

Extract from Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades, pp. 37-43.

### The Question of Authenticity

Christians visiting the Holy Land, in the period before the Crusades, as at the present day, wanted to "trace the footprints of Jesus and his disciples, and of the prophets",<sup>74</sup> the very places and things of which they read in the Bible. How could they be sure that the places they are shown were authentic?

Since 1838 A.D., when Edward Robinson and Eli Smith made their exploration of Palestine, studies of its historical geography and archaeology have become steadily more scientific. Modern archaeologists may well envy the people who knew the land in the early Byzantine period, when so many buildings now ruined or lost were still in use, and when they could still make use of living traditions and memories of sites which have since been forgotten. Indeed we have already seen how the existence of these traditions enabled Eusebius to attain a fair degree of accuracy in the *Onomasticon*.<sup>75</sup> And it is likely that the Jerusalem Church knew and cared about its Holy Places. For it was a relatively unimportant Church, compared with the rapidly-growing Christian communities in Asia Minor, Italy, Africa, and Spain, and needed to make efforts if it was to remind the world of its special place among the Churches.<sup>76</sup> In the Holy Places it had an asset of which no other Church could boast. We may therefore suppose that from an early stage in their history the Christians of Jerusalem were anxious to show the places to their visitors, and that the foundations of a reasonably sound topography thus came to be laid. Even without this special stimulus there were certain definite landmarks which would naturally be remembered, such as the Pools of Bethesda and Siloam, and certain less precisely-defined areas, like the Garden of Gethsemane,<sup>77</sup> of which we know the position rather than the extent.

Having said this we are in danger, however, of misunderstanding the expectations of pilgrims in the period before the Crusades, and before Robinson. In certain respects they were more likely than we are to make correct identifications, but not because they were looking for the same kind of truth by the same means. Circumstantial evidence, like the small pieces of gold and silver found in Egeria's time at Sedima,<sup>78</sup> may have been enough in their eyes to confirm that it had been the site of Melchizedek's palace, but this is not scientific archaeology. The authenticity of the Holy Places for the early Christians was to be measured by a standard of faith and prayer rather than of logical proof. Thus Eusebius tells us that at its discovery the Tomb of Christ in Jerusalem "by its very existence bore clearer testimony to the Saviour's resurrection than any words".<sup>79</sup> In this phrase he is not so much saying that the Tomb proves that the Saviour rose again, as that it proclaims that he did. It serves as a "witness to the resurrection"<sup>80</sup> rather in the same way as the apostles, and like the apostles its work is to evoke rather than to compel belief. The holy places thus confirm and amplify a belief already accepted, and, so to speak, cry out against the denial of this faith: "If you deny

phenomena are explained in terms of the Christian religion, such as the Volcano, 30 - p. 133 below, and "The Lord's Field", for which see pp. 69, 82 below.

64. 592.4/5 - 157. For another similar story explaining a column without a base see 25 - p. 84 below.

65. See IV.8 - p. 117 below. The story is connected with the act of looking into the well, and the same combination of story and act is exemplified by the equally rigged miracle with the synagogue bench in Nazareth, 5 - p. 79 below.

66. Such, perhaps, were the springs associated with Christ at Emmaus, p. 156 below, and at "Ramah" with the Theotokos, 28 - p. 85 below.

67. 3.2.1 - p. 113; like Eusebius, *Dem.* 7.2 - 330 and *Ev. Tr.* 12.2 - 107.

68. 34 - p. 85. In saying something similar Huguette also says she had witnesses, on p. 135 below.

69. 1.9.1 - p. 98.

70. 3.4.1 - p. 114.

71. 3.4.14 - p. 114.

72. So at 1.23.18 - p. 101; 2.3.4 - p. 104; 2.17.5 p. 107; 3.4.12 - p. 114.

73. 1.9.1. - p. 98.

74. Origen, *C. Joann.* 1.28 (fr. 6.40) - 286f.

75. See p. 15 above.

76. The vigorous efforts of Juvenal to obtain promotion to Patriarch provide a case in point.

77. Mark 14.32, John 18.1.

78. *Ev. Tr.* 14.2 - 110.

79. Eusebius, *V. Const.* 3.28 - 165.

80. Acts 1.22.

# 38 PRAYER IN THE HOLY PLACES: AUTHENTICITY

(the Crucifixion) there are many things to refute you . . . the House of Caiaphas refutes you, showing by its present devastation the power of him who was judged there".<sup>81</sup> Doubt is not for Christians, but for pagans.

The usual authentication of a site was thus either by a tradition or by direct revelation. Thus a monk is told by God where to dig, and finds the coffin of Job,<sup>82</sup> or a shepherd sees a vision which shows him where Moses is buried.<sup>83</sup> The "discovery" or "invention" of saints' bodies was sometimes made easy by the Palestinian practice of placing dry bones in ossuaries, stone boxes on which the name of the dead person was scratched. More often than not the names so associated with the bones could also be found somewhere in the Bible. Thus an ossuary was recently found in Jerusalem marked with the names Martha and Mary:<sup>84</sup> the obvious conclusion would in a pre-scientific period have been accepted without hesitation.

During our period it was, as often as not, still possible to know where biblical cities and villages had been. But the question for the pilgrim was not only whether he was in the right settlement or area of ruins, but whether he had reached the particular spot which gave the place its significance. It was, for instance, very easy to go to Caesarea, but where was the exact spot where Cornelius had been baptised?<sup>85</sup> Often in our earlier works on pilgrimage we find that the pilgrim was shown the focal points in a place by a member of the local Christian community as a normal act of hospitality.<sup>86</sup> But while the guide was showing the pilgrim round, and telling the story connected with his city or church, he was in an ideal position to boast about it, and we find the Bishop of Edessa also giving Egeria a tract to take away.<sup>87</sup>

In the three centuries between the time of Christ's ministry and the reign of Constantine the main features of the Palestinian landscape, and the majority of its towns and villages are unlikely to have changed very much. But it is a different matter when we are dealing with the trees, houses, and rooms which were chosen as the focal points of pilgrimage. Indeed only four about which we hear in the fourth century correspond with what we can identify by other means,<sup>88</sup> four are possible,<sup>89</sup> and four definitely wrong.<sup>90</sup> All the remainder, numbering thirty-four, seem to the present author to have been chosen arbitrarily on grounds of devotion rather than of tradition.<sup>91</sup>

Our suspicion that almost three-quarters of these sites were arbitrarily selected to become the foci of pilgrimage is to some extent borne out by the conventional descriptions they bear. The most common names are the "House of" so-and-so or the "Tomb of" so-and-so, but neither phrase can be understood literally. It was not thought strange, for instance, that there should be two tombs for the same saint, and before the Crusades there were two tombs of Joseph,<sup>92</sup> just as today there are two tombs of Jonah.<sup>93</sup> In the modern world we do not think it strange that in the same region there should be several memorials dedicated to the same person, and we should allow the word "Tomb" in this context to have much the same extension of meaning as our "memorial". Tombs of this kind which were venerated in our period bore the names not only of prophets<sup>94</sup> but also of other notable figures in the Old<sup>95</sup> and

81. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 13.38f — 817/20; see also 10.19 — 685/8; and 14.22 — 853/6.

82. See *Ex. Tr.* 16.5 — 112, and Appendix G — 282.

83. See p. 57 below, and the revelation of St. Stephen's burial, *PL.* 41.807f, and of the Twelve Stones in the Jordan, John Moschus, *Pr.* 11 — 286f.

84. *Pineah* 274 — 244. The names from a grave in Bethlehem, *Bord.* 598.7f — 162 no doubt came to be collected in this way.

85. Shown to the Bordeaux pilgrim, 585.7 — 153.

86. Egeria was usually shown by the bishop: see *Tr.* 8.4; 12.7; 19.1, 6, 16; 20.3; 21.1; but at Sedima by the presbyter and clergy of the place, 14.1. The Piacenza pilgrim, Willibrod, and Bernard also mention the fact that they had contact with bishops, but not that they were guided by them: see pp. 85, 126, 142 below.

87. *Ex. Tr.* 19.19 — 117.

88. Including the non-biblical Tomb of Helena with the Pool of Siloam, Jacob's Well, and the Temple area. The Pool of Beth-zatha, also in this category, was first mentioned in the fifth century.

89. Possibly authentic fourth century foci are the House of Peter at Capernaum, Macpelah at Hebron, the Place of Baptism on the Jordan, and the place of Elijah's ascension.

90. Wrong sites are the Tomb of Moses at Abarim, of David at Bethlehem, and of John Baptist at Sebastia; and Joseph's granaries at Memphis.

91. Foci arbitrarily chosen include thirty-four in the fourth century, the holy wells at Ascalon, the Tombs of Abner, Amos, Calch, Eli, Joshua, and Lazarus; the caves of the Nativity of Christ, of the Annunciation, on the Mount of Olives, of the Shepherds, of Elijah and the Hundred Prophets; the Houses of Caiaphas, Cornelius, David (in Hebron), Rahab, the Widow of Nain, and the Woman with the Issue of Blood; the meeting-place at Bethphage, Philip's Huts at Caesarea, the Gethsemane rock, the Twelve Stones at Gilgal, the Tree of Zacharias, the Tree at the Terebinth, the churches of Dorcas at Joppa and of Elijah at Sarepta, Lot's Wife, the garden in Nazareth, the place of the Ascension, the three sites at Tabgha, and the Temple at Shiloh. Twenty more sites were added in this category by documents written later in our period. Three in the fifth century: the Tomb of the Innocents in Bethlehem, Elijah's Cave on Mt. Carmel, and the Upper Room of the Last Supper on Mt. Zion; eight in the sixth century: the Houses of Peter and Andrew, of Philip, of the sons of Zebedee and of Elizabeth; the cenacle-cave in Gethsemane, the Tomb of Joseph in Hebron, Jeremiah's pit, and the place where the Holy Family rested at Memphis. None are mentioned in documents of the seventh century, but there are six in the eighth: the Houses of David in Bethlehem, and of John and Zebedee; the place of the Feeding of the Four Thousand, the mounting-place at Bethphage, the Lithostrotion on Zion, and the chapel of Melchizedek on Tabor. There are two from the ninth century, the Mount of Precipitation at Nazareth and the place at Pelusium where the Holy Family rested; and one from the tenth, the place of the Paralytic at Capernaum.

92. At Shechem, *Bord.* 588.1 — 154 (as Josh. 24.32), also at Hebron, *Place P.* 30 — p. 85 below.

93. At Mesh-hed and at Hallul. Joshua too has a tomb at Kufir Haris which was venerated at the same time as the one at Tibna: see Jeremiah, *llg.* pp. 40/2, 46/8.

94. Zacharias, Josad, Elisha, Obadiah, Ezekiel (with others) and Isaiah.

95. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with their wives; Goliath, Ahisalom and Jezebel (whose tombs were stored: see p. 85 below and *Ex. (P)* 55 — 201); and Eli and Hzekiah.

New "6 Testaments.

The phrases "Tomb of" and "House of" seem almost to coincide in the case of Cornelius,<sup>97</sup> and we are told of Cleophas that he was martyred in the place where his house was revered.<sup>98</sup> We may suspect a transition (or combination) of a similar kind in the case of the Shepherds of Bethlehem, whose tombs are shown in the seventh century in what had been simply their church in the fourth.<sup>99</sup> In several instances the "House" is said to have been made into a church,<sup>100</sup> and of these "house-churches" the most famous, which was "altered into a church"<sup>101</sup> was the one on Mount Zion.

How far does the Byzantine proportion of authentic sites remain in the Holy Land today? Our answer will depend on knowing first how much was destroyed in the Persian invasion and the other disasters of the seventh centuries, and second how far the Crusaders broke with tradition when they arrived in the country.

About half the ordinary churches whose remains have been discovered were no longer occupied after the seventh century, but only one-fifth of the holy places cease to be mentioned by our pilgrims.<sup>102</sup> This is consistent with what we know from other sources, that the Muslims converted the inhabitants of many Christian villages and cities to Islam, but that they permitted Christian pilgrims to continue visiting their holy places. Muslims indeed, with their special regard for the *Hajj* or pilgrimage, regarded it as natural that Christians should wish to come.<sup>103</sup>

A more radical change occurred in the early years of the Latin Kingdom, up till 1187 A.D. Geographically one authentic place-name is now mentioned of which nothing had been heard since Eusebius wrote the *Onomasticon*,<sup>104</sup> and three of those added are possibly authentic.<sup>105</sup> But nine are wrongly identified,<sup>106</sup> and eleven more seem to have been arbitrarily chosen on devotional grounds.<sup>107</sup> Six more arise out of natural features or sites.<sup>108</sup> Thus in adding twenty-nine places to the map the Christians of the Latin Kingdom introduced about twenty-five which were probably fanciful, besides five more which were attached to extra-biblical stories.<sup>109</sup>

So far as smaller sites and focal points are concerned the situation was no better. The Temple area was now for the first time pressed into the service of Christianity and this, and perhaps also the tomb of Paula and Eustochium in Bethlehem, were authentic. But six of these smaller features are wrongly identified,<sup>110</sup> and eleven more seem to have been chosen on devotional grounds.<sup>111</sup>

96. Cleophas, Cornelius, James the Great, Joseph, Lazarus, Mark, the Shepherds, Simeon, Tabitha, the Virgin Mary, and Zebedee.

97. Cornelius' house, 8.2 - p. 47 below; his tomb 46 - p. 89 below.

98. Cleophas' martyrdom 4 - p. 65 below; his house 8.2 - p. 47 below.

99. The Shepherds' tombs 6 - p. 105 below; their church *Ex. (P)* L1 - 185.

100. See the Houses of Cornelius, p. 47; of Cleophas, p. 47; of Elijah, p. 47; of the Bl. Virgin Mary, 84, 83; of Peter, p. 81; of Rahab, p. 82; of Peter and Andrew, 96.5 - p. 128. Note also the House of Abraham at Haran, *Ex. Tr.* 20.5 - 118.

101. See *Ex. Tr.* 43.3 - 141.

102. This proportion seems to emerge from the archaeological and documentary evidence assembled in the Gazetteer.

103. Note the words of the old gentleman in 12 - p. 126 below.

104. Etam, now Kh. el Kukh 167 161 was fortified by Rehoboam, II Chron. 11.6. Eusebius refers to another Etam in the Shephelah, *On.* 96.5, Jud. 15.8 where there was a river. In 1106 A.D.: 51-42 we have the river of Etam (which seems to be part of the aqueduct-system at el Burak 166 121) placed at the former site, which, though a mistake, does at least show that the place-name was preserved there.

105. Arimathea near Sebaste, 1106 A.D.: 74-58; Bethulia near Tiberias, 1130 A.D.: - 423; and Emmaus near "Ramah", 1106 A.D.: 62 - 52.

106. Bethsaida near Magdala, 1106 A.D.: 82 - 64 (but for the true site 1102 A.D.: - 38); Capernaum near Caesarea, 1106 A.D.: 66 - 53 (but for the true site 1106 A.D.: 73 - 64); "Decapolis", 1106 A.D.: 84 - 65; Bethaim near Tiberias, 1130 A.D.: - 423 (but for the true site 1165 A.D.: 2 - 114); Gibeon of Phineas at Tell el Ful, 1130 A.D.: - 428; Mount Gibeon near Jericho, 1106 A.D.: 36 - 32 (but for the true Gibeon 1137 A.D.: P2 - 191); "Gaza now called Gazara", 1172 A.D.: 36 - 83; Lake of Gennesaret (= L. Huleh) 1106 A.D.: 83 - 65; Mount Shiloh (= Nabl Samwil), 1172 A.D.: 38 - 87.

107. Bethfarael, a stage on the flight into Egypt, 1130 A.D.: - 415; where Abraham left the young man, 1106 A.D.: 45 - 38; where Adam was created at Hebron, 1130 A.D.: - 414; property of Judas and Paul in Jerusalem, 1106 A.D.: 15 - 18; Mountains of Modin, 1172 A.D.: 38 - 87; denarius-miracle and cure of blind men at Beisan (Matt. 17.27, 9.27) 1106 A.D.: 75 - 58; Thirty pieces of silver made in Haifa, 1172 A.D.: 39 - 89; Mount of Temptation near Jericho, 1102 A.D.: - 36; Cain slaying Abel near Nahliu, 1172 A.D.: 42 - 94; Ishakkuk at Tekua 1106 A.D.: 56 - 48.

108. See 1102 A.D.: - 35, the Monastery of the Cross; 1106 A.D.: 75 - 58, the spring where Christ bathed; 1165 A.D.: 16 - 164, the arch under which the B.V.M. suckled her son; 1172 A.D.: 24 - 61, the stone in Gethsemane; 1177 A.D.: 6 - 932, the stone where Christ sat; 1185 A.D.: - 196, the Fountain of Emmaus.

109. Bethlehem where the trees bow down at Christmas, *Ann.* III, 5 - 132; Hebron where Adam mourned Abel, 1130 A.D.: - 414; En Kerem, the Church of Refuge (of Protev. Jaz. 22.3 - 387) 1177 A.D.: 26 - 956; the "Village of Isaac", 1106 A.D.: 94 - 72; where Christ wrote the Our Father on a stone, 1102 A.D.: - 34.

110. Wrongly identified: the portrait at Casale Itanenrum, 1130 A.D.: - 429, "Bethel" on Mount Gerizim, 1165 A.D.: 2 - 116; the House of the Shunammite at Jericho, 1106 A.D.: 35 - 31; the Antonia in Jerusalem, 1172 A.D.: 4 - 10; Gilead near Accidama, 1130 A.D.: - 427, which may be a confusion with Gilead; the House of Pilate near the east gate, 1172 A.D.: 4 - 10.

111. Devotional: at Bethlehem (a) Christ's pillow and the table of the Magi, 1102 A.D.: - 35, (b) "Bethel" and the House of Jesse, 1106 A.D.: 49 - 41; the Well of the Covenant (= Ain ed Dhirs?) 1106 A.D.: 51 - 42; at Hebron House of David, 1137 A.D.: N2 - 97, 190; at Jerusalem, the Prison of the Jews, 1106 A.D.: 15 - 18; the Arch of Judas, LKM 40b; Peter at the Prison, 1165 A.D.: 16 - 162; Joseph's pit, 1172 A.D.: 28 - 69; at Tiberias the tombs of Mary, Lazarus's sister, 1165 A.D.: 6 - 33, and of Elisha and Joshua, 1106 A.D.: 79 - 62.

# 40 PRAYER IN THE HOLY PLACES : SETTING FOR PILGRIMAGE

## A Setting for Pilgrimage

"The principal motive which draws people to Jerusalem" said St. Paulinus of Nola, "is the desire to see and touch the places where Christ was present in the body, and as a consequence to recite, 'We will worship at the place where his feet stood'<sup>112</sup> . . . Our religion prompts us to see the places to which Christ came".<sup>113</sup> The places and things visited by the pilgrim matter specially to him because they were used by Christ in his ministry of salvation,<sup>114</sup> and in the setting of the Holy Land we are able to touch and see some of those very things he touched and saw. It is of course true that God is not confinable to any place,<sup>115</sup> and certainly not to the Holy Land alone, as the main defenders of pilgrimage readily admitted. But it is equally true that Christ in his earthly ministry visited some places and not others. This is why "people are drawn from the ends of the earth to see where the Lord was born, buried, and crucified".<sup>116</sup>

Many writers speak of pilgrimage in terms of sight: thus Paula wanted "to see Jerusalem and the holy places".<sup>117</sup> and Sophronius tells of his desire to "gaze at", to "see", and to "behold" them.<sup>118</sup> The Holy Land invited the pilgrim to see in several different ways. He could look at the material things, "these lifeless objects which can confirm the truths of long ago",<sup>119</sup> but these "traces of his Birth, Cross and Passion" are "still fresh".<sup>120</sup> In considering them we "see in types the signs of the Lord's incarnate sojourn here".<sup>121</sup> From seeing it is a short step to picturing or visualising the events of the history of salvation, to "contemplate the crucifixion at Golgotha . . . to see with the eyes of the Spirit".<sup>122</sup> Consequently Paula pictures the Lord on the Cross, and actually sees him in the Manger.<sup>123</sup> Nor should we be over-precise in marking the boundary between visualising and receiving a vision.<sup>124</sup>

Just as seeing can be understood in different ways, so can touching, and people in Jerusalem, according to Cyril of Scythopolis, "so to speak touch truth daily by means of the revered places where came to pass the mystery of the incarnation".<sup>125</sup> Contact in some sense unites a person with what he touches, an idea which the Bible makes most familiar in the negative context of contracting uncleanness.<sup>126</sup> But there is a correspondingly positive idea that by touching someone or something holy a person unites himself with its holiness. Thus the woman with an issue of blood (Mark 5.27) came up behind Jesus and touched his cloak, making her contact with him in a way still common in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean. Now the classic gesture of contact is the kiss: but the Hebrew verb *nashaq* means both "touch" and "kiss", in Greek and Latin the words for "kiss" and "venerate" are often identical,<sup>127</sup> and the frequently-used phrase, to "venerate the holy places"<sup>128</sup> therefore carries within it the connotation of contact. So we find the Piacenza pilgrim on arrival in Jerusalem prostrating himself and kissing the ground,<sup>129</sup> and Paula embracing the tomb-shelf at the Anastasis with the passion of a lover.<sup>130</sup>

The belief that holiness was imparted by contact was inherited by Christians from the religions around them, including Judaism.<sup>131</sup> But it was hard to intellectualise, and to modern ears the principles, when they come to be expressed, sound as crude in the works written in our period as they do when they appear in the Bible. We suspect statements like the following:

112. LXX Ps. 132 (131).7.

113. Paulinus No. 1., *Ep.* 49 - 402, written in 409 A.D. Thus John Rufus' monks treat it as normal that a Christian should wish to see the Holy Places, 198 - p. 57 below, and Jerome says it is a duty, *Ep.* 47 - 346. The expression "many wanted to die there", p. 147 below, is an extreme expression of the normal attitude.

114. Thus Cyril of Scythopolis writes, "All of us who inhabit this holy land (cf. Zech 2.127) have received by a tradition . . . from the apostles the true confession and belief in this . . . mystery of Christ, which came to pass here by the instrument of the . . . Cross, of the . . . Resurrection, and in fact also of all the holy places", *V. Sub.* 15.3.2.

115. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 4.5 expresses this by using the rare word *deventypantoc*. Since Sophronius, as bishop, used Cyril's catechetical lectures in Lent, we may guess that Cyril was the source from which he borrowed the word for *Orat.* 1 - 173.

116. John Chrysostom, *Exp. in Ps.* 110 - 274.

117. See p. 47 below.

118. Below pp. 91, 12, 49, 51, 92, 91, 17: as in Iacintus, 1 - p. 123 below, and Bernard, 1 - p. 141.

119. Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 49 - 402: note Gregory of Nyssa's objection, "we believed before seeing the holy places", *Ep.* 2 - 1013B.

120. Jerome, *Ep.* 47 - 346.

121. Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Macrina*, prol. - 960.

122. From the *Life of St. Silvinus* (c. 700 A.D.), *AA.SS.* 17th Feb. (III) 30.

123. See 9.2 and 10.2 - p. 49 below: Jerome uses comparable expressions in *Ep.* 46.13 - 343 and *C. Eph.* II prol. - 477.

124. Thus a sixth-century source describes how St. Dositheus saw an icon of hell in Gethsemane and received a vision telling him to be a monk: *AA.SS.* 23rd Feb. (III) 382.

125. Cyril Scythop., *V. Sub.* - 154.16.

126. See Lev. 11.26, and the many similar passages.

127. The connection between them is well discussed by G.F.M. Vermeer, *Observations*, pp. 93/7. Note also the use of *nashaq* in I Kings 19.18.

128. Used for instance in *V. Melanie* 34 - 190, *V. Patrum (Pelagia)* 12 - 663, Theodore of Petra, *V. Theod.* 7.14 - 105; frequently by Cyril of Scythopolis (for instance *V. Euth.* 71.1, *V. J. Hes.* - 213.5) and by John Moschus, for instance *Pr.* 91 - 2949.

129. 18 - p. 83 below: this classic action on arrival (for which see *Odyssey* 5.463) is surprisingly rare in our sources.

130. See 9.2 - p. 49 below. For the formal action involved in the kiss see 46/7 - p. 92 below and n. 6, and compare 20 - p. 83 below.

131. See for instance Exod. 29.37, 30.29, Hag. 2.13, and II Sam. 6.

Faith accepts that everything which touches the sacred body is holy.<sup>132</sup>

or this:

The Wood of the Cross is to be venerated as something made holy by having touched his sacred body and blood, (and so are) the nails, the lance, the clothes, and his sacred "tabernacles", that is to say the Manger, the Cave, saving Golgotha, the life-giving Tomb, Sion . . . and such like.<sup>133</sup>

We might prefer that our authors (and the Bible) did not speak of things as holy, but only of people. But they do,<sup>134</sup> and the riches as well as the dangers of this language are part of the Christian's inheritance.

Contact was not limited to kissing. Indeed the pilgrims show how holy places and their relics were used to serve as the scenery and properties in a dramatic ritual, and we hear of Christians going to eat in a cave where Christ ate with the disciples,<sup>135</sup> of filling a water-pot at Cana,<sup>136</sup> and of bathing at the Place of Baptism on the Jordan.<sup>137</sup> All these were ritual acts done, as we are told, to "gain the blessing" of the mystery which hallowed the place or thing. Participatory rituals of a roughly similar kind were the "miracle" with the bench at Nazareth and the throwing of stones at the tombs of wicked people such as Goliath or Jezebel.<sup>138</sup>

Another ritual which we are surely right to call dramatic, even though it is restrained and largely devoid of realism, was evolved in Jerusalem during the fourth century. During the Great Week the whole community participated in the Great Week by a series of processions which followed the order of the events of Christ's passion.<sup>139</sup>

Both expressions, the phrase "seeing in types" and the phrase "touching the truth" point to something deeper than merely physical sight and touch. On the one hand they echo the sacramental theology of their time (though from our period we have no developed "theology of pilgrimage"), and on the other they seem to be modelled on thought-patterns close to those used by Jerome in interpreting the Bible, when he sought a spiritual meaning which would go hand in hand with the literal. The two phrases stand as they are, and their authors do not elaborate them. Nor perhaps should we.

As some places and relics were chosen to serve as scenery for biblical events others were taken as settings for non-biblical narratives. Six such settings come to be mentioned in the fifth century, of which five are connected with the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose cult was then being actively discussed on the international scene.<sup>140</sup>

Some pilgrims brought offerings to the Holy Places;<sup>141</sup> some made use of objects provided for the enactment of ritual dramas. But almost all must have returned home taking some memento. Such objects were intimately associated with the experience the pilgrims had received in the holy place, and helped them, as his load of earth helped Naaman,<sup>142</sup> to keep that experience fresh when they arrived home.

In Liguria's time some of the things taken home by pilgrims had been given them as "blessings", a word which still meant first and foremost the gift from a Christian host to his guest.<sup>143</sup> But by the sixth century we find the same word being used to describe what was taken by the pilgrim himself from some place where it was provided with

132. Gregory of Tours, *Glor. Mart.* 1.7 - 712.

133. John Damascene, *Fid. Orth.* 4.11 - 1129.

134. See for instance Exod. 28.2, 30.25; Num. 5.17, 6.20, 31.6; II Chr. 5.5; Ps. 2.6, 11.4; Isa. 52.1, 64.10; Ezek. 42.13; II Reg. 2.12; Matt. 7.6, Rom. 11.16; II Pet. 1.18.

135. See 10 - p. 66 below and 4 - p. 79.

136. See 4 - p. 79 below and 13 - p. 128; like drinking from the sponge used at the crucifixion (Matt. 27.48), 20 - p. 83 below, or from the reliquary, 22 - p. 84; see also the vessel in 2 - p. 79 below, and the bucket in 6 - p. 81.

137. 16 - p. 131 below, and AA.SS. 17th Feb. (III) 30. Sebeos, *Hist. Herac.* 25 - 74 seems to speak of pilgrims actually being baptised in the Jordan (as 11 - p. 82 below), no doubt at a late age, as Constantine had wished to be, Eusebius, *V. Const.* 4.62 - 1216. Other instances of bathing or washing appear at 4 - p. 79, 24 - p. 84, and 2.3.4 - p. 104 below.

138. 5 - p. 79, 31 - p. 85 below and *Ex. Tr.* V5 - 201. Another participatory act, flagellation in the place where Christ was scourged, is not recorded till the time of the Latin Kingdom, 1170 A.D.: 25 - 62. Sometimes we are able to identify the commemorations made at a site only by noticing what relics come to be shown there. Thus Holy Sion contained several relics of the Passion which probably came from a time before the building of the Churches on Golgotha, notably the column of scourging, *Uord.* 592.4 - 157, the crown of thorns, 4 - p. 60, and the rod (*ibid.*), which is presumably that of Matt. 27.29. Similarly there were relics illustrating the Last Supper at Golgotha, namely the Cup (3 - p. 60) and basin (1.20 - p. 117); also perhaps the linen cloth of 11.1 - p. 117 if this was originally intended as the one of John 13.3, then misleadingly glossed. These may have originated in a time when the Supper was commemorated principally on the Thursday of the Great Week at the buildings on Golgotha (see *Ex. Tr.* 35.1/2 - 134/5) and before the general recognition that the Supper had taken place on Sion. A further group of relics is very hard to associate with the places where they were kept: thus the chain, 27 - p. 84, the "charger", 2 - p. 59, or the column and head of St. Theodota, 22 - p. 84.

139. See *Ex. Tr.* - 73/7.

140. Her Nativity at the Sheep Pool, her dismounting at the Old and New Kathismata, her Falling Asleep on Sion, and her Tomb in Gethsemane: the fifth site was the "Estate of Agrippa". The only later sites mentioned in this category during our period are (in the sixth century) Diocæsarea as the scene of the Virgin Mary's childhood, and Tabgha as the scene of the Apostles' baptism; in the eleventh century Choziba as the place where Mary's birth was announced to Joachim, and in the twelfth En Karem as the place of refuge mentioned in *Protev. James* 22.3 - 387.

141. See for instance 2 - p. 79 and 18 - p. 83 below, with note.

142. II Kings 5.17.

143. See *Ex. Tr.*, pp. 24f.

## 42 PRAYER IN THE HOLY PLACES : PILGRIM EXPECTATIONS

this intention.<sup>144</sup> These "blessings" were expected, at least by the Piacenza pilgrim, to have healing virtues. He speaks of diseases being cured by the "dew of Hermon",<sup>145</sup> and of the crude oil near Clyma curing those possessed by demons.<sup>146</sup> Twigs<sup>147</sup> and cloths<sup>148</sup> are also taken for their healing power, but the nature of the object matters little so long as it comes from the holy places. Perhaps the nearest equivalent to our tourist snapshots were the "measures" made from a ribbon cut to the length of some holy place or object.<sup>149</sup> These had the advantage that they did not involve the destruction of the object exposed for veneration.<sup>150</sup>

Of all places in the world Jerusalem was the most obvious source of relics, and St. Ambrose tells the tale of St. Helena taking the nails from Christ's Cross back to her son Constantine.<sup>151</sup> Constantine sent to Jerusalem for relics to place in his Church of the Apostles in Constantinople, since Jerome tells of relics of Andrew, Luke and Timothy being taken on this occasion, and of the bones of Blessed Samuel being taken to Thrace by the Emperor Arcadius.<sup>152</sup> In the sixth century we hear of the first of a long succession of travellers from Gaul who had come to seek relics, Queen Radegund, who "sent again for relics of the saints from Jerusalem and all the east". Real journeys of this kind were certainly made,<sup>153</sup> but there are also some accounts which were clearly invented to provide spurious relics with a plausible origin, and others which are simply told to glorify some hero. A frequent scene in such stories describes the Patriarch of Jerusalem loading the pilgrim with the relics he desires.<sup>154</sup> As it happens not one of the accounts we have translated below is concerned with the acquisition of major relics.

### Pilgrim Expectations

The overall motive for pilgrimage seems to have been the quest for perfection,<sup>155</sup> sought in this case particularly by going to places where God's mighty acts had been performed, and worshipping him there. A sixth-century Iberian pilgrim called Antony expresses this by saying "I adore God in his holy Cross and Resurrection",<sup>156</sup> and as a result, a pilgrim expects to dedicate himself afresh to God, and to begin a new life. A symbol of putting off the old and beginning anew was, for the Piacenza pilgrim, the tonsure and shaving of his beard on top of Mount Sinai.<sup>157</sup> and for a good many pilgrims the visit to the Holy places was in fact the prelude to entering the monastic life.<sup>158</sup> On their pilgrimage therefore some of those who intended to become monks or nuns visited the great exponents and examples of this way of life.<sup>159</sup>

Part of the reason why pilgrimage was seen as a means of perfection was that the journey itself was so full of dangers, uncertainties and hardships: St. Magdaleneus, for example, travelled to Jerusalem with great hardship, *cum magna viarum angustia*.<sup>160</sup> Illness was frequent (but so also were miraculous cures),<sup>161</sup> and deaths were not unusual.<sup>162</sup> On the journey the pilgrim was thus reminded that he was at risk, and that God was his only reliance. Pilgrimage therefore came to be seen as an exercise particularly suitable to penitents, as we hear in a letter written to Abbot Modestus in Jerusalem by Metropolitan Komitas of Armenia. Writing of the benefits of the Easter pilgrimage to his people he

144. See 18 - p. 83: 1.23.4/8 - p. 101, and Gregory of Tours, *Glor. Mart.* 1.7 - 712, which mention holy earth, like that which a certain Hesperius had in his room "to avoid suffering", Augustine, *City of God* 22.8.6 - 820. For holy oil see 18 - p. 83 below: also 20 - p. 83 and Gregory of Tours, *Mir. S. Mart.* 2.24.

145. See 9 - p. 81 below. Probably the manna, 39 - p. 87 below, was expected to do the same, and the Jordan water of 11 - p. 82 below.

146. See 42 - p. 88 below.

147. See Ezek. 47.12 and Rev. 22.2: in our period *Ex. Tr.* 8.3 - 102, Adonnan 2.11.5 - p. 106 below, and George Hamartolos, *Chron.* 4.236 - 877.

148. One at Memphis displayed a portrait of Christ, 44 - p. 88 below; one in Jerusalem had been woven by the Virgin Mary, 1.10 - p. 98; and one was Christ's shroud, 1.9 - p. 98.

149. 22 - p. 83 (see n. 31) and 23 - p. 84 below. These were justified by reference to the handkerchiefs and scarves of Acts 19.11/12, which Cyril Jer., *Cat.* 10.19 - 699 mentions as if they were still on display in Jerusalem.

150. Pieces of the rock table at Tabbou were regarded as "very effective" for cures, *Ex. Tr.* VJ - 196/200, and the present state of this rock shows the extent of damage which pilgrims were ready to do to gain relics.

151. Ambrose, in *Ob. Theod.* 47 - 1399: see also the version of this story recounted on p. 202 below. Jerome's unfavourable reaction to it, *C. Zach.* 14.20 - 898, and Gregory of Tours, *Glor. Mart.* 1.5 - 709.

152. Implied but not stated by Eusebius *V. Const.* 4.58ff - 1209/12, but affirmed by Jerome, *c. Virg.* 5.4.3 - 341.

153. For several other Frankish examples see the list in *AA.SS.* Oct. (IX) 38.

154. Introduced into the *Chanson de Charlemagne*, lines 158/65 - 5, in much the same way as it appears in the eleventh century (but not the ninth-century) *Life of St. Magdaleneus*, *AA.SS.* 4th Oct. (II) 539.

155. See the contemporary *Life of St. Fructuosus of Braga*, *AA.SS.* 16th Apr. (II) 435.

156. In the contemporary source *AA.SS.* 24th May (V) 429.

157. See 37 - p. 87 below.

158. Among those who became monks or nuns were Paula, 10.7 - p. 50 and 14.4 - p. 52 below, Willibrod 31 - p. 131, Cosmas, contemporary life in *AA.SS.* 6th May (II) 116; Theodosius the Sicote before 550 A.D., contemporary *Life* in *AA.SS.* Apr. (III) 43; in the seventh century Thomas, who stayed in Jerusalem three years after his pilgrimage and who spent three years in Jerusalem before becoming a bishop, (contemporary *Life* in) *AA.SS.* 10th Sept. (III) 605; in the eighth century John of Gottlum, Agilus who was a viscount in the sixth century "gave up everything" before setting out on pilgrimage, *AA.SS.* 30th Aug (VI) 567.

159. Like Paula, 14.2 - p. 52: see *Ex. Tr.* - 22/6 and Kötting, p. 301.

160. In the eighth century, according to the 11th-century *Life* in *AA.SS.* 4th Oct. (II) 511.

161. See for instance pp. 89 and 131 below, and *AA.SS.* 24th May (V) 421 f. No pilgrims go to the Holy Land and beyond for the purpose of healing, so far as we are told. Contrast Kötting, p. 13.

162. See below, 7 - p. 81, 8 - p. 125 and p. 147.

says,

they washed away their sins by penance, fasting,  
and charity in carrying out this hard journey  
without rest night or day. <sup>163</sup>

We hear also that Saint Marcianus often persuaded penitent prostitutes to go to Jerusalem, and paid their expenses, <sup>164</sup> and in the sixth century, in what may be our earliest reference to pilgrimage as a penance, we read that some people of Edessa who had committed blasphemy were first of all made to fast, and "when they came to themselves they dressed in black because of what had happened, and went in crowds to Jerusalem". <sup>165</sup> Pilgrimage came also to be imposed as a penance in the West, possibly as a substitute for permanent exile, <sup>166</sup> and the first clear case comes from the ninth century. Three brothers who had killed a priest who was also their uncle were sentenced by their bishops in South Italy:

to make iron chains and bind them tightly on their  
arms, and then make the circuit of the holy places  
in dust and ashes, until such time as God accepted  
their penance. <sup>167</sup>

The resulting journey lasted over three years.

On such pilgrimages, and probably others as well, a special point was made to practice the threefold rule of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. <sup>168</sup> Some people seem not to have eaten at all on the journey. <sup>169</sup>

Pilgrimage led Christians into a situation where there were many spiritual obstacles to be encountered. There was an ever-present danger of superstition and a temptation to gather souvenirs as if they would be almost magically efficacious. But the heart of the matter lay deeper, as we see in the motives ascribed to Egeria by her eulogist Valerius:

In the strength of the glorious Lord she fearlessly set out  
on an immense journey to the other side of the world.  
Guided by God she pressed on until after a time she reached  
what she had longed for, the most holy places of the birth,  
passion, and resurrection of the Lord, . . . her purpose was  
to pray and to find edification; for the more she had advanced  
in holy learning the more insatiably her holy longing burned  
in her heart. <sup>170</sup>

Pilgrimage brought its own special rewards, which Eutychius of Alexandria described in the tenth century, when he wrote of the holy places as a pledge of the kingdom of heaven and the delights of the world to come:

By these relics and places . . . Christ gave us, all joined in one,  
a blessing, a sanctification, an approach to him, pardon for sins,  
feasts in which men come together in his name, spiritual joy  
without end, and witnesses confirming the Scriptures. <sup>171</sup>

His words seem to sum up precisely the hopes which drew pilgrims to the Holy Land in our period, and the experiences they described when eventually they came home.

<sup>163.</sup> Socrates, *Hist. Herc.* 25 - 74.

<sup>164.</sup> In the pre-tenth century *Life in AA.SS.* 10th Jan. (I) 616. Marcianus himself lived in the fifth century.

<sup>165.</sup> Michael the Syrian, *Chron.* (tr. J. B. Chabot), vol. II, Paris 1901.

<sup>166.</sup> See U. Berlière, "Les Pèlerinages Judiciaires au Moyen-Age", *Revue Bénédictine* 7 (1899) 521. Such pilgrims were obliged to travel on foot (p. 525).

<sup>167.</sup> *AA.SS.* 24th Oct. (X) 847 f.

<sup>168.</sup> Notice the language used by Komitas on the last page. Almsgiving is also mentioned, for instance, at 10.1 - p. 49 below.

<sup>169.</sup> Theodoret on Marana and Cyra, *AA.SS.* 3rd Aug. (I) 226.

<sup>170.</sup> *Letter 1h* - 174/5.

<sup>171.</sup> *Dem.* 310 - 135.