

plainly their ecclesiastical affiliation<sup>47</sup>. None the less they are certainly aimed at the large Monophysite communities, as appears from their efforts to give the Monophysite Ethiopian kingdom a distinct place in the unity of the final world dominion of the Christian Empire<sup>48</sup>. However, in doing so, it is not the inter-Christian religious dissensions that come to the fore, but rather it is the concept of the unity of Christendom which is stressed in the face of nascent Islam; the latter is seen as a common religious danger for all Christians living under a régime which, through the open and official proclamation of the superiority of its religion over Christianity, seemed to be creating the most favourable conditions for apostasy and conversion to Islam<sup>49</sup>.

47. Some scholars (Brock, « Syriac Views » (n. 17), p. 19-20 ; Martinez, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic* (n. 1), p. 28) suggested a Chalcedonian (Melkite) author of the Pseudo-Methodius Apocalypse, whereas others (Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (n. 1), p. 29 – later on Alexander was more cautious ; see D. de F. Abrahamse's remarks in note 49 on p. 29-30 ; Suermann, *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion* (n. 1), p. 161) suggested a Monophysite author. For the Edessene Apocalypse, Nau, p. 446, and Suermann, p. 174, assumed a Monophysite author. Martinez, p. 209, on the contrary, suggested a Nestorian or Melkite writer, assuming a Dyophysite tendency in the following passage concerning Antichrist : « Satan will be united with this false Christ and perform signs, revelations and vanities, just as the Divinity was united with the Humanity and performed signs and wonders » (ed. Nau, p. 431 (lines 12-14)). However, as the christological formula "to be united" was used by Monophysites and Melkites, this passage is not conclusive for the question of the christological position of the author. For the moment, I will not exclude the possibility of an origin in Monophysite circles of both Apocalypses. It should not be forgotten that both works are very dated, and it is very well possible that the particular historical circumstances and developments, not to forget the Muslim politico-religious propaganda and the fear of a mass apostasy to Islam, induced their authors to focus the attention of their Monophysite co-religionists on the rôle of the Byzantine Emperor as protector of Church and Christianity (for Pseudo-Methodius see in particular my above-mentioned article in note 9).

48. See above notes 37 and 44.

49. See above notes 10 and 25.

## EARLY CHRISTIAN REACTIONS TO THE BUILDING OF THE DOME OF THE ROCK IN JERUSALEM

In 1992 B. Flusin published a short text from a collection of edifying stories (the *Diègèmata stèriktika*) attributed to the monk Anastasius in the manuscript *Vat. gr. 2592*.<sup>1</sup> In this story Anastasius reports that thirty years earlier he lived on the Mount of Olives and that at that time Egyptians were engaged in clearing the site of the Temple in Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> When on a certain night he rose three hours before the sounding of the sounding-board of the Holy Anastasis, he heard a noise coming from the Temple Mount, as if many people were working at that place. At first he believed that the Egyptians were even at that hour of night still at work there, but he changed his opinion when he noticed that a deep silence descended upon the place immediately after the man who sounds the sounding-board had started shouting the «Bless, o Lord». It was not Egyptians who were at work there, Anastasius concluded, but demons, who were rejoicing in the Egyptians' work and co-operating with them. The next morning he met some people from the Holy Gethsemane in the town, who told him that they had had the same experience during the previous night. Anastasius concludes his account by explaining why he decided to record this experience of thirty years earlier:

«I considered it necessary to record these things because of those people who think and say, that what is built in Jerusalem today is the Temple of God. For how will a temple of God be built in that place? There is given a judgment on it, saying to the Jews: "Behold, it is being left", Christ said (Matth. 23, 38; Lk. 13, 35). That is to say: it remains desolate for ever. For "the last glory of the house" (Hag. 2, 9) was that which was set on fire in the time of Titus. After the last (glory) there is no other last glory possible. For nothing is more last than the last».

<sup>1</sup> B. FLUSIN, *L'esplanade du temple à l'arrivée des Arabes, d'après deux récits Byzantins // Bayt al-Maqdis: 'Abd al-Malik's Jerusalem, I / Ed. J. Raby, J. Johns (Oxford, 1992) (Oxford Studies in Islamic Art, 9) 22–26. For the identification of the author of the *Diègèmata stèriktika* with Anastasius of Sinai, the author of the *Hodègos*, the *Questions and Answers* and other works, see B. FLUSIN, *Démons et Sarrasins. L'auteur et le propos des Diègèmata stèriktika d'Anastase le Sinaïte // Travaux et Mémoires 11 (Paris, 1991) 381–409.**

<sup>2</sup> FLUSIN, *L'esplanade...* (n. 1) 30–31. connects this event with the caliphate of Mu'awiya (about 660) suggesting that the Egyptian labourers were enlisted for the executing of some major work on the site of the Temple.

This little story is very interesting for more than one reason. Flusin plausibly argued that the topical reference to the building of the «Temple of God» in Jerusalem can only bear upon the construction of the Dome of the Rock by the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Malik in 691/2.<sup>3</sup> Following Sheila Blair's conclusion, that the inscription inside the Dome of the Rock which mentions the date 72 AH = 691/2 AD should be taken as the *terminus a quo* for the building,<sup>4</sup> Flusin concluded that Anastasius' story was written shortly after that date.<sup>5</sup>

The *Diègèmata stèriktika* form a collection of edifying stories intended to confirm the Christians in their belief and thus to comfort them.<sup>6</sup> Flusin defines them as a «collection organisée», containing the rarest and oldest documents showing how the Christians in Syria and Palestine responded to the expansion of Islam during the Umayyad caliphate.<sup>7</sup> We may conclude, therefore, that Anastasius' contemporaries obviously considered 'Abd al-Malik's building-enterprise on the Temple Mount as the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple and that this undertaking aroused much commotion among the Christians of the time. That the Christians could conceive the Dome of the Rock as the «Temple of God», is — in view of its monumental architectonic structure — quite understandable.<sup>8</sup> The new cultic building which rose on the Temple Mount

<sup>3</sup> FLUSIN, *Démons et Sarrasins...* (n. 1) 408; FLUSIN, *L'esplanade...* (n. 1) 30.

<sup>4</sup> S. S. BLAIR, *What is the Date of the Dome of the Rock?* // *Bayt al-Maqdis...* (n. 1) 69. Also G. ROTTER, *Die Umayyaden und der zweite Bürgerkrieg (680–692)* (Wiesbaden, 1982) (*Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, XLV, 3) 227–230, argued for the year 72 AH being the beginning of the building. Most scholars, however, assume that the year 72 refers to the completion of the building; cf. G. R. HAWTING, *The First Dynasty of Islam. The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661–750* (London—Sydney, 1986) 59.

<sup>5</sup> FLUSIN, *Démons et Sarrasins...* (n. 1) 409 (note additionnelle); FLUSIN, *L'esplanade...* (n. 1) 24.

<sup>6</sup> FLUSIN, *Démons et Sarrasins...* (n. 1) 389.

<sup>7</sup> FLUSIN, *Démons et Sarrasins...* (n. 1) 409. For the references to the Muslims in the other works of Anastasius, see: S. H. GRIFFITH, *Anastasios of Sinai, the Hodegos, and the Muslims* // *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 32 (1987) 339–358; J. HALDON, *The Works of Anastasios of Sinai: A Key Source for the History of Seventh-Century East Mediterranean Society and Belief* // *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East, I: Problems in the Literary Source Material* / Ed. AVERIL CAMERON, L. I. CONRAD (Princeton, N. J., 1992) (*Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam*, 1) 107–147; R. G. HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, N. J., 1997) (*Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam*, 13) 92–103.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. FLUSIN, *L'esplanade...* (n. 1) 30; FLUSIN, *Démons et Sarrasins...* (n. 1) 408: «Ainsi donc, parmi les Chrétiens auxquels s'adressent les *Récits*, certains au moins, sensibles à la propagande omeyyade, sont prêts à considérer que le Dôme du Rocher vient, après six cents ans d'interruption, occuper en pleine légitimité la place du Temple détruit par Titus».

did not answer to the usual architecture of the mosque, but rather resembled the Christian buildings belonging to the type of the ciborium or reliquary built above a sacred place.<sup>9</sup> We will not enter here into the much-discussed and vexed questions of why 'Abd al-Malik erected this memorial building and which (Jewish and Islamic) traditions may at that time have been connected with the rock and the rotunda which form the centre of the building.<sup>10</sup> However, it is very likely that anti-Christian propagandistic intentions also played a role in the caliph's undertaking. The Dome of the Rock was intended to become the visible sign that Jerusalem was no longer an exclusive Christian Holy City.<sup>11</sup> As such, this Muslim construction had to compete with the Christian sacred buildings of the town, first of all with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Cf. K. A. C. CRESWELL, *Early Muslim Architecture* (Oxford, 1969) 101–109; BLAIR, *What is the Date of the Dome of the Rock?..* (n. 4) 70; A. RIPPIN, *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices, 1: The Formative Period* (London—New York 1990) 55–56.

<sup>10</sup> For a survey of the different ancient and modern views, see now RIPPIN, *Muslims...* (n. 9) 51–58, and the following contributions // *Bayt al-Maqdis...* (n. 1) in addition to Blair's article: C. MANGO, *The Temple Mount, AD 614–638* (1–16); A. ELAD, *Why did 'Abd al-Malik build the Dome of the Rock? A re-examination of the Muslim sources* (33–58); J. VAN ESS, *'Abd al-Malik and the Dome of the Rock. An analysis of some texts* (89–103). Cf. also N. RABBAT, *The Meaning of the Umayyad Dome of the Rock // Muqarnas* 6 (1989) 12–21.

<sup>11</sup> For the anti-Christian Qur'anic inscriptions inside the Dome of the Rock, see C. KESSLER, *'Abd al-Malik's Inscription in the Dome of the Rock: A Reconsideration* // *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1970) 11–12; O. GRABAR, *The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem* // *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959) 52–56; S. D. GOITEIN, *The Historical Background of the Erection of the Dome of the Rock* // *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 70 (1950) 106; IDEM, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden, 1966) 139, 147; H. BUSSE, *Die arabischen Inschriften in und am Felsendom* // *Das Heilige Land* 109, Heft 1–2 (1977) 8–24; IDEM, *Monotheismus und islamische Christologie in der Bauinschrift des Felsendoms in Jerusalem* // *Theologische Quartalschrift* 161 (1981) 171–176; RIPPIN, *Muslims...* (n. 9) 54–55; G. J. REININK, *An Early Reference to Qur'an 112? // All those Nations... Cultural Encounters within and with the Near East* / Ed. H. L. J. VANSTIPHONT (Groningen, 1991) (*Comers/Icog Communication*, 2) 123–130. \*  
For an English translation of these inscriptions, see: BLAIR, *What is the Date of the Dome of the Rock?...* (n. 4) 86–87; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam* (n. 7) 695–699. \*

<sup>12</sup> Cf. F. E. PETERS, *Jerusalem and Mecca: The Typology of the Holy City in the Near East* (New York—London, 1986) (*New York University Studies in Near Eastern Civilization*, 11) 95. H. Busse developed a very interesting thesis concerning the building of the Dome of the Rock. In his view 'Abd al-Malik, by the building of both the Dome of the Rock and the projected building of the Aqsa Mosque on the site of the Jewish Temple, intended to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem according to the model of the Holy Sepulchre, which was considered by the Christians to be their «new Temple», being the successor of the Jewish Temple. The anti-Christian inscriptions inside the

There are, in all likelihood, further contemporary witnesses of Christian reactions to the building of the Dome of the Rock.<sup>13</sup> They seem to confirm Anastasius' report, that public opinion considered 'Abd al-Malik's enterprise to be an attempt to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem. They also strongly suggest that, at least one of the intentions of the caliph in building the Dome was to give Jerusalem a distinctive Islamic signature. By building the Dome on the site of the Temple, but after the model of a Christian church, 'Abd al-Malik was announcing that the religion of the conquerors was to be seen as the successor of both Judaism and Christianity. These witnesses are represented by three apocalyptic texts which originated in the milieu of Syriac-speaking Christianity in North Mesopotamia in or shortly after 691/2, the date of the inscription inside the Dome of the Rock.

The first witness is the so-called *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*. This work is now accessible in its first critical edition, with German translation of the Syriac text.<sup>14</sup> The early Greek and Latin translations of *Pseudo-Methodius* are now accessible in a new edition by W. J. Aerts and G. A. A. Kortekaas.<sup>15</sup>

Dome of the Rock served to prevent the Muslims from equating the Dome of the Rock with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; cf. BUSSE, *Monotheismus...* (n. 11) 176–178; IDEM, *Tempel, Grabeskirche und Haram aš-Šarif. Drei Heiligtümer und ihre gegenseitigen Beziehungen in Legende und Wirklichkeit* // H. BUSSE, G. KRETSCHMAR, *Jerusalem Heiligtumstraditionen in altkirchlicher und frühislamischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1987) (Abhandlungen des deutschen Palästinavereins) 1–27.

<sup>13</sup> For possible Jewish reactions, see HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam...* (n. 7) 315–317.

<sup>14</sup> G. J. REININK, *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius* (Louvain, 1993) (CSCO 540, 541, *Syr* 220, 221) (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation PM). An English translation of the second part (chapters X, 6–XIV, 13) by S. Brock is in: A. PALMER, *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool, 1993) (Translated Texts for Historians, 15) 222–242. An English translation of the complete text, but only of the text published from the manuscript *Vat. syr. 58*, is given by F. J. MARTINEZ, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius*. Diss. Catholic University of America (Washington, D. C. 1985) 122–205. For a less satisfying translation, by P. J. ALEXANDER, see: P. J. ALEXANDER, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* / Ed. by DOROTHY DE F. ABRAHAMSE (Berkeley—Los Angeles—London, 1985) 36–51. An unreliable edition of the Vatican manuscript, with German translation, is that by H. SUERMANN, *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion auf die einfallenden Muslime in der edessenischen Apokalyphtik des 7. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main—Bern—New York, 1985) (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe XXII, Theologie, Bd. 256) 34–84.

<sup>15</sup> W. J. AERTS, G. A. A. KORTEKAAS, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen // CSCO 569, 570, *Subs.* 97, 98 (Louvain, 1998). These new editions replace the older edition of the Latin text by E. SACKUR, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen. Pseudo-Methodius, Adso und die tiburtinische Sibylle* (Halle a. S., 1898; repr. Turin, 1976) and of the Greek text by A. LOLOS, *Die Apokalypse des Ps.-Methodios* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1976) (Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, 83).

*Pseudo-Methodius* was written in 691/2 in the city of Sinjar or in the region of the nearby Mount Sinjar in North Mesopotamia (North Iraq).<sup>16</sup> Already in 692 *Pseudo-Methodius* was circulating in Edessa, the native city of Syriac Christianity. There it generated two new apocalyptic texts (our second and third witnesses). We have called the first text the *Edessene Apocalypse*, because it is in fact an explanation, interpretation and adaptation of *Pseudo-Methodius*; this was carried out in 692 in Edessa or in one of the monasteries in the vicinity of Edessa.<sup>17</sup> This text was published with a French translation in 1917 by F. Nau.<sup>18</sup> The second Edessene text dependent on *Pseudo-Methodius* is the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*, which was published with an English translation in 1900 by J. Rendel Harris.<sup>19</sup> Since this text considers the Second Arab Civil War (680–692)<sup>20</sup> as the beginning of the fall of the Arab rule, it must have been written in or very shortly after 692.<sup>21</sup>

It is notable that Jerusalem plays a conspicuous role in the Syriac Apocalypses which originated in or shortly after 691/2. In the oldest known Syriac

<sup>16</sup> See for a full discussion of the date and place of origin, PM, *Einleitung*, XII–XXIX (transl.).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. G. J. REININK, *Der edessenische 'Pseudo-Methodius'* // BZ 83 (1990) 32–38. \*

<sup>18</sup> F. NAU, *Révélations et légendes. Méthodius.—Clément.—Andronicus* // *Journal Asiatique*. Sér. IX, T. 9 (1917) 415–452 (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation EA). We are preparing a new edition of the Syriac text, since Nau's edition is not without mistakes. German translation of Nau's text by SUERMANN, *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion...* (n. 14) 86–97. English translation by MARTINEZ, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic...* (n. 14) 232–239, and S. BROCK, in: PALMER, *The Seventh Century...* (n. 14) 243–250.

<sup>19</sup> J. RENDEL HARRIS, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles together with the Apocalypses of Each One of Them* (Cambridge 1900) (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation GTA). German translation of the last part (the revelation of John the Little) by SUERMANN, *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion...* (n. 14) 98–109. For its relation with *Pseudo-Methodius*, see H. J. W. DRIJVERS, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles: A Syriac Apocalypse from the Early Islamic Period* // *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East...* I (n. 7) 210–211; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam...* (n. 7) 268–270.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. in general ROTTER, *Die Umayyaden...* (n. 4); HAWTING, *The First Dynasty of Islam...* (n. 4) 46–57.

<sup>21</sup> According to DRIJVERS, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles...* (n. 19) 213, the work was written after 692 (dependence on *Pseudo-Methodius*) and before 705 (the end of 'Abd al-Malik's reign). The argument that there may be a reference to the founding of the city of Wasit between 702–705 in the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles (*ibidem*, 208, n. 44) is not decisive, since Harris' and Drijvers' translation of GTA, 21 (text) 39 (transl.) *bdwkt' dgl šm'* by «in the place named Diglath» is not correct, since *dgl šm'* is an apposition to *bdwkt'* meaning «in the place which has a false name» (for the expression *dgly šm'*, «falsely called», cf. R. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Oxford, 1879—1901) 822. It may be rather a reference to Medina, the City of the Prophet Muhammad, being the Muslim name for Yathrib. For the allusion to the Second Arab Civil War, see: GTA 20 (text), 38 (transl.).

apocalyptic text responding to the Arab conquests — the sermon *On the End* attributed to Ephrem Syrus (probably written between 642 and 680/3)<sup>22</sup> — Jerusalem only fulfils its traditional eschatological role. It is in the vicinity of this city that the eschatological peoples of Gog and Magog will be destroyed,<sup>23</sup> and it is also the place where Antichrist will establish his nefarious rule.<sup>24</sup> In the Syriac Apocalyses of the end of the seventh century, however, Jerusalem symbolizes the unique Christian politico-religious centre of the world.

According to Pseudo-Methodius Golgotha is the centre of the earth.<sup>25</sup> The source here is the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*,<sup>26</sup> where Golgotha, the centre of the earth, is connected with the grave of Adam, the altar of Melchizedek, the offer of Isaac and the Cross of Christ.<sup>27</sup> The Cross, which is implanted in the middle of the world, symbolizes by its two beams «the power of the Cross, which has power over height, depth, length and breadth of the earth».<sup>28</sup> This symbolism of the universal power of the Cross is adopted by Pseudo-Metho-

\* <sup>22</sup> For a full discussion of this text, see G. J. REININK, Pseudo-Ephraems «Rede über das Ende» und die syrische eschatologische Literatur des siebenten Jahrhunderts // *Aram* 5 (1993) 437–463. Edition and German translation of this work by E. BECK, Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones III (Louvain, 1972) (CSCO 320, 321, Syr 138, 139) (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation PE).

<sup>23</sup> PE 309, 67 (text) 90 (transl.). This motive is traditionally connected with Ezek. 38–39/Rev. 20:7–10.

<sup>24</sup> PE 381–388, 68 (text) 90 (transl.). This motive is connected with 2 Thess. 2:4; cf. B. MCGINN, Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil (San Francisco 1994) 41; B. E. DALEY, The Hope of the Early Church. A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology (Cambridge 1991) 30, 39; L. J. LIETAERT PEERBOLTE, The Antecedents of Antichrist. A Traditio-Historical Study of the Earliest Christian Views on Eschatological Opponents. Diss. (Leiden, 1995) 77.

<sup>25</sup> PM IX, 8–9. 19–20 (text), 32–34 (transl.).

<sup>26</sup> Critical edition with French translation of the two recensions now by SU-MIN RI, La Caverne des Trésors. Les deux recensions syriaques // CSCO 486, 487, *Script. Syri* 207, 208 (Louvain, 1987) (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation CT). For the study and discussion of the sources of CT, cf. A. GÖTZE, Die Schatzhöhle, Überlieferung und Quellen // *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse (Jahrgang 1922) 4. Abhandlung (Heidelberg, 1922); SU-MIN RI, La Caverne des Trésors. Problèmes d'analyse littéraire // *IV Symposium Syriacum 1984 (OCA, 229)* / Ed. H. J. W. DRIJVERS, R. LAVENANT, C. MOLENBERG, G. J. REININK (Roma, 1987) 183–190; IDEM, La Caverne des Trésors et Mar Éphrem // *Symposium Syriacum VII* / Ed. R. LAVENANT (Roma, 1998) (OCA, 256) 71–83. For the influence of CT on *Pseudo-Methodius*, cf. G. J. REININK, Der Verfassername «Modios» der syrischen Schatzhöhle und die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodios // *OC* 67 (1983) 46–64; PM, *Einleitung*, XXX–XXXI (transl.).

<sup>27</sup> CT XXIII (15) XXIX (6) XLIX (2–3) 178–179, 224–225, 406–407 (text), 68–69, 86–87, 156–157 (transl.).

<sup>28</sup> CTL (22–23) 422–423 (text) 162–163 (transl.).

dius and applied to the Byzantine empire. As long as the Byzantine empire will take refuge to the invincible power of the Cross, no kingdom or people will be able to prevail over the kingdom of the Christians.<sup>29</sup> Even the «pagan tyrants», viz. the Arabs who are the enemies of the Cross, will never be able to overpower the Christian kingdom.<sup>30</sup> The Christian empire is not only invincible, it will even acquire world-dominion at the end of times, when it will prevail over all kingdoms and peoples of the world and found a universal reign of peace.<sup>31</sup> This universal eschatological *pax Christiana* will be established in the near future by the Christian emperor of Byzantium.<sup>32</sup> The Arab «tyrants», therefore, will never be in the position to establish a lasting world empire, but — being only a scourge in God's hands for seventy years — their power will soon be destroyed by the emperor, who is about to realize the eschatological role of Byzantium.<sup>33</sup>

Not only is the Holy Cross in the centre of the earth, Pseudo-Methodius says, but so too are the priesthood and the kingship.<sup>34</sup> With the priesthood, the Jewish priesthood connected with the Temple in Jerusalem is meant, and with the kingship, the Jewish kingship connected with Jerusalem, the city of David.<sup>35</sup> These Jewish prerogatives have been transferred to the kingdom of the Romans after the devastation of Jerusalem and the Temple by Vespasian and Titus.<sup>36</sup> Thus the kingdom of the Christians has become the only and exclusive heir of the excellent Jewish gifts of the priesthood and kingship, and this position will remain unassailed until the end of times.<sup>37</sup> It is clear that in Pseudo-Methodius' view Jerusalem has become the exclusive Christian Holy City, since its centre, Golgotha with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, represents the Christian politico-religious centre of the world. The Byzantine king, in fact, has become the successor of king David in Jerusalem, just as Constan-

<sup>29</sup> PM IX, 9. 20 (text) 32–34 (transl.).

<sup>30</sup> For the background of PM's highly polemical use of the word «tyrants» for the Arabs, see G. J. REININK, Tyrannen und Muslime. Die Gestaltung einer symbolischen Metapher bei Pseudo-Methodius // *Scripta signa vocis. Studies about Scripts, Scriptures, Scribes and Languages in the Near East, presented to J. H. Hospers* / Ed. H. L. J. VAN-STIPHOUT, K. JONGELING, F. LEEHUIS, G. J. REININK (Groningen, 1986) 163–175; PM IX, 9. 33, n. 7 (transl.).

<sup>31</sup> PM X, 2–3. 21–22 (text), 35–36 (transl.).

<sup>32</sup> PM XIII, 14–18. 39–41 (text), 64–67 (transl.).

<sup>33</sup> PM V, 9. X, 6, XIII, 2, 4, 6. 10, 23, 35–37 (text), 15, 39, 57–59 (transl.).

<sup>34</sup> PM X, 2. 21 (text), 35–36 (transl.).

<sup>35</sup> Again *Pseudo-Methodius* is adopting motives from the *Cave of Treasures*; cf. CTL (13–16) LI (17) LII (17–19) 418–419, 428–431, 442–443 (text), 160–161, 164–165, 172–173 (transl.).

<sup>36</sup> PM X, 4. 22–23 (text), 37–38 (transl.).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. note 1 on PM X, 2. 35–36 (transl.).

etine's Church has taken the place of the former Jewish Temple.<sup>38</sup> Pseudo-Methodius' highly polemical tone is not directed against the Jews, but against the Muslims, who, being in the possession of the Holy City, could claim to have become not only the political but also the religious successors of the Christian empire in the Near East.<sup>39</sup>

As I have already suggested elsewhere, 'Abd al-Malik's plans of making Jerusalem distinctively the Holy City of the Muslims by raising the Dome of the Rock on the site of the Temple may very well explain Pseudo-Methodius' vehement attacks on the Arab «tyrants».<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, Pseudo-Methodius' use of other Syriac sources in his anti-Arab polemics strongly suggests that he is indeed responding to 'Abd al-Malik's building activity on the Temple Mount. Accordingly, he portrays the figure of the coming and liberating Byzantine emperor with the traits of Alexander the Great and the emperor Jovian, fusing motives from two well-known Syriac works, viz. the so-called

<sup>38</sup> For the connection between the Byzantine emperor Heraclius and Jerusalem as the seat of David's kingdom and the terrestrial centre of Christianity, cf. S. SPAIN ALEXANDER, Heraclius, Byzantine Imperial Ideology, and the David Plates // *Speculum* 52 (1977) 217–237. For Eusebius' description of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as the «new Jerusalem» and Constantine's new Christian «temple», cf. T. D. BARNES, Constantine and Eusebius (Cambridge, Mass.—London, 1981) 248–249; P. W. L. WALKER, Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century (Oxford, 1990) 235–241; R. L. WILKEN, The Land Called Holy. Palestine in Christian History and Thought (New Haven—London, 1992) 95–97.

<sup>39</sup> P. J. ALEXANDER, The Medieval Legend of the Last Roman Emperor and its Messianic Origin // *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978) 1–15, put forward the thesis that the important role of Jerusalem in *Pseudo-Methodius* is due to the fact of its author's being influenced by Jewish Messianic conceptions. Alexander's thesis is adopted by H. Suermann, who assumed also an anti-Jewish polemical intention in *Pseudo-Methodius*; cf. SUERMANN, *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion...* (n. 14) 208–212, 235–236; IDEM, Der byzantinische Endkaiser bei Pseudo-Methodios // *OC* 71 (1987) 140–155. For criticism of Alexander's arguments, see my article *Die syrischen Wurzeln der mittelalterlichen Legende vom römischen Endkaiser // Non nova, sed nove. Mélanges de civilisation médiévale dédiés à Willem Noomen* (Mediaevalia Groningana, 5) / Ed. M. GOSMAN and J. VAN OS (Groningen, 1984) 195–209; cf. MCGINN, Antichrist... (n. 24) 92, n. 81; WILKEN, The Land Called Holy... (n. 38) 241, n. 20.

\* <sup>40</sup> Cf. G. J. REININK, Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History in Response to the Rise of Islam // *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East...* I (n. 7) 181–185; IDEM, Der edessenische «Pseudo-Methodius» (n. 17) 39–40, 44; IDEM, The Romance of Julian the Apostate as a Source for Seventh Century Syriac Apocalypses // *La Syrie de Byzance à l'Islam VII<sup>e</sup>–VIII<sup>e</sup> siècles. Actes du Colloque international Lyon-Maison de l'Orient Méditerranéen, Paris-Institut du Monde Arabe, 11–15 Septembre 1990* / J. CANIVET, P. REY-COQUAIS (Damas, 1992) 79–80; IDEM, The Beginnings of Syriac Apologetic Literature in Response to Islam // *OC* 77 (1993) 184; *PM, Einleitung*, XX–XV (transl.).

*Legend of Alexander the Great*<sup>41</sup> and the *Romance of Julian the Apostate*.<sup>42</sup> Both works are of a highly propagandistic character in their propagation of the ideology of Christian kingship.<sup>43</sup>

In the *Legend* Jerusalem takes a key-position in defining the connection between the Byzantine emperor and Christ. Jerusalem is the city of the eternal kingship of Christ, the promised descendant from the stem of David, the throne of whose kingdom the Lord would establish for ever (II Sam. 7, 13). Alexander the Great, therefore, promises that after his death his royal throne, with his crown upon it, will be placed in Jerusalem as a seat for Christ, thereby expressing the close and lasting connection between the empire founded by him with God's help and the eternal kingship of Christ.<sup>44</sup> Jerusalem is the religious centre of the whole Christian world and the Byzantine emperor, being Christ's vicegerent on earth, is indissolubly associated with that city which symbolizes the empire's politico-religious unity.<sup>45</sup> Pseudo-Methodius applies motifs of the *Legend's* portrait of Alexander to the liberating Byzantine emperor still to come. The latter will conquer the Near East, destroy in a «holy war» the enemies of the Christian religion (the Arabs), restore the Christian rule in the Holy Land and Jerusalem,<sup>46</sup> and, being the Last World Emperor, will fulfil the *Legend's* prediction that Alexander's empire (i. e. Byzantium) will acquire world-dominion at the end of times and will finally deliver the

<sup>41</sup> Edition and English translation by E. A. W. BUDGE, *The History of Alexander the Great* (Amsterdam, 1976; repr. of the ed. Cambridge, 1889) 255–275 (text), 144–158 (transl.) (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation *AL*).

<sup>42</sup> Edition by J. G. E. HOFFMANN, *Iulianos der Abtrünnige. Syrische Erzählungen* (Leiden, 1880) 3–242 (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation *IA*). There is an unreliable English translation by H. GOLLANCZ, *Julian the Apostate. Now translated for the first time from the Syriac original* (the only MS. in the British Museum, edited by Hoffmann of Kiel) (Oxford—London, 1928).

<sup>43</sup> For the historical background of the *Alexander Legend* (written about 630) see G. J. REININK, Die Entstehung der syrischen Alexanderlegende als politisch-religiöse Propagandaschrift für Herakleios' Kirchenpolitik // *After Chalcedon. Studies in Theology and Church History Offered to Professor Albert van Roey for his Seventieth Birthday* / Ed. C. LAGA, J. A. MUNITIZ, L. VAN ROMPAY (Leuven, 1985) (*OLA*, 18) 263–281. For the background and date of the *Julian Romance* (end fourth century) see now H. J. W. DRIJVERS, The Syriac Romance of Julian. Its Function, Place of Origin and Original Language // *VI Symposium Syriacum 1992* / Ed. R. Lavenant (Roma, 1994) (*OCA*, 247) 201–214. For its influence on seventh century Syriac Apocalypses, see REININK, The Romance of Julian the Apostate... (n. 40).

<sup>44</sup> *AL*, 258, 275 (text), 146–147, 158 (transl.); cf. REININK, Die Entstehung... (n. 42) 279.

<sup>45</sup> See G. J. REININK, Alexander the Great in Seventh-Century Syriac «Apocalyptic» Texts // *Byzantinorossica* 2 (2000).

<sup>46</sup> *PM* XIII, 11, 38–39 (text) 62–63 (transl.); cf. note 12 on XIII, 11.

earthly kingdom to Christ.<sup>47</sup> This last act of the Last World Emperor will take place in Jerusalem, on Golgotha, where the Cross of Christ will ascend to heaven together with the emperor's crown.<sup>48</sup>

Whereas Pseudo-Methodius uses the *Alexander Legend* to stress the Christian empire's and emperor's divine mission in world history, he uses motives from the *Romance of Julian the Apostate* to compare the time of Arab rule with the rule of the «pagan tyrant» Julian the Apostate and the imminent *pax Christiana* with the restoration of the Christian kingship by Julian's successor Jovian.<sup>49</sup> The reasons for this are clear. The Christians should realize that the Arabs cannot claim to be the politico-religious successors of the Christian empire. Just as Julian was a «pagan tyrant» and the enemy of the Christians, so the Arabs are no less «pagan tyrants» and enemies of the Christian religion, since they reject the fundamental truths of Christianity, viz. Christ as Saviour (the divinity of Christ),<sup>50</sup> the Holy Cross and the Holy Sacraments.<sup>51</sup> But there may be an additional reason why Pseudo-Methodius wants to compare the Arabs with Julian the Apostate. Was not Julian the first and only ruler after the destruction of the Temple who attempted to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem? Julian's action was, according to Christian tradition, frustrated by divine intervention and the emperor himself was punished by his early death in Persia.<sup>52</sup> Thus history teaches that no secular arm would ever be able to undo Christ's words concerning the Temple, which would be left desolate forever.<sup>53</sup> May not Pseudo-Methodius' comparison of the Arabs with Julian the Apostate be provoked first of all by the rumour — spreading like wild-fire in 691 — that the Arabs were engaged in rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem? Taking

<sup>47</sup> *AL*, 270, 275 (text), 155, 158 (transl.); *PM IX*, 7–9, 19–20 (text), 65–67 (transl.).

<sup>48</sup> *PM XIV*, 2–4, 44 (text) 71–73 (transl.). For the background of this motive in the *Romance of Julian the Apostate*, see REININK, *The Romance of Julian the Apostate...* (n. 40); IDEM, *Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History...* (n. 40) 170–174; *PM, Einleitung* (transl.) XXXV–XXXVI.

<sup>49</sup> For Julian's «pagan tyranny» directed against the Christians in the *Romance*, cf. a. o. *IA*, 63–64; GOLLANCZ, *Julian...* (n. 42) 70; REININK, *Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History...* (n. 40) 170–171; IDEM, *The Romance of Julian the Apostate...* (n. 40) 77; *PM, Einleitung*, XXX, XXXV–XXXVI (transl.). Julian is called «tyrant» throughout the *Romance*.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. note 20 on *PM XIII*, 6. 60–61 (transl.).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *PM XII*, 3. 33 (text), 54–55 (transl.) where *Pseudo-Methodius* describes the apostasy caused by the Arab «tyrants».

<sup>52</sup> Cf. REININK, *Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History...* (n. 40) 184–185; IDEM, *The Romance of Julian the Apostate...* (n. 40) 80.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. a. o. R. L. WILKEN, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley—Los Angeles—London, 1983) 157; S. BROCK, *A Letter Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the Rebuilding of the Temple under Julian* // *BSOAS* 40 (1977) 282 (repr.: S. BROCK, *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* (London, 1984) X).

all arguments adduced by Pseudo-Methodius against the Arabs into account, we are very tempted to answer this question in the affirmative.

One of the characteristics of the *Edessene Apocalypse* is that it adds new elements to the subject-matter taken from *Pseudo-Methodius*. One of these additions, which occurs at the beginning of the work, contains significant allusions to Jerusalem. These are connected with a new ideological motivation for the «holy war» of the Christian emperor of Byzantium against the «Children of Hagar» (Muslims).<sup>54</sup> Prior to the action of the emperor, the *Edessene Apocalypse* says, the Muslims will be involved for ten-and-a-half years in a destructive civil war that will cause much oppression and distress for the people of the subjected countries.<sup>55</sup> This is, undoubtedly, an allusion to the Second Arab Civil War.<sup>56</sup> However, the adversity for mankind is not confined to their being oppressed directly by the Arabs. The whole order of nature is affected by the *kpûryâ*, «denial», «infidelity», of the Muslims: the rains will be taken away, the water of the springs will fail, the fruits of the trees and all the bounty of the earth will decay.<sup>57</sup> What exactly is this *kpûryâ* of the Muslims by which the people will suffer hardship and famine? The word *kpûryâ* has a religious connotation. In *Pseudo-Methodius* the emperor will start his military action against the Arabs, when they will boast of their victories and will deny that the Christians have a Saviour, with whom both Christ and the emperor as Christ's vicegerent on earth are meant.<sup>58</sup> It is likely that the *Edessene Apocalypse* has in mind this *kpûryâ* that provokes the divine wrath. As in *Pseudo-Methodius*, it is the emperor of Byzantium who will act as the executor and conciliator of the divine wrath by destroying the Arab kingdom and establishing a reign of peace and prosperity in the whole creation and among all nations and peoples.<sup>59</sup> However, in contradistinction to *Pseudo-Methodius*, the *Edessene Apocalypse* adds a story in which it is told how the emperor in Constantinople will know that the right time for starting his campaign against the Arabs has come. For there will take place a wonderful sign in the church of the capital, in which the bridle forged from the nails of the Lord's Cross is suspended.<sup>60</sup> When a horse that has never been ridden and never

<sup>54</sup> REININK, *Der edessenische «Pseudo-Methodius»...* (n. 17) 40–41.

<sup>55</sup> *EA*, 426 (text), 434–435 (transl.).

<sup>56</sup> REININK, *Der edessenische «Pseudo-Methodius»...* (n. 17) 37–38.

<sup>57</sup> *EA*, 426–427 (text) 435 (transl.).

<sup>58</sup> See note 20 on *PM XIII*, 6. 60–61 (transl.).

<sup>59</sup> *EA*, 427–428 (text) 436–437 (transl.). Also the natural order will be restored by the emperor's intervention: bounty will return to the earth, the fruits of the trees, the rains, the water and the fishes in the seas and rivers will increase.

<sup>60</sup> According to the *EA* these nails were mixed together with the nails of the thief and, since no one knew those of the Lord from the others, they were cast together into the fire.

been bridled comes, and puts its head into the bridle of its own accord, then the Romans (i.e. the Byzantines) will know that the kingdom of the Christians is at hand.<sup>61</sup>

The source of this prophecy is the Legend of the Finding of the True Cross in Jerusalem by Helena, the mother of Constantine, according to the version of the Syriac *Judas Kyriakos Legend*.<sup>62</sup> In this *Legend* it is reported how queen Helena after the discovery of the nails of the True Cross ordered that bridles for the king's horse should be made from them, as follows:

*Petersburg/Leningrad N.S.4*:<sup>63</sup>

«And she considered what she would make out of them. Then the grace of the Holy Spirit suggested to her the idea of making something out of them that would provide good testimony for future generations. And what the prophet before had prophesied she wanted to make, so she sent for a man who was a skilled and wise craftsman, and she said to him: "Keep the king's order and carry out the mystery of the king. Take these nails and make from them bridles for the horse of the king so that it will be a weapon and will set out against his enemies. Because now the victory belongs to the king and he will have peace instead of war, so that what Zechariah said will be fulfilled: 'On that day now the bridle of the horse will be holiness to the Lord' (Zech. 14, 20)».

Now this tradition, which refers to Constantine and the divine support of the Christian king and his empire, has found a new eschatological application in the *Edessene Apocalypse*. Zechariah's prophecy concerning the future deliverance of Jerusalem is now applied to the Byzantine emperor who will defeat his «enemies», viz. the Muslims, and will then have «peace», i. e. he will found the *pax Christiana* — being the eschatological «Endreich» that will last until the incursion of the eschatological peoples of Gog and Magog.<sup>64</sup> But

<sup>61</sup> EA, 427 (text) 436 (transl.).

<sup>62</sup> For the various accounts and versions of the Legend, see now J. W. DRIJVERS, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden—New York—København—Köln, 1992) (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 27). Edition with German translation of the Syriac texts by E. NESTLE, *De Sancta Cruce* (Berlin 1889). New edition with English translation of the version in the London manuscript *BL Add. 14. 644* together with the first edition and English translation of the version in the oldest known manuscript *Petersburg/Leningrad N. S. 4* (5th century) now by H. J. W. DRIJVERS, J. W. DRIJVERS, *The Finding of the True Cross: The Judas Kyriakos Legend in Syriac* (Louvain, 1997) (*CSCO*, 565, *Subs.* 93) (henceforth quoted by the abbreviation *JKL*).

<sup>63</sup> The following English translation is that of DRIJVERS, *DRIJVERS, JKL*, 70. Apart from some minor additions the text of London *BL Add. 14. 644* (*JKL*, 71) does not vary substantially from *Petersburg/Leningrad N. S. 4*.

<sup>64</sup> According to the *Edessene Apocalypse* the world dominion of the Byzantine empire will endure for 208 years (*EA*, 428 (text) 437–438 (transl.)). By assigning 208 years to the immanent eschatological reign of Byzantium the *Edessene Apocalypse*

there is yet another unmistakable allusion to Jerusalem in the *Apocalypse's* reinterpretation of the tradition. It is implied that the emperor's horse, on which he will go to war, «has never been ridden». This is an implicit reference to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a colt. «whereon yet never man has ridden».<sup>65</sup> Thus the emperor who will defeat the Arab enemies is presented not only as a second Constantine, but also as the vicegerent of Christ, who will restore the position of Jerusalem as unique city of Christianity and the religious centre of the world dominion of the Christian empire.<sup>66</sup>

The concept of the future liberating emperor being a «second Constantine» who will maintain the first-rate position of the «new Christian Temple» in Jerusalem, viz. Constantine's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is further elaborated in the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*.

The *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* consists of four parts, which together form a literary unity:<sup>67</sup> the proper Gospel,<sup>68</sup> the Revelation of Simon Peter,<sup>69</sup> the Revelation of James, son of Zebedee,<sup>70</sup> and the Revelation of John, son of Zebedee.<sup>71</sup> The Gospel functions as an introduction to the three Revelations, whereas the three Revelations in a complementary way deal with the future events concerning the Church (Simon Peter), Jerusalem (James), and the Roman/Byzantine, Persian and Arab empires (John). As is usual in the apocalyptic literature, the future events described by the author are partly *vaticinia ex eventu*, partly real prophecies. As to these real prophecies, the author predicts the future peaceful unity of the Church through the conversion of the Chalcedonians to the author's true orthodox Monophysite belief (Simon Peter),<sup>72</sup> the coming of a liberating emperor «from the seed» of Constantine the Great, who will make the secular rulers endure many misfortunes and found a universal Christian reign of peace (James),<sup>73</sup> and the imminent end of the Arab king-

wants to distinguish the coming liberating emperor who will defeat the Arab power from the figure of the Last World Emperor; for the reasons for this, see REININK, *Der edessenische «Pseudo-Methodius»...* (n. 17) 42–45.

<sup>65</sup> Luk. 19, 30, cf. Mark 11, 2.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. REININK, *Der edessenische «Pseudo-Methodius»...* (n. 17) 41. It is interesting to note that also the emperor Heraclius, who after his victory over the Persians restored the Holy Cross to Jerusalem in 630, was presented by his panegyrist George of Pisidia as a second Constantine; cf. B. FLUSIN, *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1992) vol. II, 312–319.

<sup>67</sup> As is plausibly argued by DRIJVERS, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles...* (n. 19) 193, 209.

<sup>68</sup> *GTA*, 1–10 (text), 25–31 (transl.).

<sup>69</sup> *GTA*, 10–13 (text), 31–33 (transl.).

<sup>70</sup> *GTA*, 13–15 (text), 33–34 (transl.).

<sup>71</sup> *GTA*, 15–21 (text), 34–39 (transl.).

<sup>72</sup> *GTA*, 13 (text), 33 (transl.); cf.: DRIJVERS, *The Gospel...* (n. 19) 195–196.

<sup>73</sup> *GTA*, 15 (text), 34 (transl.); cf.: DRIJVERS, *The Gospel...* (n. 19) 198–199.

dom as the result of the military action of the Byzantine emperor, who with God's help will destroy the Arab armies (John).<sup>74</sup> Putting the different pieces of this eschatological mosaic together, we may conclude that the author expects the imminent ruin of the empire of the Arabs, who oppress the Christians, «because eventually they (the Muslims) will hate the name of the Lord»;<sup>75</sup> this will be accomplished by the military intervention of the emperor of Byzantium, who as a second Constantine will restore the Christian authority over Jerusalem and found a universal reign of peace, in which the political unity (one Christian empire) will go hand in hand with the restoration of the ecclesiastical unity (one Church).

As stated above, Jerusalem, the Holy City, forms the central theme of the Revelation of James. The Apostle predicts the destruction of the Temple and the city by the Romans in the Jewish War (70 AD), the expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem by Hadrian (135 AD), and the transformation of the desolated city by Constantine into a new and exclusive Christian Holy City, to which pilgrims from all over the world will come flocking. The Christian signature of the city will be confirmed by the Lord who will set up therein «the sign that prevails over the iniquity of the impious men»;<sup>76</sup> this prediction, of course, concerns the True Cross which was discovered in Jerusalem by Helena, the mother of Constantine. Among the buildings built by Constantine, James says, there will be one which will surpass all buildings of the world in splendour and renown. Drijvers has rightly observed that with this building the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is meant, which is described — just as was done by Eusebius — as a new Temple, splendidly decorated with «gold of Ophir and beryls of Havilah».<sup>77</sup> With the allusion to the completion and dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (335 AD) and the death of Constantine (337 AD), the *vaticinia ex eventu* of James' revelation end.

The second part of James' prophecy concerns the coming of a «new Constantine», who will inflict many misfortunes upon the «princes» (*'nāšā rawrbê*) and establish a universal *pax Christiana*. Who are these *'nāšā rawrbê*? It is

<sup>74</sup> *GTA*, 21 (text), 38–39 (transl.); cf.: DRIJVERS, *The Gospel...* 201, 208–209.

<sup>75</sup> *GTA*, 20 (text), 38 (transl.). It is important to note that the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*, just like *Pseudo-Methodius* and the *Edessene Apocalypse*, assumes increasing tensions between Muslims and Christians at the end of their reign. Again we may think of 'Abd al-Malik's anti-Christian propaganda at the end of the seventh century, which appears to be the first official and public manifestation of these tensions after the Arab conquests.

<sup>76</sup> *GTA*, 14 (text), 34 (transl.).

<sup>77</sup> *GTA*, 14–15 (text) 34 (transl.). By referring to the Old Testament motifs of the «gold of Ophir» and the «beryls of Havilah» the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* appears to suggest that Constantine's basilica has taken the place of the Jewish Temple. The same motifs appear in Eusebius' description (*Life of Constantine III*, 33–40); cf. DRIJVERS, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles...* (n. 19) 198, and above, notes 12 and 38.

clear that the new authorities, viz. the Muslim nobles, are meant. It is very significant that the Arab *political leaders* are mentioned in James' revelation. Since the fortunes of Jerusalem form the central theme of this revelation, we may assume that the antagonism between the coming idealized Christian emperor and the Muslim authorities primarily concerns the status of Jerusalem. The «new Constantine» will wipe out the Arab power over Jerusalem, restore its status as unique Christian Holy City, and assent the position of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as the new Christian «Temple», a building that, as James says, was never — and will never be — outrivalled by any other building.<sup>78</sup> We are once more inclined to think that also the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* is here responding to the Muslim claim of Jerusalem's (also) being an Islamic Holy City, a claim that was given a material reality in a most polemical anti-Christian way by 'Abd al-Malik's building of the Dome of the Rock.

Three Syriac apocalyptic texts were composed in or shortly after 691/2, the date of the inscription inside the Dome of the Rock: the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, the *Edessene Apocalypse* and the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*. Though there are textual and literary differences between these works, they agree in one most important aspect: the Arab rule is to be destroyed fairly soon by the highly idealized figure of the Christian emperor of Byzantium who, in a «holy war» against the Muslim enemies of Christianity, will restore Christian authority over Jerusalem and establish a universal *pax Christiana*, which will last until the end of times.<sup>79</sup> The strong religious overtones which these works have in common in relation to Jerusalem suggest that these texts are responding to quite recent historical developments affecting that city. We have tried to adduce some arguments for the belief that Anastasius' report of contemporary public opinion — which supposed that the Arabs at that time were engaged in building the «Temple of God» in Jerusalem — may be corroborated by these Syriac sources. Moreover, the three Syriac apocalypses seem to support the opinion of those scholars who defended the thesis that 'Abd al-Malik, in building the Dome of the Rock on the site of the Jewish Temple, (also) intended to erect a Muslim sanctuary that could vie with or even surpass the most splendid Christian sanctuary in Jerusalem. The latter was of course the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built upon the Rock of Golgotha, and the most holy place of the Christians, with its Cave of Christ's Sepulchre and Resurrection, and the place where the Cross of Christ was erected and later on discovered by the mother of Constantine.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> *GTA*, 15 (text), 34 (transl.). Again the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* concurs with Eusebius' words (above, note 77).

<sup>79</sup> In the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* the eschatological role of the *pax Christiana* is implied by the reference to Daniel's prophecy (probably Daniel 7:27); cf. *GTA*, *ibidem*, and DRIJVERS, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles...* (n. 19) 199.

<sup>80</sup> See, in particular: WALKER, *Holy City...* (n. 38) 235–281.

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#### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

*The articles in this volume, as in all others in the Variorum Collected Studies Series, have not been given a new, continuous pagination. In order to avoid confusion, and to facilitate their use where these same studies have been referred to elsewhere, the original pagination has been maintained wherever possible.*

*Each article has been given a Roman number in order of appearance, as listed in the Contents. This number is repeated on each page and is quoted in the index entries.*

*Corrections noted in the Addenda and Corrigenda have been marked by an asterisk in the margin corresponding to the relevant text to be amended.*