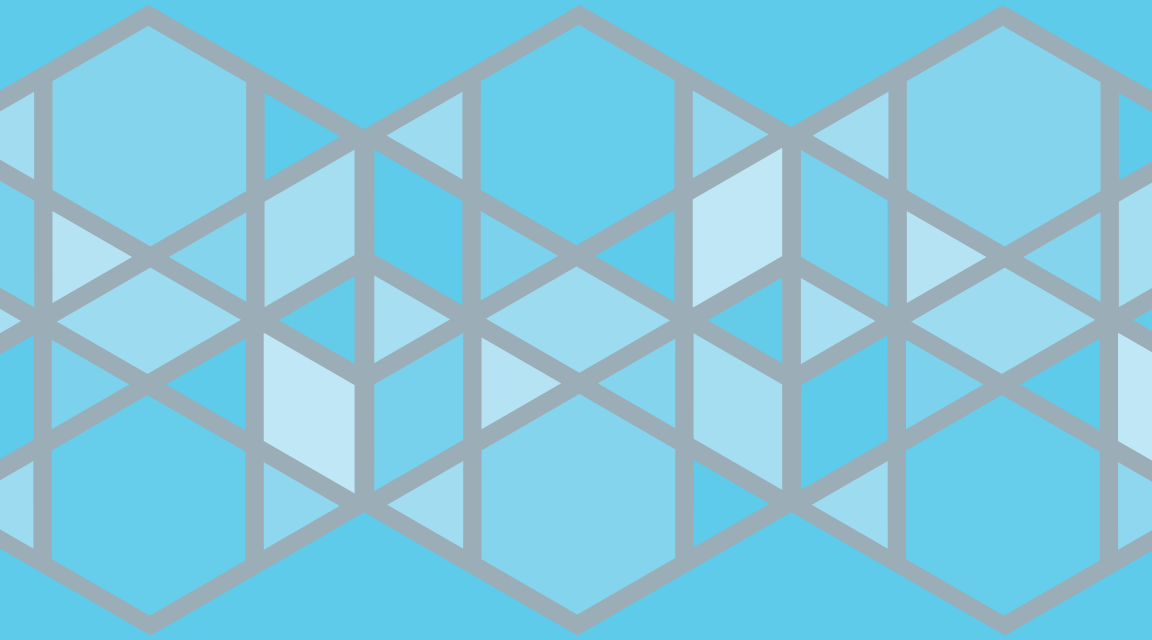




Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue

Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues



BERNADETTE J. BROOTEN

Women Leaders
in the Ancient Synagogue

Program in Judaic Studies
BROWN UNIVERSITY
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Number 36

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by Bernadette J. Brooten

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Scholars Press
Atlanta, Georgia

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

Brown Judaic Studies has been publishing scholarly books in all areas of Judaic studies for forty years. Our books, many of which contain groundbreaking scholarship, were typically printed in small runs and are not easily accessible outside of major research libraries. We are delighted that with the support of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities/Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Humanities Open Book Program, we are now able to make available, in digital, open-access, format, fifty titles from our backlist.

Bernadette Brooten's study, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* (1982), was a landmark in the study of gender in antiquity, bringing attention for the first time to the role that women played in ancient synagogues by focusing primarily on epigraphical evidence. Her book allowed us to see old evidence in a fresh way, revealing a long history of scholarly biases.

This edition incorporates a new preface. The original text is unchanged.

Michael L. Satlow
Managing Editor
January, 2020

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

In *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*, I argued against a then-prevailing view. On the basis of nineteen inscriptions, I challenged certain ideas about women whose relatives honored them with such titles as head of the synagogue, leader, elder, mother of the synagogue, and woman of priestly class/priestess or who claimed those titles for themselves, such as in donative inscriptions.¹ According to the consensus at that time, these titles did not imply that Coelia Paterna, Gaudentia, Rufina and the other women referenced in the inscriptions carried out any functions at all. Scholars claimed that they bore these titles because their husbands did; that these and comparable titles designated functions when men bore them, but were honorific when women bore them; or, in the case of mothers and fathers of the synagogue, that the titles were honorific for both women and men. In addition, I presented inscriptions honoring women who donated portions of synagogues, or in the case of one non-Jewish woman, an entire synagogue. I identified 43 donative inscriptions involving women, of which 23 commemorate women who donated, 15 commemorate a husband and wife donating together, and five commemorate a donation on behalf of a woman. Finally, I argued that, while there is medieval evidence for a strict separation between women and men in the synagogue during religious events, there is no such evidence for any required, permanent separation in the Roman period. Lest one imagine that Jewish women did not attend synagogue services at all, ancient sources present women in various communities doing just that.

In the intervening 38 years, five or six new inscriptions have come to light in which women bear titles, bringing the total number of inscriptions wherein women bear titles to 24 or 25. I present these new inscriptions here in roughly chronological order.

¹ In addition to the two articles on Yael προστάτης cited below, see: Bernadette J. Brooten, "Female Leadership in the Ancient Synagogue," in *From Dura to Sephropolis: Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lee I. Levine and Zeev Weiss. *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary series* 40 (2000) 215-223.

Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue

1. Sambathion, *archōn*, Byblos

IJO III Syr 30. Epitaph. Byblos, Syria (perhaps mid-to late-4th C. CE²). Reinterpreted by Daniel Stöckl Ben Ezra. "A Jewish 'Archontesse': Remarks on an Epitaph from Byblos." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 169 (2009) 287-93. Incised into a stone found on a house wall. No longer extant. Drawing by Ernst Renan. Stöckl Ben Ezra transcribes and translates as follows:

יִרְחַם יְהוָה [1
] אֱלֹהֵי [2
עַל סַמְבַּתִּיָּן [3
אַרְכֹּנִית שֵׁנִית [4
] תִּיּוֹ חֶרֶט ל [5

May the pity of YH[WH],
my God, be
[on] Sambathi[on],
[ar]chontesse. Yea[r]
416, Mars 30.

In contrast to Noy and Bloedhorn in IJO, who take Sambathion as the name of a male archon, Σαμβάθιον, Stöckl Ben Ezra reads it as the feminine Σαμβάθιον. The *waw* can render both omega and omicron into Hebrew, but the feminine agrees with the feminine ending of [ar]chōnit, which I would simply translate as "archon," rather than "archontesse," which is archaic. If one were to translate it as "female archon," then all masculine examples of archon should be translated as "male archon." Noy and Bloedhorn argue that [ar]chōnit represents the Greek stem *archont-*, rather than a Hebrew or Aramaic feminine, which Stöckl Ben Ezra rightly views as problematic, since *-it* is the normal female Hebrew ending. Stöckl Ben Ezra notes that "archontesses" are occasionally attested among the many male ones in non-Jewish societies, especially on the Aegean islands.³ While archons are generally assumed to be leaders of some sort within the state, precise functions that they may have had within a synagogue

² The dating depends on which system of dating the inscription utilizes. Noy and Bloedhorn in IJO III Syr 30 construe the date, "year 316, 30 March" to be possibly 385-86 CE. Daniel Stöckl Ben Ezra, "'Archontesse,'" 289, suggests 96 CE, 353 CE, 484 CE, or 616 CE.

³ Stöckl Ben Ezra, "Jewish 'Archontesse,'" 291.

Introduction to the Digital Edition

are less clear.⁴ Stökl Ben Ezra concludes that "Sambathion was most likely a woman and not a man and that she bore the title archon," arguing that while one cannot know for certain whether the title was honorific or indicated a function that she fulfilled, "we should seriously consider the latter probability."⁵

2. Eulogia, Elder, Malta

JIWE I 163 Epitaph. Rabat, Malta (4th-5th C.). Graffiti. 113 cm across, side of arcosolium. Letters colored with red ochre. Ross S. Kraemer, "A Jewish Inscription from Malta and the Question of Women Elders in the Diaspora Jewish Communities," *Harvard Theological Review* 78 (1985) 431-38. First published by Antonio Ferua, "Antichità Cristiana; le catacomb di Malta," *La civiltà cattolica* (1949) 505-15. Inscription on p. 513.

[.....]
γερουσιάρχης φιλεντόλι[ος]
καὶ Εὐλογία πρεσβυτήρα ἢ αὐτοῦ σύμβιος.
[male name, plus perhaps one title and
"and"; or plus perhaps name of father]
gerusiarch, lover of the commandments,
and his wife Eulogia, elder.

That the husband bears the title *gerusiarch*, while the wife is styled as elder demonstrates that Eulogia did not bear the title because her husband did. Perhaps as *gerusiarch*, he headed a council of elders, while she was an elder, but, in the absence of knowledge of the structures of the various synagogues in Rome, we cannot know for certain.

3. Sara, elder (or: the elder Sara), Sebastopolis

IJO II 161. Epitaph. Sebastopolis, Pontus and Bithynia, Asia Minor (4th C. or later). First edited by B. Le Guen-Pollet/B. Rémy (eds.), *Pontica* I, St. Etienne 1991, 119, No. 2 (SEG 41, 1138). Rectangular marble plaque; a menorah with a three-footed base appears below the inscription (.41 m. by .31 m. by .09 m; letters 2.5-4 cm.).

⁴ See Stökl Ben Ezra, "Jewish 'Archontesse,'" 290-291, for references within the New Testament (likely much earlier than the inscription) and within early rabbinic literature (some may be contemporaneous with the inscription). A thorough analysis of the Jewish epigraphic evidence is needed.

⁵ Stökl Ben Ezra, "Jewish 'Archontesse,'" 293.

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ἐνθα κατάκτε
Σάρα πρεσβῦτ-
[ι]ς· εἰρήνε.

Here lies
Sara, the eld-
[e]r. Peace.

The term elder, πρεσβῦτ[ι]ς, could refer to Sara's age or it could be a title equivalent to πρεσβυτέρα. This is one of just three Jewish inscriptions from Sebastopolis, all dated to the 4th C. or later. IJO II 160 commemorates Lampetis, ἀρχων.

4. Yael, *prostatēs*, Aphrodisias

IJO II 14. Donative Inscription naming "Yael *prostatēs*/with her son Iosua" (lines 9-10). Aphrodisias, Caria, Asia Minor (perhaps late 4th-early 6th C.) Marble block (2.8 m. by .46-4.25 m. [Side A] and .45-.43 m [Side B]; tapers in at the top). Face A is 27 lines long, and Face B is 61 lines long.

In 1990 and 1991 respectively, I argued that Iael is most likely a female name, like that of the Yael who killed Sisera in the Book of Judges (4:17, 18, 21, 22; 5:6, 24) and whom Josephus, Pseudo-Philo, the *Apostolic Constitutions* (in what may be Jewish prayers incorporated into a Christian work), and early rabbinic sources mention multiple times.⁶ The inscription's first editors argued that, while it could be a female name, because the other donors on the inscription were all men, Iael was more likely a male name. Their evidence consists of textual variants in the Septuagint's translation of the names of יִאֵל (in Ezra 10:26, 43=Septuagint 2 Esdras 10:26, 43), namely: Ἰαίηλ, Αἰεῖηλ, Ἰεεῖηλ, and Ἰαηλ. Walter Ameling follows Reynolds and Tannenbaum in reading Ἰαηλ as a male name, but does not take account of the multiplicity of Septuagintal translations for Hebrew names in 2 Esdras 10, most of which were probably never given to actual baby boys in Greek-speaking Jewish communities.⁷ Using

⁶ Bernadette J. Brooten, "Iael Προστάτης in the Jewish Donative Inscription from Aphrodisias," in: *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*, ed. Birger A. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 149-62; Brooten, "The Gender of Ἰαηλ in the Jewish Inscription from Aphrodisias," in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins: Presented to John Strugnell on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, John J. Collins, and Thomas H. Tobin (Lanham, MD: The College Theology Society University Press of America, 1990) 163-73; as well as the bibliography cited in IJO II 14.

⁷ For a detailed discussion, see Brooten, "Gender," 168-70.

rare Greek variants as evidence for the existence of Iael as a male name, rather than looking to the widely known female Iael of the Book of Judges is methodologically questionable.

Gerard Mussies argues that while the name Iael could be either feminine or masculine, προστάτης can only be masculine. He states that, as an actor word ending in -της, προστάτης must be προστάτις in the feminine.⁸ Ἐραστής, the grammatically masculine form of active lover to which there is also a feminine equivalent, does, however, occur for women.⁹ Throughout history, some important terms and images of leadership have been bestowed upon women in their masculine form, ranging from Hatshepsut (1507-1458 BCE), depicted in the form of a male statue, through to Mary Donaldson (1983-1984) and Fiona Woolf (2013-2014), called "Lord Mayor of London."¹⁰

Prostatēs could denote a high-level administrator, a patron, a presiding officer, or, more generally a leader.¹¹

Yael donates here together with her son, Iosua (also a well-known biblical name: Joshua), illustrating the significance of family in service to the Jewish community, including the service involved in leadership.

5. Head of Synagogue, Name Missing, Göre, Nevşehir, Cappadocia

IJO II 255. Göre, Nevşehir, Cappadocia, Asia Minor. First published by G. Mavridis, in: *The Scientific, Literary, and Technical Illustrated Almanac of 1913, especially for Anatolian Greeks*, published by the Papa Georgios Association

⁸ Gerard Mussies, "Jewish Personal Names in Some Non-Literary Sources," in *Studies in Jewish Epigraphy*, ed. Jan Willem van Henten and Pieter Willem van der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1994) 261-269, shows that ἀρχισυνάγωγος applied to Rufina (IJO II 143) is morphologically not comparable to προστάτης, which I had posited.

⁹ Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 4.5; §189; and Hephaestion of Thebes, *Apotelesmatika* 2.21 §25; see Bernadette J. Brooten, *Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 127, 139, where, however, I argue that this term may serve to masculinize tribades.

¹⁰ In the form "Lady Lord Mayor of London" and not "Lady Mayor of London," because "Lord Mayor" is the official title.

¹¹ Margaret H. Williams, "The Structure of Roman Jewry Reconsidered: Were the Synagogue of Ancient Rome Entirely Homogeneous?", *Jews in a Graeco-Roman Environment* (WUNT 312; Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2013), chap. 7, 132-35, 125-39; and "The Structure of Roman Jewry Re-Considered: Were the Synagogues of Ancient Rome Entirely Homogeneous?" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 104 (1994) 135-35, 129-41, suggests that the Roman Jewish examples of this term (JIWE II 170 [3rd-4th C.?] and 373 [3rd-4th C.]) could be variants to ἀρχισυνάγωγος. For further examples reaching back into the Hellenistic period, see Carsten Claußen, *Versammlung, Gemeinde, Synagoge: Das hellenistisch-jüdische Umfeld der frühchristlichen Gemeinden* (SUNT 27; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002) 282; and Aryeh Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt: The Struggle for Equal Rights* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1985) 111-114.

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of the Inhabitants of Nevşehir, 1913 (in Karamanli). Transcription; inscription now lost; not yet been published in the contemporary scholarly mode.

[.....]
[... τ]ῆς Τουδέ<α>ς Ν[..] ἀρχι-
συναγωγίσας. ἐν ἡ-
ρίνη ἢ κύμεις αὐτῆς.

[.....]
[... o]f the Jewish woman, head of
the synagogue (*archisynagōgisa*). In p-
ease her sleep.

I had originally construed the nu as the first letter of νῆπια, translating as "i[nfant] head of the synagogue," but Walter Ameling, who disagrees, may be right.¹²

In a separate class, because the title may have nothing to do with the synagogue or a temple:

6. Megiste, Woman of Priestly Class/Priestess, Jerusalem

CII/P 297. Burial inscription on limestone ossuary, Qidron Valley, Cave 2. Chamber B, Ossuary 18 (1st C. BCE 1st-C. CE; height 41 cm, width 82 cm, depth 32 cm). Roughly inscribed above each of two medallions. First published by Tal Ilan.¹³

Μεγίστ-
ης ἱερίσας.

Belonging to Megist-
e, woman of priestly class/priestess.

As the reader will see in chapter five, I present three possible options for understanding inscriptions in which women bear the title *hierieia/hierisa*: (1) it could be simply the Greek equivalent of Hebrew *kōhenet*; Aramaic *kahantta'*; (2) it could mean "priest" in the cultic sense of the term; or (3) it could denote a synagogue function. (Any Jewish priestess was either born into a priestly family or had married into one.) I left the question fully open, but Ilan has written that I

¹² IJO II 255.

¹³ Tal Ilan, "New Ossuary Inscriptions from Jerusalem," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 11 (1991-92) 157-59, 149-59 ; CII/P I,1 247, p. 321, similarly misrepresents me.

"equat[ed] the title priestess with a religious function,"¹⁴ and that, "She claimed that these women [the three called hierieia or hierisa], as Diaspora Jews living in peripheral communities, functioned as priestesses." On the contrary, I proposed three interpretations and left the question open. Furthermore, I did not suggest that "the Temple of Onias [in Egypt] was sectarian," but rather that the Onias and other temples outside of Jerusalem suggest pluralism and that Marin might even have served in one of the temples "considered by Onias to be heterodox."¹⁵ The Megiste inscription does not "undermine Brooten's theory equating the title priestess with a religious function," because (1) I suggested, rather than equated, and (2) because an inscription from Jerusalem does not undermine an inscription from Egypt.¹⁶

Theoretical and Methodological Questions

In *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*, I posed mainly epistemological questions. How do we know what we think we know? As analyzed in the pages below, the leading scholars of ancient synagogues and of ancient Jewish epigraphy who preceded me were certain that women did not have any functions within any of the Roman period synagogues of the ancient Mediterranean. I challenged that view. Having written before the systematic analysis of gender within Mediterranean Judaism or among its neighbors in this period, and on the basis of preconceived notions, my predecessors simply declared that women did not carry out leadership functions.

Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue caused many to question what we know and how we know it. Why could not women, likely from influential, prosperous families, have participated in making decisions within their synagogues,

¹⁴ Ilan, "Ossuary Inscriptions," 159; see also Margaret Williams, "The Contribution of Jewish Inscriptions to the Study of Judaism," in *Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3: *The Early Roman Period*, ed. William Horbury, W. D. Davies, and John Sturdy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 80, 75-93.

¹⁵ Ilan, "Ossuary Inscriptions," 159; see below, p. 89.

¹⁶ See JIGRE 84, at which William Horbury and David Noy, who generally accurately present my views, suggest that only Marin or Marion could theoretically have served as a priestess, and that at the Leontopolis Temple (of Onias), ignoring my proposal that she might have served at a temple not approved by Onias. David Noy, however, writes of Marin or Marion "Brooten's alternative explanation that she could have had a function in the temple is just conceivable," although he prefers "of priestly descent." ("The Jewish Communities of Leontopolis and Venosa," in *Studies in Jewish Epigraphy*, ed. Jan Willem van Henten and Pieter Willem van der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1994) 167, 162-182).

likely together with other family members? If the titles in these inscriptions appear in the same or the feminine form of titles borne by men, why should scholars read the male titles as functional and the female as honorific?

If a scholar is set on the notion that Jewish women played only a peripheral role in synagogues of the Roman period, and that they either sat in a separate women's section, likely a gallery, or did not attend synagogue services at all, then any number of inscriptions pointing to hitherto overlooked possibilities for women will not persuade. Today, however, far fewer today hold that view. Scholars ranging from Géza G. Xeravits; Karen Stern; Susannah Heschel; Ross Shepard Kraemer; Paul R. Trebilco; Pieter W. van der Horst; and Daniel Boyarin; to Ute E. Eisen, who has written on female office-holders within early Christianity; and Aisha Geissinger, who has written on female exegetes within Islam; as well as others who adopt my thesis that a small number of Jewish women carried out synagogue functions and have often incorporated it into their work.¹⁷ Others have, sometimes tentatively or with construc-

¹⁷ Z. Battinou, publication ed., *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum Graeciae: Corpus of Jewish and Hebrew Inscriptions from Mainland and Island Greece (later 4th c. B.C.E.-15th century)* (Athens: The Jewish Museum of Greece, 2018) 92-95, No. 32 (entry by Anastasia Loudaru); Géza G. Xeravits, "Temple and Synagogue in Late Antiquity," in *Various Aspects of Worship in Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature*, ed. Géza Xeravits, József Zsengellér, Ibolya Balla (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017) 348-349, 341-363; Karen B. Stern, "Harnessing the Sacred: Hidden Writing and 'Private' Spaces in Levantine Synagogues," in *Inscriptions in the Private Sphere in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. Rebecca Benefiel and Peter Keegan (Leiden: Brill, 2016) 222, 213-247; Hannah Safrai, "Women and the Ancient Synagogue," in *Daughters of the King: Women and the Synagogue*, ed. Susan Grossman and Rivka Haut (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 2010) 41-42; 39-49; Susannah Heschel, "The Impact of Feminist Theory on Jewish Studies," in *Modern Judaism and Historical Consciousness: Identities, Encounters, Perspectives*, ed. Andreas Gotzmann and Christian Wiese (Leiden: Brill, 2007) 530, 529-548; B. Nystrom, "Women, Priests and Jewish Inscriptions of Crete," *Ariadne* 8 (1996) 95-100; Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 106-7; 118-23, 192; Paul R. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 104-126; P(ieter) W. van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs: An Introductory Survey of a Millennium of Jewish Funerary Epigraphy (300 BCE-700 CE)* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1991) 105-109; Daniel Boyarin, "Reading Androcentrism Against the Grain: Women, Sex, and Torah-Study," *Poetics Today* 12 (1991) 49, 29-53; Ross S. Kraemer, ed., *Maenads, Martyrs, Matrons, Monastics: A Sourcebook on Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 218-20, Nos. 84-92; Barbara Geller Nathanson, "Review: Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985) 369-371; F. García Martínez, "Review: Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period* 14 (1983) 55-56; and Paul Elbert, "Review: Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue," *The Journal of Theological Studies* N.S. 35 (1984) 503-504. Ute E(va) Eisen, *Women Officeholders in Early Christianity: Epigraphical and Literary Studies*, trans.

tive criticism, accepted my analysis of all of the titles, except for "priestess."¹⁸ Peter Richardson and Valerie Heuchan, however, argue that Marin, *herisa*, in the Leontopolis inscription discussed below may well have carried out a cultic role in the Jewish Temple in Leontopolis.¹⁹ Further scholars have adopted my research results in large part or suggested that women may possibly have served in these functions.²⁰

While *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* has gained widespread acceptance, Sara Parks, in a 2019 article, "'The Brooten Phenomenon': Moving Women from the Margins in Second-Temple and New Testament Scholarship," points out that my book and other research on women and gender have yet to be adequately incorporated into scholarship as a whole, because research on women and gender is still viewed as specialized and not essential for a full picture. Parks particularly challenges male scholars: "women's scholarship and scholarship on women should not be construed as optional 'identity politics.' Rather they must be accepted as essential to so-called 'regular' scholarship. Without them, our scholarship is incomplete, or even incorrect."²¹ She cites Lee Levine as an example of a scholar who discusses *Women*

Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2000 [German original, 1996] iii, and *passim*; Aisha Geissinger, "Portrayal of the *ḥajj* as a Context for Women's Exegesis: Textual Evidence in al-Bukhārī's (d. 870) '*al-Sāḥih*'," in *Ideas, Images, and Methods of Portrayal: Insights into Classical Arabic Literature and Islam*, ed. Sebastian Günther (Leiden: Brill, 2005) 168, 153-177. For further references to early reviews and discussions of the book, see Brooten, "Female Leadership," 64.

¹⁸ E.g., Tal Ilan, "Inscriptions," 157-159; and Carol Meyers, "Review: *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 46 (1982) 542-543.

¹⁹ See below, 73-74. Peter Richardson and Valerie Heuchan, "Jewish Voluntary Associations in Egypt and the Roles of Women," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*, ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson (New York: Routledge, 1996) 226-39, 226-51. They base themselves on: Exod 38:8; 1 Sam 2:22; Targum to Judges 5:24 (all on women performing Israelite cultic functions); *t. Menahot* 11.II.1 (on the Onias Temple's [=Leontopolis Temple] high priest wearing women's clothing, which may be a spoof on priestesses in that temple wearing women's clothing), and on the more egalitarian gender relations in Egypt and the presence of cultic priestesses, which raises the possibility of assimilation.

²⁰ E.g., Judith Romney Wegner, "Review: *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*," *The Journal of Religion* 68 (1988) 327-329; and A. T. Kraabel, "Review: *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 46 (1984) 341-342.

²¹ Sara Parks, "'The Brooten Phenomenon': Moving Women from the Margins in Second-Temple and New Testament Scholarship," *The Bible and Critical Theory* 15 (2019) 60, 46-64.

Leaders, but then does not incorporate my research in the rest of his work.²²

Levine, who holds that synagogue titles held by men denoted leadership positions, concludes: (1) that women attended synagogue service, on the basis of ancient sources for their having done so; (2) that they most likely sat together with men because no ancient source states otherwise; (3) that they may or may not have had a liturgical function--a Toseftan passage on women reading from the Torah is difficult to interpret; (4) that they donated to synagogues, to which inscriptions attest; and (5) that they may have participated in synagogue leadership, although I "did not succeed in providing convincing proof that such official positions were indeed open to women."²³

Levine is epistemologically quite self-aware, except for the last point. Proving anything for the ancient world is exceedingly rare and an unreasonable expectation. To his credit, Levine does not argue that female title bearers obtained their titles from their husbands, nor does he simply claim that the female titles were honorific, but rather looks especially to the surrounding cultures for evidence of female religious and civic roles, observing as I also did that these cultures and the Jewish titles used in them varied greatly from region to region. Levine observes the concentration of parallel evidence for women in the religions of Asia Minor, including Christianity, on which basis he argues that Jewish communities there may have, in part, adapted to their surroundings in that region.

Ultimately, however, Levine seems to believe that, in his separate chapters on "Leadership" and "Priests," he has demonstrated what specific male officeholders did and what role male priests likely had in the synagogue. He is judicious in those chapters, weighing evidence and arguing for his construal of it, but he does not and cannot prove his interpretations, for we cannot know with certainty what any synagogue officer of any gender did. If female title bearers were incorporated into the chapter on "Leadership" and female priests/women of priestly class into the "Priests" chapter, then the reader would recognize that, while scholars cannot prove anything, they can thoughtfully argue that

²² Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2000) 482-483, *inter alia*.

²³ Levine, *Synagogue*, 482.

female title bearers may well have participated in decision making and carried out other leadership functions.²⁴

Ross Shepard Kraemer, who agrees that female title bearers had functions, although she questions the distinction between honorific and functional, argues that I and others have insufficiently theorized leadership.²⁵ Decision making is central to my understanding of leadership, which would include working with others, such as one's family in this highly family-based society, in arriving at decisions. A larger question, however, deserves robust discussion among researchers, namely whether administrative decisions about a synagogue complex, decisions about the liturgy, or decisions about Jewish legal matters, among other types of decisions that a synagogue official might make, are the most important indicator of leadership. Some commentators cited here seem at pains to establish that whatever functions female title bearers carried out, they did not carry out the most important ones.²⁶

Kraemer further argues that I did not recognize the extent to which these inscriptions come largely from the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries and that I did not account sufficiently for regional differences.²⁷ I noted the geographic specificity of inscriptions with specific titles applied to women: the inscriptions for three female heads of the synagogue are from Asia Minor, and one is from Crete; and the inscriptions for female elders cluster in Venosa (Venusia), Southern Italy. I would love to know more about the Jewish communities in each region and how specific histories relate to the specific women, but no one has yet found the sources to answer that question. Subsequent to 1982, scholars have attempted to date these inscriptions more accurately, yielding later dates for some, although the dating of ancient inscriptions is rarely certain. Kraemer, who is currently completing a book on Diaspora Jews in late antiquity, points out the precarious situation

²⁴ Levine, *Synagogue*, "Leadership," 387-428; "Women," 482, 471-490; "Priests," 491-500.

²⁵ Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) 237.

²⁶ E.g., Walter Ameling, *IJO II* 1, pp. 39-40.

²⁷ Ross Shepard Kraemer, "Jewish Women Synagogue Officers in the Ancient Mediterranean: Some Further Considerations" (Unpublished Manuscript). I thank Kraemer for generously making this manuscript available to me. See also Kraemer's judicious analysis of then recent studies on synagogue officeholders in *Witnesses*, 232-246.

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of Jewish communities under the Christian Roman Empire, especially as Christian Roman law increasingly removed previously held rights and placed legal disadvantages on Jews. Kraemer plausibly suggests that women sometimes take on roles usually filled by men in situations of great stress to a specific community and that we should, in any case, look at fourth and fifth century diasporic Jewish life circumstance of distress when interpreting inscriptions from that time period.

Women Leaders and my three follow-up articles have also elicited other critiques. Everyone agrees that women donated to synagogues, and a few see donation as their main synagogue function and as the main cause of their titles. Tessa Rajak writes of my books and articles, "Brooten vastly overestimates the amount of administrative activity that would have surrounded an ancient institution, and her picture of dedicated female rabbis of progressive persuasion concerned with everything from liturgy to repairs, introduces an anachronistic note."²⁸ I, however, have not presented Jewish female officeholders as progressive, nor as rabbis, and Rajak does not cite any page to back up her claim. As for the activities of synagogue officials, I propose only what ancient sources mention.

Tessa Rajak and David Noy argue that both male and female heads of the synagogue participated in the patronage system in which communities honored donors with honorific titles.²⁹ Prior to publication of *Women Leaders*, most scholars held that both "father of the synagogue" and "mother of the synagogue" were honorific titles. Samuel Krauss wrote: "A genuine office could not have been associated with the distinction [of father/mother of the synagogue] for the simple reason that it was also bestowed upon women."³⁰

The presence of female heads of the synagogue has long influenced whether or not scholars view such persons as having authority, contributing to the liturgy and/or teaching, or as bearers of an honorific title. Most scholars who

²⁸ Tessa Rajak, "The Jewish Community and Its Boundaries," in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire*, ed. Judith Lieu, John North, and Tessa Rajak (Routledge: London, 1992) 23, 9-28.

²⁹ Tessa Rajak and David Noy, "Archisynagogoi: Office, Title and Social Status in the Greco-Jewish Synagogue," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 83 (1993) 87-88, 75-93

³⁰ Samuel Krauss, *Synagogale Altertümer* (Berlin: Benjamin Harz, 1922) 166. See below 64.

do not see the female heads of synagogue as carrying out any functions argue that:

1. The titles of men signify a function, but the women's do not; or
2. The titles of both female and male heads of synagogue are honorific and signify neither administrative, nor liturgical or teaching functions.

The inscriptions in which women bear a different title than their husband and the absence of husbands in most of the inscriptions have apparently persuaded nearly all interpreters; today almost no one argues that women bore their titles because their husbands did. The honorific interpretation has nevertheless become a default position among some scholars, understood to be proven and evidence-based, in contrast to viewing the titles as including functions. "That these women used their wealth to adorn the synagogue is clear, but that their titles (and these include *hierisa*), were anything other than honorific has yet to be proved," writes Margaret Williamson.³¹ James Burtchaell writes that seeing Jewish women as functioning officers goes against mishnaic culture, not recognizing that that these largely Diasporan female title bearers were not under rabbinic control.³² William Horbury argues that all titles were honors given to men and women for their benefactions and that they designated "governmental, rather than liturgical" functions, but that women were unlikely to have participated in the decision making of a synagogue council.³³ His assessment that synagogues in this period probably separated women from men correlates with his views on women's lack of decision-making capacity. Walter Ameling holds that female heads of the synagogue are "less upsetting than often thought," because

³¹ Margaret Williams, "The Contribution of Jewish Inscriptions to the Study of Judaism," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3 *The Early Roman Period*, ed. William Horbury, W. D. Davies, and John Sturdy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 79-80, 75-93.

³² James Tunstead Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 245, 244-246, argues that the feminine titles of office refer to women whose husband's title bestows dignity upon them. Burtchaell notes the occurrence of *episcop[i]a* as the wife of an *episcopus* in Canon 14 of the Council of Tours (567). Eisen, *Women Officeholders*, 200, however, observes that Burtchaell, 316-318, erroneously refers to the wife of a bishop being called an *episcopa* in Gregory of Tours, noting that the Council of Tours provides the single known Latin example of this usage.

³³ William Horbury, "Women in the Synagogue," 399, 358-401.

male and female heads of the synagogue had no liturgical functions and did not need to be learned, but were rather often wealthy people who donated to and worked to improve the organization.³⁴ Tessa Rajak and David Noy argue that "head of the synagogue" was mainly an honorific title for all holders.³⁵ They view the non-Jewish literary sources indicating functions of heads of synagogues as not useful owing to their biases or lack of knowledge of the internal workings of the synagogue.³⁶ Taking as the only admissible evidence inscriptions concerning Roman civic office and heads of the synagogue, which rarely mention functions, contributes to the thesis that "head of the synagogue" was an honorific title.³⁷

Those above who see all the titles as honorific and mainly deriving from beneficence need to explain who led in the absence of functioning synagogue officers. Should we imagine that an entire congregation jointly organized each liturgy; read from the scriptures with no one to call them forth; as a group decided how to renovate their synagogue; and as a leaderless group raised funding, taught the members, gave advice or judgment on Jewish legal matters, decided on which biblical translation to use and acquired it, etc.? We have no evidence that Jewish communities throughout the ancient Mediterranean were leaderless communities. To be sure, however, many congregations may well have been small and less in need of official roles and designated leaders.

Beyond this, the relationship between benefaction and synagogue titles is far from clear. Among the inscrip-

³⁴ IJO II 1, pp. 39-40: "weniger aufregend als oft gedacht" (40).

³⁵ Tessa Rajak and David Noy, "Archisynagogoi," 75-93.

³⁶ Rajak and Noy, "Archisynagogoi," 78-81. Today, in line with Levine, I would account more for Christian biases in these sources than I do below, 27-33.

³⁷ See also Carrie Elaine Duncan, "The Rhetoric of Participation: Gender and Representation in Ancient Synagogues" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 2012); see also Carrie Duncan, "Inscribing Authority: Female Title Bearers in Jewish Inscriptions," *Religions* 3 (2012) 37-49. Duncan argues that one cannot know anything about what female title bearers did, if they had any functions at all, but rather only that they were benefactors to the Jewish community whose titles related to their benefactions. Duncan claims that my and others' understanding of female officeholders includes their exertion of power through control, which is based on a "modern, andro-normative understanding of power as control" ("Rhetoric," 214) but she has not identified a specific example of this in this book or in my articles. Duncan helpfully stresses that women worked within their family structures, which is surely true, although we actually know very little about the female office holders' families.

tions discussed above and below, just two are donative.³⁸ Why would one assume that all of the remaining twenty-two or -three women are donors? I state below that some of the female office holders may also have been donors and that wealth can accompany access to offices.³⁹ The appendix below of female donors who bear no titles and who far outnumber female office holders demonstrates, however, the problem in assuming an inextricable link between donations and female titles.⁴⁰ The synagogue of Apamea, with its nineteen donative inscriptions, of which nine are by women and others by women together with one or more family members can illustrate this. None of these female donors bear titles.

Deciding which are the best comparable materials for synagogue titles is complicated. The decision determines one's interpretation. Rajak and Noy give priority to Greek honorific titles and not to, for example, contemporaneous titles of church leadership.⁴¹ Riet van Bremen's research on the limits of female participation in Roman civic and religious life has provided needed caution, even as some scholars use her work to argue that Jewish women had no functions at all.⁴² Whether to compare synagogue titles with civic titles, those of volunteer associations, those of church leadership, or something else depends on one's assessment as to whether synagogues mainly represent the Jewish community vis-à-vis Roman society, are mainly volunteer associations, or are mainly for religious worship. I see elements of all of these and therefore choose to compare on more than one axis. Riet van Bremen and Rajak and Noy have shown limits and demonstrated the functions of beneficence, and I do not posit an egalitarian form of Judaism in the Roman period. One example can, however, suffice to show the value of Christian inscriptions of female presbyters, bishops, etc., and debates over the leadership of women. In 494, Pope Gelasius complains of a Christian practice in southern Italy and Sicily of women taking on ritual roles, serving as presby-

³⁸ IJO II 14, 25.

³⁹ Pp. 141-44.

⁴⁰ Pp. 157-65.

⁴¹ Rajak and Noy, "Archisynagogoi," 84-86.

⁴² Riet van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation: Women and Civic Life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1996). Carrie Duncan presents the civic titles as interpreted by van Bremen as a comparison more plausible than the titles "bishop," "elder," etc. as analyzed by Eisen. (Duncan, "Representations," 259-263).

ters at the "sacred altars."⁴³ Eisen presents two inscriptions commemorating female Christian presbyters in southern Italy and Sicily in the fourth-fifth centuries.⁴⁴ In Venosa in southern Italy from just this time, three female elders, a Jewish "fatheress" and a "mother" are commemorated in inscriptions.⁴⁵ Perhaps Christian and Jewish communities in this region in the 4th-5th C. encouraged and recognized women through titles associated with service to the church and the synagogue respectively, maybe even influencing each other.

The genres of sources declared relevant also heavily determines one's interpretation. As Levine correctly notes, restricting oneself to epigraphic materials, as do Rajak and Noy, can result in viewing the title "head of the synagogue" as based on benefaction and honorific.⁴⁶ In this book, I draw upon the full range of sources.⁴⁷

Finally, the historiographical question: Why has the contention that all titles were mainly honorific arisen following publication of this book. Is it, in part, a response to my interpretation? Previously, scholars decided that fathers of the synagogue, in the presence of mothers of the synagogue, bore their title as an honorific. Given that it has become largely untenable to hold that women acquired

⁴³ Gelasius I, *Epistle* 14.26: *Nihilomus impatienter audivimus, tantum divinarum rerum subisse despectum, ut feminae sacris altaribus ministrare ferementer, cunctaque non nisi virorum famulatu deputata sexum, cui non competunt, exhibere.* "Nevertheless, we have heard to our annoyance that divine affairs have come to such a low state that women are encouraged to officiate at the sacred altars, and to take part in all matters imputed to the offices of the male sex, to which they do not belong." (Latin: *Epistolae Romanorum pontificum genuinae*, ed. Andrea Thiel, vol. 1 [Braunsberg/Braniewo, Poland: Hildesheim, 1867-1868; reprint: New York: Olms, 1974] 376-377; English: Mary Ann Rossi, "Priesthood, Precedent, and Prejudice: On Recovering the Women Priests of Early Christianity: Containing a Translation from the Italian of 'Notes on the Female Priesthood in Antiquity,'" by Giorgio Otranto," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 7 [1991] 81).

⁴⁴ Ute E. Eisen, *Women Officeholders in Early Christianity: Epigraphical and Literary Studies*, transl. Linda Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000; German original: Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996) 128-131: Sicilian grave inscription for presbyter Kale (4th-5th C.; *L'Année Epigraphique* 1975, no. 454); and Calabrian grave inscription for presbyter Leta (4th-5th C.; CIL X 8079).

⁴⁵ JIWE I 59; CIL IX 6226 (perhaps 5th C.; see below, pp. 42-43); JIWE 62; CIL IX 6230 (perhaps 5th C.; see below, p. 43);

⁴⁶ Levine, *Synagogue*, 390-402; Rajak and Noy, "Archisynagogoi," 75-93.

⁴⁷ Today, however, I would add discussion of "head of the synagogue" as a non-Jewish title and would also take account of Roman civic and religious titles in the same regions as the Jewish titles. On the former, see the review in G. H. R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*, vol. 4 (Macquarie University: The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, 1987) 219-220, 214-220.

their titles from their husbands, might the presence of female title bearers have motivated, at least in part, some scholars to declare all titles honorific?

In closing, if I were to write this book today, I would more thoroughly historicize by interweaving discussion of an institution widespread within the Roman Empire and often necessary for obtaining the resources for benefaction, namely slavery. Women in the Roman Empire could hold property, including human property, in their own names. The very first inscription that I discuss below was commissioned by Rufina, a slave-holder, but I did no more than mention that fact.⁴⁸ An analysis of female donors as potential slave-holders would have further located these women within the contexts of their economies and their surrounding cultures. Slaveholding reminds us yet again how different were ancient synagogues from contemporary ones and demonstrates the value of thoroughly understanding the world in which they existed.

Concordance of *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum* (used for principal inscriptions discussed in this volume) with Newer Editions

Abbreviations:

- CII *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum*. Ed. Jean-Baptiste Frey, 2 vols. Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1936-1952; reprint of vol. 1 with a Prolegomenon by Baruch Lifshitz, New York: Ktav, 1975.
- CIJG *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum Graeciae*. Ed. Zanet Battinou. Athens: The Jewish Museum of Greece, 2018.
- CII/P *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palestinae*. Ed. Hannah M. Cotton, et al., Vol. I, Part 1. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010.
- IJO *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*. Ed. David Noy, Alexander Panayotov, and Hanswell Bloedhorn, vol. 1; Walter Ameling, vol. 2; David Noy and Hanswulf Bloedhorn, vol. 3. Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 99, 101, 102; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004).

⁴⁸ IJO II 43; CII 741. See below, 5-12. Ross S. Kraemer argues that the tomb was not for Rufina's enslaved laborers raised in her household and for her freedpeople, but instead those of others, perhaps other members of her synagogue. (Ross S. Kraemer, "Rufina Refined: A Woman *archisynagōgos* from Smyrna Yet Again," in *Worship, Women, and War: Essays in Honor of Susan Niditch* [Brown Judaic Studies 357; Providence, RI: Brown Judaic Studies, 2015] 287-299. Kraemer observes that the "her" usually assumed in l. 4 is in fact missing. Kraemer does not, however, argue that Rufina was not a slave-holder.

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JIGRE *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt*. Ed. William Horbury and David Noy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

JIWE *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe*. Ed. David Noy, 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993-1995.

CII 315	JIWE II 11
CII 400	JIWE II 24
CII 496	JIWE II 542
CII 523	JIWE II 577
CII 606	JIWE I 63
CII 619d	JIWE I 116
CII 639	JIWE I 5
CII 731c	IJO I Cre 3
CII 741	IJO II 43
CII 756	IJO II 25
CII 696b	IJO I Ach 18
CII 581	JIWE I 59
CII 590	JIWE I 62
CII 597	JIWE I 71
CII 606	JIWE I 63
CII 692	IJO I Thr 3
CII 1514	JIGRE 84

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INTRODUCTION

It is my thesis that women served as leaders in a number of synagogues during the Roman and Byzantine periods. The evidence for this consists of nineteen Greek and Latin inscriptions in which women bear the titles "head of the synagogue," "leader," "elder," "mother of the synagogue" and "priestess." These inscriptions range in date from 27 B.C.E. to perhaps the sixth century C.E. and in provenance from Italy to Asia Minor, Egypt and Palestine. While new discoveries make this a growing corpus of material, a number of the inscriptions have been known to scholars for some time. The purpose of this dissertation, therefore, is not to present a hitherto unknown body of evidence, but rather to suggest a new interpretation of known material.

According to previous scholarly consensus, Jewish women did not assume positions of leadership in the ancient synagogue. Scholars have therefore interpreted the titles borne by women in these inscriptions as honorific. Samuel Krauss, for example, made the gender of the office holder a criterion for the functionality of the title: "The office of archon does not occur for women, and this is the best proof that we must regard archons as genuine, practicing officials of the gerousia or synagogue, in a way that one certainly could not have taken them from the ranks of the women."¹ This tradition of interpreting the titles borne by Jewish women as honorific has continued until the present day,² although in recent years several scholars have begun to question it, among them A. Thomas Kraabel, Dorothy Irvin and Shaye Cohen.³ Jeanne and Louis Robert also seem to view the titles as functional.⁴ In order to decide if the titles were functional or honorific it is necessary to examine each title and each inscription.

PART ONE

THE INSCRIPTIONAL EVIDENCE

CHAPTER I

WOMEN AS HEADS OF SYNAGOGUES

A. The Inscriptional Evidence for Women as Heads of Synagogues

In three Greek inscriptions women bear the title archisynagōgos/archisynagōgissa. The formation is a rather curious one. Whereas, for example, archiereus, archigrammateus, archikybernetēs consist of archi- plus the name of the office, archisynagōgos/archisynagōgissa comes from arch- plus an element formed from the institution over which the officer stands, in this case synagōgē. Architriklinos (from triclinium--a dining room with three couches), meaning "head waiter," would be a parallel. Although the title also occurs occasionally in paganism,¹ it is most often Jewish, and it is probable that the pagan examples represent a borrowing from Judaism, rather than vice versa.

Smyrna, Ionia

CII 741; IGR IV 1452. Marble plaque (36 x 26 x 2 cm); horizontal lines beneath each row of letters (probably 2nd C.).

'Ρουφεῖνα Ἰουδαία ἀρχι-
2 συνάγωγος κατεσκεύα-
σεν τὸ ἐνσὸριον τοῖς ἀπε-
4 λευθέροις καὶ θρέμμασιν
μηδενὸς ἄλλου ἔξουσίαν ἔ-
6 χοντος θάψαι τινά. εἰ δέ τις τολ-
μήσει, δώσει τῷ ἱερωτάτῳ τα-
8 μείῳ (δηνάρια) ἅπ καὶ τῷ ἔθνει τῶν Ἰου-
δαίων (δηνάρια) ᾠ. Ταύτης τῆς ἐπιγραφῆς
10 τὸ ἀντίγραφον ἀποκεῖται
εἰς τὸ ἀρχεῖον.

L.4: read θρέμμασιν.

L.5: read ἄλλου.

Rufina, a Jewess, head of the synagogue, built this tomb for her freed slaves and the slaves raised in her house. No one else has the right to bury anyone (here). If someone should dare to do, he or she will pay 1500 denars to the sacred treasury and 1000 denars to the Jewish people. A copy of this inscription has been placed in the (public) archives.

The history of the interpretation of the title archi-synagōgos in this inscription can serve as an exemplification of the way in which scholars have dealt with all of the following inscriptions. Salomon Reinach, who first published the inscription, solves the dilemma of a woman archisynagōgos in a novel way.² He first reviews how Emil Schürer deals with the problem of mothers of the synagogue, namely by declaring both mothers and fathers of the synagogue to be honorary office holders.³ What can be done now that a woman head of the synagogue has been discovered, he asks, for this goes against Schürer's establishment of the title archisynagōgos as functional. Reinach solves the crass contradiction between genuine function and woman by positing two stages in the development of the title. Since we know that at the early stage heads of the synagogue had a genuine function, we cannot, he reasons, depart from the accepted understanding. Later, however, archisynagōgos became a purely honorific title, one which passed from father to son.⁴ It took on a sense which was "more vague and more general," analogous to the title father or mother of the synagogue. Thus it is in the category of head of the synagogue honoris causa that Rufina is to be seen.

M. Weinberg's solution to the dilemma is that Rufina was the wife of an archisynagōgos, "for women have never held an office in a Jewish community, and certainly not a synagogue office."⁵ Emil Schürer's is simple: "Rufina herself bears the title ἀρχιουδῆγογος, which in the case of a woman is, of course, just a title."⁶ Jean Juster, after describing how difficult it was to fill the office of archisynagōgos, what authority and knowledge were required, notes in closing that "the title of archisynagōgos could also be accorded honorifically, even to women and children."⁷ Samuel Krauss adopts the wife solution: "Concerning the women, it can certainly not mean that they were bestowed with the dignity of a head of the synagogue, for the synagogue did not allow women such honors; it is rather the wives of heads of the synagogue who are meant."⁸ Salo Wittmayer Baron writes, "The aforementioned woman archisynagogus of Smyrna, if not merely the wife of an official, was very likely a lady whom the congregation wished to honor, but to whom it could hardly have entrusted the actual charge of an office."⁹ Jean-Baptiste Frey, querying whether the title could be honorific or whether Rufina was simply the wife of a head of the synagogue, notes, "It seems difficult to admit that she actually exercised the functions of a head of the synagogue."¹⁰

It does seem difficult for these scholars to admit that a woman could have exercised an official function in the ancient synagogue. Are there any who can imagine it? The epigraphist Louis Robert is a notable exception in the history of the interpretation of this inscription. In the context of discussing a Jewish woman who bears the title archegissa, which will be discussed below, Robert notes, "In Jewish communities women bore titles," and lists the Rufina inscription and others.¹¹ Robert does not make any further attempts to define the titles or to discuss the functions associated with them, but he does see all of these examples as part of the same phenomenon and not as something exceptional. More recently, A. Thomas Kraabel, Dorothy Irvin and Shaye Cohen have also suggested that the title archisynagogos in this inscription denotes an actual function.¹²

Are the arguments of those who consider the title honorific convincing? As to the view that Rufina was merely the wife of an archisynagogos, it is striking that in the legal matter at hand, namely that of guaranteeing a burial place for her freed slaves and the exposed infants raised in her household, she acts in her own name. Thus we do not even know whether she was married or not. The suggestion that the title archisynagogos was honorific in the later period will be discussed below. The primary argument, however, is that a woman, qua woman, could not have held such a post. This will be discussed after all of the evidence has been surveyed.

Excursus: What is an Honorific Title?

In order to ascertain whether the titles discussed in this thesis were or were not honorific titles, the meaning of the term "honorific title" must first be clarified. The sense in which this term has been used by scholars dealing with the Jewish inscriptions in question is that a title which normally designates a function (e.g., archisynagogos) is here merely meant to honor a person. In the case of pater/mater synagogae, one decided that the title itself implies no function, but is per se an honorific title.

This is by no means the way in which "honorific title" is normally used. For example, Friedrich Preisigke devotes a section to Ehrentitel in his dictionary of the papyri.¹³ The honorific titles listed fall into two categories: adjectives, often in the superlative (e.g., clarissimus, lamprotatos), and nouns, often corresponding to a titular adjective (e.g., spectabilitas, lamprotēs). A man of senatorial rank, for example,

could bear the title vir clarissimus (abbreviated c.v.),¹⁴ his wife being clarissima femina (abbreviated c.f.).¹⁵ While the title does not necessarily pass on to the children, there are examples of clarissimus iuvenis (c.i.)¹⁶ for a young man, and clarissima puella (c.p.)¹⁷ and clarissimus puer (c.p.)¹⁸ for a young girl and boy respectively. Thus, a "distinguished" (clarissimus/a) person was not simply any distinguished person, but rather a person of senatorial rank. The senatorial rank certainly implied certain duties and functions, but these were not expressed with this title, and clarissimus/a can properly be termed an "honorific title." Quite unlike the title archi-synagōgos, clarissimus/a never denoted an official function; it was per se honorific. Note also that while a wife does receive the title of her husband, it is not the case that his title was functional while hers was purely honorific. The titles of both were honorific. Finally, while the wife did receive the title clarissima femina through her husband, she apparently could continue to bear it even if no longer married to the vir clarissimus, but to another not of senatorial rank.¹⁹ This, then is the standard use of "honorific title," and it will become clear that our case has little to do with it.

What of the wife of a religious functionary receiving his title? Could this not be seen as an honorific title? For example, the wife of a flamen dialis is called flaminica,²⁰ but this was not simply a title, for a flaminica had certain cultic functions and appeared at her husband's side wearing official cultic garb. Like her husband, the flaminica wore priestly garb; on her head she wore the red veil, the flammeum, and a purple scarf, the rica, to which was attached the pomegranate branch, the arbor felix. Her mantle was also purple in color and her tunic was made of wool. She wore shoes made of the leather of an animal which had been slaughtered, but not of an animal which had died a natural death. Like her husband, she was not allowed to touch a corpse, nor did she have to swear oaths. Further, the flaminica had the duty to offer sacrifice.²¹ According to Plutarch, she was the priestess of Juno,²² but this may be incorrect information on Plutarch's part. Certain flaminicae were assigned to the cult of deceased women of the imperial family.²³ Thus it is clear that having attained a title through marriage did not necessarily imply that no duties accompanied that title or that it was not an official one.

The example of the flaminica is not meant to be a parallel to the Jewish materials. Indeed, the flaminicae and flamines

bear little resemblance to the Jewish functionaries, and most of the Jewish materials are later. The point of this example is not to compare the two groups, but rather to call into question the widespread and otherwise unsubstantiated notion that if a wife bore the title of her husband, then this meant that her title was purely honorific. Therefore, even if one were to conclude that the Jewish women bearing titles were in fact simply the wives of synagogue officials, this would not in itself prove that they had no function.

Before speaking of the honorific nature of these women's titles, one must first establish that honorific titles even existed in the ancient synagogue. The assumption is that titles normally functional were honorific when bestowed upon women, which is similar to suggesting the existence of a church with functioning male bishops and honorary female bishops. There is no internal reason to assume that any of the titles of synagogue organization were honorific.

One often cites the child office-holders as a parallel to the women (e.g., CII 120: archōn nēpios; 402: mellarchōn), thereby overlooking that a grown woman has little in common with a two year old boy. Rather than attesting to the existence of honorific titles, such inscriptions can be seen either as evidence for the hereditary nature of some offices in certain synagogues or for the role of family ties in the selection process. Judging by the word, a mellarchōn became a functioning archōn upon reaching adulthood.²⁴ Such a case in no way parallels adult women bearing titles.

Is it nevertheless possible, and even probable, that the women title-bearers received the titles on account of their husbands? A major difficulty with this hypothesis is that in all of the inscriptions in which women bear titles, husbands are mentioned only twice (CII 166, 619d). Even if it were to have been the case that the women in these two inscriptions acquired their titles on account of their husbands, which is not a necessary consequence (why should two Jewish leaders not be married to each other?), it does not follow that no functions were attached to the title. Nor does it follow that all of the other women acquired their titles in this way. The Jewish women's titles have been compared to German women being addressed as "Frau Dr." when their husbands hold a doctorate,²⁵ but even this custom does not prove the honorific nature of the titles. Many German women are called "Frau Dr." because they have written a doctoral dissertation. Further, if it had been a common custom

for Jewish women to assume the titles of their husbands, why does this not find expression in the inscriptions? Numerous inscriptions mention male title-bearers and their wives, but with the two exceptions noted above, the wives are not honored with titles (CII 22, 216, 247, 265, 333, 391, 416, 457, 511, 532, 553, 681, 733b, 739, 770, 788, 949, 1145, 1531, etc.) and the situation is the same with the daughters of male title-bearers (CII 102, 106, 147, 172, 291, 510, 535, 537, 568, 610, 645, 1202, etc.).

In sum, we do not have evidence that the custom of wives taking on their husbands' titles even existed in ancient Judaism, but even if it did exist, and even if one or two of our inscriptions were to reflect that custom, this would not prove that the wives in question had no functions attached to their titles, nor would it prove that all Jewish women acquired their titles in this way. Further, there is no indication in the ancient sources that any of the titles of synagogue leadership were honorific at any period.

From the Rufina inscription it is clear that Rufina was a wealthy woman who possessed the funds to build a special tomb for her freed slaves and thremmata (= Latin alumni), i.e., those children who had been exposed as infants by their parents and taken by her to be raised either as slaves or as adoptive children. Since this is a tomb for the freed slaves, to whom Rufina would have been a patron, and not for other members of her family, it is likely that the thremmata mentioned here were slaves and not adoptive children. This grave, the persons to be buried in it, the marble plaque with its official legalistic language, and the high fine to be imposed all point to the wealth and influence of this woman. We know nothing about her marital status, but it is noteworthy that no husband is mentioned; she has drawn up the deed in her own name.

This type of inscription, that is, a document stating for whom a particular tomb is meant, forbidding others to bury anyone in it and imposing a fine, usually to be paid to a public institution, is quite typical for Jewish,²⁶ as well as for non-Jewish,²⁷ inscriptions from Asia Minor. The "sacred treasury" (hierōtaton tameion) is most likely the imperial treasury, the sacrum aerarium.²⁸ The fines insure that Jewish and Roman officials maintain their interest in protecting the tomb.

What do we know about the Jewish community in which Rufina was active? There are only two other Jewish inscriptions from Smyrna which mention office holders. CII 739 is a donative inscription made by one Irenopoios, who was an elder and father of the tribe, and the son of an elder;²⁹ CII 740 is a further donative inscription, probably from the same synagogue.³⁰ Another inscription not included in the CII names a Roman citizen, Lucius Lollius Justus, who was a scribe of the Jewish community in Smyrna.³¹ Further inscriptions from Smyrna include a magical amulet (CII 743),³² and a 45-line inscription from the time of Hadrian (117-138), listing donations to the city, one line of which refers to former Judeans who had donated 10,000 drachmas.³³ Of the titles in these inscriptions, elder and scribe are fairly common elsewhere, and father of the tribe seems to be analogous to father of the synagogue. That both father and son bear the title elder in CII 739 could mean that in Smyrna titles could pass from father to son, whether automatically or not is another question.

The picture of Rufina the Jewess which emerges from this and related inscriptions is that of a wealthy, independent woman looking after her business affairs according to the customs of the time. Her Roman name and her wealth could indicate that she was a member of a leading family of Smyrna. There is no indication that she was married. She bore the title archisynagōgos, which, if her name had been Rufinus, would have entitled her to being listed in modern secondary literature as a leader of the Jewish community in ancient Smyrna.

Kastelli Kissamou, Crete

CII 731c.³⁴ White marble sepulchral plaque (45 x 30 x 2.8 cm; height of letters: 1.5-3.0 cm; distance between lines: 0.5-1.5cm; 4th/5th C.).

Σοφία Γορτυνί-
2 α, πρεσβυτέρα
κὲ ἀρχισυναγώ-
4 γισσα Κισάμου ἐν-
θα. Μνήμη δικαίας
6 ἕς ἑώρα. Ἀμήν.

L. 3: read καὶ.
L. 5: read δικαίας.
L. 6: read εἰς αἶωνα.

Sophia of Gortyn, elder and head of the synagogue of Kisamos (lies) here. The memory of the righteous one for ever. Amen.

A. C. Bandy dated the inscription to the first or second century. Jeanne and Louis Robert, however, are of the opinion that it is from the fourth or fifth century.³⁵ Given the script, especially the rounded sigma and the nearly cursive omega and mu, the later date seems much more plausible.

Unlike the Rufina inscription, this one gives us no hints as to the background of Sophia. Here, again, no husband is mentioned, so one cannot assume that she was married.

This is the only Jewish inscription from Kastelli Kissamou and one of only three from Crete. The other two Cretan inscriptions do not supply us with any information which could help us to reconstruct the organizational structure of Cretan synagogues.³⁶

It is noteworthy that Sophia of Gortyn was both elder and head of the synagogue. She bears the feminine forms of both titles (presbytera and archisynagōgissa). In Greek, both ἡ ἀρχισυναγωγος as in the previous inscription, and ἡ ἀρχισυναγωγισσα are possible.³⁷ The title will be discussed below in the context of other women elders.

As this inscription was first published in 1963, the older authors cited in connection with Rufina did not express their opinion as to the meaning of archisynagōgissa. A. C. Bandy, however, did carry forward the tradition by suggesting that, "The term πρεσβυτέρα implies that the deceased either was the wife of a πρεσβύτερος or she received this as an honorary title, since it was often bestowed on women. The word ἀρχισυναγωγισσα implies either that her husband was, in addition, an ἀρχισυνάγωγος or that she received this as a second honorary title, since this also was given to women."³⁸ Jeanne and Louis Robert do not suggest such a thing. Rather they compare the title with other Jewish women's titles: archegissa, hierisa, archisynagōgos, and presbytera.³⁹

Anyone reading the inscription can see that there is no internal reason for believing that Sophia of Gortyn received the titles through her husband. If her husband was the source of her titles, why is she not called Sophia, the wife of X? The image of Sophia of Gortyn emerging from the inscription, albeit in much more vague outlines than that of Rufina, is of a very important figure in the Jewish community of Kisamos. She was not only an elder, but also head of the synagogue. There is no evidence that she was married.

Myndos, Caria

CII 756.⁴⁰ Donative inscription on chancel screen post of white marble (ca. 1 m x 21 cm x 19 cm); decorative grooves on the inscription side, forming a sort of "i"; topped by a multi-tiered pedestal (at least 4th/5th C.).

[Ἐὰν ὁ Θεοπέμπτῃς
2 [ἀρ]χισυν(αγωγῶν) καὶ τοῦ υἱ-
οῦ αὐτῆς Εὐσεβίου.

L. 2: read καὶ.

[From Th]eopempte, head of
the synagogue, and her son Eusebios.

Charles Diehl, whom Théodore Reinach consulted as to the date of the inscription, was inclined towards a sixth-century dating, which Reinach accepted.⁴¹ The main reason for the late dating is the use of the siglum ϣ for ου, which in the rounded form of our inscription points to a late date. The rounded sigma and epsilon would further substantiate a later dating, but a century or two earlier than the sixth century would also be possible.

The inscription is carved into the top of a white marble quadrangular post. Reinach was not certain whether the inscription was a funerary or donative inscription. Noticing the groove on the left side of the post, he suggested that it might be for a tenon leading into a lattice-work, which would in turn lead to another post like this one, this being a donative inscription for the structure.⁴² Recently discovered parallels confirm that this is close to correct. Our post is most likely the support for a synagogue chancel screen, such as those found in Tell Rehov⁴³ and Khirbet Susiya⁴⁴ in Israel. Zeev Yeivin's inscription no. 19 from Khirbet Susiya is a chancel screen post with a donative inscription in exactly the same place as the Theopempte inscription, that is, at the top of the quadrangular portion of the post. The screens, which fitted in between two posts, were flat marble slabs decorated with geometric, floral, and/or Jewish motifs, some of them also containing an inscription.

This arrangement of post, screen, post, screen was placed as a divider at the front of a basilica separating what in Christian churches would be the altar from the nave. In this way, the apse could be set off from the rest of the prayer hall. What we should imagine, then, is a chancel screen post which would have been placed at the front of the synagogue prayer hall.

The inscription names the head of the synagogue, Theopempte, and her son, Eusebios, as donors of the post, and perhaps also of the screen which would have fitted into it.

Of Theopempte, one can at least say that she possessed sufficient funds to make this donation together with her son, whose age we do not know. Again, no husband is mentioned, but the presence of the son indicates that she was or had been married. Her son bears no title, which shows that if his father had a title, it did not automatically pass on to the son.

Since this is the only known Jewish inscription from Myndos,⁴⁵ we can say nothing about the organization of the Jewish community there.

The scholarly opinion as to what archisynagōgos could mean here is quite the same as for Rufina. Théodore Reinach, the brother of Salomon Reinach, who had published the Rufina inscription eighteen years earlier, adopted his brother's theory that the title archisynagōgos in this period had come to have a "purely honorific sense."⁴⁶ The Theopempte inscription, to the extent that it was known, was also meant in the evaluations listed above for the Rufina inscription. The interpretation of one scholar should, however, be especially noted. Erwin Goodenough translates the inscription in a peculiar way:

. . . of Theopemptes, archisynagogus,
and of his (sic) son Eusebius.⁴⁷

How Goodenough could translate "of Theopemptes," when the genitive form is already [Theopemptes], and especially how he could translate autēs as "his" is not easy to comprehend, but then this is not the first time in the history of scholarship that a woman has been transformed into a man.

Theopempte, then, was a donor to the synagogue which recognized her as a head of the synagogue. She was the mother of a son. Judging by the inscription, the funds for the donation were either hers, if the son was still a child, or hers and her son's, if he was an adult. The donation, the formulation of the inscription and the title betray not a hint of dependency. The figure which emerges is an independent, at least moderately well-to-do, leader of the synagogue in Myndos--a woman.

In order to ascertain the exact functions of these women synagogue heads, a survey of the literary and inscripational evidence for their male counterparts is necessary.

B. The Meaning of "Head of the Synagogue"

1. Literary References to the Title

In comparison with other titles of synagogue office, we have at our disposal considerable literary evidence for the title head of the synagogue. The sources, Jewish, Christian and pagan, include references to both Palestinian and Diaspora synagogues.⁴⁸

For the first century, some of the best evidence is found in the New Testament. Mark 5:22,35,36,38 and the parallel Luke 8:49 mention an archisynagōgos, Jairos by name, whose daughter is healed by Jesus. Interesting for our question is the parallel to Mark 5:22, Luke 8:41, where instead of archisynagōgos, Luke writes archōn tēs synagōgēs. That Luke considers the two to be synonymous is shown by his use of archisynagōgos in 8:49. In Matt 9:18,23 we read neither archōn tēs synagōgēs nor archisynagōgos but rather simply archōn. Does this mean that all three titles are synonymous?

Mention should be made here of a textual variant to Acts 14:2 found in the Western text (D, partially supported by syr^{hmg} and cop^{G67}). Instead of, "The unbelieving Jews stirred up and poisoned the minds of the Gentiles against the brothers" (i.e., Paul and Barnabas) the Western text has, "The heads of the synagogue of the Jews and the archons of the synagogue (syr^{hmg} omits "of the synagogue," which would give the general meaning of "rulers," possibly identifying them as the rulers of Iconium) stirred up for themselves persecution against the righteous."⁴⁹ Important here is the distinction between "heads of the synagogue" and "archons of the synagogue." One should keep in mind, however, that this is a later textual variant, which cannot be used as first-century evidence of this distinction.⁵⁰ Further, this textual addition was made by a Christian, who may have had very little knowledge of a Jewish distinction between heads of the synagogue and archons, which would leave us to explain the seeming identification of head of the synagogue, archon of the synagogue and archon found in a synoptic comparison of the Jairos story, as well as within Luke himself (Lk 8:41 vs. 8:49). One could assume that either the identification found in the Jairos story or the distinction made in the Acts textual variant reflects actual Jewish practice or one could assume that the authors in question were not particularly familiar with Jewish synagogue organization and used the titles loosely. This could well be the case with Luke and the author of the textual addition

to Acts 14:2. It is difficult, however, to assume that Matthew, who was writing for Jewish-Christians, would have been unfamiliar with the organizational structure of the synagogue.⁵¹ Perhaps the problem can only be solved by assuming that titular practice varied as to geography and time. At any rate, since two Italian inscriptions (CII 265 from Rome: Stafulus, archōn and archi-synagōgos; CII 553 from Capua: Alfius Juda, archōn, archisynagōgos)⁵² give further attestation of a distinction between the two offices, it is probably safe to assume they were usually distinct.

A second question raised by the Jairos passage is whether there was more than one synagogue head in each synagogue (Mark 5:22: "one of the heads of the synagogue, Jairos by name"), but the meaning could simply be that Jairos was one of the class of heads of the synagogue rather than that several synagogue heads served in one synagogue.

Luke 13:10-17 is more instructive as to one of the functions of head of the synagogue. When Jesus healed a woman at the synagogue on the sabbath, the head of the synagogue, "indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, 'There are six days in which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day'" (Luke 13:14). From this passage it would seem that the head of the synagogue was responsible for keeping the congregation faithful to the Torah.

The Acts of the Apostles attests to the office of head of the synagogue in first-century Diaspora Judaism. When Paul and Barnabas come to Antioch of Pisidia and attend the synagogue service on the sabbath, the heads of the synagogue invite them to give a word of exhortation to the people immediately following the reading of the law and the prophets (Acts 13:15). The plural "heads of the synagogue" is not insignificant here, for the only reasonable interpretation is that this synagogue possessed not just one head of the synagogue, but several. Further, their inviting Paul and Barnabas to give the sermon indicates a leadership role in the planning and organizing of the service, as well as the role of representative of the congregation vis-à-vis the visitors from abroad.

In Acts 18:1-17, which describes Paul's missionary activity in Corinth, we also find more than one head of the synagogue (Acts 18:8: Crispus, who had become a believer in Jesus; Acts 18:17: Sosthenes, who had not)⁵³ in a single community, although from the passage it is not clear that they served in the same

synagogue. It seems probable that Sosthenes, who in Acts 18:17 is said to have been beaten by the crowd before the judgment seat of Gallio, is the leader of the group of Jews who had attacked Paul and dragged him before the proconsul Gallio with the complaint that Paul was "persuading people to worship God contrary to the law" (Acts 18:13). If Sosthenes was indeed the leader of this delegation, this would point to a function of leadership similar to the one we saw in Luke 13:10-17, where the head of the synagogue warned against transgressing the Torah by breaking the sabbath. Sosthenes' involvement indicates a sense of responsibility for keeping his people faithful to the law, as interpreted by him, as well as a representative role over against the Roman proconsul.

As for rabbinic sources on the first century, one must consider a Mishnaic passage, Yoma 7:1 (parallels: m. Soṭa 7:7,8). The context is the reading from the Torah on Yom Kippur (in m. Soṭa the septennial Sukkot reading of the Torah):

חזן הכנסת נוטל ספר תורה ונוחננו לראש הכנסת,
 וראש הכנסת נוחננו לסגן, והסגן נוחננו לכהן גדול.
 וכהן גדול עומד ומקבל וקורא עומד.

The sexton of the synagogue takes the Torah scroll and gives it to the head of the synagogue (or: of the assembly), and the head of the synagogue gives it to the adjutant high priest, and the adjutant high priest gives it to the high priest. The high priest stands and receives and reads it standing.⁵⁴

Due to the etymological similarity between r'ōš hakkēneset and archisynagōgos, the identification between the two is likely. Since it is unclear what would be the purpose of a synagogue on the temple mount, and since Josephus⁵⁵ and the Mishnaic tractate Middot do not mention such a synagogue in their descriptions of the temple, Frowald Hüttenmeister⁵⁶ and others go against the older interpretation by doubting that such a synagogue existed. Sydney Hoenig translates r'ōš hakkēneset as "head of the assembly" and hazzān as "overseer of the assembly." He believes that they were "Pharisaic leaders of the Anshé Maamad who were stationed in the Temple as the lay participants alongside the Sadducean officiants."⁵⁷ If such were to be the case, this would be a rather different meaning of head of the synagogue than is attested elsewhere, i.e., the synagogue head as leader of an individual synagogue. An alternative proposal which would not presuppose the existence of a synagogue on the temple

mount, would be that the hazzan and the r'ōš hakkēneset mentioned here were synagogue functionaries in one of the many synagogues of Jerusalem and were selected for the special honor of passing the Torah scroll to the high priest in the Yom Kippur (and Sukkot) services. The number of persons in the chain of passing certainly seems more than absolutely necessary and must therefore have something to do with honor. According to this interpretation, the hazzan and the r'ōš hakkēneset would be the two representatives of synagogue officials (or of the laity, as Hoenig suggests) in the festival service.

The only r'ōš bēt hakkēneset known to us by name from rabbinic literature is Shagbion (ŠGBIWN, variant Shavion, ŠBTWN), who was r'ōš bēt hakkēneset (note the alternative form of the title)⁵⁸ in Akhziv in the time of Rabbān Gamliel (II), i.e., in the second half of the first century.⁵⁹

The later rabbinic evidence is no less scattered than the material discussed thus far. One is once again reminded of how much the rabbinic authorities differed from their Christian neighbors, the latter producing numerous and complex church orders, while the former displayed little interest in defining the duties of the respective synagogue officers. After the Mishnaic passages discussed above, the earliest rabbinic evidence is found in t. Meg. 4.21 (Zuck. 227): "The head of the synagogue should not read (from the scripture) until others have told him that there is no one."⁶⁰ Could this imply that the head of the synagogue was responsible for asking others to read, but did not read himself (or herself)?⁶¹ This would fit in well with Acts 13:15, where the heads of the synagogue ask Paul and Barnabas to preach (rather than preaching themselves).

In b. Pesah 49b (top) a list has been put together for the young man seeking a wife. It forms a sort of catalogue of highly respected positions in Judaism:

חנו רבנן: לעולם ימכור אדם כל מה שיש לו
 וישא בה תלמיד חכם. לא מצא בה תלמיד חכם
 ישא בה גדולי הדור. לא מצא בה גדולי הדור
 ישא בה ראשי כנסיות, לא מצא בה ראשי כנסיות
 ישא בה גבאי צדקה. לא מצא בה גבאי צדקה
 ישא בה מלמדי תינוקות. ולא ישא בה עמי הארץ,
 מפני שהן שקץ, ונשותיהן שרץ, ועל בנוחיהן
 הוא אומע "ארור שכב עם כל בהמה".

Our rabbis taught: Let a man always sell all he has and marry the daughter of a scholar. If he does not find the daughter of a scholar, let him marry the daughter of [one of] the great men of the generation. If he does not find the daughter of [one of] the great men of the generation, let him marry the daughter of a head of synagogues. If he does not

find the daughter of a head of synagogues, let him marry the daughter of a charity treasurer. If he does not find the daughter of a charity treasurer, let him marry the daughter of an elementary school teacher, but let him not marry the daughter of an 'am ha-aretz because they are detestable and their wives are vermin, and of their daughters it is said, "Cursed be he that lieth with any manner of beast" (Deut 27:21).⁶²

This passage shows which positions the rabbis considered to be the highest; head of the synagogue is listed third, after scholar and great men of the generation (probably a title of civic leadership) and before charity treasurer and children's teacher. This view is from a particular perspective, and it is therefore easy to understand why scholar would rank highest. One must be cautious about using this list as an objective presentation of how all Jews would have ranked professions and offices. Given this particular perspective, slot number three in the list may well imply that the head of the synagogue was normally a person of some learning. The whole thrust of the advice given here is not to marry the daughter of an 'am ha-aretz, i.e., the contrast is between ignorance of the law and knowledge of it. This confirms the image of the head of the synagogue which has been emerging from the literary passages referred to thus far.

A further sign of the honor in which the rabbis held the head of the synagogue is the directive in a baraita to drink a glass of wine in honor of the head of the synagogue at a funeral ceremony (y. Ber. 6a.28-29).⁶³

Several fourth-century laws preserved in the Theodosian Code further attest that the head of the synagogue was one of the main synagogue officials. Cod. Theod. 16.8.4 reads:

Idem A. hierois et archisynagogis et patribus synagogarum et ceteris, qui in eodem loco deserviunt. Hierois et archisynagogos et patres synagogarum et ceteros, qui synagogis deserviunt, ab omni corporali munere liberos esse praecipimus. Dat. kal. dec. Constant(ino)p(oli) Basso et Ablavio cons.⁶⁴

The same Augustus to the priests, heads of the synagogues, fathers of the synagogues, and all others who serve in the said place.

We command that priests, heads of the synagogues, fathers of the synagogues, and all others who serve the synagogues shall be free from every compulsory public service of a corporal nature.

Given on the kalends of December at Constantinople in the year of the consulship of Bassus and Ablavius (December 1, 331; 330).⁶⁵

The legal assumption is that since these officials are already fulfilling a munus, they should be liberated from the public munera corporalia.⁶⁶ Cod. Theod. 16.8.13 from the year 397 reaffirms certain privileges for synagogue heads and other Jewish officials, among which are the exemption from the forced public service of decurions and the right to live according to their own laws.

Idem AA. Caesario p(raefecto) p(raetori)o. Iudaei sint obstricti caerimoniis suis: nos interea in conservandis eorum privilegiis veteres imitemur, quorum sanctionibus definitum est, ut privilegia his, qui inlustrius patriarcharum dicioni subiecti sunt, archisynagogis patriarchisque ac presbyteris ceterisque, qui in eius religionis sacramento versantur, nutu nostri numinis perseverent ea, quae venerandae Christianae legis primis clericis sanctimonia deferuntur. Id enim et divi principes Constantinus et Constantius, Valentinianus et Valens divino arbitrio decreverunt. Sint igitur etiam a curialibus muneribus alieni pareantque legibus suis. Dat. kal. ivl. Caesario et Attico cons.⁶⁷

The same Augustuses to Caesarius, Praetorian Prefect. Jews shall be bound by their own ritual. Meanwhile, in preserving their privileges, We shall imitate the ancients by whose sanctions it has been determined that privileges shall be preserved for those who are subject to the rule of the Illustrious Patriarchs, for the heads of the synagogues, the patriarchs, and the elders, and all the rest who are occupied in the ceremonial of that religion, namely those privileges according to the consent of Our Imperial Divinity, which by virtue of their holy office are conferred on the chief clergy of the venerable Christian religion. The foregoing, indeed, was decreed by the divine imperial authority of the sainted Emperors Constantine and Constantius, Valentinian and Valens. Such Jews shall therefore be exempt from the compulsory public services of decurions and shall obey their own laws.

Given on the kalends of July in the year of the consulship of Caesarius and Atticus (July 1, 397).⁶⁸

While these two laws do not give us actual details of any of the concrete functions of synagogue heads, Cod. Theod. 16.8.14 from the year 399, under the emperor Honorius, does:

Idem AA. Messalae p(raefecto) p(raetori)o. Superstitionis indignae est, ut archisynagogi sive presbyteri Iudaeorum vel quos ipsi apostolos vocant, qui ad exigendum aurum adque argentum a patriarcha certo tempore diriguntur, a singulis synagogis exacta summam adque susceptam ad eundem reportent. Qua de re omne, quidquid considerata temporis ratione confidimus esse collectum, fideliter ad nostrum dirigatur aerarium: de cetero autem nihil praedicto decernimus esse mittendum. Noverint igitur populi Iudaeorum removisse nos depraedationis huiusmodi functionem. Quod si qui ab illo depopulatore Iudaeorum ad hoc officium exactionis fuerint directi, iudicibus offerantur, ita ut tamquam in legum nostrarum violatores sententia proferatur. Dat. iii id. april. Med(iolano) Theodoro v. d. cons.⁶⁹

The same Augustuses to Messala, Praetorian Prefect. It is characteristic of an unworthy superstition that the heads of the synagogues or the elders of the Jews or those whom they themselves call apostles, who are dispatched by the patriarch at a certain time to collect gold and silver, should bring back to the patriarch the sum which has been exacted and collected from each of the synagogues. Wherefore, everything that We are confident has been collected, taking into consideration the period of time, shall be faithfully dispatched to Our treasury. For the future, moreover, We decree that nothing shall be sent to the aforesaid patriarch. The people of the Jews shall know, therefore, that We have abolished the practice of such depredation. But if any persons should be sent on such a mission of collection by that despoiler of the Jews, they shall be brought before the judges, in order that a sentence may be pronounced against them as violators of Our laws.

Given on the third day before the ides of April at Milan in the year of the consulship of the Most Noble Theodorus (April 11, 399).⁷⁰

The practice presupposed here is a continuation of the ancient practice of each male Jew annually contributing a half-shekel to support the temple in Jerusalem. After the destruction of the temple, a similar practice grew in its stead, with the money going to support the patriarch in Palestine. From this description, one could assume that the synagogue heads and presbyters collect money in their individual synagogues and then turn it over to the apostles who have been sent by the patriarch to collect the money and to bring it back to him. One could also interpret the passage to mean that some of the money was brought directly by synagogue heads and elders, while some of it was brought by the apostles sent out for this purpose.⁷¹

The value of these three laws is that they give an outsider's view, i.e., that of the lawgiver, of the internal leadership structure of the synagogue. In the eye of the lawgiver, the head of the synagogue was one of the main, if not the main, synagogue functionaries.

Several patristic sources make reference to synagogue heads. In Dialogue with Trypho 137, Justin Martyr (died ca. 165) delivers the following exhortation to Jews:

Συμφάμενοι οὖν μὴ λοιδορῆτε ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, μηδὲ
 Φαρισαίοις πειθόμενοι διδασκάλοις τὸν βασιλέα τοῦ Ἰσρα-
 ἡλ ἐπισκώφητέ ποτε, ὅποῦα διδάσκουσιν οἱ ἀρχισυναγωγοὶ
 ὑμῶν, μετὰ τὴν προσευχὴν.⁷²

Do not agree to abuse the Son of God, nor follow the Pharisees as teachers in jesting at the King of Israel, as your synagogue heads teach you, according to the prayer.

While the polemical nature of this passage must serve as a warning not to accept it at face value, the image of head of the synagogue as spiritual and intellectual leader in no way contradicts what we have seen up to this point; it rather confirms it.

Epiphanius of Salamis (ca. 315-403), in his discussion of the Jewish-Christian Ebionites, writes:

Αναγκάζουσι δὲ, καὶ παρ' ἡλικίαν ἐγκαμίζουσι τοὺς νέους, ἐξ ἐπιτροπῆς δῆθεν τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς διδασκάλων. Πρεσβυτέρους γὰρ οὗτοι ἔχουσι καὶ ἀρχισυναγωγούς. Συναγωγὴν δὲ οὗτοι καλοῦσι τὴν εἰαυτῶν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ οὐχὶ ἐκκλησίαν, τῷ Χριστῷ δὲ ὀνόματι μόνον σεμνύονται.

Their young men, having attained the marriageable age, are given to marriage under coercion, on account of a decision of their teachers, for they have elders and synagogue heads, and they call their church a synagogue and not a church and honor Christ in name only.⁷³

It seems that the Jewish-Christians described here maintained the traditional synagogue organizational structure. While we do not know to what extent Epiphanius actually had direct contact with Jewish-Christians, there seems no reason to doubt that Jewish-Christians would have maintained Jewish organizational structures. If this bit of information is not a reflection of the fourth century, then it may have come down to Epiphanius from his sources and reflect an earlier period. What is interesting here is that synagogue heads and elders are classified as teachers.

Palladius, in his Dialogue on the Life of John Chrysostom, probably written around 408 in Syene in Egypt, states that the ("corrupt and falsely named") patriarch of the Jews changes yearly, as do the synagogue heads, in order to gain wealth, for the buying and selling of the priesthood is a Jewish (and Egyptian) custom.⁷⁴ The context of this statement is a discussion of six bishops who were accused of having attained their office by the payment of money, whereby the Christian rejection of the practice is contrasted with the Jewish tolerance of it. Given this polemical purpose, one should be more sceptical of taking this remark at face value than is Jean Juster, who notes, "This text proves that the archisynagogue was nominated for a term."⁷⁵ Palladius himself does not state that he is personally familiar with this Jewish practice, but rather employs the vague introductory formula "it is said" (*phasi*).

Several further Christian sources do not seem reliable enough to warrant a detailed discussion. The Acts of Pilate,⁷⁶ which mentions heads of the synagogue throughout, seems to have drawn upon a sort of catalogue of known Jewish titles (synagogue

heads, Levites, elders, priests, high priests) and combined them at random to create scenes in which Jewish leaders debated and deliberated in council meetings. Further, the passages in Ambrose⁷⁷ and Jerome⁷⁸ cited by Juster to support his theory that synagogue heads had to have a knowledge of medicine, do not seem particularly convincing to me.

Pagan authors were also familiar with the title. In Flavius Vopiscus' Life of Saturninus 8, Scriptores Historiae Augustae 3.398-399 is preserved a letter from the emperor Hadrian (117-138) to his brother-in-law Servianus. Among the various negative comments about Egypt we read:

Illic qui Serapem colunt Christiani sunt, et devoti sunt Serapi qui se Christi episcopos dicunt. Nemo illic archisynagogus Iudaeorum, nemo Samarites, nemo Christianorum presbyter non mathematicus, non haruspex, non aliptes.

Those who worship Serapis are in fact Christians, and those who call themselves bishops of Christ are, in fact, devotees of Serapis. There is no head of the Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no Christian elder, who is not an astrologer, a soothsayer, or an anointer.⁷⁹

Of interest here is the parallelization between Christian bishop, Christian elder and Jewish synagogue head.⁸⁰ This is a further attestation that the title was well known.

The emperor Alexander Severus (222-235) was called the "Syrian archisynagogus"⁸¹ by his opponents, most likely because he was friendly to the Jewish people. This simply serves to underscore that "head of the synagogue" was the official Jewish title most widely known in the ancient world.

2. Inscriptional References to the Title

Well over thirty Greek and Latin inscriptions making mention of synagogue heads are known to modern scholarship.⁸² Of these, three make reference to women synagogue heads. The geographical spread is large: Italy,⁸³ Greece,⁸⁴ Macedonia,⁸⁵ Moesia,⁸⁶ Asia Minor,⁸⁷ Cyprus,⁸⁸ Syria,⁸⁹ Palestine,⁹⁰ and Africa.⁹¹ The chronological span is also considerable, ranging from before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E.⁹² until well into the Byzantine period.

What can we learn from these inscriptions about the function of the synagogue head? Taking note of the fact that a number of synagogue heads are mentioned as donating portions of the synagogue or of restoring the synagogue,⁹³ it is tempting to conclude that the head of the synagogue was in charge of maintaining the

physical plant of the synagogue. Unfortunately, this argument falls in the face of the fact that bearers of other titles, as well as bearers of no titles, are also listed as donors in numerous inscriptions. Furthermore, the very nature of epigraphical material is such that we must expect building activity to be mentioned fairly frequently. One memorialized donations in inscriptions. Bookkeeping, organizing the religious service, administering the guest house and ritual bath, exhorting the congregation to follow the commandments or any of the other functions which must have been performed by synagogue officials did not merit public inscriptions. Mention of these is more likely to occur in literature, if at all.

If the inscriptions cannot help us to define accurately the functions of the head of the synagogue, they can nevertheless provide us with useful information. For example, on the basis of inscriptional evidence, one must conclude that the head of the synagogue was distinct from the archon. In CII 265⁹⁴ and 553,⁹⁵ one person holds both titles, indicating that they cannot be synonymous. Further, CII 766⁹⁶ lists a head of the synagogue-for-life, a head of the synagogue and an archon, as if these were different offices.

Of special interest is the Theodotos inscription (CII 1404; Lifshitz, *Donateurs*, no. 79)⁹⁷ which was found on Mount Ophel in Jerusalem and dates from before the destruction of the temple:

Θ[ε]όδοτος Ούετιτήνου, ἱερεὺς καὶ
 2 ἀ[ρ]χισυνάγωγος, υἱὸς ἀρχισυν[αγώ]-
 γ[ο]υ, υἱωνὸς ἀρχισυν[α]γώγου, ἦκο-
 4 δόμησε τὴν συναγωγὴν εἰς ἀν[άγν]ω-
 σ[ι]ν νόμου καὶ εἰς διδασχ[η]ν ἐντολῶν, καὶ
 6 τ[ὸ]ν ξενῶνα, κα[ὶ] τὰ δώματα καὶ τὰ χρη-
 σ[τ]ήρια τῶν ὑδάτων εἰς κατάλυμα τοῦ-
 8 ς [χ]ρήζουσιν ἀπὸ τῆς ξέ[ν]ης, ἧν ἐθεμε-
 λ[ί]ωσαν οἱ πατέρες [αὐ]τοῦ καὶ οἱ πρε-
 10 σ[β]ύτεροι καὶ Σιμωνίδης.

Theodotos, son of Vettenos, priest and head of the synagogue, son of a head of the synagogue, grandson of a head of the synagogue, built the synagogue for the reading of the law and the teaching of the commandments, and the hostel and the side rooms and the water facilities, as lodging for those from abroad who need (it). His fathers and the elders and Simonides founded it (i.e., the synagogue).

From this we get a vivid picture of the types of activities occurring in a synagogue complex. In addition to the reading of scripture and the study of the commandments, we read of a guest house for visitors from abroad, which was probably especially necessary in Jerusalem, as well as water facilities, most likely

for ritual purposes. Each of these items required administration, and while the active participation of the congregation must be presupposed, it is nevertheless reasonable to assume that synagogue officers had a special responsibility in the administration of all these aspects of synagogue life. The officers mentioned in this inscription are synagogue heads and elders. This does not mean that this congregation had no other officers, but it does imply a sort of council which formed the founding body.⁹⁸

It is tempting to conclude from the fact that Theodotos' father and grandfather were also synagogue heads that the office was hereditary. CII 587,⁹⁹ which speaks of the child synagogue head Kallistos, who died at the age of three years and three months, would serve to strengthen this hypothesis, as would CII 584,¹⁰⁰ which speaks of Joseph, head of the synagogue, son of Joseph, head of the synagogue. It may be that the office was hereditary in the cases mentioned, but if we assume that it was hereditary everywhere, then there is no way of explaining the phrase "head-for-life of the synagogue" (ho dia biou archi-synagōgos), which occurs in CII 744¹⁰¹ and 766,¹⁰² for that implies that not every head of the synagogue was one for life.¹⁰³ Also of importance is Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 85¹⁰⁴ which, according to Lifshitz's reconstruction, mentions a person who had been head of the synagogue five times, which obviously implies temporary terms of office. If most synagogue heads served for a term only, then they must have been elected or appointed, for a title bestowed by inheritance would surely be for life. A further factor which makes it unlikely that the title archisynagōgos was generally an inherited one is that the title which the son bore was not always that of his father. In CII 504, for example, the son is a gerusiarch, while the father is an archisynagōgos.¹⁰⁵ Here the office of archisynagōgos could not have been hereditary. At most one could imagine that we are dealing with the custom of honoring the son of an office-bearer by appointing or electing him to an office, be it that of his father or another.¹⁰⁶

Part of the general difficulty in evaluating these hints that the office may have been hereditary, as well as the literary evidence for the patriarch's having appointed the synagogue heads annually, which was discussed above, is the temptation to take one piece of evidence as applying to all places and for the entire period in question. Rather than taking the Theodotos inscription (CII 1404) and the two inscriptions from Venosa

(CII 584 and 587) as proof that the office of synagogue head was hereditary, it seems more reasonable to assume that these indicate the special honor in which the son of a synagogue head was held, this honor being expressed in his being (automatically?) appointed or elected to an office, sometimes the same as his father and sometimes not. This reverence could even extend to infants (e.g., CII 587); the boy received the title of the office he would fill when he came of age.

CII 681,¹⁰⁷ 766¹⁰⁸ and 804¹⁰⁹ provide us with a further warning not to assume that the only way to attain the title of synagogue head was by inheritance. In each of these inscriptions the son is a head of the synagogue, and the father bears no title. Thus we see that, although the modern scholar would like very much to have a clear answer as to how a synagogue head was selected, there is no one solution which fits all the literary and epigraphical evidence. It is best to assume that there was no unified practice in this regard. Probably some were appointed by a council or an individual, some were elected, and some inherited the office. Some persons seem to have been synagogue heads for life and others for a period of time.

One inscription deserves special mention because of the constellation of office holders it presents to us. CII 803 (Lifshitz, Donateurs 38)¹¹⁰ is dated to the year 391 and was found, along with many other mosaic inscriptions, in the floor of a synagogue ruin in Apamea in Syria. It reads:

Ἐπὶ τῶν τιμιωτάτων ἀρχισυνα[γῶ]-
 2 γων Εὐσεβίου καὶ Νεμέου καὶ Φινέου
 καὶ Θεοδώρου γερουσιάρχου καὶ τῶν
 4 τιμιωτάτων πρεσβυτέρων Εἰσακίου
 καὶ Σαούλου καὶ λοιπῶν, Ἰλάσιος, ἀρχισυνά-
 6 γωγος Ἀντιοχέων, ἐποίησεν τὴν ἴσσοδον τοῦ
 ψηφίου πό(δας) ρν', ἔτους γψ' Εὐδνέου ζ'. Εὐλογία πᾶσι.

L. 4: read τιμιωτάτων.

L. 6: read εἴσσοδον.

At the time of the most illustrious heads of the synagogue Eusebios, Nemios and Phineos, and under the gerusiarch Theodoros, and the most illustrious elders Eisakios and Saulos and the others, Ilasios, head of the synagogue of the Antiochenes, made the entrance of the mosaic, 150 feet, in the year 703, in the seventh month of Audyneos. Blessing on all.

Three offices are mentioned: head of the synagogue, gerusiarch and elder. If the order of offices implies order of importance, then head of the synagogue was the highest office in this synagogue. The fact that Eusebios, Nemios and Phineos were all

-serving as heads of the synagogue in the year 391 is an important piece of evidence for the debate as to whether more than one archisynagōgos could serve simultaneously.¹¹¹ Probably Theodoros the gerusiarch presided over the council of the elders,¹¹² who seem to be too numerous to mention.

How Ilasios fits into this picture is unclear. His title, archisynagōgos of the Antiochenes, surely cannot imply that he was the sole synagogue head in Antioch, as Jean-Baptiste Frey imagines.¹¹³ In such a large city as Antioch, which had a considerable Jewish population, there must certainly have been many synagogue heads.¹¹⁴ Perhaps Ilasios served as synagogue head for a group of people from Antioch who had moved to Apamea and become part of the community there.

3. Reconstruction of the Office of Head of the Synagogue

The reader with a sensitivity for chronology, geography, genre and religious tradition will doubtlessly be overwhelmed by the variety of material cited, and cited side by side, as if Moesia were Jerusalem and the first century were the fifth. This colorful mixture of quotations of the friends and enemies of the ancient synagogue heads should at the very least remind us of how little we know of the office they held. The dream of every historian of religion is to trace a development, to differentiate, to set the late fourth-century Apamean synagogue head in sharp relief against the first-century Roman one. It is not for lack of desire that this will not be done. It is for lack of evidence.

If there is not enough evidence to trace a development, there is also not so little evidence as to evoke general despair of knowing anything. The evidence clearly permits us to say, for example, that "head of the synagogue" was one of the best, if not the best, known titles of synagogue office. One could call Alexander Severus the "Syrian archisynagogus" and the meaning was clear. I would propose the following reconstruction of what seems to have been the leading office in the ancient synagogue.

Was there more than one synagogue head in each synagogue?

The evidence (Mark 5:22; Acts 13:15; CII 766, 803; possibly Acts 18:8,17) suggests that more than one synagogue head could serve in a synagogue at a time. No ancient source limits the number to one.¹¹⁵

How was a head of the synagogue selected?

There seems to have been more than one method of selection. The two inscriptions mentioning synagogue heads who were sons of synagogue heads (CII 584, 1404) and the one mentioning an infant head of the synagogue (CII 587) suggest that the office was hereditary. The two inscriptions mentioning a head-for-life of the synagogue (CII 766, 744), as well as the one which possibly speaks of a person having been head of the synagogue five times (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 85), suggest that not all held the office for life and that some were selected in a way other than by inheritance. Although election is not mentioned in connection with synagogue heads, it should not be excluded as a possibility. If there is a kernel of truth to the note in Palladius (Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom 15) about the patriarch's appointing synagogue heads, then this could be seen in connection with Cod. Theod. 16.8.15 with its mention of "persons whom the patriarchs have placed in authority over others." This would mean that among those officials whom the patriarch appointed were included some heads of the synagogue.

What were the functions of the head of the synagogue?

If the synagogue was for "the reading of the law and the teaching of the commandments" (CII 1404), then it is logical to assume that the synagogue head was responsible in a special way for seeing that this was done. Our sources confirm this. Given the thrust of the baraita in b. Pesah 49b, it seems that the head of the synagogue was a person learned in the law. It follows that a major function of the head of the synagogue was the exhortation and spiritual direction of the congregation (Lk 13:10-17; possibly Acts 18:12-17), which included teaching (Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho 137; Epiphanius, Panarion 30.18.2). It was the synagogue heads who invited members of the congregation to preach (Acts 13:15); apparently they did not themselves read from scripture unless no one else was able (t. Meg. 4.21). M. Yoma 7:1 and m. Soṭa 7:7-8 report on a special liturgical function accorded to one synagogue (or assembly?) head during a holiday service. The synagogue heads, together with the elders, collected money from their congregations to be sent to the patriarch (Cod. Theod. 16.8.14,17). While responsibility for erecting new synagogues and restoring old ones was not limited to the head of the synagogue, synagogue

heads were among those who felt especially responsible for the building and restoration of synagogues, drawing upon their own funds when necessary (CII 722, 744, 756, 766, 803, 804, 1404, etc.¹¹⁶). It is possible that synagogue heads were often members of leading families who were financially able to perform this service.

Using the analogy of Diaspora Jewish leaders today, the ancient Diaspora head of the synagogue was probably both a leader for the congregation and representative of the congregation vis-à-vis non-Jewish neighbors and Roman authorities. (Possibly Acts 18:12-17 is to be seen in this light.) As in the Jewish Diaspora today, the civic and religious functions were probably seldom sharply distinguished.

What was the relationship between the head of the synagogue and other synagogue officials?

The head of the synagogue seems to have been the leading functionary in the ancient synagogue. In inscriptions, wherever synagogue heads are mentioned, they are mentioned first in the list (CII 766, 803). In the Theodosian Code the order varies (cf. Cod. Theod. 16.8.4,13,14). In m. Yoma 7:1 and m. Soṭa 7:7-8 the head of the synagogue occurs before the sexton and after the high priest and the adjutant high priest; in other words, here too, the head of the synagogue is the first of the synagogue officials named, (if the reference is to a synagogue official). In the baraita in b. Pesah. 49b the head of the synagogue does not occur first in the list, but rather after scholar and great ones of the generation and before charity treasurer and teacher of children, but then this is not a list of synagogue officials.

That the head of the synagogue was the main synagogue functionary is further supported by the fact that the title is the one chosen by Alexander Severus's enemies to mock his friendship with the Jews and is the one used in Hadrian's letter to Servianus to single out the typical Jewish official for mockery.

Was the head of the synagogue identical with the archon?

It seems that in most cases archisynagōgos must be distinguished from archōn (CII 265, 553, 766; the Western text of Acts 14:2). The identification between the two implicit in the synoptic comparison of the Jairos story (Matt 9:18,23; Mark 5:22,35,36,38; Luke 8:41,49) could be a loose use of terminology,

a reflection of a time or place in which the two terms were interchangeable, or a mistake.

4. The Role of Women Synagogue Heads

Given the evidence for women heads of the synagogue, and using the proposed reconstruction of the office of synagogue head as a base, what can one say about the role these women might have had? Or did they even have a role? Perhaps the title was purely honorific after all?

The two arguments adduced in favor of the title's being honorific are:

1. The women received the title from their husbands (M. Weinberg, S. Krauss, S. W. Baron, J.-B. Frey, A. C. Bandy);
2. In the later period the title was honorific for both women and men (S. Reinach, Th. Reinach);
3. In the case of women, the title must be honorific (E. Schürer,¹¹⁷ J. Juster).

Erwin Goodenough's translation, which makes Theopempte a man, will not be discussed here.

Concerning the wife thesis, one searches in vain for the husbands in question. In the three inscriptions with women synagogue heads, no husbands are mentioned. Further, Rufina and Theopempte give the impression of a certain autonomy (control of one's own funds, household and business affairs); if they were married, the marriage seems to have allowed for a certain independence on the part of the women. The fact that Theopempte's son Eusebios does not bear a title shows that, if his father had one, he did not inherit it. This, of course, does not preclude the possibility that Theopempte could have received the title from her husband, but it does call into question the connection between women's titles and children's titles made by modern scholars, the implication being that the former are the wives of, the latter the sons of, synagogue officials. Finally, in the three inscriptions where wives of synagogue heads are named (CII 265, 553, 744), they do not in fact bear the title of their husbands. In other words, there is no case where both husband and wife are called synagogue heads. Where women are called synagogue heads, we have no evidence that they were even married at the time of the inscription.

No less questionable is the thesis of the brothers Reinach that in the later period the title was honorific for both women and men. From the survey of the evidence for synagogue heads it

is evident that no ancient sources allude to this possibility. Indeed, as discussed above, we cannot assume that such honorific titles even existed in the ancient synagogue. Further, it is rather unclear what is meant by "late." Since Salomon Reinach dates the Rufina inscription to not before the third century, one wonders how he would deal, for example, with the fourth-century references in the Theodosian Code to heads of the synagogue (16.8.4 [331]; 16.8.13 [397]; 16.8.14 [399]) or with CII 803 from Apamea in Syria dated to 391 and mentioning synagogue heads. These can certainly not be said to be honorific titles, and yet they probably post-date the Rufina inscription. One has the suspicion that the theory of the later development into an honorific title was created expressly for the purpose of interpreting the Rufina inscription and then came in quite handy for the Theopempte inscription when it was discovered some years later. In any case, there is no support for this theory in the literary and inscriptional evidence surveyed.

As for the argument that the titles must be honorific by virtue of the femininity of the holders, it is difficult to discuss this in a few sentences. In a sense it is much more honest than the two theories just presented, for the author states his basic assumption clearly and without embellishment. It forces the discussion to where it should be, namely at the question of whether it is inconceivable that a woman was a leader in the ancient synagogue. We are in possession of three ancient inscriptions in which women bear the title head of the synagogue. It is our task to interpret these in the context of other ancient references to women officers of the synagogue. If the presupposition is that a woman was not capable of fulfilling the office of synagogue head or that the ancient synagogue considered all women, *qua* women, incapable or unfit, then one must produce a plausible explanation for the existence of these three inscriptions. They themselves call into question certain presuppositions about the history of Jewish women.

It is true that there are certain indications that women's lives were restricted in a number of ways in ancient Judaism, but a word of caution is in order here. Modern scholarship does not possess the Jewish literature which would be the proper companion to our inscriptions, namely Graeco-Jewish literature from the early Byzantine period from Asia Minor or Crete or even any Graeco-Jewish literature from this period or even any Jewish literature from Asia Minor or Crete.

Rather than trying to fit these inscriptions into our pre-conceived notions of what women were (and are) and of what Judaism was, would it not be more reasonable to take these inscriptions as a challenge to our pre-conceptions, as traces of a Judaism of which we know very little? It is, of course, not sufficient simply to make counter-assertions to the statement that archisynagogos was a purely honorific title when borne by women. It is necessary to produce a counter-reconstruction which is more convincing than the view that these women did nothing.

I propose the following reconstruction. Women synagogue heads, like their male counterparts, were active in administration and exhortation. They may have worked especially with women, although we should not assume that they worked only with women. Perhaps they looked after the financial affairs of the synagogue, administering it as Rufina administered her large household; perhaps they exhorted their congregations, reminding them to keep the sabbath as had the synagogue head in Luke 13:14 before them. We must assume that they had a knowledge of the Torah in order to be able to teach and exhort others in it.

Rufina, Sophia and Theopempte could have worked in a team of two or three synagogue heads, for we have seen that the number was not necessarily restricted to one. Or perhaps they served alone. A community like Myndos could well have selected Theopempte, a woman who had donated to the synagogue, possibly a widow at this time, as its sole archisynagogos. And perhaps the Jewish congregation in Smyrna considered itself fortunate to have such an able administrator as Rufina as its sole synagogue head. Whether they served alone or with others we cannot say; either is possible.

How did these women come to this high office? Rufina, for example, was wealthy. Perhaps she came from a leading and learned Jewish family, and the congregation honored her with this office much as they would have honored her brother. Or possibly she was the daughter of a leading Roman family, as the name suggests, and the congregation wished to honor a high-born newcomer to Judaism with a responsibility worthy of her descent. Theopempte also had certain funds at her disposal. Had she shown such an active interest in seeing the new synagogue built that the congregation rewarded her with this office? Sophia of Gortyn, both elder and head of the synagogue, must have been very actively involved in the affairs of the synagogue. Was it her long years of work that convinced even the most skeptical that a woman was capable of filling that office? Family ties, long

years of active involvement, largesse--these have often played a role in attaining various offices and seem as likely in the case of women as of men. Whether they were appointed or elected we do not know.

The final key to the interpretation of these three inscriptions, as well as of those which follow, lies in accepting this reconstruction as historically plausible, or in refuting it as historically impossible.

CHAPTER II

WOMAN AS LEADER

A. The Inscriptional Evidence for a Woman as Leader

One of the more recent additions to our knowledge of women leaders in ancient Judaism is the Peristeria inscription, first published in 1937, from the area of Thebes in Phthiotis in Thessaly.

Thebes in Phthiotis (Thessaly)

CII 696b.¹ A kioniskos (also called columella: a small column, flat on top and without a capital, used as a gravestone²) with the symbol of the seven-branched menorah.

Μνημα
2 Περιστερίας
ἀρχη-
4 γίσσης.

Ll. 3-4: read ἀρχηγίσσης (genitive of ἀρχηγίσσα).

Tomb of Peristeria, leader.

G. Sotirou, who discovered the inscription, took peristeria to be a common noun (cf. peristera, "pigeon," "dove"), and Archēgisis to be the name of the deceased.³ Louis Robert⁴ suggested the interpretation given above, on the basis that a common noun peristeria is inexplicable here. Robert explains the proper name Peristeria as one of the Greek personal names formed from the names of animals, comparing it to Peristera (from peristera).⁵ The title archēgissa he explains as the feminine equivalent of the term archēgos⁶ which occurs on a Jewish gold medallion now at the Jewish Museum in London.

CII 731g.

Ἵπὲρ εὐχῆς Ἰ-
2 ακωβ ἀρχηγου
πινωνᾶ.

L. 2: read ἀρχηγου.

In accordance with a vow of Jacob, president, the setter of pearls.

Robert points out that although archēgos is not attested elsewhere as a Jewish title, the Latin principalis, which occurs in an inscription from Moesia, could be a parallel:

CII 681.

Ioses arcisna
2 et principales
filius Maximini
4 Pannoni sibi et
Qyriae coiugi
6 sui vivo suo me-
moria dedica-
vit.

L. 1: read arcisynagogus (ἀρχισυνάγωγος).
L. 2: read principalis.
L. 5: read coniugi.
Ll. 6-7: read suae vivo se memoriam.⁷

Ioses, head of the synagogue and leader, son of Maximinus Pannonus, dedicated this monument, while still alive, for his wife and himself.

Thus, Robert considers the title archēgissa to be the female equivalent of archēgos, which occurs only once in the Jewish inscriptions, but has its Latin equivalent in principalis. Robert is in no way disturbed by an ancient Jewish woman bearing an official title; on the contrary, he refers to other Jewish women bearing titles in inscriptions.

Robert's suggestion that Peristeria is a proper noun and archēgissa a title is convincing. In order to interpret archēgissa in the context of ancient Judaism, a study of possible meanings is required. Since archēgissa is, to my knowledge, a hapax legomenon, the search for its meaning must concentrate on archēgos (m. and f.), the word from which it was derived.

The only other Jewish inscription found on this site, CII 696a, a stele with a seven-branched menorah, a lulav and a dove, does not provide further information about the organizational structure of the congregation:

Μνήμα Σαου-
2 λ καὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ
γαμετῆς Ἀννας.

The tomb of Saul and his wife Anna.

B. Archēgos in Ancient Literature
and Inscriptions

Archēgos appears both as an adjective, meaning "beginning," "originating," "primary," "leading," "chief," and as a noun,

meaning "founder" (as of a family), "ancestral heroine," "prince," "chief," "first cause," "originator" or "originating power."⁸ An archēgos could be a deity, and thus Plato reports that the Egyptians said that Neith was the founder of Sais in Egypt, while the Greeks said it was Athena,⁹ and the daughters of Ascopus (Salamis, Aegina, Thebe, Sinope, etc.) were considered to be the ancestral heroines of cities.¹⁰ Archēgos could also be the human ancestor of a tribe or family.¹¹ The word can also mean "leader," and it is in this sense that Eusebius calls his opponent Marcellus "leader of the godless heretics,"¹² and an inscription from Dijon, France refers to a man named Chyndonax as archēgos of the priests (CIG 6798).

In the LXX, archēgos translates a number of Hebrew words, but most often r'ōš, in the sense of military, political or clan leader (Exod 6:14; Num 13:3; 14:4; 25:4; Deut 33:21; Judg 9:44; 1 Chr 5:24; 8:28; 12:21; Neh 7:70-71; 11:16-17; Lam 2:10). Archēgos as a translation of qāšīn, "chief," "ruler" (Judg 11:6, 11; Isa 3:6,7) and šar, "prince," "official," "governor" (Judg 5:15; 1 Chr 26:26; Neh 2:9; Isa 30:4) is also relatively frequent. Josephus uses archēgos five times, three times in the sense "originator," "author" (of crimes: Ant. 7.9.3§207; of trouble: Ant. 20.6.3§136; of legal violations: Ag. Ap. 1.270), and twice in the sense of "ancestor," "founder of our race" (Ag. Ap. 1.71,130). Philo uses archēgos in the meaning "leader," "chief" (Leg. alleg. 3.175 [Num 14:4; Hebrew: r'ōš]; De somn. 1.89 [Num 25:4; Hebrew: r'ōš hā'am]); much more common in Philonic usage is the related archēgetēs, which refers to Adam as the founder of the human race (De opific. 79,136,142), Seth, "the head of our race" (De poster. 42), God, as the originator of the universe (De ebriet. 42), the twelve sons of Jacob (De fuga 73), etc.

In the NT Christ is the archēgos, i.e., originator of life (Acts 3:15), of salvation (Heb 2:10), and of faith (Heb 12:2), as well as archēgos kai sōtēr, i.e., leader and savior (Acts 5:31).

This survey has yielded three basic meanings of archēgos:

1. ancestral hero or heroine, founder;
2. originator;
3. leader, chief.

C. The Meaning of archēgissa/archēgos in Jewish Inscriptions

For the two archēgissa/archēgos inscriptions (CII 696b, 731g), the second meaning cannot apply, for one must be the originator of something, and in neither inscription is there a

genitive to indicate that something. The third meaning, "leader," "chief" is a plausible one, although it is not possible to define it more accurately in relation to other Jewish offices. If, as Robert has suggested,¹³ archēgos is the equivalent of principalis (CII 681), then archēgos is not a substitute for archisynagōgos, because the Ioses of CII 681 bears both titles: arcisina(gogus) et principal(i)s. However, since Jewish titles differed from locality to locality, archēgissa/archēgos may in fact have been the equivalent of archisynagōgissa/archisynagōgos in Peristeria's (CII 696b) or in Jacob's (CII 731g) community. Since there is no further indication either in the inscriptions themselves or in Jewish literature, one cannot decide definitively whether archēgissa/archēgos means leader of the Jewish civic community or of the worship congregation, but this distinction would apply only in areas where these two were not the same. Perhaps the Jewish community in Thebes in Phthiotis was so small that this distinction is irrelevant.

Given the background of the term archēgos, however, another meaning also presents itself. We have seen that archēgos in the sense of "ancestor," "founder" was widespread among both Jews and non-Jews, whereby the reference was nearly always to an ancestral figure or to a deity. Could it be that archēgissa/archēgos meant "founder of the Jewish community" in a particular city? One must admit that this would be a somewhat new meaning for this term, a further development of the meaning "ancestral founder" of a city, a clan, a race, but in a time in which Judaism was still a missionary religion, it is possible that the founder of a community could have been a revered figure, and by this title, have been compared to the ancestral founders of cities, families, etc. In the writings of the Jewish-Christian Paul, one finds traces of the reverence in which he, as the founder of a Christian community or as the one who had baptized a particular individual, was held or expected to be held (e.g., 1 Thess 2:9-12; 4:1-2; Phlm 10).¹⁴

While the idea that a woman might have founded a Jewish community might seem absurd at first glance, seen in the light of ancient Jewish proselytism, it is not implausible. Scholars have recognized for some time that women proselytes are mentioned relatively frequently in ancient sources.¹⁵ If numbers of women were converting to Judaism, it is not impossible to imagine that one woman could have been the first in her community to convert and could have been active in persuading others to do so as well. Proselytizing activity by women, if it indeed existed, would have been similar to the work of such Jewish-Christian women as

Priscilla and Junia, both of whom seem to have been active missionaries. Priscilla,¹⁶ who together with her husband Aquila had a house church (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19), was a teacher in the early church (Acts 18:26--notice the synagogue context) and an important co-worker of Paul (Acts 18:2-3,18; Rom 16:3-5; 1 Cor 16:19; see also 2 Tim 4:19). The Jewish-Christian woman Junia (Rom 16:7) bore the title apostolos,¹⁷ which implied active missionary work. (See esp. 1 Cor 9.)¹⁸ Another important parallel, although non-Jewish, would be Thekla, probably the most well known of early Christian women missionaries.¹⁹

If archēgissa were to have meant "founder," then we would have to imagine the same type of leadership in Peristeria that we encounter in Priscilla or Junia. Thekla would be a parallel case as to proselytizing activity, although she is described as being more counter-cultural than a Jewish archēgissa may have been.

In sum, while it is impossible to ascertain more accurately what functions the title archēgissa/archēgos implied, other passages in which the term occurs indicate that "leader" is an accurate translation. "Founder," which emerged as a second possible meaning is an intriguing possibility which must remain uncertain.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN AS ELDERS

A. The Inscriptional Evidence for Women as Elders

Six ancient Greek inscriptions have been found in which women bear the title "elder" (presbytera/presbyteressa = presbyterissa). In addition to these, there exists one Greek inscription in which a woman is called PRESBYTNS (sic), most likely presbytis.

Kastelli Kissamou, Crete

CII 731c.¹ White marble sepulchral plaque (45 x 30 x 2.8 cm; height of letters: 1.5-3 cm; distance between lines: .5-1.5 cm; 4th/5th C.).

Σοφία Γορτυνί-
2 α, πρεσβυτέρα
κὲ ἀρχισυναγώ-
4 γισσα Κισάμου ἔν-
θα. Μνήμη δικέας
6 ἕς ἕώνα. Ἀμήν.

L. 3: read καί.
L. 5: read δικαίας.
L. 6: read εἰς αἰώνα.

Sophia of Gortyn, elder and head of the synagogue of Kisamos (lies) here. The memory of the righteous one for ever. Amen.

This inscription was discussed above in the context of heads of the synagogue.² Important for the interpretation of the title presbytera is its parallelization with archisynagōgissa, which makes it unlikely that presbytera is simply a term meant to distinguish Sophia the elder from a Sophia the younger.

Bizye, Thrace

CII 692.³ Grey marble stele (width: .23 m; broken off below the lettering; height of letters: 2.5 cm.; no earlier than 4th/5th C.); above the inscription a seven branched menorah and an ethrog.

Ethrog Menorah

Μνή(μ-) σι
2 α Ρεβεκα[ς]
τῆς πρεσ-

4 Βυτέρας τ-
 ἥς κεκοιμημ-
 6 ἔνης.

- L. 1: ligature between **Μ**, **Ν**, and **Η**.
 L. 3: ligature between **Η** and **Ϛ**.
 L. 5: ligature between **Η** and **Μ**.
 Ll. 5-6: read κεκοιμημένης (The υ for οι is one reason for the late dating.)

Tomb of Rebeka, the elder, who has fallen asleep.

Whereas the original editors of the inscription, R. M. Dawkins and F. W. Hasluck, see a connection between presbytera here and archisynagōgos in the Rufina inscription from Smyrna (CII 741), Jean-Baptiste Frey argues that "elder" here either simply distinguishes this Rebeka from another, younger Rebeka or that it designates the wife of an elder, that is, of a member of the local gerousia.⁴ Samuel Krauss also suggests that the title "elder" when applied to women could mean that the woman was the wife of an elder.⁵ Jean Juster believes that "elder" when applied to women was probably a "simple title" accorded to women who were "pious and venerated in the community."⁶ We have seen this kind of argumentation in the context of the other titles borne by women. It is therefore not necessary to quote further secondary authors on this point; the line of argumentation is nearly always the same.

This is the only Jewish inscription from Bizye, so one can say nothing about the Jewish community there or its form of organization. As the inscription itself gives no further information about Rebeka, nothing of her background or status can be known.

Venosa, Apulia

Three Greek inscriptions found in a Jewish catacomb in Venosa (ancient Venusia) in Apulia, which is in southern Italy, mention women elders. They probably date from the third to the sixth centuries.

CII 581; CIL IX 6226⁷.

Τάφος
 2 Βερωνικε-
 νις πρεσβιτέ-
 4 ρες ετ φιλια
 Ἰωσειτις.

Ll. 3-4: read: πρεσβυτέρας.

L. 4: ετ φιλλια = Latin et filia (should be et filiae).

Tomb of Beronikene,⁸ elder and daughter of Ioses.

Note that Beronikene's father bears no title and that she is described as the daughter of her father rather than as the wife of a given man.

CII 590; CIL IX 6230⁹. Painted in red letters on the stucco covering of the wall of the grave.

Τάφος
2 Μαννινες πρεσ-
βιτέρες τιγάτηρ Δον-
4 γινι πατέρις ίνγόνιν
Φασστινι πατέρις
6 έτ[ω]ν λη'.

L. 1: read Τάφος.

L. 2: read Μαννινης.

Ll. 2-3: read πρεσβυτέρας θυγάτηρ.

Ll. 3-4: Δονγινι = Latin Longini (gen. of Longinus).

L. 4: read έγγόνιον.

Tomb of Mannine,¹⁰ elder, daughter of Longinus, father, granddaughter of Faustinus, father, (aged) 38 years.

Mannine was 38 years old at her death; she is the only woman elder whose age we know. The title patēr, borne by the father and the grandfather, is known from other Venosan inscriptions (CII 599, 611 twice, 612, 613 twice, 619c, 619d).¹¹ The constellation of Mannine, presbytera, Longinus, patēr, and Faustinus, patēr, makes it unlikely that Mannine's title simply means "aged woman" (which would also be precluded by her age at death) or is meant to distinguish her from a younger Mannine. Perhaps Mannine's appointment or election was not unrelated to her family background. The inscription shows, however, that her father's title had not passed down automatically to her, for her title is not the same as her father's.

CII 597; CIL IX 6209.¹² Painted in red letters on the stucco covering of the wall of the grave.

Τάφος Φα-
2 οστινες πρεσ-
βιτερες. δλθψ

Ll. 1-3: read Φασστινης πρεσβυτέρας.

Tomb of Faustina. Peace.

This name, sometimes spelled slightly differently, is quite common at Venosa (CII 569, 578, 590, 591, 593, 598, 599, 600, 601, 611 three times, 612, 613 twice, 619d), and a good number of these persons are title-bearers (CII 590, 599, 600, 611 twice, 612, 613 twice, 619d). Perhaps Faustina's title was not unrelated to her family background.

It is striking that three of the five extant presbytera inscriptions are from Venosa. CII 606 (Alexsanra, pateressa) and CII 619d (Faustina, mētēr), which are discussed below, are also from Venosa, giving a total of five women title-bearers from one town. Although the total number of Venosan inscriptions is considerable (CII 569-619; 619a-619e), and although the number five is certainly not high enough to speak of "equal access" for women and men, the concentration of these five inscriptions in one catacomb is striking enough to suggest that the Venosan community may have had a tradition of granting women official functions.

The masculine presbyteros occurs only once at Venosa (CII 595).¹³ The inscription is a strange mixture of Hebrew and Greek written in Hebrew characters, and the elder in question bears the Latin name Secundinus. The elder's wife, Materina, bears no title.

Oea, Tripolitania

SEG 27(1977) no. 1201.¹⁴ Inscription on a loculus in a Jewish catacomb; text lined up in three columns, above which is a menorah and a lulav and between which are two palm branches (4th/5th C. C.E., possibly later).

I	II	III
<u>Menorah Lulav</u>		
Μνήμη- 2 η τῆς Μακαρία	Μαζαυζαλα 2 πρεσβετέ- ρησα ἔζησε 4 εαυτου τ	ἀναπαυσης 2 ὁ θε̄ μετὰ τῶ ὀσίων κ μ τῶ δικ- 4 ἔω.
	Palm Branch	Palm Branch

- I, l. 3: read Μακαρίας (or: μακαρίας).
 II, l. 1: read Μαζαυζαλας.
 II, ll. 2-3: read πρεσβυτέρισσας.
 II, l. 4: read ἐνιαυτούς (?);
 III, l. 1: read ἀνάπαυσις.
 III, ll. 2-4: read ὁ θεός μετὰ τῶν ὀσίων καὶ μετὰ τῶν δικαίων.

Tomb of Makaria (or: the blessed) Mazauzala, elder. She lived [. . .] years. Rest. God is with the holy and the righteous ones.

This inscription was found in Libya in a Jewish catacomb which was destroyed during World War II. The primary difficulty of interpretation is found in II, l. 4, the meaning of which must remain uncertain; the connection between II, l. 4 and III, l. 1 is also rather unclear. Mazauzala is probably a Libyan name.¹⁵ This need not imply that the woman was a convert, for Jews in antiquity bore a wide variety of names. The title presbeteressa¹⁶ is similar in form to archisynagogissa in CII 73lc.¹⁷ Three other inscriptions are known from the same catacomb, but they add little to our knowledge of the Jewish community there.¹⁸

Rome

CII 400.¹⁹ Marble plaque, broken in two pieces. Letters engraved and painted in red. Found in the Monteverde catacomb (1st C. B.C.E. - 3rd C. C.E.)

Ενθ(ά)δε
2 κείται Σα-
ρα Ούρα π-
4 πρεσβύτ(ι)ς

Menorah

L. 1: text has ΕΝΘΑΔΕ.
L. 2: read κείται.
L. 3: Müller suggests Ούρα.²⁰
Ll. 3-4: text has ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΝΕ, probably πρεσβύτις (f.)
but could also be πρεσβύτης (m. or f.).

Here lies Sara Ura, elder (or aged woman).

The male presbys can be used much like presbyteros,²¹ and perhaps the female form used here also means more than simply "aged woman." A possible parallel could be the Christian order of presbytides, which was forbidden by the Council of Laodicea.²²

These six, possibly seven, inscriptions form the evidence for Jewish women elders. The geographical spread is greater than for women heads or mothers of the synagogue, with one inscription from Crete, one from Thrace, one from the province of Tripolitania in North Africa, one from Rome, and three from southern Italy. The inscriptions themselves teach us little about the women themselves and nothing about the title presbytera/presbyteressa (or presbytis). The only age given (38 for Mannine) would seem to preclude the meaning "aged woman." The parallelization of presbytera and archisynagogissa in CII 73lc is further support for presbytera being an official title. The inscriptions themselves give no indication that these women were the wives of elders, for no husbands are mentioned.

If the title presbytera/presbyteressa implied a function, what could that function have been? As with the other titles, an analysis of the functions of male elders can shed light on the duties and rights of female elders.

B. The Meaning of "Elder"

1. Literary References to the Title

Of the various titles occurring in ancient inscriptions, "elder" is one of the most difficult to define precisely, for in the course of its long history the title took on rather different meanings.²³ "Elder" could denote a political function, as in the "elders of Israel" (Num 11:16-30; 2 Sam 3:17; 5:3; 17:4, etc.). It sometimes included judicial functions, as in the "elders of the city" (Deut 19:12; 21:2-9,19-20; 22:15-21; 25:7-9). Philo (In Flacc. 74,76,80; Leg. ad Gaium 229) and Josephus (J.W. 7.10.1 §412) speak of the gerousia of Alexandria, a body which would have had representative political (and religious?) functions; it is not certain, however, that the members of this gerousia were called presbyteroi.²⁴ The New Testament regularly refers to members of a group in the Sanhedrin as "elders" (Matt 16:21; Mark 8:31; 11:27; Luke 9:22, etc.). According to a saying in the Talmud, "elder means nothing other than scholar" (b. Qidd. 32b). The Theodosian Code (16.8.2,13,14) speaks of "elders" as if they were synagogue officials. A further complication arises from the possibility that presbyteroi is equal in meaning to such terms as seniores²⁵ or maiores.²⁶ It is this spectrum of meanings and possible synonyms which makes it very difficult to utilize ancient literature to help define the title presbytera/presbyteros as it occurs in our inscriptions. For the following, those parallels are preferred which are closest chronologically, geographically and linguistically to the presbytera/presbyteressa inscriptions. The following passages do not all necessarily refer only to male elders; women could be included in some of them.

The oldest presbyteros inscription is CII 1404 (the Theodotos inscription²⁷), a pre-70 Palestinian inscription written in Greek. We have seen that the geographical range of the title was considerable, and that the chronological extension was well into the Byzantine era. Thus, New Testament references would be quite appropriate as parallels. Luke 7:3-5 is of special interest, for it could well be a close parallel to the Theodotos inscription:

Ἀκούσας δὲ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς αὐτὸν πρεσβυτέρους τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐρωτῶν αὐτὸν ὅπως ἐλθῶν διασώσῃ τὸν δοῦλον αὐτοῦ. οἱ δὲ παραγενόμενοι πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν σπουδαίως λέγοντες ὅτι ἄξιός ἐστιν ᾧ παρέξῃ τοῦτο· ἀγαπᾷ γὰρ τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν καὶ τὴν συναγωγὴν αὐτὸς ᾠκοδόμησεν ἡμῶν.

When he (the centurion) heard of Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his slave. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he built us our synagogue."

As in the Theodotos inscription, "elders" occurs in the plural. The elders' reference to the centurion's having built the synagogue, as well as the fact that the centurion chose them to go to speak to Jesus, makes it likely that the centurion considered the elders to be the official representatives of the Jewish community and that his negotiations for the building of the synagogue had been with them. A significant difference, of course, is that these elders, being in the provincial town of Capharnaum (Luke 7:1), could well have served as the Jewish elders of the city, while the elders who founded the synagogue of Theodotos could hardly have been the elders of the city of Jerusalem.

The New Testament references to Christian elders are striking in that they occur especially, although not exclusively, in a Jewish-Christian context (Acts 11:30; 15:2,4,6,22-23; 16:4; 21:18; Jas 5:14; etc.). These elders usually appear in the plural as a decision-making body of the church. Apparently Jewish-Christians continued to organize themselves on a presbyteral constitution for some time, for Epiphanius (died 403) says that the Ebionites had teachers whom they called presbyteroi and archisynagogoi and who made such decisions as whom the young men would marry (Panarion 30.18.2).²⁸ The many other New Testament references to elders, especially to elders as members of the Sanhedrin, are not likely to be useful parallels to our inscriptions.

Another major source of information on Jewish elders is the Theodosian and Justinian Codes, for the term presbyterus occurs several times in texts found therein.²⁹ A law from the Theodosian Code (16.8.2), from November 29, 330, reads:

Idem A. ad Ablavium p(raefectum) p(raetori)o. Qui devotione tota synagogis Iudaeorum patriarchis vel presbyteris se dederunt et in memorata secta degentes legi ipsi praesident, immunes ab omnibus tam personalibus quam civilibus muneribus perseverent, ita ut illi, qui iam

forsitan decuriones sunt, nequaquam ad prosecutiones aliquas destinentur, cum oporteat istiusmodi homines a locis in quibus sunt nulla compelli ratione discedere. Hi autem, qui minime curiales sunt, perpetua decurionatus immunitate potiantur. Dat. iiii kal. decemb. Constant(ino)p(oli) Gallicano et Symmacho cons.³⁰

The same Augustus to Ablavius, Praetorian Prefect. If any persons with complete devotion should dedicate themselves to the synagogues of the Jews as patriarchs and elders and should live in the aforementioned sect and preside over the administration of their law, they shall continue to be exempt from all compulsory public services that are incumbent on persons, as well as those that are due to the municipalities. Likewise, such persons who are now perchance decurions shall not be assigned to any duties as official escorts, since such people shall not be compelled for any reason to depart from those places in which they are. Moreover, such persons who are not decurions shall enjoy perpetual exemption from the decurionate.

Given on the third day before the kalends of December at Constantinople in the year of the consulship of Gallicanus and Symmachus (November 29, 330).³¹

Like Cod. Theod. 16.8.4 (December 1, 331)³² this law exempts certain Jewish officials from compulsory public services and from the burdensome decurionate.³³ Whereas Cod. Theod. 16.8.4 frees "priests, heads of the synagogues, fathers of the synagogues and all others who serve the synagogues" from compulsory public service, our law speaks of "patriarchs and elders." The two laws together form, with the exception of "patriarchs," a list of several of the more common titles of synagogue leadership. This law states that the patriarchs and the elders "preside over the administration of their law," thus informing us of at least one function of the elders. The "administration of their law" could be a continuation of certain decision-making functions assigned to elders in the bible (on blood redemption: Deut 19:11-13; expiation for an unknown murderer's crime: Deut 21:2-9; the stubborn and rebellious son: Deut 21:18-21; defamation of a virgin: Deut 22:13-21; levirate: Deut 25:5-10).

Cod. Theod. 16.8.13 (July 1, 397) reads:

Idem AA. Caesario p(raefecto) p(raetori)o. Iudaei sint obstricti caerimoniis suis: nos interea in conservandis eorum privilegiis veteres imitemur, quorum sanctionibus definitum est, ut privilegia his, qui inlustrium patriarcharum ditioni subiecti sunt, archisynagogis patriarchisque ac presbyteris ceterisque, qui in eius religionis sacramento versantur, nutu nostri numinis perseverent ea, quae venerandae Christianae legis primis clericis sanctimonia deferuntur. Id enim et divi principes Constantinus et Constantius, Valentinianus et Valens divino

arbitrio decreverunt. Sint igitur etiam a curialibus muneribus alieni pareantque legibus suis. Dat. kal. iul. Caesario et Attico consss.³⁴

The same Augustuses to Caesarius, Praetorian Prefect. Jews shall be bound by their own ritual. Meanwhile, in preserving their privileges, We shall imitate the ancients by whose sanctions it has been determined that privileges shall be preserved for those who are subject to the rule of the Illustrious Patriarchs, for the heads of the synagogues, the patriarchs, and the elders, and all the rest who are occupied in the ceremonial of that religion, namely those privileges according to the consent of Our Imperial Divinity, which by virtue of their holy office are conferred on the chief clergy of the venerable Christian religion. The foregoing, indeed, was decreed by the divine imperial authority of the sainted Emperors Constantine and Constantius, Valentinian and Valens. Such Jews shall therefore be exempt from the compulsory public services of decurions and shall obey their own laws.

Given on the kalends of July in the year of the consulship of Caesarius and Atticus.³⁵

Of importance for our question is the parallelization of Christian clerics with "those who are subject to the Illustrious Patriarchs, . . . the heads of the synagogues, the patriarchs, and the elders." As in Cod. Theod. 16.8.2, the concern here is clearly with official synagogue functionaries, and not with bearers of honorific titles. The context further makes clear that the functions are specifically religious ones, both through the comparison with Christian clerics, and by the phrase "all the rest who are occupied in the ceremonial of that religion."

Cod. Theod. 16.8.14, given on April 11, 399, discussed above in the context of heads of the synagogue,³⁶ says that it is customary "that heads of the synagogue or the elders of the Jews or those whom they themselves call apostles, who are dispatched by the patriarch at a certain time to collect gold and silver, should bring back to the patriarch the sum which has been exacted and collected from each of the synagogues" (ut archisynagogi sive presbyteri Iudaeorum vel quos ipsi apostolos vocant, qui ad exigendum aurum adque argentum a patriarcha certo tempore diriguntur, a singulis synagogis exactam summam adque susceptam ad eundem reportent), and continues by saying that this custom is now abolished. This text gives us one of the official functions of elders in this period; given this function, it is not unreasonable to posit that elders normally had some responsibility for the finances in the synagogue. This text makes clear that money was collected through the synagogues, and not, independently of them, from the Jewish community at large. This particular constellation, heads of the synagogues and elders,³⁷ reminds one of Epiphanius's reference to the Jewish-Christian

elders (presbyteroi) and heads of the synagogue (archisynagōgoi), a roughly contemporary attestation of the same synagogal organization.

These three fourth-century laws are especially valuable due to the specificity of the information they give. All three place the elders in the context of religious activities: 16.8.2: "preside over the administration of their law;" 16.8.13: ". . . and the elders, and for all the rest who are occupied in the ceremonial of that religion;" 16.8.14: ". . . the elders of the Jews . . . should bring back to the patriarch the sum which has been exacted and collected from each of the synagogues." This does not exclude the possibility that elders also had civic, representative functions, but in the eyes of the Roman lawgiver, it seems that the religious ones were considered primary.

Two further laws should be briefly considered in this context. Cod. Just. 1.9.15, dates from the year 418 and reads:

Si qua inter Christianos et Iudaeos sit contentio, non a senioribus Iudaeorum, sed ab ordinariis iudicibus dirimatur.³⁸

When any dispute arises between Christians and Jews, it shall not be decided by the elders of the Jews, but by the ordinary judges.³⁹

The Latin seniores here is most likely the equivalent of the Greek presbyteroi of our inscriptions and of the three laws just cited. This text is a further attestation to the judicial functions of Jewish elders.

Corpus Iuris Civilis, Novellae 146.1, from the year 553, forbids pericope masters, elders and teachers (archipherekilai . . . presbyteroi . . . didaskaloi) to hinder the reading of the Greek bible in the synagogue by means of excommunications (anathematismoi).⁴⁰ This is a further attestation of the synagogal, religious functions of the elders.

In rabbinic literature there are a number of references to elders (zəqənīm), although it is not certain that the rabbinical authorities meant the same thing with zəqənīm as our inscriptions meant with presbyteroi. B. Qidd. 32b, in a baraita (i.e., Tannaitic, that is, pre-220), defines elder: "an elder is nothing other than a scholar" (איך זקן אלא חכם).⁴¹ According to a saying attributed to R. Jose the Galilean (b. Qidd. 32b), who flourished around 110, "an elder is one who has acquired wisdom" (איך זקן אלא מי שקנה חכמה), which is a play on the letters of זקן: (זה) קנה חכמה. This definition complements what we have

learned from the Greek and Latin texts discussed thus far. The references to judicial activity (Cod. Theod. 16.8.2; Cod. Just. 1.9.15), although these texts are much later, fit in well with the definition of elder as scholar.

The Manual of Discipline from Qumran makes reference to a special seating place for elders (IQS 6:8-9): "The priests should sit first, and the elders second and then all of the rest of the people; each should sit in his proper place" (הכהנים ישבו) (לרשונה והזקנים בשנית ושאר כול העם ישבו איש בתורו).⁴² The Tosefta also speaks of elders having a special seating place (t. Meg. 4.21 [Zuck. 227]): "How did the elders sit? With their faces towards the people and their backs towards the sanctuary." (כיצד היו זנקים יושבין? פניהם כלפי העם ואחוריהם כלפי קודש).⁴³ The difficulty with this text is that it probably does not refer to a synagogue service. It does, in any case, refer to elders seated together in a group at a worship gathering. Two possible non-literary corroborations of a separate seating place for elders are the semi-circular steps in the apse of the Sardis synagogue, for they could have served as seats for the elders,⁴⁴ and an inscription (CII 663; Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 101; probably 4th C.⁴⁵) from a synagogue in Elche, Spain, for the inscription could indicate that the archons and elders were to sit in that portion of the synagogue in which the inscription was found.⁴⁶ The geographical and chronological spread represented by these two literary and two possible archaeological attestations of a special seating place for Jewish elders during the worship service or other public gathering make it likely that the practice was more widespread than these few pieces of evidence would make us think. This is not to imply, however, that "elder" meant the same in each place. The Qumran elders probably had rather different functions from the elders mentioned in the Tosefta passage and from those in the Elche inscription. In spite of these possible differences, two elements are constant and confirm what other sources have told us: the context is a religious one and elders are mentioned in the plural, as if they formed a council.

It is not possible to discuss the many further rabbinic passages referring to zēgānīm, but it is also questionable, on the basis of geography and chronology, whether they are appropriate parallels to our inscriptions. For example, according to certain rabbinic passages, the ordination of elders was limited to the Holy Land,⁴⁷ which would mean that all Diaspora inscriptions with the title "elder" refer to unordained elders. It is

methodologically questionable, however, to take rabbinic statements concerning the Diaspora as objective, unbiased reports of actual Diaspora practice. Perhaps ordinations in fact occurred in Rome or in Asia Minor, but were not recognized--or not known--by the rabbis, which would not necessarily mean that these ordinations were not recognized in the communities in which they occurred. Since evidence for the ordination of elders in the Diaspora is lacking, however, we should probably assume that the question is irrelevant for our inscriptions (excepting CII 931: Jaffa; 1277: Jerusalem; 1404: Jerusalem).

2. Inscriptional References to the Title

The title presbyteros occurs in over twenty ancient Jewish inscriptions. They come from as far west as Elche, Spain (CII 663) and as far east as Dura Europos, Syria (CII 829). The chronological range is also considerable. The Theodotos inscription (CII 1404) found in Jerusalem is from the Second Temple period, and presbyteros inscriptions from later centuries attest that the title remained in use for some time.

Most of the inscriptions mentioning presbyteroi tell us little or nothing about the office.⁴⁸ Several inscriptions mention elders as donors.⁴⁹ Since we have seen donors bearing each of the titles discussed thus far, as well as no title at all, it would be incautious to assume that elders were responsible in a special way for the upkeep of the synagogue. CII 803⁵⁰ is the most informative of the donative inscriptions. The plural "elders" indicates a council of elders, the number of which is larger than three; only Eisakios and Saulos are mentioned here by name. Possibly the gerusiarch Theodoros is a sort of president of the council of elders. The relationship between the heads of the synagogue and the gerusiarch and the elders is not clear, but the inscription gives the impression that these are the three main titles of leadership in the synagogue in question.

That more than one elder functioned at a time is also clear from CII 731f,⁵¹ an inscription which is difficult to reconstruct, but which clearly has hoi presbyteroi in the first legible line. CII 663⁵² also speaks of elders in the plural.

CII 800⁵³ records the son of an elder, who is himself a scribe and president of the ancients (hoi palaioi). Should one assume two councils, one of elders and one of ancients? This seems unlikely. Given the lack of evidence, one cannot come to a

more exact understanding of the organizational structures of that community.

In CII 1404⁵⁴ Theodotos' forefathers are listed together with the elders and Simonides as the founders of his synagogue. The plural "elders," as in CII 663, 731f and 803, makes one think of a council of elders. Simonides, who bears no title at all, should remind us that synagogue leadership was not (and is not today) limited to title-bearers. The activities and installations of the synagogue listed in the inscription ("the reading of the Law and the teaching of the commandments, the hostel and the side rooms, and the water facilities, as lodging for those from abroad who need it") give us an idea of what the elders and other synagogue leaders had to administer.

In summary, these inscriptions teach us that the title "elder" was geographically widespread and known from at least the first century C.E. onwards. Four inscriptions (CII 663, 731f, 803, 1404) have presbyteroi in the plural, indicating a sort of council of elders. CII 800, which mentions both a presbyteros and palaioi, raises the question of the diversity of synagogal constitutions.

3. Reconstruction of the Office of Elder

The comprehensive survey of the title presbyteros in Jewish inscriptions and the selective survey of literary references to Jewish elders has yielded a certain outline, albeit shadowy, which can help in defining the functions of the elders of our inscriptions. It is clear, of course, that "elder" implied different functions in different periods and probably also varied regionally. The following reconstruction is not meant as an ahistorical blurring of differences, but should rather be seen as representing the range of possible functions in the early centuries of the Common Era.

The evidence points to councils of elders rather than single elders.

Four inscriptions refer to elders in the plural (CII 663, 731f, 803, 1404), and a number of New Testament references to Jewish and Jewish-Christian elders (Luke 7:3-5; Acts 11:30; 15:2,4,6,22-23; 16:4; 21:18; Jas 5:14) presuppose a council of elders. The evidence for a special seating place for elders (t. Meg. 4.21 [Zuck. 227]; 1 QS 6:8-9; possibly CII 663 and the benches in the Sardis synagogue) also points to a council of elders.⁵⁵

Elders appear often in a specifically religious context.

The Roman lawgiver appears to have viewed Jewish elders primarily as religious functionaries, as a Jewish counterpart to Christian clerics (Cod. Theod. 16.8.13). In addition to functions relating specifically to the worship service (Corp. Iur. Civ., Nov. 146.1), the collecting of money in the synagogue to be sent to the patriarch (Cod. Theod. 16.8.14) must also be seen as a religious function. Judicial functions (Cod. Theod. 16.8.2; Cod. Iust. 1.9.15) could be viewed as secular activity, but to the extent that for Jews to live by their own law is a religious issue, this, too, must be seen as religious. Special seating arrangements during the worship service (t. Meg. 4.21, etc.) also point to a religious context for the elders' activities. The rabbinic definition of an elder as a scholar (b. Qidd. 32b), if this was shared by Greek-speaking Diaspora Jews, is further support for a religious locus of their activity. Given the title's background as a political, civic term, it should not be excluded that elders also had political, representative functions, but the texts cited show that one could not argue that they had only civic functions and not religious ones.

Whether the elders of our inscriptions were ordained or not cannot be known.

There is no positive evidence that they were, and rabbinic sources (e.g., y. Bik. 65d.11-15; b. Sanh. 14a) claim that ordination was limited to the Holy Land.

4. The Role of Women Elders

It should not be necessary to discuss once again the question of whether presbytera was an honorific title or not. The line of argumentation is the same as for the other titles borne by women. The person fully convinced that women could not have had official functions in the ancient synagogue is likely to remain unconvinced by all evidence to the contrary, and will argue that these women elders were wives of elders or older women (in spite of Mannine's age of thirty-eight in CII 590 and of the parallelization of presbytera and archisynagogissa in CII 731c, and in spite of the fact that no husbands appear in the inscriptions) or simply honorific elders. A. E. Harvey, for example, writing in 1974, notes, ". . . there are several Jewish tombstones in Italy and Asia Minor bearing the word $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$, but some of them must be purely honorific (four are in the

feminine!). . . ."56 To those willing to accept the possibility that the six, possibly seven, inscriptions in which women bear the title "elder" are evidence that ancient Jewish women could fulfill certain official functions, the following reconstruction is suggested.

Jewish women elders were most likely members of a council of elders. This council may have had some oversight of synagogue finances; until 399 elders annually collected money in the synagogue to be sent to the patriarchs. We should imagine that women elders were as involved in these financial matters as their male counterparts. If the women elders of our inscriptions were members of synagogues in which the elders sat in the front facing the people, then we should assume that these women sat among their colleagues facing the people. Although some may find it difficult to imagine that women could have been full members of a judicial council, the existence of the presbytera inscriptions at least raises this question. Could Jewish women actually have been scholars? Could they have had some say about the reading of the bible in the synagogue? Again, the technical terminology of our inscriptions raises these possibilities. Those maintaining their impossibility should at least consider how limited our knowledge of Jewish women in ancient Crete, Thrace, Italy and Libya actually is.

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN AS MOTHERS OF THE SYNAGOGUE

A. The Evidence for Mothers of the Synagogue

1. The Inscriptional Evidence

There exist two Greek inscriptions in which the title mētēr synagōgēs occurs (reconstructed), one Greek inscription in which a woman bears the title mētēr, two Latin inscriptions in which the title mater synagogae occurs, and one Latin inscription in which a woman bears the unusual title pateressa. All six of the inscriptions are from Italy, three being from Rome, two from Venosa in Apulia and one from Venetia in Brescia. They range in date from around the second century C.E. until perhaps as late as the sixth century.

Rome

CII 523 (= CIL VI 29756).¹ Sarcophagus fragment decorated by a shofar, a lulav and a seven-branched menorah; known since the late sixteenth century, but no longer extant. Date unknown. The manuscripts differ on points of spelling; for the variants see CII, ad loc. The text of Leon is:

Beturia Pau-
2 lla F domi
heterne quos-
4 tituta que bi-
xit an(nos) LXXXVI meses VI
6 proselyta an(norum) XVI
nomine Sara mater
8 synagogarum Campi
et Bolumni
10 en irenae ai cymysis
autis.

Shofar Lulav Menorah

L. 3: read aeternae con-.

L. 4: read quae vi-.

L. 5: read menses.

Ll. 10-11: read ἐν εἰρήνῃ (ἡ) κοίμησις αὐτῆς.

Veturia Paulla F(?), consigned to her eternal home, who lived 86 years, 6 months, a proselyte of 16 years, named Sara, mother of the synagogues of Campus and Volumnius. In peace her sleep.²

Veturia Paulla,³ a proselyte to Judaism at the age of seventy, had taken on the name Sara, most likely as a sign of her conversion. Campus probably means Campus Martius, a plain of around six hundred acres on the left bank of the Tiber. CII 88⁴ and 319⁵ refer to fathers of the synagogue of the Campesians, which may be the same congregation.⁶ These three inscriptions are the only evidence for the synagogue of the Campesians. While it would be quite dangerous to generalize on the basis of three inscriptions, it is striking that of the four title-bearers mentioned, three bear the title mother/father of the synagogue, which raises the question whether this might have been a central title in that congregation. As to the infant archon, which must indicate archon-to-be, it seems reasonable to assume that the boy was given his title because of his father's active leadership in the congregation. (This inscription is thus indirect support for the view that the title mother/father of the synagogue was functional, rather than honorific, a point which will be discussed below.)

Our knowledge of the synagogue of the Volumnesians is based on four inscriptions (CII 343,⁷ 402,⁸ 417,⁹ 523). Leon locates it among the Transtiberine group of congregations. CII 343, 402 and 417 were found in the Monteverde catacomb, which according to Leon, was the earliest of the Roman Jewish catacombs, perhaps going back to the first century B.C.E. and remaining in use until at least the end of the third century.¹⁰ With the exception of CII 523, the title mother/father of the synagogue does not occur in connection with the synagogue of the Volumnesians. The titles which do occur are archon (archōn: CII 343), archon-to-be (mellarchōn: CII 402) and (archon?)-for-life (zabiou = dia biou?: CII 417).

Veturia Paulla, then, was the mother of two synagogues, one in which the title mother/father of the synagogue may well have been a key term of leadership and one in which archon may have been a major function. Her functioning as mother of two synagogues is not unparalleled, for CII 508¹¹, also from Rome, mentions a father of synagogues. There is no difficulty in imagining that a person could be actively involved in two synagogues. Note that no husband is mentioned in the inscription. If Veturia Paulla did not become Jewish until the age of 70, then, considering the life expectancy of that period, her husband was most likely already dead when she converted, if indeed she had been married. In any case, the inscription gives

us no reason to assume that she received her title through her husband.

CII 496.¹² Sarcophagus fragment. Found in the Via Anicia; may have come from the Monteverde catacomb (1st C. B.C.E. - 3rd C. C.E.).¹³

[Ἐνθά]δε κεῖτε
 2 [Μαρ? Ἰουλ?]ια Μαρκελ-
 [λα μή]τηρ συνα-
 4 [γωγῆς] Αύγουστη-
 [σιων. Μ]νησθῆ
 6 [...έ]ν εἰρήνῃ
 [ἡ κοίμη]σις αὐ-
 8 [τῆ]ς.

L. 1: read κεῖται.

Here lies (Maria? Julia?) Marcella, mother of the synagogue of the Augustesians. May [. . . .] be remembered (?). In peace her sleep.

The form of the letters would indicate a second- or possibly third-century C.E. dating. That Markella was a woman is indicated by the fragmentary -ia before Markel- and by the final sigma for au[τῆ]ς. "Mother of the synagogue" is also partially reconstructed: m[Ἐ]τ[ῆ]ρ s[yna]g[ῶ]g[ῆ]ς, but seems to be quite a plausible reconstruction.

Six inscriptions bear witness to the Synagogue of the Augustesians (CII 284,¹⁴ 301,¹⁵ 338,¹⁶ 368,¹⁷ 416,¹⁸ 496). The other titles mentioned are scribe (grammateus) and archon-to-be (mellarcon = mellarchōn: CII 284), gerusiarch (gerousiarchēs: CII 301, 368), archon (iarlchōn: CII 338), (archon?)-for-life (zabiou = dia biou?: CII 416¹⁹).

The synagogue could have been named for the emperor Augustus (27 B.C.E. to 14 C.E.), who was in fact friendly toward the Jews. He may have been a patron of the community.²⁰ If the synagogue was founded during the reign of Augustus, it would be one of the oldest in Rome.

As in CII 523, no husband is mentioned in our inscription, so we should not assume that Marcella received her title because of her husband. Unfortunately, the brief inscription does not yield any further information about Marcella's life, age at death or title.

CII 166.²¹ Marble fragment; more fragmentary today than when first discovered. Found in the Appia catacomb (1st - 3rd C. C.E.).²²

Menorah 2 Ἐνθάδε κεῖτε Σιμπ[λικια μήτηρ? συ-]
 2 ναγωγῆς, φίλανδρος [.....]
 συναγωγῆς τῆ ἰδίᾳ σ[υμβίῳ ἐποίησεν].

L. 1: read κεῖται.

Here lies Simplicia, mother (?) of the synagogue, who loved her husband. [Husband's name and office] of the synagogue set up (this stone) to his own wife.

The form of the letters would indicate a second- or possibly third-century C.E. dating. The [mētēr sy]nagōgēs is admittedly conjectural, but the gender of the deceased is established by the philandros and by the tē idiā s[ymbiō]. Further, the title mother of the synagogue, known from elsewhere, is a plausible reconstruction for the lacuna preceding -nagōgē, especially since synagōgēs occurs in the following line.

In contrast to the two inscriptions just discussed, the name of the synagogue is lacking here, so that one cannot discuss comparative materials from the same synagogue. A further contrast is that a husband is mentioned here, and he seems to have been an office-holder. He may have borne the title patēr synagōgēs or perhaps another title. As the titles of both wife and husband are missing, it is impossible to say whether they bore the same title, but since it seems quite possible that she was a mother of the synagogue and he a father of the synagogue, then the question of how she attained her title gains added relevancy.

Venetia, Brescia

CII 639; CIL V 4411.²³ First quoted by Feliciani in 1463.²⁴
 Date unknown.

Coeliae²⁵ Paternae
 matri synagogae
 Brixianorum.

To Coelia Paterna, mother of the synagogue of the Brescians.

Unfortunately, the only other Jewish inscription from Brescia (CII 638) reads [. . .] χιουνα/γωγο[.], certainly archisynagōgos, but hardly enough to give us significant information about the Jewish community in Brescia.

Venosa, Apulia

In 1853, a Jewish catacomb in Venosa (the ancient Venusia) was discovered.²⁶ The inscriptions (CII 569-619; 619a-619e) are of two types: dipinti, painted in red on the stucco covering of the walls, and graffiti, scratched onto the walls, whereby most of the latter have disappeared. Two of the Venosan inscriptions are of interest for the question at hand.

CII 606; CIL IX 6231.²⁷ Letters traced by finger into the wet stucco, later painted in red (3rd - 6th C.).²⁸

Hic requesc-
2 et Alexsanra
pateressa qui v-
4 it anoro plus m[. . .].

שלום

Ll. 1-2: read requiescit (l. 1 Lenormant:²⁹ requiesc-);
De Rossi:³⁰AlexsanFa. (Ligature on the r
possibly indicates dr.)
Ll. 3-4: read quae vixit annorum plus minus.

Here lies Alexsanra, "fatheress" (pateressa), who lived approximately [. . .]. Peace!

The title pateressa is simply the feminine of pater. The name could be Alexsandra (as the reported ligature may indicate), but then the present spelling may simply be a variation thereof. Since a husband is not mentioned, there is no reason to make assumptions about his possible titles or office; perhaps she was not married or perhaps she was a widow. Therefore, it would be rather incautious to agree with Harry Leon when he writes:

There is one example (606) of a pateressa Alexandra (spelled Alexsanra). It seems more likely that this title was given to the wife of a pater than that it was an independent title like that of mater synagogae at Rome and elsewhere.³¹

While there is certainly a linguistic difference between pater-essa and mater synagogae, there is nothing in this difference to indicate that the one is an independent title while the other is derived from the husband's title. Indeed, one could as easily have argued the opposite, namely that the pateressa was a genuine office-holder, for her title indicates that she was a female pater, while the matres synagogae were just that, mothers and not fathers. Such an argument would be as arbitrary as that given by Leon. There is in fact no reason to consider pateressa as either more or less official than mater synagogae, whereby the question

of whether pateressa implied a synagogue function or a civic one, must remain open.

CII 619d. Found in the hypogeum (3rd - 6th C.).³²

Ἦδε κεῖτε
2 Φαυστεινα
μήτηρ, γυ-
4 νή Αὐξανα-
νίου πα-
6 τρός καὶ
πάτρονος
8 τῆς πόλεως.

L. 1: read κεῖται.

Ll. 4-5: Frenkel, Lifshitz: Αὐξανίου; Bognetti: Αὐσανίου;
J. and L. Robert: Λυσανίου.

Here lies Faustina, mother, wife of Auxanios, father and patron of the city.

CII 619c. The epitaph of the husband, Auxanios:

Ἦδε κεῖτε Αὐξάνειος πατήρ
2 καὶ πάτρων τῆς πόλεως.

Here lies Auxaneios, father and patron of the city.

This inscription again raises the question whether women bearing the title mother received it through their husbands. Unlike CII 166 (Simplicia) discussed above, this inscription is not fragmentary. It is thus clear that both wife and husband had the same title, which could indicate that the offices of both Faustina and Auxanios implied active leadership or it could mean that Auxanios alone was a leader, while his wife Faustina simply bore an honorific title. It is possible that Faustina received her title because of her family connections, but this does not necessarily imply that it was honorific.

A further question raised by this inscription is the nature of the title mētēr/patēr when it stands alone, without the additional "of the synagogue." For example, was Auxanios father of the synagogue and patron of the city or was he also a father of the city? The question raised by the term pateressa, which also stands alone, takes on new interest in light of the "of the city" in connection with "patron." A definitive solution is impossible, but the patrōn tēs poleōs makes a civic function for the title patēr/mētēr seem more likely than a synagogue function. It is probable that in the Diaspora the line separating synagogue leadership from civic leadership was rather fluid. The parallel use of patēr and patrōn in this inscription, as well as in 619b³³

and 619c, should caution us from making too quick an identification between father/mother and patron.

Father/mother is one of the more common titles among the Jewish Venosan inscriptions. Patēr/pater occurs nine times outside of our inscription,³⁴ while mētēr and pateressa occur one time each. Of the ten patres mentioned among the Venosan inscriptions, seven are named Faustinus, and the mother in CII 619d is named Faustina. This may indicate that they were all from the same family (see especially CII 611 and 613 for the passing down of names) and that the name Faustinus/a was as important a factor in attaining this title as any individual leadership skills a person might possess. In fact, Faustina may even have been named mother on the basis of the family into which she was born, most likely the same basis for success as that of the men named Faustinus in arriving at their office, rather than the family into which she married.

The twelve occurrences of the title pater/patēr/mētēr/pateressa indicate that it played a central role in the Jewish community at Venosa. Unfortunately, the inscriptions do not give us any indication of the actual function involved. Leon posits, "It is not improbable, therefore [because the title was common at Venosa], that the Venusian pater was a board member."³⁵ This seems plausible. One would only want to add that it is also not improbable that Alexsanra, pateressa (CII 606), and Faustina, mother (CII 619d) were also members of the board.

2. The Literary Evidence

There is one literary reference to Jewish mothers of the synagogue. It occurs in a Christian anti-Jewish polemic entitled De Altercatione Ecclesiae et Synagogae.³⁶ The work is a dialogue between two matrons, Synagoga and Ecclesia, in which a number of controversial points are discussed. In the context of a discussion of circumcision in which Church argues that circumcision cannot be the sign of salvation, because if this were the case, women, who do not receive circumcision, could not be saved, we read: ". . . what will your virgins do, what your widows, what even your mothers of the synagogue, if you bear witness that the sign of circumcision has helped the people to eternal life?" (quid facient virgines tuae, quid facient viduae, quid matres etiam synagogae).³⁷ The argument is that not only will normal Jewish women be excluded from eternal life if circumcision is the sign of eternal life, but that even the most outstanding women of the Jewish community, the mothers of the synagogue, will be

excluded. This Christian document thus attests that the title "mother of the synagogue" was sufficiently widespread to be known outside of Jewish circles and could be used as in some sense synonymous with "leading Jewish women." From the rhetorical standpoint, the title had to be vested with some authority or the sarcasm implicit in quid matres etiam synagogae would not have carried.

The careful work of dating and ascertaining the provenance of the De Altercatione Ecclesiae et Synagogae remains to be done. Jean Juster dates it from 438 to 476.³⁸ We would thus have a fifth-century literary attestation of the title "mother of the synagogue," which fits in well with the inscriptional evidence. Bernhard Blumenkranz suggests that the work may have originated in Spain or in Gaul, but in any case in an area which had only recently been assumed into "Romania," because Synagogue claims that Church was still living like a barbarian at a time when Synagogue already possessed Roman citizenship and was fighting wars.³⁹

B. The Meaning of "Mother/Father" and "Mother/Father of the Synagogue"

1. The Received Scholarly Opinion

The scholarly consensus is that both "mother of the synagogue" and "father of the synagogue" were honorific titles. It is my belief that this view arose because "mother of the synagogue" inscriptions have been known since the fifteenth (CII 639) and sixteenth (CII 523) centuries. That is, scholars have been faced for some centuries with the dilemma of women bearing this title. Rather than admit that the title signified a function, thereby allowing women into the ranks of synagogue leadership, they proposed that both fathers and mothers of the synagogue were honored members, but nothing more. Samuel Krauss's argumentation is quite specific in this respect: "A genuine office could not have been associated with the distinction [of father/mother of the synagogue] for the simple reason that it was also bestowed upon women."⁴⁰ The few scholars who have gone beyond the view of an honorific title have, unfortunately, produced speculations based on little evidence. Abraham Berliner, for example, suggested that the pater synagogae was the parnas (administrator of charities) of the older period, later called gabba'y. He was to care for the sick and dying and to make the necessary arrangements for funerals.⁴¹ The mater synagogae, which is the same as pateressa, was responsible for

sick and dying women and for providing money to poor brides. Her office corresponds to the office of parnesessa, which was still known in seventeenth-century Italy.⁴² No reason is given for this identification; since the words have totally different etymologies, one can certainly not posit a continuity of terminology. One wonders whether an office dealing with charity was chosen because this seems appropriate for women. The parnesessa/parnās suggestion has the double advantage of maintaining the similarity between pater and mater which the terms themselves suggest and of assigning to them functions which need not be construed as implying leadership inappropriate to women.⁴³

Harry J. Leon, who rejects Berliner's identification of pater and parnās as ungrounded,⁴⁴ reports on Berliner's theory that the mother of the synagogue "cared for women, especially the sick and dying"⁴⁵ with considerably greater sympathy, although he must admit that we have little to go on. In the end he classifies mother and father of the synagogue as honorary offices.⁴⁶

Jean-Baptiste Frey, on the basis of CII 533 and the law of immunity in the Theodosian Code (both to be discussed below) is forced to conclude that the title must imply an active role in administration.⁴⁷ The existence of mothers of the synagogue, however, sways the interpretation once again in the direction of charity, and Frey posits that these persons may have had certain functions which were particularly honorable, such as directing charitable works and assistance in the community. "This could have been the special role of the 'mothers' of the community," he adds.⁴⁸ In the same vein, several scholars imagine that the role could have been one of patronage.⁴⁹

Most scholars, however, have concluded that the office was honorary and are quite specific in citing the existence of mothers of the synagogue as the reason for this.⁵⁰

2. Further Literary References to the Title

In trying to arrive at a better understanding of this title, the lack of literary documentation is a particularly severe problem. While we possess no synagogue constitutions or rules of order to help us with any of the titles, some, such as head of the synagogue, are at least mentioned in several literary sources. For father/mother of the synagogue, in contrast, there is a paucity of literary references. The most important of these is found in the Theodosian Code 16.8.4:

Idem A. hiereis et archisynagogis et patribus synagogarum et ceteris, qui in eodem loco deserviunt. Hiereos et archisynagogos et patres synagogarum et ceteros, qui synagogis deserviunt, ab omni corporali munere liberos esse praecipimus. Dat. kal. dec. Constant(ino)p(oli) Basso et Ablavio cons.⁵¹

The same Augustus to the priests, heads of the synagogues, fathers of the synagogues, and all others who serve in the said place.

We command that priests, heads of the synagogues, fathers of the synagogues, and all others who serve the synagogues shall be free from every compulsory service of a corporal nature.

Given on the kalends of December at Constantinople in the year of the consulship of Bassus and Ablavius (December 1,331;330).⁵²

It is unlikely that the holder of an honorific title would be included in the group of persons to whom immunitas⁵³ from corporal duties (munera corporalia) was granted. In Roman law certain groups of society were freed from these duties. Among others, these included high state officials and members of certain professions. Pagan priests were included to a certain extent, and in the course of time Christian clergy were also included. Thus, the context of this law implies that the three synagogue officials mentioned here are freed from the duties on the basis of their functional role in the synagogue. The following phrase, "and all others who serve the synagogues" (et ceteros, qui synagogis deserviunt) strengthens this interpretation, for it makes it evident that the law wishes to free those who are actually serving as functionaries, even those whose actual title is not included. The plethora and non-uniformity of titles must have been the cause for this additional, rather inclusive clause. In any case, it seems clear that this law refers to synagogue functionaries, and one would be hard pressed to argue that the patres synagogae, who are being freed from very concrete public duties, are merely distinguished members of the synagogue who bear an honorific title.

One cannot generalize from this fourth-century law that the pater synagogae was in all periods an actual functionary rather than just a distinguished member of the synagogue. However, presumably the law is simply recognizing organizational structures which had existed for some time and which continued to exist after the promulgation of the law.

To my knowledge, this law and the mention of matres synagogae in the Altercatio Ecclesiae et Synagogae are the only explicit literary references to mothers or fathers of the

synagogue. Several other texts may be of indirect value. In Matt 23:9, for example, Jesus makes reference to "fathers": "And call no one your father on earth, for you have one father, the heavenly one."⁵⁴

This occurs just after the prohibition to call anyone "rabbi" (vv. 7-8) and just before the injunction to his hearers not to allow themselves to be called "masters" (kathēgētai; v. 10). This certainly looks like an honorific use of the term patēr, since one has the choice of using it or not, and it seems to be a form of address. It may be that in Jesus' time, in Palestine, the title was just coming into use and was, in fact, an honorific title. "Rabbi" would be a somewhat parallel case, for it only came into use gradually (Hillel and Shammai, for example, do not bear the title).⁵⁵ Only after some time did it come to be conferred through ordination, and only in the modern period did a rabbi come to be anything like a synagogue functionary, with duties similar to a minister or a priest. Perhaps patēr began as an honorific title, but that seems to have changed by the fourth century, as the law in the Theodosian Code indicates. It is also possible, however, that patēr tēs synagōgēs is not the actual successor to the patēr title about which Jesus warns, but rather had an independent development.

Also of interest in this context is the Aramaic title ʿabbaʿ (Hebrew: ʿāb or ʿābī), which occurs as an honorific title in rabbinic sources.⁵⁶ The title occurs in conjunction with a proper name, as, for example Abba Shaʿul (m. Menah. 8:3; 11:5; m. Mid. 2:5; 5:4; m. B. Meṣ. 4:12; 6:7; m. B. Bat. 2:7,13; m. Sanh. 10:1; etc.), Abba Guria (m. Oidd. 4:14) or Abba Gorion (m. Oidd. 4:14). Although according to a baraita in b. Ber. 16b one may call only the three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) "father" and the four matriarchs (Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah) "mother," the use of these terms was not infrequent. According to a further baraita (b. Ber. 16b; y. Nid. 49b.45-47), one should not call slaves "mother so-and-so" or "father so-and-so," but in the house of Rabban Gamliel one did so. Thus, the honorific use of both "father" and "mother" is attested.

Also of interest is the term ʿab bēt dīn, a title borne by the head of the Sanhedrin during the Second Temple period. The ʿab bēt dīn was second in line to the nāṣīʿ.⁵⁷

This very limited literary evidence for the terms mother/father and mother/father of the synagogue is certainly an insufficient basis for tracing a development or for ascertaining the precise functions of the title-bearer. The Aramaic terms for

"mother" and "father" could be used honorifically as terms of respect; that such a usage would at least have been understandable to a Greek audience is indicated by Matt 23:9. The one legal reference to fathers of the synagogue occurs in the context of synagogue officials (Cod. Theod. 16.8.4). The literary evidence, therefore, limited as it is, forces us to distinguish between an honorific use of the title, which takes the form of "mother/father so-and-so," and an official use thereof, which in the Theodosian Code takes the form patres synagogarum.

3. Further Inscriptional References to the Title

If the literary evidence for this title is quite limited, there is considerable epigraphical evidence. In Rome eight fathers are mentioned and three mothers. Most are connected with an individual synagogue. Marcella (CII 496) was the mother of the synagogue of the Augustesians; Menophilos (CII 537⁵⁸) was father of the Carcaresians; Julianus (CII 88⁵⁹) and Quintus Claudius Synesios (CII 319⁶⁰) of the Campesians, Gadias (CII 510, 535⁶¹) of the Hebrews; Pancharios (CII 509⁶²) of the synagogue of Elaëa, and Domnus (CII 494⁶³) was father of the synagogue of the Vernacilians. Veturia Paulla (CII 523) was the mother of the synagogue of the Campesians and the Volumnesians. In addition to these references to specific communities, Mniaseas (CII 508⁶⁴) is called father of synagogues (patēr synagōgion), Assterias (CII 93⁶⁵) is called father of an unnamed synagogue, and Simplicia (CII 166) seems to have been the mother of an unnamed synagogue, according to the plausible reconstruction in the CII.

That the office was one of high honor can be seen in CII 319,⁶⁶ the epitaph of Irena, wife of Clodius, the brother of Quintus Claudius Synesios, the father of the synagogue of the Campesians. A derived honor to say the least! The inscription shows the pride that even being related to a father of the synagogue must have evoked. Domnus (CII 494) had already held two other offices; he was an archon three times and phrontistes twice. While this does not necessarily imply that father of the synagogue was a higher office than archon and phrontistes, we should probably take it to mean that they were at least of equal stature. Mniaseas (CII 508) was also a mathētēs sophōn (Hebrew: talmid ḥakām), a scholar, although there is not necessarily a connection between the two. The age at death is indicated in only two of the inscriptions: Veturia Paulla (CII 523) was eighty-six when she died, and Pancharios (CII 509) lived to the

extraordinary age of one hundred ten. While we cannot generalize from two examples, the advanced age of these two people does support what one would expect from the title itself, namely that the office-holder should be an older, venerable member of the community.

In the much discussed, late third-century Stobi inscription (CII 694⁶⁷), it is Claudius Tiberius Polycharmus, also called Achyrios, father of the synagogue in Stobi, who, in fulfillment of a vow, constructed the "buildings for the holy place and the triclinium and the hall with four rows of columns." This he did with his own funds, without touching the revenues of the sanctuary. While it would be an error to use this inscription as evidence that one function of the father of the synagogue was to be in charge of building activity, (indeed, according to this method nearly all office-holders and many non-office-holders could be seen to have this function, for it is in the nature of epigraphical remains that many inscriptions are donative), it is probably not an accident that this one was wealthy enough to make this donation. Further, the reference to the communal funds may be significant. Could it imply that the father of the synagogue would have access to this money for building purposes?

In addition to the form father/mother of the synagogue, one also encounters the simple father or mother alone. It is not immediately clear if this is a synagogue title, a municipal title or a civic title (denoting representation of the Jewish people in a given area). At Venosa in Apulia, for example, the terms pater (CII 611 twice, 612, 613 twice⁶⁸), patēr (CII 590 twice,⁶⁹ 599,⁷⁰ 619c,⁷¹ 619d⁷²), patēr paterōn (CII 619b⁷³), mētēr (CII 619d), and pateressa (CII 606) occur with no genitival addition. Should we take these as indicating synagogue office? CII 619b, which mentions Marcellus, "father of fathers" (patēr paterōn) and patron of the city, could lead one to think that Marcellus' first title referred to a religious function (especially in light of Mithraic parallels to be discussed below), while the second was a municipal title. Auxanios (CII 619c, 619d) is called father and patron of the city, so that one could construe "of the city" with both father (of the city) and patron (of the city).⁷⁴ CII 613, which mentions Faustinus pater, grandson of Faustinus pater, son of Vitus, gerusiarch (ierusiarcontis [gen.]), probably refers to three synagogue officials, although it is conceivable that the man and his grandfather held municipal or civic office, while his father was a synagogue official. My tendency is to think that father/mother at Venosa refers to synagogue office, but the

several inscriptions which clearly refer to municipal honors (CII 611, 619b, 619c, 619d) should teach us that the leading families of the synagogue(s) of Venosa were also leading citizens of Venosa, thus making a definitive answer to the question impossible.

An inscription (CII 533⁷⁵) from Castel Porziano in Italy (nearly 10 kilometers to the southeast of Ostia), which probably dates from the first half of the second century, mentions a Livius Dionisius, pater (also without synagogae), who, together with the gerusiarch and an Antonius whose title is broken off, seem to be the three main leaders of the community, at least regarding the grant of a small plot of land to the gerusiarch Gaius Julius Justus for a family tomb. (This interpretation relies on the generally accepted reconstructed version given in the CII.) From this inscription we would have to conclude that the pater had some control over Jewish community property. Although it may be accidental, the pater is listed before the gerusiarch and the other official. Again, pater here could also be a civic title, he being the head of the Jewish community, while the gerusiarch headed the synagogue (the third title probably also being a synagogue title).

CII 739⁷⁶ from Smyrna in Asia Minor mentions a patēr tou stematos (sic) who was also an elder and the son of an elder. Whatever father of the tribe (or guild?) might mean is unclear.

From Mantinea in Arcadia comes CII 720⁷⁷ with its mention of a father of the people-for-life (patēr laou dia biou).⁷⁸ This term makes one think of the entire Jewish community rather than just the synagogue, although at Smyrna these may have been coterminous.

In summary, the epigraphical data alone are insufficient for arriving at an exact definition of this title. Especially problematic is whether to distinguish between mother/father of the synagogue and mother/father without a genitive. However, we can see that wherever the titles occur, the context implies that these people were among the highest functionaries of the synagogue (or community), and that they may well have had control over the common treasury, probably together with other leaders. The inscriptions indicate nothing about caring for the sick, the dying or young unmarried girls. Likewise, there is nothing in the inscriptions themselves to make us think that the titles were purely honorific. Further, the only times patronage is mentioned (Venosa: CII 619b, 619c, 619d--the last two referring to the

same person), the men are called fathers and patrons of the city, thus precluding an identification of those two terms.

4. Possible Non-Jewish Parallels

A brief survey of the title in the Graeco-Roman world may be useful for ascertaining a more exact meaning. However, the range of uses, being quite broad, yields a somewhat confusing picture. We find everything from the title of a Roman emperor, father of his country (pater patriae)⁷⁹ to a priestess of Venus being addressed as mother (mater).⁸⁰ One also finds mothers and fathers of various sorts of guilds (collegia)⁸¹ and of cultic clubs, especially of oriental cults. While it could be that the mothers and fathers were patrons of the professional guilds⁸² the evidence from cultic clubs seems to point to cultic leaders of some sort.⁸³

For our question, the cultic clubs will yield the most valuable material for comparison. The most obvious parallel comes from the cult of Mithras, where pater was the highest of the seven grades through which a person could pass. It seems that the lower orders, such as Lions, could have a pater at their head,⁸⁴ and that the patres could have a pater over them, who would be called pater patrum/pater pateron, PP in abbreviated form.⁸⁵ One is immediately reminded of the pater pateron from Venosa (CII 619b) and of CII 607, 610, and 614, where the abbreviation PP occurs. The Mithraic parallels are a further confirmation that PP equals pater patrum. While we have no evidence that Judaism had anything like the seven grades of Mithraism, the exact concurrence of titles is striking and one should not exclude Mithraic influence here. Pater patrum, even when taken out of the Mithraic context of seven grades, could still signify a high office. Mother and father were also used in other cults, several inscriptions from which make clear that a simple identification of mother/father with patrona/us is inappropriate.⁸⁶ Thus, the evidence indicates that mothers and fathers in the professional clubs may have had a different role from those in the cultic clubs. While the evidence from Mithraism must be seen in light of the Mithraic ranking system, which Judaism did not have, it is nevertheless a help for us, for it indicates the leading role a pater played, as a member of the highest rank or as a pater over another rank or as pater over the highest rank, that is as pater patrum.⁸⁷

Conclusions

There is solid evidence that women bore the title mother of the synagogue, or variations thereof, in inscriptions that may represent a span of six centuries. The six inscriptions discussed are all from Italy. These inscriptions cannot be seen as freaks of history, nor can they be cavalierly dismissed as purely honorific titles. Given the fragmentary nature of our evidence, we should assume that the six women discussed were not the only women to have borne this title. The fifth-century (?) anti-Jewish polemic, De Altercatione Ecclesiae et Synagogae, bears witness that non-Jews were also familiar with this phenomenon. While we cannot exactly define the function of a mother/father of the synagogue, all indications are that it had something to do with the administration of the synagogue. Family ties seem in certain instances to have played a role in a person's selection to this office, so we can assume that most mothers/fathers were members of leading families.

CHAPTER V

WOMEN AS PRIESTS

A. The Inscriptional Evidence for Female Priests

There exist three ancient Jewish inscriptions in which a woman bears the title hiercia/hierissa. They range in age from the first century B.C.E. through possibly the fourth century C.E. and were found in Tell el-Yahudiyyeh in Lower Egypt, in Beth She'arim in Galilee, and in Rome.

Tell el-Yahudiyyeh

CII 1514 (SEG 1 [1923] no. 574). Rectangular stele, 45 cm in height, 22 cm in breadth, with an indented space ruled for the inscription, but without architectural decoration.

Μαριν
2 ἱέρισα χο-
ρηστή πα-
4 σφιλε κ-
αί ἄλυπε κ-
6 αὶ φιλογίτ-
ων χαῖρε, ὥ-
8 ς ἔτων ν'.
L γ' Καίσαρ Π-
10 αὔνι γι'.

L. 9: read λυκάβαντος γ' Καίσαρος.

O Marin, priest, good and a friend to all, causing pain to no one and friendly to your neighbors, farewell! (She died at the age of) approximately fifty years, in the third year of Caesar (Augustus), on the thirteenth day of Payni (= June 7, 28 B.C.E.).

C. C. Edgar, who first published the inscription in 1922, thought that IERISA was "the name of Marion's father; whether it is an indeclinable noun or whether this is a genitive in -α I do not know."¹ Edgar thus thought that Marion's father's name was Ierisas or Ierisa. This rather strange interpretation of a not uncommon Greek noun was corrected the following year by Hans Lietzmann, who recognized it to be hieris(s)a, "priestess" (Priesterin).² The name Marin is a form of Marion³ and also occurs in other Greek inscriptions.⁴

This is one of eighty Jewish inscriptions found in a Jewish necropolis in Tell el-Yahudiyyeh.⁵ Many of the inscriptions are dated; CII 1466, 1492, 1493, 1498 are also from the time of

Augustus. The terminology (chrēstē, pasiphile, alypos) and form of our inscriptions (name followed by adjectives, chaire, approximate age at death, year, day of Egyptian month) are very similar to the terminology and form of the other Tell el-Yahudiyyeh inscriptions, both of those from the time of Augustus and of the others, which range from the second century B.C.E. through the first century C.E.

As with the other inscriptions in which women bear titles, modern scholars have been at pains to point out that hierisa here has no real meaning, e.g., Jean-Baptiste Frey, "This is not to say that Marin had an actual function as a priestess in the Jewish community, but rather that she belonged to the descendants of Aaron, to the priestly family" ⁶

For the interpretation of hierisa, it is rather significant that the Marin inscription was found in Tell el-Yahudiyyeh, i.e., the ancient Leontopolis in the nome of Heliopolis, for it was in Leontopolis that Onias IV, the legitimate heir to the Jerusalem high priesthood, founded a Jewish temple during the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra II (181-146 B.C.E.), when he saw that he had no chance of attaining the Jerusalem high priesthood due to events surrounding the Maccabean revolt.⁷ He founded the temple, probably around 160 B.C.E., by renovating and purifying an Egyptian temple. (On the Onias temple, see Josephus, J.W. 1.1.1 § 33; 7.10.2-4 §§ 420-436; Ant. 12.9.7 §§ 387-388; 13.3.1-3 §§ 62-73; 13.10.4 § 285; 20.10.3 § 236.) Josephus reports (Ant. 13.3.3 § 73) that "Onias found some Jews who, like him, were priests and Levites to minister there" (εὗρε δὲ Ὀνίας καὶ Ἰουδαίους τινὰς δημοίους αὐτῷ καὶ ἱερεῖς καὶ λευίτας τοὺς ἐκεῖ θρησκουσοντας, cf. Ant. 13.3.1 § 63; J.W. 7.10.3-4 §§ 430-434). The temple of Onias existed, and Jewish priests served at it, until 73 C.E. or shortly before 73, when the Romans closed it (Josephus, J.W. 7.10.2-4 §§ 420-436).

The later rabbis are still familiar with the temple of Onias, the sacrificial service of which they view with some ambivalence, but which they are willing to recognize as valid under certain limited circumstances. (See m. Menah. 13:10; t. Menah. 13.12-14 [Zuck. 533]; b. Meg. 10a; b. Menah. 109; y. Yoma 43c.64-43d.6; y. Sanh. 19a.9.) One should view the Onias temple in the context of other Jewish temples outside of Jerusalem.⁸ The very existence of these various cultic sites raises the question of pluralism within the Jewish cult.

Rome

CII 315.⁹ Plaque of white marble, 19 cm in height, 35 cm in width, 3.7 cm in breadth, from the Monteverde catacomb in the Via Portuensis.

Ἐνθάδε κτε

2 Γαυδεντία
κδ'.
λέρισα ἐτῶν

Menorah

4 Ἐν ἱρήνῃ ἡ
κοίμησις αὐ-

Torah Shrine

6 τῆς.

L. 1. read κείται.
L. 4. read εἰρήνῃ.

Here lies Gaudentia, priest, (aged) 24 years. In peace be her sleep!

On the basis of the form of the carved letters, in particular of the mu, which is nearly cursive, the inscription is probably from the third or fourth century C.E. The menorah and the Torah shrine (with open doors revealing five shelves and six compartments) attest to the Jewishness of the inscription. Torah shrines also occur on other Jewish inscriptions from the Monteverde catacomb (cf. CII 327[4th C.], 343, 401[3rd C.], 460[3rd/4th C.]). Müller and Bees suggest that the Torah shrine may be a special symbol of Gaudentia's priestly ancestry and that the Roman Jewish community, with its limited knowledge of Hebrew, may have identified ᾶρον (Torah shrine) with Aaron. The depiction of an ᾶρον would indicate descendancy from Aaron. Since, however, this is the only one of the Monteverde inscriptions embellished by a Torah shrine which was dedicated to a person of priestly class, their suggestion is not convincing. The Torah shrine, like the other Jewish symbols which ornament ancient epitaphs, may simply indicate that the deceased was Jewish.

The name Gaudentia¹⁰ also appears in another inscription from the Monteverde catacomb in the Via Portuensis, CII 314, where the bearer of the name is the daughter of a man named Oklatios. The male (?) form of the name, Galudentis (Gaudentios?), occurs in CII 316, which is also from the Monteverde catacomb.

Four, possibly five, men bear the title hiericus in inscriptions from the Monteverde catacomb: CII 346, 347 (twice), 375, 355 (?). These will be discussed below.¹¹

As for the meaning of hierisa, modern commentators follow the pattern we have seen elsewhere. Harry J. Leon writes:

One woman, Gaudentia (315), is styled a hierisa. This is apparently the equivalent of the Hebrew cohenet and probably designates the wife (or daughter) of a hiericus. It could hardly point to a priestly function for a woman, since no priestesses are to be found in the Jewish worship. Father Frey thought that the title must denote a feminine member of the priestly family of Aaron.¹²

Frey himself writes, "τέροια, literally 'priestess,' cannot, in the present case, mean anything other than a member of the priestly family of Aaron."¹³

Beth She'arim

CII 1007.¹⁴ Painted in red above and to the right of arcosolium 2 of Hall K in Catacomb 1, 38 cm in length and 26 in height, with the height of the letters varying from 3 to 5 cm.

Σαρα θυγάτηρ
2 Ναιμίας μη-
τηρ ἱερέως
4 κύρα Μαρ[ε]λης
[ἐν]θά κ[ε]ῖται?].

L. 4. read κύρας.

Sara, daughter of Naimia, mother of the priest, Lady Maria, lies here.

The inscription should probably be dated to the fourth century C.E.¹⁵ Schwabe and Lifshitz argue that Sara's corpse had been brought from abroad, perhaps from Palmyra, for burial in Beth She'arim.¹⁶ The specific evidence for this case, however, namely nails and chips of wood found in her resting place, is not particularly convincing. The title kyra, "Lady," is not uncommon among the Greek inscriptions of Beth She'arim.¹⁷ The name of Sara's father, Naimia, is the equivalent of the Hebrew Nehemyah.¹⁸ Note that Sara's father is not called a priest.¹⁹ On the meaning of hierieia, Schwabe and Lifshitz write:

Particularly the use of the title τέροια is most interesting. Sarah, the mother of Miriam the priestess, was not a priestess herself and neither was her daughter. Miriam was a cohenet, i.e., the wife of a cohen. The relatives of the deceased wanted to indicate in the epitaph that Sarah was the mother of a cohen's wife. We cannot find a better proof

of the high social status of the priests in the Jewish community.²⁰

Since Sara's father is not called a priest, it is indeed unlikely that Sara was the daughter of a priest, and therefore a priest herself. Why Maria, however, who is called a priest, should not after all be one, is unclear. The meaning of cohenet (kōhenet) will be discussed below.²¹

CII 1085. Frey, on the basis of a communication with Moshe Schwabe, gives the following transcription:

.... τηρή[ως?
2 καὶ Σάρα[ς θυγατρός?
N]αϊμίας καὶ ἰ.
4 Μαρῆ[ας]22

[Tomb of . . .], priest (?), and of Sara,
[daughter of?] Naimia and of Maria

Schwabe and Lifshitz (Beth She'arim no. 68) state that the inscription is set above an arcosolium in room III of Hall K in Catacomb 1, and is 26 cm in length and 10 cm in height, with the letters being 3 cm high. According to them, line 1 is incised, and lines 2-4 are painted in red. Their reading is:

καὶ Σάρα [θυγά-]
2 [τηρ N]αϊμίας καὶ [μήτηρ?
Μαρῆ[ας τερ]φή[ας?]23

And Sara, daughter of Naimia and mother of the priest Maria.

Note that Frey has a line above the first line of Schwabe and Lifshitz. The difference between the two transcriptions should be sufficient evidence for the illegibility of this one inscription. A major difficulty with the Schwabe and Lifshitz transcription and reconstruction is that it is based on the assumption that two women, both by the name of Sara, both daughters of men named Naimia, and both mothers of priests named Maria, were buried at approximately the same time in the same hall, an assumption which is rather unlikely. Due to the uncertain reading of this inscription, it will not be considered as evidence for the title hierieia.

B. Possible Interpretations of hierieia/hierissa

There exist several possibilities for interpreting this term in our inscriptions:

1. Hiereia/hierissa is simply the Greek equivalent of kōhenet (Aramaic: kahāntta?)

Kōhenet is not a biblical but a rabbinic term. Although linguistically kōhenet is the feminine of kōhēn (Aramaic: kahāna?), it is not exactly parallel in meaning to kōhēn. A man becomes a kōhēn in one way, by birth. Kōhēn can therefore be defined as "son of a kōhēn," who must, of course, be married to a Jewish woman.²⁴ A woman becomes a kōhenet in two ways, by birth and by marriage. Kōhenet can therefore be defined as "daughter of a kōhēn" (bat kōhēn) or as "wife of a kōhēn" (ʿešet kōhēn).

The priest's daughter²⁵ had certain priestly rights, such as the right to eat from the priestly dues, a right which is laid down in the Bible (Lev 22:12-13):

רבח כהן כי תהיה לאיש זר
הוא בתרומת הקדשים לא תאכל:
רבח כהן תהיה אלמנה וגרושה זורע אין לה
ושבה אל-בית אביה כנעוריה מלחם אביה תאכל
וכל-זר לא-יאכלו בו:

If a priest's daughter is married to an outsider she shall not eat of the offering of the holy things. But if a priest's daughter is a widow or divorced, and has no child, and returns to her father's house, as in her youth, she may eat of her father's food; yet no outsider shall eat of it.

The presupposition here is that the priest's daughter, while a child, may eat of the priestly offerings. Unlike her brother, however, the daughter of a priest can lose her right to eat of the priestly offerings by marrying a common Israelite; if he marries a common Israelite, he may continue to eat the priestly dues, but if she does so, she relinquishes that right. If she marries a priest, however, she may continue to eat of the priestly offering, but this right is a derived one, i.e., due to her priestly husband and not to her own priestly descentance (also a derivation, of course).

The Holiness Code in Leviticus places the sexual activity of priests' daughters and wives in the context of the holiness of the male priests. Lev 21:9 reads:

רבח איש כהן כי תחל לזנות אח אביה
היא מחללת באש תשרף:

And the daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, profanes her father; she shall be burned with fire.

Thus, the holiness of the priest can be damaged by the sexual activity of his daughter; his holiness is to be preserved by executing the daughter whose sexual activity is not within the bounds of patriarchally-sanctioned marriage.

Similarly, the prospective wife of a priest must reflect his holiness (Lev 21:7):

אשה זנה וחללה לא יקח ואשה גרושה מאישה לא יקח
כי-קדש הוא לאלהיו.

The (priests) shall not marry a harlot or a woman who has been defiled; neither shall they marry a woman divorced from her husband; for the priest is holy to his God.

The priest must marry a widow or a virgin to preserve his own holiness. A prostitute, a rape victim or a divorced woman would endanger his holiness. Ezekiel warns priests to marry only Israelite virgins, but allows them priests' widows (Ezek 44:22). The high priest is allowed to take only "a virgin of his own people, that he may not profane his children among his people" (Lev 21:14). The issue in these laws is the holiness of the priestly semen, which should not be allowed to enter a "vessel" previously profaned by pre- or extra-marital sexual intercourse, whether the intercourse had been forced or not. The distinction between the divorced woman and the priest's widow is not immediately clear; perhaps the divorced woman was considered more likely to engage in prostitution or other non-marital sexual intercourse than a widow, a view common in patriarchal societies.

The questions raised in these biblical laws, namely, the right to eat of the priestly dues and the profanation of the priest through his wife or daughter, form the background of much of the rabbinic discussion on the kōhenet. Further marriage limitations, i.e., limitations on who could become a kōhenet through marriage, are also spelled out. For example, a hālūṣâ (a childless widow whose brother-in-law refused to marry her according to the duty of levirate marriage; see Deut 25:5-10) may be forbidden to a priest (m. Yebam. 2:4; cf. 1:4:²⁶ the School of Shammai forbids it; the School of Hillel allows it), as may a woman taken in levirate marriage (m. Yebam. 1:4: the School of Shammai allows it; the School of Hillel forbids it). A kōhenet who by accident (through a mix-up) had had intercourse with the wrong husband was also forbidden to marry a priest (m. Yebam. 3:10).

Lev 22:13 had already established that the daughter of a priest could lose her priestliness by marrying a non-priest. The

Mishnah (Yebam. 7:4-6) lists a number of further causes for which a bat kōhēn can lose her right to eat of the priestly heave-offering (tērūmā) or by which she may not attain it in the first place. For example, the brother-in-law whose duty it is to marry the widowed, childless bat kōhēn (m. Yebam. 7:4) is a hindrance for her; since she is bound to him, she cannot return to her father's house and eat the heave-offering. As we saw above, if her brother-in-law refuses to marry her, she becomes a hālūṣā and priests are forbidden to marry her; thus, she also loses the possibility of regaining the right to eat heave-offering by marrying a priest.

A central text on the kōhenet is m. Soṭa 3:7:

בח ישראל שנשאא לכהן, מנחה
נשרפה; וכהנת שנשאא לישראל,
מנחה נאכלת. מה-בין כהן
לכהנת? מנחה כהנת נאכלת, מנחה
כהן אינה נאכלת; כהנת מהחללת,
וכהן אין מתחלל; כהנת מטמאה
למחים, ואין כהן מטמא למחים;
כהן אוכל בקדשי קדשים, ואין
כהנת אוכלת בקדשי קדשים.

A daughter of an Israelite who is wed to a kōhēn: her meal-offering is burned; and a kōhenet (i.e., a daughter of a priest) who is wed to a common Israelite: her meal-offering is eaten.

In what manner does a kōhēn differ from a kōhenet? The meal-offering of a kōhenet is eaten, and the meal-offering of a kōhēn is not eaten; a kōhenet may forfeit her priestly rights, but a kōhēn does not forfeit his priestly rights; a kōhenet may become defiled because of the dead, but a kōhēn must not contract defilement because of the dead; a kōhēn may eat of the most holy sacrifices, but a kōhenet may not eat of the most holy sacrifices.

This text²⁷ is specifically concerned with pointing out that the priestliness of a kōhenet implies less than the priestliness of a kōhēn. Thus, the commandment to burn the meal-offering of a priest (Lev 6:16, "Every meal-offering of a priest must be a whole-offering; it is not to be eaten.") is taken to refer to the son of a priest, but not to the daughter of a priest. The kōhenet who marries a non-priestly Israelite is to eat the meal-offering as if she had not been born into the priestly class. In contrast, the non-priestly Israelite woman who is married to a priest is considered to be of priestly class, and her meal-offering is burned.

Similarly, a daughter of a priest may lose her right to eat the heave-offering (tērūmā) by having sexual intercourse with a man forbidden to her. Such a sexual connection also implies that

she may never marry a priest. The son of a priest, however, who marries a woman forbidden to him, such as a prostitute or a divorced woman (see Lev 21:7), loses his priestly rights only for the period during which he is married to her. If he divorces her or if she dies, he may once again claim his priestly rights. Thus, while a daughter of a priest can "profane herself" permanently, a son of a priest cannot. The Babylonian Talmud (Sot'a 23b) gives Lev 21:15 ("that he may not profane his seed among his people") as scriptural proof for the permanency of a male priest's priestliness: a priest can profane his seed but not himself, i.e., the children of such a union are not of the priestly class, but he himself remains a priest (cf. b. Mak. 2a; m. Bek. 7:7).

Further, a kōhenet, unlike a kōhēn, is allowed to touch a corpse. The Babylonian Talmud (Sot'a 23b) gives Lev 21:1 as scriptural proof for this distinction between kōhēn and kōhenet: "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron (. . . that none of them shall defile himself for the dead among his people)," is taken to mean "the sons of Aaron" and not "the daughters of Aaron."

Finally, a kōhēn may eat of the most holy sacrifices, while a kōhenet is not allowed to do so. The scriptural proof adduced by the Babylonian Talmud (Sot'a 23b) is Lev 6:11: "All male descendants of Aaron may eat (. . . of the offerings made by fire . . .)."

M. Sot'a 3:7 makes clear that at least one rabbinic view was that the priestliness of a woman was much more fragile and open to profanation than that of a man. There was no circumstance under which a man could lose his priestliness; the priestliness of a woman, however, could be forfeited forever by one act of sexual intercourse, whether desired or forced. Further, according to this view, the priestliness of a woman did not imply the same degree of sanctity as the man's priestliness. Thus, the prohibition of touching a corpse and the right to eat of the most holy sacrifices did not apply to the kōhenet. Nevertheless, there is a recognition that the kōhenet, be she a priest's daughter or a priest's wife, has the right to eat of the heave-offering.²⁸ Her eating of the heave-offering is surrounded by purity regulations, such as that she not eat of it during her menstrual period (m. Nid. 1:7).

In light of this background, one is rather surprised to read the following passage (b. Hul. 131b-132a):

עולא הוה יהיב מתנחא לכהנתא. איתיביה רבה לעולא, "מנחת כהנה נאכלת, מנחת כהן אינה נאכלת," ואי אמרת כהן ואפילו כהנה, והכתיב, "וכל מנחת כהן כליל תהיה לא תאכל". אמר ליה, רבי מטונך; אהרון ובניו כתוביו בפרשה. דבי רבי ישמעאל תנא, "כהן" ולא כהנה, וילמוד סתום מן המפורש. דבי ר' אליעזר בן יעקב תנא, "כהן", ואפילו כהנה, הוי מיעוט אחר מיעוט ואין מיעוט אחר מיעוט אלא לרבות. רב כהנא אכל בשביל אשתו; רב פפא אכל בשביל אשתו; רב יימר אכל בשביל אשתו; רב אידי בר אבין אכל בשביל אשתו. אמר רבינא, אמר לי מרימר... והלכתא כוונה דעולא.

'Ulla used to give the priestly dues to the *kōhenet*. Rava raised the following objection to 'Ulla. We have learned: "The meal-offering of a *kōhenet* is eaten, and the meal-offering of a *kōhēn* is not eaten" (*m. Soṭa* 3:7). Now if you say that *kōhēn* includes a *kōhenet* too, is it not written, "And every meal-offering of a priest must be a whole-offering; it is not to be eaten" (Lev 6:16)? He replied, "Master, I borrow your own argument, for in that passage are expressly mentioned Aaron and his sons."

The School of R. Ishmael taught: "Unto the *kōhēn*" (Deut 18:3), but not unto the *kōhenet*, for we may infer what is not explicitly stated from what is explicitly stated.

The School of R. Eli'ezer ben Jacob taught: "Unto the *kōhēn*" (Deut 18:3), and even unto the *kōhenet*, for we have here a limitation following a limitation, and the purpose of a double limitation is to extend the law.

R. Kahana used to eat (the priestly dues) on account of his wife. R. Papa used to eat them on account of his wife. R. Yemar used to eat them on account of his wife. R. Idi bar Avin used to eat them on account of his wife.

Ravina said, Meremar told me . . . that the halakha is in accordance with 'Ulla's view.²⁹

The issue here is whether the *kōhenet* (priest's daughter) who has married a non-priest is allowed to eat the priestly dues (Deut 18:3-4). According to the passages discussed thus far, the answer seems to be a clear no. A priestly woman who has married a non-priestly man forfeits her priestly rights. Yet this text reports on a tradition according to which priests' daughters who had "profaned themselves" (cf. *m. Soṭa* 3:7) were in fact allowed to continue to eat the priestly dues. Even more surprising is the tradition that a number of non-priestly rabbis³⁰ ate the priestly dues on account of their priestly wives, which means that not only did these women not forfeit their priestly rights upon marriage to a non-priest, but that they were even able to pass these rights on to their husbands. Two scriptural arguments are made for giving priests' daughters the priestly dues even

if they are married to sons of non-priests. The arguments are both based on Deut 18:3, which reads:

וְזֶה יִהְיֶה מִשְׁפַּט הַכֹּהֲנִים
מֵאֵם הָעֵם מֵאֵם זֶבַחִי הַזֶּבַח אִם-שֹׂרֵר אִם-שֶׁה
וְנָתַן לַכֹּהֵן הַזֶּרַע וְהַלְחִיִּים וְהַקִּבָּה:

And this shall be the priests' due from the people, from those offering sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach.

The arguments are:

1. Deut 18:3 speaks of "priests" (m.) and "priest" (m.) as the recipients of the priestly dues; according to 'Ulla, these terms, in contrast to the "Aaron and his sons" of Lev 6:16, which refer to the meal-offering and is the scriptural basis for burning the meal-offering of kōhānīm (m.) and letting kōhānōt (f.) eat their meal-offering (m. Sota 3:7), can include women.
2. According to the School of R. Ishmael, the grammatical gender of "priest" in Deut 18:3 implies the exclusion of women.
3. According to the School of R. Eli'ezer ben Jacob, the use of both "priests" (m.) and "priest" (m.) in Deut 18:3, both of which exclude women, has the effect that the double exclusion implies an inclusion.

These two strands of tradition, i.e., that the priestliness of a kōhenet is lasting and that it is not, must be left to stand side by side. There is no reason to try to harmonize the two.

It is not possible to discuss all of the passages in which kōhenet appears, but even the few passages cited show that:

1. The rabbis recognized that a kōhenet had certain rights and duties;
2. There were divergent views as to how derivative and fragile a woman's priestliness was, so that whether she could lose her priestly rights is not univocally answered.³¹

There would be no difficulty in identifying hierieia/hierissa as the Greek equivalent of kōhenet. Such an identification would in no way imply congregational leadership or a cultic function, other than the right to eat the priestly offerings (and possibly the right to pass this right on to their husbands). It would also imply the respect due to a member of the priestly caste.

2. Hierieia/hierissa in the Inscriptions Means "Priest" in the Cultic Sense of the Term

Some may find this hard to believe. Female cultic functionaries do not fit our image of ancient Judaism. To be

sure, seventy-five and eighty years ago there were those who argued that women could have held some official position in the ancient Israelite cult,³² but their view gradually fell out of scholarly favor.³³ This is not the place for a thorough, critical examination of the question of female priests in ancient Israel, but it is necessary to survey briefly some of the evidence cited by scholars at the turn of the century, as well as by several contemporary scholars who have argued that women may at one time have served as priestesses in ancient Israel. The relevance of the early material for the later should be clear. Earlier practices could have lived on for centuries, and biblical priestesses could have functioned as a model for the post-biblical period.

Two biblical texts which have been cited as evidence for priestesses in ancient Israel are Exod 38:8 and 1 Sam 2:22. Exod 38:8 reads:

ויעש את הכיור נחשת ואת כנור נחשת
במראה הצבאח אשר צבאו פתח אהל מועד:

And he (Bezalel) made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the mirrors of the ministering women (hassob'ot) who ministered (gab'u) at the door of the tent of meeting.

The root gb², in addition to the more usual meaning of "to wage war," can also mean "to serve in the cult," as it does in Num 4:3,23,30; 8:24, where it refers to the cultic service of Levites.

1 Sam 2:22 reads:

ועלי זקן מאד ושמע את כל אשר יעשו
בניו לכל ישראל ואת אשר ישכבון
את הנשים הצבאות פתח אהל מועד:

Now Eli was very old, and he heard all that his sons were doing in Israel, and how they lay with the women who ministered (hassob'ot) at the door of the house of meeting.³⁴

Whether this text refers to ritual, polyandrous sexual activity, normally called "cultic prostitution" by modern scholars, is unclear. If so, then we must assume that ritual sexual activity at a YHWH cultic site (Shiloh) was at least tolerated. An alternative explanation is that the sexual intercourse between the sons of Eli and the women ministering at the tent was not ritual in any way, and that the cultic service of these women consisted of some other sort of activity.

As might be expected, a number of modern scholars have suggested that the "women who ministered at the door of the tent

of meeting" in Exod 38:8 and 1 Sam 2:22 were actually house-keepers. S. R. Driver speaks of "the performance of menial duties by the women."³⁵ A. Eberharter speculates that the women may have been the wives and daughters of the priests, who would seem to have a special calling "to perform those tasks at the temple which required feminine diligence and sense of aesthetics."³⁶ Hans Wilhelm Hertzberg writes: "The women mentioned here (and in Exod 38:8) have the responsibility for seeing to it that the entrance, which is especially important for what goes on at the sanctuary, is kept clean."³⁷

These two texts, both of which refer to the pre-Jerusalem temple period, must be treated very cautiously. Rather than calling them evidence, I would prefer simply to say that they raise questions. The problem of over-interpretation actually lies not in suggesting that these women may have been cultic functionaries, but rather in knowing that they must have performed those menial duties which the modern commentators assign to their wives, daughters and housemaids.

It has been suggested that several biblical figures were possibly priestesses. Zipporah, for example, daughter of a Midianite priest and wife of Moses (Exod 2:16, 21), performed the ritual of circumcision on her son in order to avert the destructiveness of the Lord (Exod 4:24-26). F. M. Cross suggests that she was "apparently a priestess in her own right."³⁸ One must note, however, that circumcising is not usually considered to be a priestly activity, although it may have been in that period.

Benjamin Mazar suggests that Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, in whose tent Sisera sought refuge (Judg 4:17-20), could have functioned as a priestess at the sacred precincts related to the terebinth of Elon-bezaananim:

It may be concluded that Sisera fled from the battle to the tent of Jael not only to seek the peace which reigned between Jabin the king of Hazor and the family of Heber the Kenite, but also because of the special exalted position of Jael, and because her dwelling place, Elon Bezaannaim, was recognized as a sanctified spot and a place of refuge where protection was given even to an enemy. As for Sisera's murder at a sanctified spot, in violation of all rules of hospitality, it may be explained only as the fulfillment of a divine command by a charismatic woman; thus: "Blessed above women shall the wife of Heber be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent" (Judg 5:24).³⁹

Mazar's conclusion is based on the background of the family of Heber the Kenite, on the religious significance of terebinths,⁴⁰ as well as on the verse in the Song of Deborah, "In the days of

Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, caravans ceased and travelers kept to the byways" (Judg 5:6). This parallelization of Shamgar and Jael led the medieval Jewish commentator Rashi to note, "'In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael' indicates that even Jael was a judge in Israel in her days" (מלמד שאף יעל שפטה את ישראל בימיה).⁴¹

Judg 5:24 reads, "Blessed above women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, of the women in the tent most blessed" (תברך: מנשים יעל אשה חבר הקני מנשים באהל תברך:). It is worth noting that Targum Jonathan translates this verse as follows:

והתברך מברכה נשיא מבתא יעל אחח חבר
 42: שלמאה כחדא מנשיא דמשמשן בבתי מדרשין החרברך:

Let the blessed one of goodly women, Jael the wife of Heber, be blessed; her perfection is as one of the women who minister in the houses of learning. Blessed is she!

The root šmš means "to minister," "to officiate," "to wait upon." In Hebrew it is used of the high priest and the common priests in reference to their Yom Kippur functions in the temple (e.g., m. Yoma 7:5; y. Yoma 44b.40-42), to the high priest's exercising the office of high priest (e.g., b. Yoma 47a), to the functions of the segan, i.e., the adjutant high priest (e.g., y. Yoma 41a.3-4), and to other administrative functions (e.g., y. Soṭa 24a.24-25). In the targums, šmš is also used to mean priestly activity. For example, for 1 Sam 1:3, "the two sons of Eli, Hophni, and Phineas, were priests of the Lord" (שני בני עלי חפני), Targum Jonathan reads, "the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, ministered before the Lord" (חרין בני עלי ופנחס ממששין קדם ירי).⁴³ Seen against the background of the use of šmš to refer to priestly activity, the "women who minister (dimšamšin) in the houses of learning" of Targum Jonathan gains added interest, whereby the "houses of learning" remains an enigma. Doubtlessly some scholars will want to see the ministry of these women as consisting of sweeping the floor and rearranging the mats after the pupils and their learned teachers had finished the day's lesson, but such an interpretation would seem to be biased by a particular view of women. Could they have been teachers in the houses of learning?

In summary, Jael's family background, the fact that she is mentioned together with Shamgar (Judg 5:6) and the fact that Sisera sought refuge in her tent (Judg 4:17-21; 5:25-27) point to the possibility that Jael was a charismatic and perhaps even a priestly figure. Targum Jonathan's use of šmš could indicate

that even in later periods the remembrance of Jael as a priestly figure was still alive, although what ministering in the houses of learning could have meant is unclear.

The figure of Miriam should also be mentioned here. Miriam, who is called a "prophet" (*nēbi'ā*), is said to have led the Israelite women in religious dancing and singing (Exod 15:20-21). Num 12 reports on a struggle for spiritual influence and authority which pitted herself and Aaron against Moses. The prophet Micah also seems to view Miriam as a prophet: "I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam" (Mic 6:4). These and further biblical references to Miriam (Num 20:1; 26:59; Deut 24:9; 1 Chr 5:29) are in need of a systematic study in order to ascertain what the exact nature of Miriam's cultic role may have been, whereby cultic does not necessarily imply priestly. Further, one must answer the difficult questions of dating, and thereby of original historical context (and of historicity), of the Miriam texts, before it is possible to describe adequately the development of the Miriam tradition.⁴⁴

One later chapter of the Miriam tradition deserves at least brief mention. Philo of Alexandria reports on a group of women called the Therapeutrides (*De vita contempl.* 2), who devoted their lives to the study of scripture (*De vita contempl.* 28). These celibate women (*De vita contempl.* 68) lived in a type of dual monastery together with their male colleagues, the Therapeutai. Philo emphasizes that they flourished in his time (20 B.C.E.--after 40 C.E.) in many countries, including non-Greek ones (also in Palestine?), but that they were especially numerous in the area of Alexandria (*De vita contempl.* 21). According to Philo, the Therapeutrides and Therapeutai closed their sabbath meal by singing together (*De vita contempl.* 87-88):

Τοῦτο δὲ ἰδόντες καὶ παθόντες, ὁ λόγου καὶ ἐννοίας καὶ ἐλπίδος μεῖζον ἔργον ἦν, ἐνθουσιωδῶντες τε ἄνδρες ὁμοῦ καὶ γυναῖκες, εἰς γενόμενοι χορὸς, τοὺς εὐχαριστηρίους ὕμνους εἰς τὸν σωτήρα θεὸν ᾄδον, ἐξάρχοντος τοῦ μὲν ἀνδράσι Μωυσεως τοῦ προφήτου, ταῖς δὲ γυναῖξι Μαριαμ τῆς προφήτιδος. Τούτῳ μάλιστα ἀπεικονισθεῖς ὁ τῶν θεραπευτῶν καὶ θεραπευτρίδων, μέλεσιν ἀντήχοις καὶ ἀντιφώνοις πρὸς βαρὺν ἤχον τῶν ἀνδρῶν ὁ γυναικῶν ὄξυς ἀνακλιρῶμενος, ἑναρμόνιον συμφωνίαν ἀποτελεῖ καὶ μουσικὴν ὄντως.

This wonderful sight and experience (cf. Exod 14:26-29--the crossing of the Red Sea), an act transcending word and thought and hope, so filled with ecstasy both men and women that forming a single choir they sang hymns of thanksgiving to God their saviour, the men led by the prophet Moses and the women by the prophet Miriam. It is on this model above all that the choir of Therapeutai and Therapeutrides, note in

response to note and voice to voice, the treble of the women blending with the bass of the men, create an harmonious concert, music in the truest sense.

Thus, the ceremonial singing of the Therapeutrides and Therapeutai took as its model the singing of the Song of the Sea in Exod 15, in which the women were led by their prophet, Miriam, and the men by their prophet, Moses. From this text it is clear that the Miriam tradition played a role in the cultic life of the community.⁴⁵

This very cursory survey of evidence for women in ancient Israel having performed religious functions that may have been priestly cannot replace the intensive philological and historical work required to answer the question whether there were in fact women priests in ancient Israel. The passages cited show, however, that the question is not as absurd as it seems at first sight. In spite of the overwhelmingly masculine nature of the ancient Israelite priesthood, there are scraps of scattered evidence which could indicate a more varied historical reality than we are accustomed to imagine. The Israelite priesthood, like other institutions in ancient Israel and in the Jewish Diaspora, was not monolithic. The above texts, as well as the three inscriptions in question, are themselves hints of a diversity in the institution of the priesthood.

In the narrow sense of priesthood, i.e., fulfilling cultic functions at a sacred site, Marin from Leontopolis in the Heliopolitan nome is the only one of the three women named in the inscriptions who could have been a temple functionary, for she is the only one to have lived in a city and in a time in which a Jewish temple existed. Cultic or priestly functions could have included singing psalms, providing musical accompaniment, performing priestly blessings, examining the priestly offerings and animals and performing sacrifices. While it may seem strange to some that a temple founded by the Jerusalem high priestly family, the Oniads, could ever have allowed the cultic service of women, we must remind ourselves how little we actually know of the temple of Onias, which did, after all, endure for nearly two and a half centuries. Could it be that practices such as allowing women to exercise cultic functions were among the reasons for the rabbis' hesitancy to recognize the sacrifices offered there as valid? Could it be that the Jews of Leontopolis, living in a country in which there were female priests,⁴⁶ had come, over the course of time, to accept as natural the cultic participation of Jewish women who claimed to be descendants of Aaron (or the

successors to Miriam?)? Our knowledge of the Jewish temple at Leontopolis is too meager to be able to give a definitive answer to these questions.

In addition to the temple of Onias, Josephus mentions other Jewish temples in Egypt. He quotes Onias IV as writing in a letter to Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra II (*Ant.* 13.3.1 § 66):

... καὶ πλείστους εὐρῶν παρὰ τὸ καθήκον ἔχοντας ἱερά
καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δύσοντας ἀλλήλοις, ὃ καὶ Αἰγυπτίους
συμβέβηκε διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ τὸ περὶ τὰς
θρησκείας οὐχ ὁμοδοξεῖν ...

. . . and I found that most of them have temples, contrary to what is proper, and that for this reason they are ill-disposed toward one another, as is also the case with the Egyptians because of the multitude of their temples and their varying opinions about the forms of worship . . .

Agatharchides of Cnidus (2nd C. B.C.E.) also speaks of Jewish temples in the plural (*hiera*),⁴⁷ as do Tacitus (1st C. C.E.; -- *templa*)⁴⁸ and Tertullian (2nd - 3rd C. C.E.; *templa*).⁴⁹ Whether *hiera/templa* in Agatharchides, Tacitus and Tertullian (and Josephus) means "temples" in the narrower sense of the term or simply "places of worship" is not absolutely certain.⁵⁰ Perhaps these terms were simply the equivalent of *proseuchai*, which was the usual term for synagogue in Egypt and also occurred elsewhere.⁵¹ On the other hand, the resistance to the possibility that *hiera/templa* meant "temples" in one or more of these texts probably has its origin in the belief that the existence of the Jerusalem temple excluded the possibility of other genuinely Jewish temples, that is, that the centralization of the cult was absolutely effective, a view which has little basis in the evidence.⁵²

Perhaps Marin served in one of these other Jewish *hiera* which Onias considered to be heterodox. Or perhaps she served in Onias's temple itself. According to the Josephus passage, the Jewish communities who supported these temples disagreed with each other concerning the proper form of worship. Could the temple service of women have been one of the points of the dispute, much as today Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative and Orthodox Jews are in disagreement as to whether women should be called up to read the Torah or should be ordained rabbis?

We cannot know precisely how Marin and her relatives and community understood the title *hierisa*. The existence of the Marin inscription should at least serve as a warning to any

scholar who would categorically deny that a woman may have functioned as a priest in a Jewish temple in Leontopolis. The mention in several ancient authors of Jewish "temples" should remind us just how little we know about Jewish worship in this period.

3. Hiereia/hierissa could denote
a synagogue function

To some, synagogue function may seem as incredible an interpretation as cultic function. Is it not the case that the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 C.E. and the closing of the Jewish temple in Leontopolis in or shortly before 73 C.E. saw the end of priestly cultic service? Ancient sources show that the situation is not that simple. We know that priests continued to give the priestly blessing even after the destruction of the temple. (This practice has continued until our own day.)⁵³ The priestly blessing in the synagogue is a continuation of the priests' blessing of the people in the temple, a practice which is based on Num 6:22-27. Whether the priestly blessing in the synagogue was practiced already during the time of the Second Temple is not clear. There is evidence that the practice of having a priest be the first to read from the Torah during the synagogue service is an ancient one. M. Git. 5:8 reads:

ואלו דברים אמרו מפני דרכי שלום.
כהן קורא ראשון, ואחריו לוי,
ואחריו ישראל, מפני דרכי שלום.

These are the things which they ordained because of peace: a priest is the first to read (from the Torah) and after him a Levite, and after him a common Israelite, for the sake of peace.

Philo of Alexandria also attests to the priests being preferred as readers (Hypothetica 7.13):

Καὶ ὄητα συνέρχονται μὲν αἰεὶ καὶ συνεδρεῦουσι μετ' ἀλλήλων· οἱ μὲν πολλοὶ σιωπῆ, πλὴν εἴ τι προσεπευφημησάι τοῦς ἀναγιγνωσκόμενοις νομίζεται· τῶν ἱερέων δὲ τις ὁ παρὼν ἢ τῶν γερόντων εἴς ἀναγινώσκει τοῦς ἱεροῦς νόμους αὐτοῦς καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον ἐξηγεῖται μέχρη σχεδὸν δειλίης ὀψίας· καὶ τοῦδε ἀπολύονται τῶν τε νόμων τῶν ἱερῶν ἐμπεύρωσ ἔχοντες καὶ πολὺ ὁμῶς πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἐπιδεδωκότες.

And indeed they do always assemble and sit together, most of them in silence except when it is the practice to add something to signify approval of what is read. But some priest who is present or one of the elders reads the holy

laws to them and expounds them point by point till about the late afternoon, when they depart having gained both expert knowledge of the holy laws and considerable advance in piety.

According to this description of a sabbath service at the time of Philo, which is presumably a reflection of Alexandrian practice, a priest or elder reads a scriptural passage and then delivers a sermon on it. In this passage, Philo is referring to general Jewish practice and not to one of the Jewish sects. The practice presupposed here is different from the rabbinic ideal expressed in m. Git. 5:8. According to Philo, one person reads the entire passage, whereas m. Git. 5:8 ordains that more than one person should read. Philo does not state that the priest has preference over the elder, but the priest is mentioned first. Perhaps a priest, if present, was given preference, and otherwise one of the elders read and preached.

In addition to the ancient evidence for these two priestly practices in the synagogue, i.e., the priestly blessing and the preference for priestly readers, the Theodosian Code contains a rather surprising reference to priests as synagogue functionaries. The word "priest" (in the plural: hiereis, used as a foreign word in the Latin text) occurs only once in reference to Jews in the Theodosian Code (16.8.4, given on December 1, 331):

Idem A. hiereis et archisynagogis et patribus synagogarum et ceteris, qui in eodem loco deserviunt. Hiereos et archisynagogos et patres synagogarum et ceteros, qui synagogis deserviunt, ab omni corporali munere liberos esse praecipimus.⁵⁴

The same Augustus to the priests, heads of the synagogues, fathers of the synagogues, and all those who serve in the said place. We command that priests, heads of the synagogues, fathers of the synagogues, and all others who serve the synagogues shall be free from every compulsory service of a corporal nature.⁵⁵

This law has been discussed above in the context of mothers/fathers of the synagogues⁵⁶ and of heads of the synagogue.⁵⁷

Important for the present context is the inclusion of hiereis among others who serve in the synagogue, including heads of the synagogues and fathers of the synagogue. There are two possible explanations for the Roman lawgiver's having included hiereis in this law:

1. Christians, in writing the law, used the general Christian and pagan term for official religious functionary, not realizing that Jewish priests were not synagogue functionaries.

2. The authors of the law were well-informed of the inner workings of the synagogue, and this law is therefore an attestation of the Jewish priest's having been a synagogue functionary in this period.

In support of the first possibility, the increasing use of hierews for Christian office-holders should be mentioned. In a period in which Christians had come to use the specifically cultic title hierews to refer to deacons, presbyters and bishops,⁵⁸ hierews could have taken on the general meaning of "religious functionary." Thus, hierews may reflect Christian, and not Jewish, usage. A modern parallel would be the use of "Islamic priest" to describe a mullah, which reflects the religious background of Western journalists, rather than Islamic usage. The position of hierews, i.e., first in the list, could support this interpretation: the authors first employ the term which they consider to be the general term for "religious functionary," and then proceed to the specific titles of synagogue office known to them.

In support of the second explanation, one must note that the Christian authors had a deep enough knowledge of synagogue organization to employ two terms not in use in the Christian church: archisynagogi and patres synagogarum, although archisynagogos would have been known to them from the New Testament.⁵⁹ Further, the imperial court writers would certainly not have had an interest in liberating more persons than necessary from the corporal duties. Their interest would rather have been to limit the liberation to those persons who were clearly synagogue functionaries.

It is difficult to decide which is the better explanation, particularly in the light of the fact that the term hierews, as applied to Jews, occurs only once in the Theodosian Code. Although the second explanation is probably more convincing, it seems more prudent simply to let the two explanations both stand as good possibilities.

Evidence for special recognition of priests in non-temple worship services can be found at Qumran, where priests, together with the elders or the Levites and the elders, are commanded to sit in front (1 QS 6:8; 1QM 13:1). One must note, however, that the people of Qumran probably viewed their worship service as a substitute temple service, while it is not clear that synagogue congregants did. Further, according to the Manual of Discipline, there are to be three priests in the Council of the Community (1 QS 8:1). The Damascus Document ordains that of the ten judges

of the community, four must be from the tribe of Levi and Aaron (CD 10:4-5).⁶⁰

This scattered evidence for priests having roles in the synagogue or worship service as synagogue functionaries should not be misunderstood as evidence for priests as synagogue functionaries, but Philo, from the period before the destruction of the temple; the rabbinic references to the priestly blessing and the first Torah reader's being a priest, which can be dated back to at least the redaction of the Mishnah in the early third century; and the fourth-century Theodosian Code reference to Jewish priests in the context of synagogue officials (which may not be reliable, however) do show that several streams within Judaism seem to have given priests certain rights and roles within the non-temple worship service.⁶¹

Does any of this mean that Jewish women of priestly caste had special roles in the worship service? This is by no means immediately obvious. Our starting point was the three hierieia/hierissa inscriptions. If male priests could, by virtue of their priesthood, exercise certain roles in the non-temple worship service, is it possible that female priests could likewise have performed certain functions in the worship service? There are certain hindrances to an acceptance of this proposition. For example, the male, i.e., exclusive, language of Num 6:23 ("Say to Aaron and his sons"; דַּבֵּר אֶל-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל-בָּנָיו; LXX: Ἀάλησον Ααρων καὶ τοῖς υἱοῦς αὐτοῦ), was probably understood by all later exegetes to mean that men--but not women--of priestly caste are to recite the priestly blessing. The rabbis usually take exclusive biblical language to mean that women are in fact excluded.⁶² This tradition of interpretation should be taken much more seriously by those of today who argue that "sons" really includes "daughters" and "man" really includes "woman." Against the background of the exclusion of women where the bible uses male terminology, it is surprising to find a rabbinic example of the exact opposite: taking the biblical "son" (bēn) in Deut 25:5 to mean "son or daughter." The context is the woman whose husband dies without a son and whose brother-in-law is therefore required to marry her in order "that his (i.e., the dead husband's) name not be blotted out of Israel" (Deut 25:6). The rabbis ruled that if the deceased husband had a daughter, then the brother-in-law was not required to marry the woman (b. B. Bat. 109a). Perhaps this inclusive tradition is an old one, for the LXX has sperma for bēn, and to paidion for habbēkōr (Deut 25:5-6). In sum, it is likely that most streams of Judaism

would have taken Num 6:23 ("sons of Aaron") to mean that only male priests should recite the priestly blessing, but the extension of "sons" to include "daughters" would not be a total anomaly in the history of Jewish exegesis.

Is it possible that priestly women could have been preferred readers of the Torah? Again, to most scholars of Judaism, this proposition sounds absurd, largely because of the general view that women were not allowed to read the Torah in the ancient synagogue at all. Can ancient sources shed any light on this question? An important passage is t. Meg. 4.11 (Zuck. 226):

והכל עולין למנין שבעה, אפילו אשה, אפילו קטן.
אין מביאין אה האשה לקרוח לרבים.⁶³

Everyone can be counted in the minyan of the seven (who read the Torah in the worship service), even a woman, even a minor, but one does not bring a woman up to read to the congregation.

The Babylonian Talmud (Meg. 23a) has:

חנאו רבנן הכל עולין למנין שבעה,
ראפילו קטן, ראפילו אשה, אבל אמרו חכמים,
אשה לא תקרא בחורה מפני כבוד צבור.

Our rabbis taught: Everyone can be counted in the minyan of the seven, even a minor, even a woman; but the sages said: A woman does not read from the Torah due to the honor of the congregation.

It is clear that these texts forbid women from reading the Torah to the congregation. The enigma is that if they are clearly forbidden to read, why are women included in the quorum of the seven in the first place? Minors, who are also included, are in fact allowed to read (see m. Meg. 4:6), a practice which later receded with the rise of the bar-mitzvah. Why are women included here at all? Ismar Elbogen suggests that women were originally allowed to read, but that by the Tannaitic period, they were already excluded.⁶⁴ This would mean that the rabbinic inclusion of women in the quorum of the seven attests to a more ancient tradition, later suppressed, according to which women were allowed to read from the Torah in public.

Why the Babylonian Talmud gives the "honor of the congregation" as a reason for not allowing women to read is unclear. A possible parallel case could be a woman, a slave or a minor reading the Egyptian Hallel (Pss 113-118) to a man who is not able to read or to recite it from memory himself. The Mishnah ordains that such a man should repeat it after the woman,

the slave or the minor reading it, but curses be upon him (m. Sukk. 3:10)! The shame of having a member of one of these groups read to an illiterate, Jewish, adult male was apparently great in the eyes of the rabbis.⁶⁵ What m. Sukk. 3:10 does show is that it was not unknown in the rabbinic period for women to be capable of reading scripture aloud.

Neither t. Meg. 4.11 nor m. Sukk. 3:10 can be dated more specifically than to the Tannaitic period, which closed around the first quarter of the third century. They are not parallel passages, of course, for t. Meg. refers to women reading the Torah in public and forbids it, while m. Sukk. 3:10 refers to women reading the Hallel in private and grudgingly allows it. The enigma of the inclusion of women in the minyan of the seven cannot be definitively solved with the few hints available to us in our sources, but their inclusion does make it impossible to state that under no circumstances did women publicly read from the Torah in the ancient synagogue. We must simply admit that we do not know if women did or did not read.⁶⁶ If we do not know what the situation in Palestine and Babylonia was, how much less do we know of synagogue worship in Egypt or in Rome, where Marin and Gaudentia worshiped.

In conclusion, although the recitation by priestly women of the priestly blessing seems unlikely in light of the explicit "Aaron and his sons" in Num 6:22, it is not impossible that certain communities could have interpreted this to mean "Aaron and his children" and have asked both the priestly women and the priestly men present to bless them. Further, although there is no solid evidence for women having read the Torah publicly in the synagogue service, it cannot be excluded, particularly for the Greek-speaking congregations (about which we know next to nothing), that they did. Therefore, it cannot be excluded that one or more of the three women of our inscriptions were remembered with the title "priest" because their priestly descent had entitled them to certain rights and honors in the synagogue service during their lifetime.

C. References to Male Priests in Inscriptions and Papyri

Before attempting to come to a decision as to the likelihood of the three possible interpretations of hiercia/hierissa, a brief survey of hiercus in Jewish inscriptions and papyri is necessary. From Rome there are four hiercus inscriptions, all

from the Monteverde catacomb, which Leon dates from the first century B.C.E., through the end of the third century C.E.⁶⁷

CII 346. Marble plaque.

Ἐνθάδε κειτε
2 Ἰουδας ἱερε-
ους.

L. 1: read κειται.
Ll. 2-3: read ἱερεύς.

Here lies Judas, priest.

CII 347. Marble plaque.

Ἐνθάδε
2 κεινται
Ἰουδας καὶ
4 Ἰωσηφ ἀρ-
χοντες
6 καὶ ἱερεῖς
καὶ ἀδελφοί.

Here lie Judas and Joses, archons and priests and brothers.

CII 355. Three marble fragments.

[Ἐνθ]άδε κειτε Ἰ[...]
2 [...]ος ἱερεύ[ς]
[....]καν ἐν[....]
4 [....]την.⁶⁸

L. 1. read κειται.

Here lies J[....], priest [....].

CII 375. Marble plaque engraved on both sides; broken into six fragments.

Ἐνθάδε κειτε
2 Μαρια ἡ τοῦ ἱε-
ρέως.

L. 1. read κειται.

Here lies Maria the (wife? daughter?) of the priest.⁶⁹

It is striking that all of the Roman hierieia/hiereus inscriptions are from the Monteverde catacomb.⁷⁰ Unfortunately, no information about the actual role of the priest can be gleaned from these inscriptions. CII 375 is especially important for the question of whether hierieia/hierissa simply means "wife (or daughter) of a priest." The Maria here, who is the wife or daughter of a priest, is not called hierieia or hierissa, but

rather ἡ του hierēōs. This does not mean that hierēia/hierissa in the three inscriptions in question could under no circumstances mean "wife (or daughter) of a priest," but it does show that there was a way in Greek to express such a relationship without this title, which a Greek speaker would have understood as meaning "female cultic functionary." Perhaps the "of the priest" is to distinguish her from another Maria in the community or perhaps it was meant to indicate that she was a non-Aaronide wife of a priest and therefore not a hierissa herself.

There are three occurrences of hierēus at Beth She'arim:

CII 1001 (Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 49).

Ἱερέων.
כַּהֲנָיִם.

Of the priests. Priests.

Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 180 (part one).

BA
Ἱερεὺ[ς]
[Ἱ]αβὲ Ἱερών[υμος].

The priest, Rabbi Hieronymos.

Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 181.

Ἰουδᾶς
Ἱερεὺς.

Judas, priest.

In addition to these, there are two further inscriptions of relevance:

CII 1002 (Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.28),⁷¹

הַמְקוֹם הַזֶּה
שֶׁל כַּהֲנָיִם.

This place belongs to priests.

Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 148.

Χωρὸν Βυρτιτιοῦς.

A priest from Beirut.

CII 1001 is carved on the ceiling above arcosolium 1 of Hall I in Catacomb 1. The "Of the priests. Priests," must mean that arcosolium 1 was set aside for the graves of priests. CII 1002

in Hall I of Catacomb 1 also indicates a separate burial place for priests; Schwabe and Lifshitz are of the opinion that māgôm here must mean "arcosolium," so that this inscription would be a further attestation of burying people of priestly descent separately. It is worthy of note that in none of the Greek inscriptions in arcosolium 1 of CII 1001 does the term "priest" occur (Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. nos. 50-53). Perhaps the single inscription CII 1001 was viewed as sufficient emphasis of the priestly ancestry of those buried in that arcosolium, making the use of hiericus/hiereia on each individual epitaph unnecessary. This practice of the separate burial of priestly women and men indicates a strong concern for the priesthood even in the third and fourth centuries C.E.⁷²

Little can be said about the other inscriptions. In Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 148, chōēn is the Greek transliteration of kōhēn.

At Leontopolis in Heliopolis, the site of CII 1514, the Marin inscription, no Jewish hiericus inscriptions have been found. In fact, other than the Roman and Beth She'arim inscriptions, few Jewish inscriptions with hiericus have been found at all to date.⁷³ In light of this rather striking distribution--a number of "priest" inscriptions from the Monteverde catacomb in Rome and from the necropolis at Beth She'arim and few elsewhere--it is reasonable to assume that priestly descent was especially emphasized in the communities which buried their dead on these two sites.⁷⁴ Whether this special emphasis on the priesthood also implies that priestly women and men in these communities had special roles cannot be said.

The term hiericus also occurs several times in Egyptian Jewish papyri (CPJ 120, 121, 139 [twice]), but since each occurrence consists only of a name followed by "priest," they are of little help to us in identifying any priestly functions.

Conclusions

As unsatisfying as it may be, it must be admitted that it is impossible to know precisely what hiericia/hierissa in the three ancient Jewish inscriptions means. Were this term to be the equivalent of the rabbinic kōhenet, no problems of orthodoxy would present themselves, for kōhenet does not signify a cultic or administrative religious functionary. If, on the other hand, it were to imply certain functions in the synagogue or temple worship service, the accepted image of ancient Jewish worship

would have to be altered considerably. In contrast to the synagogue functionaries discussed thus far, the Jewish priesthood has biblical roots and was attached to the temple service, both of which make the question of Jewish male and female priests highly complex.

For all of these difficulties, it must also be emphasized that if the three inscriptions had come from another Graeco-Roman religion, no scholar would have thought of arguing that "priest" does not really mean "priest." The composers of these inscriptions must have been aware that they were employing a term which normally implied a cultic function. Further, as the above survey has shown, it is not as far-fetched to imagine that a woman could have had a cultic function, for example, at the Jewish temple in Leontopolis, or that a woman could have had a synagogue function, such as reading from the Torah, as it might seem at first blush. Until further evidence is found to support one or the other of the interpretations, it seems most prudent to keep the various options open. In light of the evidence surveyed, an absolute statement such as that of Jean Juster, ". . . women were not allowed to be priestesses among the Jews,"⁷⁵ does not seem prudent.

PART TWO

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

CHAPTER VI

DID THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE HAVE A WOMEN'S GALLERY OR SEPARATE WOMEN'S SECTION?

In a lecture on the Galilean synagogue ruins held on December 16, 1911 in Berlin, the great Judaica scholar Samuel Krauss said to his audience:

Now that we are inside the synagogue, let us first of all--as politeness demands--look for the rows of the seats of our dear wives, on the supposition that something will be found which could be viewed as the remains of a "Weiberschul"¹ in the synagogue ruins.²

Following the demands of politeness, Mr. Krauss did look for, and did find, the remains of what he called the women's gallery in the ancient Galilean synagogues.³ The majority of modern Judaica scholars and archaeologists follow Krauss in both method and result, i.e., they look for a women's gallery and they find one.⁴

The significance of the question of the women's gallery for the question of women as leaders in the synagogue should be clear. If all ancient synagogues relegated women to a side room, a balcony or to the back of the prayer hall, perhaps even further separating them from the men by a lattice work or a translucent or even opaque curtain, as the contemporary Orthodox synagogue does, then it is indeed difficult to imagine that the women discussed in the previous chapter had any official functions in the synagogue, at least during the religious service. This type of seating arrangement does not imply "separate but equal." It is true, of course, that the Jewish service cannot be compared, for example, with a Roman Catholic mass, where the entire focus of the service is the altar and what goes on there. Certainly many Orthodox women feel that they can say their prayers behind a curtain as well as were they seated together with the men. Nevertheless, the reading of scripture, the sermon and the leading of prayers in an Orthodox synagogue all occur in the men's section. When the Torah scroll is carried around it is a focus of attention; everyone who has the opportunity to touch it is overjoyed. Needless to say, that same Torah scroll is not passed from the hands of the men into the hands of the women, so

that the women up in the gallery might also have the opportunity to touch it. No, instead the women peer down to what is happening below, sometimes leaning over the railing to get a better look. In some synagogues the women cannot hear the sermon well from where they are seated, and in most they cannot see well. If they are behind a curtain, they can only see shadows and outlines. If, by analogy, we use the contemporary Orthodox seating arrangement as the background against which to interpret the titles borne by ancient Jewish women, then it is in fact difficult to come to any other conclusion than that these women had no official function.

But just how strong is the archaeological and literary evidence that the ancient synagogue possessed a women's gallery? Upon what do Krauss and his colleagues base their theory? A survey of the archaeological and literary evidence for the women's gallery can answer that question.

A. Is there Archaeological Evidence for a Women's Gallery or a Separate Women's Section?

In our century numerous synagogues have been excavated in Palestine and in the Diaspora. Sometimes the remains are minimal, such as a single inscription. Other remains are quite sufficient for drawing up a complete floor plan. In no case has an actual gallery been found. All of the galleries in all the architects' reconstructions are reconstructed and not extant. In order to decide whether these reconstructions are convincing, a survey of the evidence from the major sites is necessary. We should remember, however, that monumental remains can only tell us whether a side room or gallery existed, not whether it was for women. Theoretically, donative inscriptions could speak of a women's gallery, room for women or divider between the women's and men's sections, but none do.

1. Synagogues in Roman and Byzantine Palestine

With the exception of the Theodotos inscription (CII 1404),⁵ there exist no undisputed synagogue remains from the Second Temple period. This is probably due to the fact that the floor plans of the earliest synagogues differed little from those of normal houses and cannot be identified by archaeologists as synagogues, if by "synagogue" one means a building whose main function was to house the worship service.⁶ The first possible synagogue ruin from the first century was discovered at Masada,⁷ Herod the

Great's fortress near the Dead Sea. In its present state, the structure can be dated to the period of the Zealot occupation during the First Jewish Revolt (66-73 C.E.); it is unclear whether the original Herodian building was also a synagogue before being remodeled by the Zealots. The building, approximately 10.5 by 12.5 meters in size, is located directly on the casemate wall on the northwest side of the plateau. The original Herodian building had an anteroom, and the main room had had five pillars along the northern, western and southern sides. When the Zealots remodeled, they removed two of the columns of the western row, and tore down the wall dividing the anteroom from the main room, placing the two pillars where the wall had been. They also built a small room (3.5 x 5.5 m) in the northwestern corner with an entrance from the main hall and set up a four-tiered row of plastered benches along the north, west and south walls and a single bench on the eastern entrance side.

In addition to the structure's clear nature as an assembly room, the discovery of scripture fragments (Deuteronomy and Ezekiel) found buried under the floor (as if in a geniza?) added to the conviction that the building in question was indeed a synagogue. However, since we know little about the layout of first-century synagogues, one should not consider the identification as a synagogue a closed matter.

Concerning the women's gallery, it is clear that there was none, and the small room in the corner is clearly unsuitable as a women's room as it has no separate entrance. All worshipers sat in the one main room on the benches along the walls.

At Herod the Great's fortress, Herodion,⁸ just southwest of Bethlehem, a structure very similar to the one at Masada was found. The room (14 x 10 m), with an entrance in the east, was remodeled by the Zealots during their occupation (66-70 C.E.). It had a nave and two side aisles with four (or perhaps six) columns on each side and a three-tiered row of stone benches along the sides and back. Due to its clear nature as an assembly room and because of the similarities to the synagogue at Masada, it is likely that this too was a synagogue. As at Masada one searches in vain for a women's gallery.

A further first-century public building which is most likely a synagogue was found in Gamla,⁹ the Jewish fortress in the Golan Heights destroyed by the Romans in 67 C.E. One enters the building through a narthex and proceeds through a vestibule into the main prayer hall, which, like Masada and Herodion, is lined with rows of benches. Four rows of columns run parallel to

the walls. The synagogue is approached in its southeast corner by stairs coming up the side of the hill.¹⁰ An article in the Biblical Archaeological Review¹¹ states that these stairs possibly led to an upper gallery, and a photograph of the synagogue at Capharnaum, which also has stairs, is printed as a parallel. Further excavation in the summer of 1979, however, has revealed that these steps are the continuation of a road leading up the side of a hill to the synagogue. They should, therefore, be seen as leading to the synagogue itself rather than to a gallery.

Migdal¹² (Magdala) and Korazin¹³ (Arabic: Khirbet Karaza; N.T.: Chorazin) have also been in the discussion of first-century synagogues, but both must now be excluded.¹⁴

After the first century, synagogue ruins become much more identifiable and much more varied in their architecture. In a number of these ruins archaeologists have conjectured the existence of an upper gallery for women or of a separate room for them. This is on the basis of evidence ranging from one pillar base to a number of pillars, entablature and stairs. In a number of other cases no one has claimed that any provision for separation existed.

Eshtemoa' (Arabic: es-Samu')¹⁵ in Judea, south of Hebron, is an example of the latter category. One enters the building (13.3 x 21.3 m) on the east side through a narthex with two pillars and two columns. In the prayer hall itself it is the Torah niche in the long northern wall, rather than on one of the narrow walls, which orients the synagogue towards Jerusalem. Two-tiered stone benches line the north and south walls. There seem to have been no columns in the prayer hall itself. Without columns there could have been no upper gallery, and one can see from the floor plan that there is no place for a separate room for women. The synagogue can be dated to the fourth century.

A further case where there seems to be no women's gallery is the synagogue at Beth She'an.¹⁶ The room in question is roughly square (7 x 7 m) and part of a larger complex including the house of a man named Leontius and a court. One entrance was through the court on the north, and a second entrance was from the east. The excavators have assumed the existence of a niche in the south wall (towards Jerusalem). There were benches along the walls. One can see that all synagogue worshipers sat together in one room. The date is from the middle of the fifth to the sixth century.¹⁷

In a further number of cases where remains for a gallery could conceivably have been found, the archaeological reports mention none. These are cases where one finds sufficient remains to expect some evidence for an upper story if one existed. They include: Beth She'arim (352-53),¹⁸ Beth Yerah (dating ranging from 4th to 6th C.),¹⁹ Qatsrin (4th C.),²⁰ Jerash (4th/5th C.),²¹ Isfiya (5th/6th C.),²² Jericho (6th/7th, possibly 8th, C.),²³ Na'aran (6th C.).²⁴ Khirbet Sumaq (3rd C.),²⁵ Tell Menora (6th C.),²⁶ Gaza (6th C.),²⁷ Rehov (4th/7th C.),²⁸ Ma'oz Hayyim (4th/5th C.),²⁹ Hammat Teverya (north of the hot springs--3rd/4th C.).³⁰

There are a number of synagogue ruins, particularly in Galilee, where excavators have reconstructed a women's gallery on the basis of various pieces of evidence. Let us now turn to these.

The synagogue at Capharnaum on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee is one of the best-preserved synagogues found in Israel. The white limestone structure is a basilica with a nave and two side aisles. A third row of pillars runs parallel to the back wall. The structure is oriented towards Jerusalem. Three doors on the south wall provide access to the nave and two side aisles respectively. The prayer hall is adjoined by a court with a colonnade carrying a portico along the northern, southern and western walls, leaving the central court open. At the outer northwestern corner of the synagogue proper there is a small structure made of black basalt (like the rest of the village, but in contrast to the white limestone of the synagogue itself). This structure is flanked by stairs leading up and away from the back, i.e., northern wall of the synagogue.

The first major excavation of the synagogue was undertaken in 1905 by Heinrich Kohl and Carl Watzinger. According to their reconstructed model, a women's gallery, which was reached by the basalt steps at the northwest corner, extended over the two side aisles and across the back of the synagogue proper, being supported by the columns below.³¹ Their two-story model is reprinted by Erwin Goodenough,³² Stanislaw Loffreda,³³ Zev Vilnay,³⁴ etc. A printed reconstruction like this tends to achieve a life of its own; one soon forgets which stones are actually there and which ones were called into being by the artist's pen.

This reconstruction assumes that women would have entered the gallery by the stairs attached to the black basalt annex at

the back. The gallery would have had Doric columns of a slightly narrower width than the Corinthian columns below.³⁵

The reconstruction should be clear and indeed looks plausible. Let us now examine the actual remains of this gallery. The visitor to the reconstructed synagogue at Capharnaum does not see a gallery. What is it that would archaeologically force us to assume the existence of such a thing? It is not the basilica style that would necessitate one, for indeed most basilicas did not have galleries.³⁶ Nor do we have the remains of a gallery: the floor, the railing, the walls behind it, the lintel of the door leading into it. There do exist several Doric columns of a diameter slightly less (10 cm less) than that of the columns of the prayer hall. Further, one finds several fragments of what could have been the architrave of the upper row of columns and the first steps of a staircase located at the back of the synagogue, i.e., at the northwest corner next to the basalt structure. The best evidence for a gallery consists of these steps in the back, which could possibly lead up to a gallery door. This theory presupposes a rather narrow, winding, outside staircase leading up to a rather elegantly decorated gallery. An alternative interpretation would be that the basalt staircase served the basalt structure to which it is attached. This is, in fact, the way the most-recent excavators of the synagogue, Virgilio Corbo, Stanislaw Loffreda, and Augusto Spijkerman, interpret it. They take the basalt structure (Installation 143) to be some type of storeroom and surmise that the staircase leads to an upper level of the storage area.³⁷ This reconstruction is also based on their observation that too few fragments of the alleged gallery have been found and that the winding staircase is too narrow to assume that women used it for the regular sabbath services.³⁸

Just four kilometers north of Capharnaum lie the ruins of Korazim.³⁹ The synagogue measures 16.7 by 22.8 meters and is divided by two rows of columns into a nave and two side aisles, with a third row of columns forming a further aisle along the northern side. A small room which could be entered only from the inside extended out into a courtyard, which was about five meters in width. Between the wall of this courtyard and the small room were found several steps. Nahman Avigad writes, "Apparently, these were part of a staircase leading to the upper story."⁴⁰ Other evidence from Korazim for a gallery consists of fragments of smaller columns as well as fragments from a frieze, which is

reconstructed as having run along the upper portion of the walls of the gallery.⁴¹

The synagogue in an-Nabraten (Hebrew: Nevoraya),⁴² just north of Safed was surveyed by Kohl and Watzinger in 1905 and recently excavated under the direction of Eric M. Meyers, James F. Strange, and Carol L. Meyers. Because the excavations began in 1980, only preliminary reports are available.⁴³ The excavators surmise that Kohl and Watzinger are relatively accurate in assessing the dimensions at 16.9 x 11.65 m.⁴⁴

Two rows of four columns run north-south; one entered through a single entrance in the southern facade, and there must also have been one entrance in the north. Eric Meyers notes that the "presence of smaller column fragments and pedestals suggest a possible portico on the southern side."⁴⁵ In 1905 Kohl and Watzinger found a single base to a column outside of the building on the south (front) side, the diameter of which is 46 cm, in contrast to the bases inside which have a diameter of 66.5 cm and conjectured that the base could be the single remain of a gallery.⁴⁶ However, due to the smallness of the building they concluded that a better guess is that the building had only one story and that there existed a separate room for women on the same level on the north side, the northern door being the entrance to this women's section.⁴⁷ Erwin Goodenough comments, "Since guessing is all that can be done, my guess is that women were left out altogether."⁴⁸ Presumably the base of a column found in 1905, which served as the base not only of a column but in fact of a whole gallery, was among those fragments found in the campaign and taken possibly to be part of a portico, which means that the fragments lay near where they had originally stood.

The two varying interpretations of these fragments are a good illustration of the difficulties inherent in the women's gallery hypothesis at many sites. Kohl and Watzinger reconstruct an entire gallery on the basis of one fragment and in the absence of a staircase, while the recent excavators suggest a more plausible interpretation of the same data. As to Goodenough's theory that women did not come to the synagogue, one can only ask on what evidence he bases his view.

One of the best preserved synagogues in Galilee was found in Bar'am (Arabic: Kafr Bir'im),⁴⁹ eleven kilometers northwest of Safed. The large building (15.2 x 20 m), probably to be dated to the third century, had a porch on the south side (facing Jerusalem), which was supported by eight columns. There were

three front entrances leading into the prayer hall, which was divided by two longitudinal rows and one transversal row of columns into a nave surrounded by three side aisles.

Kohl and Watzinger⁵⁰ assume the existence of a gallery. Their evidence consists of one base for a column 49 cm in diameter and the fragments of a pillar with a diameter of 43 and 44 cm. These items being of a lesser diameter than the others found, Kohl and Watzinger assume that they must have belonged to an upper gallery. They further suggest that an Ionic capital found in the house of village priest, a capital having a diameter of 45 cm, would fit well for an upper gallery. This is a rather motley collection of evidence. The only common denominator seems to be the diameter, which is in all three cases less than that of other columns found inside the prayer hall. It is by no means clear, however, that these three architectural fragments have anything to do with a women's gallery or even with each other. One cannot exclude the possibility that these three fragments belonged to a gallery, but we have no particular reason for assuming that the one base, the fragments of a pillar and the Ionic capital are the sole surviving elements of a gallery, rather than elements from some other part of the building. What definitely speaks against the gallery thesis is the lack of even the trace of a staircase providing access to such a gallery. In their floor plan, Kohl and Watzinger have added a reconstructed staircase on the outer northwestern corner of the building (as at Capernaum), punctuating it with question marks.⁵¹ While such reconstruction is not an illegitimate endeavor, one should be aware that there is not a single bit of evidence to support this. Since Kohl and Watzinger's time, when this corner was as yet uncleared, the whole synagogue area has been cleared and partially restored. In a visit to the site in June 1978, I was able to find no traces of a staircase.

It is worthwhile to compare Kohl and Watzinger with two more recent scholars. For Erwin Goodenough the gallery was no longer a thesis to be supported by evidence, but a fact to be cited. He reprints Kohl and Watzinger's floor plan, with its reconstructed staircase, commenting that the synagogue had "columns carrying a balcony on the east, north and west sides"⁵² and that, "Steps seem to have gone up to the gallery on the north side of the building as at Capernaum."⁵³ Nahman Avigad writes, "The facade undoubtedly was two stories high and terminated in a Syrian pediment, but no traces of such a pediment have been found." He further comments, "No remains of the upper story were

found."⁵⁴ It is unclear whether Avigad discounts the evidence cited by Kohl and Watzinger or whether he has overlooked it. In any case, he is willing to stick to the theory of an upper story, even in the face of no evidence at all. Since Avigad's plan has no reconstructed staircase,⁵⁵ there is no way of knowing how he would provide access to such a second story.

There is one more piece of evidence to be considered. When the Dutch traveler C. W. M. van de Velde was in the village of Bar'am in the middle of the last century, an old man told him about an upper "story with pillars," which had stood in his youth, but which had been destroyed by an earthquake.⁵⁶ This does make more credible the possibility of a gallery, although the problems raised above still remain, particularly the lack of a staircase. However, a "story with pillars" could mean anything from pilasters set high up on the walls to an actual second story. A further question is how much credence one should give to such a second-hand report.

In conclusion, while a gallery at Bar'am cannot be excluded, the burden of proof rests upon the proponents of a gallery. The meager evidence cited to date is simply not sufficient to suppose the existence of such a gallery.

One of the most fascinating of the ancient synagogues is the one excavated at Khirbet Shema'⁵⁷ in Upper Galilee. Built directly into the hill, it offers the visitor a spectacular view of the hills of Galilee. The entrance from the top of the hill is by steps leading down into the prayer hall, and, the building being of the broadhouse type, one would turn upon entering to face the long wall with the beam in order to be oriented towards Jerusalem. The building is about 11 by 15 meters in size. There were two building periods, the first in the third century (Synagogue I), the second in the fourth or fifth century (Synagogue II). The first synagogue was probably destroyed in an earthquake.

The gallery posited by the excavators in the same place for both Synagogue I and Synagogue II was probably constructed of wood which rested on bedrock at the western side of the synagogue.⁵⁸ It is posited that those entering the gallery either turned to the left into the gallery at the top of the stairs leading down to the main prayer hall or, more likely, entered by a separate door in the north wall (in Synagogue II).⁵⁹ The hypothesis is that the gallery was meant for women and that a back entrance to the gallery would insure a total separation of

the sexes. The evidence for such a door is a trace of a cutting in the bedrock into which the threshold would have fit.⁶⁰

In comparison with other synagogue ruins, Khirbet Shema' lends itself to the reconstruction of a gallery reasonably well. At least one can say that a space exists which could plausibly be a gallery; in the other ruins that space must first be created. Nevertheless, here, as with the other posited galleries, one must carefully distinguish between what actually exists and what must be reconstructed. The evidence for the gallery consists of the bedrock upon which it may have rested and a slight indentation in the bedrock which may have been meant to receive the threshold for a door leading into the gallery. What is not extant is any of the gallery itself. In light of this lack, the excavators suggest that it may have been made of wood,⁶¹ and that some of the smaller pieces found in the main prayer hall may have belonged to the gallery.⁶² Nor have remains of the actual western wall been found. At the northwestern corner, one finds only bedrock, making the exact line of the wall and of a northern door a matter of reconstruction.⁶³

Thus, Khirbet Shema' does bear evidence for a space of some sort upon bedrock, but the actual gallery, wall and door must be entirely reconstructed. Even if one were to accept the existence of a wooden gallery, rather than assuming an area for storage or some other purpose, there is no archaeological reason for assuming that it must be for women. Maybe a gallery existed for no other reason than that the builders wanted to make the best use of the space available to them and decided that a gallery was the best way to utilize the bedrock.⁶⁴ What is clear from this is that while the analogy of other synagogues could be used to posit the existence of a gallery at Khirbet Shema', Khirbet Shema' itself, due to the particular problems raised by its building site, cannot be used as an analogy for other synagogues.

Just one kilometer to the north of Khirbet Shema', also on a hill, were found the ruins of the synagogue of Meiron,⁶⁵ probably dating from the second half of the third century. The building, cut out of the rock on the northeastern side of the hill, is about 27 by 13.5 meters in size. Very little of the building has survived. Kohl and Watzinger⁶⁶ were the first to posit the existence of an upper gallery, and later archaeologists have not called this into question. The evidence for such a gallery consists of the base of a corner column, the diameter of which is somewhat less (47 cm) than that of other columns which were found (60-69 cm). Even Kohl and Watzinger recognize that

this is rather meager evidence upon which to reconstruct an entire gallery, and they concede that the fragment in question may have belonged to a narthex, as in Bar'am, although no traces of such a narthex remain, making such a suggestion fairly speculative. What is significant about this suggestion, however, is that it shows that a column, base or capital of lesser diameter than others found on a given site could have come from several parts of the synagogue, with narthex, aedicula and forecourt being alternative suggestions to gallery.⁶⁷

Just outside of Gush Halav (Arabic: al-Jish),⁶⁸ a Maronite village not far from the Lebanese border, are found the ruins of a synagogue, the first phase of which dates from ca. 250-306. The building was last used as a synagogue in around the middle of the sixth century. The prayer hall of the synagogue measured 13.75 by 10.6-11.0 meters. Two rows of columns divided the room into a nave and two side aisles. According to Kohl and Watzinger, three columns against the back wall formed a further row of columns. In their view, it was by these three columns which the hypothetical women's gallery would have been supported. The evidence given by Kohl and Watzinger for such a gallery consists of two Ionic capitals, 39 and 42 cm in diameter respectively, a drum of a column 41 cm in diameter and a small ashlar with a carved rosette which would form part of a wall frieze, the supposition being that the frieze ran along the back wall of the gallery.⁶⁹

In 1977-78 Gush Halav was re-excavated under the direction of Eric M. Meyers, and further side rooms were discovered, the function of which is unclear. The excavators note that especially "the function of the area to the north between the outer and inner wall has been difficult to determine."⁷⁰ They suggest that there was a gallery across the north end of the building. "This gallery would have been entered either from outside the basilica or possibly from within by wooden stairs, although there are no traces of such an entrance."⁷¹

As further evidence for such a gallery they note, "The debris underneath the architectural dump of the final phase of the synagogue (VIIIb) was virtually sterile, suggesting a kind of raised gallery area above it."⁷² They do not suggest that this hypothetical raised area was for women. Note that although the recent excavators call this hypothetical raised structure a gallery, they envisage something quite different than Kohl and Watzinger had imagined. The putative raised area is simply a

raised platform in the main prayer hall rather than an upper story gallery.

The synagogue found in Arbel⁷³ in Galilee, six kilometers northwest of Tiberias, measures 18.2 by 18.65 meters and is separated into a nave and two side aisles by two rows of columns, a third row of columns extending along the northern side. The synagogue probably dates from the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century. The evidence for a women's gallery consists of the base of a column with a molded side and bottom as if it were meant to be placed on top of another row of columns.⁷⁴ The diameter of the column fitting this base would be 41 cm; one shaft of this diameter, as well as one other base without the molded side and bottom portion, but of the same size, were also found. On the basis of these three pieces of evidence, Kohl and Watzinger conclude:

It is therefore certain that there was a two-story structure also in Arbel, a structure with a gallery on three sides above the ambulatory formed by the columns; the entrance to the gallery was probably directly from the slope which juts into the south wall.⁷⁵

What of this entrance? Are any traces of it extant? Kohl and Watzinger show on their plan a small room, noting that the entrance to the gallery was probably above it.⁷⁶ In other words, no trace of a staircase has been found. As for the column base in question, the form does indeed make one think that it was placed above something else, and the theory of a second row of columns is a quite attractive one, although why only one of these was found on the site, while quite a number of other columns are still there, is a question which remains unanswered. If we nevertheless assume a second row of columns and do not assume a stone staircase which later disappeared or a wooden staircase (the latter should by no means be excluded), there remains the possibility of a pseudo-gallery, i.e., of a second row of columns above the first, creating the look of a gallery, a device which would not be unprecedented in ancient architecture. A number of dressed stones with engaged columns were also found on the site of the Arbel synagogue, which Kohl and Watzinger suggest ran along the northern wall behind the gallery. This reconstruction would fit in with either a genuine or a pseudo-gallery.

Samuel Krauss is of the opinion that the women did not sit in a gallery at Arbel, but rather on the tiered stone benches found at the sides, which he calls "terraces." Krauss writes:

Now if our assumption concerning the purpose of this loft [i.e. the terrace] is correct, then one cannot really speak of a separation of the sexes in the ancient synagogues of Galilee, and we would therefore have to concede that all of the Reform congregations which build their synagogues with only a loft for the women on the two long sides of the building are right.⁷⁷

His words, spoken in 1911, make clear what has been at stake here. For a Jewish scholar to admit that there may not have been a women's gallery in the ancient synagogue would be to raise the question as to just how much a necessary part of the Jewish tradition the women's gallery really is. Krauss was confronted with the Reform congregations of his day, for whom the equality of the sexes was an important issue and who had begun to do away with the strict separation between the sexes in the worship service. Krauss perceived the absence of a women's gallery at the ancient synagogue of Arbel as a threat to the practice of having women sit in a gallery or closed-off women's section in the Orthodox synagogues of his day.

The ancient synagogue in Umm al-'Amad⁷⁸ in Galilee, a few kilometers due west of Arbel, dates to the turn of the fourth century. The prayer hall is 22.55 by 14.06 meters in size. Two rows of columns divide it into a nave and two side aisles, with a third row of columns running along the back wall. On the basis of several columns of lesser diameter than the others, Kohl and Watzinger suggest that there may have been a gallery,⁷⁹ although they do not press this hypothesis because the diameter of all the columns is quite variable. No stairs have been found at Umm al-'Amad.

In Hammat Teverya (Tiberias; Arabic: Tabariya),⁸⁰ on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, just south of the hot springs, were found the layered ruins of several buildings dating from the third through the eighth centuries. The earliest recognizable synagogue, dating from the second half of the third century, is 13 by 14 meters in size and is divided by three rows of columns into a nave and three side aisles. Moshe Dothan suggests that the side aisle to the extreme left may have been a women's section, adding, "nevertheless, there was no trace of wall or other division between this aisle and the remainder of the hall, though there may have been some temporary partition (such as a curtain) between the columns."⁸¹ After the second synagogue was destroyed at the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century, the "Severus Synagogue," also measuring 13 by 14 meters,

was built. Here, too, one assumes that the side aisle to the extreme left may have been for women.⁸²

When this synagogue was destroyed in the fifth century a synagogue in the form of a basilica was built. One entered through a narthex into the main prayer hall, which had an apse at the southwest side and was divided by columns into a nave and two side aisles, with a third row of columns running along the northwest side. The hypothesis is that these columns bore a women's gallery which would have extended over the side aisles and along the back aisle. No evidence is listed for this hypothesis.⁸³

In Ḥammāt Gader (Arabic: al-Ḥamma),⁸⁴ 7.5 kilometers to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee, a synagogue was found which measures around 13 by 14 meters and probably dates from the first half of the fifth century. Erwin Goodenough believes that a small room on the east side with a bench running along its east wall was meant for women.⁸⁵ Eliezer Sukenik, who takes this small room to be a schoolroom, imagines that there was a women's gallery. Sukenik writes:

The remains of the synagogue are practically confined to the foundation. Consequently no data are available for a restoration of the superstructure. It may, however, confidently be inferred that the basilica was provided with a gallery for women worshippers, from the massive pillars at the north-east and north-west corners of the colonnade, features which are shared by our synagogue with those of Chorazin, Capernaum and some other sites.⁸⁶

Since there exist no material remains from the gallery, it is difficult to understand why it may "confidently be inferred" that one existed. Sukenik is working on an analogy with other synagogues where he believes that the women's gallery is archaeologically certain. As this survey of the evidence shows, the gallery is far from being archaeologically certain at the other sites.

The ruins of a synagogue, probably dating from the third century, were found in Umm al-Qanatir⁸⁷ in the Golan Heights, 19 kilometers to the northeast of Ḥammāt Gader. The building is 14 by 19 meters in size and is divided into a nave and two side aisles by two rows of columns, with a third row running along the back (west) wall. Kohl and Watzinger conjecture that a gallery ran along the north, west and south sides.⁸⁸ No trace of a staircase has been found. As evidence for the hypothetical gallery, Kohl and Watzinger cite a fragment of the base of a half column (found in front of the building) which would fit with the

fragment of a shaft of a half column. The fragments could have decorated the wall of the gallery. Kohl and Watzinger further note that there are two types of capitals and suggest that the one type could have been for the lower story and the other for the gallery. Goodenough, in citing Kohl and Watzinger's reconstructed gallery, is faced with the dilemma of where to place the Torah shrine. Although the main entrance is in the east and Jerusalem to the south, Goodenough writes, "The Torah shrine with its Shekinah could not have stood anywhere but in the east, for it is inconceivable that women would have been allowed to stand or pass above it"⁸⁹ (i.e., in the gallery). Presumably Goodenough is in some way identifying women with impurity and implying that the men would not tolerate this impurity above the sacred Shekina, but the meaning of his thought is rather unclear here.

Mention should be made here of ad-Dikka,⁹⁰ which is located on the eastern side of the Jordan river, four kilometers north of where it enters the Sea of Galilee. The building, 15.3 by 11.9 meters in size and divided into a nave and two side aisles by two rows of columns, probably dates from the third century. Even Kohl and Watzinger admit that there is not enough clear evidence to reconstruct a gallery.⁹¹ They note the existence of one base, one shaft and one capital, as well as a double quarter column from a corner. No trace of a staircase has been found. It is unclear why this evidence, i.e., several fragments of columns and no stairs, should be insufficient at ad-Dikka, while at most of the other sites where Kohl and Watzinger reconstruct a gallery there is not a bit more evidence to support such a hypothesis. In spite of their caution in the text, Kohl and Watzinger nevertheless show a gallery in their reconstruction sketch of the synagogue.⁹²

The synagogue in Beth Alpha,⁹³ famous for its beautiful and well-preserved mosaic, is situated 7.5 kilometers northwest of Beth She'an and can be dated at the latest to the end of the fifth century. The basilica is 10.75 by 12.4 meters in size and is divided into a nave and two side aisles by two rows of pillars. One entered the prayer hall through a narthex. Sukenik believes that the entrance to a gallery extending over the two side aisles and the narthex was through a small side room to the west of the prayer hall. No traces of the gallery or of the reconstructed stairs in this small room remain.⁹⁴ Asher Hiram suggests that this small room may have been a schoolroom.⁹⁵

The ruins of a third- or fourth-century synagogue were found in Caesarea Maritima.⁹⁶ It was 9 by 18 meters in size and is of the broadhouse type. Michael Avi-Yonah believes that the synagogue possibly had a gallery.⁹⁷ The evidence consists of the fact that the columns and capitals found were of two sizes, 50 and 25 cm respectively; the reports include no mention of stairs. The synagogue was destroyed in the middle of the fourth century and a new one built in its place in the middle of the fifth. No mention is made of this synagogue having had a gallery.

In 'En-Gedi⁹⁸ on the western side of the Dead Sea were found the remains of a synagogue around 12 by 15 meters in size, consisting of a nave and side aisles on the east and west sides, with a further aisle at the south end with stepped benches. A narthex ran along the western side. A number of smaller rooms surround the prayer hall; two of these can be entered from the prayer hall itself. The others are accessible only from the outside. In one of these outer rooms, traces of stairs were found which could have led to a gallery.⁹⁹ Further, an Aramaic donative inscription, found in the western side aisle, speaks of "the great (?) steps," which Dan Barag takes as possibly referring to the steps leading to the gallery.¹⁰⁰ Benjamin Mazar, on the other hand, translates "the upper (?) step."¹⁰¹ Thus, there is not a consensus as to what this inscription refers to. The inscription itself is clearly later than the other mosaic inscriptions, which are from the late Byzantine period,¹⁰² so that whatever step or steps the inscription refers to must be a later addition to the synagogue. The synagogue itself is a Byzantine-period reconstruction of an early third-century synagogue and was probably in use until around 530.¹⁰³

The synagogue ruins in Khirbet Susiya¹⁰⁴ in Judea, thirteen kilometers south of Hebron, probably date from the fourth or fifth century. The building, 9 by 16 meters in size, is of the broadhouse type. One entered the prayer hall through a courtyard and then a narthex. Extending along the south side of the prayer hall are two rooms, which could be entered through the narthex, the second room also from an outside door. At the southern end of the narthex are the remains of several steps, which have been taken as leading to a gallery,¹⁰⁵ which was a later addition and would have extended over these two side rooms and possibly the narthex. It is also possible, however, that these steps led to an area above the courtyard. In the small southwestern room, a stairs was later installed when the room was used for storage.

In addition to the monumental remains, one inscription has been adduced as evidence for a synagogue gallery. The inscription,¹⁰⁶ written in Aramaic with the last two words in Greek, was found in Dabbura in the Golan Heights. Partially reconstructed, it reads, according to Dan Urman:

אלעזר ברן ... [ר]בה עבד עמון|דיה דעל מן
[ΡΟ]ΥΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΕΚΤ[ΙΣΕΝ ... |ιμια]

El'azar the son of . . . made the columns above
the arches and beams . . . Rusticus built (it).¹⁰⁷

The inscription, probably dating from the third century, consists of two lines carved in three fragments of a basalt architrave, the total length of which is 110 cm. Urman writes concerning "the columns above the arches and beams":

These seem to be columns standing on top of a construction of arches and beams or pilasters. In a synagogue such columns could only be in the upper gallery, that is, the women's gallery.¹⁰⁸

We have seen from the survey thus far that there is no archaeological reason to assume the existence of a women's gallery and that the evidence for any kind of a gallery at all is surprisingly meager. Nevertheless, one could take this inscription as independent evidence for a gallery.

The inscription is not unambiguous, however, and before we simply accept it as evidence for a gallery, the vocabulary must be carefully examined. It is not "gallery" which is mentioned, but "columns." These "columns" could indeed be the columns of a gallery, but they could also be demi-columns built into the wall or the columns of a pseudo-gallery, i.e., a row of columns placed on the architrave for decoration and giving the appearance of a gallery. There is, however, one architectural difficulty with the gallery or pseudo-gallery reconstruction. If these fragments are a portion of the architrave on which the columns rested, which it is reasonable to assume, the donative inscription usually being fairly close to the object donated, where are the arches? The Palestinian synagogues have usually been reconstructed as being trabeated rather than arcuated, and this architrave itself would fit in with the reconstruction. Further, the word kippattā can mean "arches" and passimayrā can mean "beams," but kippā can also mean "arched doorway"¹⁰⁹ and passim (Hebrew and Aramaic) can, and usually does, mean "door post."¹¹⁰ An alternative suggestion would be that these fragments do not

come from an architrave at all, but from a lintel,¹¹¹ and that the paššimayyâ are door jambs and the kippattâ are rounded arches of the type found above the central door in Bar'am. What, then, would the columns be? Perhaps they are tall columns of the type found in Bar'am in the porch. This would be a rather loose interpretation of dê 'al min, however, so that this interpretation, like that of Urman, does not solve all of the architectural problems. It must be concluded that this inscription is possible evidence for a gallery.

What can we conclude from this survey? First, it is clear that a number of Palestinian synagogues had no gallery. These include the three first-century synagogues, Masada, Gamla and Herodion--if these are indeed synagogues--as well as Beth She'an, Eshtemoa', and probably also the other synagogues where archaeologists have not even thought of reconstructing a gallery. As for those synagogues where archaeologists have reconstructed a gallery, we have seen that the evidence ranges from literally no evidence at Beth Alpha, Ḥammad Teverya (south of the hot springs, basilica synagogue) and Ḥammad Gader to the base of one corner column at Meiron, the base of one column (and possibly some additional fragments) at an-Nabraten and one base, one shaft and one capital at ad-Dikka to several steps, fragments of smaller columns and fragments of a frieze at Korazim and steps, several Doric columns and several fragments of an architrave, as well as a number of demi-columns, at Capharnaum.

Archaeological reconstruction must be based on analogy and on material evidence from the site in question. In my view, most excavators of the Palestinian synagogues have taken for granted that there exists solid evidence at other synagogues for a (women's) gallery, and have therefore maximalistically interpreted the minimal evidence at their own sites. One searches in vain for the archaeologically well-founded example of a synagogue with a gallery. Capharnaum has long served as the prime example of a synagogue with a gallery, but, as we have seen, the most recent excavators are of the opinion that they do not have sufficient archaeological evidence to assume the existence of a gallery.

The most serious barrier to the reconstruction of a gallery seems to me to be the lack of staircases. It is simply unrealistic to suppose that campers would have selectively removed all traces of a staircase while leaving behind courses of ashlar, numerous pillars and entire mosaic or flagstone floors. Conversely, the best candidates for having had galleries are those

synagogues where traces of staircases have been found. A staircase is at least solid evidence that people ascended to something. However, even here caution is advised. Gamla is a good example of the need for caution. The first reaction at finding the steps outside the Gamla synagogue was that they led to a gallery. Further excavation showed that the steps formed the culmination of a road leading up to the synagogue. Of the Palestinian synagogues there are five with traces of a staircase: Gamla, Capharnaum, 'En-Gedi, Khirbet Susiya and Korazim. Gamla must be excluded for the reasons just mentioned. As for the others, the possibility must be taken very seriously that these steps led to a gallery. However, one must also note that in none of these cases is it clear that the steps in question actually led to a gallery. At Capharnaum the most recent excavators believe that the steps led to a storage room. At 'En-Gedi the steps are situated in front and to the side of the narthex among a number of rooms surrounding the synagogue proper. The steps could have led to a gallery, but they could just as easily have led to the roof or second story of one of the adjoining structures. The reconstruction of a gallery at Khirbet Susiya seems fairly plausible on the basis of the steps, which are located in the narthex and must therefore lead to something above either the prayer hall or the courtyard. The difficulty at Khirbet Susiya, however, is that no other finds indicating a gallery have been found. Further, one must remember that there are also steps in the second small room to the south of the prayer hall which apparently led to a storage room; these should remind us of the variety of things to which steps can lead. Korazim has both steps and some fragments which could have come from a gallery, and therefore a reconstructed gallery does not seem implausible, although here again the steps could have led to the roof or second story of the storage room on the northwest corner of the building or to another installation. In spite of all these difficulties one can say that a reasonable case can be made for the existence of a gallery at Capharnaum, 'En-Gedi, Khirbet Susiya and Korazim.

Khirbet Shema' is a special case and must be treated separately. Here stairs are not necessary, due to the synagogue's being built into the side of the hill. As with the four synagogues just mentioned, here, too, it is not implausible that a gallery existed. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that nothing remains of the gallery itself except the bedrock on which it may have rested and a trace in the stone which could

have been for a door. The several small pieces of architecture found among the ruins could just as easily belong elsewhere as in the gallery.

As for the other synagogues discussed where archaeologists have reconstructed a gallery, one must say that the evidence is entirely insufficient to support such a hypothesis.¹¹² The fragments of columns and capitals which have been assigned to the galleries of the various sites, if all taken together, would hardly be enough for one single gallery. Why should campers and builders in search of reusable materials have carefully selected columns, capitals, bases and architraves just from the gallery, leaving behind considerably more of the first story? No synagogue has been found where more of the gallery was extant than of the first story, and yet if left to chance this situation should certainly occur. In addition to the lack of stones from all of these hypothetical galleries, we are confronted with the lack of stairs leading up to them. Now, one could begin reconstructing wooden galleries with wooden staircases, but this seems highly speculative, and the lack of stairs and columns must be taken as a very serious hindrance to the reconstruction of a gallery.

Further, it is not at all clear that these fragments of architecture had to come from a gallery. Perhaps the smaller columns, capitals and bases belonged to other installations, such as an aedicula or a porch. The diameter of columns often varied considerably within a single synagogue¹¹³ and it is purely a matter of definition to assign one column to the lower story and another to the gallery. The diameter of the columns in one portion of the synagogue can also vary from that of another portion, as, for example, between the main prayer hall and the courtyard at Capharnaum. For these reasons, the architectural fragments in question can no longer simply be treated as clearly having come from a gallery.

In summary, then, there are at least five synagogues (if the three first-century structures are synagogues) which clearly had no gallery, and there are five synagogues where a gallery could plausibly be reconstructed, although the evidence is by no means conclusive. In addition to these, there are a considerable number of synagogues where no one has reconstructed a gallery, as well as over a dozen where some archaeologists have reconstructed a gallery, but where a closer examination shows that the evidence is insufficient for supporting such a hypothesis. In other

words, the vast majority of the ancient synagogues in Israel do not seem to have possessed a gallery.

Brief mention of side rooms for women must also be made here. The reader will notice that most of the synagogues whose floor plans are included here do not have a side room. Several, however, do, and it has been suggested that they served as women's sections. The general rule seems to have been that if one did not reconstruct a gallery, one took such a room to be a schoolroom or other type of room. A good example of this is Ḥammāt Gader, where Asher Hiram¹¹⁴ and Erwin Goodenough¹¹⁵ suggest that the side room with the bench along one wall could have been the women's section, while Eliezer Sukenik,¹¹⁶ who assumes the existence of a gallery, takes it to be a schoolroom. Ḥammāt Teverya (south of the hot springs) is a further example. In the Severus Synagogue, where a gallery is not assumed, one has taken the aisle to the extreme east to be a women's section,¹¹⁷ whereas in the later basilica synagogue built on the same spot a gallery is assumed and the side room to the west of the prayer hall is considered a schoolroom.¹¹⁸ One cannot exclude the possibility that the side rooms found in some Palestinian synagogues did serve as women's sections, but there is no archaeological or, as we shall see, literary reason to do so. The real analogy has been the use of a separate room as a women's section in modern synagogues. This is an anachronistic analogy and therefore methodologically questionable.

2. Synagogues in the Diaspora in the Roman and Byzantine Periods

A number of synagogue remains have also been found in the Jewish Diaspora. A brief survey of the evidence for a women's gallery or women's section will complete the collection of Palestinian evidence considered thus far.

The most ancient synagogue (1st C. B.C.E.)--if it is indeed a synagogue--found to date is the synagogue on the island of Delos¹¹⁹ in the Southern Aegean. The building consists of three oblong rooms side by side. The wall separating Room A from Room B is later than the structure itself and is pierced by three doors. Benches lining the northern and western walls of Room A are broken by a highly decorated stone chair. In Room B benches run along the western wall and part of the southern one. It has been suggested, presumably because of the stone chair, that Room A served the men and that Room B was for the women.¹²⁰

Erwin Goodenough, however, who is very interested in establishing the mystery nature of ancient synagogue worship, writes:

Those who have discussed the synagogue as such have thought that the two rooms were respectively for men and women, but this I should doubt. As in the early structure at Dura, I should think the women stood in the outer chambers of C, or did not attend at all, but not that benches were provided for them in Room B. The inner chamber, A, seems to me to be the adyton which in Capernaum, for example, lay behind the screen.¹²¹

This discussion demonstrates the arbitrariness of assigning a particular room to the women. While some scholars would relegate the women to Room B, where they could at least sit and hear, though not see very much, Goodenough sends them off to Room C, where they could neither see nor hear, nor even have a bench to sit upon. There is no archaeological reason for any of these room assignments; they are, rather, the result of the presupposition that there must have been a separation of the sexes in the ancient synagogue. Room B could as easily have been a classroom as a women's section and Room C could have served as a hostel or some other purpose.

On the island of Aegina,¹²² just across from Piraeus, which is in Attica, were found the remains of a synagogue which the excavator Belle Mazur dates to the fourth century,¹²³ while noting that the foundations of an older building, possibly also a synagogue, lie under the present structure. Due to abutting houses, the entire complex could not be excavated. What was excavated is a single hall exactly enclosing a mosaic floor which measures 13.5 by 7.6 meters. An apse on the east side extends beyond the mosaic. On the level of the older building and running parallel to its northern wall were found two chambers. Mazur suggests that the younger synagogue made use of these older chambers as women's quarters or as levitical chambers.¹²⁴ One must note that it is not even clear that these older rooms had anything to do with the prayer hall at all.

The largest ancient synagogue found to date is the basilica synagogue in Sardis¹²⁵ in Asia Minor. (The main hall alone is 54 by 18 meters in size.) The building went through a number of building stages, with the present interior of the structure dating from the fourth century,¹²⁶ although some portions of it are older. One entered through an atrium with a colonnaded portico and proceeded into the prayer hall; an internal apse was situated at the west end and the famous "eagle table" in the nave. There were two rows of piers, one along the northern and

one along the southern wall. In his 1963 report, David Gordon Mitten notes, "It is still uncertain whether these features were bases for roof-supports or for piers on which galleries, similar to those familiar from synagogues in Palestine, rested."¹²⁷

Andrew R. Seager also shows a second story for the main prayer hall in his 1968 reconstruction of the Sardis synagogue.¹²⁸ By 1972, however, probably after more careful study of the matter, Seager writes, "Two rows of piers within the hall may have supported side galleries as well as the roof, but no cogent evidence for galleries has been found."¹²⁹ This development is worth noting. At first one assumed a gallery on the basis of the supposed Galilean parallels, but further study revealed that the site itself produced no cogent evidence for such an assumption.

The German excavators Theodor Wiegand and Hans Schrader discovered the ruins of what they took to be a house church in 1895-1898 in Priene¹³⁰ in Ionia. Subsequently discovered Jewish symbols in the building are evidence that the building, which measures 10 x 14 meters, was actually a synagogue.¹³¹ One entered through a small forecourt into the prayer hall, which, as stylobates attest, was divided into a nave and two side aisles. A stone bench ran along the northern wall, and a small square niche in the eastern wall probably served as a Torah niche. No suggestion has been made of a women's gallery or women's section, and there is nothing in the ruins to indicate such a thing.

In Miletus¹³² in western Asia Minor are the remains of a building which could be a synagogue, although no Jewish evidence has been found. I believe that there is insufficient evidence to identify this as a synagogue, but cite it here to illustrate the way in which A. von Gerkan deals with the issue of the women's gallery. The date of the building is uncertain, but a late, i.e., Byzantine, date seems likely. Located in a complex of buildings, the room in question is oblong (18.5 by 11.6 m) and is divided into a nave and two side aisles by two rows of columns. One proceeded from a forecourt with a peristyle through one of three doors (at an earlier stage) into the large room; at the present stage the two outer doors are blocked by two piers. Gerkan is of the opinion that the columns must have borne a gallery because they are so close together; he does not suggest that this would have been a women's gallery, nor does he mention any fragments that might have belonged to it or stairs leading to it.¹³³

Recent excavations in Stobi¹³⁴ in Macedonia (Yugoslavia) have brought to light the remains of two synagogues underneath

Christian basilica ruins. The older synagogue (possible 1st C. C.E.), which measures ca. 7.9 x 13.3 meters, contains donative inscriptions mentioning the name Polycharmos, thus tying it in with the dedicatory inscription mentioning Claudius Tiberius Polycharmos found on a column in the atrium of the basilica. This latter inscription (CII 694)¹³⁵ speaks of "upper chambers" (hyperōa) of which the donor and his descendants were to maintain disposal, perhaps for living purposes. In other words, far from being a women's gallery, these "upper chambers" were for the private use of the donor. A women's section or women's gallery has not been suggested for the younger synagogue.

The ancient synagogue excavated in Ostia,¹³⁶ the port of ancient Rome, dates from the fourth century. The prayer hall, which measures 24.9 by 12.5 meters, is part of a complex of rooms including one with an oven for baking. One approached through an area with a mosaic floor, then proceeded through an inner gateway with four columns and finally entered the innermost section, an oblong room with a bema at the western end and an aedicula, or Torah shrine, at the southeastern end. Two fallen marble columns were found in the main prayer hall. The excavators have not suggested the existence of a gallery or separate women's section. Beneath this synagogue were found the remains of a first-century C.E. building, which may also have been a synagogue. Here, too, the excavators do not assume the existence of a separate section for women.

The third-century synagogue found in Dura Europos¹³⁷ has been one of the most spectacular synagogue discoveries to date, due to the excellent condition of the building and especially of the frescoes decorating its walls. The main prayer hall, measuring 13.65 by 7.8 meters, is located in a complex. No one has suggested the existence of a gallery, which would be impossible given the architecture. A separate women's room has, however, been suggested. Beneath the third-century synagogue were found the remains of an earlier synagogue, and in this earlier synagogue, Room 7, a small room to the east of the prayer hall has been taken to be a possible women's section.¹³⁸ Erwin Goodenough, however, sees this as impossible due to the wear on the threshold between Room 7 and the main prayer hall, Room 2. Goodenough writes:

First, the well-worn threshold of the little door that joined Room 7 with Room 2 indicates a frequency of going back and forth unthinkable if the room was used for women, but quite intelligible if processions from one room to the other were a

regular part of the ritual. A glance at the plans of oriental synagogues strengthens this feeling. Kohl and Watzinger give a number of such plans, from which it is at once clear that if women were accommodated in the synagogues at all, they did not stroll in with the men and sit in full view of them. Rather they had a separate entrance from the outside to a room entirely screened off from the room where the men worshiped. The heavy wear of the sill shows that Room 7 in the early synagogue could not thus have been blocked off.¹³⁹

The oriental synagogues referred to by Goodenough, several floor plans of which are given by Kohl and Watzinger,¹⁴⁰ are none other than modern oriental synagogues. With this it becomes clear that the true analogy for the women's section and the starting point for the search thereof is the contemporary Orthodox synagogue. Given the absolutely strict separation implied by the modern concept of the women's section, Goodenough seems to me quite right in insisting that a worn threshold could not have served as the barrier between women and men. Presumably, Goodenough assumes that, in the absence of a women's section, women did not go to the synagogue at all.

The later synagogue did not have this separate room, for the whole area was taken up by the forecourt. Carl Kraeling therefore suggests that the women prayed with the men in the main prayer hall, but that they sat on the south side of the room. Kraeling writes:

What we know about the nature of the wall decorations in this area, and what we can infer from the existence of the smaller door, makes it clear that the benches in question were those normally used by the women and that here the raised footrests were omitted lest modesty and propriety be offended. Along the south wall in the benches used by the women two additional provisions were made to safeguard modesty and simultaneously to provide easier access. One was a rectangular recess in the lower bench where it abutted on the reveal floor of the smaller door, the other a rectangular platform set into the southwest corner of the chamber floor below the lower bench.¹⁴¹

By the "nature of the wall decorations," Kraeling means that the west wall bears the fresco with Elijah raising the widow's son. He suggests that this scene is especially appropriate vis-à-vis the women's entrance.¹⁴²

While it must be emphasized again that Kraeling is doing what archaeologists should do, namely reconstructing, one must nevertheless note how shaky the evidence is upon which he builds his theory. The fact that a woman appears in a certain fresco can hardly be taken as evidence that it was women who sat beneath

it, and there are many reasons why one door is smaller than another. The special features of the benches (steps, etc.) could be taken as safeguards for feminine modesty, but they could also mean no more than that a different person built the benches on that side of the room, adding some features (steps) and omitting others (footrests). In spite of all this, Kraeling's suggestion that the women sat together on one side of the room in the later synagogue at Dura fits in better with the archaeological evidence than other possible suggestions, such as a gallery or a women's room. It may well be that if there was any separation of the sexes at Dura, then it was of the informal type proposed here. In any case, the later synagogue at Dura did not have a women's gallery or a separate room for women.¹⁴³ Most likely, neither did the earlier synagogue.

In 1883 a Captain Ernest de Proudhomme who was stationed at Hammam Lif (Naro),¹⁴⁴ not far from Tunis in North Africa, performed an amateur excavation of a synagogue mosaic and of the building complex in which it was located. What seems to have been the main prayer hall can be approached from two directions, with many small rooms on either side of the approach ways. In the prayer hall was a magnificent mosaic (much of it now lost) with a large inscription in the middle:

Sancta sinagoga Naron pro salutem suam ancilla tua Iuliana p(ateressa?) de suo proprium teselavit. Menorah¹⁴⁵

L. 1: read sanctam synagogam.

Your servant Juliana, "fatheress" (?), paved with mosaic, from her own funds, the holy synagogue of Naro for her salvation.

A woman donated the entire mosaic for the prayer hall; given the high costs of mosaics, this must have been a very substantial donation. Does it seem reasonable that the wealthy woman who donated the mosaic should also have had the right to tread upon it? Not so to Erwin Goodenough, who writes:

She herself could presumably not have attended the services in this sancta synagoga; but as with all daughters in Israel, her hope was in the maintenance of Jewish worship and life.¹⁴⁶

Goodenough places the women worshipers in the room to the left of the prayer hall, for it has a separate entrance and no access to the prayer hall at all; indeed, one could neither see nor hear anything from this room. Goodenough notes, "This room might have

been used for a guest hostel, but seems to me more likely, from its total isolation, to have been designed for the women."¹⁴⁷

Methodologically it is important to keep open the possibility that the ancient Jewish men in Ḥammam Lif were of the mentality described by Goodenough, that they desired to isolate totally the women in a room from which they could not see into the prayer hall nor hear the Torah being read or the sermon being given. It is also important not to exclude the possibility that the ancient Jewish women in Ḥammam Lif accepted this, that the benefactor Juliana did not take offense at never being allowed to pray in the room in which lay the mosaic she had donated. All of this is possible, but where is the literary or archaeological evidence for it? There being no Jewish literary sources from Ḥammam Lif, we are dependent on the monumental remains. Archaeologically, there is no reason to assume that the room in question is a women's section rather than a hostel, a meeting room or a schoolroom.

This survey has shown that there is no Diaspora synagogue in which a strong archaeological case can be made for a women's gallery or a separate women's section. At Priene and Ostia a gallery or room for the women has not even been suggested. In the later synagogue at Dura there is also no separate room or gallery for women. Although there was some speculation in the earlier phases of excavation as to whether the Sardis synagogue might have had a gallery, it has now been recognized that there is "no cogent evidence" for such a gallery. The Stobi inscription does speak of "upper chambers" but these were not for women but rather for the use of the donor, Claudius Tiberius Polycharmos, and of his heirs. At Aegina, the earlier synagogue at Dura, Ḥammam Lif and Delos, a side room (or rooms) has been suggested as a possible women's section. At Aegina it is not even clear that the rooms suggested had any connection with the synagogue. At Dura the worn threshold between the hypothetical women's room and the main prayer hall speaks against the use of Room 7 as a strictly separate women's section. At Ḥammam Lif there are many side rooms, and we do not know the exact use of any of them. There is no archaeological reason for assigning any one of them to women. At Delos we have seen that, while Plassart supposed that the division between Rooms A and B represents the division between the men and the women, Goodenough assigns the women to Room C and makes Room A into an inner chamber for the men, Room B being the men's outer chamber. It is time to recognize that we can only guess at the function of the many

adjoining side rooms in the Diaspora synagogues. It is arbitrary to assign one or the other to women.

B. Is there Literary Evidence for a Women's Gallery or a Separate Women's Section?

No scholar is of the opinion that ancient Jewish literature attests to a general regulation that the sexes be separate in synagogue worship. All admit that this regulation cannot be found in ancient Jewish sources. Eliezer Sukenik, for example, writes:

The ancient literature nowhere mentions a specific regulation to the effect that men and women must be kept separate at public worship; still less is it prescribed that the women's section shall be built in the form of a gallery.¹⁴⁸

In spite of this consensus, scholars have argued that even without a regulation, it was in fact the case that the sexes were kept separate in the synagogue worship. What is the literary evidence for a factual separation?

In the Second Temple there existed a women's forecourt (ʿezrat hannāšim; gynaikōnitis),¹⁴⁹ which contrasted with the forecourt of Israel. This meant that women were normally only allowed into the women's forecourt, but not beyond that;¹⁵⁰ only the men were allowed into the inner forecourt of Israel. What is often overlooked, however, is that the women's forecourt was not reserved for women. It was the large outer court where both sexes mingled together freely. It was not an area where women could pray quietly by themselves, undisturbed by men, for the men had to pass through this area in order to enter the forecourt of Israel. Therefore it can hardly be taken as an example of the separation of the sexes. "Women's" here does not mean reserved for women, but rather restrictively that women could not pass beyond this outer court. Thus, the men had a court reserved for them, but the women did not. This is a totally different model from the one presupposed by those archaeologists who reconstruct a women's gallery with a separate entrance in the Galilean synagogues.

Once a year, however, an actual separation of the sexes was ordained. This was during the water-drawing celebration on the night following the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

B. Sukk. 51b-52a reads:

"במוצאי יום טוב כו". מאי תיקון גדול?
 -אמר רבי אלעזר, כאוחה ששנינו,
 חלקה יתה בראשונה והקיפה גזוזמרא,
 והחקינה שיהו נשים יושבות מלמעלה ואנשים מלמטה.
 חנו רבנן: בראשונה היו נשים מכפנים ואנשים מבחוץ,
 והיו באים לידי קלות ראש, החקינה שיהו נשים יושבות מבחוץ
 ואנשים מבפנים. ועדיין היו באין לידי קלות ראש.
 החקינה שיהו נשים יושבות מלמעלה ואנשים מלמטה.
 היכי עביד הכי? והכתיב "הכל בכחב מיד ה' עלי השכיל!"
 -אמר רב, קרא אשכחו ודרוש, "וספדה הארץ משפחות משפחות לבד
 משפחה בית דוד לבד ונשיהם לבד".
 אמרו, והלא דברים קל וחומר:
 ומה לעתיד לבא שעוסקין בהספד ואין יצר הרע שולט בהם
 אמרה תורה אנשים לבד ונשים לבד,
 עכשיו שעוסקין בשמחה ויצר הרע שולט בהם
 על אחת כמה וכמה.

"At the conclusion of the first festival day, etc." (m. Sukk. 5:2). What was the Great Enactment? -- R. El'azar replied, As that of which we have learned. Originally [the walls of the women's forecourt] were smooth, but [later the court] was surrounded by a gallery, and it was enacted that the women should sit above and the men below.

Our Rabbis have taught, Originally the women used to sit within [the women's forecourt] while the men were without, but as this caused levity, it was instituted that the women should sit without and the men within. As this, however, still led to levity, it was instituted that the women should sit above and the men below.

But how could they do so? Is it not written, "All this [do I give you] in writing as the Lord has made me wise by his hand upon me"? (1 Chr 28:19)-- Rav answered, They found a scriptural verse and expounded it: "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart" (Zech 12:12). Is it not, they said, an *a fortiori* argument? If in the future when they will be engaged in mourning and the evil inclination will have no power over them, the Torah nevertheless says, "men separately and women separately," how much more so now when they are engaged in rejoicing and the evil inclination has sway over them.¹⁵¹

The text describes a temporary (wooden) gallery which was erected for the annual all-night celebration of the water-drawing ceremony on Sukkot. It would have surrounded the women's forecourt, so that the men were on the floor of the women's forecourt of the temple and the women in a gallery surrounding it. R. El'azar's words are a nearly exact quotation of m. Mid. 2:5.¹⁵² They are followed by a baraita (i.e., Tannaitic saying), and the two sayings serve to explain each other, that is, the reader is meant to take the *gēzūztārā'* (Greek: *exōstra*) as the architectural concretization of the women sitting above. The gemara raises the question as to how this innovation in the temple architecture could be allowed, quoting 1 Chr 28:19 as proof that the (First) Temple should not be changed. The third century Babylonian Amora Rav answers that Zech 12:12 can serve as a proof text for the

validity of this innovation. The explanation is that the text refers to a future period of mourning and requires a separation of the sexes even when mourning, that is, when one would not expect the evil inclination to arouse their sexual desires. How much more is it necessary to separate the sexes when they are engaged in celebrating this special festival--a time when one would expect sexual desire to arise.

Here we have the precise model that scholars have assumed for the synagogues. Is this not sufficient evidence for assuming a similar arrangement in the synagogue? Aside from the fact that a rather uneven development is described here, a development based on anything but a stable notion of how the sexes should be arranged, it is of special note that the Babylonian Talmud brings this gallery into connection with a special holiday, i.e., a night when many people would be present and dancing and wine would be an integral part of the festival. One can hardly draw generalizations from this special arrangement--not for the regular temple service and even less for synagogue worship.¹⁵³

A further possible reference is found in v. Sukk. 55b.14-23 according to which the famous Diplostoon (Hebrew: dippēlē ʾistēbāʾ; Greek: diple stoa)¹⁵⁴ in Alexandria was destroyed by the Emperor Trajan. After he had killed the men, Trajan offered the women mercy if they would surrender, to which the women answered, "Do to those above (ʿilyāʾ) as you have done to those below (ʾarʿāyāʾ)." This seems to be a very clear case of the separation of the sexes. What is often overlooked, however, is that the parallels in Lam. Rab. 1:45 (on 1:16) and 4.22 (on 4.19)¹⁵⁵ have the terms reversed: "Do to those below (i.e., the women) as you have done to those above." Sukenik dismisses this reversal:

Right or wrong, the Palestinian narrator cannot conceive of the Community Centre in Alexandria otherwise than with a gallery, and that reserved for the women.

Accordingly it would seem that the reading of the parallels in the ordinary edition of Lamentations Rabba, 58b and 68d, where the terms are reversed, is due to a misapprehension. In Buber's edition, p.83, they are simply replaced by 'men' and 'women.'

It is even possible that in Palestinian Aramaic the male and female halves of any congregation were designated colloquially as ארעייא, literally 'those of the ground (floor)' and עילייא, 'those of the upper (floor)' respectively.¹⁵⁶

At the historical level, it is not clear that this account is based on historical fact. Sukenik and those who follow him,

however, are less interested in the early second-century Alexandrian Diplostoon than in the third- and fourth-century Palestinian synagogues. But if this is the case, then how can one so rapidly dismiss the parallels, where "those above" and "those below" are reversed, making the women "those below"? If the interest is in ancient Israel rather than Alexandria, then this discrepancy must be taken very seriously. Further, it is not even clear that 'ilayé' and 'ar'ayé' are spatial terms at all. Marcus Jastrow, for example, takes them to mean "inferior" (i.e., the women) and "superior" (i.e., the men) respectively, and lists y. Sukk. 55b as an "incorrect version"!¹⁵⁷ A further possibility is that the image behind this haggadah is that of a castle or a fortress, where the men fought up above and only when they were killed did the Roman soldiers reach the women below.¹⁵⁸ In light of the ambiguity of the terminology and the lack of agreement in the sources, this passage and its parallels cannot be taken as evidence either for a gallery in the Alexandrian Diplostoon or for galleries in ancient synagogues in Israel.

A further passage of interest is found in Philo of Alexandria. In describing the life of the Therapeutrides and Therapeutai, Philo writes (De vita contempl. 32-33; cf. also 69):

Τὸ δὲ κοινὸν τοῦτο σεμνεῖον, εἰς ὃ ταῖς ἑβδομαῖς συνέρχονται, διπλοῦς ἐστὶ περιβόλος, ὃ μὲν εἰς ἀνδρῶνα, ὃ δὲ εἰς γυναικωνῆτιν ἀποκριθεῖς· καὶ γὰρ καὶ γυναῖκες ἔξ ἔθους συνακροῶνται τὸν αὐτὸν ζῆλον καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν προαίρεσιν ἔχουσαι. ὃ δὲ μεταξὺ τῶν οἰκῶν τοῦχος τὸ μὲν ἔξ ἐδάφους ἐπὶ τρεῖς ἢ τέσσαρας πῆχεις εἰς τὸ ἄνω συμφυκοδόμηται θωρακίου τρόπον, τὸ δὲ ἄχρι τέγους ἀν-ἀγειον ἀχανές ἀνεῖται, δυοῖν ἕνεκα, τοῦ τε τὴν πρόπουσαν αἰδῶ τῇ γυναικείᾳ φύσει διατηρεῖσθαι καὶ τοῦ τὴν ἀντίληψιν ἔχειν εὐμαρῆ καθεζομένης ἐν ἐπηκόῳ, μηδενὸς τὴν τοῦ διαλεγομένου φωνὴν ἐμποδίζοντος.

This common sanctuary in which they meet every seventh day is a double enclosure, one portion set apart for the use of the men, the other for the women. For women too regularly make part of the audience with the same ardour and the same sense of their calling. The wall between the two chambers rises up from the ground to three or four cubits built in the form of a breast work, while the space above is left open. This arrangement serves two purposes; the modesty becoming to the female sex is preserved, while the women sitting within ear-shot can easily follow what is said since there is nothing to obstruct the voice of the speaker.

Should we take this as a first-century example of a separation of the sexes? Yes, by all means, but that gives us no license to generalize that all or even most first-century Jews followed the example of the Therapeutai and Therapeutrides. The group which Philo is describing is a sect, a sect which follows

such unusual life customs as celibacy and the pursuit of the purely contemplative life, as the context of this passage clearly demonstrates. Scholars would not think of using this sect as proof that celibacy or the contemplative life were widespread in Judaism. Why should one view their separation of the sexes during worship in a different way? It may well be that their celibacy and the desire to preserve it were what gave rise to this custom. Further, the divider described does not fit in with any synagogue remains known to us. One cannot use a room divider of about 4.5 to 6 meters in height as proof for a women's gallery or separate room for women. Finally, the very tenor of Philo's description of this group of people suggests that he was telling his readers something they did not already know. Whether written for Jewish or for non-Jewish readers, the report on this exotic sect is an introduction to customs not widely practiced. Philo's detailed description arouses the impression that we have before us a rare custom rather than one so widespread that describing it is unnecessary.¹⁵⁹

A further text worth noting here reflects a fourth-century Babylonian practice (b. Qidd. 81a [mid.]):¹⁶⁰ אבוי דייר גופלי. "Abaye placed jugs around (them); Rava placed reed around (them). Avin stated, The sorest spot of the year is the festival season." The context of this passage is a discussion of women and men mixing with each other. The jugs and reed were two means of separating the men from the women, i.e., they could be placed on the floor forming a sort of boundary between the two groups. Rashi says that the jugs were pottery shards and that these or reeds were placed in rows between men and women at such gatherings as a sermon or a wedding. The statement, "The sorest spot of the year is the festival season," is a reference to the type of frivolity discussed above in the context of the water-drawing ceremony.

Note that this text makes no reference to the synagogue. If Rashi is right, the gatherings were not necessarily synagogue services, but rather large public gatherings of various sorts. Given all the discussion by archaeologists of permanent architectural features designed to separate women from men, it is especially noteworthy how temporary a jug or reed divider looks to us. This text, therefore, rather than providing support for the thesis of a women's gallery or section in the ancient synagogue, lends credence to the thesis that the separation of the sexes was occasionally practiced at certain large public

gatherings and was facilitated by means of temporary dividers, as for example, reed or jug dividers.

This survey of the literary evidence adduced by scholars in support of a women's gallery or women's section has shown that none of this evidence is convincing. The women's forecourt in the temple was not just for women. The gallery erected in the women's forecourt was just for women but was rarely used. The story concerning Trajan and the women is ambiguous in its terminology and contradictory in its versions. The separation practiced by the Therapeutrides and the Therapeutai cannot be used as evidence for general Jewish practice. The passage concerning the separation of women from men by means of jugs or reeds is not related to the synagogue and actually underscores the temporary nature of the divider. There is, therefore, no convincing literary support for the existence of a women's gallery or women's section.

C. Further Considerations

In order to set the study of the synagogues in its proper context, it is necessary to compare them briefly with churches and temples. As to Christian practice, there was some variety and a certain development. The vast majority of the Byzantine churches in Palestine do not seem to have had a gallery.¹⁶¹ Outside of Palestine some churches seem to have had one (e.g., the Church of St. John Studios in Constantinople [463],¹⁶² the Church of the Acheiropoietos in Salonika [470],¹⁶³ the Umm-es-Surab in the Hauran, Syria [489],¹⁶⁴ and the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople [537]¹⁶⁵), while others seem not to have (e.g., St. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna [490],¹⁶⁶ Maria Maggiore in Rome [432-440]¹⁶⁷). Galleries in churches, of course, could serve a number of purposes, and should therefore not be identified as "women's galleries."¹⁶⁸ There is, however, some evidence that some Christian communities did institute a separation of the sexes.¹⁶⁹ These varied in form and sometimes applied only to the laity.¹⁷⁰ There is no reason to assume that this practice was ancient or universal or that the earliest Christians adopted it from the Jews.¹⁷¹ The evidence points to its being an independent Christian development which occurred in an uneven and regionally varied way.

It is impossible to give any kind of a survey of temples here, and it also does not seem necessary since ancient synagogues do not bear a great deal of resemblance to ancient Graeco-Roman temples. One type is worth mentioning, however, and

that is the temple with a staircase. Robert Amy made a very thorough survey of temples with staircases, especially of those in Syria, Lebanon and Trans-Jordan.¹⁷² What is significant for our question is that staircases do not disappear in the course of time. Where they are present in the ruins, they have as good a chance of surviving raids by builders in search of material as do columns, piers, or courses of ashlar stones. This fact should be particularly significant for those archaeologists who would reconstruct galleries in Palestinian synagogues even when no staircase is to be found.

If the evidence points so heavily against the reconstruction of a gallery and against the assumption that women and men were strictly separated in the ancient synagogue, why is the opposite the prevailing view? The most likely reason is that modern scholars are still using the contemporary Orthodox synagogue as their tertium comparationis rather than allowing for the possibility that in antiquity certain customs were different from today's customs. Further, archaeologists have looked to certain Galilean synagogues for their point of departure, assuming that the reconstructed women's gallery was based on firm evidence.

Has no one called all of this into question? As a matter of fact, five prominent scholars, over a period of the last eighty-one years, have offered their reasons for calling into question the existence of a separate gallery or women's section in the ancient synagogue.

The first was Leopold Löw,¹⁷³ who pointed out that the Talmud makes no mention of it, and that a number of stories make mention of women participating in the synagogue services. He also discusses a number of the passages dealt with above and comes to the conclusion that there was no women's section in the ancient synagogue.

Löw was followed by Ismar Elbogen,¹⁷⁴ who referred to several of the same texts and concluded that women and men probably sat separately, but that the rows for women and for men were side by side. Elbogen does assume, however, that the galleries in the Galilean synagogues were probably for women, although he adds that this is not certain.

Richard Krautheimer¹⁷⁵ also believed that the ancient synagogue did not have a strict separation of the sexes, suggesting that this probably came in gradually.

Asher Hiram¹⁷⁶ argued on various grounds that the ancient synagogue in Israel did not have a gallery, whether for women or not. As a technical argument, Hiram points out that the

Palestinian synagogues were built of ashlar stones with no cement of any sort and that such buildings could not have supported the lateral pressure which would have been exerted by a gallery. As an archaeological argument against the gallery, Hiram cites the ancient coins which bear the images of synagogues, noting that no gallery is visible on them. He further proposes the economic argument that a gallery is rather expensive and the architectural argument that a gallery would have been aesthetically unpleasing. If there was a gallery, Hiram concludes, then it must have been over the transverse aisle and have functioned as a classroom. If there was a pseudo-gallery, it could have been used for storage purposes. By rejecting the theory of the gallery, Hiram does not totally exclude the possibility that the women sat in a side room, as he believes they did at Hammat Gader.

Finally, and in the greatest depth, Shmuel Safrai¹⁷⁷ has called the existence of the women's gallery into question. Safrai accepts the existence of galleries, but argues that these were not for women and that, in fact, no reference to a general separation of the sexes in synagogue worship can be found in ancient Jewish literature. Safrai also discusses a significant number of texts which show that women went to the synagogue and participated in the services.

It is time that scholars of Judaica and archaeologists take these arguments seriously.

Conclusions

The archaeological survey has demonstrated that the ancient synagogue ruins in Palestine yield little evidence for galleries. The ancient Diaspora synagogues yield none. While there are side rooms, especially in Diaspora synagogues, there is no archaeological reason to assume that these were for women. It should be stated here that it is not my thesis that one can prove that all ancient synagogues were built without galleries. Rather, it is my thesis that at nearly all sites the evidence is totally insufficient to reconstruct a gallery. Even if these galleries were for women, the architectural and cultural picture emerging would still be vastly different from the one current in modern scholarship. As for the side rooms, it is not my thesis that one can prove that these were not for women, but rather that all evidence is lacking to support the hypothesis that they were for women. Even if the one or the other were a women's section, the cultural picture emerging would still be vastly different from the one current in modern scholarship.

Ancient Jewish literature yields no hint of a strict separation of the sexes in the synagogue. Thus, even if a gallery were to have existed in a particular synagogue, this would not prove that it was a women's gallery. By the same token, ancient literature should caution us from identifying unidentified side rooms as women's sections.

The parallel of Christian churches shows that they do not give us reason to reconstruct a gallery in the ancient synagogues in Israel. The development of the arrangement of the sexes was uneven and regionally influenced. Earliest Christianity does not seem to have had a separation of the sexes.

Ancient pagan temples with stairs show that stairs do not disappear more quickly than other architectural elements.

This has not been the first attempt to call the existence of the women's gallery and the women's section in the ancient synagogue into question. Rather than simply relying on the consensus of scholarship, it is time to rethink the prevailing view, to produce evidence where it exists and to alter one's hypothesis where it does not. It is therefore inappropriate to reject the possibility of women leaders in the ancient synagogue on the grounds that women were not even admitted into the main prayer hall.

CHAPTER VII

FURTHER BACKGROUND ISSUES RELATING TO WOMEN

LEADERS IN THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE

A. Women's Participation in Synagogue Worship Services

The lack of an adequate understanding of women's participation in the life of the ancient synagogue has hindered research on the Jewish inscriptions in which women bear titles. Even the following, very cursory survey of several salient points should shed light on the context from which they arose. The basis for all other participation is attendance at the synagogue services. Women's attendance at synagogue worship services is taken for granted in the ancient sources.¹ The New Testament gives several of the earliest attestations of this. In Luke 13:10-17, Jesus heals a woman who had been bent over for eighteen years. According to the evangelist, the framework of the miracle is a sabbath service: "Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath" (Luke 13:10).

The Acts of the Apostles also attest to women's presence at worship services. When Paul and Silas traveled to Philippi, they followed their usual custom of searching out the local synagogue (Acts 16:12b-14):

Ἔμην δὲ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ πόλει διατρίβοντες ἡμέρας τινάς.
τῇ τε ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων ἐξήλθομεν ἔξω τῆς πύλης παρὰ
ποταμὸν οὗ ἐνομιζομεν προσευχῆν εἶναι, καὶ καθίσαντες
ἐλάλοῦμεν ταῖς συνελθούσαις γυναῖξιν. καὶ τις γυνὴ
ὀνόματι Λυδία, πορφυρόπωλις πόλεως θυατείρων σεβομένη
τὸν θεόν, ἤκουεν, ἣς ὁ κύριος διήνοιξεν τὴν καρδίαν
προσέχειν τοῖς λαλουμένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Παύλου.

We remained in this city for some days; and on the sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a synagogue (proseuchē); and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul.

There is a general tendency among scholars to assume that it is not an actual synagogue service which is meant, but rather some sort of outdoor prayer meeting. The reasons for the hesitancy to translate proseuchē as "synagogue" are: 1) the "we supposed" (hou enomizomen) of v. 13; 2) the use of proseuchē instead of

synagōgē, which is the usual term in Acts (Acts 6:9; 9:2; etc.); and 3) the fact that the congregants are women.² As to the first reason, it does not seem unusual that the missionaries would not know the site of the synagogue in a strange town. Secondly, the term proseuchē perhaps goes back to the sources of the author of Acts (the same term occurs immediately following in 16:16) or is perhaps a simple variant in the author's usage. It is in any case well-attested as meaning "synagogue."³ I believe that the real reason for the hesitancy is that the only congregants mentioned are women. One can see that this is a circular argument: on the assumption that women did not attend or only rarely attended synagogue services, a text which speaks of women attending services is taken as not referring to genuine synagogue worship. None of the three reasons is convincing, and this text is therefore a further attestation of women's presence at Jewish worship services. Another example is found in Acts 17:4, in which "not a few of the leading women" were persuaded by Paul's sermon in the synagogue of Thessalonica. Finally, Acts 18:26, "He [Apollos] began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and expounded to him the way of God more accurately," is an example of a Jewish woman not only attending the service, but also teaching in a synagogue context.

Rabbinic sources also speak of women participating in synagogue services. B. 'Abod. Zar. 38a-38b reads:

אשה קדירה על גבי כירה ובאה עובדה כוכבים
ומניסה עד שתבא מביית המרחץ או מביית הכנסת
ואינה חוששת.

[An Israelite] woman may set a pot on a stove and let a gentile woman then come and stir it pending her return from the bathhouse or the synagogue, and she need take no notice of it.

This saying is a baraitha (i.e., Tannaitic). Just preceding these words, the text speaks of a male Israelite leaving a gentile man to watch his meat while he is in the synagogue or house of learning. Thus it is assumed that just as men ordinarily go to synagogue, so too do women ordinarily go to synagogue. A further relevant text is y. Ber. 9d.6-8 (cf. b. Soṭa 38a):

עיר שכולה כהנים נושאים אה כפיהן. למי הן מברכין?
לאחיהן שבצפון לאחיהם שבדרום לאחיהם שבמזרח
לאחיהם שבמערב. ומי עונה אחריהן אמר? הנשים והטף.

In a town where all are priests they raise up their hands [to give the blessing]. Whom do they bless? Their brothers in the north, in the south, in the east and in the west. And who answers, "Amen," after them? The women and the children.

Again, the women's presence in the service is simply presupposed.⁴ Note that this text presupposes that only male priests give the priestly blessing. A story told of a woman who used to go each week to hear R. Me'ir (ca. 150) preach would be one more example of the way in which also the rabbinic sources take women's attendance at worship services to be an ordinary phenomenon (y. Sotā 16d.38-52; Lev. Rab. 9.9; cf. Deut. Rab. 5.15). Another story about a woman's regular attendance at synagogue services is also relevant here (b. Sotā 22a):

דההיא אלמנה דהואי בי כנישחא בשיבכותה,
 כל יומא הוא אחיא ומצלה בי מדרשיה דרבי יוחנן,
 אמר לה, בחי! לא בית הכנסת בשיבכותך.
 אמרה ליה, רבבי! ולא שכר פסיעות יש לי.

A certain widow had a synagogue in her neighborhood; yet she used to come daily to the school of R. Johanan and pray there. He said to her, "My daughter, is there not a synagogue in your neighborhood?" She answered him, "Rabbi, but have I not the reward for the steps!"

The issue here is not that the woman goes to the synagogue regularly, but rather that she walks quite a distance to attend services in a synagogue far from her home and merits reward for her extra steps. That she attends is not cause for surprise. The background of these sources is that, according to Tannaitic halakhah, women are obliged to pray (m. Ber. 3:3); prayer in the synagogue is one of the ways of fulfilling that obligation.

In the light of such sources, one can say with certainty that Jewish women attended synagogue services in the period of the Second Temple and of the Mishnah and the Talmud. It is difficult to understand how Goodenough could write with reference to the Juliana who had donated the mosaic in the synagogue at Naro in North Africa:

She herself could presumably not have attended the services in this sancta synagoga; but as with all daughters in Israel, her hope was in the maintenance of Jewish worship and life.⁵

B. Women as Donors to and of Synagogues

Anyone familiar with the workings of private institutions is acutely aware of the connection between the ability to give money and the capability of wielding influence. The boards of

trustees of the private institutions of this country provide ample attestation of this phenomenon. In the ancient world, philanthropy and power were also intimately connected with each other, perhaps even more so than today, whereby it is not always clear whether philanthropy was the prerequisite to holding office or vice versa. In an article entitled "Feminism in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum," S. L. Mohler writes:

It follows as a natural corollary to the importance of games and epula in the life of the ancient communities that social leadership was determined to a considerable extent by the ability of individuals to supply the demand for these forms of entertainment.⁶

After outlining the concrete relationship between certain official titles held by women and philanthropy, Mohler notes:

Having once received this formal recognition as public functionaries--which meant as much or as little as election to a magistracy--, these women were in a position to enter upon the prescribed career of philanthropy.⁷

Without simplistically transferring the situation of the non-Jewish world onto Judaism, it does seem reasonable to ask whether there might have been a relationship between donations to and of synagogues and influence in the Jewish community. This is not to ask whether synagogue functionaries attained their titles through engaging in donative activity or whether maintaining the synagogue building was one of their functions. Throughout the discussion of the various titles, we have seen that while persons who bear titles often appear in donative inscriptions, so too do those who bear none. The purpose of pointing out the women in Jewish donative inscriptions is not, therefore, to suggest that all of these held leadership positions or were synagogue functionaries. The point, rather, is to view the women title-bearers against the backdrop of women donors, that is, to consider the implications of the existence of women donors for the interpretation of the nineteen inscriptions in question.

For an overview of women donating alone and together with their husbands, as well as of others donating on behalf of women, see the forty-three inscriptions given in the appendix. The most important aspect of this corpus is not any one detail, but rather the very fact of the existence of such inscriptions. They belie the current, often unstated, view of Jewish women in antiquity as very much in the background, as not in any way involved in the public sphere, but rather as absolutely restricted to domestic

activities. They show that at least some women controlled their own property and possessed sufficient sums of money to be able to donate from it. One might ask whether the system of guardianship would not have been a severe restriction on women's control of their property, as the approval of the guardian (tutor, kyrios) was necessary before disposing of one's property. Guardians are not mentioned in the donative inscriptions, probably because donative inscriptions are not legal documents. If the guardian's approval was necessary, which, especially with the smaller donations, may not have been the case, all of these women succeeded in obtaining it. Since the system of guardianship had broken down considerably by the late Roman period,⁸ the question may even be irrelevant for most of the inscriptions.

One synagogue where women were particularly active as donors was that in Apamea in Syria, which contained a mosaic floor with nineteen dedicatory inscriptions (Lifshitz, Donateurs nos. 38-56; Inscr. Syrie 1319-1337; CII 803-818). One of the inscriptions is dated to 391 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 38; CII 803⁹). Of the nineteen inscriptions, nine were ordered by women (Appendix nos. 7-15), and another five were ordered by a man (or men) and a woman (or women) together, in two cases with their children (Appendix nos. 30-34). Two further inscriptions contain donations on behalf of women (Appendix nos. 39-40). There are only three inscriptions (Lifshitz, Donateurs nos. 38, 47, 49; Inscr. Syrie 1319, 1328, 1330; CII 803, 812, 814) which mention only male donors (in contrast to nine which mention only women), although one of these (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 38) refers not to one, but rather to several male donors. A caveat concerning the relationship between being a donor and holding an official position is in order here. In spite of the preponderance of women donors, the only office-holders mentioned by name are men.¹⁰ Thus, the case of Apamea does not demonstrate that where women donate money, they receive official titles. It simply shows that they were active members of the synagogue and in control of a certain amount of money.

An inscription which shows a closer connection between donative activity and official honor is the Tation inscription from Phocaea, Ionia (Appendix no. 3; perhaps 3rd C.).¹¹ Tation donated an entire synagogue and was honored with a golden crown and prohedria, that is, the right to sit in front in the seat of honor. Perhaps this refers to the type of special chair or throne found in the synagogues at Delos, 'En-Gedi and Korazim.¹² One is reminded also of Jesus' indictment of the scribes and

Pharisees who "sit on the seat of Moses" and who "love the best seats (prōtokathedriai) in the synagogues" (Matt 23:2, 6). The prohedria granted to Tation does not fit in with the hypothesis of a women's gallery. One could imagine that this inscription is unambivalent with respect to the honor bestowed upon a woman. Not so to Salomon Reinach, who writes:

The inscription of Phocaea shows us that this distinction [i.e., prohedria] was accorded not only to the wealthy and the learned, but that the community conferred it, by special decision, even upon women.¹³

It would seem that a woman who donates an entire building is, by definition, wealthy, and how Mr. Reinach can know that Tation was not a learned person is unclear to this author.

Another woman who donated an entire synagogue was Julia Severa (Appendix no. 6; probably 1st C.), probably a non-Jewish woman¹⁴ who was a high priestess, agōnothetis and eponymous magistrate (MAMA VI 153, 263, 265).¹⁵ Her name continued to be associated with the synagogue for some time, for the extant inscription does not commemorate the erection of the building, but rather its repair at a later date.

The one woman title-bearer who was also a donor is Theopempte (Appendix no. 4), head of the synagogue. The contribution of her and her son Eusebios was a chancel screen post, possibly also the chancel screen attached to it.

In summary, the references to women in Jewish donative inscriptions do not prove that women were synagogue functionaries in antiquity, but they do show that some women controlled considerable sums of money and were active in supporting the synagogue. This is an important piece of information when considering the question of whether women could have been members of boards of elders or whether mothers of the synagogue might have served on governing boards. One of the functions of such boards might have been to make budgetary decisions. Those in society who are appointed or elected to make budgetary decisions are often those who possess property or money themselves. These inscriptions show that some women in antiquity controlled money and would, therefore, have been good candidates for board membership.

C. Women as Proselytes to Judaism

Scholars have recognized for some time that women proselytes are mentioned relatively frequently in ancient sources.

Josephus, in speaking of the Jewish War, writes that the men of Damascus wanted to carry out a massacre against the Jews of Damascus, and that "their only fear was of their own wives, who, with few exceptions, had all become converts to the Jewish religion (πλὴν ὀλίγων ὑπηγμέναις τῇ Ἰουδαϊκῇ θρησκείᾳ), and so their efforts were mainly directed to keeping the secret from them" (J.W. 2.20.2 § 560). Because this report seems exaggerated to modern scholars, they often assume that these women, or at least the majority of them, had not become full Jews, but rather "God-fearers."¹⁶ It is not at all clear why this should be the case. Josephus further reports that the Jewish merchant Ananias converted King Izates of Adiabene in the following way (Ant. 20.2.3. §§ 34-35):

...πρὸς τὰς γυναῖκας εἰσιὼν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐδίδασκεν αὐτάς τὸν θεὸν σέβειν, ὡς Ἰουδαίοις πατριὸν ἦν, καὶ δὴ δι' αὐτῶν εἰς γνῶσιν ἀφικόμενος τῷ Ἰζάτη κἀκεῖνον ὁμοίως συνανέπεισεν...

. . . [Ananias] visited the king's wives and taught them to worship God after the manner of the Jewish tradition. It was through their agency that he was brought to the notice of Izates, whom he similarly won over with the co-operation of the women . . .

Izates' mother, Helena, independently of her son, also converted to Judaism. Helena was well-known for her help to the people of Jerusalem in a time of famine and was buried in Jerusalem.¹⁷ The Mishnah (m. Yoma 3:10) mentions Helena's gifts to the Jerusalem temple, and the Babylonian Talmud says that she was very careful to observe all of the commandments (b. Sukk. 2b). Josephus also reports on a Roman woman of high rank, Fulvia by name, who had become a Jewish proselyte and was tricked by three Jewish men into giving them purple and gold, which they promised to deliver to the temple in Jerusalem, but which they actually kept for themselves (Ant. 18.3.5 §§ 81-84). In contrast to all of these references to female proselytes, Josephus mentions only one male proselyte in the Diaspora, Izates.

Some have argued that Poppaea Sabina, the wife of Nero, was perhaps a proselyte or at least favorably inclined to Judaism (Josephus, Ant. 20.8.11 § 195), but this is rather uncertain.¹⁸

The ancient Jewish inscriptions also support the theory that it was especially women who were attracted to Judaism. Of the seven or eight inscriptions from Italy which mention Jewish proselytes, five refer to women (CII 21, 202, 222, 462, 523), and only two or three to men (CII 68, 256, possibly 576). As for the

"God-fearers," Kuhn and Stegemann¹⁹ count four inscriptions referring to women (CII 285, 524, 529, 642), and three referring to men (CII 5, 500, 642). According to their use of the term "God-fearer," CII 683a and 731e should be added to the list; the first refers to a man and the second to a woman. A. Thomas Kraabel, however, has recently called into question the existence of a clearly defined group of persons called by the technical term "God-fearers,"²⁰ and therefore caution is called for in the use of these materials.

Rabbinic literature also makes mention of female proselytes (e.g., m. Ketub. 4:3; b. Ber. 8b; b. Roš. Haš. 17b; b. B. Qam. 109b; b. Hor. 13a; b. Yebam. 46a, 78a, 84b; b. Ketub. 37a; Ger. 2.1, 4). In fact, as the following law from the Theodosian Code makes clear, women continued to become proselytes to Judaism even well into the Christian era (Cod. Theod. 16.8.6; August 13, 339):

Imp. Constantius A. ad Evagrium.

(Post alia:) Quod ad mulieres pertinet, quas Iudaei in turpitudinis suae duxere consortium in gynaeeo nostro ante versatas, placet easdem restitui gynaeeo idque in reliquum observari, ne Christianas mulieres suis iungant flagitiis vel, si hoc fecerint, capitali periculo subiugentur.

Dat. id. aug. Constantio A. ii cons.²¹

Emperor Constantius Augustus to Evagrius.

(After other matters.) In so far as pertains to the women who were formerly employed in Our imperial weaving establishment and who have been led by the Jews into the association of their turpitude, it is Our pleasure that they shall be restored to the weaving establishment. It shall be observed that Jews shall not hereafter unite Christian women to their villainy; if they should do so, however, they shall be subject to the peril of capital punishment.

Given on the ides of August in the year of the second consulship of Constantius Augustus.²²

The only explanation for this law is that large numbers of Christian women had converted to Judaism. Had there only been isolated instances, such a law would be inexplicable. Placing Jewish missionary activity among Christian women under the death penalty must certainly have placed a damper on such activity; that the Roman lawgiver considered such a penalty necessary must indicate that the Jewish mission to women had been enjoying considerable success.

John Chrysostom attests, not to the conversion of women to Judaism, but to Christian women attending the Jewish New Year service in the Antioch of his time, as well as other synagogue services. Not surprisingly, Chrysostom condemns this practice with the sharpest of words, emphasizing that a Christian man is

the head of his wife and that he should keep his wife and his slave at home, not allowing them to go to the synagogue or the theater (Adv. Jud. 2.4-6; 4.3).²³

All of this evidence for women being attracted by and converting to Judaism sheds a new light, not only on ancient Judaism in general, but also on the question of the make-up of new communities of the Diaspora. If large numbers of women in the ancient world converted to Judaism, then it could have been the case that in some communities women formed the majority. Further, if large numbers of women became proselytes, then why should we imagine that men were the only proselytizers? In the imperial weaving establishment, for example, one could visualize women workers, Jewish by birth or by conversion, discussing religious questions with their fellow weavers, inviting them to religious services or festivals and finally arranging for their conversion.

Further, women's attraction to Judaism may have had something to do with the nature of the Judaism to which they were attracted. Is it possible that these forms of Judaism were less restrictive regarding women than some of its forms known to us through history? This does not mean that women could not or have not converted to religions oppressive of women, which is simply a fact in the history of religions. If Judaism was especially appealing to women in the Roman world, however, scholarship must face the question why this was so and re-evaluate our understanding of ancient Judaism accordingly. The attractiveness of Judaism to women cannot be explained as a result of the presence of Jewish women title-bearers, but it is plausible to imagine that active, leading Jewish women were influential in attracting non-Jewish women to join the Jewish community. One clear point of connection between proselytes and women title-bearers is CII 523, in which Veturia Paulla, who had converted to Judaism sixteen years before her death, is called the mother of two synagogues. It is not surprising that a convert, who would have been an especially active member of the synagogue, should also have been involved in the leadership of it.

CONCLUSION

The view that the titles in question were honorific is based less on evidence from the inscriptions themselves or from other ancient sources than on current presuppositions concerning the nature of ancient Judaism. Seen in the larger context of women's participation in the life of the ancient synagogue, there is no reason not to take the titles as functional, nor to assume that women heads or elders of synagogues had radically different functions than men heads or elders of synagogues. Of the functions outlined for each title, there are none which women could not have carried out. If women donated money, and even large sums of it, surely they were capable of collecting and administering synagogue funds. Nor is it impossible to imagine Jewish women sitting on councils of elders or teaching or arranging for the religious service. Even women carrying out judicial functions is not impossible in a tradition which reveres one of its women prophets (Deborah) as a judge. This is not to say that the women of these inscriptions might not have been exceptions. Indeed, they probably were. It is an exception today for women to hold positions of religious leadership. The point is not whether these women were exceptions or not, nor even whether they faced opposition or not--today's women rabbis, ministers and priests certainly do--but whether their titles were merely titles or whether they implied actual functions, just as for the men. It is my view that they were functional, and that if the women bearing these titles had been members of another Graeco-Roman religion, scholars would not have doubted that the women were actual functionaries. This collection of inscriptions should challenge historians of religion to question the prevailing view of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman period as a religion all forms of which a priori excluded women from leadership roles.

Further steps in research would be to consider these Jewish women leaders in the larger context of the history of religions, comparing their functions with those of women leaders in other communities and religions, such as the Isis, Demeter or Dionysus religions. It would also be especially useful to study possible connections between Judaism and Jewish Christianity. For example, it is striking that several early Christian women leaders were Jewish: the apostle Junia (Rom 16:7), the teacher and missionary Prisca (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom 16:3-4; 1 Cor

16:19; 2 Tim 4:19; note that in Acts 18:26 she teaches in a synagogue context), and possibly the Mariam of Rom 16:6, "who labored much for you" (on *kopiaō* as a term of leadership, see 1 Cor 16:16; 1 Thess 5:12). The inscriptional evidence for Jewish women leaders means that one cannot declare it to be a departure from Judaism that early Christian women held leadership positions. A further context in which to study this material would be the political titles borne by women in this period, in particular in Asia Minor, since some of the Jewish titles may have had civic and political overtones. Another area in great need of research is the social and economic aspects of Jewish women's lives in this period. If we had a clearer picture of women's daily lives, it would be much easier to visualize how Jewish women leaders fit into the larger context of Jewish women's history. A historian wishing to add to the picture of which the present study is a small portion might look at other periods of Jewish history, in particular, the Persian, Hellenistic and medieval periods, to see if similar evidence from those periods exists, raising the question of a continuum of Jewish women leaders.

Historians of Judaism, in particular rabbinics scholars, might consider taking this evidence into account when assessing statements concerning women in Jewish literary sources. Non-literary materials should be a challenge, and not a simple complement, to the view of reality emerging from literature. Literature composed by men is the product of men's minds and not a simple mirror image of reality. As we begin to evaluate all of the sources for Jewish women's history in the period in question, including inscriptions and papyri, a much more differentiated picture will emerge. It will then be impossible to mistake male Jewish attitudes towards women for Jewish women's history. Jacob Neusner has already made an important contribution to this endeavor with his five-volume work, A History of the Mishnaic Law of Women (Leiden: Brill, 1980), in which he attempts a systemic analysis of the mishnaic division on women. That is, Neusner sees clearly that what the male rabbis said about women does not necessarily reflect who women were, what they did or what they thought. Rather it reflects who the men making these statements were. Therefore, one must view their words in the context of their system of thought. Only subsequent to this can one evaluate how relevant for women's history a given passage might

be, that is, if it contains accurate historical data about women or not. Perhaps this greater sensitivity to the nature of the historical documents and a heightened awareness of the perspectives they represent can bring us one step closer to understanding the reality of women's past.*

*Just as this study was being prepared for publication, Prof. Dr. Martin Hengel kindly informed me of the existence of an unpublished Jewish inscription from Aphrodisias in Caria in which a woman by the name of Jael is called prostatēs ("presiding officer," "patron," "guardian"). Her son Josua, who is called an archōn, is also mentioned. The long inscription is reported to date from the third or fourth century and to be concerned with charitable activities. It is to be published soon by Miss Joyce Reynolds of Newnham College, University of Cambridge and others in Revue des études grecques and may well be an important piece of evidence for the further discussion of Jewish women's leadership. An analysis of the title prostatēs in the inscription could also shed light on the work of the early Christian prostatis, Phoebe, mentioned by Paul in Rom 16:1-2.

ABBREVIATIONS

All abbreviations not listed here are according to the Journal of Biblical Literature abbreviation guidelines.

- ANRW = Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Ed. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase. Vols. 1- . Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972- .
- Applebaum, "Organization" = Applebaum, Shimon. "The Organization of the Jewish Communities in the Diaspora." In: Compendia Rerum Judaicarum ad Novum Testamentum, pp. 464-503. Ed. M. de Jonge and Shmuel Safrai. Vols. 1- . Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974- .
- BAR = Biblical Archaeology Review
- Baron, Community = Baron, Salo Wittmayer. The Jewish Community. 3 vols. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1942; reprint ed., Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1972.
- Berliner = Berliner, A(braham). Geschichte der Juden in Rom. 2 vols. Frankfurt: J. Kauffmann, 1893.
- Chiat = Chiat, Marilyn J. Segal. A Corpus of Synagogue Art and Architecture in Roman and Byzantine Palestine. 4 vols. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1979. An abbreviated version of this appeared just after this manuscript was completed: Handbook of Synagogue Architecture. Brown Judaic Studies 29. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982.
- CPJ = Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum
- EAE = Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land. English edition ed., Michael Avi-Yonah and Ephraim Stern. 4 vols. Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1975-1978. Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society and Masada Press, 1975-1978.
- Elbogen = Elbogen, Ismar. Der jüdische Gottesdienst. 2d ed. Frankfurt: J. Kauffmann, 1924.
- Goodenough = Goodenough, Erwin. Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period. 13 vols. Bollingen Series 37. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953-1968.
- HA = Hadashot Arkheologiot
- Hennecke-Schneemelcher = Hennecke, Edgar. New Testament Apocrypha. Ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher. Tr. R. McL. Wilson. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963.

- Hättenmeister = Hättenmeister, Frowald. Die antiken Synagogen in Israel. Part I. Die jüdischen Synagogen, Lehrhäuser und Gerichtshöfe. Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des vorderen Orients. Series B (Geisteswissenschaften) no. 12/1. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert, 1977.
- IGR = Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes
- Inscr. Syrie = Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie. Ed. Louis Jalabert and René Mouterd. 5 vols. Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1929-1959.
- Juster = Juster, Jean. Les Juifs dans l'empire romain. 2 vols. Paris: Geuthner, 1914.
- Klijn and Reinink = Klijn, A.F.J., and Reinink, G.J. Patristic Evidence for Jewish Christianity. Supplements to Novum Testamentum 36. Leiden: Brill, 1973.
- Kohl and Watzinger = Kohl, Heinrich and Watzinger, Carl. Antike Synagogen in Galiläa. Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 29. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1916; reprint ed., Jerusalem: Kedem, 1973.
- Kraabel, "Synagogue" = Kraabel, Alf Thomas. "The Diaspora Synagogue." In: ANRW 19,1 (1979) 477-510.
- Krauss, Altertümer = Krauss, Samuel. Synagogale Altertümer. Berlin: Benjamin Harz, 1922.
- Leon = Leon, Harry J. The Jews of Ancient Rome. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1960.
- Levine, Synagogues Revealed = Ancient Synagogues Revealed. Ed. Lee I. Levine. Detroit: Wayne State University Press and The Israel Exploration Society, 1982. Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 1981.
- Lifshitz, Donateurs = Lifshitz, Baruch. Donateurs et fondateurs dans les synagogues juives. Cahiers de la Revue Biblique 7. Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie, 1967.
- MAMA = Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua.
- Mazar, Beth She'arim = Beth She'arim, vol. 1: Benjamin Mazar, Catacombs 1-4; vol. 2: Moshe Schwabe and Baruch Lifshitz, The Greek Inscriptions; vol. 3: Nahman Avigad, Catacombs 12-23. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1973-1976; Jerusalem: Masada Press, 1973-1976; Hebrew original, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1957-1971.
- Schürer, Gemeindeverfassung = Schürer, Emil. Die Gemeindeverfassung der Juden in Rom in der Kaiserzeit. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1879.
- Schürer, Geschichte = Schürer, Emil. Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi. Vol. 3. 3d ed. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1909.

Schürer, History = Schürer, Emil. History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ. Rev. ed., rev. and ed. by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, Matthew Black and Pamela Vermes. 2 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973-1979.

Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim = Beth She'arim, vol. 1: Benjamin Mazar, Catacombs 1-4; vol. 2: Moshe Schwabe and Baruch Lifshitz, The Greek Inscriptions; vol. 3: Nahman Avigad, Catacombs 12-23. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1973-1976; Jerusalem: Masada Press, 1973-1976. Hebrew original, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1957-1971.

SEG = Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum

Sukenik, Synagogues = Sukenik, Eliezer L. Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece. The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1930. London: Oxford University Press, 1934; reprint ed., Munich: Krauss Reprint, 1980.

Vogelstein and Rieger = Vogelstein, Hermann and Rieger, Paul. Geschichte der Juden in Rom. 2 vols. Berlin: Mayer und Müller, 1895-1896.

For Greek and Latin classical texts the Loeb Classical Library edition and translation were used unless otherwise noted. For the Babylonian Talmud and the Midrash Rabbah the Soncino edition translation was consulted.

APPENDIX

WOMEN AS DONORS IN THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE

A. Women as Donors of Synagogues or to Synagogues

GREECE

Delos

These two inscriptions from Delos are from what is most likely a synagogue (1st C. B.C.E.). One of the reasons for assuming that it was a synagogue is the use of the term "most high God" in the inscriptions.

1. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 5; CII 728.

Λαωδίκη Θεῶι
Ἐψίστωι σωθεῖ-
σα ταῖς ὑφ' αὐτο-
4 ὄ θ' ἑαρηπῆαις
εὐχήν.

Laodike to the most high God,
having been saved by him with
the medical treatments, in ful-
fillment of a vow.

2. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 7; CII 730.

Ἐψίσ-
τω εὐ-
χήν M-
4 αρκία.

To the most high (God), Marcia,
in fulfillment of a vow.

IONIA
Phocaea

3. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 13; CII 738. Perhaps 3rd C.

Τάτιον Στράτωνος τοῦ Ἐν-
πέδωνος τὸν οἶκον καὶ τὸν
περίβολον τοῦ ὑπαίθρου
κατασκευ-
4 ἄσασα ἐκ τῶ[ν [δ]ίων
ἐχαρίσατο τ[οῖς Ἰο]υδαίοις.
Ἡ συναγωγὴ ἐ[τείμη]σεν τῶν
ων Τάτιον Σ[τράτ]ωνος τοῦ
Ἐνπέ-
8 δωνος χρυσοῦ στεφάνῳ
καὶ προεδρίᾳ.

Tation, daughter (or wife) of
Straton, son of E(m)pedon,
having erected the assembly
hall and the enclosure of the
open courtyard with her own
funds, gave them as a gift
to the Jews. The synagogue of
the Jews honored Tation, daugh-
ter (or wife) of Straton, son
of E(m)pedon, with a golden
crown and the privilege of sit-
ting in the seat of honor.

CARIA
Myndos

4. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 29; CII 756. Chancel screen post. After 4th/5th C.

[Ἀπὸ Θε]ωπέμπτῃς
[ἀρ]χίσουν(αγώγου) καὶ τοῦ υἱ-
οῦ αὐτῆς Εὐσεβίου.

From Theompempte, head of the
synagogue, and her son Euse-
bios.

CARIA
Tralles

5. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 30; CIG 2924. Probably 3rd C.

Καπετωλίνα
ἡ ἀξιολογ(ωτάτη) καὶ
θεοσεβ(εστάτη) (π)οῆσα-

I, Capitolina, the most revered
and pious one, having made the
entire dais, made the revetment

- 4 σα τὸ πᾶμ βάρρο[ν] of the stairs, in fulfillment
 ἔσκούτλωσα τ[ὸν] of a vow for myself and (my)
 (ἀ)ναβασμὸν ὑπ[ὲρ] children and (my) grandchild-
 εὐχῆς ἑαυτῆς [καί?] dren. Blessings.
 8 πεδίωv τε καὶ ἐγ-
 γόνων. Εὐλογία.

PHRYGIA
 Akmonia

6. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 33; CII 766; MAMA VI, 264. Probably 1st C.

- Τὸν κατασκευασθέντα οἶκον ὑπὸ
 Ἰουλίας Σεουηρας· Π(οπιλιος) Τυρρώνιος Κλα-
 δος, ὁ διὰ βίου ἀρχισυνάγωγος καὶ
 4 Λουκιος Λουκιου ἀρχισυνάγωγος
 καὶ Ποπιλιος Ζωτικὸς ἄρχων ἐπεσ-
 κεύασαν ἐκ τε τῶν ἰδίων καὶ τῶν συν-
 καταθεμένων καὶ ἔγραψαν τοὺς τοί-
 8 χους καὶ τὴν ὀροφήν καὶ ἐποίησαν
 τὴν τῶν θυρίδων ἀσφάλειαν καὶ τὸν
 λυπὸν πάντα κόσμον, οὕστινας καὶ
 ἡ συναγωγὴ ἐτελείμησεν ὀπλῶ ἐπιχρύ-
 12 σιν διὰ τὴν ἐνάρετον αὐτῶν δ[ι]ἀθ[ε]-
 σιν καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὴν συναγωγὴν εὐνοϊάν
 τε καὶ σπουδὴν.

The building was erected by Julia Severa; P(ublius) Tyrronios Klados, the head-for-life of the synagogue, and Lucius, son of Lucius, head of the synagogue, and Publius Zotikos, archon, restored it with their own funds and with the money which had been deposited, and they donated the murals for the walls and the ceiling, and they reinforced the windows and made all the rest of the ornamentation, and the synagogue honored them with a gilded shield on account of their virtuous behavior, solicitude and zeal for the synagogue.

SYRIA
 Apamea

- Inscriptions 7-15 are from the mosaic floor of a synagogue; they date from ca. 391; cf. nos. 30-34, 39 and 40 below.

7. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 41; Inscr. Syrie 1322; CII 806.

- Ἄλεξάνδρα Alexandra made 100 feet, in
 εὐξαμένη ὑπέ- fulfillment of a vow, for the
 ρ σωτηρίας πάν- salvation of all (her) rela-
 4 των τῶν εἰδίων tives.
 ἐποίησεν πό(δας) ρ'.

8. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 42; Inscr. Syrie 1323; CII 807.

- Ἄμβροσία εὐξα- Ambrosia made 50 feet, in
 μένη ὑπὲρ σω- fulfillment of a vow, for the
 τηρίας πάν- salvation of all (her) rela-
 4 των τῶν ἰδίων tives.
 ἐποίησεν πό(δας) ν'.

9. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 43; Inscr. Syrie 1324; CII 808.

- Δομ[νιν]α Domnina made 100 feet, in
 εὐξαμένη fulfillment of a vow, for the
 ὑπὲρ σωτη- salvation of all (her) rela-
 4 ρίας πάντων tives.
 τῶν ἰδίων
 ἐποίησεν πό(δας) ρ'.

10. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 44; Inscr. Syrie 1325; CII 809.
 Εὐπιθίς
 εὐξαμένη
 ὑπὲρ σωτη-
 4 ρίας πάντων
 τῶν ἰδίων
 ἐποίησεν πό(δας) ρ'.
- Eupithis made 100 feet, in fulfillment of a vow, for the salvation of all (her) relatives.
11. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 45; Inscr. Syrie 1326; CII 810.
 Διογενίς
 εὐξαμένη
 ὑπὲρ σωτη-
 4 ρίας πάντων
 τῶν ἰδίων
 ἐποίησεν πό(δας) ρ'.
- Diogenis made 100 feet, in fulfillment of a vow, for the salvation of all (her) relatives.
12. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 46; Inscr. Syrie 1327; CII 811.
 Σαπρικ[ι]α
 εὐξαμένη
 ὑπὲρ σ[ω]τη-
 4 ρίας π[ά]ντων
 τῶν ἰδίων
 ἐποίησεν πό(δας) ρν'.
- Saprikia made 150 feet, in fulfillment of a vow, for the salvation of all (her) relatives.
13. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 51; Inscr. Syrie 1332; CII 816.
 Κολωνίς εὐ-
 ξαμένη ὑπ-
 ἔρ σωτηρίας
 4 αὐτῆς καὶ τῶν
 τέκνων αὐτῆς
 ἐποίησεν πό(δας) οε'.
- Colonis made 75 feet, in fulfillment of a vow, for the salvation of herself and her children.
14. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 54; Inscr. Syrie 1335.
 [... ὑπὲρ σωτηρί-]
 ας αὐτῆς καὶ τῶν
 [τέκνων αὐτῆς?]
 καὶ τῶν ἐγγονίων ἐποίησεν... children.
- So and so made ... for the salvation of herself and her children (?) and (her) grandchildren.
15. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 55; Inscr. Syrie 1336.
 Εὐπιθίς εὐξαμένη
 ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας αὐ-
 τῆς καὶ τοῦ ἀνδρός
 4 καὶ τῶν τέκνων
 καὶ παντός τοῦ οἴκου
 αὐτῆς τὸν τόπον ἐποίησεν.
- Eupithis made this place, in fulfillment of a vow, for the salvation of herself and (her) husband and (her) children and all of her household.
- PALESTINE
Ashkalon
16. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 70; Hüttenmeister 24-25, no. 2; CII 964. Three marble fragments. 604.
 Θ(εός) Β(οήθει)· κυρά Δομνα Ἰου[λιανου] καὶ κυρ(ά) Μάρι(ν)
 Νόννου εὐχαρ[ιστοῦσαι]
 προσφέρωμεν. Κύρ[ος] . . ἐγ[γόνιν] Ἐλικίου [εὐχαριστῶν]
 τῷ Θ(ε)ῷ καὶ τῷ ἀγ[ίῳ] τόπῳ προσήνεγα ὑπὲρ σωτερ(ίας)·
 Κύρ(ος) Κομ[μοδος] προσήν-]
 4 εγκα ὑπὲρ σωτερ(ίας) [καὶ] ζοήν. εἶτους θψ'.
- God help. We, lady Domna, the daughter (or wife) of Julianos (?), and lady* Marin (?), the daughter (or wife)* of Nonnos, donate in thanksgiving. I, lord (or lady) so and so, the

grandchild of Helikios, donate in thanksgiving to God and to this holy place, for my salvation. I, lord (or lady) Kom... donate for my salvation and my life. In the year 709 (604).

*Lifshitz and others read: ... Φ ΜΑΡΙ ΝΟΝΝΥ as, "lord Mari(n), son of Nonnou; $\kappa\omicron\upsilon\rho(\sigma\varsigma)$ Μάρυ(ν) Νόννου.

PALESTINE

Ḥuldah

17. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 81b; *Hüttenmeister* 177-178, no. 2. Mosaic. Probably late 5th C.

Εὐτοχῶς	Blessings to Eustochios (or
Εὐστοχίῳ	Eustochion, f.) and Hesychion
καὶ Ἑσυχίῳ	(f.)* and Evagrius, the
4 καὶ Εὐαγρίῳ	founders.
τοῖς ἀτίσ-	
τεῖς.	

*Lifshitz and others read Eustochios (m.) and Hesychios (m.).

PALESTINE

Isfiyah

18. *Hüttenmeister* 183-184, no. 2. Mosaic. Mid-5th/early 6th C.

[...] וברוכה [חלי] פר [א] חחה דברבי [...] .
 2 דכיר לטב כל מן דפ] סק ויהב פסקחה חחי [להיה ברכתח [...] .
 [...] דכיר לטב דכיר לטב ירשיה די] הב [...] .
 ... and blessed be Ḥalifo, the wife of Rabbi
 Let every one who promised and gave his (or her)
 donation be of good memory. Blessed be that one
 Be of good memory. Be of good memory Josiah who gave

PALESTINE

Na'aran

19. *Hüttenmeister* 324, no. 2. Mosaic. 6th C.

רבקה	דכירה	May Rivqa, the wife of Pinḥas,
אחחה	2 לטב	be of good memory.
פינחס.		

20. *Hüttenmeister* 325, no. 3. Mosaic. 6th C.

דכירה לטב חליפר ברה רבי ספרה
 2 דאחחזקת בהדין אחרה [קדי]שה. אמן.
 May Ḥalipho, daughter of Rabbi Saphra, who has gained
 much merit in this holy place, be of good memory. Amen.

PALESTINE

Ḥamat Gader (al-Ḥamma)

21. *Hüttenmeister* 157-158, no. 3; CII 858. Mosaic. Probably early 5th C. *See p. 165.

<ו>[כ]י) ר לטב קיריס ליאנטים וקירה קלניק ד>ה[בו]ן.....
 [ל]קרה דכנישחה.
 2 מלך עלמה י>תן ב>רכתח בעמלה. אמן. אמ>ן. סלה.< .ש[ל]ן. <[נ]כירה
 לטב הדה אחחה
 אנטוליה <ד[יהב]ה> חד דינר ליקרה דכנישחה.< . מלך >עלמה
 יתן ברכתח בעמלה.<
 4 אמן. אמ>ן. [סלה]< . שלום ודכירין לטב עיריא >דהבו]ן חד
 .טר (ימ) יסי>ן.<

May lord Leontis and lady Qaliniq, who have donated ... for the honor of the synagogue, be of good memory. May the King of the universe give his blessing on their work. Amen. Amen. Selah. Peace. And may the woman Anatolia, who donated one denar for the honor of the synagogue, be of good memory. May the King of the universe give his blessing on her work. Amen. Amen. Selah. Peace. May the people of the city, who donated one trimissis, be of good memory.

AFRICA
Hammam Lif

22. Goodenough 3. fig. 894; cf. 2.91-100. Mosaic.

Sancta sinagoga Naron pro sa-	Your servant, Juliana,
lutem suam ancilla tua Iulia-	P (?), paved with mosaic,
na P de suo proprium teselavit.	from her own funds, the
<u>Menorah</u>	holy synagogue of Naro for
	her salvation.

CYRENAICA
Berenice

23. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 100. Twenty-line dedicatory inscription (16 men; 2 women). 55 C.E.

Column 2, lines 8-12:	
8 Εἰσιδώρα	Isidora, daughter (or wife) of
Σεραπῶνος (δρ.) ε'.	Serapon, 5 drachmas. Zosime,
10 Ζωσίμη Τερ-	daughter (or wife) of Ter-
πολίω (δρ.) ε'.	polius, 5 drachmas.

Cf. also above, no. 21.

B. Women Donating Together with Their Husbands

IONIA
Teos

24. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 16; CII 744. 3rd C.

Π(οπλιος) ῥου(ιλιος) Ἰωσης ὁ ἀξιολογώτατος ὁ διὰ βίου
ἀρχισυνά-
γωγ[ος] σὺν Βισιννίᾳ Δημῶ τῇ συνβίῳ αὐτοῦ ἐκ θεμελίων ἐκ
τῶν ἰδίων].

The most excellent P(ublius) Rut(ilius) Ioses, head-for-life of the synagogue, together with his wife Bisinnia Demo, (rebuilt this edifice) from the foundations, with their own funds.

LYDIA
Sardis

25. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 19. Mosaic.

Αὐρ(ηλιος) Ὀλύμ- πιος, φιλῆς Λεοντίων	I, Aur(elios) Olympios, from the tribe of the Leontioi, together with (my) wife and children, fulfilled a vow.
4 μετὰ τῆς συμβίου καὶ τῶν παιδίων εὐχὴν ἐτέ- λεσα.	

26. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 20. Four marble slabs.

[.....]ς μετὰ τῆς συμβίου μου Ῥηγεινης καὶ τῶν τέκνων
 μ[ου]

(ca 7 11?)

[.....ἔδ]ωκα ἐκ τῶν δωρεῶν τοῦ παντοκράτορα θε(εο)ῦ τὴν
 σκουτλωσιν πᾶσαν vac.

[τοῦ οἴκου] καὶ τὴν ζωγραφίαν.

[So and so] with my wife Regina and my children ...
 I gave, from the gifts of the omnipotent God, the entire
 marble revetment (...?) of the hall and the painting.

27. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 22.

[Ὁ δεῖνα β]ουλ(ευτῆς)
 χρυσο[χόος]

[So and so,] member of the
 council, goldsmith, with my
 wife, Eu..., gave.

[μετὰ τῆ]ς συνβείου Εὐ-
 [... ἔδ]ωκα.

LYDIA

Philadelphia of Lydia

28. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 28; CII 754. 3rd C.

[Τ]ῆ ἁγιοτ[άτη]
 [σ]υναγωγῆ
 τῶν Ἑβραίων
 4 Εὐστάθιος
 ὁ θεοσεβῆς
 ὑπὲρ μνίας
 τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ
 8 Ἑρμοφίλου
 τὸν μασκαύ-
 λην ἀνέθη-
 κα ἄμα τῆ νύμ-
 12 φι μου Ἀθα-
 νασίᾳ.

To the most holy synagogue of
 the Hebrews, I, Eustathios,
 the pious one, have dedicated,
 together with my bride
 (sister-in-law?), Athanasia,
 the purification basin, in
 memory of my brother Hermo-
 philos.

CARIA

Hyllarima

29. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 32. 3rd C.

Ἐπὲρ υἱάσ NO[...] ΙΑΙ
 Βασιλέως[...]
 Αὐρ(ηλιος) Εὐσανβάτιος πρεσβύτερος καὶ Αὐρ(ηλια) Ἐπιτυν-
 χ(άν)ουσα ὑπὲρ τῆς ἑατῶν σωτηρίας καὶ παίδων αὐτῶν καὶ
 4 ΚΙΦΙΙ[...] ΟΥ
 τῆ ἁγιωτάτη συναγωγῆ τὰ πρα[...] ἀπὸ τῶν [ιδίων χρημ]άτων.
 Α[...].

For the health ... of the king ... Aurelius Eusanbatiος,
 elder, and Aurelia Epitynchanousa, for their own salvation
 and that of their children and ... to the most holy syna-
 gogue the ... from their own funds.

SYRIA

Apamea

Inscriptions 30-34 are from the mosaic floor of a synagogue; 31-
 34 date from ca. 391; cf. nos. 7-15 above and nos. 39-40 below.

30. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 40; Inscr. Syrie 1321; CII 805. March
 9, 391. Note that the reference to a wife is reconstructed,
 but relatively certain in view of the parallels.

- 'Επί Νεμια ἀζζανα
καὶ τοῦ διακόνο
ἐψηφώθη ἡ πρόσθεσις
4 [τοῦ] ναοῦ ἔτους γψ'
Δύστρου θ'.
[....]ων εὐξάμενος ἀμα
[συνβίῳ καὶ] τέκνις
ἐ[ποίησ]εν.
Under Nemias, hazzan and deacon,
the porch (addition?) of the
sanctuary was paved with mosaic,
in the year 703, on the ninth
day of the month of Dystros
(March 9, 391). ... so and so,
in fulfillment of a vow, to-
gether with (his) wife and
children, made (this).
31. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 48; *Inscr. Syrie* 1329; CII 813.
Θαυμασίς ἀμα Ἑσυχίῳ
συνβίῳ καὶ τέκνοις
καὶ Εὐσταθίῳ πενθηρᾶ<ς>
4 ἐποίησεν πόδας ρ'.
Thaumasis, together with
Hesychion, (his) wife, and
children and Eustathia, (his)
mother-in-law, made 100 feet.
32. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 50; *Inscr. Syrie* 1331; CII 815.
Αὐξίτω τὰ ἔτη
τῶν φιλαδέλ-
φων Εὐσεβίου
4 κὲ Βητουρίου σὺν
τεσ γυνεξίν αὐ-
τῶν.
Lengthened be the years of
Eusebios and Veturius, who
love their brothers, together
with their wives.
33. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 52; *Inscr. Syrie* 1333; CII 817.
Ἱέριος ἀμα Οὐρανίῃ
γυνεκὶ εὐξάμενος
ἐποίησεν πό[δας] ρ'.
Hierios, together with (his)
wife Ourania, in fulfillment
of a vow, made 100 feet.
34. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 53; *Inscr. Syrie* 1334; CII 818.
Θεόδωρος ἀμα
Ἑσυχίῳ συνβίῳ
εὐξάμενος ἐπ-
4 οίησαν πόδας λε'.
Theodoros, together with
Hesychion, (his) wife, in
fulfillment of a vow, made
35 feet.

SYRIA

Emesa (Homs)

35. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 57; *Inscr. Syrie* 2205. Mosaic in a
basilica which was possibly a synagogue. Possibly 5th C.
Εὐδόξιος ἀμα συνβίῳ καὶ
τέκνοις
[εὐ]ξάμενος ἐψηφώσεν
πό[δας]
διὰκ[ο]σό[υ]ς.
Eudoxios, together with (his)
wife and children, in fulfill-
ment of a vow, paved 200 feet
with mosaic.

PALESTINE

Ḥammāt Gader (al-Ḥamma)

36. Hüttenmeister 154-155, no. 1. Synagogue Mosaic. Probably
early 5th C. *See p. 165.
<דכיר לטב>
<קירס הופליס וקירס >
<פרוטון וקירס סלוסטיוס >
<חחנה וקומס פרוורוס בר >
<וקירס פוטס חחנה וקירס > 5
<חנינה ברה הננון ובניהו >
<דמיצוחון חדירן בכל אחר >
<דהבוון חכה חמישה דינרי >
<דהב. מלך עלמה יתן ברחה >
<בעמלהן. אמן. אמן. סלה. > 10
May lord Hoplis and lady Proton
and lord Sallustis, his son-in-
law, and comes Phruros, his
son, and lord Photis, his son-
in-law, and lord Ḥanina, his
son, these and their sons,
whose gifts are present in
every place, who have given
here five denars, be of good
memory. May the King of the

universe give his blessing on
their work. Amen. Amen. Selah.

PALESTINE

Between Jaffa and Gaza

37. Hüttenmeister 135-137, no. 5; Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 72; CII 966. Fragment of a marble plaque. Byzantine period.

Υπὲρ σωτηρίας Ἰακω(βου) Λαζαρ-
2 ος καὶ ...] σινα εὐχαριστο(ῶ)ν-
τες τῷ θεῷ ἐπὶ] τοῦ ἁγίου τόπου ἀνεπέ-
4 ωσεν τὸ κτίσμα (?) τῆς κώνχης σὺν
τῷ καγέλλφ ἀπὸ θεμελί(ων)· μ(ηνὸς) Μαρτίου ἰν(δικτιῶνος).

For the salvation of Iakobos, Lazaros and ...sina, in
gratefulness to God in (this) holy place (i.e., synagogue),
renovated the construction of the conch together with the
chancel screen from the foundations. In the month of March,
Indiction

AFRICA

Hammam Lif

38. Goodenough 3. fig. 895; cf. 2.90. CIL VIII 12457b. Mosaic.

Asterius, filius Rus-
tici arcosinagogi, (et)
Margarita Riddei par-
tem portici tesselavit.

Asterius, son of the head of
the synagogue, Rusticus, (and)
Margarita, (daughter) of
Riddeus, paved with mosaic
(this) part of the portico.

C. Donations on Behalf of Women

SYRIA

Apamea

From the mosaic floor of a synagogue; 39-40 date from ca. 391;
cf. nos. 7-15, 30-34 above.

39. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 39; CII 804. Wayne A. Meeks and Robert L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era* (SBL Sources for Biblical Study 13; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978) 54, no. 2.

Ἰλάσιος Εἰσακίου ἀρχισυνάγωγος Ἀντιοχέ-
ων, ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας Φωτίου συμβίου καὶ τέκνων
καὶ ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας Εὐσταθίας πενθερᾶς
4 καὶ ὑπὲρ μνίας Εἰσακίου καὶ Ἐδεσίου καὶ Ἡσυχί-
ου προγόνων, ἐποίησεν τὴν ψήφωσιν
τῆς ἰσόδου. Εἰρήνη καὶ ἔλεος ἐπὶ πᾶν
τὸ ἡγιασμένον ὑμῶν πληθός.

Ilasios, son of Eisakios, head of the synagogue of the
Antiochenes, for the salvation of Photion his wife and
his children, and for the salvation of Eustathia his
mother-in-law, and in memory of Eisakios and Edesios
and Hesyehios, his ancestors, donated the mosaic entry-
way. Peace and mercy on all your holy people.

40. Lifshitz, *Donateurs* no. 56; *Inscr. Syrie* 1337.

Θαυμάσις Νόν[νου ὑπὲρ σω]-
τηρίας Ἡσυχί[ου συνβίου]
αὐτοῦ εὐξάμ[ενος ...].

Thaumasios, son of Nonnos, for
the salvation of his wife
Hesyehion, in fulfillment of a
vow...

PALESTINE
Caesarea

41. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 67. Marble column. 4th/5th C.
 Προ(σφορά) Θεωδώρο(υ) Donation of Theodoros, son of
 υιοῦ ᾿Ολύμπου Olympos, for the salvation of
 ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας his daughter Matriona.
 4 Ματρῶνας
 θυγατρὸς.

PALESTINE
Ashkalon

42. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 71; CII 965. Hüttenmeister 26, no. 3.
 (Reading according to Hüttenmeister.)
 ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας Μενά- For the salvation of Menamos
 μο(υ) κ(αί) Μα(τ)ρώνας (=Menaḥem) and Matriona, his
 (σ)ηβίου αὐ- wife, and Samoulos (=Samuel)
 τοῦ κ(αί) Σαμούλου υιοῦ their son.
 4 αὐτῶν

EGYPT
Alexandria

43. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 91; CII 1438. Base of a column.
 Probably Byzantine period.
 [Υπ]ὲρ σωτηρίας κυράς Ῥουας θυγατρὸς [τοῦ μα]-
 κριστάτου Ἐντολίου Βορουχ Βαραχία. Πῶϣ
 For the salvation of lady Roua, daughter of the most
 blessed Entolios, Borouch, son of Barachias (dedicated
 this column?). Peace.

*The Ḥammad Gader inscriptions (nos. 21 and 36) are much more fragmentary today than when discovered by Sukenik. To indicate this, the following sigla are used (following Hüttenmeister):

- [] = lacuna at the time of discovery;
 . = partially legible letter at the time of discovery;
 < > = lacuna today;
 _ = partially legible letter today.

PLATES

Plates follow the order of the discussion.

ΡΟΥΦΕΙΝΑ ΙΟΥ ΔΑΙΑ ΑΡΧΙ
ΕΥΝΑΓΩΓΟΣ ΚΑΤΕΣΚΕΥΑ
ΣΕΝΤΟ ΕΝΘΟΡΙΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΑΠΕ
ΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΙΕ ΚΑΙ ΘΡΕΜΑΣΙΝ
ΜΗ ΔΕ ΝΟΣ ΑΛΟΥΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΝ Ε
ΧΟΝΤΟ ΕΘΑΥΑΙ ΤΙΝΑ ΕΙΔΕΤΙΣΤΟΛ
ΜΗ ΕΙΔΩΣ ΕΙΤΩ ΙΕΡΩΤΑΤΩ ΤΑ
ΜΕΙΩ Χ' ΑΡ ΚΑΙ ΤΩ ΕΘΝΕΙ ΤΩΝ ΙΟΥ
ΔΑΙΩΝ Χ' Α ΤΑΥΤΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΓΡΑΦΗΣ
ΤΟ ΑΝΤΙΓΡΑΦΟΝ ΑΠΟΚΕΙΤΑΙ
ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ

CII 741; IGR IV 1452. From BEJ 7 (1883) 161 (Salomon Reinach).
See discussion on pp. 5-7; 10-11.

PLATE II

Plate removed due to copyright

CII 731c. From Hesperia 32 (1963) pl. 64, no. 1
(A. C. Bandy; Courtesy of the American School of
Classical Studies at Athens). See discussion on
pp. 11-12; 41.

Plate removed due to copyright

CII 756. From Goodenough 3. fig. 883. See discussion on pp. 13-14.



CII 692. From R.M. Dawkins and F.W. Hasluck, The Annual of the British School at Athens XII, session 1905-06, 179, no. 5. See discussion on pp. 41-42.

Plate removed due to copyright

SEG 27 (1977) no. 1201. From Quaderni di Archeologia della Libia
9 (1977) 115, fig. 4 (Pietro Romanelli). See discussion on pp. 44-45.

Plate removed due to copyright

CII 166. From CII. See discussion on p. 59.

Plate removed due to copyright

CII 496. From CII. See discussion on pp. 59-60.

Plate removed due to copyright

CII 315. From CII. See discussion on pp. 75-76.

Plate removed due to copyright

CII 1007. From Mazar, Beth She'arim pl. XV, no. 5. See discussion on pp. 76-77.

Plate removed due to copyright

MASADA. From Levine, Synagogues Revealed 25.

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HERODION. From Levine, Synagogues Revealed 28 (B).

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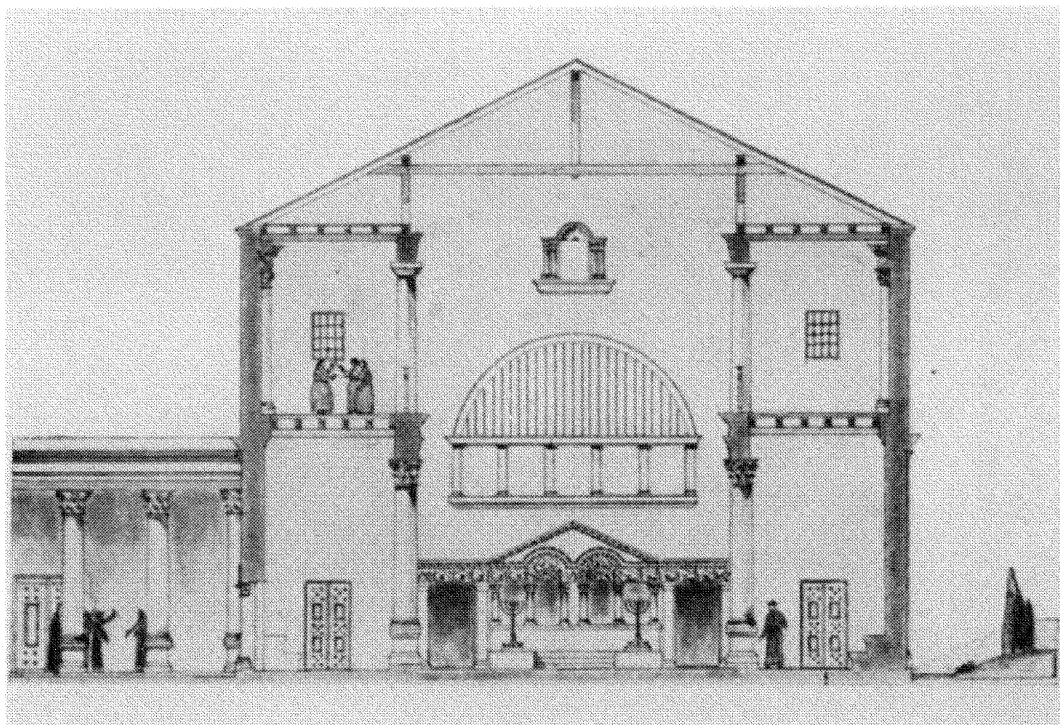
GAMLA. From BAR 5:1 (1979) 16.

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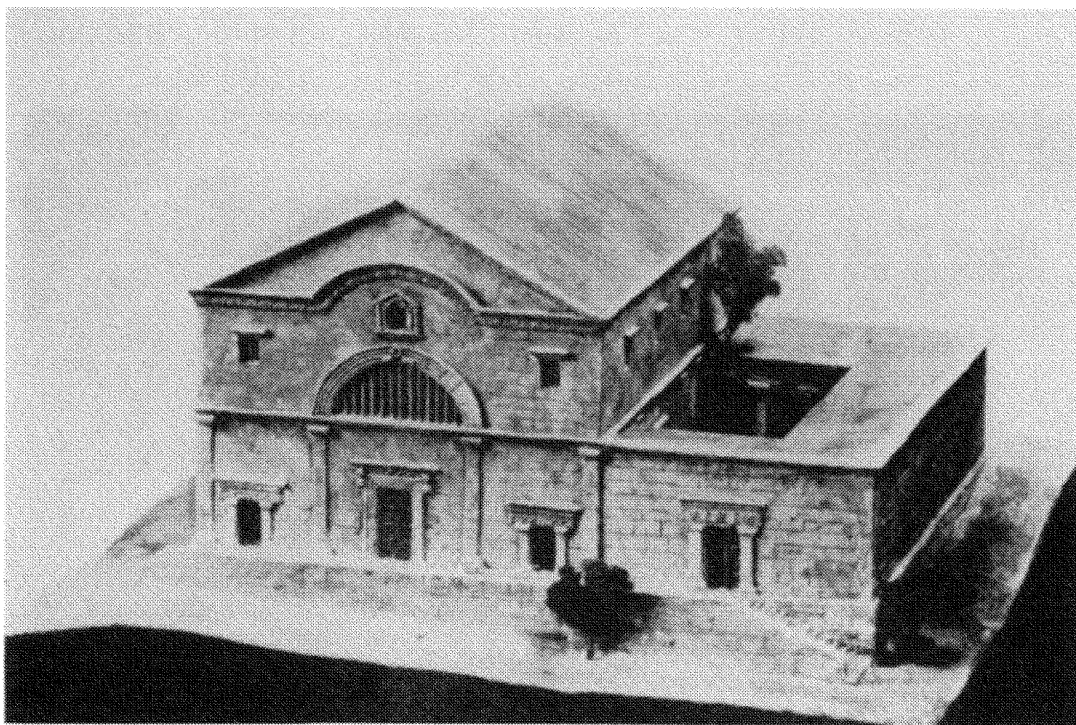
ESHTEMQA'. From EAE 2.386.

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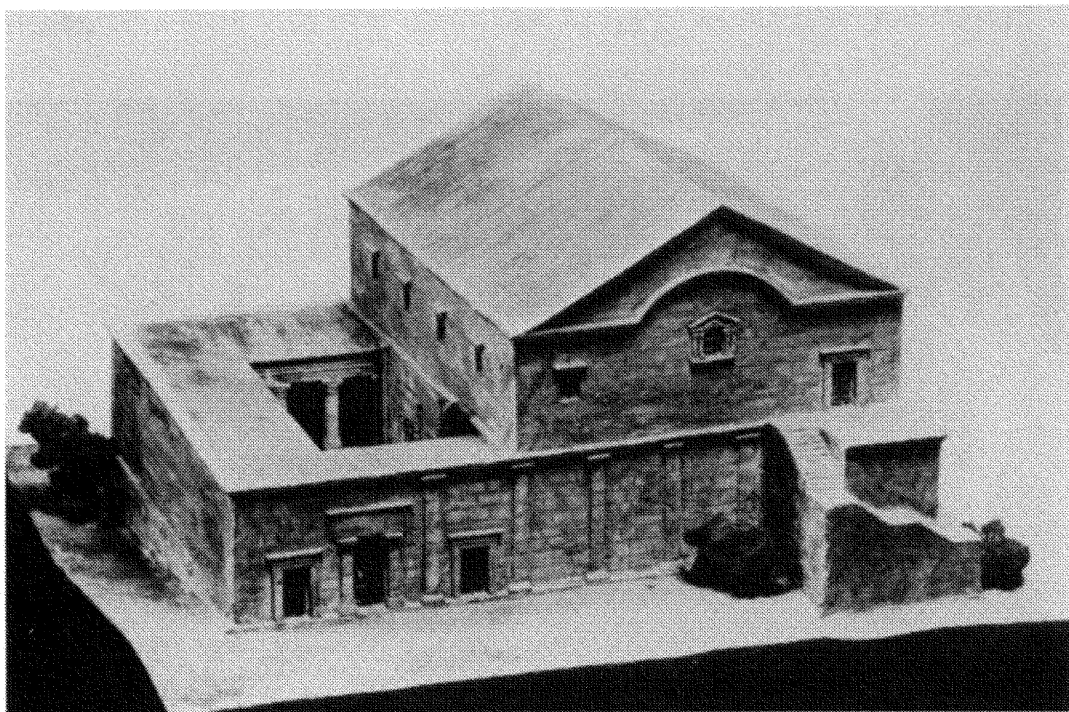
BETH SHE'AN. From EAE 1.226.



CAPHARNAUM. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. IV. Reconstruction with a view to the south.



CAPHARNAUM. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. V. Reconstruction model.



CAPHARNAUM. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. VI. Model showing reconstructed back entrance.

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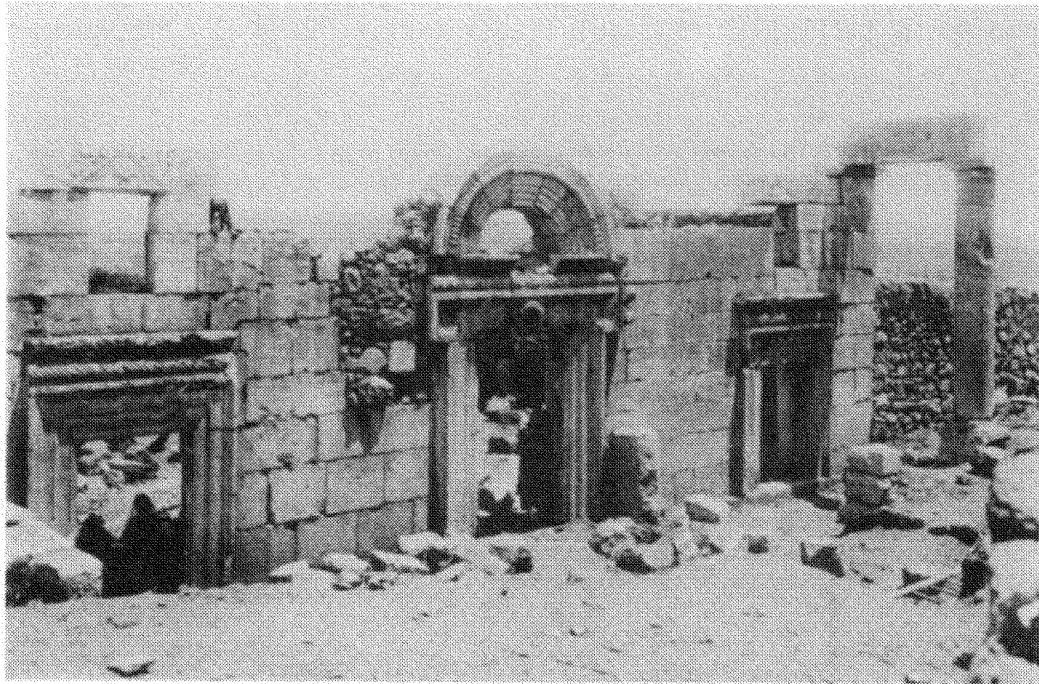
CAPHARNAUM. From Levine, Synagogues Revealed 53.

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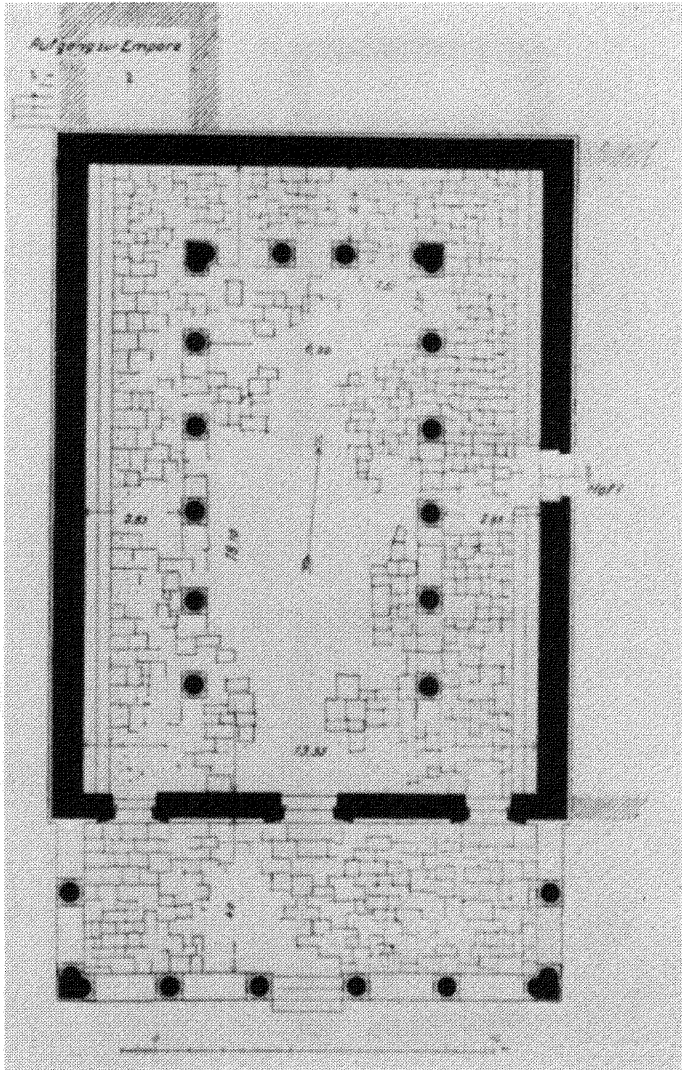
KORAZIM. From Goodenough 3. fig. 484.

Plate removed due to copyright

AN-NABRATEN. From IEJ 31:1-2 (1981) 109, fig. 1 (E[ric] M. Meyers, J[ames] F. Strange, and Carol L. Meyers).



BAR'AM. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. XIII. View of the facade.



BAR'AM. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. XII.

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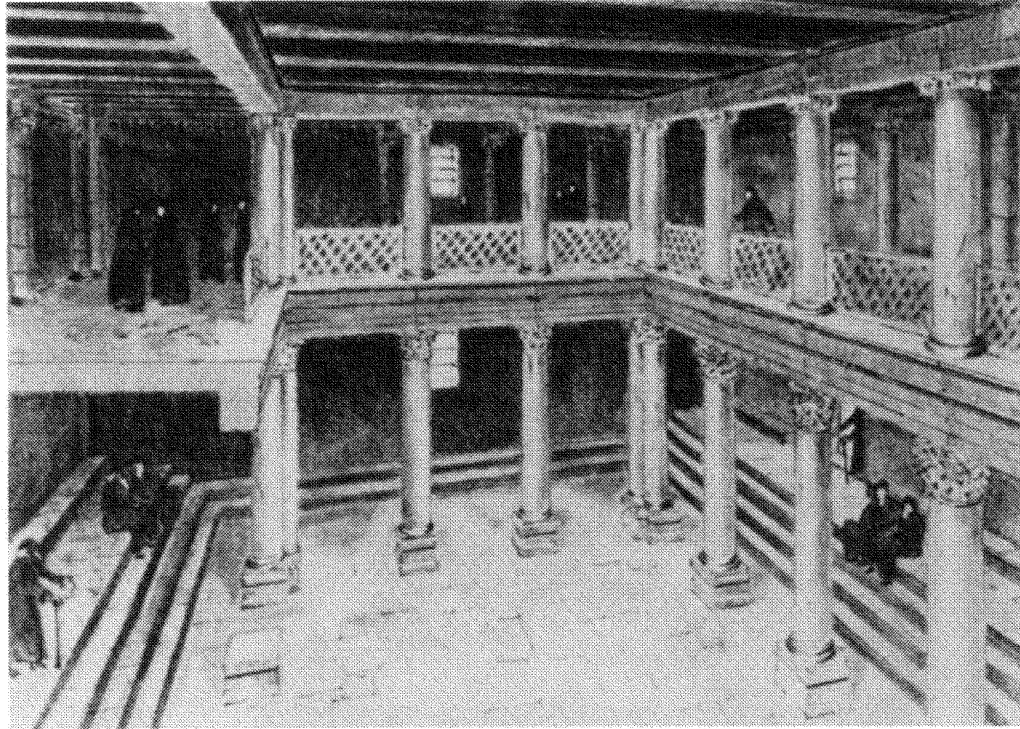
KHIRBET SHEMA'. From BASOR 221 (1976) 98. (Courtesy of Eric M. Meyers, John F. Thompson, and the American Schools of Oriental Research).

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MEIRON. From BASOR 221 (1976) 98. (Courtesy of Eric M. Meyers,
John F. Thompson, and the American Schools of Oriental Research).

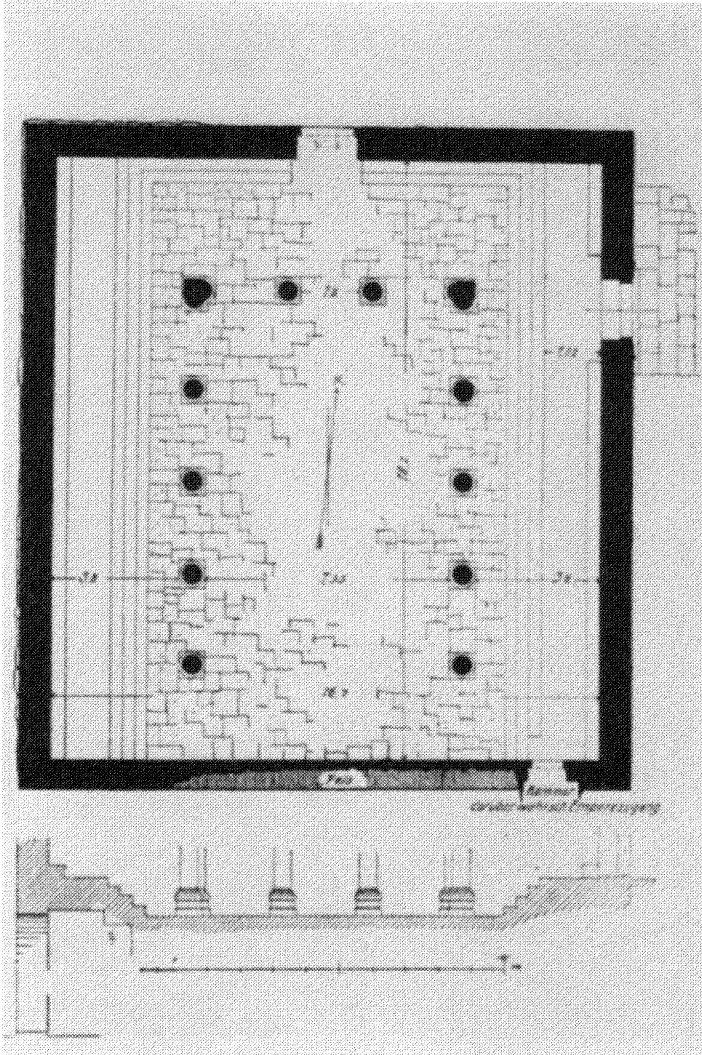
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GUSH HALAV. From Levine, Synagogues Revealed 76.

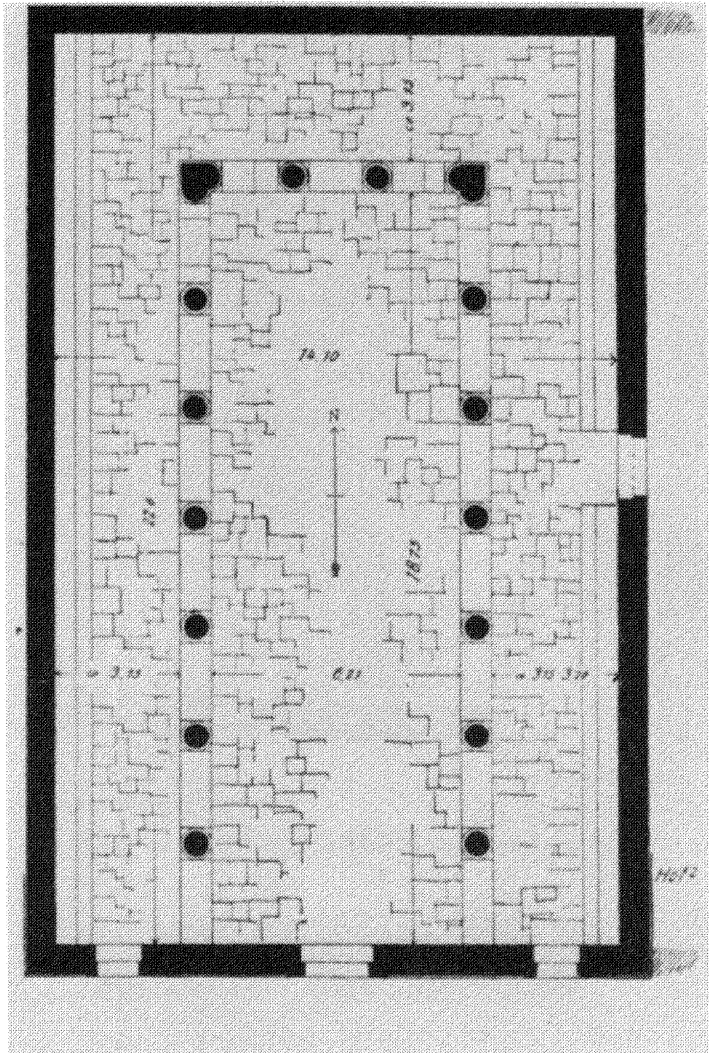


ARBEL. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. IX. Reconstruction of the interior.

PLATE XXVIII



ARBEL. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. VIII.



UMM AL-'AMAD. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. X.

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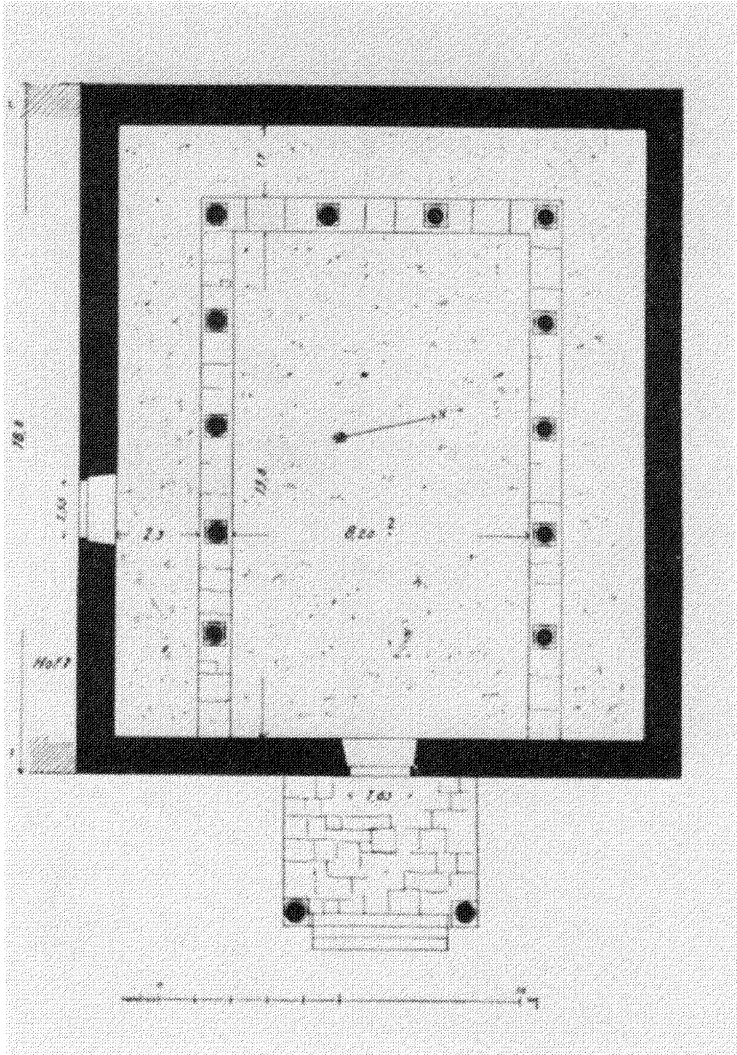
ḤAMMAT TEVERYA. From Levine, Synagogues Revealed
65.

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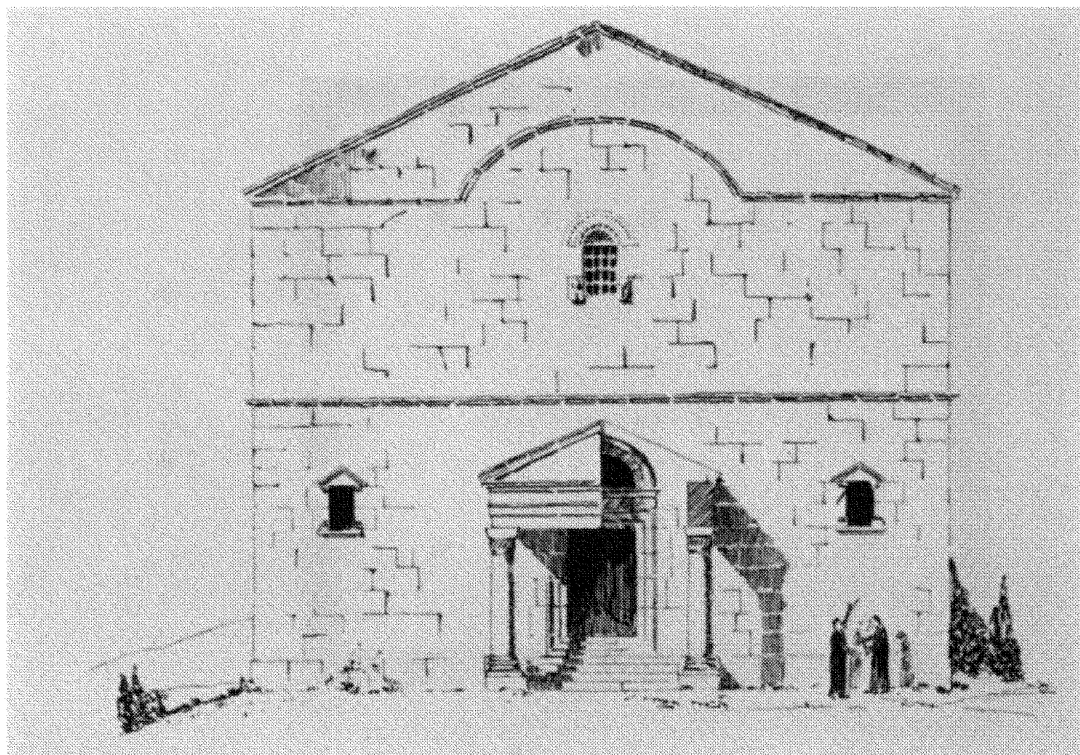
HAMMAT TEVERYA. From Levine, Synagogues Revealed
68.

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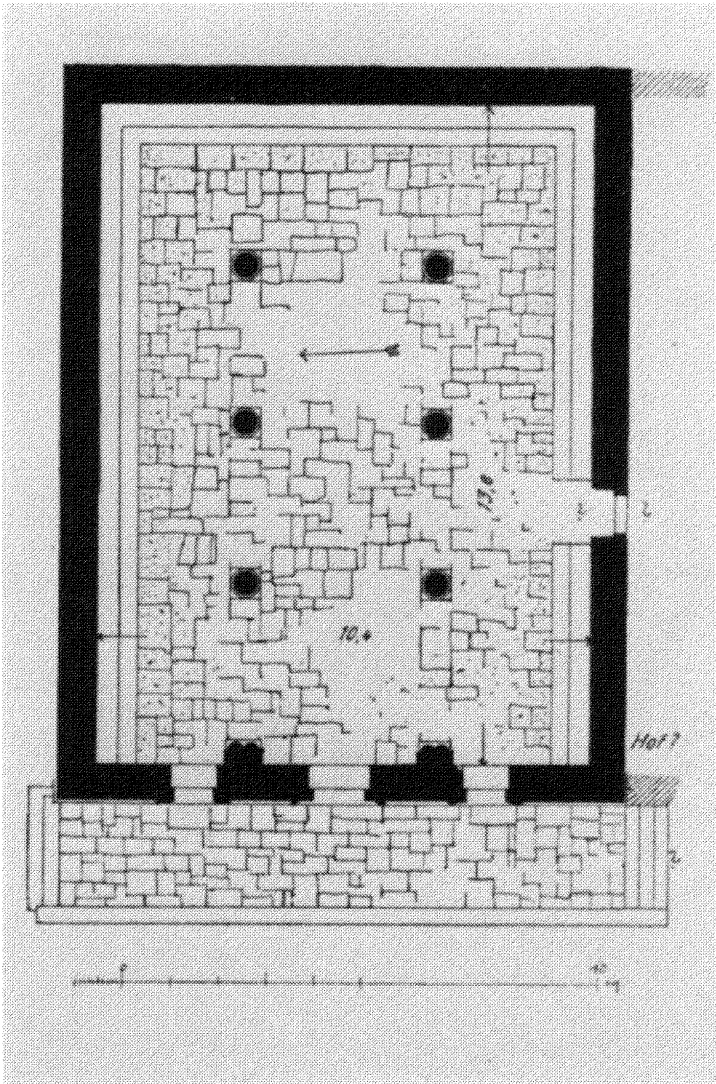
HAMMAT GADER. From EAE 2.472.



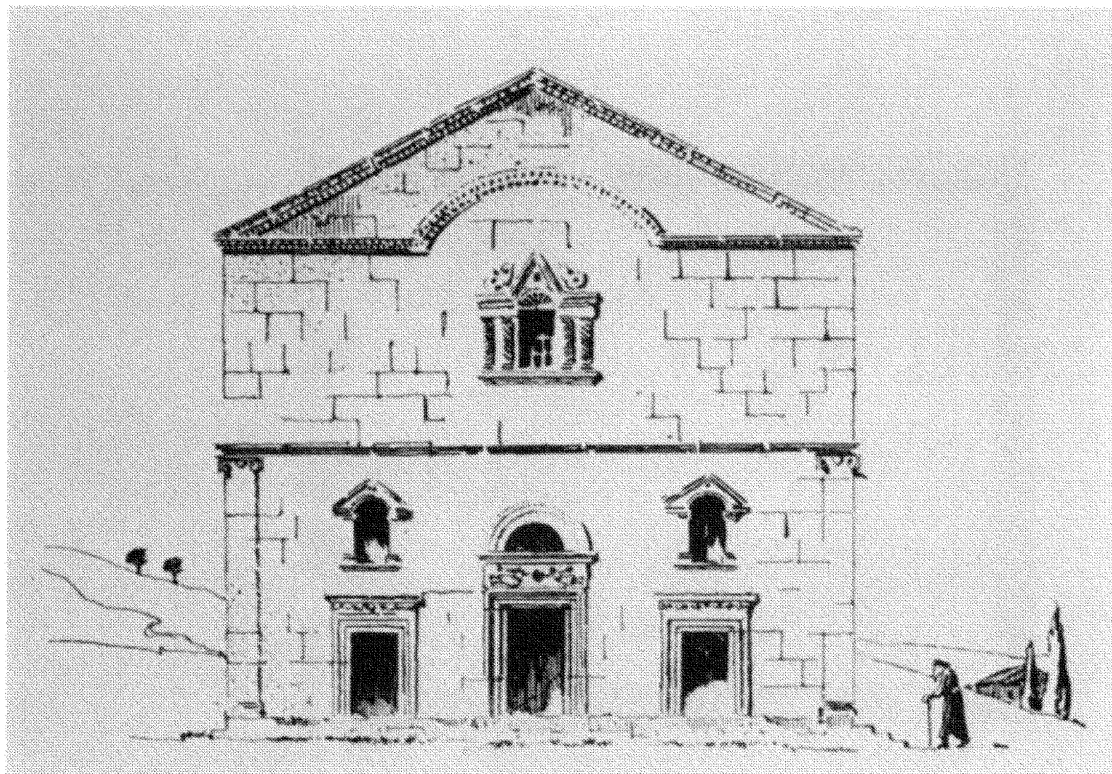
UMM AL-QANATIR. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. XVII.



UMM AL-QANATIR. From Kohl and Watzinger 134.



AD-DIKKA. From Kohl and Watzinger pl. XVI.



AD-DIKKA. From Kohl and Watzinger 124.

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BETH ALPHA. From Goodenough 3. fig. 631.

Plate removed due to copyright

BETH ALPHA. From Goodenough 3. fig. 64l.

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'EN-GEDI. From Levine, Synagogues Revealed 117.

Plate removed due to copyright

KHIRBET SUSIYA. From EAE 4.1126.

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DABBURA INSCRIPTION. From IEJ 22 (1972) pl. 4 (Dan Urman).

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DELOS. From Goodenough 3. fig. 875.

Plate removed due to copyright

AEGINA. From Goodenough 3. fig. 881.

Plate removed due to copyright

SARDIS. From AJA 76 (1972) 429, ill. 2 (Andrew R. Seager). With the permission of the editors and the author.

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PRIENE. From Goodenough 3. fig. 879.

Plate removed due to copyright

MILETUS. From Goodenough 3. fig. 880.

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STOBI. From Archaeology 30 (1977) 152 (Dean L. Moe).

Plate removed due to copyright

STOBI. From Archaeology 30 (1977) 154-155 (Dean L. Moe).

Plate removed due to copyright

OSTIA. From Archaeology 16 (1963) 194 (Maria Floriani Squarciapino).

PLATE L

Plate removed due to copyright

DURA EUROPOS. From Goodenough 3. fig. 593.

Plate removed due to copyright

DURA EUROPOS. From Goodenough 3. fig. 594.

Plate removed due to copyright

Plate removed due to copyright

HAMMAM LIF. From Goodenough 3. fig. 894 (Bardo Museum).

NOTES
(Pages 1-7)

Notes to the Introduction

¹Krauss, Altertümer 149.

²A recent example would be Emil Schürer, History 2.435-436. The editors simply add to the footnotes the newly discovered inscriptions in which women bear titles, without calling into question Schürer's view that they were honorific.

³A(1f) Thomas Kraabel, Judaism in Western Asia Minor under the Roman Empire, with a Preliminary Study of the Jewish Community at Sardis, Lydia (Th.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1968) 43-50; Dorothy Irvin, "The Ministry of Women in the Early Church: The Archaeological Evidence," The Duke Divinity School Review 45 (1980) 76-86, esp. 76-79; Shaye Cohen, "Women in the Synagogues of Antiquity," Conservative Judaism 34:2 (1980) 23-29.

⁴Louis Robert, Hellenica 1 (1940) 26-27; Jeanne Robert and Louis Robert, Bulletin épigraphique, Revue des études grecques 77 (1964) no. 413.

Notes to Chapter I

¹Eusebius Hist. eccl. 7.10.4; CIG 2007f (Olynthos); 2221c (Chios) IG XII.2(1)288 (Thessalonica); Archäologisch-epigraphische Mittheilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn 19 (1896) 67.

²Salomon Reinach, "Inscription grecque de Smyrne. La Juive Rufina," REJ 7:14 (1883) 161-166 (facsimile). Reinach's dating of the inscription as not before the third century is based on the nearly cursive omega, the squared sigma and the bar through the upsilon, all of which point to a late date.

³Schürer, Gemeindeverfassung 29, cited and discussed by S. Reinach, "Inscription" 165.

⁴See CII 584, 587.

⁵"Die Organisation der jüdischen Ortsgemeinden in der talmudischen Zeit," Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 41, n.s. 5 (1897) 658-659.

⁶Schürer, History 2.435.

⁷Juster 1.453.

⁸Krauss, Altertümer 118.

⁹Baron, Community 1.97.

¹⁰Jean-Baptiste Frey, CII 2.11.

¹¹Louis Robert, Hellenica 1 (1940) 26-27.

¹²A(lf) Thomas Kraabel, Judaism in Western Asia Minor under the Roman Empire, with a Preliminary Study of the Jewish Community at Sardis, Lydia (Th.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1968) 43, 47; Dorothy Irvin, "The Ministry of Women in the Early Church: The Archaeological Evidence," The Duke Divinity School Review 45 (1980) 76-79; Shaye Cohen, "Women in the Synagogues of Antiquity," Conservative Judaism 34:2 (1980) 25-26.

¹³Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden mit Einschluss der griechischen Inschriften (4 vols., ed. E. Kiesling; Berlin: By the Heirs, 1925-1944), 3 (1931) 183-203; see also Otto Hirschfeld, "Die Rangtitel der römischen Kaiserzeit," Kleine Schriften (Berlin: Weidmann, 1913) 646-681; Paul Koch, Die byzantinischen Beamtentitel (Jena: University Press, 1903); Arthur Stein, "Griechische Rangtitel in der römischen Kaiserzeit," Wiener Studien 34 (1912) 160-170.

¹⁴E.g., CIL VI 8420.

¹⁵E.g., CIL VI 1334.

¹⁶E.g., CIL VI 1421.

¹⁷E.g., CIL V 34.

¹⁸E.g., CIL VI 1334.

¹⁹See CIL XII 675. Hydría Tertulla c(larissima) f(emina) was married to Terentius Museus (no title) at the time of her death.

²⁰See PW 12 (1909) 2484-2492.

²¹Macrobius 1.16.30.

²²Quaestiones Romanae 86.

²³The elder Faustina (Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Antoninus Pius 6.6-7) and Claudia, the daughter of Nero (Tacitus, Annales 15.23) were accorded this honor. See also Otto Hirschfeld, "Zur Geschichte des römischen Kaiserkultes," in: Kleine Schriften (Berlin: Weidmann, 1913) 491. Hirschfeld believes that the flaminica was responsible for the cult of the empress, her husband being responsible for that of the emperor.

²⁴The case of the thirty-eight-year old mellarcon (CII 457) is enigmatic. Perhaps it is analogous to "president-elect."

²⁵See, for example, Harry J. Leon, JOR n.s. 44 (1953-1954) 271, n. 9.

²⁶CII 752, 757, 770, 773, 775, 776, 778, 779, 788, 791, 799, etc. A number of Phrygian inscriptions impose a curse rather than a fine: CII 760, 761, 767, 768, 769, etc.

²⁷CIG 3265, 3266, 3281, 3286, 3401, etc.

²⁸S. Reinach, "Inscription" 163-164.

²⁹CII 739 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 14; Smyrna, Ionia; 4th C.): Ἡρηνοποῦως πρ(εσβύτερος) κὲ πατὴρ τοῦ στέματος υἱὸς Εἰσακῶβ/ κὲ αὐτοῦ πρ(εσβυτέρου) ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς ἑαυτοῦ κὲ τῆς συνβίου μου κὲ/ τοῦ γνισίου μου τέκνου ἐποίησα τὴν στροσιν τοῦ εἰσοτικῶδ/ σὺν τῶν σκαμνοκανκῆλουσ καλιεργίσασ· νο(μίσματα) ζ'. 017W

"(I), Irenopoios, elder and father of the tribe, son of Jacob, himself also an elder, in fulfillment of a vow by myself and my wife and my lawfully begotten child, beautifully made the pavement of the interior together with the balustrades; seven coins. Peace."

³⁰CII 740 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 15; Smyrna, Ionia): 'Εγένετο τὸ ἔργον σπουδάζον/τος Δοσᾶ. "The work was done through the efforts of Dosas."

³¹According to the reading of Jeanne Robert and Louis Robert, Hellenica 11-12 (1960) 260-261 (Smyrna, Ionia): Λουκιος Λολλιος/ 'Ιουστος γραμματεὺς/ τοῦ ἐν Ζυμόρνη λαοῦ/ ἐποίησε τὸ ἐνσὸριον/ ἑαυτῷ καὶ τῷ γένει/ τῷ ἰδίῳ. "Lucius Lollius Justus, scribe of the community in Smyrna, made this tomb for himself and his own people."

³²CII 743 (Smyrna, Ionia): Θωβαρραβο/υλακασακισ/ αβρασας/ ωαση; (reverse side): Ναλη/εχεχε.

³³CII 742 (Smyrna, Ionia; 117-138 C.E.): L. 29: 'Οι ποτὲ 'Ιουδαῖοι μυ(ρίαδα) α'. "The former Judeans, 10,000 drachmas." For this interpretation of Ioudaioi, see Kraabel, Judaism 28-32. Previous to Kraabel, interpreters took the inscription as referring to former Jews.

³⁴First published by Anastasius C. Bandy, "Early Christian Inscriptions of Crete," Hesperia 32 (1963) 227-229, no. 1, pl. 64. See also idem, The Greek Christian Inscriptions of Crete (Christianikai Epigraphai tēs Hellados 10; Athens: Christian Archaeological Society, 1970) Appendix no. 3. The inscription was included by Lifshitz in his prolegomenon to the CII, p. 88.

³⁵Bulletin épigraphique, Revue des études grecques 77 (1964) no. 413. Bandy later accepted this dating (Inscriptions ad loc.).

³⁶CII 731b (Elyros): Σανβάθου(ς)/ 'Ερμῆ μνά/μας χάρις. "Sanbathis to Hermes for the sake of his memory." CII 731d (Arcades): 'Ιωσηφους/ Θεοδώρου/ 'Ιουδα τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ/ (μ)νείας χάρι/ς, ἑτῶν α'. "Josephus, son of Theodoros, to Juda his son, for memory, (he lived) one year."

³⁷Cf. hē diakonos (Rom 16:1) and hē diakonissa, which came into use in the later period (e.g., Council of Nicaea, can. 19).

³⁸Bandy, "Inscriptions" 227-228.

³⁹Robert, no. 413.

⁴⁰First published by Théodore Reinach, "La pierre de Myndos," in: REJ 42 (1901) 1-6 (photograph). Reinach suggests that the lacuna in the first line be filled with apo or para, p. 4.

⁴¹T. Reinach, "La pierre" 1.

⁴²T. Reinach, "La pierre" 4.

⁴³D. Bahat, "A Synagogue Chancel-Screen from Tel Rehob," IEJ 23 (1973) 181-183, pl. 48.

⁴⁴Z(eev) Yeivin, "Inscribed Marble Fragments from the Khirbet Sūsiya Synagogue," IEJ 24 (1974) 201-29, pls. 42-44.

⁴⁵CII 756a was seen but never copied down and is now lost.

⁴⁶T. Reinach, "La pierre" 2.

⁴⁷Goodenough 2. 79.

⁴⁸On the meaning of "head of the synagogue" see esp. Schürer, Gemeindefassung 25-28; Berliner 1. 69; William M. Ramsay, "The Rulers of the Synagogue," The Expositor (April 1895) 272-277; Vogelstein and Rieger 1. 41-43; M. Weinberg, "Die Organisation der jüdischen Ortsgemeinden in der talmudischen Zeit," Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 41, n.s. 5 (1897) 657-658; The Jewish Encyclopedia (10 vols; ed. Isidore Singer; New York: Funk and Wagnall's, 1901-1906), 2 (1902) s.v. "Archisynagogue;" Schürer, History 2.433-436; Schürer, Geschichte 3.14-15, 17, 88, 95-96; Juster 1.398, 450-453; Krauss, Altertümer 116-121; Elbogen, 483-484, 577, n. 2; Str-B 4.145-147; Frey, CII 1. pp. XCVII-XCIX; Baron, Community 1.103, 138; Enc. Jud 3. s.v. "Archisynagogos"; Applebaum, "Organization" 492-493.

⁴⁹. . . ἀρχισυνάγωγοι τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ οἱ ἀρχόντες τῆς συναγωγῆς ἐπήγαγον αὐτοὺς διωγμὸν κατὰ τῶν δικαίων. See Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971) 419-420.

⁵⁰See Ramsay, who argues that this variant shows that the Bezan Text cannot be pre-70 ("Rulers" 272-277).

⁵¹It is also possible, of course, that when Matthew wrote archōn, he did not take it as synonymous with archisynagōgos. It could simply be a variant.

⁵²Discussed and quoted below, p. 24; n. 95.

⁵³Emil Schürer's view (Gemeindefassung 27) that Sosthenes is not Crispus' colleague, but rather his successor, is not convincing. We cannot assume that at this early date a synagogue head who became a Christian had to be replaced.

⁵⁴M. Sota 7:8 adds one more link to the chain, namely the king, who reads instead of the high priest.

⁵⁵J.W. 5.5.1-6 §§ 184-227.

⁵⁶Hüttenmeister 201; for further bibliography see 197-198.

⁵⁷JQR 54 (1963-1964) 119.

⁵⁸It is possible, particularly in light of Sidney Hoenig's considerations, that r'ōš hakkēneset and r'ōš bēt hakkēneset are not the same title, that only the latter is the equivalent of archisynagōgos.

⁵⁹T. Ter. 2:13 (Zuck. 28); see Hüttenmeister 8.

⁶⁰ראש הכנסת אל יקרא עד שיאמר לו אחרים שאין אדם.

⁶¹A further confirmation that the head of the synagogue was only to read if necessary is found in b. Git. 60a (top), where R. Isaac the smith states that after the priest and the Levite the following are to read: "scholars who are appointed parnasim of the community, and after them scholars who are qualified to be appointed parnasim of the community, and after them the sons of

the scholars, whose fathers had been appointed parnasim of the community, and after them heads of synagogues and members of the general public." אחריהן קוראין חלמידי חכמים הממונין פרנסים על הצבור, ואחריהן חלמידי חכמים הראויין למנותם פרנסים על הצבור, ואחריהן בני חלמידי חכמים שאבוניהן ממונים פרנסים על הצבור ואחריהן ראשי כנסיות וכל אדם.

⁶²Note that this passage is a baraitha, i.e., from the Tannaitic period (before ca. 220).

⁶³One should note the parallel in the extra-canonical tractate Sem. 14 (end), which is very similar to y. Ber. 6a.28-29, as well as b. Ketub. 8b, which instead of ראש הכנסת has פרנסי העיר, "city administrators." This coincides with a gloss in y. Ber. 3.28-29, which interprets head of the synagogue as city administrator, cf. Str-B 4,1.146-147.

⁶⁴Ed. Theodor Mommsen, 2d ed. (2 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1954), 1. 887.

⁶⁵Tr. Clyde Pharr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952) 467 (with minor changes).

⁶⁶See below, pp. 65-66; 91-92, for a slightly more extensive discussion of this passage. On the legislation concerning Jews in the Theodosian Code, see Amnon Lindner, "The Roman Imperial Government and the Jews under Constantine," Tarbiz 44 (1974-75) 95-143 (Hebrew), English summary, p. V; Klaus Dieter Reichardt, "Die Judengesetzgebung im Codex Theodosianus," Kairos 20 (1978) 16-39; Robert L. Wilken, "The Jews and Christian Apologetics after Theodosius I Cunctos Populos," HTR 73 (1980) 451-471, esp. 464-466. Baron sees Cod. Theod. 16.8.2-4 as the result of a battle fought by the rabbis, in which they persisted and finally won (Community 1.138). While political activity on the part of the Jewish leadership should certainly be assumed, Baron's assumption that the primary Jewish leaders were the rabbis is questionable.

⁶⁷Ed. Mommsen 1. 890.

⁶⁸Tr. Sheila Briggs, drawing partially upon Pharr 468. For a description of the development of the decurionate from a vied-for honor in the republican period to what sometimes amounted to a punishment in the late imperial period, the period with which we are dealing here, see PW 8 (1901) 2319-2352.

⁶⁹Ed. Mommsen 1. 890.

⁷⁰Tr. Pharr 468. For a discussion of this custom, see Juster 1.385-388. On the various roles of the Jewish patriarch, see Lee I. Levine, "The Jewish Patriarch (Nasi) in Third Century Palestine," ANRW 19,2.649-688.

⁷¹This law was rescinded in 404 (Cod. Theod. 16.8.17), thus allowing the practice to be resumed.

⁷²Ed. Georges Archambault (2 vols. in 1; Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1909), 2.292.

⁷³Panarion 30.18.2 (PG 41.436A); included in Klijn and Reinink 186-187. I am following the reading of Klijn and Reinink, who have "teachers" (didaskalōn), rather than that of PG ("teachings"; didaskaliōn). See also Panarion 30.11.1, in which

Epiphanius mentions heads of the synagogue, priests, elders and azanitai (Hebrew: hazzānim), which he says should be translated as diakonoi or hypēretai (PG 41.424B).

⁷⁴Palladius, Dialogue on the Life of Saint John Chrysostom 15 (PG 47.51 mid.).

⁷⁵Juster 1.452, n. 5. Juster's theory that the synagogue heads were appointed by the patriarch, which he bases on Palladius and on Cod. Theod. 16.8.13 (397 C.E.) and 16.8.15 (404 C.E.), is also not convincing. In Cod. Theod. 16.8.13 (quoted above, p. 20), there is no reason to take "heads of the synagogues . . ." as an appositive to "those persons who are subject to the power of the Illustrious Patriarchs;" the more straightforward sense is that these are two separate groups. In Cod. Theod. 16.8.15, no specific officeholders, such as synagogue heads, are mentioned. More weighty than these arguments, however, is the silence of Jewish sources on such a practice. Silence concerning the patriarch's annual appointment of all main Jewish functionaries can only be compared to a total silence in Vatican sources about the custom of appointing bishops and cardinals.

⁷⁶Hennecke-Schneemelcher 1. 449-470.

⁷⁷Exposition on Luke 6.50 (PL 15.1767D; see also 1768C); quoted and discussed in Juster 1.452, n. 3.

⁷⁸Epistles 121.10 (PL 22.1033 bot.); quoted and discussed in Juster 1.452, n. 3.

⁷⁹Vopiscus' section of the Historia Augusta is an early fourth-century work. Whether the letter is genuine or not cannot be discussed here. Assuming that it is the composition of Vopiscus, it can be counted as a fourth-century attestation of the term, which is no less valuable than a second-century attestation. On this passage, see Dieter Georgi, Die Gegner des Paulus im 2. Korintherbrief (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964) 117; Krauss Altertümer 115; Schürer, Gemeindeverfassung 26.

⁸⁰That "Samaritan" is used alone probably just indicates that the author was not familiar with official Samaritan titles.

⁸¹Lampridius, Life of Alexander Severus 28, Scriptores Historiae Augustae 2.234-235. Since archisynagogus was not exclusively Jewish, it is possible that the jibe had nothing to do with Judaism. The title is, however, much more widely attested as a Jewish title than as a pagan one, and this interpretation therefore seems the most likely.

⁸²This number includes several, such as CII 282, 548 and 638 and Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 212, in which a number of the letters of the word "head of the synagogue" are missing.

⁸³CII 265, 282, 336, 383, 504, 548, 553, 584, 587, 596, 638; Maria Floriani Squarciapino, "Plotius Fortunatus archisynagogus," La Rassegna Mensile di Israel 36 (1970) 183-191.

⁸⁴CII 722 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 1), 731c.

⁸⁵SEG 27 (1977) no. 267.

⁸⁶CII 681.

⁸⁷CII 731g, 741, 744 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 16), 756 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 29), 759, 766 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 33; cf. MAMA 6. no. 264 [a better edition of this inscription]); Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 37 (could also be archōn).

⁸⁸Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 85.

⁸⁹CII 803, 804 (Lifshitz, Donateurs nos. 38, 39).

⁹⁰CII 991 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 74; for a detailed discussion of this difficult inscription, see Hättenmeister 404-407), 1404 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 79), 1414; Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 66; SEG 20 (1964) no. 443; Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. nos. 164 (quoted below, n. 114), 203, 212. SEG 26 (1976-1977) no. 1687 includes the word archisynagogos as reconstructed by Moshe Schwabe, but there is no basis for this reconstruction.

⁹¹CIL VIII, Suppl. 1. 12457.

⁹²CII 1404 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 79).

⁹³The inscriptions mentioning synagogue heads as builders are: CII 548 (Porto): [. . . .]θουσ[. . . .] / [. . . . ἐκ τῶν []δίων καὶ [. . .] / [. . . τ.]ὸν παρῶν[ου] / [. . . ἀρχισυ]ναγωγῆ[. . .]. "...[from] (his/her) own funds and [. . .] the side door [. . . head of the synagogue [. . .]." (Obviously this inscription is heavily reconstructed.) CII 722 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 1; Aegina): Θεόδωρος ἀρχ[ισυ]-ἀγωγ(ος) φροντίσας ἔτη τέσσερα/ ἐκ θεμελίων τὴν σ[υναγωγ(ήν)] οἰκοδόμησα. Προσοδεύ(θησαν)/ χρύσιν[οι]τ πε' καὶ ἐκ τῶν τοῦ Θε(οῦ) δωρεῶν χρύσιναι ρο'[. . .]. "I, Theodoros, head of the syn[agogue], having served as phrontistēs (business manager) for four years, built the synagogue from the foundation up. 85 gold pieces were contributed, as well as 170 gold pieces from the gifts to God [. . .]." CII 744 (Teos, Ionia; 3rd C.): quoted below Appendix no. 24. CII 756 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 29; Myndos, Caria; 4th/5th C.): Theopempte inscription, quoted above, p. 13. CII 776 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 33; Akmonia, Phrygia; end of 1st C. C.E.): quoted below, Appendix no. 6. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 37 (Side, Pamphylia; 5th C.): ['Ε]πὶ Λεοντίου πρεσβ(υτέρου) καὶ ζυγ(οστάτου) / [κ]αὶ φροντιστοῦ υειοῦ Ἰακωβ/ἀρχ(ισυναγωγού) καὶ ζυγ(οστάτου) ἐγένετο ἡ κρήνη/ σὺν τῷ μεσαύλῳ ἰνδ(ικτιονι) γ', μη(νὶ) ζ'. "At the time of Leontios, elder, treasurer and business manager, son of Jacob, head of the synagogue and treasurer, the fountain was installed in the courtyard, in the third year of the indiction, in the sixth month." (Note that arch could also be an abbreviation for archon.) Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 66 (Caesarea, Palestine; 6th C.): Βη[ρ]υλλος ἀρχισ(υναγωγος) / καὶ φροντιστῆς/ υος Ἰουτου, ἐποί/ησε τὴν ψηφο/θεσίαν τοῦ τρι/κλίνου τῷ ἰδίῳ. "Beryllos, head of the synagogue and business manager, son of Juda (lit.: Ioutos), made the mosaic of the dining hall (triclinium) with his own funds." CII 803 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 38; Apamea, Syria; 391 C.E.): quoted below, p. 26. CII 804 (Apamea, Syria; end of the 4th C.): quoted below, Appendix no. 39. CII 991 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 74; Sepphoris, Palestine; first half of 5th C.): ('Επὶ) Ἰελασίου σχο(λαστικοῦ) κώ(μητός) λαμπ(ροτάτου) υειοῦ Ἀετίου τοῦ ὕ(ψηλῆς) κώ(μητός) Εἰσοδα (ἀ)ρχισυναγωγού Σιδονίου <ἀ)ρχισυναγ/άγου> περιερθονταδ Συβεριανο(υ) Ἰαφρο(υ) ἀρχισυναγ/άγου Τύρου λαμπ(ροτάτου). (Text of M. Schwabe.) "At the time of Gelasios, lawyer, most illustrious comes, son of

Aetios, comes, and of Juda, head of the synagogue of Sidon . . . (?) of S(e)verianus Apher, the most illustrious head of the synagogue of Tyre." This is just one reading of a difficult inscription. For an extensive discussion, see Hüttenmeister 404-407. CII 1404 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 79; Jerusalem; before the destruction of the Second Temple): quoted below, p. 24. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 85 (Constantia-Salamine, Cyprus; 3rd C.): [. . .] / πεντ(άκις) ἀρχι(συναγώγου) / υἱοῦ Ἀνανία / δὲς ἄρχοντ(ος) (reconstruction of B. Lifshitz). "[So and so], five times head of the synagogue, son of Ananias, twice archon."

⁹⁴CII 265 (Rome: Via Appia): Stafulo arconti/ et archisynagogo/ honoribus omnibus/ fuctus. Restituta coniux/ benemerenti fecit. Ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἡ κοίμησις σου. "To Stafulus, archon and head of the synagogue, who held all honors. Restituta, his wife, set up (this stone) in grateful memory. In peace your sleep."

⁹⁵CII 553 (Capua, Italy): Alfius Iuda, / arcon arcosity/ nagogus q(ui) vi(xit)/ ann(is) LXX mesib(us) VII/ dieb(us) X, Alfia So/teris, cum q(ua) vixit) an(nis)/ XXXXVIII, coiugi / incomparabil(i)/ benemerenti fecit. "Alfius Juda, archon, head of the synagogue, who lived 70 years, 7 months, 10 days (lies here). Alfia Soteris, with whom he lived for 48 years, set up (this stone) for her incomparable husband in grateful memory."

⁹⁶CII 766 (Akmonia, Phrygia): quoted below, Appendix no. 6.

⁹⁷For recent bibliography, see Hüttenmeister 192-194.

⁹⁸A further member of the founding body was a certain Simonides, who bears no title at all, a fact which should remind us that the title-bearing officers were not the only leaders of the ancient synagogue.

⁹⁹CII 587 (Venosa, Italy): Τάφος Καλ/λίστου νεπίου/ ἀρχοσυναγω/γου, ἐτῶν γ' [μη]/νῶν γ'. Ἐν [εἰ]ρή[ν]ῃ ἡ κοιμη[σις] αὐτοῦ]. "Tomb of Kallistos, infant head of the synagogue, (aged) 3 years, 3 months. In peace his sleep."

¹⁰⁰CII 584 (Venosa, Italy): Τάφος/ Ἰωσηφ ἄρχησου/νάγωως υἱῶς/ Ἰωσηφ ἀρχησου/ναγοῦ. [יִשְׁשַׁבְּט] לַע יוֹסֵף [ש]. "Tomb of Joseph, head of the synagogue, son of Joseph, head of the synagogue. Peace on his bed."

¹⁰¹CII 744 (Teos, Ionia): quoted below, Appendix no. 24.

¹⁰²CII 766 (Akmonia, Phrygia): quoted below, Appendix no. 6.

¹⁰³CII 416 and 417 (Rome: Via Portuensis): with their curious mention of za biou, which probably equals dia biou (see Schürer, Gemeindeverfassung 23-24) should also be considered in this context. CII 416 is quoted below in chap. 4, "Women as Mothers of the Synagogue," n. 18, while CII 417 is quoted in the same chapter, no. 9.

¹⁰⁴Quoted above, n. 93.

¹⁰⁵CII 504 (Rome: uncertain provenance): Ἐνθάδε/ κέϋτε Ἰου/λιανὸς ἱερευσάρχων (or: ἱερεὺς ἀρχων) Καλ/καρησιῶν υἱ/ὸς Ἰουλιανοῦ ἀρχισυν/αγώγου. "Here lies Julianus, gerusiarch (or priest, archon) of the Calcaresians, son of Julianus, head of the synagogue." See also CII 991 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 74)

and Lifshitz, Donateurs nos. 37, 85, all three of which are quoted above in n. 93.

¹⁰⁶Other inscriptions where father and son both bear a title, but not the same one: CII 88, 145, 146, 613, 800.

¹⁰⁷CII 681 (Sofia, Moesia): quoted below, p. 36.

¹⁰⁸CII 766 (Akmonia, Phrygia): quoted below, Appendix no. 6.

¹⁰⁹CII 804 (Apamea, Syria): quoted below, Appendix no. 39.

¹¹⁰On this inscription in the context of other inscriptions relating to Jews in Antioch see also Wayne A. Meeks and Robert L. Wilken, Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era (SBL Sources for Biblical Study 13; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978) 53-57; Meeks and Wilken also discuss the internal organization of Jews in Antioch, ibid., 6-9.

¹¹¹Jean-Baptiste Frey's suggestion that these synagogue heads served successively rather than simultaneously (CII, ad loc.), does not take epi, "at the time of," "under," seriously. It is most reasonable to assume that the mosaic was constructed "under" all of those named.

¹¹²See Meeks and Wilken, 7.

¹¹³CII, ad loc.

¹¹⁴The case of the gerusiarch of Antioch in a Beth She'arim inscription is rather different, for that person could have been the head of an Antiochene gerousia composed of delegates from various synagogues. The inscription reads: 'Αψίδς/ Αίδεσίου/ γερού(σ)ιάρχου/ 'Αντιοχέως. "Burial chamber of Aidesios, the gerusiarch of Antioch." (Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 141; Meeks and Wilken, 55). A somewhat parallel inscription is Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 164: "Ενθά κίτε/ Εύ<σ>έβις ὁ λαμ/πρότατος ἀρ/χισυνάγωγος ὦν Βηριτῶ[ν]. "Here lies Eusebi(o)s the most illustrious head of the synagogue of the people of Beirut." (For ὦν read τῶν.)

¹¹⁵Y. Meg. 74a.18 is interesting in this context: ג' מניח הכנסת כביה הכנסת. "Three (delegates) from the synagogue are like the synagogue," i.e., have the authority to represent it. It is the plural which is important here.

¹¹⁶See above, n. 93.

¹¹⁷Schürer's argument is quite similar to argument two; he says that in the later period women and children bore the title archisynagogos "just as a title," but he does not suggest that the title was honorific for men in the later period (History 2.435; see also Geschichte 3.88).

Notes to Chapter II

¹First published by G. Sotirou, Archaeologischer Anzeiger 52 (1937) 148; corrected by Louis Robert, Hellenica I (1940) 26-27.

²For photographs of kioniskoi, see Alexander Conze, Die attischen Grabreliefs (4 vols.; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1911-1922) 4. pls. CCCLXXIX-CCCLXXXVII.

³Sotirou 148.

⁴Robert 25-27.

⁵On Peristera, see Friedrich Bechtel, Die Attischen Frauennamen nach ihrem Systeme dargestellt (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1902) 88, n. 2; Friedrich Bechtel, Die historischen Personennamen des Griechischen bis zur Kaiserzeit (Halle/S.: Max Niemeyer, 1917) 591; Friedrich Bilabel, Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten 3 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1926) no. 6783 (Zenon Papyri); Louis Robert, Hellenica I (1940) 26,71.

⁶On the ending -issa, see Edwin Mayser, Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit (2 vols. in 6 pts.; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1906-1934) 1 (1931) 54; Eduard Schwyzer, Griechische Grammatik (4 vols.; Munich: C.H. Beck, 1939-1971), 1.473-475 (includes bibliographical references).

⁷In late Latin, vivo suo is used for se vivo; on this see Veikko Väänänen, Introduction au latin vulgaire (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1963) 179.

⁸See LSJ 252; Gerhard Delling, "Archēgos," TWNT 1 (1933) 485-486; or TDNT 1 (1964) 487-488; LPGL 236.

⁹Plato Timaeus 21E. Archēgetis/archēgetēs is used synonymously with archēgos, e.g., Artemis Leukophyrene was archēgetis of Magnesia on the river Maiandros (Asia Minor), see Wilhelm Dittenberger, Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum 1. nos. 256.22, 259.19, 261.18-19; 2. no. 552.18.

¹⁰Bacchylides 8.50-52 (ed. Richard C. Jebb [Cambridge: At the University Press, 1905] 306-309).

¹¹Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics 8.12.4.

¹²Eusebius De ecclesiastica theologia 2.9 (ed. Erich Klostermann: GCS 18, Eusebius 4 [1906] 109; 2nd ed., rev. Günther C. Hansen [1972] 109).

¹³Robert 25.

¹⁴Apparently members of the Corinthian community placed an emphasis on who had introduced them to Christianity that was far too great for Paul's liking (1 Cor 1:12-16; 3:4-11).

¹⁵For a discussion of women proselytes in ancient Judaism, see below, pp. 144-147.

¹⁶On Priscilla, see esp. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, USOR 33(1978) 156-157; idem, Women of Spirit. Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions (ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether and Eleanor McLaughlin; New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979) 34.

¹⁷See Bernadette J. Brooten, "'Junia . . . Outstanding among the Apostles' (Romans 16:7)," Women Priests. A Catholic Commentary on the Vatican Declaration (ed. Leonard Swidler and Arlene Swidler; New York: Paulist Press, 1977) 141-144. That Junia was Jewish is indicated by syngeneis mou (Rom 16:7), which

can have either the narrower sense of "my relatives," or the extended sense of "people of my race." Since Paul was Jewish, either of these meanings would imply that Junia and Andronicus were likewise Jewish.

¹⁸Other women who were important co-workers of Paul include: Phoebe (Rom 16:1); Mariam (Rom 16:6); Tryphaina, Tryphosa and Persis (Rom 16:12); Euodia and Syntyche (Phil 4:2-3); Apphia (Phlm 2); cf. also Chloe (1 Cor 1:11) and Nympha (Col 4:15). On these women, see esp. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Women in the Pre-Pauline and Pauline Churches," USQR 33 (1978) 153-166.

¹⁹See The Acts of Paul and Thecla, Hennecke-Schneemelcher 2.353-364. The work ends with the words, "Having enlightened many with the word of God, she [Thekla] slept a noble sleep."

Notes to Chapter III

¹First published by Anastasius C. Bandy, "Early Christian Inscriptions of Crete," Hesperia 32 (1963) 227-229, no. 1, pl. 64. See also idem, The Greek Christian Inscriptions of Crete (Christianikai Epigraphai tes Hellados 10; Athens: Christian Archaeological Society, 1970) Appendix no. 3. The inscription was included by Lifshitz in his prolegomenon to the CII, p. 88.

²Pp. 11-12.

³First published by R. M. Dawkins and F. W. Hasluck, "Inscriptions from Bizye," The Annual of the British School at Athens XII, session 1905-1906, 179-180, no. 5 (facsimile).

⁴CII, ad loc.; p. LXXXVI, n. 2.

⁵Krauss, Altertümer 144.

⁶Juster 1.441, n. 8.

⁷On the Jewish catacomb in Venosa, see Otto Hirschfeld, "Le catacombe degli Ebrei a Venosa," Bulletino dell'Instituto di Corrispondenza archeologica (1897) 148-152; G. I. Ascoli, Iscrizioni inedite o mal note, greche, latine, ebraichi di antichi sepolcri quidaici del Napolitano (Estratto degli Atti IV Congresso Internazionale degli Orientalisti tenutosi in Firenze nel 1878; Turin: Ermanno Loescher, 1880) 39-64; pls. 1-2; Raffaello Garrucci, "Cimitero ebraico di Venosa in Puglia," La Civiltà Cattolica 1 (1883) 707-720; François Lenormant, "La catacombe juive de Venosa," REJ 6 (1883) 200-207; Harry J. Leon, "The Jews of Venusia," JQR n.s. 44 (1953-1954) 267-284; Gian Piero Bognetti, "Les inscriptions juives de Venosa et le problème des rapports entre les Lombards et l'Orient," Comptes-rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres (1954) 193-202; Baruch Lifshitz, "Les Juifs à Venosa," Rivista di filologia 90, n.s. 40 (1962) 367-371; Leo Levi, "Le iscrizioni della 'Catacomba nuova' di Venosa," Rassegna mensile di Israel 31 (1965) 358-364. For further literature, see CII, p. 46 of the Prolegomenon; and pp. 420-422. CIL IX 6226 is the first publication of CII 581.

⁸The transcription of the name is unclear. Frey takes it to be Beronikenes (CII, ad loc.), while Leon suggests the Latin Veronicene ("Jews," 278). Lifshitz believes it is "the feminine form of Berenicianus: Βερονικ(α)ν(η)ς." (CII, Prolegomenon 45).

⁹First published in CIL IX 6230. Cf. Ascoli 49.

¹⁰Leon suggests Mannina ("Jews" 275, n. 20).

¹¹See below, pp. 62-63.

¹²First published by Ascoli 53 no. 5.

¹³CII 595: שלום על מי/שכהברו/ טפוס סהקונדינר/ פרטוביטרן
(Menorah, Lulav, Ethrog) קי מטאירינא/ אטרן ארנדואמא.
Ll. 3-5 (Greek in Hebrew characters) = Τάφος Σεκουσσίδου
προσβυτέρου ἐκ Μαρτινα(ς) ἑτῶν ὀγδοήντα. "Peace upon his bed.
Tomb of Secundinus, elder, and of Materina, (aged) 80 years."

¹⁴First published by Pietro Romanelli, "Una piccola catacomba giudaica di Tripoli," Quaderni di Archeologia della Libia 9 (1977) 111-118 (drawing).

¹⁵Romanelli suggests this, noting that Mazauzala is unattested in both Greek and Latin (Romanelli 114-115).

¹⁶Romanelli is of the opinion that the term probably designates the wife of a presbyteros or is simply an honorific title applied to an aged and venerated woman (Romanelli 116).

¹⁷See above, pp. 11-12; 41.

¹⁸SEG 27 (1977) no. 1200: not totally legible, probably a Latin text; no. 1202: Ἔδε κτε Ρων(υλοσ)/ τῷ Ζοσίμου/
ΝΟΥΤ. . . .Y. "Here lies Ropnios, son of Zosimos. . . ."; no. 1203: K MAKAP...ANA/ N."... ". . . Makar[ia? ios?] . . . Ana (or Ana[nias?])."

¹⁹First published by Giorgio Schneider Graziosi, "La nuova sala giudaica nel Museo Cristiano Lateranense," Nuovo bulletino di archeologia cristiana 21 (1915) 31, no. 51.

²⁰Nikolaus Müller, Die Inschriften der jüdischen Katakombe am Monteverde zu Rom (ed. Nikos A. Bees, Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1919) 55, no. 48. Rather than reading this as Our[is]a (Frey, CII ad loc.), one should probably take it as a previously unattested name. Leon 325, does not believe it is a name at all and simply writes oura.

²¹LSJ 1426.

²²Council of Laodicea, can. 11 (PG 137.1356D). See esp. Roger Gryson, The Ministry of Women in the Early Church; tr. Jean Laporte and Mary Louise Hall (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1976) 53-54.

²³On the meaning of "elder," see esp. Schürer, Gemeindeverfassung 19; idem, History 2.184-185; 427-433; Geschichte 3.89-91,96; Juster 1.440-447; Hans Lietzmann, "Zur altchristlichen Verfassungsgeschichte," Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie 50, n.s. 20 (1914) 97-153, esp. 113-132; Krauss, Altertümer 116-117, 147-148,167,246,307,393; Elbogen 39,52,475, 484; Str-B 4.145; Jean-Baptiste Frey, RSR 21 (1931) 137-139; Hans Zucker, Studien zur jüdischen Selbstverwaltung im Altertum

(Berlin: Schocken, 1936) 173-190; Jean-Baptiste Frey, CII pp. LXXXVI-LXXXVII; Baron, Community 1.77,99-100,133-135; 3.13, n. 2; Louis Robert, Revue de philologie 32 (1958) 41-42; Günther Bornkamm, "Presbys, presbyteros etc.," TWNT 6 (1959) 651-683; or TDNT 6 (1968) 651-680; Enc Jud s.v. "Elder"; A. E. Harvey, "Elders," JTS n.s. 25 (1974) 318-332; esp. 320-326; C. H. Roberts, "Elders: A Note," JTS n.s. 26 (1975) 403-405; Shimon Applebaum, "Organization" 491-495.

²⁴On this question, cf. LXX, which usually translates zēgēnīm with presbyteroi (Num 11:16; 2 Sam 3:17; 5:3; 17:4,15, etc.), but occasionally translates it with gerousia (Exod 3:16,18; 4:29; 12:21, etc.). For a discussion of presbyteroi and gerousia in the LXX, cf. Hans Lietzmann, "Verfassungsgeschichte" 123-125.

²⁵See Cod. Iust. 1.9.15.

²⁶See Cod. Theod. 16.8.1,23; 16.9.3; CII 611.

²⁷Quoted and discussed above, pp. 24-25.

²⁸PG 41.436A. Included in Klijn and Reinink 186-187. See also Epiphanius, Panarion 30.2.6: ποτὲ γὰρ παρθενίαν ἐσεμνύοντο, δῆθεν διὰ τὸν Ἰακωβὸν τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου· <διδ> καὶ τὰ αὐτῶν συγγράμματα πρεσβυτέροις καὶ παρθένοις γράφουσι. "In the past they boasted of virginity because of James the brother of the Lord. (Therefore) they address their writings to elders and virgins," (PG 41.408B; Klijn and Reinink 176-177).

²⁹For the following, see Lietzmann, "Verfassungsgeschichte" 130-132. Lietzmann emphasizes the significance of the legal texts for understanding the term presbyteroi. In addition to the texts discussed in the following, he cites Cod. Theod. 16.8.1, where maiores are mentioned, and Cod. Theod. 16.8.8 and 16.8.29 (= Cod. Iust. 1.9.17), where primates are mentioned. Since it is not clear, however, that maiores and primates mean the same as presbyteroi, these texts will not be used here as evidence for the functions of elders.

³⁰Ed. Theodor Mommsen, 2d ed. (2 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1954), 1.887.

³¹Tr. Clyde Pharr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952) 467 (with minor changes).

³²Quoted and discussed above, pp. 19-21.

³³On the decurionate, see PW 8 (1901) 2319-2352; on immunitas see PW 9 (1916) 1134-1136.

³⁴Ed. Mommsen 1.890.

³⁵Tr. Sheila Briggs, drawing partially upon Pharr 468.

³⁶See above, pp. 20-21.

³⁷The apostles are not functionaries within the synagogue, but rather delegates from the patriarch to the synagogue.

³⁸Ed. Paul Krueger, in: Corpus Iuris Civilis 2, 14th ed. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1968) 62.

³⁹Tr. S. P. Scott (17 vols.; Cincinnati: The Central Trust Company, 1932; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1973), 12.78 (with a minor variation).

⁴⁰Archipherekitaï comes from the Aramaic rešē pirqā', which means "heads of the school" (e.g., b. Qidd. 31b).

⁴¹For a discussion of the possibility that elders spoke the words of excommunication, cf. H. Zucker, Studien 188-189. This text is, however, not necessarily a definition of the title zāqēn as used in the rabbinic period. It rather defines zāqēn as used in the bible and is an attempt to assert the antiquity of the "scholar-class" and to claim special prerogatives for themselves, such as having others rise in their presence (Lev 19:32), which is the context in b. Qidd. 32b.

⁴²See also IQM 13:1, which speaks of the elders' place in the messianic battle.

⁴³The terminus ad quem for this passage would be the early third century.

⁴⁴The benches were probably installed in stage three of the building (3rd C.) and remained in use in stage four (4th C.); cf. Andrew R. Seager, in: AJA 76 (1972) 426, pl. 93, fig. 4; photo in: BASOR 199 (1970) 50, fig. 41.

⁴⁵CII 663: [. . . εἰς εὐ]χῆς (ἀρ)χόντων καὶ πρε(σ)βυτέρων [. . .]. ". . . of the archons and the elders . . ."

⁴⁶Rachel Wischnitzer, The Architecture of the European Synagogue (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964) 11-13 (plan); Don A. Halperin, The Ancient Synagogues of the Iberian Peninsula (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1969) 26-28.

⁴⁷E.g., y. Bik. 65d.11-15; b. Sanh. 14a; on the ordination question, see H. Zucker, Studien 174-180; Edward Lohse, Die Ordination im Spätjudentum und im Neuen Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951) 28-66; Str-B 2.647-661. The question of ordination and the Holy Land is related to the power of the patriarch; on this, cf. y. Sanh. 19a.41-48; Str-B. 2.649-650. Epiphanius's note that an apostle of the patriarch could remove an elder from office (Panarion 30.11.1, PG 41.424B) is also apropos here.

⁴⁸See CII 378 (Via Portuensis, Rome; Greek); 595 (Venosa, Apulia; Hebrew and Greek in Hebrew characters) quoted above, n. 13; 650c (Tauromenion, Sicily; Greek); 650d (Tauromenion, Sicily; Greek); 653b (Philosophiana, Sicily; Greek) 790 and 792 (Corycos, Cilicia; Greek); 801 (twice; Chrysopolis, Pontus; Greek); 931 (Jaffa, Palestine; Greek); 1277 (Jerusalem; Greek).

⁴⁹See CII 663 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 101; Elche, Spain; probably 4th C.); quoted above, n. 45; CII 735; Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 82; Golgoi, Cyprus; probably 4th C.): Ἰωση πρεσβ(ύτερος) (μετὰ τοῦ) υἱοῦ Συνεσίου/ ἀνεπέωσαν/ τὸ πᾶν ἔργον/ τῆς Ἑβραϊκῆς. "Jose, elder, together with his son Synesios, restored the entire structure of the synagogue;" CII 739 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 14; Smyrna, Ionia; 4th C.): quoted above, chap. 1, n. 29; CII 803 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 38; Apamea, Syria; 391 C.E.); quoted above, p. 26; CII 829 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 58; Dura Europos, Syria; 244 C.E.): Σαμουήλ/ Εὐδδεοῦ/ πρεσβύτερος/ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐκτίσεν. "Samuel, son of

Jaddaiou, elder of the Jews, built (it)." For the name "Jaddaiou", see CII 828a (YDYW); Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 32 (Hyllarima, Caria; probably 3rd C.): quoted below, Appendix no. 29; Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 37 (Side, Pamphylia, 5th C.): quoted above, chap. 1, no. 93; Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 84 (Lapethos, Cyprus; probably 5th C.): Θ(εός) β(οήθει). 'Εντόλιος/ πρεσβύτερος καί/ 'Ενκαίριος υἱός 'Ισα/ακ ἐπίκλην Σινδούρου/ τοῦ μακαριστάτου./ τὰ σά ἐκ τῶν σῶν/ σοι προσφέρω/μεν. μη(νός) ε', ἰνδ(ικτίωνος) ε'./ Κ(ύρι)ε σῶσον,/ ἀμήν. "God assists. We, Entolios, elder, and Enkairios, son of the late Isaak, also called Sindouros, offer to you from that which is yours, in the fifth month, the fifth indiction. Lord save. Amen."

⁵⁰Quoted and discussed above, pp. 26-27.

⁵¹CII 731f (Samos): [. . . κα]ί οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καί. . . / [τῶν] 'Ιουδαίων τῆς κατὰ [Σάμον?]/[. . . συ]ναγωγῆς ἐτίμησαν AP. . . "[. . . a]nd the elders and [. . . .] of [the] Jews of [Samos? . . . sy]nagogue honored Ar[. . . .], etc.

⁵²CII 663 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 101; Elche, Spain): quoted above, no. 45.

⁵³CII 800 (Arnaut-Keni, Bithynia): 'Ενθάδε/ κατάκητε/ Σανβατίς/ υἱός Γερω/ντιου πρ(εσβυτέρου)/ γραματεὺς/ κ(αί) αἰψηστ/άτις τὸν/ παλεῶν/ ἥρινη. "Here lies Sanbatis, son of Geronteos, elder, scribe and president of the elders. Peace."

⁵⁴Quoted above, p. 24.

⁵⁵H. Zucker, drawing on rabbinic sources, speaks of the "local elder" ("Ortsältester"), assuming that each elder had a sort of local jurisdiction. While one must allow for variety on this point, Zucker's interpretation must be viewed with caution, since he rather loosely interprets other terms as meaning "elder," such as *hākām* and *yāhīd*, and uncritically places passages with these terms side by side with passages referring to *zēqēnīm*, Studien 184-190.

⁵⁶A. E. Harvey, "Elders" 325.

Notes to Chapter IV

¹The earliest records of this inscription are given by Philippe de Winghe (died 1592) in Cod. 17872-3 of the Royal Library of Brussels, Claude Ménestrier (died 1639) in the Vatican manuscript Cod. Lat. 10545, fol. 150b, and Alonso Chacón (1540-1599), (exact location unknown). For further background and bibliography see Leon 67-68; CII ad loc.

²The translation is that of Leon 341, with minor variations. Note that no plausible solution has been suggested for the f. Frey's *filia* or *feliciter* are not satisfactory. For all of the following Roman inscriptions consult Leon 263-346 ("Appendix of Inscriptions"). The following translations of Roman inscriptions are those of Leon, with minor variations.

³The readings for this name vary considerably: Paucila, Paulina, Paullina. See CII, ad loc.

⁴CII 88 (Rome: Via Appia): 'Ενθά(δ)ε κεῖτε Ἄννιανος ἄρχων [νή]πιος/ υἱὸς Ἰουλιανοῦ πατρὸ[ς] συναγωγῆς Καμπη/σιων αἰτῶν η' μηνῶν β'. 'Εν εἰρήνῃ ἢ κοιμησὶς αὐτοῦ. "Here lies Annanios, infant archon, son of Julianus, father of the synagogue of the Campesians, aged 8 years, 2 months. In peace his sleep." Note that the infant archon did not receive the same title as his father.

⁵CII 319 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Ενθάδε κῆτε Ἐιρήνα/ παρθενικὴ σύμβιος/ Κλωδίου ἀδελφοῦ/ Κουντου Κλαυδίου/ Συνεσίου πατρὸς/ συναγωγῆς Καμπη/σιων Ῥώμης. ΔΙΛΨ "Here lies Eirene, virgin wife of Clodios, brother of Quintus Claudius Synesios, father of the synagogue of the Campesians of Rome. Peace."

⁶On the synagogue of the Campesians, see Leon 144-145; CII 433 may also contain a reference to the Campesians, but only the Ka- is extant.

⁷CII 343 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Ενθάδε κῆτε Ἰλαρος/ ἄρχων ἀπὸ συναγωγῆς Βολουμνησιων/ ζήσας ἔτη λε'. 'Εν εἰρήνῃ ἢ κοιμησὶς/ αὐτοῦ. μνί[α] αὐτοῦ. "Here lies Hilaros, archon from the synagogue of the Volumnesians, who lived 35 years. In peace his sleep. His memory (for a blessing?)."

⁸CII 402 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Ενθάδε κεῖτε Σικκου/λος Σαβεινὸς μελ/λάρχων Βολουμνη/σιων ἐτῶν β' μηνῶν ι'. "Here lies Siculus Sabinus, archon-to-be of the Volumnesians, aged 2 years, 10 months."

⁹CII 417 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Ενθάδε κεῖτε/ Φλαβίος Σαβεινὸς/ ζαβίου συναγωγῆς/ τῶν Βολουμνη <ν>/σων. 'Εν εἰρήνῃ/ ἢ κοιμησὶς αὐτ(ου). "Here lies Flavius Sabinus, (archon?)-for-life of the synagogue of the Volumnesians. In peace their sleep." On this interpretation of ζαβίου as ἄρχων διὰ βίου see Schürer, Gemeindevorfassung 23.

¹⁰Leon 66, 157-159.

¹¹CII 508 (Rome: uncertain provenance): 'Ενθάδε κεῖτε Μνι/ασεας μαθητῆς/ σοφῶν καὶ πατῆρ/ συναγωγῶν. "Here lies Mniaseas, disciple of the sages (= talmid ḥakām) and father of synagogues."

¹²First published by Giuseppe Gatti, "Nuove scoperte nella città e nel suburbio," Notizie degli Scavi, Atti della R. Accademia dei Lincei, anno CCXCVII, series 5, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche 8 (1900) 88. See also *idem*, "Notizie di recenti trovamenti di antichità," Bullettino della Commissione archeologica comunale di Roma (1900) 223-225.

¹³Leon 142.

¹⁴CII 284 (Rome: Via Appia Pignatelli): Marcus Cuynt/us Alexus gra/mmatus ego t/on Augusthsio/n mellarcon / eccion Augu/stesion an(norum) XII. "Marcus Quintus Alexus, scribe of the Augustesians (= ἐκ τῶν Αὐγουστησιων), archon-to-be of the Augustesians (= μελλάρχων ἐκ τῶν Αὐγουστησιων), (aged) 12 years."

¹⁵CII 301 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Ενθάδε κῆτε Ἄννις/ γερουσάρχης (sic) συναγωγῆς Ἄγουσσεσιων. 'Εν/ εἰρήνῃ ἢ κοιμησὶς/ αὐτοῦ. "Here lies Annis, gerusiarch of the synagogue of the Augustesians. In peace his sleep."

(Pages 59-62)

¹⁶CII 338 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Εν[θάδε κεί]τε/ Ζωτ[ικὸς? ἀρ]χων/ Αὐγ[ουστησιων]. 'Εν εἰρή[ν]ῃ [ἡ κοίμησις αὐτοῦ]. "Here lies Zot[ikos, ar]chon of the Aug[ustesians]. In peace [his sleep]."

¹⁷CII 368 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Ενθάδε κεί]τε/ Κυντιανὸς γεροῦ/σιδάρχης συναγωγῆς Αὐγουστησιων/ ὅς ἔζησεν ἔτη 54./ 'Εν εἰρήνῃ ἡ κοίμησις αὐτοῦ. "Here lies Quintianus, gerusiarch of the synagogue of the Augustesians, who lived 54 years. In peace his sleep."

¹⁸CII 416 (Rome: Via Portuensis): 'Ενθάδε χεῖ]θε Φλα/βια 'Αντωνίνα γυνή/ Δατιβου τοῦ ζαβίου/ ἀπὸ τῆς συναγωγῆς τῶν Αὐγουστησιων. "Here lies Flavia Antonina, wife of Dativus, (archon?)-for-life of the synagogue of the Augustesians."

¹⁹Cf. CII 417, quoted above, n. 9.

²⁰Leon 142.

²¹First published by Raffaello Garrucci, Cimitero degli antichi Ebrei scoperto recentemente in vigna Randanini (Rome: Coi tipi della Civiltà cattolica, 1862) 52.

²²Leon 66.

²³For references to the manuscripts which quote the inscription, see CIL V 4411 (ad loc.), and for previous editions of the inscription, see CII 639 (ad loc.).

²⁴Brix. B 4; see CIL V 4411 (ad loc.).

²⁵Frey's Caelia seems to be a simple printing error. Lifshitz corrects it in his prolegomenon to the 1975 edition, 49.

²⁶For literature on the Jewish catacomb in Venosa, see above, chap. 3, n. 7.

²⁷First published by G. I. Ascoli, Iscrizioni inedite o mal note, greche, latine, ebraiche di antichi sepolcri guidaici del Napolitano (Estratto degli Atti IV Congresso Internazionale degli Orientalisti tenutosi in Firenze nel 1878; Turin: Ermanno Loescher, 1880) 53, no. 6.

²⁸Ascoli, Iscrizioni 45, suggests this date for the catacomb. Leon, JQR n.s. 44 (1953-1954) 284, dates it to the fourth or perhaps early fifth century, and he also refers to further attempts to date the catacomb.

²⁹REJ 6 (1883) 203.

³⁰Ms. de Rossi 16356, no. 36, as reported by Frey, CII, ad loc. For further variants, see CIL IX ad loc.

³¹JQR n.s. 44 (1953-1954) 271-272; see also Leon 188. For a further possible example of the title pateressa, see below, pp. 128-129.

³²See W. Frenkel, Nella patria di O. Orazio Flacco, guida di Venosa (referred to by Lifshitz, CII, Prolegomenon, p. 46, but unavailable to me); G. P. Bognetti, Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres (1954) 194; Jeanne Robert and

Louis Robert, Bulletin Épigraphique, Revue des études grecques 68 (1955) no. 301; Baruch Lifshitz, Rivista di filologia n.s. 40 (1962) 368.

³³CII 619b (Venosa): Ὡδε κεῖτε Μάρκελλος/ πατὴρ πατέρων καὶ πάτρων τῆς πόλεως. "Here lies Marcellus, father and patron of the city."

³⁴CII 590: quoted and discussed above, p. 43. CII 599: Τάφος/ Φαοστίνυ/ πατέρως./ יְשׁוּעָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַל מְנוּחָיו. "Tomb of Faustinus, father. Peace upon Israel. Amen." CII 611: Hic ciscued Fausthna/ filia Faustin(i) pat(eris) annorum/ quattuordecim) mhnsurum/ quinque que fuet unica paren/turum quei dixerunt trhnus (= θρήνους)/ duo apostuli et duo rebbites et/ satis grandem dolorem fecet pa/rentibus et lagremas cibita/ti/ . שלום נפש שלום / פרוסטטנינה / que fuet pronepus Faustini/ pat(eris) nepus Biti et Aselle/ qui fuerunt maiures cibi/tatis. "Here lies Faustina, daughter of Faustinus, father, (aged) 14 years, 5 months, who was the only child of her parents, for whom two apostles and two rabbis said the funeral elegy, and (her death) brought great sorrow to her parents and tears to the city. (Funeral) bed of Faustina. May (her) soul rest. Peace! She was the great-granddaughter of Faustinus, father, (and) grand-daughter of Vitus and Asella, who were the leading people of the city." CII 612: Absida (= ἄψις) ubi/ cesquit Faus/tinus pater. "Tomb where Faustinus, father, lies." CII 613: Hic pa[us]ad Fausti/nus pat[er] nepus Fas/tini pat(ri)s filius Viti/ ierusiarcotis / . שלום על משכהבר/ ירא ירושה "Here lies Faustinus, father, grandson of Fastinus, father, son of Vitus, gerusiarch. Peace upon his bed. . . (?)." CII 619b: See above, n. 33. CII 619c: See above, p. 62.

³⁵JQR n.s. 44 (1953-1954) 271.

³⁶PL 42.1131-1140. This work is not to be confused with the twelfth-century work which has gone under the title Altercatio Synagogae et Ecclesiae, but which Bernhard Blumenkranz believes is a Christian catechism, and not a pseudo-dialogue at all (Les auteurs chrétiens latins du moyen âge sur les juifs et le judaïsme [Paris: Mouton & Co., 1963] 207-208).

³⁷PL 42.1134.

³⁸Juster 1.74, n. 1. Bernhard Blumenkranz accepts this dating (TZ 4 [1948] 126; Altercatio Aecclesie Contra Synagomam [Strasbourg: Palais de l'Université, 1954] 27). The work was incorrectly attributed to Augustine, which explains its present location in PL 42.

³⁹TZ 4 (1948) 126; see PL 42.1131.

⁴⁰Krauss, Altertömer 166.

⁴¹Berliner 1.69.

⁴²Berliner 2,2.57.

⁴³Berliner's description is rather clear in this regard: "Für kranke und sterbende Frauen, wie für die Versorgung armer Bräute sorgte die mater Synagogae (No. 27 [= CII 523]), die auch unter dem Titel Pateressa bekannt ist und noch im 16. Jahrhundert als Parnessessa (somit Femininum von Parness) ihre Würde

behauptete. Als ehrwürdige Matrona erschien sie überall, wo dem weiblichen Theil der Gemeinde Hülfe, Beistand und Trost zu bringen war" (Berliner 1.69).

⁴⁴Leon 186-187.

⁴⁵Leon 188, n. 2.

⁴⁶Leon 194.

⁴⁷Frey, CII 1. p. XCVI.

⁴⁸Frey, CII 1. p. XCVI.

⁴⁹Juster 1.448-449; Baron, History 2.413, n. 22 (see also 2.186-188, 194); Applebaum, "Organization" 497-498. For further discussion of this title, see: Schürer, Gemeindeverfassung 29-30; Vogelstein/Rieger 1.43-44; Schürer, Geschichte 3.88-89,96; Krauss, Altertümer 118,156,166-167; Elbogen 484; George La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome in the First Centuries of the Empire," HTR 20 (1927) 361; Frey, CII 1. pp. LXXXIV, XCV-XCVI; Baron, Community 1.96-97,101; Baruch Lifshitz, Prolegomenon to the 2d ed. of Frey, CII 1.48.

⁵⁰The following example is representative rather than exceptional: "Schon der Umstand, dass eben auch der letztere Titel [mater synagogae] vorkommt, macht es wahrscheinlich, dass damit nicht ein eigentliches Gemeindeamt bezeichnet wird" (Schürer, Geschichte 3.88-89).

⁵¹Ed. Theodor Mommsen, 2d ed. (2 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1954), 1.887.

⁵²Tr. Clyde Pharr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952) 467 (with minor changes).

⁵³On immunitas see PW 9 (1916) 1134-1136.

⁵⁴See especially Gottlob Schrenk, "Patēr", TWNT 5 (1954) 946-1016; or TDNT 5 (1968) 945-1014.

⁵⁵See Str-B 1.916-917; Schürer, History 2.325-326.

⁵⁶See Gustaf Dalman, The Words of Jesus, tr. D. McKay (Edinburgh; T. & T. Clark, 1902) 338-339; K. Kohler, "Abba, father, title of spiritual leader and saint," JQR 13 (1901) 567-80; Str-B 1.918-919; Schürer, History 2.326-327.

⁵⁷See Encyclopedia Talmudica (ed. Meyer Berlin and Shlomo Josef Zevin; Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia, 1969-), 1(tr. Isidore Epstein and Harry Friedman; 1969) s.v. 'ab bēt dīn.

⁵⁸CII 537 (Porto, Italy): Καττία Ἀμμίας θυγάτηρ Μηνοφίλου πατὴρ συναγωγῆς τῶν Καρκαρησίων. Καλῶς βιώσα/σα ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαϊσμῶ ἔτη ζήσασα/ τριάκοντα καὶ τέσσαρα μετὰ τοῦ συμβίου. εἶδεν ἐκ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς ἕγγονα. ὤδε μελεῖται Καττία/ Ἀμμίας. "Cattia Ammias, daughter of Menophilos, father of the synagogue of the Carcaresians. She lived a good life in Judaism, having lived 34 years with her husband. From her children she saw grandchildren. Here lies Cattia Ammias."

⁵⁹CII 88 (Rome: Via Appia): quoted above, n. 4.

- ⁶⁰CII 319 (Rome: Via Portuensis): quoted above, n. 5.
- ⁶¹CII 510 (Rome: probably from the Monteverde catacomb): Ἦδε κεί/τε Σαλω/ θυγάτηρ Γα/δία πατρός/ συναγωγῆς/ Αἰβρέων. ἔβ(ω)σεν λ(υ)κάβαντας) μα'./ ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἢ κοίμη/σεις αὐτῆς. "Here lies Salo, daughter of Gadias, father of the synagogue of the Hebrews. She lived 41 years. In peace her sleep." CII 535 (Porto): Ἐνθάδε κῆτε/ τυγατέρες δύο/ πατρός τῶν/ Ἐβρέων Γα/δία Τοσκα/ρα. ἐν ἰ/ρήνῃ. "Here lie two daughters of the father of the Hebrews, Gadias Toskara. In peace."
- ⁶²CII 509 (Rome: uncertain provenance): Ἐνθάδε κεύται Παν/χάριος πατὲρ συνα/γωγῆς Ἐλαίας ἐτῶ/ν ἑκατῶν δέκα φιλό/λαος φιλέντολος/ καλῶς βιώσας. ἦν εἰρ/ήνῃ ἢ κοίμησις/ αὐτοῦ. "Here lies Pancharios, father of the synagogue of Elaia, (aged) 110 years, lover of his people, lover of the commandments. He lived well. In peace his sleep."
- ⁶³CII 494 (Rome: Region of the Via Portuensis): Ἐν[θά]δε κ/εῖ[τε] Δ]ομνο/ς π[α]τῆρ συνα/γωγ[ῆς] Β]ερνακλω/ν τρις δ[ι]ρχ]ων κῆ δ[ις] [φ]/ροντ[ιστῆ]ς. ἐν εἰρῆ/ν[ῃ] ἢ κ]οίμ[ι]ς αὐ[τοῦ]. "Here lies Domnus, father of the synagogue of the Vernacilians, thrice archon and twice phrontistes. In peace his sleep."
- ⁶⁴CII 508 (Rome: uncertain provenance): Ἐνθάδε κεύται Μνι/ασεας μαθητῆς/ σοφῶν καὶ πατῆρ/ συναγωγῶν. "Here lies Mniaseas, disciple of the sages and father of synagogues."
- ⁶⁵CII 93 (Rome: Via Appia): [Ἐν]θάδε κῆτε Ἄσσερ[ί]α/[ς] πατῆρ συναγωγῆς ὄσι/[ος] ἀμειπτος ἦς. αἰν ἰρήνῃ ἢ/ κοίμησίς σου. "Here lies Assterias. You were father of the synagogue, holy, irreproachable. In peace your sleep."
- ⁶⁶See above, n. 60.
- ⁶⁷CII 694 (Stobi, Macedonia): quoted below, chap. 6, n. 135.
- ⁶⁸See above, n. 34.
- ⁶⁹Quoted and discussed above, p. 43.
- ⁷⁰See above, n. 34.
- ⁷¹See above, p. 62.
- ⁷²See above, p. 62.
- ⁷³CII 619b (Venosa): Ἦδε κεύτε Μαρκελλος/ πατῆρ πατέρων καὶ πά/τρων τῆς πόλεως. "Here lies Marcellus, father of fathers and patron of the city."
- ⁷⁴Cf. the maiores cibitatis (a woman and a man) in CII 611, quoted above in n. 34.
- ⁷⁵CII 533 (Castel Porziano; probably from the first half of the 2nd C. C.E.): [Universitas] Iudeorum/ [in col. Ost. commor]antium qui compara/[verunt ex conlat]ione locum C. Iulio Iusto/ [gerusiarchae ad m]unimentum struendum/ [donavit rogantib]us Livio Dionisio patre et/ [.....]no gerusiarche et Antonio/ [.....]diab]iu anno ipsorum consent. ger /[us.C. Iulius Iu]stus gerusiarches fecit sibi/ [et coniugi] suae lib.lib.posteriorisque eorum/ [in fro]nte p. XVIII in agro p. XVII. "The community of Jews living in the colony of Ostia, who by

means of a collection acquired a plot of land for G(aius) Julius Justus, gerusiarch, so that he might construct a (grave) monument, gave it to him at the request of Livius Dionysius, father, and of [.....]us, gerusiarch, and of Antonius [archon-for-life?], in the year of (their office?), by consent of the ge[rou]sia. G(aius) Julius Jus]tus, gerusiarch, made (the monument) for himself [and] his [wife], for his freedmen and freedwomen and their descendants. [W]idth, 18 feet, length 17 feet."

⁷⁶CII 739 (4th C.): quoted above, chap. 1, n. 29.

⁷⁷CII 720 (Mantineia, Arcadia): 'Αύρ(ηλιος) 'Ελπιδους/ πατήρ λαοῦ/ διὰ βίου δωρον/ το(ῦ) προναοῦ/ τῆ συναγωγῆ. "Aur(elius) Elpidys, father-for-life of the people, (made) a gift of the forecourt to the synagogue."

⁷⁸See Krauss, Altertömer 243.

⁷⁹This title was bestowed, for example, upon the emperor Antoninus Pius in the mid-second century by the senate (Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Antoninus Pius 6.6-7).

⁸⁰Plautus, Rudens 1.5.

⁸¹Egg., CIL III 7505; VI 8796, 10234; IX 2687, 5450; XIV 37, 2408.

⁸²Wilhelm Liebenam posits this in Zur Geschichte und Organisation des römischen Vereinswesens (Leipzig: Teubner, 1890) 218. See also: J(ean)-P(ierre) Waltzing, Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles chez les Romains (4 vols.; Louvain: Charles Peeters, 1895-1900), I (1845) 425-449.

⁸³Waltzing, Étude, 1.446-447; PW 4 (1901) 425.

⁸⁴See M. J. Vermaseren, Corpus inscriptionum et monumentorum religionis Mithraicae (2 vols.; The Hague: Marinus Nijhoff, 1956-1960), I, nos. 688, 803; Waltzing, Étude 1.446.

⁸⁵Vermaseren, Corpus, indices to vols. 1, 2 under "List of Mithraic Grades"; Waltzing, Étude 1.446-447.

⁸⁶CIL III 882 (Ladislaus Vidmann, Sylloge inscriptionum religionis Isiacae et Sarapicae [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969], no. 698), CIL VI 406,408,413 (the patronus is distinguished from the pater); see also CIL III 8147; VI 377; XIV 37,69,707; IG XIV 1084 (Vidmann no. 384).

⁸⁷Since women were probably not admitted to the cult of Mithras, the question of mater is an irrelevant one. There is, however, one case of a woman in Leptis Magna, Africa, who bore the title lea, a Mithraic grade (Vermaseren I, no. 115).

By pointing out the similarity between Mithraism and Judaism with respect to this one title, I do not mean to imply a structural similarity between the two. Mithraism is a cult, whereas Judaism in the Roman Diaspora is a community, albeit a cultic community.

Notes to Chapter V

¹Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte 22 (1922) 13, no. 25.

²ZNW 22 (1923) 284; reprinted in: Hans Lietzmann, Kleine Schriften, (ed. Kurt Aland; 3 vols.; Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 67,68,74; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1958-1962), 1.442; see also SEG 1 (1923) no. 574 (also corrects to hierisa).

³See Jeanne Robert and Louis Robert, Bulletin épigraphique, Revue des études grecques 61 (1948) no. 259.

⁴E.g., SEG 17 (1960) 818 (Cyrenaica). The name Marion occurs in an inscription from the same site, SEG 17 (1960) 819.

⁵On the excavations in Tell el-Yahudiyeh, see Edouard Naville, The Mound of the Jew and the City of Onias. Seventh Memoir of the Egyptian Exploration Fund (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1890); W. M. Flinders Petrie, Hyksos and Israelite Cities (London: University College and Bernard Quaritch, 1906). For a list of the principal epigraphical publications on Tell-el-Yahudiyeh, see CII 2. pp. 380-381, as well as Jeanne Robert and Louis Robert, Bulletin épigraphique, Revue des études grecques 72 (1959) no. 503.

⁶CII ad loc.

⁷On the temple of Onias, see Schürer, Geschichte 3.144-148; PW 12,2 (1925) 2055-2056; M. Delcor, "Le temple d'Onias en Égypte," RB 75 (1968) 188-203 ("Post-Scriptum" by Roland de Vaux, 204-205).

⁸For a brief survey of these, see Michael Stone, Scriptures, Sects and Visions. A Profile of Judaism from Ezra to the Jewish Revolts (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) 77-82. Stone mentions the temples at Arad, Elephantine, Araq el-Emir and Leontopolis, as well as the evidence for animal sacrifice at Qumran and at Sardis.

⁹First published by Giorgio Schneider Graziosi, "La nuova sala giudaica nel Museo Cristiano Lateranense," Nuovo bulletino di archeologia cristiana 21 (1915) 31, no. 49; see also Nikolaus Müller, Die Inschriften der jüdischen Katakomba am Monteverde zu Rom (ed. Nikos A. Bees; Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1919) 43-44, no. 35 (photograph in CII).

¹⁰On this name, see Müller and Bees, Inschriften 43-44.

¹¹Discussed below, pp. 95-97.

¹²Leon 193.

¹³CII ad loc.

¹⁴First published by Moshe Schwabe, Yediot 5 (1937-1938) 91; see also Mazar, Beth She'arim 1.102; pl. 15, no. 5; Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.42-43, no. 66. There is a contradiction between 1.102, which refers to our inscription as "a three-line Greek inscription painted in red, with the addition of a word in Hebrew: 'Shalom,'" and locates it above and to the

right of arcosolium 3, and 2.42-43, which locates the five-line Greek inscription above and to the right of arcosolium 2. An arcosolium is a grave niche with an arched ceiling.

¹⁵ Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.39-40.

¹⁶ Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.39-40; see also Mazar, Beth She'arim 1.102.

¹⁷ See CII 1050, 1067, 1088; Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2. nos. 151, 165, 191, 219. The use of the nominative kyra may be due to Aramaic influence, as the Greek loan word QYR², indeclinable in Aramaic, is not unusual in Palestinian Aramaic inscriptions.

¹⁸ For a discussion of this name, see Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.42.

¹⁹ He was buried next to Sara in arcosolium 1 (CII 1081; Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.42, no. 65). His own epitaph also does not call him a priest, although perhaps one should nevertheless not exclude the possibility that he was one.

²⁰ Beth She'arim 2.43; see also Baruch Lifshitz, RB 74 (1967) 52.

²¹ Pp. 78-83.

²² There are certain minor inconsistencies between Frey's uncial and minuscule transcriptions. Whether this is due to Schwabe's communication to Frey or to Frey himself, I cannot judge.

²³ Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.43.

²⁴ The literature on the ancient Israelite priesthood is voluminous. For a survey of recent literature and a summary of the issues of greatest importance in the current discussion, see Schürer, History 2.237-308. See also Enc Jud, s.v. "Priests and Priesthood;" Gottlob Schrenk, "Hiereus," TWNT 3 (1938) 257-265; or TDNT 3 (1965) 257-265; Juster 1.453-454; and for the nineteenth century, see esp. Wolf Wilhelm Baudissin, Die Geschichte des alttestamentlichen Priestertums (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1889). Also important here is the rabbinic extension of what can be seen as priestly purity to the laity. On this see Jacob Neusner, A History of the Mishnaic Law of Purities (22 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1974-1977) and A History of the Mishnaic Law of Holy Things (6 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1978-1979).

²⁵ On the rights and duties of the kōhenet, see Talmudic Encyclopedia (ed. Meyer Berlin and Shlomo Josef Zevin; Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia, 1951-), 4 (1952) s.v. bat kōhen (Hebrew); Encyclopedia Talmudica (ed. Meyer Berlin and Shlomo Josef Zevin; Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia, 1969-), 3 (tr. David B. Klein; 1978) s.v. ʿešet kōhēn.

²⁶ These and the following references represent only a selection of the rabbinic passages on each question.

²⁷ This text, which is unattributed, cannot be dated precisely. Jacob Neusner believes that the tractate Sota is the work of Ushans, i.e., from the period of 140 to 170 (A History of the Mishnaic Law of Women [5 vols; Leiden: Brill, 1980], 5.147; for commentary on this passage, see 4.36-37).

²⁸On the heave-offering, see Num 18:8,12,24,26; Deut 18:4. See also Terumot, the tractate on heave-offerings in the Mishnah, Tosefta and Jerusalem Talmud. On the question of whether Babylonia was seen as subject to agricultural taxes, see Jacob Neusner, A History of the Jews in Babylonia (5 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1966-1970), 2 (1966) 260.

²⁹The difficulties in dating this text are related to the difficulties in dating any Talmud text. It is unclear which 'Ulla is referred to here; Mordechai Margolioth (Encyclopedia of Talmudic and Geonic Literature [2 vols.; Tel Aviv: "Yavneh," 1976], 2.716 [Hebrew]) believes that the text is speaking of an 'Ulla who was a contemporary of Rava (died 352). With the exception of R. Idi bar Avin (ca. 310), it is impossible to know precisely which rabbis are referred to as having eaten priestly dues on account of their wives, as there was more than one rabbi by the name of Kahana, Papa and Yemar. They were in any case Babylonian Amoraim. Even if one knew precisely which rabbis were meant, we have no guarantee of the accuracy of the ascription. In light of the lack of critical studies of the biographies and sayings of the rabbis in question, we can only say that the theories and sayings found in the text are Amoraic.

³⁰One might ask whether R. Kahana was not in fact a priest, as his name would indicate. First, it must be noted that having the name Kahana or Kohen does not necessarily imply priestly descent. Secondly, the text would make no sense if he were a priest, for then he would eat the priestly dues on account of himself and not on account of his wife.

³¹A text strongly expressing the fragility and derivative nature of a woman's priestliness is m. Yebam. 9:5-6, which describes under which circumstances a common Israelite woman who is the widow of a priest and a priest's daughter who is the widow of a common Israelite may eat of the priest's due.

³²Ismar J. Peritz, "Woman in the Ancient Hebrew Cult," JBL 17 (1898) 111-148; Ditlef Nielson, Die altarabische Mondreligion und die mosaische Überlieferung (Strassbourg: Karl J. Trubner, 1904) 192; Alfred Jeremias, Das Alte Testament im Lichte des alten Orients, 4th ed., rev. and enl. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1930) 425 (cf. 1st ed. [1904] 271); Theod. Engert, Ehe- und Familienrecht der Hebräer (Munich: J. J. Lentner, 1905) 11; Max Löhr, Die Stellung des Weibes zu Jahwe-Religion and -Kult (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908) 49-54; Frank Moore Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973) 200-201; Benjamin Mazar, "The Sanctuary of Arad and the Family of Hobab the Kenite," JNES 24 (1965) 301-2.

³³For the position that there were no female priests in ancient Israel, see esp. A. Eberharter, "Gab es im Yahwekult Priesterinnen?" (Tübinger) Theologische Quartalschrift 94 (1912) 183-190. His position has remained the majority one.

³⁴Some scholars consider 1 Sam 2:22b to be a later interpolation; see the commentaries by Otto Thenius and Max Löhr, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1898) 17; Henry Preserved Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899) 20; S. R. Driver, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913) 33; and others. The reasons for this theory are:

1. The LXX and Qumran do not include 1 Sam 2:22b;
2. 1 Sam 2:22b is linguistically very similar to Exod 38:8 (P):
הצבארו פתח אהל מועד; הצבאח אשר צבאו פתח אהל מועד.
3. 1 Sam 2:22b speaks of a "tent of meeting," whereas 1 Sam 1:9 presupposes an established building (hēkāl). While it is impossible to discuss this question at any length here, one should simply note the possibility that the LXX and Qumran could have censored their Vorlage and that the phrase "women who served at the door of the tent of meeting" was a standard phrase. If it was a standard phrase still in use at the time of the writing of 1 Sam 2:22b, this would explain how "tent of meeting" could occur with reference to Shiloh, which had a building rather than a tent.

³⁵Driver, Books of Samuel 33.

³⁶" . . . jene Arbeiten am Tempel zu verrichten, welche weiblichen Fleiss und Kunstsinn erheischten . . ." (Eberharter, "Priesterinnen" 190).

³⁷"Die hier (und 2. Mose 38,8) genannten Frauen haben die Aufgabe, den für das Geschehen am Heiligtum besonders wichtigen Eingang sauberzuhalten" (Die Samuelbücher [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956] 23).

³⁸Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973) 200.

³⁹"The Sanctuary of Arad and the Family of Hobab the Kenite," JNES 24 (1965) 302. Frank Moore Cross concurs with Mazar: "Mazar is no doubt correct in seeing Heber and his wife Jael as persisting in their priestly functions at a temenos related to the terebinth" (Cross, Canaanite Myth 201).

⁴⁰"It should be especially noted that the term terebinth (תרבין) appended with a surname always refers to a holy tree; and it is a recurring theme in the Bible that a Patriarch pitched his tent by such a tree and sanctified the spot by erecting an altar or massebah" (Mazar, "Sanctuary" 301). See Gen 12:6-7; 26:23-25; etc.

⁴¹Migra'ot Gedolot. Prophets and Writings (Tel Aviv: Pardes, 1958) ad loc.

⁴²Alexander Sperber (ed.), The Bible in Aramaic, vols. 1- (Leiden: Brill, 1959-), 2 (1959): The Former Prophets According to Targum Jonathan 57. On the date of this targum, see Samson H. Levey, "The Date of Targum Jonathan to the Prophets," VT 21 (1971) 186-196; Levey suggests as terminus ad quem the Arab conquest of Babylonia (640-641).

⁴³Sperber, Bible 94.

⁴⁴The same is also true for the Jael, Zipporah and "women who minister at the door of the tent of meeting" texts. On the Miriam traditions, see Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, The Liberating Word, (ed. Letty M. Russell; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976) 49-52.

⁴⁵Philo himself was also very interested in the story of Miriam leading the Israelite women in song; see De Agricultura 80-83; De vita Mosis 1.180; 2.256.

⁴⁶An excellent survey of female priests in Graeco-Roman Egypt is given by Lea Pringmann, Die Frau im ptolemäisch-kaiserlichen Aegypten (Bonn: Bonner Universitäts-Buchdruckerei, 1939) 75-86, 123-125. See also her discussion of women in cultic clubs, 86-90.

⁴⁷Apud Josephus, Aq. Ap. 1.209.

⁴⁸Historiae 5.5.

⁴⁹De ieiuno 16.6 (Tertulliani Opera 2, CChr, SL [1954] 1275).

⁵⁰See Paul-Eugène Dion, Science et esprit 29 (1977) 49-55.

⁵¹See Martin Hengel, "Proseuche und Synagoge. Jüdische Gemeinde, Gotteshaus und Gottesdienst in der Diaspora und in Palästina," Festschrift Karl Georg Kuhn. Tradition und Glaube (ed. Gert Jeremias, Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn and Hartmut Stegemann; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1971) 157-184.

⁵²See above, n. 8.

⁵³On the priestly blessing, see m. Ber. 5:4; m. Meg. 4:5,6,7; m. Sota 7:6; m. Tamid 7:2; b. Roš. Haš. 31b; b. Sota 40a; y. Ber. 9d.2-5; Num. Rab. 11.1-8 (on Num 6:23-27).

⁵⁴Ed. Theodor Mommsen 2nd ed. (2 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1954), 1.887.

⁵⁵Tr. Clyde Pharr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952) 467, with minor changes.

⁵⁶Pp. 65-66.

⁵⁷Pp. 19-21.

⁵⁸LPGL 670.

⁵⁹Mark 5:22,35,36,38; Luke 8:49; 13:14; Acts 13:15; 18:8,17.

⁶⁰On priestly leadership at Qumran, see John Strugnell, JBL 77 (1958) 110-111.

⁶¹See also Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Alexander Severus 45.7 (Lampridius), who describes how Alexander Severus used to announce publicly the name of a governor, military officer, procurator, etc. before appointing him, noting that "Christians and Jews observed this custom in announcing the names of those who were to be ordained priests" (sacerdotibus, qui ordinandi sunt), but this may be due to a misapprehension, cf. Juster 1.445, no. 1.

⁶²One passage which illustrates this very well is the gemara on m. Sota 3:7 (b. Sota 23b), the mishnaic passage defining the differences between a kōhen and a kōhenet, as well as between a man and a woman. The reason given for a number of these differences is the male language used by scripture. For example, Lev 21:1 is taken as referring only to sons of priests and not to daughters of priests, because it says "the sons of Aaron," but not "the daughters of Aaron." Another of the many examples of this phenomenon would be b. Qidd. 29b, in which Deut 11:19 (וילמדם אתם את-בניכם) is taken to mean that one is required

to teach one's sons the Torah, but not one's daughters, a regulation which has had enormous consequences for Jewish women for centuries.

⁶³Or: hērabbin, see Tosefta, ed. Lieberman 356, no. 34 (second apparatus).

⁶⁴Elbogen 170. Elbogen thus takes this text to be a "defensive" text, that is, one which is required to defend the innovation of not allowing women to read.

⁶⁵Krauss, Altertümer 174, also believes that the issue is one of male illiteracy.

⁶⁶For further discussion of this question, see Salo Wittmayer Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. (vol. 1- ; New York: Columbia University Press, 1952-), 2.413, n. 23.

⁶⁷Leon 66.

⁶⁸This transcription and interpretation follow Leon, rather than Frey, who according to Leon, misread the letters because minium had been carelessly applied (Leon 192, n. 3; 316-317).

⁶⁹CII 379 is carved on the other side of the marble plate, which causes Leon to suggest that CII 375 is incomplete, perhaps because the stonecutter had omitted gyne (wife) in l. 2 (Leon 320-321).

⁷⁰Leon believes that this may be due to the general conservatism of the Monteverde catacomb (Leon 192).

⁷¹The transcription given here does not actually follow either of the ones given by Frey, but rather that in Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.28.

⁷²For the dating, see Schwabe and Lifshitz, Beth She'arim 2.29.

⁷³CII 746 (Ephesus; end of 2nd C.): Τὸ μνημεῖόν ἐστὶ Μ(αρκου) Ἀ(υ)ρ(ηλιου) Μουσσίου ιαρεος (=ιερέως). Ζῆ./ κήδονται οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. (Reading according to Louis Robert, Hellenica 11-12 (1960) 381-384, and not according to Frey.) "The Tomb of Marcus Aurelius Moussios, priest. May he live! The Jews mourn." CII 785 (Corycos, Cilicia): Σωματοθήκη Ἀβα (or ἄβα) Συμωνος/ τοῦ μακαρίου ἐιερέων. "Funerary urn of Aba (or father?) Symon, the blessed one (= deceased one) of the priests." CII 930 (Jaffa): Ἴσα υἱοῦ Λαζαρου/ ἱερέος ΓΙΠΟ (Ἐγυπτίου?)/ Εἰρήνη./ ἴγγ. "Isa (Isak?), son of Lazaros, priest of Egypt (?). Peace! Lazar." CII 1404 (Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 79; Jerusalem): the Theodotos inscription, quoted above, p. 24. Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 100 (Berenike, Cyrenaica; dated to 77 C.E.): a long dedicatory inscription, l. 17. Καρτισθένης Ἀρχιά ἱερέως (δρ) ι'. "Kartisthenes, son of Archias, priest, 10 (drachmas). Baruch Lifshitz, RB 74 (1967) 50-52 (Caesarea): Θήκη Μα[. . .]/ κε Ἐλέου κε [. . .]/[. . .]εμα ἐιερή[ων]. "Tomb of Ma[. . .] and of Eleas and of [. . .] the priests." Also important are the lists of priestly courses found in Ashkalon (CII 962) and Caesarea (Michael Avi-Yonah, IEJ 12 [1962] 137-139), as well as Hebrew and Aramaic occurrences of "priest," e.g., CII 828a, 1197, 1221, 1317, 1411.

⁷⁴A number of those buried at Beth She'arim were from abroad, e.g., the kōhēn from Beirut (Schwabe and Lifschitz, Beth She'arim 2. no. 148). Therefore, one should not overemphasize the interest of the town of Beth She'arim in the priesthood.

⁷⁵Juster 1.453, n. 8 (" . . . les femmes ne pouvaient pas être prêtresses chez les Juifs.").

Notes to Chapter VI

¹Literally "women's synagogue," "Weiberschul" denotes a totally separate prayer room for women in the synagogue, be it a gallery or a separate room on the same level.

²Die galiläischen Synagogenruinen (Gesellschaft für Palästina Forschung. 3. Veröffentlichung) 15.

³Synagogenruinen 15-16; Altertümer 355-357.

⁴Kohl and Watzinger 140 and passim; Sukenik, Synagogues 47-48 and passim; Goodenough 1.226 and passim. The two latest, most complete and extremely useful works on Palestinian synagogues, Hüttenmeister pp. VIII-IX and passim, and Chiat passim, report on others having reconstructed a gallery and are cautious in their evaluations of these reports, but do not call the existence of such a gallery into question.

⁵Quoted above, p. 24.

⁶Marilyn J. Chiat, in a paper given on November 18, 1979 in New York at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature, questioned the identification of buildings at Masada, Herodion, Gamla, Migdal and Korazim (all discussed below) as synagogues. Chiat makes a good case for questioning the identification of these buildings as synagogues in the narrow sense, but one must then ask if what seem in any case to be public meeting halls might not have been used for worship services. Synagogues are attested literarily for the 1st C.: Matt 4:23; Mark 1:23; John 6:59; Acts 6:9 and passim; Josephus, J.W. 2.14.4 § 285; Life 277, 280, 293; Ant. 19.6.3 § 300.

⁷Yigael Yadin, Masada. Herod's Fortress and the Zealots' Last Stand, tr. Moshe Pearlman (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966; Sphere, 1973) 180-189; EAE 3.809-810 (Yigael Yadin); Hüttenmeister 314-315; Chiat 561-567, 904, 1008, 1021-1022. It is not possible to quote all of the bibliography for this and other sites. The reader desiring further bibliography is referred to Hüttenmeister and Chiat for the ancient synagogues in Israel and to Kraabel, "Synagogue" for the Diaspora synagogues. Also worthy of special mention are: Rachel Wischnitzer, The Architecture of the European Synagogue (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1964); Hershel Shanks, Judaism in Stone. The Archaeology of Ancient Synagogues (New York: Harper and Row, 1979); Levine, Synagogues Revealed. For a survey of various issues relating to the ancient synagogue, including the architecture, see Wolfgang Schrage, "Synagoge," TWNT 7 (1964) 798-839; or TDNT 7 (1971) 798-852. For Masada and the following sites discussed here, see the plates at the back of this volume. The plates follow the order of the discussion.

⁸Gideon Foerster, Eretz-Israel 11 (1973) 224-228; English summary, 30*; pl. XLIV, 2; EAE 2.503-505, 509 (Gideon Foerster); Hüttenmeister 173-174; Chiat 467-471, 899, 1009; Doron Chen, BASOR 239 (1980) 37-40.

⁹HA 59/60 (1976) 6; Shmaryahu Gutman, Gamla (Department for the Knowledge of the Land in the Kibbutz Movement, 1977), (Hebrew); BAR 5:1 (1979) 15-19, cover photograph; Chiat 640-643, 1030-1033; S(hmaryahu) Gutman, "The Synagogue at Gamla," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 30-34; Z. Ma'oz, "The Synagogue of Gamla and the Typology of Second Temple Synagogues," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 35-41.

¹⁰A photograph of these steps is printed in Gutman, Gamla 27.

¹¹BAR 5:1 (1979) 18-19.

¹²HA 57-58 (1976) 8-9; Hüttenmeister 316-318; Chiat 244-247, 887-888.

¹³Gideon Foerster (citing J. Ory), Eretz-Israel 11 (1973) 227; English summary, 30*; Hüttenmeister 277, 280-281.

¹⁴Further excavation has shown that those remains identified as a synagogue at Migdal are actually part of an urban villa, thus excluding it from the discussion; see Virgilio Corbo, "Piazza e villa urbana a Magdala," Studi Biblici Franciscani 28 (1978) 232-240, pls. 71-76. As to the supposed synagogue at Korazim, there are no extant remains and it therefore seems imprudent to discuss it in the same context as Masada, Herodion and Gamla.

¹⁵L. A. Mayer and A. Reifenberg, JOPS 19 (1939) 314-326; pls. 23-30; Goodenough 1.232-236; 3. figs. 605-616; EAE 2.386-389 (Dan Barag); Hüttenmeister 117-121; Chiat 518-523, 1013-1016; Z(eev) Yeivin, "The Synagogue of Eshtemoa," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 120-122.

¹⁶Nehemiah Tzori, IEJ 16 (1966) 123-134; pls. X-XIII; Dan Bahat, Qadmoniot 5 (1972) 55-58; pl. IV; EAE 1.226-228 (Nehemiah Tzori and Dan Bahat); Hüttenmeister 58-67; Chiat 288-292, 889, 985.

¹⁷It is also quite possible that the court was actually the synagogue itself, a synagogue in the form of a basilica; see HA 48/49 (1974) 44. The remains are too sparse to ascertain whether or not there was a gallery.

¹⁸Goodenough 1.208-211; 3. figs. 535, 545; Mazar, Beth She'arim 1.14-20; fig. 3; EAE 1.233-237 (Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Mazar); Hüttenmeister 68-72; Chiat 155-161, 879, 947.

¹⁹Goodenough 1.263-264; EAE 1.258 (Ruth Hestrin); Hüttenmeister 72-73; Chiat 713-716, 913.

²⁰HA 39 (1971) 8; HA 56 (1975) 2-3; EAE 2.460-462 (Dan Urman); Hüttenmeister 357-358; Chiat 611-614, 1024-1028.

²¹J. W. Crowfoot, in: Gerasa (ed. Carl H. Kraeling; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938) 234-239; pls. XLIII-XLV; plan I.XXXVI; Goodenough 1.180, 259-260; 3. figs. 450, 656; EAE 2.420, 426, 428 (Shimon Applebaum); Hüttenmeister 126-130; Chiat 739-744, 914, 1036-1038.

²²N. Makhouly and Michael Avi-Yonah, QDAP 3 (1934) 118-131; pls. XLI-XLIV; Goodenough 1.257-259; 3. figs. 648-654, 658; Hüttenmeister 181-184; Chiat 377-381, 896, and 992-994.

²³D. C. Baramki and Michael Avi-Yonah, QDAP 6 (1938) 73-77; pls. XVIII-XXIII; Goodenough 1.260-262; 3. figs. 655, 657, 659, 666; EAE 2.571, 573 (Gideon Foerster); Hüttenmeister 189-191; Chiat 579-582, 907, 1022.

²⁴L. H. Vincent, RB 16 (1919) 532-563; L. H. Vincent and Pierre Benoit, RB 68 (1961) 161-177; pls. III-XXIII; Goodenough 1.253-257; 3. figs. 642-647; Hüttenmeister 320-334; EAE 3.891-894 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Chiat 583-590, 908, 1023.

²⁵Kohl and Watzinger 135-137; Goodenough 1.208; 3. figs. 529, 536; Hüttenmeister 419-420; EAE 4.1136 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Chiat 382-384, 994.

²⁶Hüttenmeister 435-436; Chiat 293-295, 892, 986.

²⁷Goodenough 1.223; 3. figs. 583-584; EAE 2.410-417 (Asher Ovadiah); Hüttenmeister 130-137; Chiat 414-419, 898, 999, 1001-1003.

²⁸Hüttenmeister 369-376; Chiat 300-307, 894, 988-989; Fanny Vitto, "The Synagogue at Rehob," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 90-94.

²⁹Vasilios Tzaferis, Qadmoniot 7 (1974) 111-113; Hüttenmeister 307-308; Chiat 296-299, 893, 987; V(asilios) Tzaferis, "The Synagogue at Ma'oz Hayim," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 86-89.

³⁰N. Slouschz, Proceedings of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society 1,1 (1921) 3-39; Goodenough 1.214-216; 3. figs. 561-568; Hüttenmeister 159-163; EAE 4.1178-1180 (Moshe Dothan); Chiat 222-227, 884, 965-967.

³¹Kohl and Watzinger 26-27, 33, 35; pls. II-V.

³²Goodenough 3. fig. 452.

³³A Visit to Capharnaum, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1973) fig. 31. Since the text of this booklet states that there was probably no women's gallery (p. 52), the use of this reconstruction model is even more noteworthy.

³⁴The Guide to Israel, 19th ed. (Jerusalem: "Hamakor" Press, 1977) 496. Baruch Sapir and Dov Ne-eman also follow the Kohl and Watzinger model in their booklet, Capernaum (Tel Aviv, 1967) cover and 57.

³⁵On the gallery see, Kohl and Watzinger 26-27, 33, 35; frontispiece; pls. IV-VI; Sukenik, Synagogues 8; Goodenough 1.182; 3. figs. 452, 457.

³⁶See below, C. Further Considerations.

³⁷Virgilio Corbo, Stanislao Loffreda, Augusto Spijkerman, La sinagoga di Cafarnaò, dopo gli scavi del 1969 (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1970) 56-58; Cafarnaò (Publicazioni dello Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 19; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1972-75) vol. 1: Virgilio Corbo, Gli edifici

della città; vol. 2: Stanislao Loffreda, La ceramica; vol. 3: Augusto Spijkerman, Catalogo della monete della città; vol. 4: E. Testa, I graffiti della casa di S. Pietro; 1 (1975) 145; pls. 66-67. See also the review by James F. Strange of the latter book, where Strange takes the view that the stairs led to a gallery (BASOR 226 [1977] 71).

³⁸Conversation with Stanislao Loffreda, Jerusalem, June 1978. For further information on the synagogue at Capharnaum, see Kohl and Watzinger 4-40, 193-195; pls. I-VI; frontispiece; Gaudenzio Orfali, Capharnaüm et ses ruines d'après les fouilles accomplies à Tell-Houm par la Custodie Franciscaine de Terre Sainte (1905-1921) (Paris: Picard, 1922) 9-101; pls. I, III-X; Goodenough 1.181-192; 3. figs. 451-452, 457-479, 660, 662, 664; EAE 1.286-290 (Nahman Avigad); Hüttenmeister 260-270; Chiat 200-212, 882.

³⁹Kohl and Watzinger 41-58; pl. VII; Goodenough 1.193-199; 3. figs. 484-502, 544; EAE 1.299-303 (Zeev Yeivin and Nahman Avigad); Hüttenmeister 275-281; Chiat 213-221, 883, 960-965.

⁴⁰EAE 1.301.

⁴¹EAE 1.302.

⁴²Kohl and Watzinger 101-106; pl. XIV; Goodenough 1.203-204; 3. figs. 504, 523; Hüttenmeister 343-346; EAE 3.710-711; Chiat 94-98, 877, 939-941.

⁴³Eric M. Meyers, "Excavations at En-Nabratein, Upper Galilee: The 1980 Season," American Schools of Oriental Research Newsletter no. 2 (September 1980) 3-7, 10-11; E(ric) M. Meyers, J(ames) F. Strange and Carol L. Meyers, "Nabratein, 1980," IEJ 31 (1981) 108-110. One of the more important aspects of the Duke University excavation is that the latest level of the synagogue can now be dated to between 650-700 on the basis of twenty-three coins found beneath the latest floor of the building (Meyers, "Excavations" 4).

⁴⁴Meyers, "Excavations" 6.

⁴⁵Meyers, "Excavations" 6.

⁴⁶Kohl and Watzinger 104-105; fig. 197.

⁴⁷Kohl and Watzinger 106.

⁴⁸Goodenough 1.204.

⁴⁹Kohl and Watzinger 89-100; pls. XII-XIII; Goodenough 1.201-203; 3. figs. 505, 510-515; Hüttenmeister 31-34; EAE 3.704-707 (Nahman Avigad); Chiat 70-76, 874, 942.

⁵⁰Kohl and Watzinger 97, 100.

⁵¹Kohl and Watzinger pl. XII.

⁵²Goodenough 1.202; see 3. fig. 505.

⁵³Goodenough 1.202.

⁵⁴EAE 3.705.

⁵⁵EAE 3.707.

⁵⁶C. W. M. van de Velde, Reise durch Syrien und Palästina in den Jahren 1851 und 1852, tr. (from the Dutch) K. Göbel (2 vols.; Leipzig: T. O. Weigel, 1855-1861), 1.134.

⁵⁷See the very complete and well-done excavation report: Eric M. Meyers, A. Thomas Kraabel and James F. Strange, Ancient Synagogue Excavations at Khirbet Shema', Upper Galilee, Israel 1970-1972 (AASOR 42; Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1976); Hüttenmeister 387-390; EAE 4.1094-1097 (E[ric] M. Meyers); Chiat 77-85, 875, 931-936.

⁵⁸Meyers et al., Khirbet Shema' 56-59, 80-83; see esp. figs. 3.3, 3.4, 3.10, and 3.14.

⁵⁹Meyers et al., Khirbet Shema' 80.

⁶⁰Meyers et al., Khirbet Shema' 58, cf. fig. 3.2.

⁶¹Meyers et al., Khirbet Shema' 57.

⁶²Meyers et al., Khirbet Shema' 81.

⁶³In their preliminary reconstruction the excavators posited that the western wall extended much further to the north and slanted slightly to the west; see Eric M. Meyers, Thomas Kraabel and James F. Strange, BA 35:1 (1972) 10, fig. 5. In their final excavation report they alter their earlier reconstruction, making the gallery considerably smaller in size; see Meyers et al., Khirbet Shema' 56, n. 25.

⁶⁴In a letter to me of November 20, 1979, Eric M. Meyers writes that he is "not inclined to call the gallery a 'women's gallery.'"

⁶⁵Kohl and Watzinger 80-88; pl. XI; Goodenough 1.200-201; 3. figs. 506, 543; Hüttenmeister 311-314; EAE 3.856-860 (Dan Barag); Chiat 86-93, 876, 937-939.

⁶⁶Kohl and Watzinger 88, figs. 173, 188.

⁶⁷On the narthex, see the literature on Bar'am cited above in n. 49; on the aedicula, see the photograph of the synagogue in Ostia in Maria Floriani Squarciapino, Archaeology 16 (1963) 196, and of that in the synagogue in Dura Europos in The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report (vols. 1- ; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943-), 8,1: Carl H. Kraeling, The Synagogue (1956) pl. V; on the forecourt, see the literature for Capharnaum cited above, notes 33,34,37,38.

⁶⁸Kohl and Watzinger 107-111; pl. XV; Goodenough 1.205; 3. figs. 519, 522; Hüttenmeister 144-146; EAE 4.1135 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Eric Meyers, Carol Meyers, "Gush Ḥalav (el-Jish), 1978," IEJ 28 (1978) 276-279; Eric M. Meyers, James F. Strange, Carol L. Meyers and Richard S. Hanson, "Preliminary Report on the 1977 and 1978 Seasons at Gush Ḥalav (el-Jish)," BASOR 233 (1979) 33-58; Chiat 60-69, 873, 922; Eric M. Meyers, "Excavations at Gush Ḥalav in Upper Galilee," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 75-77.

⁶⁹Kohl and Watzinger 111, fig. 216.

- 70 Meyers and Meyers, "Gush Ḥalav" 278.
- 71 Meyers, Strange, Meyers and Hanson, "Report" 46; see also Meyers and Meyers, "Gush Ḥalav" 277.
- 72 Meyers and Meyers, "Gush Ḥalav" 278.
- 73 Kohl and Watzinger 59-70; pls. VIII-IX; Goodenough 1.199; 3. figs. 503, 508; Hüttenmeister 15-17; EAE 4.1133-1134 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Chiat 240-243, 886, 973-974.
- 74 Kohl and Watzinger 68, fig. 128.
- 75 Kohl and Watzinger 68.
- 76 Kohl and Watzinger pl. VIII.
- 77 Synagogenruinen 16. On the modern discussion among Orthodox Jews concerning the separation of the sexes and the historical arguments for it, see Baruch Litvin (ed.), The Sanctity of the Synagogue: the case for mechitzah, separation between men and women in the synagogue, based on Jewish law, history, and philosophy, from sources old and new (New York: Spero Foundation, 1959).
- 78 Kohl and Watzinger 71-79; pl. X; Goodenough 1.199-200; 3. figs. 507, 509; Hüttenmeister 12-15; EAE 4.1137 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Chiat 150-154, 878, 945-946; Lee I. Levine, "Excavations at Ḥorvat ha-'Amudim," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 78-81.
- 79 Kohl and Watzinger 76-77.
- 80 Goodenough 12.45, 185-186; Moshe Dothan, Qadmoniot 1 (1968) 116-123; Hüttenmeister 163-172; EAE 4.1178-1184 (Moshe Dothan); Chiat 228-234, 885, 968-972; Moshe Dothan, "The Synagogue at Ḥammath-Tiberias," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 63-69.
- 81 In: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 65; see also Dothan, Qadmoniot 119.
- 82 Hüttenmeister 166.
- 83 Hüttenmeister 166.
- 84 Eliezer Sukenik, JPOS 15 (1935) 101-180; Goodenough 1.239-241; 3. figs. 626-630; EAE 2.469-473 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Hüttenmeister 152-159; Chiat 717-724, 912, 1035.
- 85 Goodenough 1.239; see also Asher Hiram, Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 19 (1962) 46.
- 86 Sukenik, JPOS 162.
- 87 Kohl and Watzinger 125-134; pl. XVII; Goodenough 1.206-207; 3. figs. 530-534; Hüttenmeister 465-468; EAE 4.1137-1138 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Chiat 688-690, 1035.
- 88 Kohl and Watzinger 133.
- 89 Goodenough 1.207.

- ⁹⁰Kohl and Watzinger 112-124; pl. XVI; Goodenough 1.205-206; 3. figs. 520-521, 524-528; Hüttenmeister 103-105; EAE 4.1134-1135 (Michael Avi-Yonah); Chiat 636-639, 909; Z. Ma'oz, in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 102-103.
- ⁹¹Kohl and Watzinger 124; cf. Goodenough 1.205.
- ⁹²Kohl and Watzinger 124, fig. 251; reprinted in Goodenough 3. fig. 521 and by Ma'oz, in: Levine: Synagogues Revealed 102.
- ⁹³Eliezer Sukenik, The Ancient Synagogue of Beth Alpha. An Account of the Excavations Conducted on Behalf of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem (Jerusalem: The University Press, 1932); Goodenough 1.241-253; 3. figs. 631-635, 638-641; EAE 1.187-190 (Nahman Avigad); Hüttenmeister 44-50; Chiat 271-280, 890, 979-980, 982-983.
- ⁹⁴Sukenik, Beth Alpha 16-17; pl. III; fig. 17.
- ⁹⁵Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 19 (1962) 12.
- ⁹⁶Michael Avi-Yonah, IEJ 6 (1956) 260-261; EAE 1.277-279; Hüttenmeister 79-90; Chiat 369-376, 991-992.
- ⁹⁷IEJ 6 (1956) 261.
- ⁹⁸Dan Barag and Josef Porat, Qadmoniot 3 (1970) 97-100; HA 41/42 (1972) 36-37; Dan Barag, Joseph Porat, Ehud Netzer, Qadmoniot 5 (1972) 52-54; pl. 3; EAE 2.378-380, 396, 448 (Dan Barag); Hüttenmeister 108-114; Chiat 510-517, 900, 1011-1013; D(an) Barag, Y(osef) Porat and E(hud) Netzer, "The Synagogue at 'En-Gedi," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 116-119.
- ⁹⁹HA 41/42 (1972) 36; Barag, Porat and Netzer, "Synagogue" 119.
- ¹⁰⁰EAE 2.379.
- ¹⁰¹Tarbiz 40 (1970-1971) 21; English summary, p. IV.
- ¹⁰²Mazar, Tarbiz 20.
- ¹⁰³Barag, Porat and Netzer, "Synagogue" 119.
- ¹⁰⁴Shmaryahu Gutman, Zeev Yeivin and Ehud Netzer, Qadmoniot 5 (1972) 47-52; pl. 1; cover; Hüttenmeister 422-432; EAE 4.1124-1128 (Shmaryahu Gutman, Ehud Netzer and Zeev Yeivin); Chiat 524-530, 902, 1016-1019; S(hmaryahu) Gutman, Z(eev) Yeivin and E(hud) Netzer, "Excavations in the Synagogue at Horvat Susiya," in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 123-128.
- ¹⁰⁵Gutman, Yeivin and Netzer, Qadmoniot 48, EAE 4.1124-1125, Levine, Synagogues Revealed 124; Chiat 525.
- ¹⁰⁶Dan Urman, Tarbiz 40 (1970-71) 399-408; English summary, pp. I-III; Dan Urman, IEJ 22 (1972) 17-19, no.1; EAE 2.464 (Dan Urman); Hüttenmeister 91-95; Joseph Naveh, On Mosaic and Stone (Jerusalem: Ma'ariv, 1978), (Hebrew) 26-27, no. *7; Dan Urman, in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 155.
- ¹⁰⁷IEJ 17, no. 1.
- ¹⁰⁸IEJ 18.

- 109 E.g., b. Erub. 11b; b. Yoma 11b.
- 110 E.g., b. Menah. 33b, 34a, b. B. Bat. 12a.
- 111 I have not seen the stone itself, but only pictures of it, so this can be taken as nothing more than a suggestion. However, the length (110 cm) would fit in well with this hypothesis.
- 112 At Gush Halav a raised platform does seem to be a plausible reconstruction, although here again no traces of an entrance to it were found.
- 113 In Umm al-'Amad, for example, the extant capitals vary from 43 to 48 cm under the capital and 50 to 56.5 cm at the base; see Kohl and Watzinger 77. The extant columns vary in diameter from 40 to 58 cm, there being no clear cut-off point between the hypothetical gallery and the main story; see Kohl and Watzinger 76. A further example would be the column of the porch at Bar'am, which is 49 cm in diameter under the capital, narrower than some, if not all, of the interior columns, which range up to 70 cm in diameter at the base; see Kohl and Watzinger 92-100.
- 114 Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 19 (1962) 12.
- 115 Goodenough 1.239-240.
- 116 JPOS 15 (1935) 162-163; 167.
- 117 Moshe Dothan, Qadmoniot 1 (1968) 119; in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 65.
- 118 Moshe Dothan, EAE 4.1182; in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 69.
- 119 André Plassart, in: Mélanges Holleaux. Recueil de mémoires concernant l'antiquité grecque (Paris: Auguste Picard, 1913) 201-215; pls. V, XII; reprinted in: RB 11 (1914) 523-534 (missing one plan; contains substitute by the editors of RB); Sukenik, Synagogues 37-40; pl. X; Goodenough 2.71-75; 3. figs. 874-876. For the reasons against this being a synagogue, see Belle D. Mazur, Studies of Jewry in Greece (vol. 1- ; Athens: Hestia, 1935-), 1.15-24. The most recent extensive study of the question is Philippe Bruneau, Recherches sur les cultes de Délos à l'époque hellénistique et à l'époque impériale (Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 217; Paris: E. de Boccard, 1970) 480-493. See also Kraabel, "Synagogue" 491-494, who accepts Bruneau's identification of the building as a synagogue.
- 120 Plassart, in: Mélanges Holleaux 210; he notes that the separation of the sexes is certain, even though it is "not explicitly attested in the ancient sources."
- 121 Goodenough 2.74.
- 122 Mazur, Studies 25-33; pls. IV-V; Sukenik, Synagogues 44-45; pl. XI; Goodenough 2.75-76; 3. fig. 881.
- 123 Mazur, Studies 28-29.
- 124 Mazur, Studies 32, n. 4; cf. Goodenough 2.75.

- 125 BASOR 170 (1963) 38-48; 174 (1964) 30-44; 177 (1965) 17-21; 182 (1966) 34-45; 187 (1967) 9-50, 60-62; 191 (1968) 26-32; 199 (1970) 45-53; 206 (1972) 20-23; 215 (1974) 49, 52; Goodenough 12.191-195; Andrew R. Seager, AJA 76 (1972) 425-435; pls. 91-94; idem, Oadmoniot 7 (1974) 123-128; idem, in: Levine, Synagogues Revealed 178-184; Kraabel, "Synagogue" 483-488.
- 126 Seager, AJA 433.
- 127 BASOR 170 (1963) 41.
- 128 BASOR 191 (1968) 24, fig. 24.
- 129 AJA 426.
- 130 Theodor Wiegand and Hans Schrader, Priene (Berlin: Georg Riemer, 1904) 480-481.
- 131 Sukenik, Synagogues 42-43; Goodenough 2.77; 3. fig. 882; Kraabel, "Synagogue" 489-491.
- 132 A. von Gerkan, "Eine Synagoge in Milet," ZNW 20 (1921) 177-181; Sukenik, Synagogues 40-42; Goodenough 2.78; 3. fig. 880; Kraabel, "Synagogue" 488-489. Goodenough believes that it is "at best only a possibility" that this is a synagogue, and Kraabel, due to lack of Jewish evidence, disputes it entirely.
- 133 Gerkan, "Synagogue" 179.
- 134 Ernst Kitzinger, "A Survey of the Early Christian Town of Stobi," Dumbarton Oaks Papers 3 (1946) 81-161; Martin Hengel, "Die Synagogeninschrift von Stobi," ZNW 57 (1956) 145-182; James Wiseman, Stobi. A Guide to the Excavations (Belgrade: National Museum of Tito Veles and University of Texas at Austin, 1973); idem and Djordje Mano-Zissi, "Excavations at Stobi, 1970," AJA 75 (1971) 393-411; idem, "Excavations at Stobi, 1971," AJA 76 (1972) 407-424; idem, "Excavations at Stobi, 1972," AJA 77 (1973) 391-403; idem, "Excavations at Stobi, 1973-1974," Journal of Field Archaeology 1 (1974) 117-148; idem, "Excavations at Stobi, 1975-1976," Journal of Field Archaeology 3 (1976) 269-302; Dean L. Moe, "The Cross and the Menorah," Archaeology 30 (1977) 148-157; Kraabel, "Synagogue" 494-497.
- 135 CII 694 (Stobi, Macedonia): ["Ετους ΤΙΑ?] [ΚΛ.]
 Τιβεριοσ Πολύ/χαρμοσ, ὃ καὶ Ἀχύρι/οσ, ὃ πατήρ τῆσ ἐν/
 Στόβοισ συναγωγῆσ/ ὃσ πολεϊτευσάμε/νοσ πᾶσαν πολεϊτεί/αν
 κατὰ τὸν Ἰουδαί/σμοῦ ἐύχῆσ ἔνεκεν/ τοὺσ μὲν οἰκοὺσ τῶ/ ἀγίῶ
 τόπῳ καὶ τὸ/ τρίκλεινον σὺν τῶ/ τετραστόῳ ἐκ τῶν/ οἰκείων
 χρημάτων/ μηδὲν ὄλωσ παραψά/μενοσ τῶν ἀγίων, τῆν/ δὲ
 ἔξουσίαν τῶν ὑπε/ρώων πάντων πᾶσαν/ καὶ τῆν (δ)εσποτείαν/
 ἔχειν ἐμὲ τὸν ΚΛ. Τιβεριο/ον Πολύχαρμον καὶ τοὺσ/ <καὶ τοὺσ>
 κληρονόμοσ/ τοὺσ ἐμοὺσ διὰ παντόσ/ βίου, ὃσ ἂν δὲ βουληθῆ/
 τι καινοτομῆσαι παρὰ τὰ ὕ/π' ἐμοῦ δοχθέντα, δώσει τῶ/
 πατριάρχη δηναρίων (μ)υριά/δασ εἰκοσι πέντε· οὕτω γάρ/
 μοι συνέδοξεν, τῆν δὲ ἐπι/σκευῆν τῆσ κεράμου τῶν/
 ὑπερώων ποιεῖσθ(α)ι ἐμὲ/ καὶ κληρονόμοσ/ ἐμοὺσ. (I)
 Claudius Tiberius Polycharmos, also named Achyrios, father of the
 synagogue at Stobi, who conducted my whole life according to
 Judaism, (have), in fulfillment of vow, (erected) the buildings
 for the holy place and the triclinium together with the
tetrastoon with my own means without in the least touching the
 sacred (funds). Howbeit, the right of disposal of all the upper
 chambers and the proprietorship (thereof) shall be vested in me,
 Claudius Tiberius Polycharmos, and my heirs for life; and whoso-

ever shall seek in any way to alter any of these dispositions of mine shall pay unto the patriarch 250,000 denarii. For thus have I resolved. But the repair of the tile-roof of the upper chambers shall be carried out by me and my heirs." (The translation is according to Sukenik, Synagogues 80, with minor changes.)

¹³⁶Maria Floriani Squarciapino, "The Synagogue at Ostia," Archaeology 16 (1963) 194-203; *idem*, "La Sinagoga di Ostia. Secunda campagna di scavo," Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Classica 6 (1962 [1965]) 299-315; Fausto Zevi, "La Sinagoga di Ostia," Rassegna mensile di Israel 38 (1972) 131-145; Kraabel, "Synagogue" 497-500.

¹³⁷The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report (vols. 1- ; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943-), vol. 8, pt. 1: Carl H. Kraeling, The Synagogue (1956); Goodenough 9-11 (1964); Joseph Gutman (ed.), The Dura-Europos Synagogue. A Re-Evaluation (1932-1972) (Religion and the Arts 1; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1973); Kraabel, "Synagogue" 481-483.

¹³⁸Kraeling, Synagogue 31.

¹³⁹Goodenough 9.31.

¹⁴⁰Kohl and Watzinger pl. XVIII.

¹⁴¹Kraeling, Synagogue 16-17.

¹⁴²Kraeling, Synagogue 147, n. 537.

¹⁴³Kraeling, Synagogue 23, specifically notes, "At Dura the women shared equally with the men in the use of the House of Assembly, though they entered by a special doorway and sat on benches reserved especially for them."

¹⁴⁴E. Renan, Revue archéologique ser. 3, 2 (1883) 157-163; 3 (1884) 273-275; pls. VII-XI; Krauss, Altertümer 266, 309, 341, 347-348, fig. 7; Goodenough 2.89-100; 3. figs. 886-888, 890-892, 894-895, 897-906, 913-921.

¹⁴⁵Photograph, Goodenough 3. fig. 894; see also 2.91. Samuel Krauss suggests that the P could be p(uella) or p(ateressa), (Altertümer 266). The abbreviation is difficult to decipher, but puella ("girl") seems a rather unlikely title for the person who has donated the most expensive mosaic of the synagogue. Pateressa can by no means be taken as a certain reading, but the abbreviation PP, which seems to be pater patrum (cf. pater pateron; on these terms see above, p. 71) increases the likelihood that pateressa is the solution of the abbreviation. On the title pateressa, see the discussion of CII 606 above, pp. 61-62. Goodenough does not mention Krauss's suggestions in his discussions of the inscription.

¹⁴⁶Goodenough 2.100.

¹⁴⁷Goodenough 2.90.

¹⁴⁸Sukenik, Synagogues 47.

¹⁴⁹M. Sukk. 5:4; m. Mid. 2:5; etc; Josephus, J.W. 5.5.2 § 199; 5.5.3 § 204. See also Adolf Büchler, "The Forecourt of Women and the Brass Gate in the Temple of Jerusalem," JQR 10 (1898) 678-718.

¹⁵⁰ See, however, Shmuel Safrai, "Was There a Women's Gallery in the Synagogue of Antiquity?" Tarbiz 33 (1963-1964) 329-338, esp. 332 (Hebrew); English summary, p. II, who argues that women sometimes did enter the forecourt of Israel.

¹⁵¹ Cf. m. Mid. 2:5; t. Sukk. 4.1 (Zuck. 198); y. Sukk. 55b.30-38.

¹⁵² M. Mid. 2:5 reads: וחלקה היחה בראשונה והקיפורה כצוצטרה, שהנשים רואות מלמעלה והאנשים מלמטן כדי שלא יהו מעורבלין. "Originally [the walls of the women's forecourt] were smooth, but [later the court] was surrounded with a gallery so that the women should look on from above and the men from below, in order that they should not intermingle."

¹⁵³ On this passage, see Safrai, "Gallery" 331.

¹⁵⁴ See t. Sukk. 4.6 (Zuck. 198); y. Sukk. 55a.62-55b.7; b. Sukk. 51b. Note that the spelling of Diplostoon varies. The building was probably a synagogue, although the description of it is a highly extravagant one (e.g., that it held twice the number of those who left Egypt or 1,200,000). Krauss, Altertümer 261-263, believes that it was a market hall, used also for judicial purposes (on the model of the Roman basilica) and as a prayer hall.

¹⁵⁵ Note that Salomon Buber, Midrash Echa Rabbati (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1967; reprint of the Wilna, 1899 edition) 83, has simply replaced these terms by "men" and "women". A. Cohen's translation ([London: Soncino, 1951] 127, 232), does not make this emendation, but rather translates "inferiors" (i.e., women) and "superiors" (i.e., men). See also the parallel account of the story in the proem to Esth. Rab. (3), which does not include the passage on the women.

¹⁵⁶ Sukenik, Synagogues 48, n. 1.

¹⁵⁷ A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature (New York: Pardes, 1950) 125.

¹⁵⁸ Safrai, "Gallery" 333.

¹⁵⁹ See Safrai, "Gallery" 334.

¹⁶⁰ Or: אַבִּי. Mention should also be made here of the enigmatic term andron, which occurs four times in Josephus (J.W. 2.18.9 § 503; 5.4.4 § 177; Ant. 15.6.7 § 199; 16.6.2 § 164). Only Ant. 16.6.2 § 164 describes what may be a synagogue context, and here the meaning is unclear. Could it be aaron (= Hebrew אַרֹן?)

¹⁶¹ See Asher Ovadiah, Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in the Holy Land (Bonn: Hanstein, 1970).

¹⁶² See Richard Krautheimer, Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1965) 78, pl. 22.

¹⁶³ Krautheimer, Architecture 74; fig. 25.

¹⁶⁴ Krautheimer, Architecture 108; fig. 41.

- 165 Krautheimer, Architecture 153-162; pl. 71.
- 166 Krautheimer, Architecture 138; pls. 60-61.
- 167 Krautheimer, Architecture 64; pls. 15-16.
- 168 Cf., however, the sixth-century rhetor Choricus of Gaza, Laudatio Marciani 2 (ed. Boissonade [Paris: Dumont, 1846] 117); ET: R. W. Hamilton, Palestine Exploration Fund. Quarterly Statement (1930) 190. Choricus describes a church at Gaza with a women's gallery. The Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (dedicated in 537) also apparently had a women's gallery, cf. Procopius of Gaza, Monodia in Sanctam Sophiam (PG 87.2836A). Evagrius Scholasticus, Ecclesiastical History 4.31 (ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier [London: Methuen, 1898] 180), notes that the empress sat there when she attended the church feasts.
- 169 Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus 18 (ET: Burton Scott Easton [Cambridge: The University Press, 1934] 43); Didascalia Apostolorum 2.57 (ET: R. Hugh Connolly [Oxford: Clarendon, 1929] 119-120); Apostolic Constitutions 2.57 (ET: James Donaldson [ANF 7; Buffalo, 1886] 421).
- 170 E.g., Testamentum Domini 1.19, 23; cf. also 1.41, 43; 2.4, 8 (ET: James Cooper and Arthur Maclean [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902] 64, 76, 108, 111, 120, 127). Widows, who are here part of the clergy, sit within the veil and are called "those who sit in front" (Syriac: deqadman yatban, ed. Ignatius Ephraem II Rahmani [Mainz: F. Kirchheim, 1899] 26, etc.). The laity, however, are divided into two aisles according to sex.
- 171 John Chrysostom's Homilia in Matthaeeum 73 (PG 58.677; ET: George Prevost [Cambridge, 1939] 443) is a good example of this. Chrysostom describes a wooden divider separating the sexes and then berates his congregation for making such a thing necessary, saying that the elders had told him that a divider did not exist in former times and referring to Gal 3:28; Acts 1:13-14; 16:15 and to such women as Priscilla (Acts 18:2, 18:26; Rom 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19) and Persis (Rom 16:12) to prove his point that the earliest Christians did not have a separation of the sexes.
- 172 Robert Amy, "Temples à Escaliers," Syria 27 (1950) 82-136; pls. I-II.
- 173 Gesammelte Schriften (vols. 1-5; ed. Immanuel Löw; Szegedin: Alexander Baba, 1889-1900), 4 (1898) 55-71.
- 174 Elbogen 466-468.
- 175 Mittelalterliche Synagogen (Berlin: Frankfurter Verlagsanstalt, 1927) 54.
- 176 "Die Entwicklung der antiken Synagogen und altchristlichen Kirchenbauten im Heiligen Lande," Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 19 (1962) 7-63, esp. 45-46.
- 177 Safrai, "Gallery" 329-338; English summary, p.II. See also the response by S. D. Goitein, Tarbiz 33 (1963-1964) 314. Goitein gives an eleventh-century example. Perhaps this is the earliest example to be found.

Notes to Chapter VII

¹On the following sources, see esp. Shmuel Safrai, Tarbiz 32 (1962-1963) 329-330; English summary p. II; idem, in: Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum (ed. Shmuel Safrai and Menachem Stern; vols. 1- ; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 1,2 (1976) 919-920.

²See Hans Conzelmann, Die Apostelgeschichte, 2d ed. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1972) 99; cf. Ernst Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles. A Commentary, tr. (from the 14th ed.) B. Noble, G. Shinn, H. Anderson and R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) 494.

³See Martin Hengel, "Proseuche und Synagoge. Jüdische Gemeinde, Gotteshaus und Gottesdienst in der Diaspora und in Palästina," in: Festschrift Karl George Kuhn. Tradition und Glaube (ed. Gert Jeremias, Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn and Hartmut Stegemann; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 157-184.

⁴Another text which simply presupposes women's presence is the Midrash ha-Gadol on Deut 29:10. It states, "your wives, even though they do not understand, are to come and listen and receive their reward." A further later text, found in the extra-canonical tractate Soperim 18:6, speaks of the necessity of reading the translation after every passage from the Torah and the prophets on the sabbath, for the benefit of the people, including the women and children. The same passage goes on to say that people come late to the service on feast days because the food has to be prepared. If it is the women who prepare the food, then the coming late must refer at least also to them.

⁵Goodenough 2.100.

⁶Mohler, The Classical Weekly 25:15 (1932) 114.

⁷Mohler, Classical Weekly 115.

⁸On guardianship, see Max Kaser, Das römische Privatrecht (Rechtsgeschichte des Altertums III,3,1; Munich: C. H. Beck, 1971) 367-369; Adolf Berger, Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society n.s. 43, pt. 2; Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1953) 393, 469, 530, 610, 748; see also 577, 621. There is no mention of the tutela mulierum in the Theodosian Code (312-438).

⁹Quoted above, p. 26.

¹⁰See Appendix no. 39 and Lifshitz, Donateurs no. 38 (quoted above, p. 26).

¹¹See Salomon Reinach, "Une nouvelle synagogue grecque à Phocée," REJ 12(1886) 236-243; H(enri) Leclerq, Manuel d'Archéologie chrétienne (2 vols.; Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907), 1.347-349.

¹²For illustrations of the thrones at Delos, 'En-Gedi and Korazim respectively, see Goodenough 3. fig. 876 (drawing); Levine, Synagogues Revealed 116 (photograph; seat can be seen in the northern wall of the synagogue, to the right); EAE 1.302 (photograph) and Goodenough 3. fig. 544.

¹³Reinach, "Synagogue" 240.

¹⁴Tation may also have been non-Jewish, but this is not certain. A hint in that direction would be the way in which the term "Jews" is used in the inscription, almost as if she were not included in that group.

¹⁵On Julia Severa, see A(lf) Thomas Kraabel, Judaism in Western Asia Minor under the Roman Empire, with a Preliminary Study of the Jewish Community at Sardis, Lydia (Th.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1968) 71-80.

¹⁶E.g., Karl G. Kuhn and Hartmut Stegemann, "wohl zumeist als 'Gottesfürchtige'" (PW Sup 9 [1962] 1263).

¹⁷J.W. 5.2.2 § 55; 5.3.3 § 119; 5.4.2 § 147; Ant. 20.2.3-5 §§ 35-53; 20.4.3 §§ 94-95; 20.5.2 § 101; m. Nazir 3:6; etc.

¹⁸In her article, "The Alleged Jewish Tendencies of Poppaea Sabina," JTS n.s. 10 (1959) 329-335, Mary Smallwood has argued that there is no basis for this assumption.

¹⁹PWSup 9 (1962) 1266-1267.

²⁰A(lf) T(homas) Kraabel, "The Disappearance of the 'God Fearers,'" Numen 28 (1981) 113-126.

²¹Ed. Theodor Mommsen, 2nd ed. (2 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1954), 1.888.

²²Tr. Clyde Pharr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952) 467.

²³PG 48.860-861, 881; tr. Paul W. Harkins, Saint John Chrysostom. Discourses against Judaizing Christians (The Fathers of the Church 68; Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1979) 44-45, 92. Jerome also mentions women who were attracted to Judaism (In Matt. 23.5 [PL 26.175]).

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Compiled by Christina Bucher

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