of the Greek-speaking diaspora believers, provoked a violent reaction. The latter were driven out, scattering across Judaea, Samaria and Galilee, and through the coastal cities to Phoenicia, Cyprus and the metropolis of Antioch. Here many Gentiles were won over, and dubbed *Christianoi* (Acts 11:26). The Latin suffix construes them as social activists. Famine relief was sent back to the *presbyteroi* in Jerusalem for distribution to the *adelphoi*. This international development was hardly expected, yet not wholly without precedent. Those who preached the baptism of John had also gone abroad (Acts 18:25; 19:3). There were Pharisaic missions (Mt. 23:15). In AD 19 a noble Roman convert had been defrauded on the pretext of sending her donations back to Jerusalem (Jos. *Ant*. 18, 81/4).

In AD 44 John's brother James (the apostle) was executed and Peter arrested. Well before this, James the brother of Jesus was seen by Paul as counting with the apostles (Gal. 1:19). From now (Acts 12:17) until his own execution in AD 62 the *haeresis* of the Nazarenes (Acts 24:5) under James maintained its standing in the Temple with some support from the Pharisees (Acts 5:34; 15:5; 23:9). James however overturned the Pharisaic demand for the circumcision of Gentile believers (Acts 15:5.19). His judgement was sent to the converts in Syria and Cilicia under the authority of the apostles and elders and with the consent of the whole *ekklesia* (Acts 15:22). Another letter from (presumably the same) James went to 'the twelve tribes in the dispersion'. It says nothing of any cultic or ritual obligation, being focussed on the 'complete law of liberty' (James 1:25). Pure θρησκεία consists in providing for the needs of orphans and widows (v.27). The letter envisages a synagogue building (2:2) with proper seating for an equestrian patron, as well as an *ekklesia* whose elders pray for the sick (5:14). The two institutions may

have functioned in tandem: they need not be conflated. In Jerusalem James conscientiously guarded the Temple bond (Acts 21:20-4). Hegesippus pictures him as a figure of high-priestly sanctity who could command the support of 'all the tribes and the Gentiles as well' (ap. Eus. *HE* 2, 23, 4/18). His execution (at Sadducean initiative?) out-raged many scrupulous admirers (the Pharisees? Jos. *Ant*. 20, 200-11). His brother Jude looked back to the apostles (v.17), attacking intellectual parasites who exploited the free meals (v.12). Descendants of the brothers of Jesus outlived the destruction of the Temple (Bauckham 1990; Painter 1997).

The letter 'to the Hebrews' was apparently written while the Temple ritual was still in use (Heb. 10:2.11), but its main concern is to ensure that those who had abandoned the cult do not revert under pressure (10:32-9). They are to hold to the new covenant of Jeremiah, where the law is internalised (8:8-13). They have been enrolled in the *ekklesia* of the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22f), where they worship in the way that pleases God (v.28). They have an 'altar' from which those who worship in the (Mosaic) tent have 'no right to eat' (13:10). Their sacrifice consists in praise to God, and the sharing of one's goods (v.15f). Any conventional cult is thereby excluded (De Silva 2000). The Gospel of Matthew was also written for a Jewish commu-nity alienated from its national tradition, and condemned for fraternising with Gentile believers. The kingdom of God will be taken away from Jerusalem, says Jesus (Mt. 21:43), and given to an *ethnos* producing the fruits of it. The *ekklesia* he will build (Mt. 16:18) need not be large: two or three will suffice, but its authority is binding (Mt. 18:15-20). The scribes and Pharisees are blind guides, who do not practise what they preach. They refuse to enter the kingdom of the heavens and lock others out, because they only care about appearances (Mt. 23:1-39). Better to pray in secret, and fast in secret (Mt. 6:1-13), 'Something greater than the Temple is here' (Mt. 12:6). The new *ekklesia* will practise no public cult (Stanton 1992).

There were soon networks of *ekklesiai* also in the old-established Greek cities of Asia Minor, linked with Peter, whose first letter is addressed to the 'migrants' in the North-western provinces, or with John, whose revelation is sent to the seven *ekklesiai* of the province of Asia. Both take cultic worship as a metaphor for the inward trans-formation of life. They are built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices (1 Pet. 2:5). Worship will no longer be centred on a sacred place, but must be offered 'in spirit and in truth' (John 4:21-4). With the Pauline network we come close to the very process by which such communities were built up.

Paul's two earliest letters, Galatians and 1 Thessalonians, reveal the disputes through which the new communities were marked off from their Jewish and Greek forerunners respectively. In Galatians the dispute is over the obliga-tions to Judaism of Gentile believers. Paul passionately blames those spying on them (2:4), and the hypocrisy of Peter (2:13). They do not have to submit to the servile

yoke of Sinai (4:25), but are called to freedom (5:1), a new foundation (6:15). Later Paul was to assert the advantage of Jews (Rom. 3:1) over Gentile believers, who were only grafted onto the old stock (Rom. 11:17). There is no indication that a breach with the synagogues had yet occurred in Rome. Paul had not yet been there, and his letter is not sent to an *ekklesia*. In 1 Thessalonians the dispute relates to social dependency (4:12). Some of the believers were giving up their trades (v.11), presumably to be supported by the generosity of others. Paul himself could have enjoyed this, given the status his enterprise entitled him to, but he insisted on supporting himself (2:5-9). He had at first been protected by the hospitality of Jason, and other prominent people (Acts 17:4f). Paul was writing from Corinth, where the social aspirations of his converts inspired serious animosity over his refusal, unlike the false apostles (2 Cor. 11:13), to accept the patronage offered, or to present himself in the style befitting an acknowledged authority. A different kind of community life was being promoted by Paul. These principled reversals of convention make it difficult to classify his *ekklesiai* as Greek assocations, which were meant to undergird the established order.

Heinrici argued that for similar reasons the *ekklesia* could not have derived its form from the synagogue, but that the initial Roman tolerance of it implied a structural basis in the type of association derived by Foucart from the inscriptions, even though the Corinthian letters were preoccupied with the inner turmoil of their *ekklesia* (1876:475-77, 479, 521). Hatch argued more extensively 'that not only some but *all* the elements of the organization can be traced to external sources' (1882:26-39, 214)[7]. Although the common meals and close bonding may well have suggested or even reflected the practice of the clubs, the distinctiveness of the *ekklesiai* is in various ways more conspicuous. Their purpose was fundamentally different: they were calling upon believers to build an altogether new community in anticipation of the coming kingdom. Their methods were didactic and argumentative, a kind of alternative education in the meaning and conduct of life. Their structure was not at first determined by any formal constitution, arising instead from the combination of charismatic initiative with authority delegated by the apostles. Their members were drawn from a wider social range than could easily be held in such close relations, linked together by the novel conception of various individual gifts contributed in mutual service to the common good. Finally, the *ekklesiai*, though each complete in itself, formed an imitative network that provided hospitality and financial support for members travelling across the empire and beyond (Judge 1984; 2004).

The *ekklesiai* at first often gathered in private houses. Here they enjoyed social protection, and in return endorsed the household order. But they were not controlled by domestic authority, and their teaching sought to transform the spirit of domestic relationships from within. A similar ambivalence applied in their attitude to the public order. An essentially different manner of life was being created,

that was to provide an alternative structure and a potential conflict of obligation in each dimension of the social order, whether *oikonomia*, *koinonia* or *politeia*.[8]

The Pauline communities are also difficult to correlate with classical cult-groups. In Jerusalem Paul practised the Jewish cult (Acts 24:14), but in his mission he transposed worship into a figure for the preaching of the gospel (Rom. 1:9; 1 Cor. 9:13/14). Believers were to practise a rational alternative to worship through self-sacrifice, that is by the transformation of their life-style and thinking. Thompson (1997) and Peterson (1998) argue against those who hold that the meetings of the *ekklesiai* could not have been construed as acts of worship. But charismatic spontaneity and volubility must have shattered the procedural solemnity necessary to classical worship. The only explicit case of such a formal act of worship in a Pauline assembly is the *proskynesis* of the hypothetical unbeliever of 1 Cor. 14:25. As an *idiotes* nothing had indicated to him the presence of God until his conscience was convicted by the prophesying. There was no cult. It is only from the perspective of the fourth century, when the churches began to take up the sacral terms of the classical cults, that it is historically realistic to look back to the first for the development of Christian worship. Likewise, one must guard against linking sacramental and other procedures too soon to possible classical models (Wagner 1967; Klauck 1982; Gebauer 1989; Forbes 1995; Arnold 1995; Horbury 1998:112-19).

A similar circularity of argument is involved in the attempt to justify the application of the category 'religion' to the New Testament churches. It presupposes the later transposition of the Latin term *religio*, that is scrupulosity, or 'superstition' as the modern world sees it, making it in retrospect the honorific name for the whole complex of reconstructed belief and life that we now call 'religion', but which first-century Romans called *superstitio*. This conceptual problem besets such notable projects as those of Smith (1990), Betz (1994) and of Theissen (2000).[9] This is why it would be confusing to classify the Pauline *ekklesiai* as cultic communities (Judge 2003).

## Second-century community and cult

All three Roman writers of the early second century who comment on the Christians classify them as a *genus hominum* (Suet. *Nero* 16, 2) alienated from the rest (*odio humani generis*, Tac. *Ann.* 15, 44, 4) by social malpractice (*flagitia*, Tac. 2; Plin. *Ep.* 10, 96, 2). The cause of this is a *superstitio* which is both novel and destructive (*nova et malefica*, Suet.), of unrestrained depravity (*prava et immodica*, Plin. 8) and terminal (*exitiabilis*, Tac. 3). Pliny discovered from those who recanted that all they had done was to meet before dawn, sing a hymn to Christ as though he were a god, and pledge themselves on oath (*sacramento*) not to commit any crime. Pliny had assumed the opposite since they had disbanded when he banned any *collegia* that might turn into action-groups. Later in the day they had taken a simple meal together. What proved they held to a dangerous *superstitio* however was not any of these

details, but the commitment shown by two deaconesses under torture, presumably an unflinching testimony to their beliefs. Pliny refers to the mindlessness (*amentia*) of inflexible obstinacy (3/4) as itself requiring punishment. The offence was non-conformity. Later in the century Galen considered the indifference to death of some Christians and their lifelong celibacy to be truly philosophical. He did not however approve of the empirical, rather than logical, way of demonstrating truth in the school (*diatribe*) of Moses and Christ (Walzer 1949).

His older contemporary, the philosopher Justin (Martyr), had been converted on this very principle: the prophets did not rely upon *apodeixis*, but were 'witnesses to the truth above all demonstration' (*Dial*. 7). Paul had made the same point, rejecting logical persuasion for 'the *apodeixis* of spiritual power' (1 Cor. 2:4 — the crucified Messiah?). This argument from historical testimony in turn provoked a novel critique of the gospel's historicity in the *alethes logos* of Celsus (Andresen 1955). In Alexandria a philosophical school (*didaskaleion*, Eus. *HE* 5, 10, 1) sought intellectual reconciliation, conspicuously in the writings of Clement, that went beyond the regular *catechesis* required for baptism (Scholten 1995). Tertullian, moreover, rejected any partnership with the Academy (*De praesc. haeret*. 7), since the gospel had made further *curiositas* and *inquisitio* unnecessary. Philosophy only led on to heresy.

The term *secta* (with its politico-philosophical flavour) is however one that Tertullian accepts (*Apol*. 37, 3). Yet Christians are not partisan, and should have been classified *inter licitas factiones* (38, 1) since they are not interested in local politics but only in the universal *res publica* (38, 3). As a *corpus* (39, 1) their activity centres on collective pleas to God, which one may only share in if one passes the *censura* of the *litterae divinae* (39, 2-4). The monthly payment is optional, and used not for feasting but for poor relief (39, 5f). Tertullian understands that it is because of their commitment (*superstitio*) that Christians are mocked as a *tertium genus* (*Ad nat*. 1, 8, 11, with commentary of Schneider (1968:187-90)). But they are co-terminous with all other *gentes*, filling every place and institution except only the temples (*Apol*. 37, 4). That is the reason why, though claiming to be *dei secta* (39, 6), they are not allowed to count as having a *religio* of their own (24, 9). They do not yet qualify as a cultic community.

Abhorrence from idolatry and from the offering of sacrifice persisted, but ambiguity arises.[10] The prophetic denunciation is cited in the letter of Barnabas (2, 4f. 7f), while the καινὸς νόμος requires an offering indeed, but one not made by man: it is the broken heart (9f). Fasting likewise must not go over to the law of 'the others' (3, 6), but the *laos* being prepared by the Lord will fast, as he demanded through Isaiah (58:4-10), in their acts of mercy towards the poor (Barn. 3, 3). The old covenant was lost through idolatry (4, 7f), and now the temple has been destroyed (16, 4). But we are a spiritual temple (16, 10).

The *Didache* soon shows such principles being re-adjusted to allow for formal procedures. The hypocrites fast on the second and fifth days, so we must do it on the third and sixth (8, 1). The Lord's prayer is to be recited thrice daily (8, 3). Prophets are free to pray as they see fit (10, 7), but there is a simple form of the eucharist, already sanctified (9, 5), and without prior confession of sins the 'pure sacrifice' (Malachi 1:11.14, now linked with Mt. 5:23f) will be defiled (*Didache* 14, 2). It is not clear in what respect this already conceives of the eucharistic celebration as a sacrifice (Niederwimmer 1993:196-9). A variety of metaphorical applications of θυσία is listed from second-century Christian authors by Ferguson (1990: 818). Clement's first letter spoke of Jesus Christ as high priest of our προσφοραί (36, 1), while bishops have been 'offering' the gifts in a holy manner (44, 4). Justin (*Dial*. 41, 3) takes the 'pure offering' of the Gentiles (Malachi 1:11) as fulfilled in the eucharistic bread and cup. This is the 'new oblation of the new covenant' according to Irenaeus (*Adv. haer*. 4, 17, 5). The sacrificial implications of it were to be emphatically spelled out in the third century by Cyprian (*Ep*. 63, 14.17; 67, 3).

In a similar way the priestly terminology of the Septuagint was occasionally applied to the ministry in the *ekklesiai*. In the *Didache* visiting prophets are not only given free rein with the eucharistic prayer, but are maintained as well from the first fruits 'for they are your chief priests' (13, 3). Polycrates of Ephesus (ap. Eus. *HE* 5, 24, 3) salutes the memory of the apostle John as the 'priest wearing the ephod' (sc. the high priest, since he lay on the Lord's breast, John 21:20). Tertullian speaks of the irregular ordinations of those who entrust *sacerdotalia munera* to laymen (*De praesc. haeret*. 41), though he is alert to the way custom establishes rules that are not prescribed in Scripture (*De cor*. 3, 4). Nevertheless the biblical terminology for ministers prevailed and it was not until the fourth century that it became common to add hierarchical terms to it (Kötting 1980; Dassmann 1992).

From the classical side, Lucian refers to the Christians as practising a novel mystery cult (τελετή) in which Peregrinus set himself up as προφήτης καὶ θιασάρχης καὶ ξυναγωγεύς through associating with their ἱερεῦσιν καὶ γραμματεῦσιν (*Peregr*. 11). Similarly Celsus speaks of the disciples of Jesus as θιασῶται, a term Origen was to distance himself from (*C. Cels*. 2, 70; 3, 22/3). Yet Clement contrasts the θίασος of the Maenads with the holy χορός of the prophets (*Protr*. 1, 2, 2), and considers it better to become θιασώτης τοῦ παντοκράτορος than to choose demonic darkness (*Strom*. 4, 8, 68, 4). A century later Eusebius was to make free use of the cultic imagery. Christ at the beginning instructs his θιασῶται (*HE* 1, 3, 12.19), while in Constantine's day his *ekklesiai* throughout the world constitute our θίασος. This is best taken as a stylistic device according to Bartelink (1979). Colpe (1992) reviews the historical issue, and the ambiguities surrounding the classification of the unique character of second-century Christianity are treated by Lieu (1998).

## Third-century community and cult

Far-reaching clarifications were attempted in the mid-third century, as the Roman state reached both its millennium and its military nadir. Origen belatedly produced a systematic reply to Celsus. The latter had opened his attack by recognising how the Christians were bound together, more powerfully than by any oath, through their so-called ἀγάπη. On this basis they formed compacts (συνθῆκαι) in defiance of 'the common law' (of civilised mankind). Against this Origen asserts 'the law of truth' (*C.Cels*.1, 1). Just as it would be right to plot against a tyrant, so, in the case of the laws on images and godless polytheism, 'it is not unreasonable to form compacts against the law for the sake of truth' (the earliest attested statement of such a principle). The Christians aim to save others by persuading them to break with a diabolical tyranny.

Decius, however, in 249 determined to restore Rome's fortunes through a traditional mass *supplicatio* to the gods. The force of such pledges lay in their spontaneity (Aug. *Res gestae* 9, 2). But now, for the first time, every word and action was to be rigidly prescribed and verified; every man, woman and child must personally have tasted the sacrifice and poured the libation. They must then submit to the special commissioners a written petition (*libellus*) to be countersigned with explicit testimony that they had been seen to do it. All must affirm that they had always sacrificed (an echo of the spontaneity principle?). The Christians construed it as an assault on 'the law of truth'; there was never any question of exemption such as was secured to Jews by the tax system. Apart from the extant *libelli* the outcome is known from their intense reactions (Selinger 2002). While many Christians submitted (*sacrificati*), or stopped short but induced the commissioners to sign anyway (*libellatici*), others publicly refused (*confessores*), in some cases being condemned to death (*martyres*), while many simply absconded, notably Cyprian and Dionysius (Clarke 1998). Both were highly educated, wealthy adult converts, but episcopal leadership was challenged by the moral authority of confessors and martyrs. In Africa these issued thousands of petitions of reconciliation (*libelli pacis*, Cyp. *Ep*. 20, 2, 2) for penitent *libellatici*, provoking a metaphorical civil war over the credentials of two rival systems of sacrifice (Cyp. *De lapsis* 25). The organisational energy and international networks of the bishops match the claim of Origen (*C. Cels*. 1, 7) that 'almost the whole world has come to know the *kerygma* of Christians better than the *placita* of philosophers'. But more than academic truth was now at stake. The cultural solidarity of the empire as a whole was in jeopardy. For the first time the government switched its attention from personal loyalty to the structure of the Christian community in itself.

Valerian made no attempt to revive the Decian *libelli*. According to Dionysius (ap. Eus. *HE* 7, 10, 3) his *oikos* itself was a veritable *ekklesia* of God, filled with θεοσεβεῖς. In a clear shift towards the Christian sense of *religio* as a life commitment rather than a procedural one, he allowed (in

257) that there were those *qui Romanam religionem non colunt*, but they must perform the procedures all the same (Heberlein 1988). Recalcitrant *episcopi* and *presbyteri* were to be exiled and debarred from holding *conciliabula*, or going into the *coemeteria*. The report of Dionysius (ap. Eus. *HE* 7, 11, 3.10.11) coincides; no *synodoi* or *synagogai*, no going into so-called *koimeteria*. The self-conscious use of the bizarre Christian sense of 'dormitories' reveals the serious attention now being paid to the realities of the problem. Decius had tried to swamp it by reverting to a lost consensus, but Valerian will tackle it from the ground up. Nothing shocked classical ideals more profoundly than the celebration of the physical relics of death. The *ekklesiai* had migrated far beyond the old *collegia funeraticia*. Cyprian (*Ep*. 67, 6, 2) condemns Martialis for using one, *exterarum gentium more*: they belong to foreign nations, while Cyprian stands with the new world-wide people, *cum omnibus omnino episcopis in toto mundo constitutis*. In Egypt, facing the exiled Dionysius, the governor attempted the first ethnic cleansing of Christians (Eus. *HE* 7, 11, 14). It failed. A year later (258) Valerian sharpened his analysis (Cyp. *Ep*. 80, 1, 2): all clergy were to be executed immediately, and all men and women of Roman rank, including imperial freedmen, were to be stripped of their honours and estates. There are two drastic innovations here: the penalties are retrospective, recantation securing only one's basic citizenship; while confiscation strikes down the social welfare system of the *ekklesiai*, maintained even from exile (Schwarte 1989). Such an intensive action against the churches was never attempted again. From 260 Valerian was a prisoner of war in Persia and his son Gallienus cancelled the program by edict.

When Dionysius and other surviving bishops sought its application to Egypt the rescript (translated by Eusebius, *HE* 7, 13) focussed upon the retrieval of τόποι θρησκεύσιμοι. This unparalleled term may well have been retained in the Latin from the original Greek petition of the bishops. It discloses for the first time the existence of buildings dedicated to Christian use, and thus requiring a new categorisation. It also implies that they were not in private ownership, since bishops would not have been required for their retrieval, but that they were held by the bishops on behalf of the *corpus Christianorum*. Cyprian had already indicated how the *ekklesia* gathered around its tribunal, the raised *pulpitum* (*Ep*. 38, 2, 1; 39, 4, 1; 5, 2), from which the words of the gospel are read daily. A platform is needed where one must project one's voice across a throng of people, in a public assembly, the law courts, the theatre, or when lecturing. It is not needed in a temple or for sacrificial cult. But Cyprian can see that analogy. If one gives in to heretics, he imagines, our *sacerdotes* might as well take away the Lord's *altare* and let the others instal their images and idols with their *arae* in the sacred and revered *congestus* ('chancel'?) of our clergy (*Ep*. 59, 18, 1). The very horror of idolatrous cult is set up as a foil to ecclesiastical practice. *Altare* (cf. LXX θυσιαστήριον) keeps its distance from the *arae* (cf. the βωμός of polytheistic sacrifice), which ought

to stay outside anyway if they are for animal offerings (H. Leclercq, s.v. Autel, *DACL*).

The synod that excommunicated Paul of Samosata in 268 complained of his theatrical showmanship on the *bema* at ecclesiastical *synodoi*, enhanced by his use of a high throne and a *secretum*, or private sanctum (ap. Eus. *HE* 7, 30, 9). Paul refused to surrender the ecclesiastical *oikos* until Aurelian (on petition) assigned it to those nominated in writing by the Italian and Roman bishops 'of the dogma' (*HE* 7, 30, 19). The need to determine ownership of the new buildings had led the bishops for the first time to an imperial ruling, which significantly enforced the Roman point of reference in church affairs. The same applied with the ecumenical synod of the Dionysiac artists (Judge 2002:67f). The imperial government itself had long since smoothed away public debate: Aurelian is said to have reproached the senate with spinning out the argument as though they were meeting in a Christian *ekklesia* and not in the temple of all the gods (*SHA* 26, 20, 5). The neo-Platonic critic Porphyry taunted the Christians with building very large *oikoi* so that they could pray together in them even though nothing stopped them praying in their own *oikiai*, since the Lord would hear them anywhere (ap. Macarius Magnes 4.21 = frag. 76 Harnack). Writing of the huge influx of people into the *ekklesiai* by the turn of the century, Eusebius calls their buildings *proseukteria* ('prayer-halls'), and for the first time(?) uses the term *ekklesiai* for the large-scale structures now being created (*HE* 8, 1, 5) (Richardson 1998; White 1997). The decision of Aurelian in 270 had presumably given the churches at last corporate recognition in Roman law. But their self-determined structure and ideology itself challenged the sovereignty of the Roman people (Ehrhardt 1953 & 1954; Saumagne 1960 & 1961; Herrmann 1980; Brent 1999).

## Fourth-century community and cult

The destruction of buildings was a distinctive feature of Diocletian's campaign against the Christians, along with the burning of scriptures (Lact. *Mort*. 12, 2; Eus. *HE* 8, 2, 1.4). The term *ekklesia* was presumably used for the buildings in the edict as it was even at village level in 304 (P.Oxy. 33.2673). When Galerius in 311 authorised rebuilding he called them *conventicula* (Lact. *Mort*. 34, 4; τοὺς οἴκους ἐν οἷς συνήγοντο, Eus. *HE* 8, 9). They were not seen as cult-sites, and Galerius allows the (non-cultic) respect (*observare*, προσέχειν) shown to the God of the Christians as distinct from the *cultum et religionem* (θρησκείαν) one owed to the gods. In the edict of Milan Constantine and Licinius were to make the same distinction (Lact. *Mort*. 48, 3; Eus. *HE* 10, 5, 5). Galerius knows to use the (non-cultic) *orare* (ἱκετεύειν) favoured by Christians when he asks them to 'plead' with their God for his safety (*salus*, σωτηρία) and that of the *res publica* and of themselves (Lact. *Mort*. 34, 5; Eus. *HE* 8, 10). He would have known that this is precisely what Christians normally offered in defence when their loyalty was challenged. Their offence is elaborately explained at the beginning of

the edict. It is not classified as the introduction of a *religio nova* (from abroad) based on 'superstitious doctrines' as with the Manichaeans condemned in the edict of 302 (Riccobono 1968: 580f). Instead the Christians are said to have abandoned the life-style (*secta*, αἵρεσις) of their ancestors and arbitrarily to have made up laws for themselves to observe. The result was that *per diversa varios populos congregarent*, ἐν διαφόροις διάφορα πλήθη συνάγειν (Lact. *Mort*. 34, 2; Eus. *HE* 8, 10). The Greek suggests that *per diversa* is not necessarily a geographical expression and that *varios* does not mean 'various', in spite of recent translations. The correct sense of Eusebius was given by Valesius, prior to the recovery of Lactantius, in 1659 (*PG* 20): *in diversis sectis atque sententiis diversos cogerent coetus*. Galerius objects to the Christians forming 'divergent communities on deviant lines', splitting with their inherited Roman culture. Deplorable though it was, he has decided to tolerate them on condition that they contribute in their own way to the common good. It is a calculated libertarian policy, to be overridden within a year of his own death. It differs from the biculturalism secured for the Jews by their tax, since the Christians were Romans. Their government has at last conceded Origen's point. One may lawfully pursue a higher truth than law itself.

The restoration of the buildings and return of exiles (many having been condemned to the mines) threatened to disrupt the lives of those who had taken over the properties of Christians. Constantine and Licinius soon guaranteed compensation (Lact. *Mort*. 48, 7/9; Eus. *HE* 10, 5, 9/11). But at Antioch the administrator Theotecnus promoted instead a public petition for their exclusion from the city. Maximinus in 312 endorsed this as a model for other cities. Each received his rescript congratulating it on its pious adherence to the gods (Eus. *HE* 9, 7, 3/14, translated in person from the stele at Tyre). Latin fragments, notably from Colbasa (*AE* 1988, 1046) confirm the translation. The formal *territorium* of each city was included, cutting off any quiet retreat into the local countryside. This apartheid policy was linked with the campaign, already launched by Theotecnus, to win back community support for the gods. *Hypomnemata* of Pilate discrediting Christ were publicly displayed in town and country, and set for memorisation in primary school (Eus. *HE* 9, 5, 1/2), along with a scandalous exposure of what went on in the *kyriaka* ('Kirchen', 'churches').

Maximinus built on this concern over the intellectual and moral drive, with its underlying theme of separate nationhood, a systematic answer to their organisational network. High-priests were appointed for each city and province, and given powers of arrest and the white uniform of public officials. They were required to offer daily sacrifices to all the gods, to confront Christians with their duty, and to hand over any recalcitrants to the magistrates (for expulsion?) (Lact. *Mort*. 36, 4/5; Eus. *HE* 9, 4, 2). By the following year (313), however, Maximinus denied that he had been responsible for any banishments, citing his refusal of the petitions from Nicomedia and other cities, and in effect

reinstating the position of Galerius (Eus. *HE* 9, 9a, 1/12; 10, 7/11). In the wake of these intractable problems came the decisive clarification of the legal status of the Christian community produced by Constantine in his agreement with Licinius at Milan in 313 (Lact. *Mort*. 48, 7/9; Eus. *HE* 120, 5, 9/11). The Christians collectively constitute a *persona / πρόσωπον*, with corporate existence (*corpus / σῶμα*) in law. Both the concept and term of legal as distinct from natural personhood are entirely absent from the greatest classifier amongst Roman jurists, Gaius, and the notion of a corporation acting in lieu of a person only gained currency in the legal science of the Middle Ages (Schulz 1951:71). The 'edict of Milan' however takes it for granted. But the repeated emphasis upon *corpus Christianorum* in our version, which Licinius issued at Nicomedia, implies that this latter concept was unfamiliar in the Greek East. The explanatory phrase, *id est ecclesiarum, non hominum singulorum*, was therefore taken by Ehrhardt as a gloss by Licinius himself. It was moreover further processed by Eusebius in his translation, which fails to pick up *ecclesiarum* though Ehrhardt thought it had only made its unusual appearance in official Latin for the benefit of the Greek provinces already familiar with the term. As for *corpus*, it had been applied to their churches a century earlier by Tertullian in Africa. It need not remain uncertain whether the gloss *id est corpori et conventiculis eorum* conceives *corpus* as a larger entity than *conventicula*, since *corpus* itself had already been defined in the earlier gloss as (plural) *ecclesiae*. Viewed this way one may take the policy of Constantine as an attempt to provide for these within the substructure of the national community, rather than adopting the more drastic final solutions of Galerius or Maximinus which faced up to the *tertium genus* theory as a serious threat to national solidarity.

For Eusebius, however, normalisation fell far short of the truth of this moment. In his *ecclesiastike historia* (1, 4) while admitting that Christians were a *neon ethnos*, he had stressed that their *theosebeia* was the most ancient, having been discovered by Abraham. His purpose then had been to trace the succession to orthodoxy within the principal *ekklesiai*, much as though he was compiling the *philosophos historia* of a regular school. His history barely recognised the question of its bearing on that of the Roman world as a whole. But now he developed a 35-volume response to Porphyry's exposure of the intellectual and social inadequacy of the Christians. The time has come, he says (*Praeparatio evangelica* 1, 5, 10/12), to explain what may properly (κυρίως) be called Christianism (as distinct from Hellenism and Judaism), a new and authentic *theosophia*, accentuating by its name its innovatory character (καινοτομίαν). Origen had already applied the Stoic idea of providence (πρόνοια) to history, and the overwhelming enthusiasm for the blossoming of Constantine's patronage swept Eusebius into a grand vision for the future (Kinzig1994). As a broad movement of life and thought Eusebius has rightly seen that the *ekklesiai* have far outstripped the familiar conventions of local associations. But what can he say about cult?

Those outside our θίασος will still have a part in its benefits (*HE* 10, 1, 8). Our temples (νεώς) are rising again to far greater splendour (2, 1). One hymn of praise comes from all, with consecrated men performing the sacred rites (3, 3). At the opening of the νεώς in Tyre, Eusebius himself delivered the panegyric (*HE* 10, 4, 2/72). The imagery comes from the Temple of Jerusalem, but its meaning is drawn from the New Testament. The priestly stole is the Holy Spirit (4, 2), their praises come from the Psalms. Our kings have spat in the face of dead idols (4, 16), acclaiming Christ as king of all by royal inscriptions in the city that rules the world. He has supplanted the violent customs of barbarous nations with mild and humane laws (4, 18). He has set up throughout the earth a nation unheard of before (4, 19). We are that living ναός (he reverts to the *koine* form of the New Testament) into whose inmost sanctuary, the secrets of the rational soul, only the greatest High Priest of all may see (4, 21/22). The rebuilding of the *basilica* is described, and interpreted in detail (4, 55/69). The θυσιαστήριον is where Jesus as great High Priest receives from all the sweet smell of incense and the bloodless, immaterial sacrifices they offer through prayers.

Constantine for his part took the shift to inner sanctity quite personally. He confides in Aelafius, imperial vicar of Africa, whom he knows also to be a *cultor* of the supreme God that he fears the Divinity may be moved not only against the human race but against himself (*CSEL* 26, 204/6). He will not be free of anxiety until he knows that everyone reveres the most sacred God with united observance in the due cult of the Catholic *religio,* or the most sacred Catholic law, as he had put it at the beginning. He is enraged (Eus. *HE* 10, 5, 21) that some should split off over the cult (θρησκεία) of the holy and heavenly power and over the Catholic cause (αἵρεσις). The *corpus Christianorum* has quickly emerged, not as a secure component of the civil order, but as a totality whose coherence demands personal commitment from everyone. To the Catholic bishops (*CSEL* 26, 208/10), whom the Lord has judged *dignos cultui suo*, he confides that there had been many things in him lacking in *iustitia*, which he had thought the supernal power could not see. But the Saviour had had mercy on him. Christ's clemency however must have departed deservedly from those who will not obey the most sacred law. He knows this because they demand his judgement, when he awaits the judgement of Christ, while the judgement of the *sacerdotes* should be received as though the Lord himself was sitting with them. But those unspeakable deceivers of *religio* will be sent to his court by the vicar of Africa to contemplate there something worse than death. By such reasoning did the quest for mercy in the inner man convert the state itself into an instrument of cultic terror (Judge 1986).

By the middle of the fourth century Constantine's half-nephew, Julian, had privately turned his mind back to the classical cults. The bishop of Troy, Pegasius, showed him the local temple of Athena, closed now but carefully preserved. The bishop had kept the key (Julian, *Ep*. 79 Bidez, 19 Wright). Coming to power in 361 as the last of

Constantine's line, Julian committed himself to the reconstruction of Hellenism, consciously requiring the Greek cults to convert themselves into an adequate answer to the Galileans. We must add the practices that have done most to increase their atheism, *philanthropia* towards strangers, care for the tombs of the dead, and the contrived seriousness of life (*Ep*. 84 Bidez, 22 Wright). Arsacius, as high-priest of Galatia, must compel his subordinates and their families to be committed (σπουδαίους), they must avoid the theatre and taverns, provide hostels for strangers and food for beggars, teach Hellenists to support public services, and insist on their own precedence over governing officials. In contrast with Maximinus, Julian expects that the Hellenic gods can be supported by activist cult-communities on the Christian model (Nicholson 1994). His own admirers knew how unreal it was, but Julian shares with Celsus and Porphyry an historically alert recognition of the social and intellectual force of the communities that were emptying the old cults of their value to ordinary people.

Ammianus Marcellinus, an admirer of Julian yet sceptical of his practice in such matters, himself failed as an historian to identify clearly the historic phenomenon of Christianisation. It was taken for granted by him that the Christians shared in no way in the distinctives of the classical cults. The word *deus* does not arise in connection with them, and *numen* significantly only when Julian makes a pretence of addressing it at an Epiphany celebration (21, 2, 5). The virgins whom Sapor found *cultui divino sacratas* (18, 10, 4) were probably so described for their protection, *divinitas* (27, 7, 6) being in any case a preferred term amongst Christians. The deposition of Athanasius from his *sedes sacerdotalis* (15, 7, 9) likewise no doubt reflects the phrase used by Constantius. In spite of the favourite metaphors of Eusebius and others, Ammianus allows the Christians no *templum*, *delubrum* or *fanum*, no *sacerdos*, no *sacra*, *caerimoniae*, *hostia* or *ara*. All these belong exclusively to the gods. Similarly *secta*, *doctrina* and *theologus* belong elsewhere. But Ammianus self-consciously uses words that are in regular Christian usage (even apologising, as a Greek himself, for their origin): *ecclesia*, *synodus*, *episcopus*, *presbyter*, *diaconus*, *martyr*, *basilica*. For the phenomenon as a whole he couples the adjective *christianus* with *cultus*, *lex*, *religio* and (a growing preference) with *ritus*. None of these four nouns is coupled in Ammianus with any other such adjective, none of them is used primarily in a cultic connection, and the case usage of the phrases differs strikingly from that of the same nouns in other connections. They indicate his broad sense of a committed practice he cannot define, and for which he has no word (*christianitas* is first attested in *CTh* 14, 3, 11 of 365). Ammianus is in strong reaction to it, however, often expressing that in military metaphors (e.g. 21, 16, 18). He carefully indicates why he dislikes synods and admires martyrs. He favours an uncontentious, ethically quietist, and tolerant Christianity, but cannot understand the turmoil stirred up by it, simply treating that as a vice. He knows how factionalised and brutal the Christians often are, but does not understand the doctrinal character of the disputes or their popular appeal. He is not aware of biblical authority, though familiar with its equivalent in Classical and Egyptian culture, and only slightly conscious of the ecclesiastical welfare work, of monasticism, and of the influence of women. Thus though familiar with the public impact of Christianity Ammianus makes the typical historian's mistake of trying to explain its problems in terms of the general ones of the time. He would like to assimilate the socially positive aspects of Christianity, but is blind to the dogmatic sources of that. Yet in avoiding any terminological equation with the classical cults, and casting around for a different way of alluding to the phenomenon as a whole, like the good historian he is, he has indirectly registered the historical novelty (which we now call religion) of beliefs about God creating an alternative culture. But he would have been puzzled to hear Eusebius presenting it figuratively as a cultic community (Judge 2004b).

Like Galen two centuries before, Ammianus respected the philosophical commitment that led people to asceticism or to martyrdom. But he would surely have been appalled by the new institutional forms they were developing in his own day. Although the *ekklesia* had been providing social support for female virginity and widowhood since New Testament times, it was not until the early fourth century that continent men first won social recognition, and a name. The word *monachos* is attested in this sense as early as 324: *NDIEC* 1 (1981) 124/6. It soon became a paradox to contemporary observers that the quest for singularity of life produced dramatic new types of collective action, horrific to the unbelieving and often confrontational with the regular *ekklesiai* (Brakke 1995). The combination of intense spiritual discipline with a radically differentiated lifestyle fully justifies bringing the new monasteries under the rubric cultic community. Even those not living coenobitically were preoccupied with human relations (Gould 1993). Driving it all was the Christian substitute for cultic ritual, the desire to practise the moral injunctions of Scripture to the fullest degree (Barton-Christie 1993; Shaw 1998; Clark 1999). There was however no more glorious public testimony to one's faith than to suffer execution for not renouncing it (Bowersock 1995). As Cyprian had found, the readiness to die conferred on the confessor a moral authority which challenged that of his bishop (Dassmann 1973). To the revulsion of outsiders this trust was carried forward to the relics of the martyr, and to the burial site. In a total reversal of the classical instinct to shun a grave as polluting, the promise of life was now tied to the dead (Brown 1981). The relics, moreover, were moveable, and could be used to extend the privileged access to grace through the martyrs permanently into the future (Markus1994). By such means the *ekklesia* could turn themselves into local sanctuaries with a divinely accredited patron, matching the old cults in community value. MacMullen speaks of a 'seamless join of the old to the new' (1997:125). Certainly the churches came to provide the cultic anchorage that was desired for the daily and seasonal round. But entrenched within it

***Figure 2:** An ivory plaque depicting the crucifixion. © The British Museum Trustees*

now was the corpus of texts that had driven their radical experiments in community reconstruction (Kaczynski 1974; Stroumsa 1999).

## What would it all do for the world?

The ruling fashion amongst Ancient Historians is to say that the conversion of Rome changed little or nothing, at least in the way life was experienced. All Ramsay MacMullen could find that was unique in the daily round was the sign of the cross. But that on its own points to something more profound than ritual. To the ancient critics the cross was a disgusting humiliation, making nonsense of any claim that Christ was divine. But to believers he already triumphed from the cross. See the earliest narrative depiction of it on the British Museum ivory plaque of about AD 420 (Figure 2; McGregor 2000:123). It signalled an altogether different kind of rule, the rock, if you will, on which the new community was being built. It sidestepped all established order for this alternative society. In the meantime the two had to live with each other, everyone having a stake in either. But in the end the new would supplant the old.

In late antiquity, in what seemed its hour of triumph, the social force of this was masked, as the *ekklesiai* were drawn into the reassuring cultic comforts of the past. But at the least an alternative structure of thought was ensured. The perfect, stable and permanent universe of classical thought was confronted by the proposition of a beginning and an end, and the discovery that things must progress. The massive dogmatic drive also kept open the potential for counter-cultic renewal. The doctrine of a truth higher than law had been formulated by Origen, and accepted reluctantly in practice by Galerius. Those who claim they were only acting under orders are no longer excused. The open society places moral responsibility on everyone. The onus of choice has made space for multiculturalism. But

multiculturalism threatens the open society if it only locks us into our cultural past, protected from criticism. Australia does not have the excuse of an inherited ethnic mosaic. It falls to everyone to be open to a better choice, and to win a better understanding of how the world works.

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# Endnotes

1 More than a dozen aretaologies and hymns are preserved in literary or documentary form: Grandjean (1975); Engelmann (1964), on the founding of the cult at Delos; Vanderlip (1972); Zabkar (1988:135-60), including Eng. tr. and discussion of the main Greek and Latin texts, for which see also G.H.R. Horsley (1981:10-21).

2 They have been collected by Bricault (1996). This Greek motif, unique to Isis, is confined to the flood of enthusiasm for her that runs from the time of Caligula to that of the Severi, and must have been organised, according to Bricault (1994:67-86).

3 Over 1,000 inscriptions from outside Egypt were treated by Vidman (1969). Some 3,150 epigraphically attested individuals were listed and classified by Mora (1990). The organisation of priestly grades has been studied by Baslez (1975 & 1977), and by Schönborn (1976). Vidman (1970) presents a full analysis of the group terminology, and its dilemmas are treated by Koester (1999).

4 For their distinctive dress, see Eingartner (1991).

5 Clauss (1992), tallied 184 definite Mithraea, 673 Mithras reliefs, and 1003 inscriptions from 480 sites, 19 of them in Rome. Of 997 attested individuals 350 are from Rome and Italy, 102 from Rhine provinces, 423 from Danube provinces, and 122 from elsewhere in the Empire.

6 Progression through the grades is documented by P.Berol. 21196: Brashear (1992). The proposal of Dieterich (1923), to derive *PGM* 4.475/834 from the cult of Mithras has not proved convincing more recently.

7 For analysis of the debate at the time, and of its renewal a century later, see Josaitis (1971); Kötting (1977) Kloppenborg (1993); Schmeller (1995:9-24).

8 Further discussion in Hainz (1972); Kertelge (1972); Klauck (1981); Hainz (1982); Barton (1992); Harrison (1999); Clarke (2000); Horrell (2000).

9 The terminological artifice of Theissen's title is acknowledged: 'Sie erbauten eine semiotische Kathedrale aus narrativen, rituellen und ethischen Materialien, eine Zeichen- *und* Lebenswelt' (385).

10 Il sacrificio nel Giudaismo e nel Cristianesimo: *ASE* 18/1 (2001); I cristiani e il sacrificio pagano e biblico: *ASE* 19/1 (2002).

# Gustaf Adolf Deissmann (1866-1937): trailblazer in biblical studies, in the archaeology of Ephesus, and in international reconciliation

## Albrecht Gerber

**Abstract:** Whether in philology, lexicography, archaeology, or international reconciliation, the German theologian Gustav Adolf Deissmann was an intellectual force to be reckoned with. As New Testament Professor at Heidelberg (1897-1908) – where he produced most of his Greek linguistic works – he became the 'Father of New Testament Philology' and was the first one to prove the Greek Bible's vernacular Koine, by comparing its language with that in the papyri and inscriptions. He is best known for his most frequently quoted book *Light from the Ancient East*. As New Testament Professor at Berlin (1908-35), he produced the internationally influential semi-political communiqués *Protestant Weekly Letter* (1914-17) and *Evangelischer Wochenbrief* (1914-21), which indirectly led to his successful rescue operation for the then rapidly vanishing ancient city of Ephesus, and also helped to establish him as a leading member of the post WW1 ecumenical and international reconciliation movement. Deissmann was the recipient of eight honorary doctorates – Marburg, Aberdeen, St Andrews, Manchester, Wooster, Oxford, Uppsala and Athens – and was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Price.

## Biographical background

The name Adolf Deissmann scarcely registers recognition in his native Germany today; how much less so in other parts of the world. This regrettable obscurity is mainly due to the absence of any scholarly evaluation of the life and works of this once internationally acclaimed and versatile intellectual – a major shortcoming in the history of scholarship that is beginning to be redressed only now. His international eminence may be gauged in part from the award of eight honorary doctorates from universities in Germany, Scotland, England, USA, Sweden and Greece; and in both 1929 and 1930 he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The son of a liberal protestant pastor, Gustav Adolf Deissmann (figure 1) was born on 7 November 1866, in Langenscheid, a small village in the German state of Hessen. On his father's insistence, he studied theology and was educated at Tübingen, Berlin, Herborn and finally Marburg, where in 1891 he habilitated with a philological dissertation entitled *Die neutestamentliche Formel 'In Christo Jesu' untersucht* (The New Testament formula "in Christ Jesus" examined). Following a brief stint as *Privatdozent* (lecturer), he worked for two and half years as *Pfarrer* (minister/pastor) for provincial Herborn and its surrounding farming districts, while concurrently teaching at the local Theological Seminary. In 1897 he became Professor of New Testament at the University of Heidelberg, and there taught for eleven years, before accepting a similar position at Berlin, where he remained until his retirement in 1935, two years before his death. Deissmann married Henriette



*Figure 1: Gustav Adolf Deissmann (Photo held privately).*

Elisabeth Behn (1873-1955) on 18 April 1897 (figure 2), a union that resulted in five children, of whom Dr. Phil. Gerhard Deissmann (Bremen), who celebrated his 94th birthday in May 2005, is the sole surviving member.

## Trailblazer in biblical studies

Before 1895, when Deissmann published his groundbreaking book, *Bibelstudien* (Bible Studies), the language of the New Testament was routinely isolated from classical Greek literature, as 'biblical', 'Jewish', 'Christian', 'Hebraistic', or even 'Holy Ghost' Greek, and was widely but erroneously believed to be heavily indebted to the Jewish translation of the Old Testament into Greek, commonly known as 'Septuagint'.

It would, of course, be very wrong to think that Deissmann was some lone voice amidst a world of opposing scholars. Throughout the 19th century academic consensus – particularly amongst philologists, socio-linguistic historians and theologians – had slowly been shifting away from these misguided linguistic isolation theories. But despite the growing international awareness that things were not what they seemed with the language of the New Testament, no one had thus far been able to come up with a tangible methodology that could systematically demonstrate how this language really was to be understood.

No one, that is, until Deissmann produced his *Bibelstudien*. It is the first of three interconnected volumes on the linguistic history of the Greek New Testament and the principal work that began to change all this. It was quickly followed by *Neue Bibelstudien* (both appeared in English later as a single-volume, entitled *Bible Studies*) and finally, in 1908, by *Licht vom Osten* (English version: *Light from the Ancient East*). Despite spanning more than a decade, the author wrote them intentionally as a triad on Hellenistic Greek as it relates to the New Testament, and the three works are best understood under the banners of Discovery, Consolidation and Popularisation.

Unless one reads the lengthy subtitles of both *Bibelstudien* books carefully, their popular names are very misleading, for they are anything but Bible studies *per se*. Instead they present a revolutionary and philologically technical exposition on the Greek of the New Testament, based not on sacred literature, but on scraps of ancient non-literary texts preserved on papyri and inscriptions. With this unorthodox approach, Deissmann had discovered and developed an innovative and highly effective philological methodology through which he compared the language of these common writings with that of the New Testament. The British grammarian James Hope Moulton (1863-1917) expressed it this way:

> *Deissmann is the first to seize upon the new material ... and [to] use it in a way which gives us a wholly new and indispensable tool for the study of the Greek Bible ... But the use of the papyri is the most characteristic feature of [Bibelstudien].[1]*

*Figure 2: Henriette Elizabeth Behn (Photo held privately).*

*Bibelstudien* entails learned philological commentaries of 75 Greek words, idioms and phrases in the Septuagint, most of which also occur in the New Testament, but were universally considered as exclusively 'biblical'. The author, however, demonstrates from the newly found sources that each of these examples had been in common use at the time of their writing. His work was not restricted to papyri, but also included various inscriptions and ostraca.

When *Neue Bibelstudien* was published two years later, it strongly consolidated his original thesis, by demonstrating that his first book had merely drawn attention to the tip of a linguistic iceberg. For he added more than 90 fresh case studies of Greek words, which classical scholars still categorized as 'biblical' or 'Hebraistic' peculiarities.

Deissmann's best-known and masterly book *Licht vom Osten* completes the triad. Much wider in scope, it expands still further on the two earlier but far more technical works. His writing style is no longer esoteric, but glows with passionate enthusiasm; all foreign texts or words are translated and the book also features 58 high-quality and fully explained photographic reproductions of various texts on papyri, inscriptions and ostraka. Some of these latter ended up in Sydney just five months before Deissmann's death. In early November 1936 the Nicholson Museum was able to finalize the purchase of 87 ostraca from Deissmann's private collection (Deissmann-Angus Collection),[2] which:

> '... formed part of the material upon which he based his investigations into the nature of the Greek

*of the New Testament and he included much of it in his great work entitled Light from the Ancient East.'(Lawler 1997: M.420,1-3)*

These three books ought to be much better appreciated. For it is through them that the language of the New Testament was finally able to be put into its rightful historical setting and begun to be understood correctly (Horsley 1989:5-40).

## Revolutionary New Testament Lexicon

Dissmann's exceptional philological insight caused him deep frustration with the fundamentally flawed methodology all then available New Testament lexicons were based on. Lee recently described this situation in an outstanding survey (2003). One elementary problem was the common practice of trawling words *en bloc* from predominantly classical literature, which resulted in a sharply lopsided picture of the socio-linguistic reality of ancient Christianity. Compounding this methodological defect was an across-the-board intentionally calculated deficiency in school lexicons of basic 'expected-to-be known' words! Instead, their focus was first and foremost on the vocabularies of the more obscure classical writers, which created an ingrained presumptive knowledge base that underpinned Greek scholars, particularly theologians. But there was yet another obstacle for them: Hermann Cremer's *Biblisch-theologisches Wörterbuch der neutestamentlichen Grӓzität*, first published in 1866 and so popular that the author had revised it ten times by the time he died in 1903. An English translation appeared in 1878, entitled: 'Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek'. Its success was largely due to the Greek definitions being rendered into German, instead of the then-customary Latin, but also because of Cremer's underlying belief that the 'unique' language of the New Testament, and *ipso facto* early Christianity, had self-generated through divine empowerment.

It is amidst an overwhelming environment of such erroneous linguistic presumptions that Deissmann began his push for a more accurate and scientific New Testament lexicon. The first time when he specifically states that he was planning to compile one is in his foreword to *Neue Bibelstudien*, when he was not yet 31 years old. A few weeks after its publication he presented a paper on this topic at a theological conference in Giessen in 1897, where he boldly argued that:

> the next big task is to create a new lexicon for the New Testament ... As excellent, generally speaking, as Wilibald Grimm's revision of Wilken's [lexicon] was ... and as much as Cremer's lexicon has gained ascendancy over the years, both works – not to speak of all the others – are today no longer adequately serving their purpose.[3]

Deissmann planned his lexicon to be fully comprehensive and squarely based on his groundbreaking philological methodology. Although it was meant to be a New

Testament tool, its makeup was to be radically different to any of its predecessors. For he intentionally 'secularised' – that is, put in its historical Greek context – the 'sacred' language of the New Testament, by presenting compelling parallels from contemporary Greek vernacular.

Deissmann's mounting sense of urgency was certainly justified, but he was also beginning to feel frustrated with the State Ministry. He had long ago proven that his innovative lexicographical work would set the study of New Testament Greek on a new level of understanding; yet he received scant governmental cooperation. He was also conscious of the large network of helpful volunteers who assisted with the collection and evaluation of useful material. Moreover, scholars on both sides of the North Sea were eagerly expecting the long-promised lexicon, and many influential academics had made highly optimistic references to it in print. The value Deissmann himself laid on this lexicon can be gauged by his willingness to exchange his prestigious professorial position with pastoring in a small town, to gain more time for his work. With two primary school children and a seven months old baby to support, this was clearly no hasty decision.

Deissmann used to keep all his lexical work in a number of lockable boxes, but this was far more than a mere compilation of dictionary illustrations. They contained, in fact, the loose-leaved makings of a radically new lexicographical manuscript that drew heavily on the then-recently discovered masses of papyrological and inscriptional non-literary and non-sacred Greek texts. His own faculty members in Heidelberg were quite familiar with his unique project, and as early as November 1907 wrote a petition to the State Ministry in Baden, in which they showed their unanimous confidence that Deissmann's lexicon could soon be ready for publication, if the author were given better (governmental) support.

Deissmann clearly expected this lexicon to become his *opus vitae*. Yet despite his tireless efforts, he increasingly came to realise that, as long as he remained in his present position as Professor of Theology, the lexicon would take impossibly long to complete and if he wanted to succeed, he would have to make some major changes. Nevertheless, his perspicacious proposal at Heidelberg to set up the world's first chair for New Testament Philology was rejected by the State Government in 1907, resulting in a flurry of activities at the University, whose Senate wrote to the Ministry that they feared:

> [we] could lose such an indubitably outstanding force as Deissmann, who is not able in the long run to remain in his present oppressed position, but is even now considering to take up a pastorate in some lower paid place, so that he may find the necessary spare time to complete his lifework.[4]

Despite the Senate's entreaty, the Ministry reacted with thinly disguised disinclination and, in effect, became instrumental in bringing about an end to Deissmann's very

productive Heidelberg career. For it was at about that time that he received an invitation from the aged Berlin theology professor, Bernhard Weiss (1827-1918), to come and meet him, on the pretext of some book dedication. Once there, however, Deissmann was enticed with many alluring promises, including the perhaps decisive one, of which he wrote to his Swedish friend, Nathan Söderblom (1866-1931) '… that my own lexicon would be strongly fostered here in Berlin and [I] hope that in the not too distant future, the printing can begin.'[5] Indeed, the Prussian Ministry showed its eagerness to have Deissmann in Berlin, in that they more than doubled his Heidelberg salary. For while he had thus far grossed 7,100 marks, the 'Mother of all Universities' assured him the princely sum of 16,200! It seemed to be an exceptional opportunity in every way, and four months later the Deissmanns had made their move to Berlin.

Although the lexicon was paramount to Deissmann, it failed to come to fruition; for besides unexpected work pressures, the looming First World War was about to change the course of his life completely. This is not to say that his lexicographical interests came to an end, or that his pioneering work did not leave its mark on classical scholarship. For he had closely collaborated with Moulton and with the latter's co-editor and later successor, George Milligan (1860-1934), by exchanging technical information and providing copious assistance. Indeed, their well-known work *The vocabulary of the Greek Testament, illustrated from the papyri and other non-literary sources* (London, 1914-29) is indebted in no small degree to Deissmann's ever-ready input. Nevertheless, after having concerned himself over the course of his life for nearly five decades with the language of the Greek Bible, the obvious question arises as to what became of his priceless collection of lexicographical data.

After Deissmann's sudden death of a heart embolism on 5th April 1937, his wife, Henriette, continued to live in their home in Wünsdorf, 40 km south of Berlin. The lexicon boxes were still there and had remained untouched in his study until April 1945. During that month, a Russian pincer attack on Berlin took control of the entire Wünsdorf region, from where they later commanded the Soviet occupied zone of Berlin. For one of their administrative headquarters, they requisitioned the Deissmann residence – and the boxes, along with most other private possessions fell victim to ignorance and war and perished forever.

During his lifetime, theologians and philologists alike have saluted Deissmann as a man who, through his innovative approach to the language of the Greek Bible, has made possible significant advances for the scholarly understanding of early Christianity within the context of the wider ancient world. Unfortunately, very few people recognize him today as the philological pioneer he really was, and that it was his innovative method of comparing ancient non-literary textual fragments with the Greek of the New Testament that has made all this possible.

Notwithstanding the thwarting of his attempt at Heidelberg to establish a formal branch for this new science, and the fact that some classical philologists had also worked in this field, scholars such as Friedrich Blass (1843-1907), Albrecht Dieterich (1866-1908), Eduard Schwartz (1858-1940), or Johann Theodor Paul Wendland (1864-1915), yet none of these accomplished philologists provided a solid framework for NT philological study. Adolf Deissmann was clearly the 'founding father' of modern New Testament Philology. To my knowledge, only one person has ever held a post with that title: Dr. Lars Rydbeck, Dozent in New Testament Philology at the University of Lund In Sweden.

## Rescuer of ancient Ephesus

Towards the end of 1905 Deissmann heard that his colleague at Heidelberg, the archaeologist Friedrich von Duhn (1851-1930), was going to lead a small group of men on a study tour to Greece and the Middle East. The entire venture was to be subsidized by the State of Baden, but restricted to classical philologists. However, both Deissmann and von Duhn were members of the same exclusive intellectual club, named 'Eranos' (founded in 1903 by Deissmann and the Professor of Classical Philology, Albrecht Dieterich); it is at one of its monthly meetings that Deissmann asked the tour organizer to allow him to join the tour. When von Duhn agreed, Deissmann immediately sought written permission from the State Ministry, which, despite initial reluctance, consented and even financed a third of his total cost. The fact that Deissmann had published the well-received first volume of the Heidelberg Papyri only a few months earlier had almost certainly helped in their decision.

Prior to 1906 Deissmann's studies and lectures were primarily based on written sources, and he had long felt disadvantaged by his lack of first-hand experience of the region or people whose language and social history he was researching. Now, however, he seized the opportunity to round out his intellectual knowledge with this comprehensively planned educational journey. For while contemporary theologians centred their cultural studies in an overly narrow manner on Palestine and Syria, Deissmann contended that the historical background of early Christianity 'is the antique world *in its widest sense*'[6] – a world that must be experienced from within to be accurately comprehended. This made him (not without opposition) into an early advocate of what Peter Pilhofer almost a century later terms 'lokalgeschichtliche Methode' (Pilhofer 2002:8-9, 44-45).

It was this philological 66-day study tour, followed by a similar but more theologically-oriented one in 1909 – this time organised and led by Deissmann himself – that laid the foundation for his contribution to archaeology during the latter years of his life. Yet until now very little was known of these two seminal journeys, neither has anyone made the obvious connection between them and

the significant role Deissmann later played in the revival of archaeological work at Ephesus, one of the world's most celebrated ancient sites. For it was in 1906 that he was first introduced to some of the most distinguished archaeological teams of his time at work, representing countries such as Austria, Britain, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Rumania and Turkey. During these two months, he also befriended many of their internationally recognised leaders: men like Wilhelm Dörpfeld, Arthur John Evans, Rudolf Heberdey, Maurice Holleaux, Georg Karo, Joseph Keil, Theodor Wiegand, Ulrich Wilcken or Georgios Zolotas.

The journey was scheduled to begin on Friday 30 March 1906, but before departing he wrote three brief yet emotionally charged farewell messages, one to his wife, a shorter one to his mother, brothers and sisters, and another to his (then) only son. His misgivings were not unfounded; for besides the prospects of wild dogs, robberies and various transportation hazards, they planned to travel through parts of the tottering and increasingly volatile Ottoman Empire. There was also the constant danger of catching malaria or some other serious disease – only a few months earlier the young Director of the American School of Classical Studies at Corinth (1893-1905), Theodore Woolsey Heermance had contracted typhoid fever and died, aged 33.

Von Duhn had arranged that their first educational stop be at Vienna. Deissmann himself had visited the Austrian capital (apparently for the first time), in March 1904 and
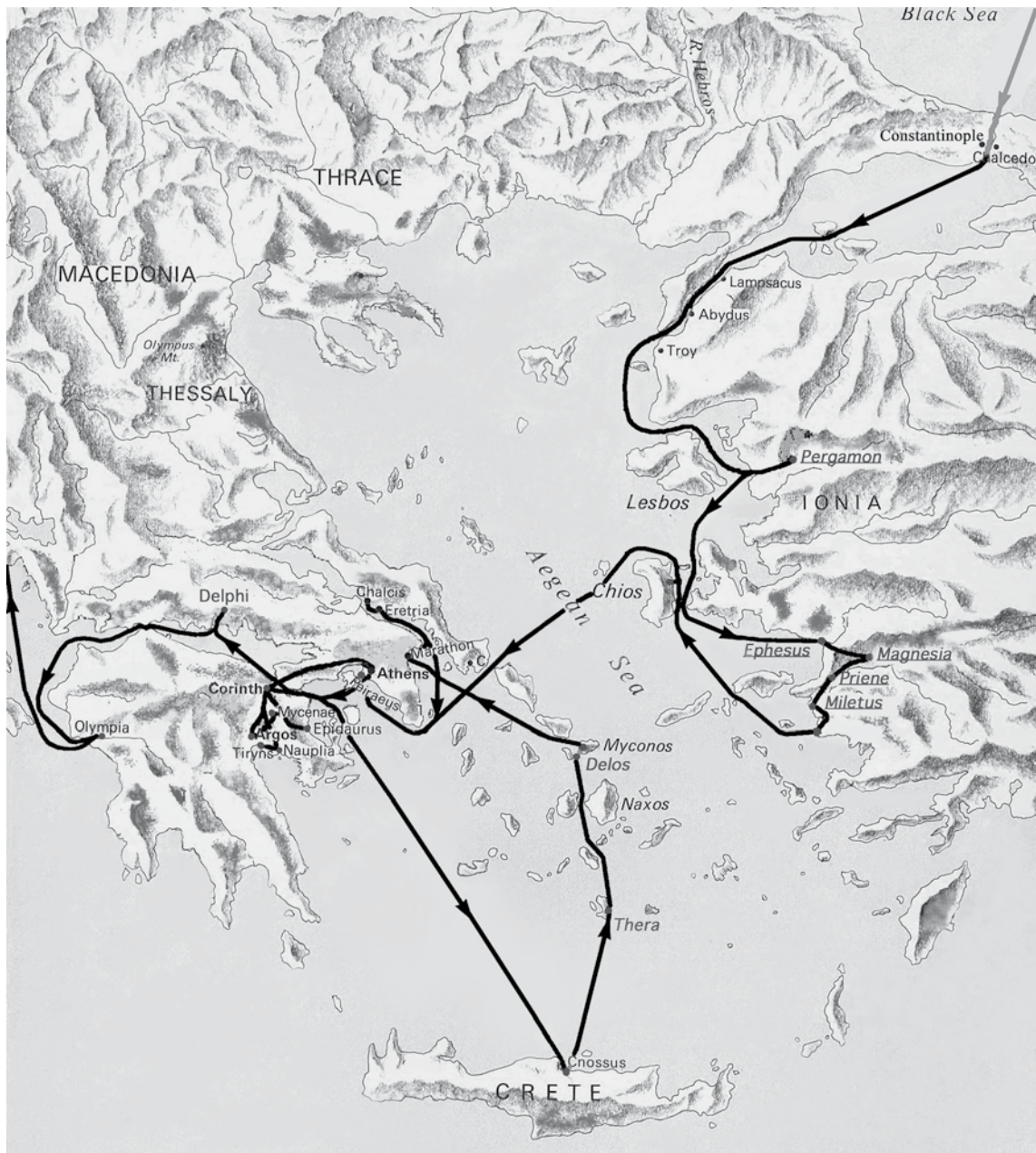


*Figure 3: Map of Deissmann's 1906 journey (Based on Bury & Meiggs 1900:579).*

was familiar with the remarkable work done at Ephesus by its Archaeological Institute (ÖAI). Now, however, in preparation for their imminent field studies, they spent two days at the newly opened Lower Belvedere exhibition, as well as the Theseus Temple in the public gardens, both dedicated to outstanding archaeological discoveries from Ephesus. It is possible to trace the itinerary and many details of what occurred on the trip from Deissmann's unpublished office diaries (see acknowledgements).

The journey resumed on Tuesday morning by 'Orient Express', travelling via Budapest and Bucharest to the Black Sea port Constanza, where they embarked on the steamer 'Romania' for a twenty-hour sea voyage south to Constantinople. There the men were welcomed by Theodor Wiegand (1864-1936), an old high school friend of Deissmann. The two had not seen each other for 21 years, but the uncommonly energetic Wiegand had since become Director both of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) in Constantinople, and of the Berlin Museums' antiquities division. Wiegand was a consummate and high profile archaeological campaigner, with an impressive record that included the successful excavation of Priene and Miletus with its surrounding region. His new project in 1906 was Didyma. That evening, however, he invited Deissmann to his home, where they renewed their friendship, and the following year the former became godfather to Deissmann's third child, Liselotte, who later married Wiegand's son Werner in 1928.

After five days in Constantinople, the men sailed southwest, through the Dardanelles and into the Aegean Sea. However, the group was now augmented by two well-known personalities: the one was Theodor Wiegand, who joined this relatively short leg of the tour to introduce the scholars to the physical fieldwork Germany was doing along the coastal regions of Turkey; and the other was the Director of the DAI at Athens, Wilhelm Dörpfeld (1853-1940), who was to act as their expert guide until Athens.

Dörpfeld was both a successful architect as well as an archaeologist of international repute, who was widely known for his work at Olympia (1877-81); and because his excavations played a substantial role in the revival of the Olympic Games in 1896, he had also been a guest of honour there. Towards the close of the Olympia project in 1881, Heinrich Schliemann (1822-90) had invited him to join his controversial venture at Troy. They became a successful team until the latter's death nine years later, after which Dörpfeld continued to direct the project for another four years. He was a leading and enthusiastic authority on Homer, which, together with his rhetorical finesse and wide archaeological experience, made him a captivating speaker who had, therefore, already given countless educational tours for celebrities, including King George I of Greece.

Under the guidance of these two very experienced men, von Duhn's party visited most of the better-known classical archaeological sites in western Anatolia. Beginning with

Pergamon, Dörpfeld showed them how the friezes of its great altar were rescued by being cut into 2-3 ton slabs and carefully packaged, before teams of oxen dragged them on rough wooden sledges down to the sea, for shipment to Berlin. There the entire altar would be reconstructed, and to this day has an overwhelming effect on anyone who visits the magnificent Pergamon Museum.

It was two days later, on 15 April 1906, when Deissmann set eyes on the vast remains of Ephesus for the first time. Their guide was Joseph Keil (1878-1963), a Czech-born archaeologist who, as Secretary of the ÖAI, had been working in Ephesus since 1904. Deissmann and Keil had apparently never met before, but this day proved the beginning of a lifelong friendship. Under Keil's knowledgeable direction, the sprawling site of this once 'first and greatest Metropolis of Asia' made a deep impact on Deissmann, as he relates some years later:

> I gladly confess ... that the view from the castle hill or from the 'prison of St. Paul', with its unforgettable wealth of impressions, first revealed ancient Ephesus to me and enabled me at length really to study the monumental work of the Austrians on Ephesus with full profit.[7]

Even though they were able to spend less than a day amongst these ruins, Deissmann's brief visit, reinforced by another in 1909, was to have far-reaching consequences, as we shall see later.

It was a short trip inland from Ephesus to the remains of Magnesia on the Meander, but here they could still see traditional reed-huts similar to those Herodotus described (5.101), before spending the night in nearby Söke. Early in the morning they mounted horses and made their way along a rough 15 km track to the ruined Hellenic town of Priene, where Wiegand explained the various stages of his ongoing excavations. That afternoon they saddled up again, intending to ride to Miletus – an additional and arduous 22 km – but the path led right through the mosquito-infested swamps of the Meander and they promptly lost their way. It was well after sunset when they reached their intended destination, but since Wiegand's 70 labourers had already deserted the place for the night, there was little choice but to press on into the dark for yet another 7 km on horseback, before finally arriving at their quarters in the region's oldest town, Akköy – utterly saddle-sore and exhausted. Nonetheless, since it had been too dark to see anything of Miletus, Deissmann wanted to return to it after daybreak. Wiegand was only too ready to show him 'his' highly successful diggings on which he had been working for the past 6 1/2 years. Later that day, however, the tired scholars were yet again sitting on their horses for the 20 km ride south along the ancient stone-paved Sacred Road that once linked Miletus with its cult-centre Didyma (not shown on the map). That night they slept somewhat uneasily in a house where bandits had only days before broken in and murdered a Greek occupant.

The following day they set out to sea on a steamer, crossing over to Athens via Chios and arrived coincidentally just as the Intermediary Olympic Games came to a close. During their three weeks' stay at the 'classics capital', von Duhn and Dörpfeld presented archaeology and history lectures almost daily, as well as conducting regular educational tours, while several other notable specialists presented topical sessions. The papyrologist Ulrich Wilcken (1862-1944), for instance, who happened to be in Athens at the time and of whom Deissmann wrote that he reads Greek texts scrawled on ostraca like other people read postcards, elucidated a number of inscriptions; or Georg Karo (1872-1963), Dörpfeld's Assistant Director at the DAI in Athens, who spoke on Delphi. Rudolf Heberdey (1864-1936), the Austrian archaeologist and regular leader of the excavations at Ephesus since 1896, was there too, and gave some practical field talks at Athena Nike's temple on the western tip of the Acropolis, since he had succeeded in the previous two years in reconstructing its fragmented gables and balustrade.

At the conclusion of their introduction to archaeology in Athens they moved on to Corinth, from where the tour focus shifted to archaeological locations connected with Bronze Age Minoan or Mycenaean civilizations. It began on Sunday 13 May with a short trip to the historic seaport Nauplia, on the Argolic Gulf, from where they proceeded 4 km north to the remains of Tiryns' Mycenaean citadel, with its massive walls, revealing monuments and Minoan frescoes, which Schliemann and Dörpfeld had brought to light some two decades earlier. The next morning they drove to ancient Greece's most illustrious healing centre: Epidaurus on the Saronic Gulf, sanctuary of Asklepios. Excavations on its finely preserved and acoustically superb 14 000 seat amphitheatre had originally begun in 1884, but work was still taking place on it in 1906. Here they also visited the new archaeological museum and studied local inscriptions.

Thirty-five km west of Epidaurus lay Argos, where the tour headed on Tuesday, before visiting nearby Mycenae by following some distance along the remains of a Late Bronze Age road. They took time to explore this silent citadel with its ruined walls and tholos tombs, before leaving the Peloponnese on the steamer 'Thessalia' for an overnight passage to Crete. There they stayed for two days and studied some of the island's Minoan sites, including the maze-like five acres of palace ruins at Knossus, which Arthur John Evans (1851-1941) had almost completely excavated less than three years before.

From Crete the group steamed north to Thera, the southernmost island of the Cyclades, where a German team had recently completed their excavations of the city that gave the island its name. Leaving this volcanic place, they sailed still further north to Delos. Some important remains of a Cretan/Mycenaean settlement had been discovered here, but the French archaeologist Maurice Holleaux (1861-1932) was in the process of excavating the city's

Hellenic parts with its amazing third/second century BC mosaics and multi-storied houses. He gave the Germans a guided tour and explained various inscriptions amongst the rubble, including one that Deissmann had discussed eleven years earlier in his *Bibelstudien*. A photo included in *Light from the Ancient East* (61) shows Deissmann, Holleaux, et al., examining parts of the inscription, *Licht vom Osten* includes the photo but lacks identifying details of the people in the picture.

They spent the night on the nearby island of Mykonos, then sailed northwest to the bay of Marathon, stopped briefly at Eretria, and visited one of Greece's oldest Jewish synagogues in nearby Chalkis, before returning to the Piraeus and docking for the night.

The following day they were again on board a vessel, manoeuvring through the precipitously steep-walled (up to 79 m.) new canal into the Corinthian Gulf, and steering for Itéa. After disembarking, their road led through sprawling olive groves and wound its way up to Delphi, where they stayed two full days and Deissmann took some time to study the inscriptions on the polygonal buttress of the Apollo temple, which related to the sacral manumission of slaves.

Their last cruise within Greek territory bent around the top of the Peloponnesus and to Olympia, where the French had first begun to excavate in 1829, but were succeeded by German archaeologists 45 years later. Deissmann and his colleagues spent two full days among the widely scattered ruins and inscriptions of this once foremost sanctuary, where in 776 BC the first Olympic Games were held. Here they also examined the remains of the great Doric temple that once housed a colossal 12 m. high statue of Zeus enthroned, created by Phidias and revered in antiquity as one of the seven wonders of the world, although little has survived of the sculpture itself. It would also not have escaped the scholars that the local museum was designed and built by their countryman, the architect Friedrich Adler (1827-1908), whose daughter Anne had married one of his students – none other than Wilhelm Dörpfeld.

Their study tour came to an end with a northerly course through the Ionian Sea, via Corfu, Brindisi, Taranto and Pompeii, which they had time to visit for a day and a half, before embarking on the Steamer 'Königin Luise' and sailing to Genoa, from where they took the train home to Heidelberg.

At that time nobody could possibly have foreseen that this journey designed for classical philologists would bear fruit two decades later, when one of its members – and a theologian at that – was galvanized to set in motion the complex rescue of a rapidly vanishing Ephesus.

Since Deissmann first set eyes on Ephesus' ruin-scattered landscape, he became increasingly convinced about its unique historical significance, especially in respect to early Christianity. Within a year of visiting the site for the second time in 1909, he was preparing eight lectures

*Figure 4: Ephesus: Theatre at the foot of Panayır Dağ, with the modern town of Selçuk in the far distance. The square area near the theatre is the lower (market) agora; the square area near the right edge of the photo is the upper (civic) agora. The road leading from the Theatre to the left of the photo takes the ancient visitor to the harbour (photographer, date and source unknown).*

on the Apostle Paul for the University of Uppsala, in which, spread throughout his text, he mentions Ephesus some 28 times. To give just one example: '... huge ruins of the great cities of Paul's world [have] been brought to light again through the excavations in Asia Minor and Greece – especially impressive [is] the uncovering of Ephesus by British and Austrian investigators ...'(1912:44). However, the First World War and ensuing collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire brought an abrupt end to this undertaking, and the only exception occurred during the short Greek occupation of western Asia Minor, when in 1921-22 an Athenian archaeological team under Georgios A. Sotiriou (1880-1965) was able to excavate part of the sixth-century basilica of St. John. Yet despite Deissmann's fears regarding Ephesus' bleak post-war fate, he was unable to do anything about it in view of the economic chaos in Germany that gave him a salary of 90 billion Marks, while the wages of a printer's assistant hovered around 900 million a week! Although Deissmann had long made it a point to draw the attention of his students to Ephesus' plight, it was not until spring 1925, when he was able to begin a resolute promotional campaign in which he targeted prospective sponsors in Europe and the United States.

At that time, Deissmann also contacted Keil with his idea; for despite the long interruptions of the war years, the ÖAI was still the only body licensed by the Turkish authorities to undertake diggings at Ephesus. Deissmann proposed, therefore, that they draw up a joint plan to recommence archaeological work in autumn 1926, for which he would

raise the necessary finance, while Keil would organise a professional team.

During the latter part of 1925, Keil had been employed by the 'American Society for Archaeological Research in Asia Minor' to make a surface survey of Cilicia, from where he was also able to make his first brief inspection of Ephesus since 1913, which enabled him to send Deissmann an up-to-date report on its condition.

The site turned out to be in far greater jeopardy than they had presumed. Before the mid-1980s, when the Turkish government raised the road level between the ancient city and the Kaystros river, the ruins were subject to annual flooding, which scoured and inundated many vulnerable structures, reburying them meters-deep under enormous amounts of silt and detritus. Rampant vegetation covered everything else and did much damage to sensitive masonry, which, in turn, was severely compounded by the local residents' habit of clearing the shrubbery by burning off. Two earthquakes had also occurred in western Anatolia during recent years: one in November 1919, the other in November 1924 – further serious structural damage could only be a matter of time. But perhaps the most pressing problem was the imminent threat of wholesale plundering.

Between December 1914 and November 1921 Deissmann produced a unique weekly paper, named *Evangelischer Wochenbrief*, of which, until 1917, an English edition, the *Protestant Weekly Letter*, was mailed to a thoughtfully

selected readership in America. One flow-on effect of these semi-political communiqués was a growing international circle of highly influential personal friends, such as Tomás Garrigue Masaryk (1850-1937), Founder and first President of Czechoslovakia, or Charles Henry Brent (1862-1929), Bishop of New York State West, who was also on the board of trustees for the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund in New York. It was through Brent that Deissmann was able to negotiate a sizeable financial donation from John Davison Rockefeller Jr (1874-1960), son of the then wealthiest man on Earth. In Germany itself Deissmann also lobbied governmental bodies successfully, and obtained the support from the Ministry for Internal Affairs, the Emergency Fund for German Scholarship[8] and the Foreign Office.

Deissmann thus succeeded on his own accord to organise the required funding for the recommencement of archaeological work at Ephesus. Yet concern was raised within Germany that, as a theologian, he simply made use of his international connections to seek subjective archaeological authentication for the Christian cause.

Nevertheless, such allegations could only cast aspersions on the academic integrity of the ÖAI, which is why Keil was stung to remark in a private letter:

> *'I wonder why they keep writing to me from abroad as if [Deissmann's] interests were purely fixed on Ephesus' Christian monuments and he intended to keep us from the antique ones, etc. It almost appears as if someone has deliberately sparked such rumours, which really run completely contrary to the truth. As far as I'm concerned, Deissmann has taken an entirely different standpoint right from the beginning....'[9]*

The first fully organized Austrian excavation team to return to Ephesus since 1913 arrived at the beginning of September 1926. Besides Josef Keil as leader, it consisted of the two Austrians Max Theuer (1878-1949) and Franz Miltner (1901-59), as well as the Turk Ahmet Aziz Ogan (1888-1956).

Keil's task of organizing an effective work party had turned out more difficult than expected and he felt compelled to write to the well-connected Wiegand for advice. In his letter he confided that his greatest misgiving for a successful undertaking was the Institute's lack of archaeologically experienced architects, since the Ephesus veteran Wilhelm Wilberg was now too old for this work. Thus far, Theuer had plainly not yet become a serious contender in Keil's mind, since more than four months later he writes in another letter to Wiegand that Hans Hörmann, his most recent prospect, appeared to be unavailable on personal grounds. Even though the latter eventually joined the team in 1927, in the end it was Theuer who was selected for the 1926 season.

Miltner was barely 25 years old, but had already shown himself a promising archaeologist with his local work

at the amphitheatre of the once-notable Roman city Petronell-Carnuntum, some 40 km east of Vienna. In 1925 he had also accompanied Keil to Cilicia (see above) for inscriptional work. As it turned out, he proved to be an excellent choice for Ephesus, since he became an integral part of every campaign there until 1931 and again later, from 1954 to his untimely death in 1959.

Aziz, on the other hand, was there as a result of negotiations between the Turkish government and the Austrian *Chargé d'Affairs* August Kral. For as late as May the widespread political uncertainties, particularly with regard to Italy's expansionist Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, had compelled Turkey to call a halt on all archaeological work or travel within western Anatolia, and it appeared that Ephesus was to suffer yet another year's critical damage. However, Kral was able to gain the government's acquiescence, by urging that the campaign should go ahead under the aegis of the Smyrna Museum, with its Director Aziz acting as formal leader, although in practice he worked in complete cooperation with the Austrian team.

Deissmann himself was unable to leave Berlin before October 1926 and only arrived in Ephesus on Sunday 17th, but this to the hearty welcome of all four team leaders. During the past six weeks they had already done most of the necessary groundwork, such as clearing and restoring the Institute's dilapidated headquarters in nearby Selçuk; hiring an initial gang of 40 to 50 labourers (which increased to about 130 in the last month), as well as clearing the overgrown vegetation from the most important ruins. When Deissmann arrived and saw the activities on the site he had so passionately campaigned for, it was almost like a 'homecoming' experience for him, and a few days later when he wrote to Wiegand about it, he confided that:

> *'it is one of the greatest delights of my life that after many disappointments we have after all finally succeeded in reopening this door [Ephesus].'[10]*

This was far more than prideful, or romantic pleasure in what he had achieved, for shortly after he wrote in another letter to an English friend:

> *'I began this new period of my life in a new inspiration [sic], being here for many weeks and participating in the new excavation work of the Vienna Institute ...'[11]*

Deissmann's sentiments are revealing, for he evidently envisaged himself in a future role for Ephesus, where he would continue to participate actively in scientific archaeology, rather than confine himself to fundraising and peripheral fieldwork.

His claim of actual participation in these excavations was no overstatement. Being a specialist in early Christianity and the instigator of New Testament Philology as a new sub-discipline of Biblical Studies, Deissmann had wide experience in using published inscriptions, and was therefore equipped to play an active role in all matters relating to Ephesus' Christian period. After acclimatizing

and familiarizing himself for a few days amongst the diggings, he began his work by investigating the disappearance of artefacts from the St. John's basilica. When he compared Sotiriou's four-year-old photographs with the ransacked state of the remaining edifice, Deissmann became so appalled that he later reported that 'the inhabitants of the Turkish village Seltchouk [sic] ... have plundered and are still plundering these venerable ruins in a horrible measure when they are erecting their houses and stables'.[12] With Greece's defeat by Turkey, Sotiriou had been forced to terminate his work abruptly in 1922, leaving more than half the church still buried beneath 5-6 m. of solid rubble; nevertheless, he was able to store a large amount of its smaller sculptures and architectural fragments in an unused mosque in neighbouring Ayasoluk. Unfortunately, this building was soon taken over by Muhajirs, and with the constant change of these occupants,

Sotiriou's collection (except for a few heavy blocks) all but disappeared. However, within two weeks of Deissmann's arrival he had rediscovered most of the missing items – fitted into various stone walls in the neighbourhood of the old Mosque – and with Aziz' energetic intervention via the local authorities was able to requisition the return of several wagonloads of them.

For the next month Deissmann was primarily working with Miltner at the Seven Sleepers' caves, a legend-enshrouded Christian necropolis, on the rocky eastern slopes of Panayır Dağ, behind Ephesus. Christian and Muslim traditions share the myth of how, during the Decian persecution (249-251), seven young men escaped into one of the local caves, where they were sealed in by the Emperor. The youths then fell into a deathlike sleep, but were awakened again by God some two centuries later. When the 'new' Emperor
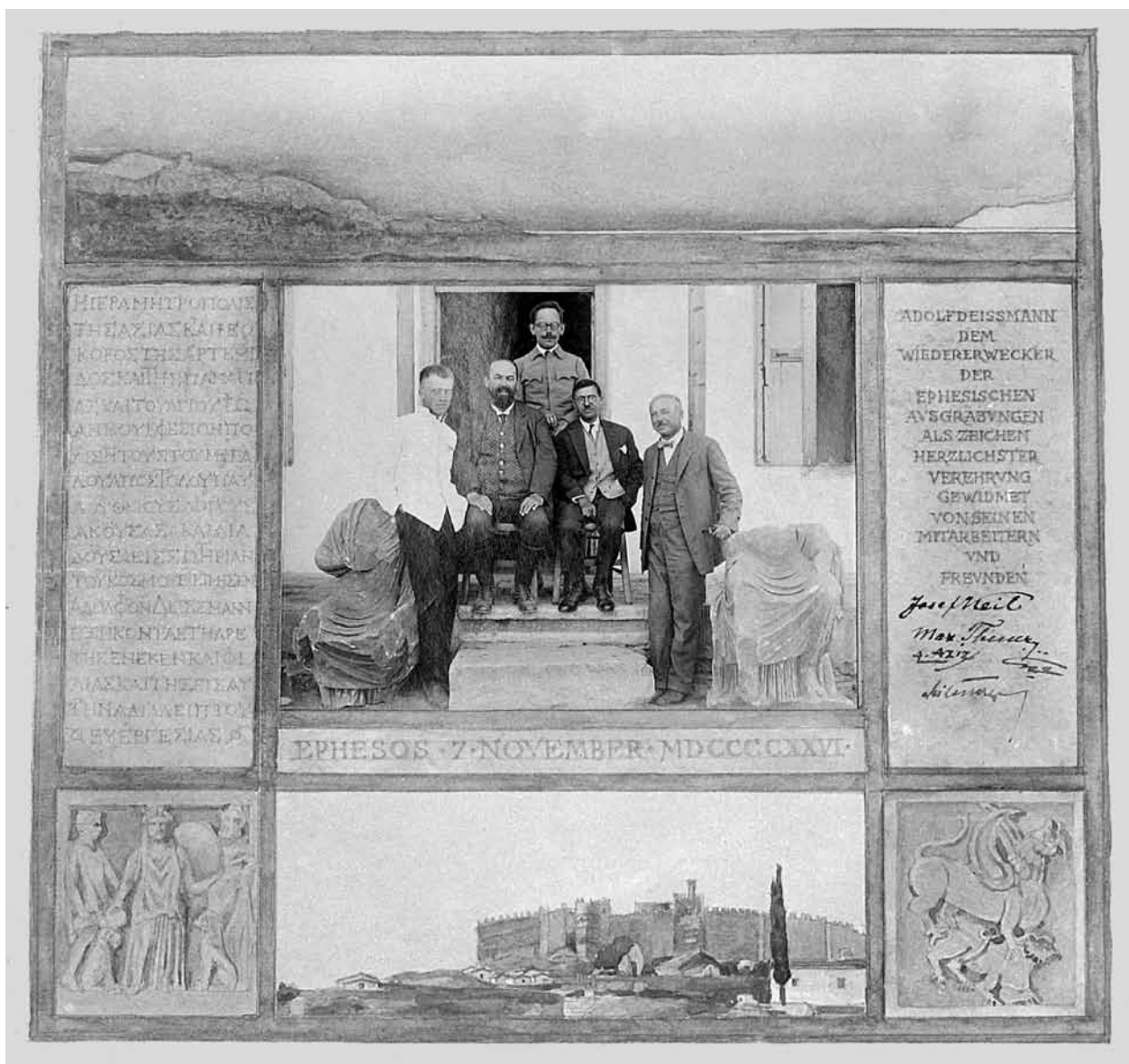


**Figure 5:** *Diploma presented to Deissmann at Ephesus on his 60th birthday by the Austrian archaeological team. Pictured from left to right: Franz Miltner, Adolf Deissmann, Josef Keil, Ahmet Aziz Ogan, Max Theuer. (Used with permission from the Austrian Archaeological Insitute, Vienna).*

Theodosius II (408-450) came to see this miracle, he hailed them as living examples of the resurrection, after which they died a natural death and were buried in the same cave.

To facilitate the excavations two narrow-gauge steel tracks were laid into the hillside for their hand-operated tipcarts, each with a capacity of about 1 m³. By employing 130 labourers on the caves they were thus able to remove 500 such wagonloads of rubble and dirt each day, yet despite their Herculean efforts, it took two seasons (1926-1927) to excavate this large and difficult hillside completely, at the end of which they had shifted more than 10'000 m³. However, in 1926 they already succeeded in unearthing the burial chamber of the seven youths, a Christian church built over subterranean catacombs and a large mausoleum. Although the necropolis and cult centre had long ago been plundered, by 1927 they had discovered some 300 tombs, 150 inscriptions, various pilgrim graffiti, wall paintings, floor mosaics, coins, and marble plates. Perhaps most striking, though, were the large quantities of diverse earthenware lamps, totalling over 2,000. Factory imprints and symbolic decorations showed that most of the approximately 170 varieties had been locally manufactured over a considerable time span and brought here by Christians, Muslims and Jews.

Three weeks after Deissmann arrived in Ephesus his colleagues presented him with a finely crafted diploma in honour of his 60th birthday. The original is no longer extant – another casualty of the Second World War – but fortuitously a single photograph of it has survived at the ÖAI in Vienna (Figure 5).

The caption beneath the photo marks the date of Deissmann's 60th birthday. The modern imitation of an ancient Greek inscription on the left, very probably written by Joseph Keil (standing at rear), refers to the excellence of Deissmann's friendship and his unending benefaction for Ephesus.[13] However, it is the German text on the right that seems especially significant, for it singles out Deissmann as the one who made it possible to rescue the priceless remains of the ancient city of Ephesus.

> To Adolf Deissmann, the reviver of the Ephesus excavations; as a token of sincerest veneration. Dedicated by his work-colleagues and friends: Joseph Keil, Max Theuer, Ahmet Aziz, Franz Miltner.[14]

Deissmann remained an integral part in all four excavation campaigns until 1929, and besides the Seven Sleepers' cemetery was mainly involved with work on the St. John's basilica and the Vedius Gymnasium. However, the high demands placed on him as Rektor of the Berlin University made active fieldwork impossible for him after 1930; but this did not deter his fund-raising and promotional efforts for Ephesus, which he vigorously continued to the end of his life. Although badly falling exchange rates forced the work to be brought to a premature conclusion with the 1935 season, one of the very last letters Deissmann ever received came from Karl Griewank (1900-53) of the Emergency Fund; it was written two days before Deissmann's death and concerns funding for Ephesus.[15]

Although a theologian by profession, Deissmann had already become an honorary member of the DAI in 1922 and a full member by merit in 1928.[16] He was also a regular participant in the monthly meetings of the Archaeological Society from 1909 until his death in 1937. In Vienna, too, the ÖAI decided at their annual business meeting on 5 June 1930 formally to recognize his significance to Anatolian archaeology, by granting him full membership of their Institute.[17] Deissmann was once aptly described as 'the Life and Soul' of the renewed Ephesus excavations,[18] but although it may be pointless to speculate what this important ancient archaeological site would be like today without his timely and tireless initiatives, it can be said with absolute certainty that immeasurable historical losses were being avoided in the nick of time because of his proactive and visionary determination to preserve this city's unique heritage. Today four million visitors are drawn to Ephesus each year, resulting in a huge public exposure, which has been summed up perfectly by Dr. Wilfried Seipel, Director-General of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna: 'Ephesus has done more, in these [past] 100 years, than any other city on the west coast of Turkey to further the understanding of ancient civilization.'[19]

## Post WW1 reconciliation

Like the vast majority of Germans at the beginning of the First World War, Deissmann was not immune to the effects of the overwhelming nationalistic fervour that swept over the Fatherland. Thus, on 4 September 1914, he signed a public declaration of Germany's blamelessness on the grounds of national self-defence, along with 28 other German intellectuals and clergy. This declaration attempted to absolve their country of any responsibility for entering the war by shifting blame on to the 'encircling' powers, Britain, France and Russia. A month later (4 October 1914) he signed a second declaration, this time with 92 of the country's leading intellectuals and addressed to the entire *Kulturwelt* (civilised world). This was translated into ten languages and widely distributed in all the neutral countries as a passionate protest against the 'lies' and 'slander' of Germany's enemies, and went so far as to deny the violation of Belgian neutrality.[20] Although Deissmann soon began to change his views, some commentators on German history have failed to look past this troubled juncture in his life.

Prior to the war – and besides his two comprehensive study tours of the East – Deissmann had also been to Austria, England, Italy, Scotland, Sweden and Switzerland, and presented series of lectures at Cambridge (in English) and Uppsala. His pre-war friendships were not at all limited to Germany, but spanned various cultures, social strata and religious persuasions – an inclusive *Weltanschauung* learned from his parents. So, to think of this broadminded, internationally known theologian, as a 'typical' Wilhelmine German, would do him great injustice.

When Deissmann began to publish the earlier mentioned 'Protestant Weekly Letter', he had the sincere objective of serving ... *der Verständigung unter den Völkern und der Stärkung der christlichen Solidarität* (... the understanding among nations and the strengthening of Christian solidarity);[21] and he did this by confining the letters to the topic *Der Krieg und die Religion* (The war and religion). Whilst his motives were at first certainly influenced by patriotism, it was his almost innate ecumenical intellect that kept the letters going, even when frustrated by censorship. However, immediately after Germany's new interim government lifted these restrictions, Deissmann confesses in his 'letter' of 21 September 1918 that he had some time ago come to the painful conclusion that their invasion of Belgium did, in fact, constitute an appalling martial act that had burdened the nation with an onerous guilt.[22] Yet it was this very war – or more specifically his weekly letters resulting from it – which reinforced in Deissmann the long-held conviction that since Christians worldwide shared a common faith, they also ought to be able to co-exist and work together in peaceful cooperation. How successful he was can best be seen by what the Swiss Professor of Theology Wilhelm Hadorn (1869-1929) writes in his article '*Im Dienste der Versöhnung*' (In the service of reconciliation):

> *The Weekly Letters are written in such an ecumenical and truly conciliatory spirit, that they have in actual fact become a crystallising point for the endeavours for peace and mutual understanding, with which no other similar undertaking can compare.[23]*

Deissmann boldly attacked what he called 'the bankruptcy of the Christian idea of reconciliation', by which he did not mean the Christian message as such, but the obdurate disjointedness of Christian communities themselves, bickering over the 'correct' interpretation of this message. That is why 'the great Protestant nations have mangled each other ...', he warned, because they have 'not taken in real earnest one of the most vital revelations of the will of God'. The will that was clearly expressed in the prayer of Christ on the cross 'as he viewed the great multitude from all nations – "That they all may be one"'.[24]

In contrast to many of his colleagues who saw the ecumenical movement as a quasi-political vehicle for peace, Deissmann was a genuine believer in its unifying force, in both the political and sociological spheres. In his own words:

> *'I was in this movement from the beginning, long before the war, and then I spoke in the same spirit as I do to-day. The only difference is that now I am speaking with even greater conviction.'[25]*

In the five years leading up to the first 'Universal Conference of Christian Communions' at Stockholm in 1925, Deissmann took part in the historic 'Oud Wassenaer' conference in The Hague. This conference marked the naissance of the ecumenical movement, a mere three months after Germany was forced to sign the Versailles Treaty. He also played an active role at the subsequent preparatory ecumenical conferences of Geneva, Copenhagen, Helsingborg and Amsterdam. At Stockholm itself he was a driving force and one of four keynote speakers to address the question of what the churches can do to promote international peace and to remove the causes of war. During this twelve-day conference – encapsulated by Deissmann in the phrase: 'Stockholm, the Nicaea of Ethics'[26] – the responsibilities and purpose of an ecumenical Christendom were for the first time being formulated and a visionary continuation program launched. It was Deissmann who was elected to compile the official (and very comprehensive) German report on the conference's history, proceedings and results (*Die Stockholmer Weltkirchenkonferenz*, Berlin, 1926) and two years later at the ensuing Lausanne conference, it was again Deissmann who drafted the 'Message of the church to the world', which was unanimously accepted by its members and became the confessional foundation for all participating churches – a splendid testimonial to his reconciliatory spirit.

## Conclusion

As a trailblazer in several different intellectual fields, Adolf Deissmann was certainly no stereotypical German theologian. His scholarly contributions to the understanding of Hellenistic Greek, the language of the New Testament and the social history of early Christianity have exercised a continuing influence in modern scholarly debate, even where his name is largely forgotten. His creative initiative to ensure the preservation of ancient Ephesus has allowed literally millions of visitors and readers to become better acquainted with the architecture, art and culture of this grand ancient metropolis. His tireless conciliatory endeavours helped to reunite a world that had been torn asunder as never before in the history of mankind.

For Deissmann's 70th birthday a Swiss theologian summed up his humanitarian and intellectual achievements in the following words:

> *...[I] have heard with my own ears with what gratitude Deissmann's name is voiced, not only within the realms of the German language, but in bishops' palaces of the orthodox world in the Near East, in monastery cells on the Sinai and in Palestine, in hushed and distinguished studies at Oxford or Edinburgh, in out-of-the-way manses in the middle of America's West and on the Pacific Ocean.'[27]*

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## Acknowledgments

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## Endnotes

1 *The Expository Times*, vol. 12, nr. 8, May 1901, 362.

2 It was mediated by a former student of Deissmann, Samuel Angus (1881-1943), Professor of Theology at St. Andrew's College, Sydney University; hence the joined names in the collection.

3 *Sprachliche Erforschung*, 24 (transl. A.G.).

4 Letter from Heidelberg University Senate to Baden State Ministry, 26.11.1907, Personalakten Universitätsarchiv Heidelberg, PA 1463 (transl. A.G.).

5 Letter from Deissmann to Söderblom, 29.7.1908, Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek, Handskrifts- och Musikavdelningen, Olaus Petri-Stiftelsen 2.

6 *Licht vom Osten*, 1 (transl. and emphasis A.G.).

7 *The Expository Times*, vol. 25, nr. 11, Aug. 1914, 487.

8 i.e. 'Notgemeinschaft für Deutsche Wissenschaft'; a state body established in 1920 to distribute funds equitably for academic purposes.

9 Keil's letter to Wiegand, 12.5.1927, DAI, NL Wieg., Kiste 5. '... wundere ich mich, daß man mir immer von auswärts so schreibt, als hätte er nur für die christlichen Monumente von Ephesos Interesse und wollte uns von den antiken abhalten usw. Es ist fast als ob jemand solche Nachrichten, die ja wirklich der Wahrheit ganz zuwider laufen, absichtlich in die Welt setzte. Mir gegenüber hat Deissmann von Anfang an einen ganz anderen Standpunkt eingenommen ...'.

10 23.10.1926. '... dass es nach vielen Enttäuschungen schließlich doch gelungen ist, diese Thür wieder offen zu machen, ist eine der größten Freuden meines Lebens.' DAI, NL Wieg. Kiste 2.

11 Deissmann to G.K.A. Bell (then Provost of Canterbury), 14.11.1926, Lambeth Palace, Bell Papers, vol. 18 (i).

12 Letter to Appleget, 21.2.1927, Rockefeller F.A., folder 481. In an earlier letter to the Notgemeinschaft (7.2.1927) he reported that almost all of the precious marble flooring and a large section of a tiled wall had been removed, while much of the remaining marble architecture was toppled over and smashed. Bundesarchiv Koblenz, R 73/10917.

**13** For a fuller discussion of this diploma, see A. Gerber, 'Gustaf Adolf Deissmann (1866-1937) and the revival of archaeological excavations at Ephesus after the First World War', forthcoming.

14 (Transl. A.G.), photo used with permission from the ÖAI, Vienna.

15 3.4.1937, Bundesarchiv Koblenz, R 73/10917.

16 For this information I am indebted to Dr. Antje Krug of the DAI.

17 i.e. 'Wirkliches Mitglied im Ausland', certificate, dated 15.7.1930, ÖAI.

18 Letter from H. Strathmann to Schmidt-Ott, 10.7.1925. '... daß Sie oder einer der maßgebenden Herren ... Ihres Ministeriums zunächst einmal Herrn Geheimrat Deißmann als der Seele des Planes die Gelegenheit geben, den Plan noch genauer darzustellen ...', Bundesarchiv Koblenz, R 73/10917.

19 Wiplinger/ Wlach, vii. Yet it is a sign of the obscurity into which Deissmann's role *vis-à-vis* Ephesus has fallen that the one photo in which Deissmann features in the book (p. 35) fails to identify him.

20 G. Besier, *Die protestantischen Kirchen Europas im Ersten Weltkrieg. Ein Quellen - und Arbeitsbuch*, Göttingen, 1984, 40-45, 78-83.

21 Printed on the face of each issue after 21.2.1917.

22 *Evangelischer Wochenbrief*, NF, 91/92, 16.11.1918, 3-4.

23 In *Kirchenfreund*, 52, Nr. 19, 1.10.1918, Basel. 'Die Wochenbriefe sind in einem so ökumenischen, wahrhaft versöhnenden Geiste geschrieben, daß sie tatsächlich ein Kristallisationspunkt der Friedens- und Verständigungsbestrebungen wurden, welchem kein anderes derartiges Unternehmen an die Seite gestellt werden kann.'

24 From Deissmann's speech given on 25.3.1923 to the Whitefield's Men's Meeting in London; published under the title 'The cross of Christ and the reconciliation of the nations', 2-3, Evangelisches Zentralarchiv Berlin, F 5611.

25 Ibid., 6.

26 From his published commemorative speech 'Die ökumenische Erweckung, ein Jahrzehnt zeitgenössischer Kirchengeschicht', Rede bei der Feier der Erinnerung an den Stifter der Berliner Universität König Friedrich Wilhelm III in der Alten Aula am 3. August 1929, 26.

27 Cited by H. Lietzmann, in 'Adolf Deißmann zum Gedächtnis; Rede bei der Gedenkfeier der Theologischen Fakultät zu Berlin am 18. Juni 1937', in *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vol. 35, 1937, 106. '...[Ich habe] mit meinen eigenen Ohren gehört, mit welcher Dankbarkeit Deißmanns Name ausgesprochen wird, nicht nur im Bereich des deutschen Sprachgebietes, sondern in bischöflichen Palästen der orthodoxen Welt des Nahen Ostens, in Mönchszellen auf dem Sinai und in Palästina, in stillen, vornehmen Gelehrtenstuben von Oxford und Edinburgh, in einsamen Pfarrhäusern im mittleren Westen Amerikas und am pazifischen Ozean.'

# New Light on the Siloam Tunnel Inscription

## T.C. Mitchell

**Abstract:** The literature relating to the discovery and recording of the Siloam Tunnel is reviewed and the most recent scientific dating analysis is described. A date of 700BC or before for the tunnel is now almost certain. A discussion of the technical terminology in the tunnel inscription leads to the conclusion that the workmen who excavated the tunnel probably used picks, or axe like implements, rather than chisels.

Recent physical analysis of materials has thrown new light on one of the best known ancient Hebrew inscriptions. The Siloam Inscription was located in a water tunnel which runs south-westwards from a spring ('Ain Sitti Maryam, known as the Virgin's Spring, probably the Gihon Spring mentioned in 2 Chronicles 32:30) at the northeast corner of the most ancient part, the Ophel Hill, of Jerusalem. The tunnel follows a somewhat irregular course from the spring to the southwest corner of Ophel Hill where it debouches into the Pool of Siloam (Figure 2).

George Adam Smith gives a description of the water system in *The Topography, Economics and Historical Geography of Jerusalem* (1907: 87-98) and J. Wilkinson gives a convenient account of the pool in New Testament times with reference to its earlier history (1978: 104-108). A modern report on the tunnel is given by D. Gill (1996: 18-22) in the course of his more general article on the geology of the City of David and its ancient subterranean waterworks.

The inscription, which was situated on the east wall of the tunnel about 19 feet in from the lower pool, was first noticed in 1880 when, according to Conrad Schick (known particularly for his model of the Temple in the time of Herod), one of his pupils fell into the water. Schick promptly entered the tunnel to inspect the inscription and found that the lower part was below the water line, so debris had to be cleared from the bottom to lower the level. He found also that, as he put it, "a deposit of silicate" had covered the inscription, making it very difficult to take a paper squeeze (*papier-mâché* impression). He published an announcement of the discovery in the *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund* (1880: 238-39).

In the *Quarterly Statement* for the following year Lieutenant Claude Conder of the Royal Engineers, who was on detachment to the Palestine Exploration Fund to work on the Western Survey, reported that Hermann Güthe, of the German Palestine Society (Deutscher Palästina Verein), had succeeded in taking several paper squeezes and a gypsum cast of the inscription (1881: 197-99). In the same volume Archibald Henry Sayce, who was very prominent at the time in expounding discoveries of this kind, published a preliminary translation (1881: 282-85).
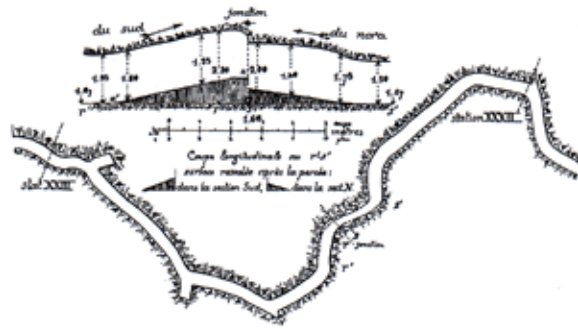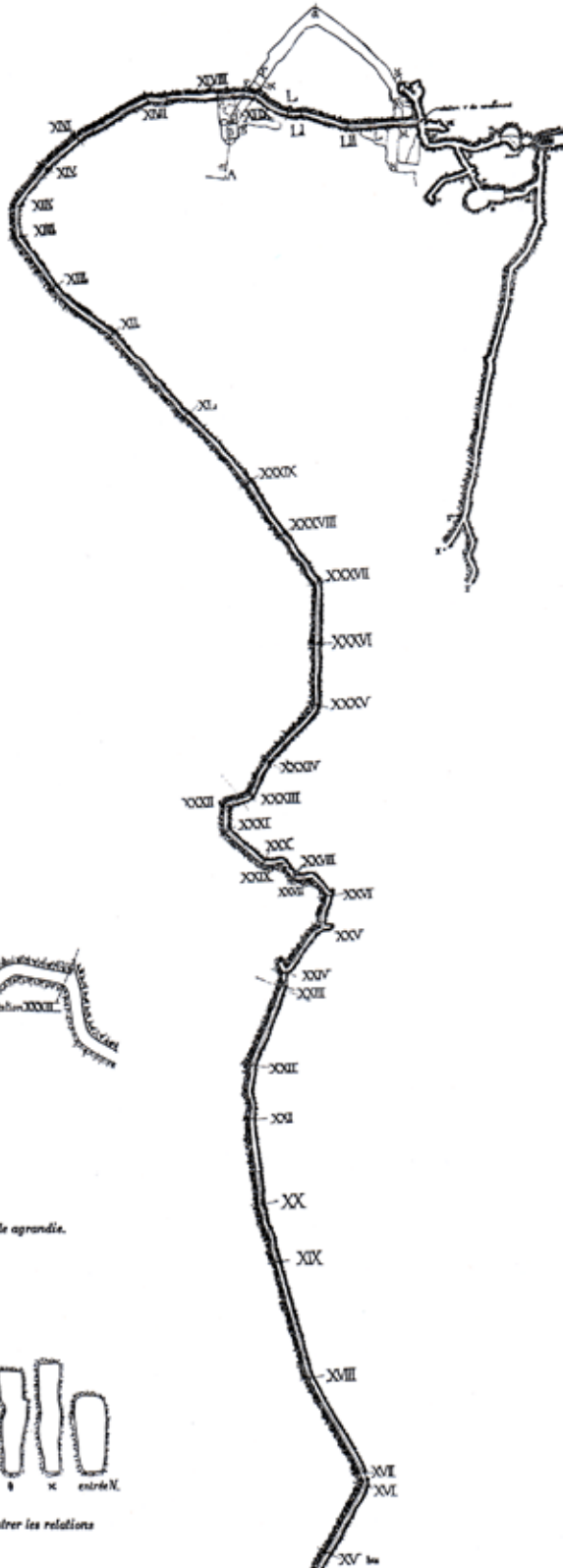
In 1890 the inscription was hacked out of the rock wall, and, since at that time Palestine formed part of the Ottoman Empire, it was taken to Istanbul where it is now held in the collections of The Museum of the Ancient Orient
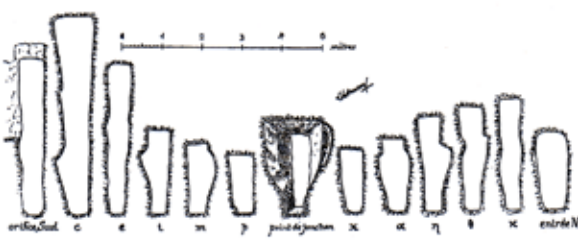


*Figure 1: The Siloam Inscription now in the Istanbul Museum. Photo: the editor 1973*
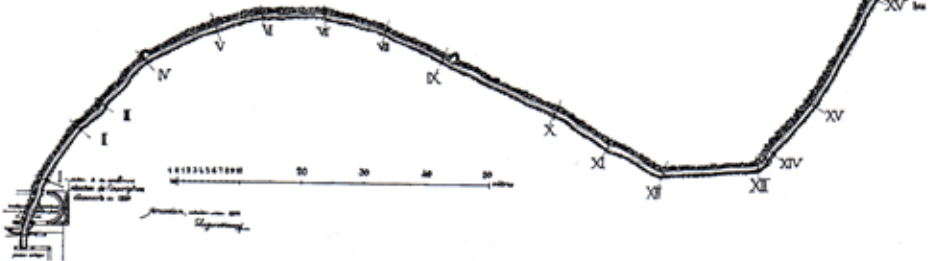
**Figure 2:** *The plan from Vincent (1954:pl. LXV) based on a survey illustrating the sinuous path of the tunnel from the Gihon Spring (top right) to the Pool of Siloam (bottom left) where the inscription was found. The survey traverse data and sections are also given.*

*Figure 3: The start of the tunnel at the Gihon Spring. Photo: the editor 1974.*

(formerly Imperial Ottoman Museum) (Figure 1). Parts of the inscription are damaged, but, as a tracing made in 1881 by Lieutenants Conder and Mantell of what could be made out of the inscription *in situ* shows,[1] it was already in this damaged condition before it was removed. They had found it difficult to discern the details because of a layer of lime (calcite) which had formed over it, but they cleared some of this off with hydrochloric acid.

The language of the inscription was recognized as Hebrew by Sayce and others, and seen to be of great interest. It has been familiar to generations of English-speaking students of Hebrew since a copy and a transcription into the Square Hebrew script were included in the English edition published in 1910 of the Hebrew Grammar of the great German Hebraist Wilhelm Gesenius, for long the standard reference grammar (Kautzsch 1910: 9f) (Figure 4). It describes the inscription, provides a bibliography and includes the script of the inscription in a Table of Alphabets (Kautzsch 1910:xvif). Three years later a photograph, a transcription into the square Hebrew script, a translation together with philological notes on it were provided by S.R. Driver, with characteristic thoroughness, in his standard commentary on the Hebrew text of the books of Samuel (1913:viii-xi).[2] He noted that "The Hebrew is as idiomatic, and flowing, as a passage from the Old Testament"(Driver 1913: x), but while he commented that it had generally been assigned to the time of Hezekiah, he referred to other opinions put forward at the time that it was actually to be dated in the period of Simon son of Onias in about 220 B.C. or even by some to the time of Herod.

The inscription has been published frequently since, for example there are translations with introductory notes by W.F. Albright in Pritchard (1955: 321); N.H. Snaith in "the poor man's Pritchard" (Thomas 1958: 209-11); and the text is given conveniently with translation and philological notes in Gibson's *Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*

(1971: 21-23); and recently with a thorough treatment by Renz (1995: 178-189).

The inscription describes the cutting of the tunnel, and since, unlike many monumental inscriptions of this type, it does not name any king,[3] its dating has depended on the palaeography of the script and on its presumed connection with references in the Old Testament to the cutting of a water channel in the time of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:3-4, 30). On these bases, it has been generally agreed that it should be dated to about 700 B.C. (Mitchell 1991: 356-359).

The new physical evidence makes use of two techniques, radiocarbon dating of organic material, and radioactive thorium and uranium dating of calcite speleothems formed by water seeping through the rock (Frumkin 2003:169-71; *Biblical Archaeology Review* Nov/Dec 2003:18). A speleothem is defined as "a naturally formed, unitary, coherent body of mineral matter which has been deposited within a cavern or cavern space subsequently to the development of such space, and at least a portion of the substance of which has been precipitated from solution ..." (Wyatt 1986: 294).

The organic matter, notably a fragment of wood and part of a plant, was found in borings into the floor of the tunnel, which had been plastered over in antiquity to counter the seepage away of water through fissures in the rock. Radiocarbon dating of these samples gave a figure of 2620 ± 35 years BP (Before the Present) = 822-796 B.C. for the wood, and 2505 ± 35 years BP = a range between 790-760 and 690-540 B.C. for the plant fragment.

Samples from the speleothems which had formed on the walls and ceiling of the tunnel as a result of water percolating through fissures in the limestone were tested for radioactive thorium and uranium, giving dates of 2317 ± 18 years BP = 332-286 B.C.
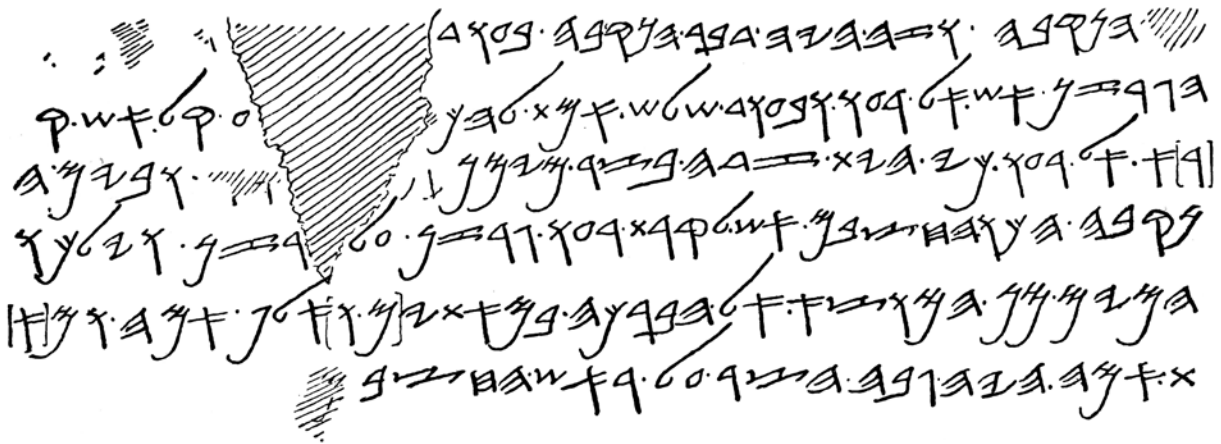
הנקבה . [תם . ] • וזה . היה . דבר . הנקבה . בעוד . . . .
הגרזן . אש . אל . רעו . ובעוד . שלש . אמת . להנ[קב] . . קל . אש . ק
רא . . אל . רעו . כי . הית . זדה . בצר . מימן . . . . . . . ובים . ה
נקבה . הכו . החצבם . אש . לקרת . רעו . גרזן . על . גרזן . וילכו
המים . מן . המוצא . אל . הברכה . במאתים . ואלף . אמה . ומ(א)
ת . אמה . היה . גבה . הצר . על . ראש . החצב[ם]

*Figure 4: A hand copy of the Siloam Inscription and a transliteration into the square Hebrew script. From Kautzsch (1910:xvif)*

The radiocarbon date of about 800 B.C. for the fragment of wood might show only that the tunnel had been cut at some time after that date, but, as the authors of the article point out, trees more than a hundred years old are rare in Palestine, so a date a little before or around 700 B.C. is likely, and this conclusion is supported by the broad range of dates between 790 and 540 B.C. for the plant fragment. The formation of speleothems would probably have taken many years after the cutting of the tunnel so the range of thorium-uranium dates in about 332-286 B.C. would not clash with a date around 700 B.C.

With this confirmation of what has long been assumed to be the actual date of the inscription, it is worth having a look at some points in it. It indicates that two teams of workmen cut their way through the rock from opposite ends, finally meeting more or less in the middle. In the last stages, when, as the inscription says, they were three cubits (שלש אמת: *šlš. 'mt*) apart, the voice of each calling to his fellow (רעו קל אש קרא אל: *ql. 'š.qr'. 'l.r 'w*)[literally "voice of (*ql*) man (*'š*) calling (*qr'*) to (*'l*) his companion (*r 'w*)"] could be heard and when they finally met it was implement against implement (גרזן על גרזן: *grzn. 'l.grzn*) and the water flowed from the source (מוצא: *mws'*) to the pool (ברכה: *brkh*), 1200 cubits (במאתים ואלף אמה: *bm 'tym.w 'lp. 'mh* [literally "in" (*b*-) + "hundred" (*m 't*) + "two" (*-ym* (dual termination)) "and" (*w*) + "thousand" (*'lp*) "cubits" (*'mh*)].

This last detail provides a useful clue to the value of the cubit in ancient Israel. The word *'mh* is found many times in the Old Testament (vocalised as *'ammāh*) with the meaning "cubit", mostly in descriptions of the making of the tabernacle, the temple, and Ezekiel's temple in Exodus 25-38, 1 Kings 6-7, 2 Chronicles 3-4 and Ezekiel 40-43. This is the only rendering of *'ammāh* in most English versions, but usage in other languages makes it clear that it's primary meaning was "forearm"(Dhorme 1963: 143) and it has been suggested that an instance of this meaning is found in Psalm 91:4, where the consonants אמתו: *'mtw* could be read with the vowels *'ammātō*, "his arm", instead of *'ămittō* "his truth" (Authorised Version) and "faithfulness" (New International Version) which appears in the Masoretic text. This remains a speculation, but it is reasonable, and has been adopted for instance in *The Revised Psalter* (London, 1964) although there are other suggestions (Dahood 1968: 331).

Hebrew *'ammāh* has a clear cognate in Akkadian (Babylonian-Assyrian) *ammatu* which had the meaning "cubit" in most contexts. In a limited number of instances it is clear that the correct rendering is "forearm"(Oppenheim 1968: 70-75) and, further, in Ugaritic there is a rare occurrence of *'amt* in a context where it is reasonable to translate it "forearm". For example, in a passage in the Epic of Keret the hero is told by the god El to wash his hands to the *'amt*, probably the elbow (Gibson, 1978: 83, line 63). The English word "cubit" is itself appropriate for this unit of measurement, since it derives from Latin *cubitum*, "arm; distance from the elbow to the middle finger".

***Figure 5:*** *The Pool of Siloam. The tunnel exit is under the right side of the arch behind the standing figure. Photo: the editor 1974.*

While a cubit was the length of a man's forearm, men come in various sizes so this can indicate only a general not a precise value. The length of a Babylonian cubit (*ammatu*) in about 2000 B.C., at that time Sumerian *kùš* (Borger 1978: sign no.38; 2003: sign no.490) is known from a statue of the ruler Gudea who is shown seated with a flat space on his knees prepared for the plan of a building, but with a graduated builder's rule already carved on it measuring a total of 27cm (10.64 inches), or 26.5 cm (10.44 inches) to the last marked graduation (de Sarzec 1884-1912: 136-38, II, pl.15.2 and 3; Parrot 1948: 163 no.6; pl.XIV.b and d lower). This presumably represents half a cubit of 54 or 53 cm (21.28 or 20.88 inches), and this value of the cubit is also evident in the cuneiform texts during the second millennium B.C. In the Neo-Babylonian period (mid- to late first millennium B.C.) the length of the *ammatu* stood at only about 40 cm (15.76 inches), the longer standard being referred to at that time as *ammatu rabītu*, "great cubit" (Oppenheim 1968: 75; Borger 1978: 342).

There is good evidence for the value of the cubit in Egypt from actual builders' rules, an average measurement of which gives a length of 52.3 cm (20.6 inches). Carter refers to graduated rules measured by him (1917: 130-58). But Arnold argues, on the basis of measurements of actual buildings, that 52.5 cm is a more correct figure for the Egyptian cubit (1991: 10; 251-52; 2003: 61).[4] Another interesting indication is found in a papyrus giving details, including dimensions, of a royal tomb which was almost certainly that of Ramesses IV. Matching the dimensions on the papyrus with the corresponding measurements in the actual tomb of Ramesses IV gives a value of 52.3 or 52.31 cm (20.60 or 20.61 inches). (The actual measurements made by Carter are arranged in columns opposite the papyrus measurements, Carter and Gardiner 1917: 149-156).[5] The Egyptian cubit (*mh*)[6] was reckoned to consist of seven palms (or handbreadths) (Faulkner 1962: 113; Gardiner 1957: 199, §266.2).

The measured length of the Siloam tunnel is 533 meters, (Gill 1996: 18-19)[7] so 53300 ÷ 1200 = 44.41 cm (17.50 inches). This is rather smaller than the lengths mentioned above from Babylonia and Egypt, but, bearing in mind the likelihood that 1200 is an approximation rather than an exact figure and that it would have been difficult to obtain an accurate measurement through the twisting course of the tunnel, precise accuracy is not to be expected. The difference between the Siloam cubit and the Babylonian and Egyptian dimensions amounts, however, to something like 1/6 of the lesser figure, that is to say 44.41 ÷ 6 = 7.4, while 7.4 x 7 = 51.8, a figure not far from those of the Babylonian and Egyptian cubits. This numerical relationship corresponds to that found in Babylonia in Neo-Babylonian times, and there may be reference to it in Ezekiel's vision of a new temple, where a measuring rod is referred to as, literally, "of six cubits in the cubit and the handbreadth" (*šēš-'ammôt bā 'ammāh wāṭōpaḥ*), i.e. indicating a cubit longer by one handbreadth, or palm, (*ṭōpaḥ*) than the standard (Ezekiel 40:5), a passage rendered by the NIV, "six long cubits, each of which was a cubit and a handbreadth." That is to say, if the Babylonian and Egyptian dimensions suggest a common international standard of seven handbreadths, the cubit used to measure the Siloam tunnel may represent a cubit of six, i.e. shorter by one handbreadth, and the one referred to by Ezekiel the longer international standard.

The word גרזן: *grzn* in the inscription, tentatively translated "implement" above, raises some questions. It occurs four times (vocalised *garzen*) in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 19:5; 20:19; 1 Kings 6:7; Isaiah 10:15). It has a clear Semitic etymology in the verb *grz*, "to cut",[8] and the references in Deuteronomy show that it could be used to cut down trees, while the passage in Kings, like the inscription, refers to working stone. The passage in Isaiah does not add further to the definition. It is probable that the noun is found as a Semitic loanword *qrḏn* (in which *ḏ = dj*) in Egyptian (Hoch 1994: 303f no.438), where one reference indicates that it was a tool used in making a tomb, presumably indicating again that it could work stone.[9] The Old Testament references and the extra-Biblical sources thus show that it was a chopping or hacking implement which could be used for working either wood or stone. This may indicate that it was a generic rather than a specific

term. Artefacts from Palestinian excavations show that by the 8th century B.C. iron weapons and implements were outnumbering bronze, and this situation is reflected in references in the Old Testament (Mitchell 1982: 449-50). Two instances relating to the 9th (2 Kings 6:5-6) and 8th (Isaiah 10:34) centuries refer to an implement or implements described only by the word "iron" (*barzel*), used for cutting down trees, and therefore usually translated "axe".

The question arises therefore, whether the implements used for the tunnel were of bronze or iron. A possible indication may be found in a reference to the making of the tunnel in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) (48:17), where one Hebrew manuscript mentions the use of a bronze tool (*nḥšt),* while the Greek version refers to one of iron (*sidērion*), in each case the word for the kind of tool being understood but not stated.[10] The Hebrew text of this book was probably written in the early second century B.C., so it cannot be counted as a reliable source concerning the time of Hezekiah, but it could be that it points to a tradition that the tools were bronze, and that the scribe who made the Greek translation altered the material to that most likely in his own time, either inadvertently or because he assumed it to be correct. This, of course, is only speculation. Limestone, though it occurs in different forms, measures only about 3 on the Mohs scale of hardness and could probably have been worked with bronze implements. Bronze can be a very tough material, especially when hammered, and as the working edges wore down they could have been reground or replaced. This is described by Tylecote who cites work-hardened examples of bronze from Egypt (1976: 167, 9).

Representations of Egyptian woodworking axes in tomb paintings show that for that purpose the blade, probably of bronze, mounted on a wooden shaft, was shaped like a half-circle, the cutting edge being curved.[11] It seems clear, however, that when it came to detailed work on a stone statue, a chisel was used with a club-shaped mallet (Bierbrier 1982: fig.28; Scheel 1989: 53, figs 43, 44, 57; Lucas 1962: 63-68). However as Arnold and Davey have noted, the chisel types used for quarry and underground excavation in Egypt do not at this stage appear in the archaeological record (Arnold 1991: 33; Davey 2001: 23).

Evidence also comes from Assyria, where a representation on the bronze gates from Balawat depicting a man carving a relief of Shalmaneser III celebrating his campaign to the source of the Tigris in 853 B.C., shows the sculptor using a chisel and a club-shaped mallet (King 1915: 30f, pl.LIX). This evidence applies to the carving of statues or reliefs, the mallet and chisel being appropriate to this kind of work,[12] but the references to the use of the *garzen* in the texts make it unlikely that it was a chisel, and since it was apparently used to cut down trees (Is. 10:15), it is likely that it was some kind of axe rather than an adze.

Axes are depicted in the Assyrian bas-reliefs but they are shown in scenes of war or ceremonial (Hrouda 1965: 88,



*Figure 6: A view inside the tunnel. The regular shape of the tunnel and the smoothness of the walls displays careful workmanship. Photo: the editor 1974.*

pls.18.14, 15, 16; 26.3), and do not give much indication of the activities of everyday life.

It is often instructive to examine the semantic field of a word in a language, bearing in mind that the evidence is limited. In the Old Testament there are three other words, *qardōm*, *kaššīl*, and *magzērâ*, which appear to refer to similar implements. Q*ardōm* occurs five times in contexts which show that it was used mainly for cutting trees (Jer. 46:22; Ps. 74:5) or branches from trees (Judg. 9:48), indicating some kind of axe, and there is an interesting passage making clear that it needed to be sharpened (1 Sam 13:19-21) (McCarter 1980: 238). The other two words occur each only once: *kaššīl* in Ps 74:6 where it is represented (together with another implement of uncertain meaning) as suitable for destroying carvings in a sanctuary, suggesting some kind of pick; and *magzērâ* in 2 Sam 12:31 where it is defined as made of iron and the context seems to indicate an agricultural implement of some kind. McCarter discusses the general sense, but questions the inclusion of "*mgzrh* of iron" in the original text (1984: 311). The Old Testament only uses vocabulary of this kind incidentally, and none of these words are found in the inscriptions, so this evidence is too limited to help to define *garzen*.

More distant evidence from the classical world may give some idea of what a tool used for cutting into rock might

have been like in Palestine. Painted scenes of the 6th century B.C. from Corinth show miners hacking into what is probably rock with what look like picks (Healy 1978: 84, pls.8, 17), and actual examples of a type which would have been mounted on a wooden handle include a Greek miner's pick of the 4th-3rd century B.C. from Corinth, and a Roman example of the Roman period from the area of Rio Tinto in southern Spain (Healy 1978: 84, 100, pls 16a and 30).

Many examples of axes are known from throughout the ancient Near East,[13] and it may be that among them there is a type appropriate to the present text, but the context does not give sufficient evidence for a clear choice. This is an instance of a common situation in the study of antiquity, that many questions remain open.


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## Endnotes

1    *PEFQS* 13 (1881), pp.285-87, the tracing following p.286. Sayce (1883) reproduced this tracing in his popular book *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments* facing p.87, with accompanying text, pp.82-91; the copy also appears embossed in gold on the front cover.

2    S.R. Driver played a major part in the translation of the RV Old Testament, just as his son G.R. Driver was greatly involved in the preparation of the NEB.

3    The inscription occupied the lower part of a rectangular space measuring a little over 2 feet square which had been smoothed and polished to receive it. The upper part, which was blank, may have been intended for an historical introduction naming the king in question, but warlike conditions at the time perhaps prevented its completion.

4    I am indebted to Mr E.P. Uphill for drawing my attention to this reference.

5    This tomb was used as a billet by Champollion (the decipherer of Egyptian hieroglyphics) and his colleagues when they were examining the tombs in the Valley of the Kings in 1829 (popular account of this in L. and R. Adkins, *The Keys of Egypt. The Race to Read the Hieroglyphs* (London, 2000), 265-68).

6    *Mh* also had the meaning "forearm", the hieroglyph being a picture of a human forearm.

7    Adam Smith (1907:93) cites measurements made before his time varying between 518 and 535 meters. According to Sayce (1883:84), Conder measured the length of the tunnel at 1708 yards, actually 1708 feet — a mistake corrected in his well-known book *The "Higher Criticism" and the Verdict of the Monuments* (London, 1893), p.377 — giving a cubit of $520.94 \div 1200 = 0.4341$ meters, i.e. 43.41cm.

8    Found also in the metathesised form *gzr*, "to cut".

9    J. Černy, *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 15 (1929), pp.245 (referring to recto page 2, line 9 of a papyrus) and 249, nn.31 and 32 (where *qrḏn* is given as the equivalent of "hoe", suggesting that the two words have been reversed).

10   The Hebrew, and Greek texts are given conveniently in Vattioni, (1968:262-63) and see Skehan & di Lella (1987:537-38).

11   Killen (1994:fig. 6) felling a tree, early 2nd millennium; Scheel, (1989:fig. 52) cutting a tree.

12   A useful account of the tools and methods used for stone working in the Achaemenian period in Iran is given by Nylander (1970:22-30) with bibliography concerning the classical world, Egypt and other areas nn.46-47; see also on ancient Greece, with some reference to Egypt Casson 1933:168-222).

13   A large selection of early bronze examples is included in Deshayes (1960); and some selected examples can be seen, e.g. from Palestine in Barrois (1939:374-78, fig.134) (an old book but giving a useful though limited selection); and from Egypt, Scheel, (1989:48, 53, fig.51) and Killen (1994:fig. 50) (actual tools, late 2nd millennium B.C.).

# Reconstructing Ancient Kellis

## Gillian E. Bowen, Thomas Chandler and Derrick Martin

**Abstract:** The possibilities offered by Virtual Archaeology generated a great deal of enthusiasm during the 1990s despite limitations of the technology. Today, with advances in computer graphics and processing power, 3D applications are increasingly used in furthering the documentation, conservation and preservation of ancient heritage. This paper examines the digital reconstruction of Ismant el-Kharab, ancient Kellis, Egypt based upon data from excavations carried out by Dr Colin Hope and Dr Gillian Bowen, Centre for Archaeology & Ancient History, Monash University. Presently ancient Kellis exists principally in data not immediately interpretable to the general public. In line with the growing emphasis on Virtual Heritage, comprehensive three-dimensional (3D) visualisations can significantly advance the awareness of historical sites normally inaccessible due to their location or fragile condition. Visualisations stretching across time and space can provide the possibility of visiting places that no longer exist or of viewing how places would have appeared at different times in their history. In the case of ancient Kellis, as in most archaeological excavations, a complete reconstruction is not possible as only a fraction survives. Several theories may compete to explain probable or possible reconstructions; a presentation of plural visualisations is the only way to obtain reasonable results. Interactive applications offer the ability to compare and contrast details of buildings and suggested reconstructions and choose between visualisations where temporal and spatial aspects can be explored. These techniques can significantly advance the archaeological interpretation of the site.

## Introduction

The purpose of this article is to present an introduction to a new project: the Virtual reconstruction of ancient Kellis.[1] To place this project within its context, an archaeological overview of the site and the structures that are currently being reconstructed by the 3D process, is provided by Gillian Bowen, Centre for Archaeology & Ancient History, Monash University and Deputy Director of excavations at Ismant el-Kharab. Although reports on excavations at the site have been published in various journals, this overview will introduce readers of *Buried History* to work currently undertaken in Egypt by a team of academics and students centred in Melbourne. The discussion of the Virtual Archaeology project and the work undertaken to date is provided by Thomas Chandler and Derrick Martin, Faculty of Information Technology, Monash University.

## Ancient Kellis

Ismant el-Kharab (Ismant the ruined), ancient Kellis, is a Roman Period village situated in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis, some 800 km south-south-west of Cairo and about 280 km west of Assyut in the Nile Valley. The site falls within the concession granted to the Dakhleh Oasis Project (DOP) in 1977. It was surveyed by the Project during the 1981-82 field season at which time limited excavation was undertaken and a detailed plan of the site was begun (Mills 1982: 99-100; Knudstad and Frey 1999). Small-scale excavation continued in the 1982-83 field season and, following the completion of the survey of historic sites, Ismant el-Kharab had shown sufficient potential to warrant closer examination (Hope 1988: 160). In the 1986 season a more extensive excavation programme was embarked upon under the directorship of Dr Colin A. Hope (Hope 1985: 114-25). The work is on-going.

The settlement was built upon a low terrace of Nubian clay with wadis to the southeast and northwest (Figure 1). It covers an area 1050 m northeast-southwest and 650 m northwest-southeast (Knudstad and Frey 1999: 189). The remains of the village are visible above the surface of the site and are extremely well preserved with some structures surviving to a height of over eight metres above the surface (Hope 1990:43; Knudstad and Frey 1999: 188). Knudstad and Frey (1999: 912) note that in the central, south and west sections of the site, most of the vaults and domes are to a large extent preserved, indicating that the structures are in the early stages of erosion. Kellis was built almost entirely of mud brick, with sandstone and limestone reserved for some formal structures and some tomb chambers. The village was surrounded with field systems, traces of which are visible today. Two major cemeteries are located outside the village: one in the low escarpment across the northwest wadi and comprises rock-cut tombs that contained pagan burials, whilst the second, which developed in the northeast, consists of pit graves uniformly cut into the bedrock on an east-west axis; bodies were placed in a supine position with their heads to the west (Birrell 1999: 38-41; Bowen 2003), which conforms to early Christian burial practice and the cemetery was clearly established for members of this section of the population. A series of freestanding mausolea form a line along the north-western edge of the site and a further group is to be found in the extreme south.

In the northernmost sector of the village, to the east of the mausolea, are three large complexes spanning an area of approximately 240 m north-south and 100 m east-west.
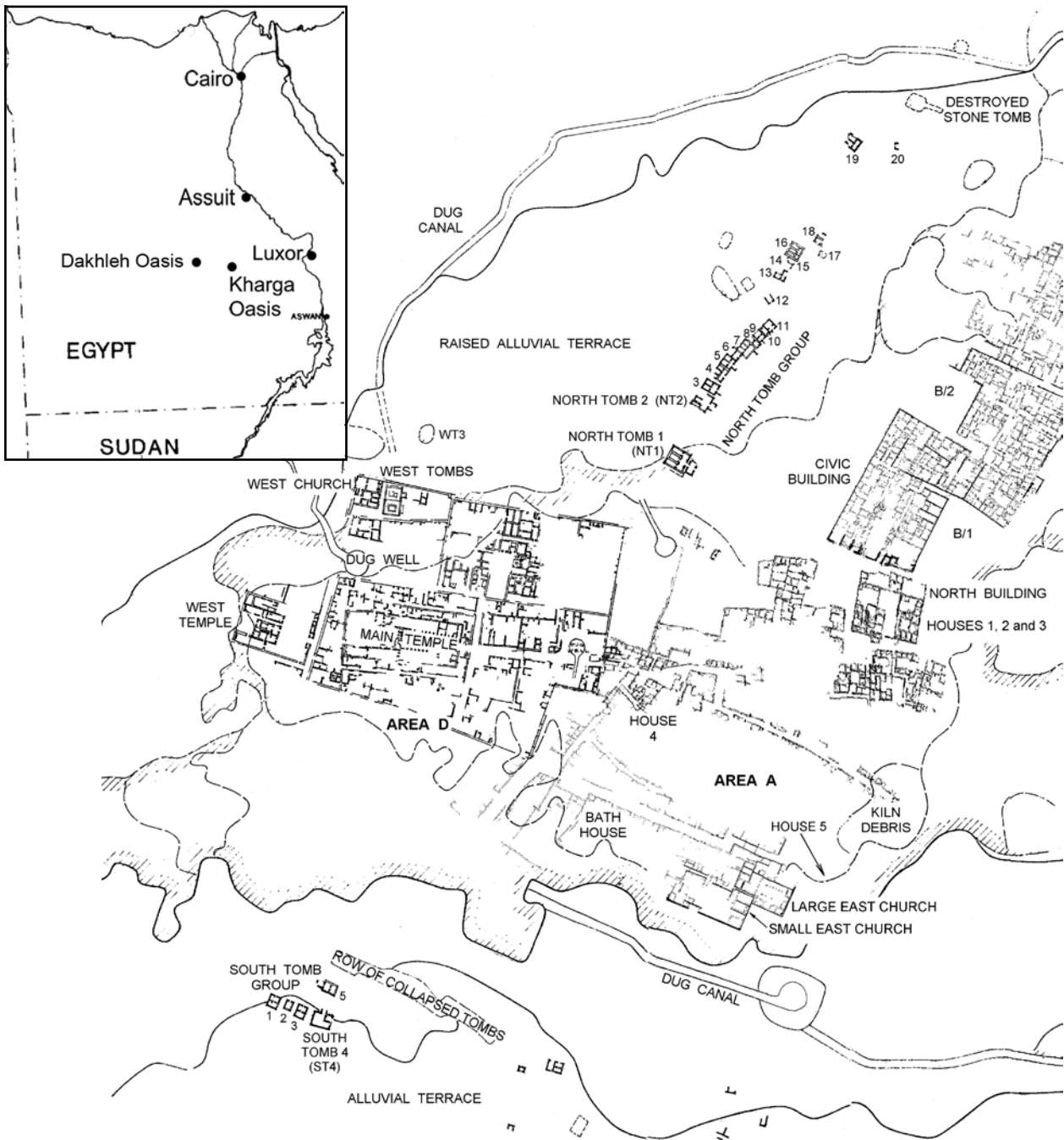
*Figure 1. Ismant el-Kharab: plan of the western half of the village (original drawing by J.E. Knudstad supplemented by J. Dobrowolski and B. Rowney and compiled by B. Parr)*

They occupy a sector of the site designated Area B (Hope 1988: 163). The most southerly of these complexes forms a single unit, which had undergone at least three extensions. In its final stage it contained no fewer that 216 rooms and is presumably civic in nature (Hope 1988: 163). The complexes to the north are essentially residential with small domestic units dispersed between large, well-constructed villas, with elaborately decorated walls (Hope 1988: 163-64; 1990: 43; Hope et al 2005: 37-40). A test was conducted in one of the latter in the 2005 field season: B/3/1. The extent of the structure has not yet been determined but it comprises numerous rooms around a large central hall with substantial columns and piers; the structure, which

predates the fourth century, attests the affluence of some members of the Kellis community (Hope et al 2005: 37-40). The sector designated Area C is contiguous with the east side of Area B; it extends to the easternmost boundary of the site. Area C comprises domestic and light industrial structures, including potters kilns and evidence of blacksmithing (Hope 2002: 174; Hope et al 2005). This area has witnessed more deflation than the remainder of the site; there is no evidence of occupation during the fourth century. The central residential sector, designated Area A, lies immediately to the south of Area B. This sector extends to the southern limits of the site, and includes the Large and Small East Church that were built

on the south-eastern periphery of the village overlooking the south-east wadi (Knudstad and Frey 1999: 168; Hope 1988: 165; 1990: 44; Bowen 2002: 65). Houses within Area A were built in the late third and fourth centuries; occupation of the village in the fourth century might well have been largely restricted to Area A and sections of Area D (Hope 1997: 12). The houses in Area A include both single-and double-storey structures (Hope 1997: 11). A major east-west thoroughfare leads west from the churches and intersects some 100 m west of the Large East Church with a north-south street, which runs in front of the outer temenos wall of the Temple of Tutu. A bathhouse has been identified in the south eastern corner of this intersection (Knudstad and Frey 1999: 205). The north-south street marks the boundary between the residential Area A and the formal religious complex to the west. Four contiguous enclosures occupy the south-western sector of the site, which is designated Area D. The largest and most southerly of these, Enclosure 1, houses the Temple of Tutu with its associated shrines and ancillary structures; it occupies a sizeable portion of the entire village. By the mid-fourth century the formal cult practice in the temple had ceased and the structure was used for secular purposes. The limited excavation that was undertaken in Enclosure 2 revealed domestic structures; no excavation has been undertaken in Enclosure 3. Enclosure 4 contains the West Church and a small Christian cemetery to its east. Two pre-existing classical-style, stone tombs located to the immediate east of the church were incorporated into the enclosure when the church was built (Hope and McKenzie 1999).

## Period of Occupation

The site was occupied from the late Ptolemaic Period, as determined by the discovery of burials and demotic inscriptions from that period (Schweitzer 2001: 270; Hope 2002: 205); it was abandoned in the closing years of the fourth century (Hope 2001). The latest text that can be dated is a horoscope drawn up in the year 392 (Hope 2002: 205-6). Before leaving, the villagers removed the doors and other timber fittings from all of the structures, presumably for reuse elsewhere. As the roofs collapsed and the structures were left open to the elements, the sand appears to have engulfed many of the buildings rapidly (Knudstad & Frey: 2001 191). There is some evidence of post-abandonment activity, especially in the Large East Church, where many of the sandstone pavers were removed from the floor of the nave; a collection of ceramic vessels and mud jar sealings was found between 0.75 – 1.25 m above floor level in windblown sand in the north pastaphorium, and sixteen courses of mud brick were laid upon clean windblown sand in the central doorway of the church itself. Part of the uppermost course was laid over the deflated north doorjamb (Bowen 2002:75). Other activity is attested in the temple of Tutu: stones from the temple were removed and a graffito in the mammisi informs those who read it that George and Kyris spent the night in the

building with their geese (Bowen, Hope and Kaper 1993: 20; Hope 2001: 51). The text is written in Sahidic Coptic, which suggests that this reuse took place in antiquity. Some looting of sandstone occurred in the recent past, as attested by chipped stone on the surface of the site and, as Knudstad and Frey (2001: 191) also note, Herbert Winlock (1936: 21), who visited the site in the first decade of the twentieth century, described and photographed decorated sandstone blocks *in situ* in North Tomb 1 that have since disappeared. Local residents from the nearby villages recall that Bedouin camped on the site in the 1940s. With the exception of some squatting activity and plundering for sandstone and treasure, we can say with a degree of confidence that the village was uninhabited for 1600 years and consequently fell victim to the ravages of time, wind and sand erosion.

## Research strategy

During the survey of the oasis by the DOP, numerous sites were found with large quantities of ceramics that appeared to be of the Roman period. This indicated extensive occupation of the oasis during that time. As the identification of the oasite ceramic assemblage was poorly understood, it was essential to choose a large site with such ceramics, not only to clarify the ceramic date, but also to study the site in detail to expand our knowledge of village life in antiquity. The remarkable state of preservation at Kellis made it an obvious choice.[2]

The research objective adopted for Kellis by the director was to glean as comprehensive a picture as possible of life in a provincial settlement. With this in mind specific areas were targeted for excavation. As the village spanned the transitional period from paganism to Christianity, excavation would naturally include the Temple of Tutu and at least one, if not all, of the churches. Selective house units within various areas of the site would also be included, as would a representative selection of the monumental tombs. Areas excavated to date include:

Area A: Houses 1-3, two rooms of a north building and test through a street (Hope 1986; 1991: 41-43), sections of Houses 4-5, (Hope 2002: 170) the Large and Small East Churches (Bowen: 2002).

Area B: Test trenches in the south of B1, the entrance room to a series of niched chambers in the west, B2 (Hope 1999: 65), and four rooms in one of the villas, B3 (Hope 2005: 37-40).

Area C: twelve domestic and light industrial complexes: C/1/1 and C/2/1-11 (Hickson 2002; Hope 2002: 170, 173-8; 2005: 35-7).

Area D: the Temple of Tutu, room 1 of Shrine 1, Shrines 2 and 3, minor clearance in one room of Shrine 4, the rear of the temple, and structures to the north west of the inner temenos, D/8 (Hope 2002: 178-206), the classical tombs (Hope and McKenzie 1999), the West Church and the Enclosure 4 cemetery (Bowen 2002: 75-84; 2003: 175-77).

*Figure 2: Ismant el-Kharab: plan of Houses 1-3 (drawing by J.E. Knudstad).*

Mausolea: one tomb in the South Tomb Group, and seven tombs, and one room of an eighth in the North Tomb Group (Hope 2003: 244-86; 2004: 19-41). The Christian and pagan cemeteries are excavated under the supervision of the physical anthropologists under the leadership of J. Eldon Molto.

## Houses 1-3

Structures chosen for Virtual Archaeology reconstruction include Houses 1-3 (Figures 1 and 2). These are located at the north of the Area A residential sector. The houses are bounded by an east-west street in the north that separates the residential sector from the Large Building (B1) and another east-west street in the south that separates the block from other house units. At the rear of the houses are two other structures that are associated with the houses: the North Building that is situated to the north of the courtyards of Houses 1 and 2, and an unexcavated, rectangular enclosure north of the courtyard of House 3 (Hope 1997: 6). The houses differ in plan but have similar architectural features. All are single-storey with a staircase giving access to the roofs. The larger living rooms are flat roofed or open to the sky but the majority of the rooms are barrel vaulted. Each of the living areas have niches and open cupboards with shelves built into their walls; these features were highlighted with a band of white plaster, presumably to indicate their presence in what must have been gloomy rooms. A band of white plaster was also painted across some vaulted ceilings. On abandonment of the houses, the occupants removed most of the wooden fittings although not all were taken away; several door lintels were found in the corridor of House 1. Many of the rooms were filled with windblown sand before any appreciable erosion or collapse had taken place and consequently they are remarkably well preserved.

House 1 (Figure 2; Plate 1), the most westerly, is approached through a single door in the opening off the street to the south in room 9, which, in turn gives access to a corridor (room 8) that runs the width of the house and opens onto the courtyard with animal mangers. The main living areas (rooms 1-6) are to the west of the corridor; these include a kitchen (room 1). Across the corridor is a walk-in cupboard (room 10), the staircase to the roof, with ten preserved steps, with its under-stairs cupboard (room 11). The largest room in the house is an L-shaped dining area (room 7) located in the east. Access to this room is via a door in its west wall, which opens directly onto a courtyard. Peculiar to this room is a mud-brick, plastered, horseshoe-shaped feature set within a solid platform; this occupies the southern section of the room. The remains of a circular feature were found in the north of the room. It would appear that the north section of this room was unroofed (Hope 1987: 74-83). Shelves and niches in the rooms were highlighted by a band of white plaster and a similar band was painted across the vaulted ceilings (Hope 1986: 74-83).

House 2 Figure 2), the central residence in the block, is accessed from the south street via a double-roomed entrance system (rooms 5-6). Room 6 opens into interconnecting living rooms (rooms 2-3). Room 1 in the north, is accessed via room 2, room 8 in the south is accessed through room 3, as is room 4 in the west. A short corridor (room 7) in the south gives access to the stairs, an under-stairs cupboard, and the kitchen, which, like that in House 1 was a late
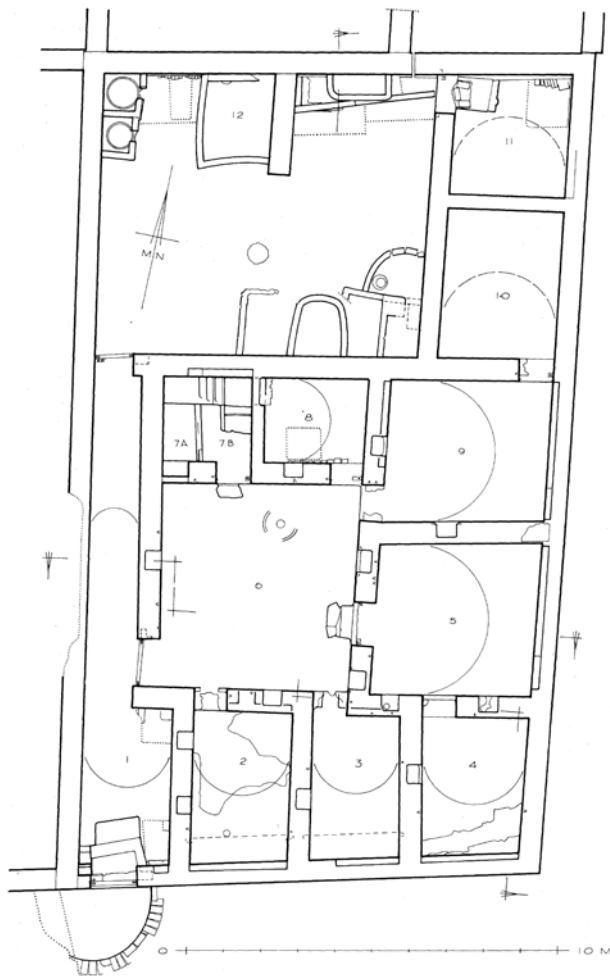


*Plate 1: Ismant el-Kharab: House 1, room 4.*

*Figure 3: Ismant el-Kharab: plan of House 3 (drawing by J. E. Knudstad).*

addition. All rooms were vaulted with the exception of the interconnecting living rooms, which were flat; they were constructed of palm trunks topped with palm fronds and covered with a thick coat of mud. The extensive courtyard is not approached directly from the house but from the street (Hope 1987: 157-66; 1997: 6-7). From the artefactual remains found within the house, we know that during the last phase of occupation a carpenter was conducting his business from here; amongst other items, he manufactured the leaves for wooden codices (Hope 1987: 163-6).

House 3 (Figures 3 and 4), to the east of House 2, is the largest of the three houses. The door, which opens from the south street, had been raised some 0.80 m during the later stages of occupation. A semi-circular wall of mud

brick was erected in the street, on the level of the original sill, to the east of the door in an effort to prevent a build-up of chaff and debris (Hope 1993: 3-4). The entrance (room 1) was down a short flight of steps; the room opens directly into a corridor, which extends the length of the house. A suite of nine rooms opens off the corridor to the east (Hope 1991: 41-3). The access room (room 6) was open to the sky. Rooms 2-3, 5 and 7-9 open directly off the central room; room 4 is accessed through a door in the south wall of room 5, whilst the entrance to room 10 is in the north wall of room 9. The staircase and under-stairs cupboard is to the north-west of the central room. The corridor opens into a courtyard with animal mangers and flimsy structures, presumably animal pens; two ovens are built into the north-western corner of the courtyard. The courtyard is also accessible from a compound to the north. Another room opens off the courtyard to the east (room 11). Rooms 2 and 3 each had a small window set high above the door in the north wall some three metres above the floor. This presumably served to let in light from the open-roofed room 6. A small textile business was conducted from this house (Bowen 2001: 24-6).

The houses bear a striking resemblance in plan and appearance to the older sections of modern villages in Dakhleh such as Balat, Bashendi and the Islamic town of Qasr. The architecture of these desert settlements has changed little over the centuries. Houses, shops and small industrial areas cluster together and in some instances they are indistinguishable from each other when viewed from the narrow, covered streets and lanes. The structures are built of mud brick, an ideal medium in a harsh environment; palm trunks, covered with fronds and mud-plaster are used for the roofs. Doors and their fittings remain unchanged. Rooms interconnect and are dark; windows are few. Whitewash is used on some of the internal walls but this is a rarity, and more often than not the walls are simply coated with mud plaster. As with the structures at Kellis, the floors in these older houses are made of earth.

## The Small East Church

The second area of the site chosen for a Virtual Archaeology study is the Small East Church. The structure is located within a large enclosure, overlooking the south-east wadi (Figure 1). It is part of a larger ecclesiastical complex that includes the Large East Church, a purpose-built basilica that dates to the first half of the fourth century (Bowen 2002: 81). The enclosure is imprecisely mapped due, in
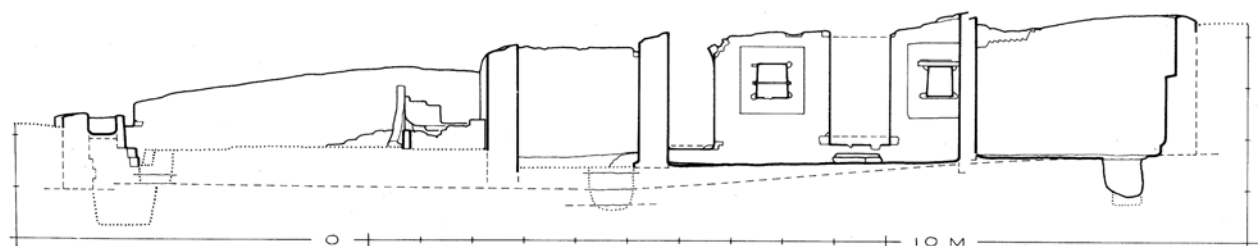


*Figure 4: Ismant el-Kharab: north-south section through the centre of House 3, looking east through room 6 (drawing by J.E. Knudstad).*
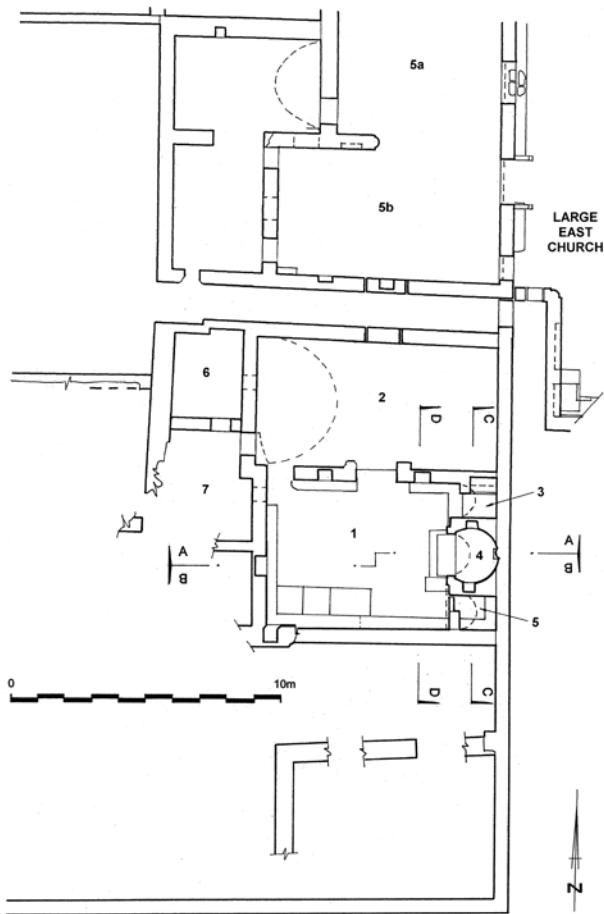
*Figure 5: Ismant el-Kharab: Plan of the Small East Church (drawing by J. Dobrowolski and B. Rowney)*

part, to the degree of preservation of the walls, which makes it impossible to locate buried doorways, and because the structures within the enclosure have undergone extensive alteration (Knudstad and Frey 1999: 205). The structure occupied by the church was not originally built as such but was modified for Christian use by setting an apse and side chambers against the east wall of the enclosure, ten metres north of its south-eastern corner, in an already existing room.

The church is a two-roomed, mud brick structure: the church in the south, room 1, and an adjoining room on the north, room 2 (Figure 5). The overall dimensions of the complex are 10.5 m north-south and 9.5 m east-west. The area to the south has not been excavated but it does not provide direct access to the church. To the immediate north of the complex is a narrow vaulted corridor, 1.00 m wide that separates the Small East Church from the narthex of the Large East Church. A door in the north wall of Room 2 once gave access to the structure from this corridor but was blocked in antiquity, possibly with the modification of the building. Access to the church was through two small vaulted rooms to the west. These rooms, which preserve their vaults and are in a somewhat dangerous state, have not been excavated and so the entrance system cannot be determined. It has been established, however, that the entrance door was set in the south-western corner of room 1.

The access room to the church (room 2) is barrel-vaulted. The vault had collapsed on to the floor and a decision was made not to excavate this room entirely. A small window set high in the west wall was exposed. This was presumably the sole light source for the room. The church itself (room 1) was preserved to a height of four metres in the west (Figure 6); its flat roof had disappeared and the entire structure was filled with windblown sand. The church comprises a nave, with an apse and two side chambers built against the east wall of the enclosure (Plate 2). Access was via two doors, which communicate with room 2: a narrow one in the west and a large central door. A low bench was built against the north, south and west walls of the nave and cupboards were built into the south, west and north walls; these were once closed off with wooden doors. The floor was once gypsum-coated and all walls were painted with white plaster. A solitary window in the west wall had been blocked with the modification of the building. The apse and side chambers are slightly elevated from the floor of the nave and were framed by mud-brick arches, the stumps of which survive (Figure 7). The side chambers were barrel-vaulted and the apse was roofed with a cupola, which commenced
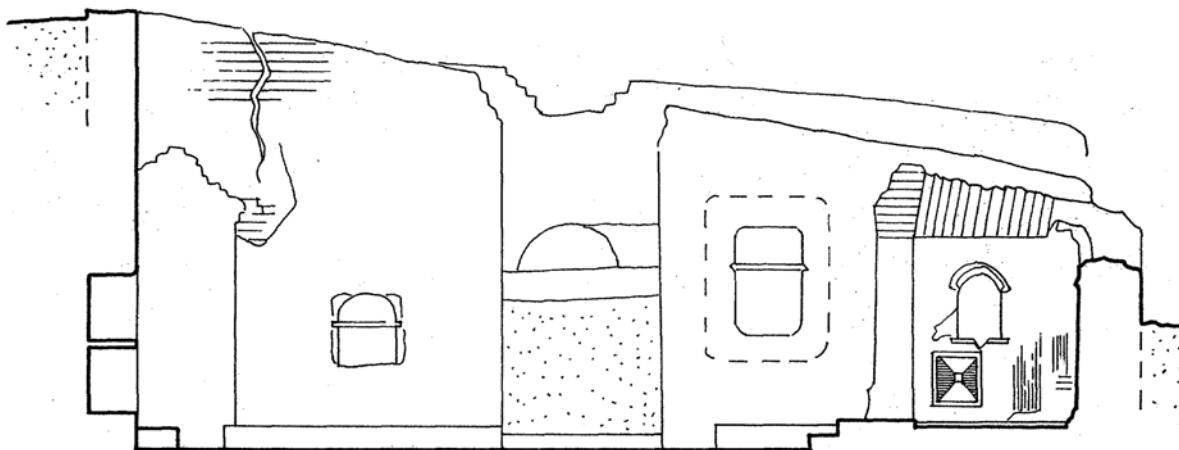


*Figure 6: Ismant el-Kharab: Small East Church, east-west section (AA) through the centre of the church looking north through room 2 (drawing B. Rowney).*

**Plate 2:** *Ismant el-Kharab. The Small East Church looking east.*

1.72 m from the floor. Both side chambers functioned as storage rooms. That on the north (room 3) measures 1.20 m x 1.18 m, and comprises a large wall bin and an open cupboard built into the north wall for the full length of the room, leaving a space of only 0.80 m between the bin and the apse wall. The room was closed off from the nave by a door. The south chamber (room 5) is 1.20 m x 1.50 m. It is devoid of features. A wall was constructed to block this room off from the nave and access was gained through a narrow doorway placed 0.35 m above the nave floor. The doorway is 0.63 m high and 0.45 m wide. Both chambers, including the bin, were coated with white plaster.

A narrow sandstone step gives access to the apse (room 4); the floor was similarly lined with sandstone, most of which were removed in antiquity. The maximum dimensions are 1.87 m north-south and 1.32 m east-west. The lack of bonding between the apse and the exterior wall, together with an insubstantial foundation for the apse has caused the latter to slump, creating two large cracks. Two niches, each framed by a sunken arch and painted red and yellow, were built into the north and south sides of the

apse; these were once fitted with doors. The apse was elaborately decorated. An engaged half column was set on the rear wall, slightly north of centre; its capital comprised three-pointed leaves rising and spreading from a horizontal moulding. It was painted yellow and red. Two painted columns were placed either side of the engaged half-column; their shafts are painted red and they are set upon yellow plinths. Between the engaged half-column and the painted columns are two painted frames with representations of panelled double-leaf doors. These comprise a series of eight rectangles decorated with stylised palm fronds. Below the niches are painted squares divided into four alternating red and yellow triangles. In the centre of each square is a small *crux ansata*, the Christian adaptation of the Egyptian *ankh*, which for Christians symbolised eternal life. Both faces of the pilasters are painted with geometric designs. The front to the sanctuary, facing the nave, was elaborately painted to represent columns set upon pedestals with geometric designs.

## Preservation and conservation of the monuments

Preservation and conservation of the monuments is a priority. Some of the excavated structures are sound, their mud-brick walls being strong enough to withstand the weight of the sand surrounding them; others are precarious and have large cracks in the walls caused, in part, by the removal in antiquity of their wooden fittings. The practice adopted in relation to all structures is to draw up detailed architectural plans and sections, to photograph, and then to backfill as many as possible at the end of the excavation, thereby returning them to their pre-excavation condition. The internal walls in some of
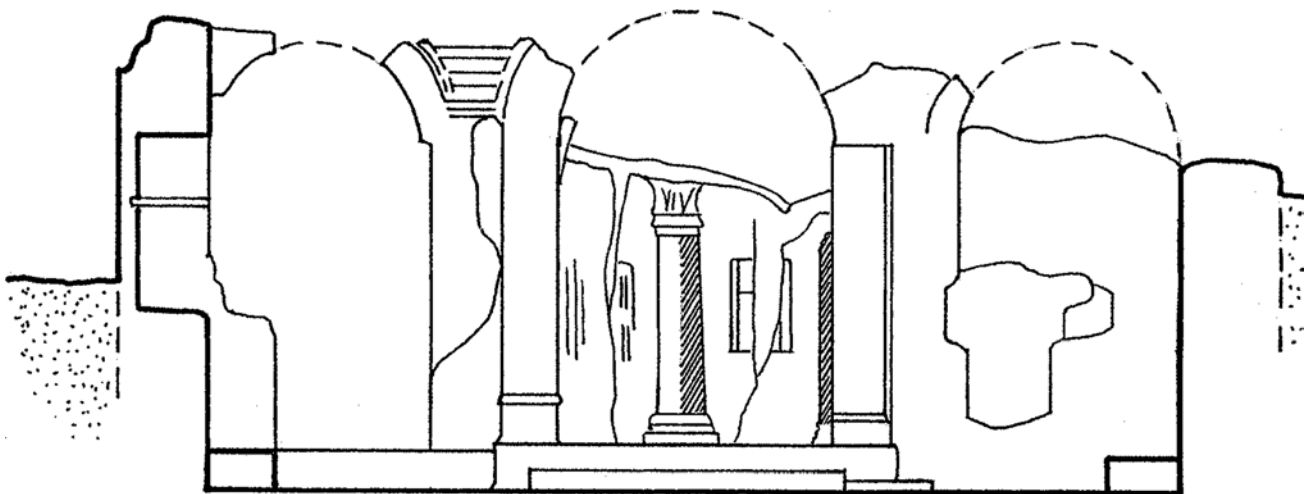


**Figure 7:** *Ismant el-Kharab. Small East Church, north-south section (CC) through the east end (drawing B. Rowney). .*

the formal structures are decorated with wall paintings executed upon a thin plaster wash. The paintings are fragile and the conservation strategy developed is to consolidate those paintings that remain on the walls and to collect all pieces of painted plaster that have fallen to the ground for reconstruction and consolidation in the workroom (Kaper 1999; 2002). Paintings that remain on the walls are drawn and photographed in careful detail; following this a wall, reusing ancient mud bricks, is built about 30 cm from each of the decorated walls and the intervening space filled with clean sand. The remainder of the room is subsequently backfilled. No wall paintings that are *in situ* anywhere on the site will remain exposed. The intention is to reproduce the decorative schemes in line drawing and photographic displays. It is here that Virtual Archaeology offers enormous potential.

## Virtual reconstruction as a tool for archaeology

Virtual archaeology is the ideal medium for examining ancient Kellis. The technology will give the archaeologists a variety of reconstruction options for structures that have suffered the ravages of time and choices for the placement of objects that were found within the structures. It offers the potential to visualise the village as a whole and the individual structures within it. Many of the buildings have undergone modification over time; these include the Temple of Tutu and the Small East Church. Virtual Archaeology gives the opportunity to visualise these monuments in the various stages of their evolution. The visualisation of the Small East Church is of particular significance as it is the earliest church so far attested in Egypt; its modification as such dates to the early years of the fourth century. Furthermore, this new technology will facilitate a comparison of the architecture of Kellis with contemporary architecture in Dakhleh and in the Nile Valley. An invaluable aspect of Virtual Archaeology for Kellis is its role in the preservation of the site. The fragile nature of the structures renders Ismant el-Kharab a dangerous site for tourists to visit. Numerous buildings are preserved beneath the sand; the tops of some vaults and stairwells are visible from the surface, others are hidden and can collapse should the unwary tourist venture across the site. Moreover, tourists walking upon the walls and roofs of such structures pose a threat to the monuments themselves. Virtual Archaeology can address this problem and make Kellis widely accessible to the general public in a comprehensible form.

## Introduction to Virtual Archaeology

The terms *3D reconstruction and 3D modelling* can be a misleading. Though they can refer to physical 3D scale models made from, for example, clay or balsawood, increasingly the terms refer to virtual reconstructions built with the aid of computer programs. Conceptually and visually however, the concept of modelling 3D objects on a computer is the same as physical modelling, with the advantage of being more flexible and plastic. Digital 3D models, like clay, are 'soft' and plastic; they can be resized, reshaped and remodelled in countless ways (Novitski 1998: 15). Today, 3D technologies are employed for a multitude of purposes: the visualisation of architecture before final construction; in prototyping industrial designs; in animation for major movies and in creating convincing virtual worlds for computer games.

The application of 3D technologies for archaeological visualisation is similarly well established. Many people are familiar with spectacular special effects in televised historical documentaries and museum exhibitions, but digital reconstruction and visualisation regularly aid archaeological research at a more operational level. The recreation of daily life and domestic structures based upon floor plans and sections, textual descriptions, photographs and material textures has assisted archaeologists in visualising the possible appearance of historic buildings and how people organized household activity and organised storage and work spaces (Simmons, cited by Novitski; 1997: 35). These digital reconstructions, whether intended for public display or for specific academic purposes, have come to be classified under the rather general term Virtual Archaeology.

There have been several valid criticisms of Virtual Archaeology. In the early stages where 3D technologies were adopted, particularly in the 1990s, 3D focused archaeological projects too often served as "vehicles for demonstrating advanced graphics techniques with any archaeological considerations playing a less important role" (Ryan 1996: 107). 3D technologies have matured considerably in the last decade, but continual improvements in hardware, visualisation software and the compelling nature of images and video means that the preoccupation with demonstrating novel graphic capabilities over and above archaeological method and enquiry is an ongoing problem. Another criticism is that the initial information upon which reconstructed models are based is not made "transparent" and offers 'a peremptory single reconstruction without offering alternatives' (Forte 2000: 249).

In a study of the documentation and validation of Virtual Archaeology, Ryan (2001: 2) emphasizes the key role that visualisation methods bring to the archaeological process 'in providing interfaces to data sources that help to identify uncertainty and enable the exploration of alternative interpretations'. To ensure that the building of virtual models does not end with definitive visual representations, interactivity presents researchers with the ability to choose and manipulate presented digital images.

Where reconstructions are presented not as static images but as interactive spaces the possibilities for visualisation and interpretation become more complex and rich. This study examines and describes some of the ways forward for 3D reconstruction, using specific structures that have been excavated at ancient Kellis. Researchers in archaeological visualisation have pointed to the necessity of a sequence
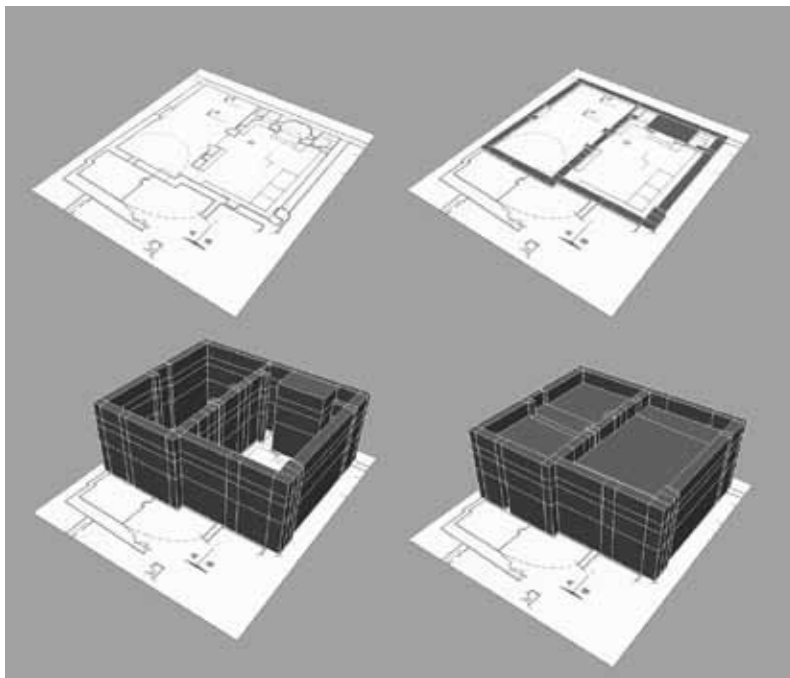
*Figure 8: Modelling the Small East Church*

1999: 202-6; Bowen 2002: 76). These plans, together with photographs of the structures, provided accurate information upon which to base the images presented in this paper.[3]

The process of modelling begins with digitising the floor plan to create a reference image and template for the 3D placement of walls and door openings. Once the base was defined the plan was extruded along an axis to recreate the walls. Doors and windows were cut through the model's walls, and a roof was added to complete the external geometry. This process is illustrated in Figure 8 where the Small East Church plan is used as the template. Although the reconstructions shown depict the Small East Church as a free-standing building, it did in fact adjoin other structures and was part of a larger enclosure.

As the upper portions of the buildings at the site have not survived, the building profile diagrams and floor plans were studied for information regarding the correct height and placement of walls, floors, niches and doors (Figures 5-7). Although the diagrams provided information about some non-existing features (for example, Figure 7 shows the architect's reconstruction of the arches that frame the sanctuary), certain architectural features needed to be added without the direct archaeological information. As with other virtual heritage projects (Sanders 2005), the accurate modelling for these parts of the building rely on expert advice, comparison to similar sites and comparison with modern buildings constructed with identical materials. In the case of the church and houses detailed in this study, these analyses allowed wall features (shelves, niches, cupboard doors), ceilings and roofs to be completed for the models. The inherent flexibility of the 3D model means that several different versions of building features can be created. This modular approach allows flexibility and future proofing; if future research indicates that different geometry was present, a more accurate model may be swapped into the reconstruction.

Once the geometry of the building was modelled, appropriate 'textures' were applied over the 3D model surfaces. Digital textures have two roles in 3D architectural visualisation; they render the surface colours and they recreate surface irregularities, or 'bumpiness'.

Surface colours for the Kellis visualisation were partially based on surviving plasterwork from the site, both internal and external (Bowen 2002: 159; Hope 2002: 235). The digital recreation of textures and colours for Houses 1-3 and Small East Church were important in communicating a number of peculiarities by way of surface treatment. For example, the walls of the houses are known to have

of images to explore alternatives; archaeological visualisations ideally should involve digital reconstructions of several interpretations of the data, of not just of one 3D model but of lengthy sequences of models (Novitski 1990: 58).

Though the digital reconstruction of a range of buildings at Kellis is underway, this paper focuses upon several buildings specifically: Houses 1, 2 and 3, and the Small East Church. The images presented in this paper reveal the iterative process guiding the digital reconstructions and are subject to further alterations as new discoveries are made and new interpretations are brought to light. Rather than concluding the research process, virtual reconstructions should be regarded as a continuous evolutionary process in which 3D models experience constant refinement (Mausch 1999: 1). It is important not only to communicate the archaeological basis upon which these reconstructions rely, but also the methodological approaches of the 3D technologies that have been employed.

It is hoped that the inherent flexibility of the modelling process and the interactive ways in which it can be communicated will provoke discussion of possibilities and techniques in future research.

## The Reconstruction of Houses 1-3 and the Small East Church; Archaeological Data and the 3D Reconstruction Process

The 3D recreation of architecture relies upon accurate information regarding the size and placement of the building walls, doors, windows and other features. The exceptional state of preservation of many structures at Kellis facilitated the production of comprehensive plans and sections (Hope 1990: 48; 1991: 41; Knudstad & Frey

*Figure 9:* Geometry and surface texture reconstruction of the interior of the Small East Church

been treated with a mud coating. This has been eroded from the external walls leaving the mud brick structure exposed. The mud plaster has survived on many of the internal walls. It should be noted here that a band of white plaster was painted around the features, presumably to highlight their position. This indicates poor light source. Colours are similarly important in faithfully rendering details of the Small East Church, where the external wall on the east was mud plastered but the internal walls were white (Figure 9). The painted decoration in the apse and the façade of the sanctuary was rendered in various ochres found in the surrounding desert. The apse decoration is largely intact but the two large cracks in the rear wall caused by the slumpage of the apse wall have damaged a section of the design. The design on the façade is more fragile. Large portions of plaster were dislodged from the wall in antiquity and some colours have faded considerably making it difficult to determine the pattern. This requires a degree of interpretation.

The reconstruction in this study extracted textures from photographic references to create generically accurate textures. These textures are generated so that the small sample may be repeated across each surface, without noticeable 'tiling' or obvious repetition. Unique textures are placed on the surface above the base colour. For example, the barrel ceilings in Houses 1, 2 and 3 had paint outlining the roof-wall juncture and the arc of the roof. This paint is placed separately to the plaster colour for the ceilings (Figure 10). For mud brick construction, the colour of the local sand determines brick colour. In determining the correct colour, lighting conditions of the reference photography varied from white to pink, yellow and brown based on the time of day the photograph was taken. Eyewitness review was necessary to accurately recreate the true colour of the mud brick walls. The commencement

and ongoing research into surface texture recreation and restoration has presented a number of interesting questions, particularly where specific coloured decorations are concerned. How reliable are the photographs by way of colour considering the colours have faded since they were produced in antiquity? How is it at all possible to recreate them in detail? The presentation of several variations is necessary to explore these uncertainties.

The reconstruction of the surface treatment of Houses 1-3 and the Small East Church was carried out with the aid of photographic documentation from past excavations. Ideally, 3D texture reconstruction favours photographic images taken at right angles so that they can be painted



*Figure 10:* Reconstruction of barrel ceilings with paint outlining the roof-wall juncture

*Figure 11: A digital rendering of wall cracks in the small East Church*

long before a 3D reconstruction of the site was proposed (and before 3D technologies were capable of rendering detailed and coloured surfaces). An entirely accurate 3D recreation of the surface textures of the building would require the photographic textures sourced from every part of the building at specific angles and with specific lighting considerations. Though this is technically feasible, it would involve considerable effort and expense and is often not possible given excavation timelines and considerations for the state of the preservation of the buildings involved.

The second role of textures in 3D recreations is to provide surface depth details (bumpiness). This is typically done using 'bump mapping', where the surface has an artificial unevenness or roughness applied. For this study there was often no need to exactly recreate existing bumpiness. Only when the surface appearance was significant and unique to a particular location did precise data become required. One example of such unique surface information exists in the two large cracks in the apse of the small East Church mentioned above. Modelling these structural fault lines would require considerable time, however the application of digital textures and virtual lighting renders the surface quickly and creates an illusion of depth. (Figure 11).

It should be noted that a technique exists to duplicate surface protrusions and indentations using a single camera and four lights (Einarsson 2004). This method generates an exact recreation of the surface detail and can be applied to 3D geometry as a texture. This technique was not employed here, as it requires physical access to the site and specialised equipment, though it may prove useful in capturing the surface details of structures excavated in the future.

or 'stuck' onto flat surfaces on a virtual model. While many photographic references were appropriate for this method, it should be stressed that the existing photography was primarily intended for archaeological documentation



*Figure 12: Slicing through the virtual model with progressive 'cutaways'.*

## Specialised techniques: Visualising Interiors, Exteriors and Internal Architectural Structure

One of the important parts of this 3D visualisation is the need to be able to 'see' inside the buildings. There were several possible methods for visualising the interior of the structures.

The two most obvious methods were to make the entire structure semi-transparent, or to remove parts of the digital geometry to reveal the structures within. These methods were simple
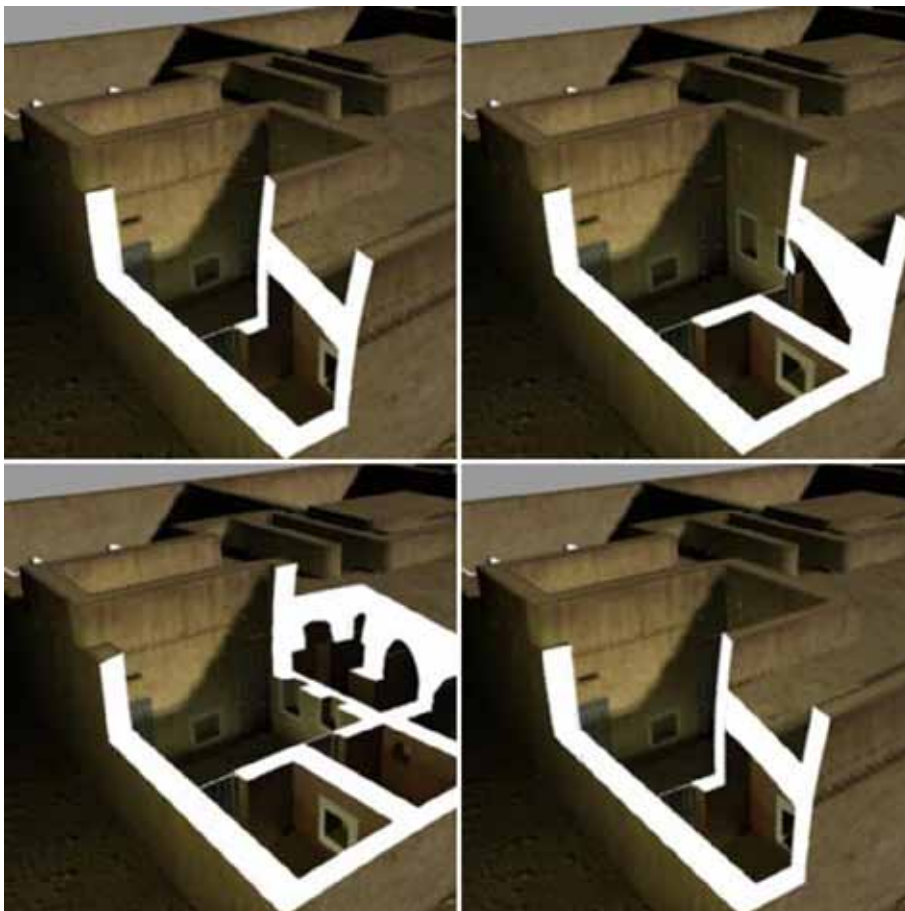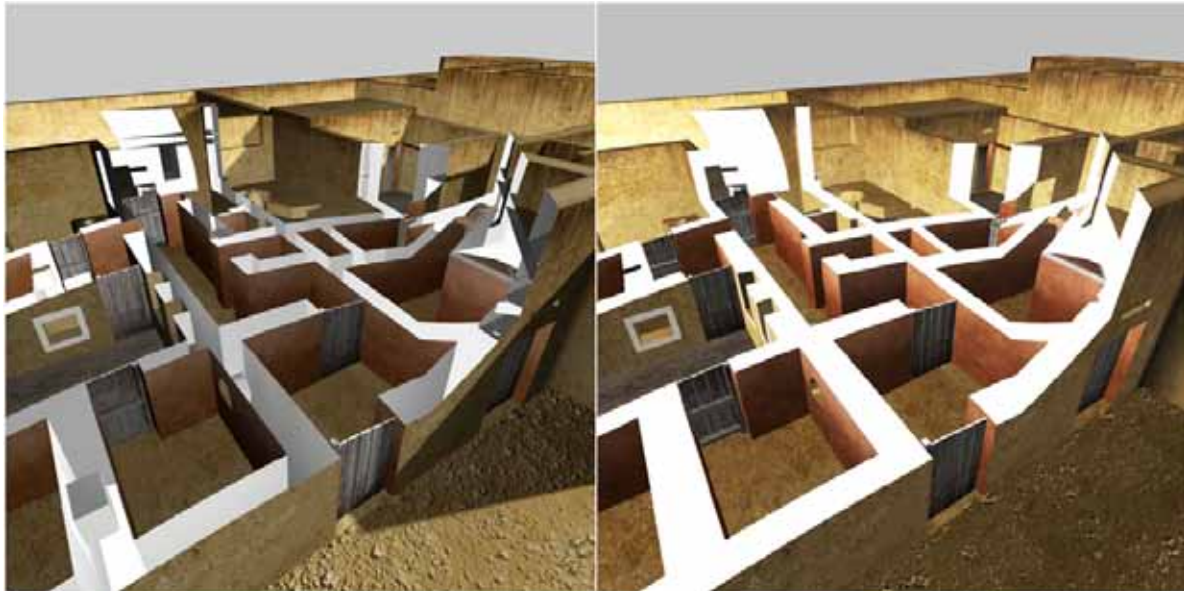
*Figure 13: The internal structure of the virtual model*

to implement, but suffered several different restrictions. In making the structure semi-transparent, the colour and surface detail of the architecture become less obvious. When removing geometry, the removal must be done manually and is destructive to the virtual model; that is, the original version of the structure must be kept separate in order to be able to go 'back' to the complete version

An alternative method involves the interception of graphics as they are displayed to the screen (Niederauder 2003) but because the removed geometry must align in a particular direction it was incompatible with the buildings addressed in this paper.

A more suitable approach was to simulate a 'cutaway' visualisation for the generated images which removes irregularly shaped 'slices' of the reconstructed model. The result is very similar to traditional technical illustrations used in architecture and industrial design, with the advantage of offering the viewer/computer user many angles of view simultaneously. For the visualisations shown in Figure 12, a method was constructed using light intensity from a light within the virtual environment that cast no shadows or lit any of the 3D geometry. Instead, the intensity of the light was used to 'cut through' the 3D geometry and make it transparent, leaving the rest of the digital model intact but invisible.

This method proved very flexible because the cut-away section could be moved over the model by moving the light in the 3D environment. This technique also permitted animations to be created where the cut-away section moves into the building, showing increasing amounts of the interior over time. The programming of this visualisation technique into an interactive interface is currently being investigated, which will allow researchers to examine the entirety of the structure, internal and external, by moving the mouse over the model.

One limitation to this technique lies in the fact that all virtual geometry is filled with empty mathematical space. Although a virtual wall may appear solid from all sides its interior is in fact hollow, so cutting through building walls reveals empty space instead of the internal structure of the wall (Figure 13, left). In order to create the illusion of solidity, it was necessary to apply a single colour to the inside faces of any geometry being cut. (Figure 13, right). Since white is the only colour applied to these spaces within the walls, improvements need to be made that reveal the materials (bricks, plaster and mortar) from which the wall is made. Beyond the visualisation of reconstructed architecture, this technique shows potential for further archaeological visualisation applications such as the interactive display of site stratigraphy.



*Figure 14: An interactive environment*

## Future Developments and Research

This study details the reconstruction of architecture through digital geometry and surfaces and examines several of the ways in which these structures can be visualised in computer rendered images. The procedures and techniques outlined here constitute only the foundations of more extensive digital reconstruction work in the future. Absent from these images of reconstructed architecture are the many elements suggestive of a lived in space such as baskets, pottery, weaving looms, storage jars, people and animals. Even once all these elements are assembled and placed in context, the rendered images portrayed remain only as snapshots to the past. Interactive visualisations that offer the researcher a choice of differing reconstructions have already been alluded to, though ultimately richer visualisations still would include animation and sound and allow virtual visitors to the site to navigate through the reconstructed virtual environment at will. The creation of these 'immersive' environments with the latest computer game technology considerably advances the possibilities for exploration and interpretation within a reconstructed space. Being able to 'walk through' ancient Kellis, pick up objects and move through doorways and corridors will engage the virtual visitor in ways which static reconstructed images never can. Although these interactive environments are currently being investigated (Figure 14), their creation nevertheless depends upon the groundwork of the cumulative research work detailed above.

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## Endnotes

2    A team from Columbia University under the directorship of Roger S. Bagnall is currently excavating another Roman period site: Amheida, in the west of Dakhleh,

3    We are indebted to Dr Colin Hope for providing unpublished plans, sections and photographs with which to work.

# Reviews

**Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, Xxii + 662 pages, notes, black and white plates and indexes, US$30 ISBN 0802849601.**

Reviewed by Lindsay Wilson

This is a landmark book from a leading evangelical scholar. Kenneth Kitchen is Emeritus Professor of Egyptology at the University of Liverpool, but has written extensively not only in the area of Egyptology, but also about the ANE background to the events of the Bible. In the preface he indicates that the genesis of the book came from the encouragement by Howard Marshall for him to produce an Old Testament volume parallel to F.F. Bruce's *Are the New Testament Documents Reliable?* The end product is, however, a much more substantial work than its NT equivalent. There are 100 pages of endnotes, which shows the depth of serious scholarship which underlies this book. These endnotes are followed by 50 black and white figures which shed further light on the issues. There are also 37 tables throughout the work. The book finishes with subject and scripture indexes but no author index.

One of the interesting features of his approach is that he works generally backwards through history. He starts with the external and internal evidence of the divided Hebrew kingdom, and then the exile and return. After dealing with these better-documented eras, he then considers the time of Saul, David and Solomon (under the heading 'The Empire Strikes Back'); the settlement and conquest; the Exodus and wilderness wanderings; the patriarchal period; an excursus on prophets and prophecy; and finally Genesis 1-11. There is an extended conclusion of 50 pages, in which he critically assesses minimalists like Thompson and Lemche, the compromise position of Dever ("much solid rock" but "also sinking sand"), and deconstructionist and some sociological approaches. Against the encroaches of the 'minimalists', Kitchen has taken a firm stand.

In relation to the divided kingdom, he explores how the biblical accounts list foreign kings, how foreign and local sources refer to Hebrew kings, and then various matters dealing with chronology (e.g. different calendars and regnal years). There follows an extensive evaluation of this data with the aim of presenting a 'balance sheet'. At that point of history (930-580BC) where the biblical records are most subject to corroboration or dispute by other written records and artefacts, Kitchen points out that there is compelling case for accuracy and reliability. He concludes that "the basic presentation of almost 350 years of the story of the Hebrew twin kingdoms comes out under factual examination as a highly reliable one, with mention of own and foreign rulers who were real, in the right order, at the right date, and sharing a common history that usually dovetails

together well, when both Hebrew and external sources are available." (64). Less space is devoted to the period of exile and return (600-400BC), but there are again close matches in historical detail and chronology.

Chapter 4 is an interesting discussion of the united monarchy, and is increasingly relevant as a number of 'minimalist' scholars question the historicity of David and Solomon. Kitchen extensively examines the external sources, explains why there were fewer during this period, and argues that the extant archaeological evidence shows "much realistic agreement" between the biblical texts and various sources (inscriptions, topography, the sites of Hazor, Gezer and Megiddo, and cultural references). This may not persuade all (there is less than a page on the Tel Dan inscription), but the chapter is full of fair consideration of the various challenges to the biblical text.

His chapter on conquest and settlement is similarly incisive, based on a reading of Joshua (which is quite common today) that it describes wars of conquest not occupation. At this point it is worth noticing that Kitchen's argued case for the historical worth of the biblical records is based on a 13th century (or late date) for the exodus from Egypt. Those looking to support an earlier date for the exodus will need to look elsewhere.

On the paucity of Egyptian evidence for the exodus, Kitchen cites the setting of the East delta, from which very little has survived; the reuse of stone blocks in later periods; and the unwillingness of the Pharaohs to describe defeats on temple walls. There are judicious comments on the *yam suph* ('sea of reeds', or lakes) the large numbers (*'eleph* can mean 'leader', most clearly in 1 Kings 20:30, or 'thousand'), the route followed and the location of Sinai. At this point he is broadening beyond the issue of historicity in order to explain the text, but the end product is that the account is coherent when better understood. These are followed by a discussion of the tabernacle, the ANE treaty forms, and a brief argument for a 13th century date for the exodus. Kitchen concludes that, while much of the exodus account cannot be corroborated by external sources, there are good reasons for this shortage of evidence, and a reasonable amount of other support. The exodus and Sinai events are thus not proven, but in harmony with the attested realities of the period and place.

The patriarchal period is not covered chronologically, but rather by considering a number of themes and especially religious and cultural practices. The Joseph period is used as a test case, and Kitchen is able to use his Egyptological expertise to argue for the authenticity of many incidental details such as names, titles, dream interpretation and Semites in Egypt. The assumption here is if the Joseph is historically authentic when so little is based on these unimportant references, then there are good grounds for trusting it as an accurate text.

An historical walk through the various prophets and periods of prophecy fills chapter 8. This seems a bit like

an afterthought, and this material could well have been incorporated in earlier chapters. The various problems of Genesis 1-11 are then considered under the assumption that this is prehistory or protohistory, with a number of literary and other parallels in the ancient world.

He argues that the proper factual backdrop to the reading of the OT texts is that of the entire ANE geographical and historical setting. In terms of the divided monarchy and the exile and return (where the evidence is fullest), there is a high level of support for the reliability of the OT accounts. Indeed, even the earlier material seems to fit well in its putative date and setting. Wherever evidence is there, it is supportive rather than dismissive of the reliability of the OT documents. (500)

A reservation which I have about this valuable book is that sometimes the way in which he is dismissive of the views of others may cause readers to react, and not hear the legitimate criticisms he is putting forward. This is how he refers to some of the ideas he disagrees with (drawn largely from his conclusion): "Utter poppycock in practice." (p.471); "this tiny example of (anti)academic lunacy will suffice." (p.471); "Rubbish on both counts." (p.473); "a 'con-nonsense-us'" (p.372) "a dead duck and of no relevance" (p.476); "blatantly untrue, in fact the exact opposite of the truth." (p.481); "an entirely irresponsible misstatement of the real facts and still needs to be publicly withdrawn in print." (p.481); "a shabby way to treat important firsthand evidence" (p.482); "the Tel Dan stela most unkindly brushed this silly, asinine myth aside" (p.483); "unsubstantiated guesswork out of somebody's head." (p.492). There is some room to be a little more gracious, though no less firm in pursuing truth!

Kitchen is aware that not all readers will find his views to their taste. He notes, for example, that the title of the book would yield the acronym OROT, and comments "my critics are free to repunctuate this as O! ROT!—if they so please!" He is clearly a polemicist! I first met Ken Kitchen in the kitchen (how ironic) of Tyndale House, Cambridge, as we were both there for an Old Testament Study Group. He was erudite, a little idiosyncratic, but absolutely passionate about his subject and utterly convinced of his own views. The book is just like the person, and this makes it engaging, stimulating and a little quirky.

This is an important book, but who is it for? It is so detailed and, at times, technical that it becomes a reference book for scholars and students. It would be great if Ken could use his undoubted learning to produce a shorter and more popular volume.

Lindsay Wilson
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## Gavin Betts, *Teach yourself new testament greek*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 2004, 278 pages, paperback A$44:95, ISBN 0340870842.

Reviewed by Alexander Hopkins

Gavin Betts was Associate Professor of Classical Studies at Monash University. He is author of the Latin volume of the Teach Yourself series, co-author with Alan Henry of the Ancient Greek volume, and has also translated modern Greek writings into English.

This volume starts with introductory material including advice on how to use the book and a glossary of grammatical terms; then come 21 teaching units, followed by appendices, a key to the Greek reading exercises, a list of principal parts of verbs, a vocabulary section, and index. The font face used, both for the English and Greek is clear and the size adequate. Throughout the book I detected only one typographic error, in either English or Greek, a missing full stop on page one.

This is a book which I will recommend as a clearly-written, concise, and accurate introduction to New Testament Greek. But I want to start with some cautions, which have less to do with the book's contents than the way the book may be used. Let me draw on my own experience as a student and teacher of NT Greek.

About thirty years ago I sat, perplexed, in a university tutorial room. Why was my Greek professor frowning quizzically at me? As gently as possible, he explained that my English to Greek translation of the practice sentences was barely comprehensible. I had studied the chapter on the 'accusative of respect' intensely and worked that construction into almost all of my sentences. But no! I had misunderstood the book's intention. What my professor unknowingly taught me that day was how necessary it is to have a teacher to correct our misunderstandings of the text book.

I note secondly that the book concerns itself specifically with *New Testament* Greek, rather than *koine* Greek. Its audience is likely to be drawn significantly from those wanting to understand the New Testament Scriptures because of a faith commitment. This was and remains my own motive for learning the language. It is frustrating to hear persons from public platforms bolstering arguments or interpretations with references to the Greek that are *nearly* accurate, based on as much understanding as they glean from commentaries. But what really induced annoyance was hearing Greek slaughtered by a speaker who smugly told his audience that he knew Greek – he was ... *self-taught*.

In endorsing this particular volume, then, I urge that its users show the Socratic wisdom of knowing more than others by knowing how little they know. But let's turn

from a potential mis-use of the book to its contents to see how it does give good service to its reader.

The book is built around its 21 teaching units. The preceding introductory material gives the reader sound advice as to how to attack the task. Betts includes a recommendation that the learner "read through the Greek aloud" and the suggestion that some Greek be learnt by heart. These deserve to be highlighted as both are important complements to the basic learning style encouraged by the book's approach.

After learning the alphabet in unit 01, the real work begins in unit 02 with nouns of the second declension, presented first because it is the most straight-forward, and with the present and future active of the major class of Greek verbs. Betts' explanation of the way in which Greek nouns differ from those of English in exhibiting case endings is uncomplicated and clear. It may have been helpful in the immediate context of the description of basic uses of the cases to give Greek examples; the reader finds these in the Greek reading section, of which there is one for each unit.

Unit 03 presents first declension nouns, and some adjectives, adverbs and prepositions. The self-teaching reader is by now aware of the need for memorisation of lists of endings in order to learn Greek, and of the approach taken by our author. While traditional, however, it is not the only one. There is an increasing number of teachers who believe that NT Greek should be taught as a modern language, using as much as possible only the target language, unfolding the grammar through examples, and speaking and listening. Obviously, a book designed for self-teaching cannot work in this way. It would be possible, however, to incorporate some aspects of this methodology, such as substitution drills. For example, a model sentence is taught, say, 'He saw the man'. Then, the student is required to make substitutions: 'He saw the men/friend/father', or 'He <substitute verb> the man'. None of the exercises in the present book require translation into Greek, which is a task that students generally dislike but which assists the acquisition of fluency! Nevertheless, there are benefits in using paradigms (lists of noun and verb endings), particularly in that the adult language learner can use analytical skills to put into a place the elements he is learning, and from them generate new sentences.

Within the learning framework that Betts uses, then, his progressive unfolding of the language is logical, coherent, and comprehensive. An impressive feature of the book is the author's combining accuracy with concision. This is all the more remarkable in that a difficulty for any teacher of Greek is that it cannot be assumed that the learner will know even English grammar. Many students, it seems, 'know' of participles only that they end in '-ing', and have no concept of there being a passive participle. In introducing his explanation, Betts clears up these misunderstandings in less than three lines. Time and again Betts' grammatical explanations exhibit both brevity and effectiveness. This is not always so with Greek grammars!

Some units are supplemented by an excursus on a matter of general interest such as the nature of Greek and its history, books in antiquity, and the text of the New Testament. Again the reader benefits from Betts' erudition being easily and simply communicated. Each reader might wish for a little more. The significance of papyrological research for our developing understanding of the New Testament is an aspect I would have liked to have seen. And there are occasionally statements or opinions with which one might argue. Betts says of *koine* Greek that "its most important feature was that it was the language of the street, akin to the form of English spoken today by the relatively uneducated." (p7) The impression that this might give rise to needs to be weighed against the fact that what we have in the New Testament are written documents, when in itself the ability to write was confined to the educated (we cannot assume present day rates of literacy), that these are written and not oral texts, and that within the *koine* itself there is a broad range of levels of linguistic register. Betts, it seems, prefers the less modern translations; some might have a response to his comment, "Many recent translations show a tendency to paraphrase, which at times distorts the meaning of the original." (p164) But nowhere does Betts get on a soapbox. There is a small number of writers of NT grammars who have pressed pet interpretations of certain NT verses. Betts' text is scholarly and subjects the reader to no such excesses.

By the time I reached about unit 10, I felt that if the self-taught learner has taken Betts' advice, mastering the material of each unit before moving on, he or she will have a nascent sense of the structure and coherence of the language. Betts' mastery of detail and his comprehensiveness is exemplified in his including information on the formation of certain verbs which exhibit the influence of a 'yod' suffix; his style is exemplified in the lightness of touch with which he speaks of this matter which, though helpful, is touched upon by no other introductory NT grammar that I can recall.

One last linguistic matter requires attention: verbal aspect. About 15 years ago two scholars independently produced books on verbal aspect in the GNT. Fanning's approach was the more traditional, Porter's the more provocative. Naturally, it is the latter that subsequent writers seem obliged to respond to! One difficulty faced by students is that different authors may use the same terminology – to mean quite different things. Prior to this, many grammarians had explained the choice of tense, especially the choice between the Greek aorist and imperfect, as being based on *Aktionsart* – the nature of the action. The imperfect, some argued, denoted actions of some duration, while the aorist denoted those that could be described as "punctiliar". Porter's usefulness is in demonstrating that the choice is a matter of the writer's decision about how to present the verbal action to his reader. "The queen **reigned** forty years," views the action of reigning *globally* (as an entirety), and uses the simple past, for which the Greek

aorist would be used. We could say, however, "While the queen **was reigning** for forty years her country enjoyed prosperity," using the imperfect in English as in Greek. It is not the nature of the action that differs, but the way in which the author wishes to present the action in a given context. Where Porter set a cat amongst the pigeons, however, was his contention that verbs in the indicative do not "grammaticalize tense", that is, do not indicate the time at which an action takes place. (The "present" tense does not necessarily convey information about an action taking place in the present, nor the aorist an action in the past, etc.) That view has found little support. Though the writer of our *Teach Yourself* volume does not specifically refer to Porter's view, it is clear that he finds it no more convincing than does this reviewer.

As a pragmatic test, this reviewer looked particularly at Betts' treatment of the imperfect. In his notes to help the student in the translation exercises, Betts often makes perceptive comments, as when he explains on page 127 how a difference between Greek and English idiom makes the translation "loved" suitable in an instance where the Greek imperfect ("was loving") is used. Similarly, the translations Betts supplies in his key to the Greek reading exercises at times bring out more clearly the fullness of meaning of the imperfect than English readers are used to seeing in our translations (eg nos. 11 and 16 of unit 05). Pragmatically, then, the work is helpful.

The precise formulation used in expressing certain distinctions with regard to verbal aspect is critical, however, and at times I find myself in some disagreement with Betts, as when he distinguishes between commands that use the present or aorist form. "The present is used for an action which is seen as going on, in the process of happening or being repeated, the aorist for an action which is seen simply as an event." (p154) This, however, focuses on the nature of the action and is close to an *Aktionsart* view; the important point, rather, is how the author *presents* the action, whether he wants the reader to view the *process* of the action, or the entirety. Betts exemplifies his formulation by speaking of the Greek verb 'to obey' and writes that the present imperative indicates 'keep obeying', whereas the aorist "would have reference to a single act and be simply translated by *obey*". But if we look at the Lord's prayer (given in the translation exercise), are we to imagine that the aorist imperatives indicate that his name is to be hallowed, his will be done, and our daily bread be given *only once*?

It may be helpful to provide some ideas supplementary to those given in the somewhat thin section 'Suggestions for further study', which refers to only five other resources. Surprisingly, given that it is modern enough to use no capitals in its title and refers to unit 01, 02, etc, the book points the reader to no Internet resources. The B-Greek list (http://www.ibiblio.org/bgreek/) is a moderated forum to which students could refer questions; the New Testament Gateway (http://www.ntgateway.com/) is a directory of

Internet resources including many for NT Greek. ESword (http://www.e-sword.net/) provides Greek texts, Bible translations, and other aids. *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* by Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor gives running vocabulary and grammatical helps to the reader; while Zerwick's *Biblical Greek illustrated by Examples* would make an excellent follow-up to Betts' work, particularly in its treatment of verbal aspect. Daniel Wallace's *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* is a widely used grammar which will consolidate understandings, though it tends to fit grammar into too many unnecessary categories, a trap that Betts deliberately avoids. Ceslas Spicq's *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* and the series *New Documents illustrating Early Christianity*, esp. vol 5 by G.H.R. Horsley, hold much interest based on understandings gained from papyrus and other sources.

Teaching oneself a language from a book requires passion; no book can generate that degree of motivation, it must lie within the student. For the student who is passionate, dedicated to many hours of study and some of frustration, and of the integrity to acknowledge the limitations of their own self-teaching, this book represents a trustworthy guide. For the teacher, too, who looks to accurate grammar concisely expressed this is a valuable book. I commend it to readers.

Dr Alex Hopkins has taught Greek language or classics at Monash and La Trobe Universities, and served as research assistant to a project to revise Moulton and Milligan's The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament. He is currently I.T. Manager and teacher at a secondary school, while teaching NT Greek privately and for Tyndale College. He acknowledges that as a student some 30 years ago he "sat at the feet" of Prof. Betts to great profit.

**James K. Hoffmeier, *Ancient Israel in Sinai: The evidence for the Authenticity of the Wilderness Tradition*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2005, 384pp, maps and plates, US$45, ISBN 0195155467.**

Reviewed by Christopher Davey

Professor Hoffmeier's earlier work, Israel in Egypt (1996) established a methodological and an evidential background which he develops further in this latest study. As readers of Israel in Egypt will know Hoffmeier is well qualified for his subject as a scholar in Egyptology and the Ancient Near East. James Hoffmeier is Professor of Near Eastern History and Archaeology at Trinity International University, Deerfield, Illinois. He was Project Director of the Eastern Frontier Canal Survey in 1994 and since 1999 the Director of the Tell el-Borg excavations in Northern Sinai. (http://www.tellelborg.org/index.htm). The personal background of the author gives this book and some of its conclusions a standing that will remain relevant well beyond the reviews of material that it contains.

Hoffmeier does not allow himself to be bound by 'anthropological and sociological models and subjective theories about the dating and origin of the biblical documents' and instead examines and follows the evidence. In this new book he adopts a phenomenological approach which is descriptive, comparative, empirical and where investigation is done in the context of history itself. Above all, it suspends judgement on the phenomenon so as not to import bias and limitation. As a result the conclusions are often 'on balance' assessments and leave the field open for additional evidence.

After surveying the wilderness tradition in the history and religion of ancient Israel and in modern scholarship, Hoffmeier discusses the geography and environment of Sinai. He concludes that the place names associated with the Sea of Reeds (Ex 14:2) refer to a specific location and that they correspond best to the Egyptian toponyms of the thirteenth century B.C. In his view, archaeological discoveries of the last fifteen years in north Sinai render it no longer plausible to claim a sixth century milieu for the Exodus story. The paleoenvironmental and archaeological data leads him to conclude that the geographical setting for Exodus 14 is 'between the north side of the el-Ballah Lake system and the southern tip of the eastern lagoon'.

The discussion about the location of 'the Mountain of God' begins with an analysis of the Wilderness itineraries and the possible corresponding geography. North and central Sinai have no reasonable candidates for Mount Sinai. There is a lengthy assessment of outside Sinai theories including those presented by Professor Colin Humphreys (2003). He finds Humphreys' use of the Exodus itinerary problematic as the data is forced into a preconceived route. The proposed mountains in Arabia do not in Hoffmeier's view correspond with the distances or the geographic and

toponymic data. The most viable candidates are located in Southern Sinai and are Gebel Safsafeh and Gebel Serbal.

The treatment of the journey from Egypt to Mt Sinai begins with a discussion of the numbers of people involved and Hoffmeier accepts Mendenhall's view that '*elep* is a clan-based military unit rather than a 'thousand' (1958) so that there were only tens of thousands of Israelites. Hoffmeier uses earlier scholarship to trace the route to Mt Sinai commenting on timing, seasons and sustenance. He considers the route to be tentative, but plausible.

The possibility of the Israelites writing legislation is considered in relation to the origins of the Semitic alphabet and the form of contemporary Ancient Near Eastern treaties. Hoffmeier agrees with Kitchen (1993) that the tabernacle's design and construction was based on Egyptian technology pointing to a Bronze Age rather than exilic date. Many of the words associated with the tabernacle's construction, furnishing and operation are connected to Egyptian etymology and motifs have Egyptian prototypes. Hoffmeier is not the first to draw these conclusions but he has assembled more evidence than has been previously gathered.

A chapter is devoted to the Egyptian nature of personal names and to other Egyptian elements in the Wilderness tradition. The final chapter discusses the relationship between the Wilderness tradition and the origin of Israel. Hoffmeier takes the view that Israel entered Canaan from the outside rather than developing indigenously. The origin of the divine name is seen to derive from the Sinai as it has no parallels in Egypt, and the debate about the Karnak Temple scenes now attributed to Merneptah showing prisoners that may be Israelites is explained without a conclusion being reached.

In concluding Hoffmeier finds it implausible that an exilic period writer could have constructed a narrative so dependent upon second millennium Egyptian culture, and why would one try doing so as no one at the time would have known the difference in any case. To jettison the wilderness tradition in Hoffmeier's view leaves too many unanswered questions about ancient Israel's origin, religion, law, and the divine name, Yahweh.

While the book is a documented scholarly work it is readable and should not present a challenge to the non-specialist. The pictures, taken by Hoffmeier himself, set the scene well. He has photographs of all the 'Mount Sinai contenders' in the southern Sinai, allowing the reader to appreciate the points made in the text. The maps are satisfactory, but are not detailed enough to complement the discussion about the wilderness itineries. This may partly be a result of the uncertainties that Hoffmeier concedes remain with our understanding of them.

It almost appears that Hoffmeier has left the next stage of Israelite tradition from Mt Sinai to 'the promised land' as the subject for a further book, maybe to complete a trilogy. The period covered by this book is placed directly in the area of Hoffmeier's field of study and current field

work. His capacity to discuss issues in terms of the meaning on the ground is unparalleled especially in relation to the crossing of the 'sea of reeds', which he places in the vicinity of his excavations at Tell el-Borg. The reliability of his field work and particularly the paleoenvironmental and geomorphological analysis will have to await publication more comprehensive than that available on the excavation's website. However for some time to come no one will be able to consider the wilderness tradition without reference to this study.

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**Shimon Gibson, *The Cave of John the Baptist: The Stunning Archaeological Discovery that has Redefined Christian History,* New York: Doubleday, 2004, 400pp, maps, figures, plates, US$17, ISBN 0385503474 (Hb);**

***The Cave of John the Baptist: The first archaeological evidence of the historical reality of the Gospel story,* London: Arrow Books, 2005, A$28, ISBN 009942648X (Pb).**

Reviewed by Christopher Davey

When studying archaeology one of my lectures stated to my surprise that archaeologists are really in the entertainment industry. He meant that if public are not interested in what archaeologists do, funding will evaporate and it will be necessary to get a job not so dependent on people's curiosity.

It is not easy to keep people interested and at the same time be intellectually honest as archaeology can be downright boring, especially at the beginning of an excavation when funds are often desperately short. Speculation may spice up the situation and may not be a problem when one is expounding the significance of archaeological material in the context of personal interest, how people once lived and died, but step into the realm of history and in particular religious history and issues will become contentious.

There is a tradition of British archaeologists writing popular books describing their work. Layard and Kenyon are two such archaeologists. Gibson also comes out of the British

archaeological world and is associated with the Palestine Exploration Society. He appears to be a genuine and careful archaeologist. But there is a very real question about the lengths that this book, or at least the cover, goes to gain attention.

The title of the book ensured a good level of interest in the 'Di Vinci code' world and sales have borne this out. However many readers with expectations fostered by the title and blurb will close the book wondering what it was all about. Gibson's book after all reports on a professional excavation of a late Iron Age cistern located near Ain Karim west of Jerusalem that had some rather indistinct drawings on the wall. It does not seem to be the stuff that will change the course of Christian history.

Press releases issued during the excavations claimed that the place where John the Baptist lived had been found. After such hype, it is hard to write a popular book unless the excitement is maintained. However the connection of John the Baptist with this site remains highly speculative.

Gibson discusses the church and biblical traditions associated with John the Baptist, and describes related archaeological and ecclesiastical sites. The Biblical material will be familiar to most readers of the Bible, but the development of church traditions may not and it is these that occupy a significant portion of the book.

Gibson's venture into John the Baptist's theology and significance assumes that his importance was diminished by Jesus' disciples and the traditions of the Christian church, and that his theological meaning was modified so as not to conflict with the Church's view of Jesus. The suggestion that John saw himself as Elisha waiting for Elijah will not gain much support. His ideas at this point are superficial and lead one to conclude that he is probably a good archaeologist.

While the treatment of John by Church tradition is criticised, the reader has to be interested enough in such traditions to read numerous chapters about them. This aspect of the book is heavy going, something that is compounded by the suspicion that Gibson is himself in unfamiliar territory.

The arrangement of the book is rather frustrating. Figures do not have captions, only a number referring to a list at the front of the book, so that with endnotes at the back one needs to have the book open at three places much of the time. The endnotes are useful, but not comprehensive. The drawings of the cave itself are small and do not give the reader a feel for the structure. The colour photographs and line drawings are helpful, but maps are limited leaving much of the geographical context, an important issue for the study, to the imagination.

While the book will probably sink without trace, one hopes that the cave itself will be the subject of a careful archaeological publication. Such an enterprise takes time, but it is something that British archaeologists have been good at.

**Colin J. Humphreys, *The Miracles of Exodus,* San Francisco: Harper Collins (USA), London: Continuum, University of East London (UK) 2003, Hardback (Paperback 2004), 362 pages, Illustrations, Pictures and maps, US$24.95, ISBN 0060514043 (Hb).**

Reviewed by Murray Gillin

Professor Humphreys CBE is a renowned Cambridge University physicist who has received considerable recognition for his ideas and research, which span many fields from computer chips to microprinting, eternal lightbulbs and computer chips in the brain. His passion for many years has been examining the Bible in the light of science. He is the Goldsmiths' Professor of Materials Science and head of the Roll Royce University Technology Centre at Cambridge University, and chair of Christians in Science for the United Kingdom. He was honoured by the Queen in in 2003 with the CBE. Humphreys has published over 500 scientific papers.

Professor Colin Humphreys uses his scientific approach to unlock many of the mysteries associated with the ten plagues that afflicted the Hebrew people, the exodus journey, and a suggested new site for Mount Sinai. Importantly he starts his journey by considering the story of the Exodus to be that of an eye witness and states "his approach to the description of Moses and the Exodus in the Bible is going to be as a scientist who tests and weighs the evidence". "In my research I found that these writings in Exodus are remarkably accurate and coherent" but also found that "Much of the traditional interpretation is wrong, particularly regarding the geography of the exodus."

His aim, in writing this book is to answer five key questions about the exodus.

1.  Is the story coherent and consistent?

2.  Is the story factually accurate?

3.  Can we understand the miracles?

4.  Has the Exodus text been misinterpreted?

5.  Can we construct the Exodus route and find the true Mount Sinai?

Interestingly, Humphreys starts this often intriguing journey by first considering the final miracle—that of crossing the River Jordan into the Promised Land. In evaluating the available evidence for this event, Humphreys quotes Professor Amos Nur that the ancient town called:-

> *'Adam' (Joshua 3:15, 16) is now modern 'Damiya,' the site of the 1927 mudslides which cut off the flow of the Jordan. Such cut-offs, lasting one to two days have also been recorded in 1906, 1834, 1546, 1534, 1267, and 1160. "The stoppage of the Jordan is so typical of earthquakes in this region that little doubt can be left as to the reality of such events in Joshua's time"* .

Humphreys is aware that some readers may object to such a scientific explanation as many regard the Israelite event as a miracle straight from the hand of God. He then argues that the Israelites would have viewed this event as 'a total demonstration of the hand of God in their time of need.' After 40 years of waiting in the wilderness and now standing before the flooded Jordan River the river is held back at just the right time and they cross into the promised land. Humphreys exclaims "what a great climax to the Exodus journey"!

A major portion of the book addresses each of the ten plagues and shows scientifically his agreement with the famous Egyptologist Flinders Petrie who observed in 1911 "The order of the plagues are the natural order of such troubles on a lesser scale in the Egyptian season". In other words, it has long been realized that the plagues follow a natural, connected sequence. In each of the ten plagues Humphreys provides a scientific and plausible explanation of each event.

An important feature of his writings surrounds his calculation of the likely number of Israelites participating in the famous exodus. Much has been made of the number 603,550 men, twenty years and older—implying a total group of at least two million. Humphreys' first points out the uncertainty of the word 'eleph' to mean a thousand or a troop and which is unclear from the context. From his reading of the phrase "The two hundred and seventy-three first-born Israelites who exceed the number of the Levites" (Numbers 3:46) he was struck by the precision of the number as it was clearly not a rounded number. Secondly it was a small number; and thirdly the number did not look like a symbolic number so causing him to consider that it was a literal number meaning 273. Performing a mathematical analysis on the relationships between the tribes, males, first-born, &c. he was able to conclude that the total number of men, women and children at the exodus was probably about 20,000. This work has already been published (1998).

Central to Humphreys' scientific approach and establishing the writings in Exodus are remarkably accurate and coherent has been its application to tracing the Exodus journey and leading to the identification of a suggested Mount Sinai. Using the textual clues as to the places at which the Israelites either camped or passed through namely Marah, Elim, Red Sea, Desert of Sin, Dophkah, Alush, Rephadim, Desert of Sinai, and Mount Sinai, he has been able to construct the Exodus journey in a new and scientific way which has remained faithful to the theological integrity of the text and if correct will rewrite our understanding of a major event in world history.

Presented in a "you are there style", this book identifies and describes events and how the biblical account is remarkably accurate and historical when scientifically investigated and answers each of the five questions asked above. Profusely

illustrated with maps, photographs, and explanatory tables, this book by a significant scientist unlocks the mysteries of the ultimate Bible story in a fascinating and convincing way.

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## Gerald O'Farrell, *The Tutankhamun deception: The true story of the mummy's curse,* London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 2001, 233 pages, US$18, ISBN 0283072938.

Reviewed by Ian McDowell

The thesis of this book is that Lord Carnarvon and Howard Carter gained access to the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings (KV62) across the Nile from Luxor in Egypt, some years before the accepted entry year of 1922. They did this using postulated passages connecting KV62 to adjoining tombs, notably that of Ramsses V & VI (KV9), which were shown to them by the infamous tomb robber family El-Rassul. Carter supposedly constructed the passage by which the tomb is entered today, as part of a detailed recent misdirection.

Your reviewer, an engineer, is skeptical, for various reasons. One is that the tombs in the Valley of the Kings certainly do not display uniformity of levels, which connecting passages capable of installing the KV62 shrines would require. Another is that actual such passages between KV9 and KV62 have not been found. And another is, where are the large quantities of allegedly looted items?

The supposed early entry was for the purpose of despoiling the tomb of most of its treasures secretly. These included papyri which identified Tutankhamun closely with the monotheistic Aten cult of his close relative, Akhenaten, and cast doubt on the historicity of Moses and, by inference, of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Here the book becomes somewhat fanciful. The early deaths of Carnarvon and others, attributed by the media to "the curse of the pharoahs", it is claimed, were caused by persons unknown, with vested interest in denying accepted Christian beliefs.

At the same time, it must be said that the archaeological methods of even Carter's day were suspect. A variety of questions relating to Tutankhamun remain to be answered. An empty tomb of Akhenaten is shown at at Amarna. The tomb KV55 in the Valley of the Kings near that of

Tutankhamun was probably prepared for Smenkhkare, a close relative of Akhenaten and Tutankhamun, all Dynasty XVIII pharoahs. But for reasons yet undiscovered, royal funeral honours were withheld from Smenkhkare, and his tomb furniture used for Tutankhamun, including one inscribed canopic coffin. The most notable such item is Smenkhkare's gold funerary mask, which seems to have been used for the second of Tutankhamun's famous masks. being markedly different in appearance from the younger and thinner faces on Tutankhamun's first and third masks, and leaving Smenkhkare's mummy bereft.

It has long been thought that Tutankhamun was murdered at the instigation of polytheistic Amun interests. To this notion the O'Farrell thesis adds latter-day anti-monotheism proponents dedicated to the suppression of the alleged missing papyri. Tutankhamun's mummy has been treated with scant respect since the discovery. Interestingly, Egypt's archaeology chief, Zawi Hawass, recently arranged for CAT scans of the remains, some of which have appeared in the media. We await the detailed findings with interest. Perhaps Dr. Hawass could establish or otherwise the existence of the putative tunnels between the tombs also.

The O'Farrell thesis is acknowledged as derived from that of Thomas Hoving's 1978 book, "Tutankhamun, the Untold Story". Perhaps O'Farrell would have entertained us more if he wrote the story as conspiracy theory fiction like "The da Vinci Code", itself derived from an earlier speculative pseudo-scholarly work.

# *Buried History*

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All Papers published by *Buried History* are refereed. Brief communications, book reviews are also invited for consideration.

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