"Christian ideology and the image of a holy land:
the place of Jerusalem pilgrimage in the various Christianities"[1]

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The great majority of the world's holy cities and sacred shrines attract pilgrims from culturally circumscribed catchment areas, and thus host pilgrims united by strong degrees of cultural homogeneity. Jerusalem, on the other hand, draws pilgrims from a vast multitude of nations and cultural traditions. During religious festivals - which tend to be imbricated because of the antagonistic engagement of Judaism, Christianity and Islam - Jerusalem's streets swarm with men and women displaying a rainbow of secular and religious costumes, speaking a cacophony of languages, and pursuing a plethora of divine figures. Other sacred centres which attract pilgrims from areas as heterogeneous as those which provide Jerusalem's pilgrims - eminent among these Mecca (which nonetheless services only the sects of a single religion) - funnel their devotees through ritual routines which mask differences beneath identical repertoires of movement and utterance[2]. Jerusalem's pilgrims, on the other hand, go to different places at different times where they engage in very different forms of worship. The result is a continuous crossing and diverging - often marked by clashes - of bodies, voices and religious artifacts. Jerusalem does not, in fact, appear so much as **a** holy city as as a **multitude** of holy cities - as many as are the religious communities which worship at the site - built over the same spot, operating at the same moment, and contending for hegemony.

This synchronicity of Jewish, Muslim and Christian holy cities suggests that what makes the city holy to the various groups which 'go up' to Jerusalem is not something found in the city but, instead, something brought there from outside and there matched up with monuments to and markers of sacrality. The various Jerusalems function as signs in the diverse discourses on religion, power, and identity of the visiting groups, and, just as those discourses are created by the pilgrims' home cultures, so too do these signs render meaning from, and direct it back towards, the cultures which mobilize them. Each Jerusalem

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[2] See Ruthven 1984: 35-37 and 42-47 on the choreography of the Meccan pilgrimage and on its production of homogeneity.

experienced by each group rises less from the walls and streets of the literal city than from images of the holy city and its environs imbibed in distant places while the pilgrims-to-be listened to stories and songs, engaged in religious ceremonies, observed sacred and secular art works, and read pilgrims' tales and travellers' narratives. The holy city is, in other words, a place where pilgrims who have inherited or developed certain images of a 'Jerusalem' during enculturation elsewhere can 'embody' those images and engage them as aspects of the material world.

The study which follows will examine processes of, and problems with, reifying the imaginary as these processes and problems relate to the construction of holy sites, the organization of rituals, and the interaction of groups with different imaginings of Jerusalem. It will concentrate on Christian pilgrimage, as this was the subject of my fieldwork in Jerusalem and the so-called 'Holy Land' between 1983 and 1985 and during shorter visits in 1987 and 1988. Such a circumscription of my topic - a topic which ideally should as well embrace Islamic and Judaic Jerusalem pilgrimage - will serve to amplify, rather than mute, my assertion about the problems of rooting a rich diversity of meanings in a single terrain, as it will expose the number of diverse and mutually contradictory ways persons nominally united within a **single** religious tradition approach a place they not only share with each other but also with the devotees of two other world religions.

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To understand the sources of discord between the several Christian experiences of Jerusalem and the Holy Land we must first comprehend the 'textuality' of Christian imaginings of the places. The 'textualizing' of the Holy Land was an integral part of the process by which Christianity was transformed from a dissident sect within Palestinian Judaism to a universal religion embraced by peoples throughout the world. In the 4th century A.D. Christianity, under the patronage of Constantine and his imperial successors, became the dominant religion of the Roman empire. The Bible, both New and Old Testaments, was mobilized by the ideologues of Empire to legitimate the imposition of religious homogeneity on the vast dominions of the Empire (see Kee 1982 and MacMullen 1984). If the members of the gentile populations of those domains were to be drawn into the ranks of what would, by 381 A.D., be declared as the Roman state religion, the core mythologies of Christianity would have to be rendered comprehensible, coherent and attractive to them. The Bible was

consequently interpreted, translated, allegorized, and purged of 'heresy' so as to relate it to both the life experiences of its audiences and the intentions of its promulgators. Thus, the history of the Israelites and the records of messages spoken to that people by its reformers and prophets were torn from context and rewritten to serve as spiritual and practical directives for peoples of very different cultural experiences. Biblical exegesis, and the knowledge it promoted, uprooted Israelite history from Palestine and relocated it within the domains of Christian communities far from the lands out of which it had arisen.[3]

Nonetheless, the biblical text referred by name to the places, people and events of Israelite history. These fragments - literally nominal - of Palestine and its past were invoked constantly in sermons, liturgies, and the figurative and narrative arts as well as in everyday speech. Dramas of salvation, enacted in liturgy and in individuals' imaginations, were staged in settings marked with the toponymy of distant Palestine and peopled by characters carrying biblical names. The imagined 'land' of Palestine - a place shaped in the forms of the cultures that revered it - was deeply inscribed with the verbal traces of an distant and real domain.

The central role played for Christians by the events recounted in the Bible gave to the places where those events occurred, however those places might be imagined, a numinosity which elevated them far above the places in which Christians lived out their quotidian lives. The fact that Christians envisioned the granting of the divine promise of salvation and eternal life in Palestinian settings meant that the 'holy places' were imagined as redolent with that promise (Photius, in his Amphilochia - the narrative of an extended Holy Land pilgrimage which took place between 870 and 877 A.D. - describes the Holy Sepulchre as "the source of our immortality" [Wilkinson 1977: 146]). The names of the holy places and the promise which seemed to be embodied within them were kept in constant circulation by ritual, prayer, reflection and conversation. It does not seem surprising that people, endowing these places with such significance and knowing that they existed within the conceivable, though arduous, reach of travellers, would go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Burchard of Mt. Sion wrote in the 13th century that one should struggle to reach the Holy Land, "for what hour is there of the day or night all the year round wherein every devout Christian doth not by singing, reading, chanting, preaching and meditating, read what hath been done or written in this land

[3] "The biblical narratives...were transferred in every detail to a contemporary setting and were thereby divested of their historical character in favour of a naturalistic, perceptual representation" (Dvorak 1967: 107. see also Auerbach 1961: 15-18).

and in its cities and holy places?" (Burchard of Mt. Sion 1895-1896: 4).

Despite pilgrims' visits to the literal land the textuality of early Christianity's Palestine was overwhelming. Descriptions of contemporary Palestine by travellers who'd actually visited there were restricted by the narrators to recountings of only what lies within the borders of the biblical text. Two early and influential presentations of the Holy Land -- Eusebius's Onomastikon and the anonymous Itinerarium Burdigalense -- provide salient examples of the subordination of place to text. Eusebius was a long time resident of Caesarea in Palestine and was, according to Wilkinson, "a man whose enthusiasm for the country knew no bounds" (Wilkinson 1971: 12). Nonetheless, when he came to record for posterity the biblical sites he'd seen, he broke them away from their settings in a contemporary landscape and reset them within a configuration determined by the order of the occurrence within the Greek alphabet of the first letters of their names -- themselves translated from the indigenous Aramaic into Greek. Within this rubric the place names were then arranged and annotated -- without geographical detail -- according to the order in which they were mentioned within the Bible (see Wolf 1964).

The earliest extant pilgrim text, that of the anonymous Bordeaux Pilgrim, arranges the sites mentioned in the order of the pilgrim's coming upon them, but the narrative, instead of describing the places themselves, presents a string of appropriate biblical citations. Even the long and arduous road from southern Gaul to Palestine provides only another way back into the biblical text from which it had arisen.

The land of Palestine did not stand outside the biblical text as a fixed reference point, and therefore it could not serve to stabilize and standardize readings of that literary corpus. With the fifth century the processes leading to the fragmentation of the Roman Empire became irreversible, and new social formations were established which would develop differentially throughout its former domains and, later, through cultural areas influenced by those new formations (Herrin 1987). As these arose the Bible and the traditions accreted around it were reinterpreted and remobilized to answer to the needs thrown up by those transforming social forms and the ideologies they generated. Varieties of Christianity developed, and with these arose new readings - and new versions - of the Bible. These new texts generated, in turn, new Jerusalems.

The holy city has developed - in the imaginings of Christian collectivities and, on the

ground, through enactments of those imaginings - as a supplement to a text. As that text has mutated and proliferated, so too, from the fifth century to the present day, have Christian visions of Jerusalem grown increasingly more diverse and divisive. Pilgrims, motivated by their different visions of the city, have gathered in Jerusalem through the centuries to celebrate and enact their understandings of its significance, and have there found themselves having to contend, ofttimes violently, with other Christians celebrating and enacting other visions.

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The fact that Jerusalem, as an actual city, and Jerusalem, as a textual construct, were two separate places means that it is important, for understanding how the two loci interact when pilgrims' travels bring them together, to see how the literal city is 'written over' by the literary topoi. In this section I will examine the simultaneous developments of the city in the Judean mountains and the city in the imaginations of early Christians in order to show how the former was made incapable of resisting the imposition of the latter.

W. D. Davies (1972, 1974) comprehensively sets forth the complex of often contradictory meanings of Jerusalem within Judaism prior to the final Roman destruction of the city in A.D. 135. He further examines the ways ideologues of the breakaway Judaic sect which was to become Christianity interpreted the city and its land in light of these contradictions[4]. Christianity, as it spread beyond the confines of Palestine and began to find following throughout the entire Mediterranean basin, interpreted the message of its founder as calling for faith's departure from the confines of Temple and Land and its repatriation in the spiritual 'nation' of Christian communities scattered throughout the Roman world. Thus in Mark and Matthew "all geographic bounds become insignificant; the Gospel is for all nations" (Davies 1974: 241) while in John Christ's departure from the Temple (8:59) represents God's abandonment of Jerusalem and announces that henceforth "the person of Jesus becomes 'the place' which replaces all places" (Ibid: 318). The separation of Christianity from the land was literal as well as symbolic: Christianity between the first and fourth centuries developed in large part in isolation from what would later become its Holy Land because of the hostility manifested within Judaic Palestine towards Christianity's radical revisionism.

4 See Ernst Bloch 1970 on the political context of Christ's world rejection.

This exile was enabling rather than alienating. Until the close of New Testament period the Church, in the appropriative manner of all radical reformation movements, claimed to be Israel (Frend 1984: 121). Israel's calendar and kingdom were replaced with a millenarian chronology and an apocalyptic locality. For Christians Jerusalem existed where Jesus was and would be found through Jesus. Throughout the reaches of the successful missionary movement they engaged in 'love feasts' which spiritually reunited them with Jesus who had 'gone before' into the capital of the Promised Land, the 'New Jerusalem'. Although they would not have been able to locate it on a map, early Christians thought of this millenarian domain as a literal land to be ruled by its God-king from Jerusalem after the destruction of those peoples and nations which had rejected his message.

As time elapsed, and the millenarian promise proved long in coming, Christians began to develop the sustaining structures which would allow their communities to survive while awaiting the Second Coming. Many of these strategies were radically anti-state and anti-world, and the history of Early Christianity was strongly influenced by Gnostic and monastic movements founded on austere principles of world rejection (see Frend 1984 and Ward 1981). These prophesized the eventual assumption of the saved into a heavenly Jerusalem which was the true domain of the Christ as King, and this Jerusalem, whether it would finally descend to earth or would simply await its citizens' in-gathering after their deaths, had nothing to do with the city, renamed by the Roman occupiers Aelia Capitolina, which still sat on the crest of the Judean Mountains. When a group of Egyptian monks were dragged before Governor Firmilianus at Caesarea in 306 and interrogated about their origins they answered that they came "from Jerusalem". The fact that these men, facing martyrdom, spoke not of Palestinian Jerusalem but of the heavenly Jerusalem to which judicial murder would return them seems less to signal the eclipse of the earthly Jerusalem in the Christian imagination than does Firmilianus' response. He, who would have been thoroughly briefed on Christianity in preparation for carrying out Diocletian's call for its complete extirpation, had never heard of the city the monks claimed to have come from, yet believed it to be on the Roman maps, most likely in distant Persia (Eusebius 1927-28: xi: 9-10). It seems unlikely that a governor of Roman Palestine based in Caesarea, sixty Roman miles from the city which had, until 165 years before, been called Jerusalem, would have offered such a response had the city continued at the turn of the 4th century to signify anything to Christians.

Other strategies of survival were articulated during this period, and in the long run it was these, founded on the idea of life in this world as preparation for eternal life in the next, which were to build prospering Christian communities over the ruins of the rejectionist movements. A number of elements were at play in the creation of this alternative Christianity, among them the gradual establishment of an orthodox, written canon, the development of linked hierarchical structures of orthodoxy-enforcing authority, and the recognition that Christianity, if it were to survive while awaiting its unduly belated redeemer, would have to allow its communities a degree of economic and social collaboration with the surrounding world. There is not room here to trace the complexities of this conjuncture, although fine synthetic studies are available (see Frend 1984, Gager 1975, MacMullen 1984, and Meeks 1983). Its results, however, were of vast importance for both the survival, and eventual hegemony, of Christianity and the development of Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

By the late third and early fourth centuries the large part of Christianity was made up of communities of men and women, well-articulated in terms of occupation and status into mainstream society, who nonetheless met with each other - in secrecy when necessary - for liturgical celebrations of their unity in Jesus and their eventual entry into his heavenly kingdom. Whereas in the past such celebrations had been freeform, charismatic and chiliastic, the liturgies of these later Christians were more structured and more worldly, with lay celebrants being pushed more and more into the role of passive observers of clerical routines:

> The eschatological emphasis in the eucharist inevitably faded. It ceased to be regarded primarily as a rite which manifested and secured the eternal consequences of redemption, a rite which by manifesting their true being as eternally 'redeemed' momentarily transported those who took part in it beyond the alien and hostile world of time into the Kingdom of God and the World to come. Instead, the eucharist came to be thought of primarily as the representation, the enactment before God, of the historical process of redemption, of the historical events of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus by which redemption had been achieved (Dix 1945: l61).

This shift from an ecstatic participation in a future state of millenarian redemption to a contemplative observation of the historical processes which brought about the possibility of that redemption had, of course, significant effects on the way Christianity viewed the Holy

Land.

Directly relevant to Christian views of Jerusalem and the Holy Land was the growing interest in the historical life of Jesus; suddenly areas of Palestine which had played significant roles in the life and mission of Jesus were important for the clues they could provide as to how that life had been lived. Earlier figures, like Melito of Sardis (A.D. 190), Alexander of Cappadocia (A.D. 213) and Origen (A.D. 230), had visited the Holy Land, and though Origen may have played a part in passing textual information from the Jewish Hexapla to Eusebius for inclusion in the Onomastikon (Wolf 1964: 88-89), we know nothing of their visits but that they made them. However, as the fourth century ushered in a new age for Christianity Eusebius of Caesarea and others established in Palestine the scholarly apparatus for extensive research into the life of Jesus. Although the audience of such endeavour was likely restricted to the most learned levels of the church hierarchy, there was a simultaneous development of popular interest in the historical figure of Jesus as a God who had lived in time and place as a man. These two developments -- of specific knowledge related to the life of Christ in Jerusalem and the Land and of popular and sacramental concern with that life as a model of and for redemption -- would, when brought together, transform the Holy Land into a sort of Disneyworld of the sacred where popular imaginings could be given substance by being celebrated over the sites where those images were engendered.

These elements would be brought together and would give rise to a strong and long-lasting tradition of Christian pilgrimage through the intervention of a pagan emperor. Constantine, seeing that Christianity had the power to forge peoples of diverse backgrounds and social positions into a quiescent, morally upright and infinitely extendable community, inserted himself into the Christian hierarchy with the help of Christian apologists like the ubiquitous Eusebius. Constantine's 'conversion' to Christianity, in which he saw his relation to the Christian God (Jehovah rather than Jesus) more as that of a consort in the pagan imperial tradition than as the humble servant of the Christian tradition, is most clearly seen as a 'hijacking' of Christianity (Kee 1982). Yet, whatever his motives, Constantine's conversion led to massive changes in the wealth, influence and popularity of Christianity throughout the Empire and, in the Holy Land, engendered an intensive programme of building shrines and basilicas around the holy sites[5]. This programme of monumentalization, meant to glorify the

[5] "The chief Christian loca sancta were discovered or recovered or localized, initially on imperial enterprise. Furthermore and at imperial expense they were enshrined in suitable sanctuaries,

donor as much as the celebrated subject, changed Jerusalem from a dusty outpost in the imperial outback, dense with shrines to pagan divinities and denuded of population, to a bright and busy testimony to the prestige of a religion recently risen out of the pits of persecutions and soon to ascend into the heights of proclamation as the official religion of Empire. With state-financed glorification Constantine's New Jerusalem became not only a focus of Christian attention but also the goal of a new class of wealthy and prestigious travellers, mostly converted to Christianity after the Emperor's adoption of the religion made such conversion legitimate and fashionable. These pilgrims/ tourists made their ways - frequently paved by state subsidies - to the Holy Land where they celebrated both the life of their newly adopted saviour and the majesty of the emperor who had brought him, and the sites he made holy, out of infamy's obscurity and into glory[6].

This form of pilgrimage - the sort of high-class tourism engaged in by persons like Constantine's mother Helena - was not what would serve later centuries as a model for pilgrimage. It was instead the travels of Egeria, a nun either of Aquitane or of Galicia, that Valerius, a 7th century monk, cited when he wrote an edifying letter to his fellow monks praising Egeria because "she sought healing for her own soul [and] she gave to us an example of following God which is marvellously profitable for many" (Wilkinson 1971: 177). Valerius points out that Egeria's purpose in "fearlessly set[ting] out on an immense journey to the other side of the world...was to pray and to find edification; for the more she had advanced in holy doctrine, the more insatiably her holy longing burned in her heart" (Ibid: 174-75). An examination of Egeria's motives and a perusal of her accounts of her approaches to the holy places will demonstrate the nature of the construct that was the holy land in these early days of pilgrimage and which would influence the development of pilgrimage for centuries to come.

Valerius claims that Egeria, through her constant study of and engagement in 'holy doctrine', had before leaving home already developed a burning desire to 'pray and find edification' at the literal places referred to in liturgy and scripture. In preparation for her

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centralized chapels and even sizeable basilicas....The structural memorialization of sacred sites, recorded in such detail by Eusebius (Life of Constantine III: 25-43 and 51-53) gave powerful impetus to the Christian practice of pilgrimage" (Willoughby 1955: 61).

[6] See Hunt 1982 and Casson 1974 on tourists and pilgrims. The interpellation of Constantine's glory into that of the Christian messiah is evident in Bishop Eusebius' recounting, in his official biography of the emperor, of Constantine's construction of the Church of the Resurrection (Eusebius 1890 and Drake 1976).

journey "she perused all the books of the Old and New Testaments, and discovered all its descriptions of the holy wonders of the world; and its regions, provinces, cities, mountains and deserts" (Ibid: 175)[7]. Egeria's activities at the holy places she visits - and her travels were biblically comprehensive (see Ibid: 27-30) - suggests that the places only existed for her as reiterations of the texts she had read. A passage from her visit to a mountain neighbouring Mount Sinai illustrates the way she constantly 'rivets' landscape to the biblical text which brings its fragments to her attention:

> We passed on to another mountain next to it which from the church there is called 'On Horeb'. This is the Horeb to which the holy Prophet Elijah fled from the presence of King Ahab, and it was there that God spoke to him with the words, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?', as is written in the Books of the Kingdoms [I Kings 19.9]. The cave where Elijah hid can be seen there to this day in front of the church door, and we were shown the stone altar which holy Elijah set up for offering sacrifice to god. Thus the holy men were kind enough to show us everything, and there too we made the offering, and prayed very earnestly, and the passage was read from the Book of Kingdoms. Indeed, whenever we arrived, I always wanted the Bible passage to be read to us" (Wilkinson 1971: 95).

Egeria's practice of approaching a place, saying a prayer, having the biblical text read so as to 'locate' the place properly, observing the sites and objects referred to in that passage, singing a hymn, closing with another prayer and passing on was followed throughout her voyage through and around the holy land; Spitzer characterizes the practice very nicely in saying "the eye of the pilgrim wanders incessantly from the Biblical locus [i.e. passage] to the locus [locality] in Palestine" (Spitzer 1949: 239]. When she visits Jerusalem to participate in its extended Holy Week liturgy she does so in order better to understand how well the Christian liturgy, in Jerusalem as well as on the distant Western fringes of Europe, re-presents the life and times of Christ:

> [On Palm Sunday] everyone is carrying branches, either palm or olive, and

[7] Egeria's literary pre-construction of a literal journey is the rule rather than its exception. Felix Fabri, in the 14th century, prepared his journey to the Holy Land in the following way: "I read with care everything on this subject which came into my hands; moreover I collected all the stories of the pilgrimage of the crusaders, the tracts written by pilgrims and descriptions of the Holy Land, and read them with care" (Fabri [I] 1893: 50).

> they accompany the bishop in the very way the people did when once they went down with the Lord....What I admire and value most is that all the hymns and antiphons and readings they have, and all the prayers the bishop says, are always relevant to the day which is being observed and to the place in which they are used. They never fail to be appropriate" (Wilkinson 1971: 146).

Whether Egeria visits holy sites or observes the holy liturgy in situ she is engaged in a tautological process which creates a Jerusalem and a holy land with little if any regard for the actual place out of which the textual construct arose. Her visits to sites are choreographed by texts which tell her what to observe, and her eye does not wander outside of the textual domain either to take in extraneous peoples or unsanctified landscapes: "Since the significance of the places seen by Aetheria, the id est as it were, is alone important, we cannot expect to find nature described for its own sake; formation of terrain interests her only insofar as it can be illuminated by the Scriptures" (Spitzer 1949: 244)[8]. When she observes the rigorous reenactment of the last days of Jesus by the population of an entire city she applauds the verisimilitude of the ceremonies because it effaces the difference between what she knows is the

[8] As Egeria's description of contemporary Jerusalemites enacting the passion of Christ shows, the traveller is willing to present extra-biblical persons and places as long as their activities or presences are somehow implicated in the work of revelation. Her visit to the palace of King Abgar in Edessa is not only a visit to a site not recounted in the Bible but also includes an apparently naturalistic description of the palace's pools and the fish within them: "I have never seen fish like them, they were so big, so brightly coloured, and tasted so good" (Wilkinson 1971: 116). However, as the rest of the visit is narrated, the logic of inclusion is made clear. King Abgar was a king of an early Christian legend (which Wilkinson claims arose around 250 A.D.) who believed in Jesus before he'd ever seen him, wrote a letter to Christ attesting that belief, and was rewarded with a miraculous letter which protected Abgar and his people during an extended Persian siege. During the siege, the people of Edessa were prevented from dying of thirst when a miraculous eruption of a sweet water spring out of dry ground was brought about by the processing of the letter from Jesus around the city. The fish Egeria describes live in its water, and the palace - that of the man who believed in Christ -was built around the pools Christ's miracle brought about (Ibid: 115-117). Pilgrims often appear to supplement the biblical texts with stories of sites and objects discovered in the Holy Land. These monuments - which appear to engender that which they commemorate - are not, however, extratextual: the equation of the Holy Land with the world of the biblical text enables interpreters of that land to bridge the gap between the world which is seen and the world of the text with stories of objects and events which render them continuous. The three crosses are discovered by St. Helena, Constantine's mother, and their discovery gives rise to a major chapel within the Anastasis (Wilkinson 1977: 175), the tomb of Moses is discovered because of angelic intervention and a memorial is built on the site (Ibid: 57), and, in Nazareth, "the book in which the Lord wrote his ABC" is shown to visiting pilgrims (Ibid: 79). All these supplements to the text are already implicit within the text itself, and it merely calls for a monastic order looking to legitimate the site of its monastery (see Wilkinson 1971: 18) or an impoverished village or church looking to draw pilgrims into its purview for such embellishments to be sketched in on the land. Protestant biblical archaeology of the 19th and 20th centuries claimed to locate on the ground the unarticulated horizons, both cultural and physical, within which the biblical text had been articulated (see Silberman 1982, Bliss 1906 and Shepherd 1987).

significance of the place and the time and the place and time itself. The city is visible only insofar as it makes itself transparent to that of the biblical text.

One might, in investigating the narratives of Egeria and other early pilgrims, question whether the interests of indigenous persons were served by the inscription on their land and their lives of the imagery of foreigners. However, Josephus's description of Titus' destruction of the city in A.D. 70 and Eusebius' narrative of Jerusalem's depopulation, colonization and reconstruction in A.D. 135 suggest that the local population was itself anything but indigenous. Hence Josephus,

> Caesar gave orders that they should demolish the entire city and temple: but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency...and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison: as were the towers also spared in order to denominate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valour had subdued. But for all the rest of the wall, it was so completely levelled with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation that there was left nothing to make those who came thither believe it had ever been inhabited (Josephus n.d.: 425 [VII, i, 1-2]),

and Eusebius, "The city was...interdicted to the Jewish race and suffered the total destruction of its former inhabitants [:] it was colonized by an alien race...(Eusebius 1965: IV, 6)." There was, after the Roman depredations of the first century A.D., little continuity either of buildings or of peoples on which to ground indigenous reconstructions and interpretations. In the subsequent centuries it was foreigners, first pagan and then Christian, who came to the city and rebuilt it in accordance with their own images. Even sites which may have had historical continuity, like that of Golgotha, were monumentalized according to models which had little other than locale to do with Palestine and its history and everything to do with the strategies of those uncovering and reconstructing them. Constantine was so interested in having his Church of the Resurrection serve as a monument to his extirpation of pagan error that he went to extremes in preparing the site to insure that nothing was left of what had previously stood there to signal the significance of a different order of interpretation:

> He could not consent to see the sacred spot...thus buried, through the devices of his adversaries, under every kind of impurity and abandoned to forgetfulness and

> neglect....As soon, then, as his commands were issued, these engines of deceit were cast down from their proud eminence to the very ground, and the dwelling places of error, with the statues and the evil spirits which they represented, were overthrown and utterly destroyed....He gave further orders that the materials of what was thus destroyed, both stone and timber, should be removed and thrown as far from the spot as possible....[F]ired with holy ardor, he directed that the ground itself should be dug up to a considerable depth, and the soil which had been polluted by the foul impurities of demon worship transported to a far distant place" (Eusebius 1890: 525-526)[9].

Other sites visited by Egeria were the constructions of monks and nuns - either wealthy Roman citizens in retreat from the crumbling affluence of empire or dissident Egyptian peasants pulling away from the reach of the state - who came in from elsewhere, settled a community and interpreted their surroundings in terms of the Bible that community celebrated: "this strangely shaped rock, that ruin, this lonely bush, that spring were drawn into the service of their interpretation of the place where they spent their life" (Wilkinson 1971: 18, see also Hunt 1982 and Chitty 1966).

Egeria did not make up a holy land; she inherited one. There were guides for the itineraries she travelled and monuments over the sites she revered. The discourse that had charted the routes and celebrated the sites was not, however, indigenous. It was as much an import to Jerusalem and Palestine as were the religious officiants, the magnificent structures, the masses of devotees thronging round the biblical depictions, and Egeria herself. Egeria's devotions were enactments of a model of devotion which had been developed in the early centuries of diasporic Christianity. What she did in the holy places was what Christians did in their celebrations throughout the Roman Empire; she meditated on a passage, enacted, where

[9]. St. Jerome, in On Zephania I, 15-16, suggests that in a similar manner the Christian maintenance of Hadrian's banning of the indigenous Jewish population serves to allow the previous hegemonic cultural system to speak only of its utter defeat by the new order. Jerome speaks of the 'wailing' of the Jews on the one day of the year they are allowed into Jerusalem - the anniversary of the day in A.D. 70 when the Roman army destroyed the Temple: "You can see with your own eyes on the day that Jerusalem was captured and destroyed by the Romans, a piteous crowd that comes together, woebegone women and old men weighed down with rags and years, all of them showing forth in their clothes and their bodies the wrath of god. That mob of wretches congregates, and while the manger of the Lord sparkles, the Church of His Resurrection glows, and the banner of His Cross shines forth from the Mount of Olives, those miserable people groan over the ruins of their Temple...." (quoted in Peters 1985: 145). It is not surprising that, as Antiochus Strategos relates in his eyewitness account of the Persian invasion of Jerusalem in A.D. 614, the Jews dismantled and burned all the Christian churches left standing after Christian sovereignty was overthrown (Conybeare 1910).

appropriate, an imitation of the salvation process set forth in that passage, and enveloped the whole with a dedication, through prayer, to God. She was able, because of the establishment of an infrastructure of roads and hospices by an opportunist emperor, to perform the liturgies in places which appeared to give that much more verisimilitude to their representations by placing them in situ. Nonetheless, neither she nor the persons who built up and occupied the holy places were interested in fourth century Palestine as a place in itself; Jerusalem and the Holy Land were, and would remain, places out of time and space. They referred to, and bodied forth, events and locales grounded in the pages of a text and not on the stony soil of the land.

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Egeria's subordination of the land through which she travels to the biblical text and to liturgies commemorating that text is not something particular to herself but is a practice fundamental to Christianity as a diasporic religion grounded on a textual tradition. The adoption of the Judaic Old Testament by Christianity substantially transformed the field of reference of that text. For Jews the Old Testament is typically read as a chronicle of God's intervention in their national history which includes within it numerous divine promises of the nation's future this-worldly realization of a God- granted destiny. Diasporic Christianity, in separating that text from the history of the Jewish nation and supplementing it with chronicles of and prophecies related to the life of Jesus, transformed "that mixture of folklore, ethical exhortation and nationalist political propaganda" (Kamenka 1973: 4) into a referential system which, no longer bound to a particular people and a particular historical movement, could be assimilated into other discourses and other historical movements. The Bible, while retaining its status as a record of God's actions in and statements to the world, became the 'charter myth' of numerous groups and institutions which mobilized its stories and its prophecies to suit strategies and contexts not only radically different from those of the Palestinian Jews but also, in time, disparate from those of other groups which legitimated their activities and their world views in biblical terms. The Bible may have been the central text on which Christians based their identities and in terms of which they legitimated their activities, but Christians from different cultural milieus constructed in the midst of different historical processes would, while nominally celebrating the same record of God and the world, be in fact reading their lives and their surroundings in terms of very different myths.

The centrality of that text meant that it was the reference point by which religious Christians judged the world through which they moved, but the proliferation of meanings accreted around it as it variously developed through the historical spread of the Christian faith meant that the worlds constituted in its terms were very different - even when, as in the case of the goal of Holy Land pilgrimages, those worlds were nominally the same.

This is not, however, to say that the Bible is, in Barthes' terms, a completely 'writerly' text (Barthes 1975); Christianity, as it developed, evolved a substantial, and authoritarian, institutional framework which strove to restrain 'semantic drift', establish doctrine, and extirpate heterodoxy. Nonetheless, the spread of the Christian faith through numerous cultures and environments and the necessity for that faith - if it were to remain convincing - to give meaning to the lives of individuals within those different settings means that there has always been a strong centrifugal impulse operating within the religion[10]. As long as that drive towards difference is constrained within a single institutional framework it generates relatively insignificant variations in regional practices, but when the framework itself disintegrates - as it has numerous times throughout the past two millenia (see Frend 1984 and Herrin 1987 for recent histories of divisions within early Christianity) - new institutions develop to maintain difference and foster further variation. I would like, before passing on to a consideration of how various Western Christianities[11] enact their versions of Christianity in the Holy Land, to discuss briefly the substantial differences between the epistemologies and soteriologies of three major strains of the religion: Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Protestantism.

All three branches of Christianity inherited from their Judaic forebears an interpretation of the world which posed a dialectical relationship between the unfavourable state of the sphere in which people live and a redeemed domain, at present unattainable, into which people will, through the grace of God, eventually enter. In Judaic terms this 'other-world' is to be realized in history and will offer the 'nation of Israel' redemption from its history of misfortune and oppression. Early Christianity, by defining inclusion within the Church as a

[10] An impulse evident, of course, within all religions which accommodate diverse ways of life and different historical experiences within them. This is not only evident within diasporic Judaism but also within the history of Judaism within Israel and Palestine where class differences as well as regional differences have, in the past as well as the present, led to very different readings of the significance of the sacred texts.

[11] I will not, in this paper, consider the so-called Eastern branches of Christianity (the Assyrians or the Armenian, Syrian, Coptic and Ethiopian Orthodox communities) which, while active in promoting pilgrimage to the holy places, are not well represented among Western pilgrims.

matter of election rather than of membership within a territorial or kinship group, radically transformed the Judaic relationship between the land, the people, and history. Christianity asserted that salvation was attainable only through the forging of a personal bond with God and thus moved the emphasis of the salvatory process from a collectivity defined in terms of blood and national identity to the individual. This, according to Dumont (1982), following Troeltsch (1922), elevates the individual's personal relation to God to a supreme value while simultaneously devaluing his or her involvement with the secular world and its institutions:

> the individual soul receives eternal value from its filial relationship to God, in which relationship is also grounded human fellowship: Christians meet in Christ, whose members they are. This tremendous affirmation takes place on a level that transcends the world of man and of social institutions, although these are also from God. The infinite worth of the individual is at the same time the disparagement, the negation in terms of value, of the world as it is: a dualism is posited, a tension is established that is constitutive of Christianity and will endure throughout history (Dumont 1982: 6).

Despite this radical shifting of emphasis away from the nation in history towards the individual in eternity, Christianity, in all subsequent incarnations, maintained the concept of a collective organisation into which believers entered through baptism and which, like Noah's Ark, would serve to carry those given God's grace out of danger and into redemption. This institution, which through the second and third centuries A.D. became increasingly hierarchicized and authoritarian, was the Church which defined itself as the 'New Israel'.

Within the parameters of the inherited biblical tradition there was considerable room for diversity, and the historical development of Christianity played numerous variations on the themes of the redeemed world, the individual desirous of entry into it, and the nature of the Church which would offer access. Christianity, as Gibbon (Gibbon 1907) and his many successors have pointed out, became the religion of an imperial system well on its way to fragmentation. Whether or not Gibbon is correct in his assertion that Christianity actually contributed to the decline and fall of the Roman Empire cannot here concern us, but it is significant that as Constantine adopted Christianity as his personal religion and extended to it the support that would assist it in its rise to hegemony he was in the process of shifting the capital of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople. That transfer acknowledged that the

centre of the Empire, as a socio-economic entity, had effectively already been displaced from the West to the East, and that the West, threatened by barbarian invasion and political anarchy, was no longer as governable nor as economically viable as the Eastern sectors of the Empire (see Anderson 1974). Christianity was widespread and influential throughout both sectors of the Empire, but the different conditions under which it evolved in the two domains resulted in very different articulations of the nature of mankind, the world, and the possibilities of salvation.

The fundamental dualism between this world and a redeemed world in Christian epistemology allows the possibility, developed fully in Eastern Christianity, that the state can be left to deal with issues pertaining to the fallen world while the Church concerns itself with matters related to humanity's escape from this world and into the next. People can 'render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's' so long as Caesar is willing to allow them to 'render unto God that which is God's'. In the Byzantine East, where a Christian Emperor granted the Christian Church full spiritual authority while dealing efficiently with secular matters, this division of labour could be maintained. In the West, on the contrary, the state was not able to maintain the order that the Church needed if it were to deal with people's spiritual needs. The collapse of urban infrastructures, the threat of barbarian invasions, and the frequency and violence of peasant revolts such as those of the Bacaudae and Circumcelliones led the western Church, in the fourth and fifth centuries, to in effect take over the functions of the faltering state (Herrin 1987: 72-73, and Anderson 1974: 136-137).

The Latin Church developed its political programme and its theology in this situation, surrounded by ample evidence that the existing state apparatus could not only not defend its citizens but was actually, through exploitation, indifference and expropriation, inflicting degradation and destruction upon them. Western theology, as articulated by Ambrose and Augustine amongst others, argued that it was the Church's duty to ensure that divine grace, provided through the agency of the Church, would be available to people in the world. The Church was, therefore, responsible for imposing an order on the temporal world which would allow people access to that grace. The medieval theory of kingship, which Herrin sees as having been prepared in the late classical West, was based not on the concept of rendering unto Caesar what was Caesar's but on the idea that the church would work politically and theologically to impel Caesar to use his goods and his powers to expand and maintain

Catholic hegemony. Central to this Western development was what Dumont calls "the papal assumption of a political function... [whereby] the spiritual is conceived as superior to the temporal **on the temporal level itself**, as if it was a superior degree of the temporal" (Dumont 1982: 16-17, emphasis original, and see Ullman 1970: 291). This shift of emphasis, whereby instead of seeing the temporal world as something to transcend through religious devotion, Latin Christians 'consecrate' the political realm by forcing it to "participate in absolute, universalist values" (Ibid; 17), makes for substantial differences between Orthodox and Latin interpretations of the 'proper' life of a person in the world and the appropriate role of the sacra in that life.

Lay Orthodox Christians see life as divided into two stages: a period stretching from childhood until the moment one's children are married off during which the establishment, raising and supporting of a family deeply involves one in the social world, and another, subsequent phase, during which one sheds social and familial responsibilities and, in preparation for ascension after death into Paradise, turns attention to sacred things (Hirshchon 1989: 225-232). One's behavior during the earlier, material, phase of life does not, except when one breaks communion with God, determine whether or not one will, after death, ascend to Paradise; lay Orthodox theology assumes that the sins of the world are the results of living in a fallen world and that sinners will be punished in that world rather than in an afterlife (Campbell 1964: 323-326). The separation of the fallen and the redeemed worlds, which is a consequence of Adam and Eve's sin of devotion to the world rather than to its creator, is in large part complete, with only the bridges of the sacra - those things, like icons or liturgies, which co-exist in both worlds - to bring them into contact. What is important in Orthodox theology is that the Christian, as he or she approaches the moment when death will provide escape from this world, establishes full communion with God and throws off involvement with the illusion of a world that seems to exist apart from its creator[12]. As Campbell was told by the Sarakatsanos villagers with whom he worked in the north of Greece, humans are, because of their enmeshment in a mortal world, subject to envy and sensuality - "conditions which imply an attachment to material things which leads man away

[12] The influence of Platonic and neo-Platonic thought on Orthodox theology is profound, as one might expect of a religion developed within the matrix of a culture deeply imbued with Greek philosophy, and is one of the several roots of difference between Orthodoxy and a Latin theology which evolved in large measure apart from the Greek language and its cultural appurtenances.

from God" (Ibid: 326). The extirpation of these 'ancestral sins' through devotion to those things - holy persons, icons, and liturgies - through which God reveals that he, and he alone, creates and gives meaning to existence, enables the Orthodox to enter into the Paradise which God has opened to all those who recognize its existence.

Salvation is much more problematic within Latin Christianity. The fact that the world itself becomes a domain for God-directed activity elides the border between the fallen world and the redeemed world which, in Orthodoxy, is so carefully drawn. Whereas, in the Orthodox world, the Church functions to make manifest in the life of mortals the traces of the immortality towards which they should strive as they begin to shuck off involvement in the secular world, the Latin Churches serve, instead, to direct people as to how they should live their lives within the fallen world so as to 'earn' Paradise after death. In consequence, one's chances for salvation are interpreted in terms of the degree to which one has 'done God's work' during one's life. This expansion of the domain of sacred activity has significant consequences for Latin theories of salvation. In Orthodoxy the redemption brought about by Christ's intervention in history is cosmological and hence eventually universal[13], but in Latin theology salvation is only granted to those who have fully accorded their actions and thoughts with a world historical will made manifest by an institution - the Church - established within and operating on the secular world. This implies, first of all, that there is a substantial element of wastage (the damned) within Latin soteriology; it is only a very small percentage of humankind which will prove itself worthy of attaining Paradise[14]. Furthermore, divine grace

[13] "As the principle of death took its rise in one person and passed on in succession through the whole of the human nature, so the principle of the Resurrection extends from one person to the whole of humanity" (Gregory of Nyassa, Catechetical Oration, quoted in Meyendorff 1974: 163).

[14] While Orthodoxy accepts the same biblical account of Adam's disobedience as does Latin Christianity, it interprets the consequences of that disobedience -- recounted in Romans 5:12 -- differently. Jerome's Latin translation from the Greek Gospels reads (in English) "As sin came into the world through one man, and through sin, death, so death spread to all men because all men have sinned." Orthodox interpretation of the Greek text hinges, on the other hand, on reading 'because' (**eph ho**) not as a neuter pronoun but as a masculine pronoun referring to the immediately preceding substantive, 'death' (**thanatos**). The Orthodox passage thus reads "As sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, so death spread to all men; and because of death, all men have sinned" (see Myendorff 1974: 144 for this analysis). In the Orthodox reading Adam and Eve's sin resulted in their losing their immortality, and subsequently mortality (but not mortal sin) was inherited by their descendants. Mortality causes the individual to sin because it commits him or her to the struggle for food, drink, sex and other worldly things not needed by immortal beings. The need for these sensible objects in a world of limited resources generates anger, envy, hatred and lust, and all of these -- tempered with the perpetual fear of death -- bind the individual to the world and prevent him or her from seeing through it to that which gives it meaning. The Latin reading, on the other hand, contends that human mortality is consequent on humankind's inheritance of original sin, and, despite

only flows through the Church and can only operate on those obedient to the will of God as interpreted by the Church. Consequently that institution - if it is to do the work of God in bringing all those worthy of salvation to redemption - must increase its membership to include the entirety of those in the world capable of earning redemption. It must, furthermore, direct those within its purview as to how to live so as to please God. Brown (1964), Frend (1971), Asad (1973: 242-245) and others have examined the role granted coercion (in missionization, conversion, establishing orthodoxy, enforcing obedience, and waging holy war) by an institution which defines itself as the sole organ of the only significant values operative in the world, but I am more concerned here with the pedagogical function of the Church as an institution which makes evident to its members how they should act to please God and earn salvation.

Whereas the sacra in Orthodoxy serves, in effect, to disengage believers from the false values of a fallen world in preparation for their admission into the redeemed world, the religious in Latin theology serves instead to impose a particular ethics on activity in that fallen world itself. Within Orthodoxy the divine liturgy as well as other vehicles of the sacred like icons or holy relics serve as means of allowing people to 'step out' of illusion and see creation, as a whole, in relation to its creator:

> the icon's first and foremost liturgical function is making contact between the worshipper and the world of grace.... the icon is an indispensible part of the liturgy which in its turn functions as an 'icon' revealing the divine presence to the faithful and uniting the celestial and terrestrial church" (Galavaris 1981: 5, see also Ouspensky 1978 and Brown and MacCormack 1982).

Orthodox believers, in Greece as well as in the Holy Land, have several times told me that, when they stand within an Orthodox church - its walls and iconostasis dense with icons and its ceilings painted with stars and pictures of the Pantocrator - they stand in Paradise in the presence of God, the Virgin Mary and all the saints. Their entry into holy space serves, in effect, to presage their entry, at death, into eternity. In the Latin Churches, on the other hand,

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Christ's incarnation, only a very few people will prove themselves worthy to serve as vehicles of the grace that incarnation brought into the fallen world. Thus for Augustine and later Latin theologians humanity is a **massa peccati** (sinful mass) which holds hidden within it a very small number of people who have the potential for salvation. Different historical periods and different movements within Latin theology have varied the proportion of humankind capable of earning access to Paradise, but whatever the proportions that access has always remained contingent upon radical obedience to the divine will in worldly actions.

knowledge of the sacred is always mobilized back towards activity in the world. The liturgy makes clear to believers the debt owed to their God who took human form and, in that form, was humiliated and judicially murdered so as to grant humankind the possibility of salvation. The structure of the sermons and of the devotions are designed to inspire worshippers with faith in the power of God and with models for behaving in the world in accordance with that power. Each week, and for the particularly devout each day, is dedicated to a particular saint or holy incident which provides a particular lesson on how to live one's life. Religious art, instead of - like the icon - providing "a patch of clear visibility" (Brown and MacCormack 1982: 212) through which the devotee can see into Paradise, is purely pedagogic: it provides models for meditation which, rather than offering the meditator momentary access into the redeemed world, teaches him or her the sorts of activities that God rewards. The 'lessons' are inspirational and meant to provoke the devotee into action in the world. Unlike in Orthodoxy where one engages the sacred precisely to the degree that one's social position disengages one from the secular domain - Hirshon points out that it is women and the old who, in Greek society, are expected to be religious (Hirshon 1989: 219-231) - in the Latin Churches people are expected, throughout the whole of their lives, to model their behavior according to the lessons of the Church. Latin devotion, to use Dumont's terminology, is much more 'in-worldly' than is that of Orthodoxy (Dumont 1982).

The great heterodoxy of Latin Christianity, spanning as it does numerous manifestations of Catholicism as well as a bewildering diversity of Protestant sects, might lead the reader to doubt whether one can talk of a 'Latin ontology'. It is, however, precisely the 'in-worldliness' of the Latin perspective which unites those churches, and a consequence of that in-worldliness that gives them their apparent diversity. The correlate of the Church's sanctification of the world as a domain of religious action is a secularisation of the Church as a worldly institution. Ullman, in pointing out that the history of Western theology made the Church the sole 'legislator' of reality, also indicates the sources of an elitism which alienated the greater part of its members from the benefits it promised: the priests alone are functionally qualified to goven the Christian body (Ullman 1970: 291).

This political elitism combined with the spiritual elitism implicit in the Augustinian concept of the **massa peccati** to provoke a **de facto** refusal by the Church to include its lay members in the liturgical practices meant to offer them the chance of salvation; after the fifth

century the unconsecrated were in large part excluded from both the offertory and communion (Dix 1945: 598). Thus, in effect, the lay population was subordinated to the secular rule of the Church without access to the spiritual grace which the Church claimed legitimated that rule. This exclusion was to lead, throughout the Middle Ages, to several suppressed popular heretical movements which were, in effect, social revolutions against the hegemony of the Church. Subsequently, however, the more general spread of literacy and lay power in the late medieval period initiated a theological assault on the legitimacy of the Church. Wycliffe, Huss, and subsequent 'fundamentalists' argued that the Bible was the sole criterion of doctrine and that it provided no sanction for the immense and corrupt power of Latin Church. In effect, the mediation of the Church as the sole vehicle of salvation existing between God and mankind was thrown into question and the Bible was given priority as the Word of God present in the world.

This, as I have suggested above, was not a solution to the problem of understanding the divine will but merely the initiation of several new discourses on God, humankind, and moral activity. By throwing aside the authority of the Roman Church the Protestant reformers once again released the biblical text from the constraints of tradition so that it could speak new words to new contexts. The various answers which would be thrown up by the multiple Protestant sects over the next five hundred years to questions of 'who is worthy of redemption?', 'what is the relationship of the sect to the world?', and 'how is God to continue to make his will manifest in the world?' are too diverse to examine here. It is, however, worth stressing the ontological continuity which survives Protestantism's rupturing of Catholic hegemony. Protestantism, like Catholicism, presents a discourse on transforming the world in accordance with a transcendental will. It retains the idea of an elect which works that will and of others, outside grace, who neither assist God nor will benefit from redemption. Divine will is still seen to be channeled through a community, more or less institutionalised in the world, which serves to interpret and articulate it and, in some cases, to impose it by force on those who do not submit to it willingly. The individual still gains, or loses, salvation in relation to how he or she accords his or her life in the world to models ordained as God-given. The chief difference is that the Protestant sects draw more directly on biblical texts than on the authority of an interpretative institution for their models of behaviour and of devotion.

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In examining the ways groups within these various traditions impose their models of devotion on the Holy Land one must remain aware that Christian pilgrimage is voluntary. Even when Catholicism offered indulgences linked to the holy places or instituted penitential pilgrimages to those places, these were not linked to a conception of the holy places as being, in any epistemological sense, different than the places from which pilgrims departed. The development of the system of indulgences was, as its subsequent extension to most holy places within Christendom has shown, meant to ensure the maintenance of a Catholic presence in those places (Lea 1896 and Watkins 1920) while penitential pilgrimages served to disengage serious transgressors from the sites of their transgressions for substantial periods of time (Berliere 1890 and Vogel 1964); it was worldly logistics and not any sense of the singularity of the Holy Land which motivated these practices. Holy Land pilgrimage is popular because it allows pilgrims to meditate away from the cares and distractions of their everyday lives on places and moments central to their senses of themselves as Christians. Holy Land pilgrimage may, in the pilgrims' experience, amplify the religious impulse, but it does not change the signal; it is an aid to devotion rather than a necessary part of it. This explains why, in contradistinction to, say, Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, devotional practices in the Holy Land do not differ in any substantial way from those the pilgrims enage in in their originary milieu. The continuity of practice has given rise to a long theological controversy on the worth of pilgrimage, wherein opposition to its practice has been grounded on the assertion that one is no more likely to find God in a pilgrimage centre than in any other sanctified place and that, in fact, the distractions of the journey are more likely to carry one away from God and the holy life than towards them (Constable 1976).

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I will, in what follows, examine the pilgrimage practices of three groups of Christian pilgrims in order to show the way that those practices, all enacted in Jerusalem and its environs, are differentially structured by the ontologies of their particular sectarian alliances. I have chosen these three out of the twenty-seven Christian communities which regularly promote pilgrimages to the Holy Land because I have travelled with and observed them and because they seem particularly suited to display the range of pilgrim practices enacted there. The first group was made up of forty eight Greek Orthodox Cypriots brought together from a wide area of villages and towns by a pilgrimage organiser with ties to the Jerusalem

Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. One group of nine, men and women, within the larger group came from a single village and was accompanied by its parish priest, but the guide for the group as a whole was an archimandrite (superior of a monastery), normally resident in Gaza, who came up to Jerusalem to assist with pilgrim groups during the period leading up to and including Holy Week. The second group I will discuss was made up of fifteen English and Irish Catholics who were members of a lay organisation called the 'Little Way', dedicated to the performance of acts of charity and devotion in accordance with the model set by the life of Saint Theresa. They had been brought together through an advertisement in the organisation's journal and were being guided by a Franciscan priest, Father Raphael. The final group, part of a massive crowd of 1600 'Christian Zionists' who had come to Israel to celebrate the Jewish 'Feast of Tabernacles', was made up of Evangelical Protestants from the United States, South Africa, Great Britain and Holland. The group was addressed in a large convention hall throughout its week in the country by various Israeli politicians and members of the so-called 'International Christian Embassy' and, during the few excursions its members made outside the hall, was guided by state-licensed Israeli guides. While keeping in mind the reservations expressed by James Clifford (1988) about the possibility of extrapolating general ethnological statements from encounters with particular individuals and small groups, I will nonetheless try to indicate the ways the particular pilgrimage practices of these groups coincided with general tendencies within Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant pilgrimages. I must, however, assert that each group was distinctive in terms of its constituency, its background and the particularities of its experiences and that, therefore, the three are not being presented as 'typical' representatives of the wider religious entities.

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Greek Orthodox pilgrims envision their pilgrimage to the holy places as a 'shucking off' of impurities consequent on the Fall in preparation for death and resurrection. They step out of a world in which they have been deeply involved in the sins consequent on mortality and into a world which has, with Christ's life and death, partaken in the process of turning mortal into immortal flesh. Traditionally, Greek and Cypriot pilgrims come to the Holy Land in old age to prepare themselves for a good death and for their subsequent assumption into the redeemed world promised by Jesus, and the constituency of the group with which I travelled conformed

with this pattern[15].

Orthodox pilgrimage is made up of two types of activity, although they are not necessarily arranged sequentially. The first involves the transformation of the fallen to the redeemed, while the second celebrates their consequent participation in Paradise itself. Within the first is enacted the process of the individual's own transfiguration, and pilgrims, before going on pilgrimage, prepare for this by confessing their sins. On entering the Holy Land they will, so as to mark the boundary between a world in which they have dedicated themselves to worldly concerns and one in which they will devote themselves to the eternal, have their feet washed by monks of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepuchre who meet them at the sea or air ports. At some point during their pilgrimage they will be baptised in the Jordan River in order, like Christ himself, to have the Holy Spirit descend upon them[16].

The baptism at the Jordan is, for the pilgrims, a catharctic reunification with the divine image within them which has, through the years, been tarnished and covered over by the corruption consequent on their mortality. When, in 1984, Archmandrite Meliton, the Cypriot pilgrims and I arrived at what at present passes as the Jordan River baptism site, the pilgrims tore off their clothing, dressed themselves in white funeral shrouds which they had bought in Jerusalem (some of which were imprinted with an icon of Christ's resurrection from the tomb), and plunged into the river. Meliton, singing an Orthodox hymn with the term **metamorphosis** (transfiguration) repeated throughout, splashed water on them with a sprig of thyme, and then went through the motions of rebaptizing them. Afterwards some rolled about in the water, splashing others gleefully, while many dipped bits of clothing - among other things the funeral shrouds of others who had been unable to come themselves but who, like the pilgrims, would be buried in these shrouds - in the river before storing them carefully

[15] Recently this has begun to change as the establishment of cheap flights between Mediterranean centres of Greek Orthodoxy and Israel/Palestine have made the trip much cheaper and much less arduous. In the three Greek Orthodox pilgrimages I accompanied during my fieldwork I found, on average, three couples in their mid-thirties to early forties in the midst of crowds of forty to sixty people -- in couples or, as widows or widowers, alone -- in their sixties and seventies. Almost exclusively the older pilgrims claimed that this pilgrimage was their first visit and would be their last, while the younger pilgrims said they had come to see the holy places, and would certainly come again. I suspect that for the younger people the pilgrimage is somewhat touristic, but I never saw them, while I travelled, diverge from the practices of their elders.

[16] In Campbell's words, in baptism "the Holy Spirit purifies and recreates the nature of the child, uniting it to the body of Christ and bestowing Spirit upon it. The rite of Baptism marks the acceptance of a soul into the Church, it makes possible the remission of future sins and it releases the individual from the weight of original sin (Campbell 1964: 219: also Meyendorff 1974: 193-195).

away in plastic bags they had been filling throughout the day with crosses, burnt candles, bits of flowers, and small flasks of lamp oil from other holy sites. Afterwards, on the bus, Archimandrite Meliton announced to all "now that you have sloughed off your sinful bodies and have risen in the body of Christ you must love one another as brothers, must pray for the peace of all nations, must obey all of God's commandments, and must live in his ways". He then went on to say, because, as he explained to me later, it was important "to fight against the simple assumptions of their minds", that "this does not mean you have left this world; you must not give up your duties, and that includes those to your wives and husbands"[17].

The second aspect of Orthodox pilgrimage is collective participation in the eternity imaged in the places where Christ had worked his redemptive mission. The Holy Land, for the Greek pilgrims, is a place that images forth the places they commemorate in their churches and icons at home. Each place has, in history, played a particular part in manifesting the divine promise of deification to the world, and so too each place - as a bridge to the eternal - has a particular significance. However, particular sites, like particular icons, provide entry into the entirety of the redeemed world and, once that entry has been effected, there is no reason to consider any moment of eternity as different from any other. In Latin holy places, which pedagogically affect the pilgrim and then refer him or her back to the world, each site mobilizes the incident which has occurred in it to teach pilgrims specific lessons to be applied in their worldly lives. The particularity of Orthodox holy places, on the other hand, is discarded as soon as it has served to bring pilgrims out of the fallen world and into the risen world manifest within the icon-dense churches built over or next to the memorialized sites; an historical moment is only distinct from others in the light of temporality - in eternity all moments are the same.

I was bemused, while travelling with Orthodox pilgrims, to see that the guides always presented biblical and historical information about holy places **before** entering onto the property of those places, and that the pilgrims were so uninterested in those details that, as the

[17] Archimandrite Meliton, who was expelled from the Holy Land by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch in 1986, was himself committed to "fighting superstition". He told me at Virs Galilee "I do not want to perpetuate a system in which the people are kept under superstition in the rule of the priests. If I present the Holy Land to enough people as an historical place and the centre of salvatory history rather than as a source of magic, they will return home, spread the world, and help to erase superstition and foster biblical understanding". His 'demythologizing' of the baptism was taken in silence by the pilgrims, and later a friend told me that the accompanying village priest had commented, "This is modern stuff; it is against tradition and no good".

pilgrimages proceeded, the guides took to keeping the pilgrims confined to the busses until they had finished their historico-biblical sketches. Once released the pilgrims would rush impatiently into the churches and proceed around the interiors kissing all the icons without granting any - except perhaps those of Jesus and the Virgin Mary - any particular attention. For the pilgrims the interiors of churches prefigured Paradise, and, since all the saints in Paradise were present through their icons within the churches, there was no reason why a pilgrim should grant any of them, except perhaps the Lord and his mother who had effected their **metastoicheiosis**, or trans-elementation, any more attention than any other. Icons which figured forth the incidents which were supposed to have occurred on the site, and the actual remains of those places, received no more reverence than did the other icons, although some pilgrims would pay particular attention to the icons of the saints of their name days[18].

The one thing that, perhaps, makes the Holy Land more sacred than the other sacra experienced in the life of a Greek Orthodox person is that it is the most realistic icon, or representation, of the spiritual truths expressed in all Orthodox religious forms. The fact that the places themselves are supposed to be the same places through which Christ walked and around which he did his work does not appear to be universally appreciated; on the same pilgrimage one can see people who kiss every available rock and drink from every body of water and others who only show enthusiasm when they are inside churches revering and commenting on icons identical to those in their home churches. Travels around the holy places are, for the Orthodox, a desirable but unnecessary supplement to their pilgrimage; what the pilgrimage to the Holy Land is about, at heart, is being present in Jerusalem during the holy feasts. It is during these festivals that the significant realism of the holy places comes into play when Orthodox pilgrims, in the company of thousands of other Orthodox persons from throughout the Mediterranean basin, witness, for perhaps the only time in their lives, an image of the community of mankind united in Christ[19].

Campbell and Hirshon, in their examinations of religion in Greek community life, have both emphasized the fact that Orthodox life is torn by a deeply felt contradiction whereby

[18] see Stewart 1988 on the connection between the naming of Orthodox persons and their incorporation into the collectivity of the redeemed.

[19] Michael Herzfeld, in recent work on rural Cretans' uses of icons (Herzfeld 1989), uses Evans-Pritchard's concept of segmentation to investigate the ways icons, in different contexts, enable Orthodox persons both to differentiate themselves from others and to draw all Orthodox together in an ideal community.

people recognize that they are one in Christ but at the same time live in a world where, because of the curse of mortality, others are for the most part perceived as ruthless competitors for scarce resources. Campbell points out that it is only during Holy Week that the Sarakatsani transcend that isolation and see themselves, at least hypothetically, as part of the community to which Christ has granted them access:

The idea of Christ's brotherhood implies, at least, the brotherhood of the Sarakatsani of Zagori, and, by extension (although less certainly), the brotherhood of Orthodox Greeks. Christ sacrificed Himself not for one but for all. Not the least miracle of Easter is the measure of social goodwill. There is an easy warmth of greeting and attitude between unrelated men which is entirely foreign to the tense aggressiveness that is the formal idiom of social life at other times....The union of men in Christ is reflected at the level of social relations in an expression of ideal solidarity which for a moment breaks down the barriers which isolate family from family and community from community (Campbell 1964: 350, see too Hirshon 1989: 198-201).

During Holy Week in Jerusalem, and to a lesser extent during the two other feasts for which Orthodox pilgrims come to the Holy City (the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, and that of the Exaltation of the Cross), Orthodox pilgrims are able to transcend that contradiction and see that ideal community bodied forth, as it were, in the flesh. For days the streets and churches are filled with elderly Greek pilgrims who are not, in any significant way, in competition with others and who, for perhaps the first time in their lives, are not in places scarred by memories of conflicts which have involved them[20]. During the ceremonies that bring both the Lenten fast and the Holy Land pilgrimages to their fulfillment, all the pilgrims commemorate collectively the process of redemption they have mirrored individually or in smaller groups throughout their lives and their pilgrimage. They then engage together in the fruit of those processes. With Christ's resurrection the universal transformation of the fallen world is effected, and as that **anastasis** is celebrated in the Holy Sepulchre an image of mankind, united not in temporality but in eternity, is brought forth. At the Ceremony of the Holy Fire the experience of **communitas** reaches a peak as thousands of

[20] Despite Meliton's repeated attempts to make the Cypriot pilgrims aware of the effects of Israeli domination on the local Palestinian Christians, he was unable to get any of them at all interested, and this despite the fact that they were temporarily living with Palestinian Christians within the warrens of the Old City.

pilgrims, crammed to the point of immobility into the confines of the Anastasis, pass the Holy Fire - announcing the imminence of the resurrection - from hand to hand until the whole church is bright with the flames of thousands of 'resurrection candles'. Later in the evening, when the resurrection of Christ is announced and as the pilgrims prepare to communally break the Lenten Fast, they sing together the **Christos Anesti**:

Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and to those in the tomb
he bestows life
(translation Hirshon 1989: 242)

* * *

Catholic pilgrimage, unlike that of the Orthodox, is not strictly regulated by a liturgical calendar. Catholic groups come to the Holy Land throughout the year, and while many come as individuals or in families the larger proportion come in groups active as organisations in the world outside. In large part Catholic pilgrimage is inspirational; although plenary indulgences are still given, priests and pilgrims alike spoke of them to me as atavisms. People come to the Holy Land to be renewed in their faith so that they can subsequently reengage their ordinary lives with renewed energy and a renewed sense of purpose. A number of priests with whom I went around the holy places were members of the Maryknoll Brothers, who had, after several years of missionary work in Bolivia, come to the Holy Land on a ten week programme of 'spiritual revitalization'. One of them told me that the awareness of Christ that he had felt after travelling through the places Jesus had walked and preached left him profoundly inspired: "I wish I had done this before I'd entered my calling because I would have been much more dedicated to the spirit and less non-emotional and rationalistic". The idea that pilgrimage serves as a revitalization of spiritual energies drained by involvement in the labours of the secular world makes Catholic pilgrimage much more individuated than that of the Orthodox; instead of a cosmological celebration of the community of mankind in Christ the Catholics engage, as individuals or in groups bound by a shared purpose, in a process of being repossessed by the power that gives meaning to their personal lives and labours. This individuation releases Catholic pilgrimage from the timetable of communal feasts. Whereas in Orthodoxy the holy places and the holy dates in the church calendar are

moments at which the temporal participates in the eternal, in Catholicism the sites and the days are sources of inspiration which do not reach beyond the world but point to the appropriateness of certain activities and attitudes in the world. Their significance can be meditated upon at any time, and therefore even those groups which attempt to structure their travels through the holy places in accordance with the Church calendar often do so on dates which are not aligned with the calendar itself. A group of Catholics from Montmartre, in Paris, organize an annual pilgrimage in the course of which they move through the holy places according to an itinerary organized to reflect in place the annual cycle of liturgy; this pilgrimage takes place in August and lasts for two weeks.

The 'Little Way' pilgrims with whom I toured Jerusalem were lay donors to the 'Little Way' charity, and had come to the Holy Land on a week's pilgrimage (three weeks before Easter) in order "to celebrate their common calling together". Whenever possible they stayed in Carmelite guesthouses (like those in Nazareth and on Mt. Carmel) and were guided by Carmelite sisters; the 'Little Way' had organizational ties with the Carmelite order. This had not, however, proved possible in Jerusalem and the nuns at Mt. Carmel had arranged through the Franciscan Monastery of St. Saviour's for them to be guided through the Holy City by a Franciscan monk. Thus the portion of their pilgrimage in which I participated was somewhat less 'oriented' towards the specificities of their group work and its institutional contexts than the rest of their pilgrimage when they were guided by leaders more closely affiliated with their association[21].

[21] The tendency to link pilgrims of particular affiliations to the Holy Land orders with which they are associated is not uncommon. This would seem to be explained by the solidarity of the pilgrims and the orders in a particular calling, or task, in the world. The tendency of Catholic groups to present the world in relation to their particular communities and their tasks within it is, on occasion, taken to extremes. Three Catholic orders, for instance, have separate monasteries at widely separated places all of which monumentalize Christ's meal at Emmaeus. A Franciscan-made promotional film entitled simply "The Holy Land" was exceptional in its refusal to portray any of the holy places to which the Franciscans did not have claim under the 'Status Quo' (see **Cust**). The camera, accompanied by the soothing plainsong of Gregorian chants, led the viewer through the properties of a Franciscan Order while a superimposed voice narrated the significance of the holy place it was built on and the history of the Order in that place. Then, when the site had been surveyed and the voice-over had finished its narration, the camera abruptly pulled back to a great height, shifted out of focus, and moved at great speed over a blurred landscape as if it were being carried by a helicopter. Simultaneously the soundtrack increased in volume and belched forth a cacophonous, rock-and-roll like music. Then, after a few moments the camera focus sharpened, the music shifted back into plainsong and diminished in volume, the viewer was brought within the purview of another Franciscan holy site, and the voice-over once again began to narrate the history of Christ and the Franciscans at that place.

The monk's presentation of the holy places, and the interaction of the pilgrims with those places, were very different from analagous presentations and relations within Greek Orthodox pilgrimages. As did Orthodox guides, the Franciscan presented secular and historical information about places outside the chapels built to commemorate them (but **not**, as with the Orthodox guides, off the property of the holy places). However, when inside, he continued to instruct the pilgrims and talked not of the site itself but of the significance of what was alleged to have occurred there. Thus, inside the mosque which encloses the traditional site of Christ's ascension, Father Raphael read two biblical passages pertaining to the ascension (Matthew 28:16 and Luke 24:50) before telling the people that "what is important is not the literal place but the actual fact of the ascension". The pilgrims and the monk then engaged in a discussion of the significance of the ascension during which one woman said that the 'footprint' of Jesus, enshrined within the mosque, "is not relevant, it is only there to assist us in the 'interiorization' of the significance". The group then recited the Lord's Prayer and a series of ten 'decades' ('Hail Marys') after which Father Raphael read the 'virs Galilee' passage (Acts 1:11) from the Gospels and added "we should stop staring at the sky and get on with the missionary call of Christ".

This pattern of drawing spiritual inspiration from a site and directing its significance back into activity in the world continued through other sites in and around the Old City. Each place had a particular significance, not only linked to what was alleged to have happened at that site but also to the way that event provided inspiration and a model for devout activity in the pilgrims' lives. When available, as they usually were in Latin holy places, realist wall paintings of the events which the places commemorated were pedagogically mobilized; details of the representations were pointed out and expanded upon so that the pilgrims could 'interiorize' the event, which was usually, although not always, drawn from the Gospels (at St. Saviour's monastery, the headquarters of the Franciscan Order in the Holy Land, the lives of St. Francis and his followers were set up as models of inspiration). The event was then given contemporary moral significance, and the pilgrims were pointedly told to go into the world and get on with applying the lesson to their lives in it.

Whereas the Orthodox approach to the holy places diminishes the specificity of the places by grouping them as manifestations of Paradise, the Catholics diminish the specifity of

the sites by distinguishing between the significance of the biblical events said to have happened at the sites and the places themselves. It is from the significance, not the places, that one draws inspiration, and the places serve primarily as loci where the pilgrims are better able to body forth the subjects of their meditations in their imaginations. Thus, in Franciscan sites in particular, there are full scale, dramatically painted presentations of the holy places' events; the Chapel of the Flagellation, on the Via Dolorosa, is particularly striking as its life size paintings of Christ's judicial humiliation are designed, with the help of painted plaster extensions, to project out of the walls and into the space of the chapel itself. Pilgrims can, in effect, 'be' in the presence of these events while in the chapel and can thus be particularly moved by their experience. Nonetheless, the experience of interiorization can take place away from the sites; it is the image, not the place, which is important. I noticed, on the many occasions I accompanied Catholic pilgrims on Friday processions along the Via Dolorosa, that they invariably kept their eyes closed in prayer as the monks who led the processions read out the appropriate Gospel passages; several pilgrims told me that they did not want images of the literal place to get in the way of the images of Christ's procession that they normally meditated on when they performed the Stations of the Cross in their home churches. During the Little Way pilgrimage crowds along the Via Dolorosa prevented our party from stopping at many of the traditional sites of the Stations of the Cross. We would pass by them, with Father Raphael simply pointing out the markers. Later, when a doorway or a courtyard was available, we would step inside and the monk would carefully take us through bible readings pertaining to the sites we had passed (and those we were about to pass), present meditations on those sites, and lead the people in their decades and their prayers. The monk's words (and memories of their devotions at the Stations of the Cross within their home churches) then, in effect, provided the pilgrims with the foundations on which they built their reflections.

An unplanned alteration in the Little Way's itinerary revealed the primary role of the Church, through its officiants and its rituals, in mediating between God and its members. It is, finally, the liturgy, in which officiants sanctified by God through the agency of the Church pass on to celebrants the redemptive power of the blood and flesh of Christ, which puts believers into communion with God. Meditations and devotions serve to make clear to them

the debt owed Christ and the consequent necessity of orientating their thoughts and actions towards his will, but it is only through the channels of the liturgy that that spiritual orientation can be translated into a real and redemptive contact with God. We were supposed to have a communion mass at the Franciscan chapel of Dominus Flevit (which commemorates the site at which Christ wept for the imminent destruction of Jerusalem) but arrived at the chapel an hour before the time at which we had been scheduled. Father Raphael managed, after considerable effort, to get permission for us to have mass instead in a small chapel, redolent with the fumes of cabbage being cooked for the monks' lunch, attached to a nearby building in which the attendant monks lived. I had, up to this time, noted that the pilgrims had showed curiosity at the sites we had visited but not, surprisingly, displays of strong emotion, even at places commemorating events quite signal in the career of Christ. However, during mass this coolness dissolved, and the pilgrims spent the half hour on their knees with three of the women crying throughout and several of the others breaking into tears during communion. It was there, in a chapel with only an incidental connection to the holy places and during a mass identical to those they engaged in at home, that the pilgrims seemed most to feel the presence of Christ and, in that presence, tearfully and indiscriminately embraced all the members of their group.

* * *

Protestant devotions in the Holy Land tend, for reasons both historical and ontological, to be disengaged from the traditional holy sites revered by the Orthodox and the Catholics. Protestants came late to the Holy Land, and the claims of the more well-established churches to significant places, made official by the Ottoman firman, or edict, of 1852, were firm and well monumentalized. Furthermore, the Protestant desire to have an 'unmediated' relation to the Bible means that a holy place 'covered over' with Orthodox or Catholic churches is, in effect, a site which commemorates institutional domination rather than the 'truth' that institution has usurped and distorted. Protestants, in general, approach the Holy Land for the same inspirational reasons as Catholics, but for them that inspiration devolves from what is interpreted as an unimpeded relationship between the individual and Christ and not, as with Catholicism, from the sense of being part of a long history during which the will of Jesus has been enacted in the world through the agency of the Church. Consequently, Protestants tend

to want to 'witness' Christ and not his putative agents, and frequent places, like the area around the Sea of Galilee or the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem, where they can imagine Christ **in situ** rather than monuments thrown up by two thousand years of devotion to his memory.

The Garden Tomb saliently displays the characteristics of Protestant Holy Land devotion. The Garden Tomb, which many Protestants consider the actual site of Christ's burial, is a small enclosed site outside the walls of the Old City within which is a careful reconstruction of a rich man's first century garden. Louring over this quiet orchard of olive and carob trees is a rock face which is given the appearance of a skull by the open sockets of two eroded medieval cisterns. The Garden Tomb guides, trained volunteers who are the only persons allowed to guide people while they are within the garden's confines, instruct visitors in seeing that the site before them is identical to that described in the biblical texts which present Christ's crucixion and entombment: it is correctly located outside the walls (even though - as they do not say - the contemporary walls of the Old City, built in 1542 by Suleiman the Magnificent, are very differently placed from those of the city within which Jesus was condemned and outside which crucified), the skull-like hill above it is obviously Golgotha, 'the place of the skull', and the garden itself appears, even to the empty burial cave with a channel for its rolling rock door at its western end, to be the garden of the wealthy land-holder, Joseph of Arimathea. Pilgrims, whether or not they are convinced that the Garden Tomb is the literal site (and there is occasional dissension on this issue), assert that "it is easier to imagine Jesus here than inside that dark pile of stones they call the Holy Sepulchre".

During one of my visits to the Garden Tomb I accompanied a group of evangelical Christians from the Assembly of God Church of Lakewood, California through the garden, into the tomb itself and then to a small garden area where they had communion and a 'praise meeting'. During the latter the wife of the minister announced to the people that, while she was in the tomb, she herself saw "the grave clothes thrown back and the angel at the door who said 'Why do you seek the living among the dead?' [Luke 24:5]. 'He is not here, for He has risen' [Matthew 28:6]". She then proceeded to tell the congregation that since she, and they, have "today seen that the Tomb is empty, we know that everything the Bible says is true. We must live according to its Word".

Within Protestantism the concept of 'living according to the biblical word' has a wide

range of reference, calling upon some sects to separate themselves as far as possible from the secular world so as to organize personal and communal lives around biblical precepts and demanding of others that their members labour in the fields of political activism to impose their readings of biblical morals on the whole of the world around them. One influential strain of biblical fundamentalism has, particularly under the influence of the Scofield Bible (see Halsell 1987 and Vidal 1987), promoted a reading of Scriptures which relates all Biblical prophecy to historical events which will occur in the 'Final Days' preceeding Christ's Second Coming. Within this movement believers argue that their divinely-ordained task in the world is to work to bring about that Second Coming and, with it, the destruction the fallen world and all those who, because they have not worked to effect the return of Christ, do not merit salvation.

Christian Zionists, who make up a small but influential sector of this tendency, have organized themselves around readings of several Old and New Testament books (influential among them Jeremiah, Ezekial and Ephesians) which, they believe, call on them to bring God's 'Chosen People' (the Jews) back from the distractions of diaspora to rebuild the Kingdom of Israel within its biblically-mandated borders ("from the Nile to the Euphrates") and re-establish the Solomonic Temple and its ordained rituals. Christian Zionists believe that this work, which is to be done now "because we are living in the 'final days'", will bring Christ back into the world where he will engage in battle and destroy the 'Anti-Christ' (who will rise in the Soviet Union) and thus bring about the millenium and the rule of God in the world. Merv Watson, a spokesman for the International Christian Embassy (a non-denominational pressure group established to effect the work of Christian Zionism), told me in an interview that "our role is to speed up the day in which the ultimate destiny of the day is realized....If our faith is anything it's not just nodding our heads to prophecy but getting off our butts to do something to help".

The annual 'Feast of Tabernacles' pilgrimage to Jerusalem was organized by the Embassy to bring fundamentalist Christians to 'Eretz Israel' where they can 'comfort' the Jews and witness the work of God. It is, like other Latin pilgrimages, inspirational in that it serves to reveal to participants that its work - that of Christian Zionism - is divinely-ordained and is succeeding in transforming the world despite the demonic opposition of other churches,

secular humanists, communists and Arabs. Here inspiration does not, however, entail visiting the sites of Christ's historical life and death but in seeing the way that Christ, through his workers in the contemporary world, is preparing the way for his return.

There was very little travel involved in the week long celebration in which I participated in 1984[22]. People could, on free afternoons, join guided trips to Israeli settlements on the Occupied West Bank where they would see the "Jews laying claim to the land God gave them" or could go to religious schools where fundamentalist Jews were being taught how to perform the rituals of sacrifice in preparation for the time when the Temple was reestablished on the current site of the al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Most of the week was, however, taken up by meetings within the West Jerusalem Binyenei Ha'ooma convention hall where lectures on God's work in Israel and the world by Jewish and Christian "tools of God's fulfillment" were punctuated with prayer meetings and healing sessions. The lectures ranged widely within parameters set by the necessity of understanding and witnessing God's intervention in contemporary history; we were addressed by biblical scholars who told us how to understand the Bible in the light of current world and Israeli politics, by a Christian Zionist historian who linked the history of the colonization of Palestine with God's promises in the Bible, by 'Fishers of Jews' who described their work of preaching to Jews in the Soviet Union the urgent need for them to emigrate to Israel and dedicate themselves to building up the state, by representatives of the 'Jerusalem Temple Foundation' who spoke of the necessity of levelling the Muslim holy places on the Temple Mount so that the Judaic Temple could be reestablished, and by officials of the Embassy who instructed us on how to mobilize support for Israel's 'redemptive mission' when we returned home.

The fact that this meeting sounds more as though it was a political workshop than a pilgrimage belies neither its religious character nor its affinity to Orthodox and Catholic pilgrimages. All the pilgrimages here examined function through enabling pilgrims to feel

[22] Many of the pilgrims would, on their own, make trips to places that were of importance to them in their understandings of Christ's mission to the world, both past and future. Thus, during free time or after the close of the week, people went to the Garden Tomb, to the Mount of Olives (where Christ was expected first to appear when he returned) or to Megiddo in the Galilee (where the final war between Christ and the Anti-Christ was expected to occur). Halsell narrates a pilgrimage she took with Jerry Rawling's 'Friends of Israel' group in 1985 which, while the pilgrimage was not directly linked with the Feast of Tabernacles, nonetheless gives the tone of fundamentalist readings of the land as a whole (Halsell 1987).

they are integrally, and to a degree exclusively, involved in the divine redemptive project. For the Orthodox that project is most evident through involvement with 'images' (icons) which "transfer the event from the terrestrial world in which it had occurred to the celestial" (Talbot-Rice 1974: 93) and which, by so doing, temporarily carry the observer there as well. In Catholicism the engagement of pilgrims in the worldly work of the church, an engagement effected by their participation in the rituals and the institutional frameworks of the Church, God's agency in the world, links them more closely with God. For Christian Zionists God's work is manifest in the fate of the Kingdom of Israel, and projects like those outlined during the Feast of Tabernacles enable them to feel that they, and the others who surround them, are integrally involved in bringing about what God wills for Israel and the world.

The Christian Zionist celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles is a means by which fundamentalist Protestants locate themselves within the history of the Jewish people and unite themselves with a project which is, by their lights, the core of God's redemptive work in the world. Their seven days of dwelling in West Jerusalem hotels and gathering together in a foreign convention centre coincides perfectly with the seven days of the Jewish Succoth (celebrated simultaneously throughout Israel) during which Jews, as the Bible instructs, "shall dwell in booths...that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 23:42-43). During that seven days in 1984 the Christian Zionists presented and analysed strategies for bringing to an end the present-day exile of Jews and "spiritual Jews" (the term by which one of the speakers, George Giakamakos, citing Romans 9-11, referred to the assembly) and 'conquering' the messianic kingdom promised to them by God.

The culmination of the week's celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles was a 'Praise Procession' meant to enact before the eyes of the Israeli people the 'coming up of the nations to Jerusalem' (Leviticus 23: 33-36, 39-43) to celebrate with them the finish of the the Judaic succoth. The marchers, grouped by nation of origin, waved banners and palms (see Leviticus 23: 41) and sang the praises of Israel and the imminence of Christ's return as they processed noisily along the route to be followed by the Messiah when he returns to take up his kingdom (from the top of the Mount of Olives to the foot of the Western, or Wailing, Wall). At the finish of the march Jan Van der Hoeven, one of the Embassy's officials, instructed the

pilgrims to "go down to the Western Wall and pray" and, while the majority engaged in this ritual of identification, one small group of Americans, led by a tele-evangelist, convinced an elderly Hassidic Jew to read to them, in Hebrew, from the Torah. When he finished the reading the old man laid his hands on the leader's head and, in Hebrew, blessed him. Then the leader returned the gesture, saying, in English, "The Lord bless you". At this the whole group, eyes clenched in what appeared to be ecstasy, waved their hands in the air and began to chant "Hallelujah, praise the Lord"[23].

* * *

The complexities involved in inscribing such diverse sets of interpretations, expectations and practices on an area as small and 'compacted together' as the Holy Land poses substantial problems not only for pilgrims and pilgrimage organisers but for anthropologists of pilgrimage as well.

Pilgrims who come to the Holy Land expecting to find their religious imaginings, both profound and trivial, 'bodied forth' in the world are often left frustrated and unhappy: an elderly Catholic man from the South of Germany who told me, after seeing the Holy Sepulchre, that "all my dreams of childhood are distorted and destroyed" was not exceptional. One source of disillusionment is that the Holy Land, as imagined, is a place in a sense 'out of this world'; the images of desire and utopian nostalgia that go into the construction of any imagined sacred terrain will rarely find their reflection in the mirror of the world. This is, of course, a particular problem in Palestine/Israel because the land is torn by war and dissension and dense with secular tourism and commercialism.

[23] The Christian Zionist relation to the Jewish people was basically textual; it was clear that it was the Jews, as biblically designated agents of redemption, who were loved rather than the Jews as people. An American woman with whom I was speaking at the closing ceremonies of Feast said "I love the Jewish people so much" and immediately qualified her philo-semiticism with the anti-semitic statement "I'm not talking about arrogant New York Jews". She then, without clarifying which sector of the Jewish people she **did** love, turned the conversation to the way the Bible gives 'the Land' to the Jewish people. A more telling instance occurred during a discussion with a minister of the Calvary Chapel group of Casa Mesa, California. This evangelical group, though not part of the Feast of Tabernacles gathering, was distinctly Christian Zionist and was, when I joined it, being addressed at the Jerusalem Hilton by Stanley Goldfoot of the Temple Foundation, an Israeli institute dedicated to the destruction of the Moslem holy places on the Haram al-Sharif or Temple Mount. In response to my conversational comment that the fulfillment of the Temple Foundation's programme would unite the Islamic nations of the world in a jihad against Israel, the minister leaned across the table and whispered "but we don't really care what happens to the Jews because by then all the believers will have risen up in the Rapture [Christ's lifting up of all those he choses to save so that they float, with him, above the apocalyptic violence of Armaggeddon which erases the old order]".

What is, however, perhaps even more problematic is the fact that there are too many religious groups there engaged in attempting to make their pilgrims' experiences conform with their expectations, and these groups get in the way of one another. Most holy sites are sacred to more than one religious sect, as one would expect in a land where all sacredness finds its roots in the same text. Consequently, and particularly in places of signal significance like the Holy Sepulchre or the Bethlehem Church of the Nativity, the holy places fill with crushes of pilgrims pursuing different refractions of the holy. The creation of alternative sites, like the Garden Tomb, can diminish the dissonance, as can the careful scheduling of liturgies and tours so as to avoid simultaneity, but it is inevitable that groups will often, nonetheless, come into contact with the traces of other structures of devotion in places they assume were given to them for their particular devotions by God.

I witnessed an interesting example of compounded discourses on the holy when I accompanied a group of Greek pilgrims returning to Jerusalem from Jericho as they stopped, briefly, outside the Roman Catholic 'Church of All Nations' which is built on the traditional site of Gethsemene. I quote from my notes:

> Michael [a novice priest and unpracticed guide] takes us in to see the olive trees which the people weren't terribly impressed with. They want, as usual, to get into the church, and we manage, but the reaction is confused, muted, and finally very negative. Some go for the murals on the wall, others kneel at the rail and look at the rock (two kiss the railing) but voices rise in consternation and most wander out. There are no icons to kiss, no obvious signs of devotional places, so they can't cue in. Finally end up thinking the place isn't holy. Michael says 'their questions and comments are like bombs'.

Pilgrims do not come to the Holy Land to witness religious diversity but to see the religious practices with which they are familiar and in which they find their identities lifted out of quotidian life and enshrined. Contact with pilgrims who practice their religions in other ways rarely, if ever, leads to toleration, much less understanding; it almost universally generates hostility. Evangelical Protestant references to the Orthodox Easter ceremonies as "that parade of the damned" find parallels in incidents I have witnessed of Greek Orthodox women

making the evil eye sign at Catholics during mass on Golgotha or of Catholics saying, after watching a group of Protestant pilgrims pass through the Shrine of the Nativity, that Protestants "aren't even Christians".

Father Dubois, a Ratisbonne priest and long-term resident pilgrim guide in Jerusalem, told me that "there is no true pastoral spirituality" in the Holy Land:

> A proper pilgrimage should work to transform time and space; it is finally a pantomime or psychodrama of a spiritual itinerary....At Lourdes an organisation links all pilgrims in a rhythm of prayer. Lourdes pilgrims come and are absorbed by the rhythm of liturgy through rules, set processions, vespers; [they provide each other with] a mutual comfort. Here we have plenty of hotels and pensiones but no living organism; the only thing that links the churches is hostility....

The substance of the Father's critique is clearly Catholic, but his insight is easily universalized; the diversity and dissonance of devotion in the Holy Land breaks into the processes by which pilgrims engage with their religion, throwing them back into the cacophony of the world precisely when and where they expected to escape it. The dilemma is perhaps less serious for those groups, like the Orthodox, who expect to find the holy in places bounded off from the surrounding world, and more severe for others, like Evangelical Protestants, who expect to meet their God walking through and working in the world. Nonetheless, it is hard work for all pilgrims to cut through the din of the pilgrim busses, the clamor of the tour guides, and the thunder of heterodox forms of devotion to hear the small, still voice of God at the centre of the storm.

The problem Jerusalem pilgrimage poses anthropologists is serious, and oddly similar. Theories inherited from earlier scholarship on pilgrimage have been drawn, almost exclusively, from studies of single religion pilgrimage centres. Anthropologists, lured by the appearance of community generated by these centres' 'rhythms of liturgy', have focussed attention on activities that seem redolent with that mysteriously evasive **mana** of social action - Durkheimian 'effervesence' - and have consequently concentrated their theorizing on what happens at pilgrimage centres to cause people to behave as though they were part of an ideal community. The proposed answer, that pilgrimage practices **make** people feel themselves part of something greater than themselves by bringing them together **en masse**,

has led anthropologists to treat that solidarity as consequent on the activities in which pilgrims engage rather than to analyse those activities as the enactment, in domains orchestrated to avoid interference, of models of community inherent in the religious conceptions pilgrims bring to pilgrimage sites. Jerusalem pilgrimage, with its diversity and its dissension, reveals that the simple matter of bringing crowds together around a shared religious goal does not suffice to generate **communitas**; when pilgrims who share reverence for a place but do not share the means of expressing that reverence aggregate around a holy site it is hostility and distrust, rather than solidarity and communion, which finds expression.

Jerusalem pilgrimage forces the anthropologist to look at its practices as complex interweavings of discourses on the nature of God, history and humankind at sites designed to give those discourses concrete form in the world. The multiplicity of its practices, which devolves from the diversity of interpretative communities which construct those discourses, makes Jerusalem pilgrimage appear anomalous with respect to the single denomination pilgrimages which to date have informed the theoretical apparatus of the anthropology of pilgrimage. I contend, however, that Jerusalem pilgrimage is not aberrant but instead most saliently illustrates the discursive construction of all pilgrimages. Pilgrimages are journeys to the sacred, but the sacred is not something which stands beyond the domain of the cultural; it is imagined, defined and articulated within cultural practice. To comprehend pilgrimages in the particularities of their practices anthropologists must explore the many disparate sites at which concepts of the sacred and desires to engage it are forged. Such exploration may carry anthropologists far from the scenes where pilgrimages are enacted but it is at the sites from whence pilgrims set out on their searches for the centre that pilgrims learn what they desire to find. At the centres, where pilgrims go in expectation of fulfilling that desire, pilgrims - like empiricist anthropologists - experience little other than that which they already expect to encounter.

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