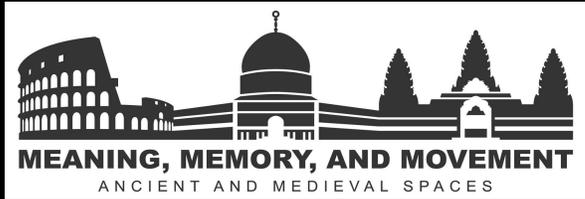


# New Classicists

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Revisiting the Anonymous  
'Pilgrim' from Bordeaux:  
Defining Characteristics of  
Christian Sacred Space and Travel  
in Early Fourth Century Jerusalem

Natalie Smith



# Revisiting the Anonymous 'Pilgrim' from Bordeaux: Defining Characteristics of Christian Sacred Space and Travel in Early Fourth Century Jerusalem

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The city of Aelia Capitolina, or Jerusalem, was witness to significant changes over the course of the fourth century. At the outset, as a Roman *colonia*, Jerusalem's early religious significance seemed painfully forgotten at the time recalled in Eusebius' *Martyrs of Palestine*.<sup>1</sup> When asked what city he came from, Pamphilus of Caesarea and his companions remarked, "Jerusalem". Eusebius emphasised this as a reference to the Jerusalem *above*:

...saying that Jerusalem was his city - meaning, to be sure, that one which it was said by Paul, 'But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother' and 'Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem'.<sup>2</sup>

However, Firmilianus, whose mind was "fixed on this world here below", expressed confusion: he did not know a place by that name.<sup>3</sup> Oded Irshai summarized the interaction succinctly: "Both of them did, however, agree on one thing, namely, there was no place on earth named Jerusalem".<sup>4</sup>

Underlying this exchange is not only the elimination of Jerusalem from the geographic memory of Palestine following the creation of Aelia Capitolina; it is also the Christian orientation towards another, spiritual Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> Christians identified themselves as the legitimate inheritors of Jerusalem; however, this city was not earthly, but heavenly.<sup>6</sup> These circumstances combined

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<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *De Martyribus Palaestinae* 11.9-12. Eusebius remarked that it was the Kalends of March (310) that Pamphilus and his companions were brought before the governor Firmilianus.

<sup>2</sup> *Mart. Pal.* 11.9. (Trans. Lawlor and Oulton 1927: 385).

<sup>3</sup> *Mart. Pal.* 11.10. (Trans. Lawlor and Oulton 1927: 385).

<sup>4</sup> Irshai 1999: 205. See also Stroumsa 1999: 349; Hunt (1982: 5), who remarked that "the Roman magistrate's resolutely earthbound ignorance of the Christian's celestial Jerusalem is a remarkable testament of two worlds unreconciled".

<sup>5</sup> In early Christianity, a tension existed between Jerusalem's importance as a city of historical and biblical memory (however corrupted by its associations with Christ's death), and as the image of eschatological hope: the Jerusalem "below" and the Jerusalem "above". As Jewish messianic hope was set on Judea and Jerusalem, Origen and others responsively subscribed to the more 'spiritualised' view of Jerusalem, as was displayed in Galatians 4:26 and Hebrews 12:22. On this, see Wilken's (1992: 65-78, 70) analysis of Origen; see also Perrone (1999: 225).

<sup>6</sup> Early Christian attitudes toward Jerusalem were indeed ambiguous. It seems that it was not until the end of Bar Kokhba that a more polemical tone was adapted, as is the argument of Clements (2012).

to deteriorate the memory of Jerusalem during the interim centuries of Roman occupation.<sup>7</sup> As Robert Wilken put it: “Together, it seems, Romans and Christians had conspired to obliterate the memory of Jewish Jerusalem”.<sup>8</sup>

Seemingly at odds with this tendency in early Christian thought, the fourth century brought about a noticeable change in the notion of sacred topography and the reputation of Jerusalem in Christian reception. This is particularly true following Constantinian intervention, in which changes to the religious urban fabric of the city and its environs were instigated through the (re)discovery of sites associated with sacred memory and the construction of imperially-funded churches.<sup>9</sup> This reconfiguration inspired the increasing presence of Christian pilgrims and the development of public and performative ecclesiastical processions.<sup>10</sup>

Increased Christian interest in Jerusalem - and the localisation of sacred memory more widely - exemplifies a shift from the spiritual to the topographic plane.<sup>11</sup> Christian claims on Jerusalem were not solely of the city “above” but were increasingly concerned with possessing the city “below”.<sup>12</sup> Jerusalem became a city both terrestrial and heavenly, immediate and

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<sup>7</sup> However, as Henry Chadwick’s (1959) notion of the Circle and the Ellipse reminds us, the prominence and historical reputation of Jerusalem was not eliminated following the Jewish wars. This contrasted the opinion of Brandon 1951.

<sup>8</sup> Wilken (1992: 83).

<sup>9</sup> Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 3:25-40; Smith (1987: 79). On Constantinian Jerusalem, within the scope of the city’s wider religious history of Jerusalem, see Wilken (1992: 82-101); Wharton (1995), Eliav (2005), Sivan (2008), and Limor (2014). The localisation of Christian memory was not limited to the sites of Christ but included various sites of Jewish significance. A principal study of this phenomenon is Maurice Halbwachs’ *La topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre Sainte: étude de la mémoire collective*. Halbwachs (trans. Coser 1992: 200) presented collective memory as having a “double focus”, incorporating both material reality and symbol.

<sup>10</sup> Hunt (1982) is still an authoritative study on Jerusalem during this period. The liturgy of Jerusalem is particularly well preserved thanks to Egeria’s extensive account of the liturgical scene during her pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 381-4, and the complete catechetical lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem. The *Armenian Lectionary*, which details liturgical instruction in the fifth century rounds out our primary evidence of the liturgy of late-antique Jerusalem. On the *Armenian Lectionary*, see Renoux (1969-70), Conybeare (1905). On the development of stationary liturgy during this period, see Baldovin (1987) and Verhelst (1999).

<sup>11</sup> Emphasizing the impact of Constantine’s churches and the “amplification” of liturgical interaction, Cardman (1984: 58) referred to this change as the “historicizing”, or “de-eschatologizing” of space. Using different terminology to express a similar idea, R.A. Markus (1994: 264-5) employed the dichotomy of “Locative” and “Utopian” orientations (originally coined by Smith (1978) and (1990)) to discuss the origins of sacred space in late-antique Christianity. Markus affirmed that, while not completely reducing the process to a dichotomy, “there is a clear shift in the fourth century towards the ‘locative’ pole”. The development of sacred space and its theological implications are also explored in MacCormack (1990), Caseau (1999), Bitton-Ashkelony (2005) and Smith (1987).

<sup>12</sup> Irshai (2009: 466) portrayed these concurrent processes well in his re-interpretation of Markus’ (1994) theory on the development of sacred topography. He asserted that the cult of the martyrs served as a “launching pad for the Christian appropriation of the land”. With particular interest in the treatment of Jewish history, place, and identity, Andrew Jacobs (2004: 23) considered the means by which imperial Christianity asserted a “need for unity and stability... by refashioning the Christian world in a newly comprehensive manner”. The world and its history were recast within a Christian framework. As Jewish identity and history became “pliable object[s] through which Christians might ‘think through’”, the re-inscribing, converting, and re-historicizing of religious topography was a form of geographic and “cognitive control” as well (Jacobs 2004: 21-25). Preceding Christian sacred space was the assertion of Christian ownership over the topography of Jerusalem and its environs; thus, there seems to be concurrent processes of both Christianisation and consecration of the topography.

eschatological.<sup>13</sup> It is within this context that Jerusalem emerged into public consciousness as a ‘Holy’ Christian city.<sup>14</sup>

When considering this phenomenon, one cannot avoid the commanding figure of Constantine. However, the impact of the emperor on this development has often been overstated.<sup>15</sup> Echoes of Telfer’s notion of an imperial “Holy Land Plan” still surface in countless studies of late-antique Palestine.<sup>16</sup> However, valuable revisions have encouraged us to look at a wider breadth of forces at work in the Christianisation, and consecration, of Jerusalem.<sup>17</sup> For instance, the first-hand accounts of Christian pilgrims to Palestine offer unique insight into the composition and reception of sacred topography during this period. These itinerant visitors infused physical and observable aspects of the terrain with scripture, history, and liturgical imagination.<sup>18</sup> Pilgrimage accounts of the Holy Land acted as both a force of Christianisation and as a barometer by which these processes might be measured. In this respect, they were both active and passive forces in the composition of Christian topography. The aim of the present study is to reassess one important witness of Jerusalem, the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, and its depiction of religious topography. Though often overlooked due to its brief and tedious annotations, the *Itinerarium* is an essential witness to Jerusalem during the reign of Constantine. Rather than being dismissed for its content, I question the semantic qualifications imposed on the author, the land,

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<sup>13</sup> The precarious nature of Christian possession of Jerusalem in the fourth century, as well as the divergent approaches to this issue by Eusebius and Cyril is discussed by Walker (1990: 315-7). The spatial ambiguity of Jerusalem and pilgrimage to the city is discussed in Pullan (2007). Patristic debates on sacred topography more generally, as well as in the question of Jerusalem, are explored in Bitton-Ashkelony (2005).

<sup>14</sup> R.A. Markus’ (1994) theory reminds us that this development was not exclusively, or even initially associated with Jerusalem. See also MacCormack (1990), Bitton-Ashkelony (2005: 27). Aided by imperial intervention, the spatial Christianisation of Jerusalem seems to have happened quickly. However, the visible re-composition of the religious landscape did not mean that the religious demography of the city changed at the same rate. Doron Bar (2003) and Joshua Levinson (2013) noted that the rapid ‘conversion’ of space in the development of a Christian ‘Holy Land’ has led many to conclude that Christian conversion happened more quickly than in other parts of the empire. However, this is a bit of a falsity.

<sup>15</sup> A principal example of this comes from J.Z. Smith, whose framework will be considered below. The physical and ideological configuration of the ‘Holy Land’ was succinctly summarised as such: “What Constantine accomplished with power and wealth was advanced by rhetors like Eusebius, who built a ‘Holy Land’ with words”. Smith 1987: 79.

<sup>16</sup> Telfer 1957. Telfer argued that Constantine’s building projects were fuelled by vision to create a religious centre and pilgrimage hub out of a new, revitalized, Christian Jerusalem. While not all adopting Telfer’s argument wholesale, the notion of a Constantinian “Holy Land Plan’ has since been picked up by several others; For example, Hunt (1982 and 1997: 420); Yarnold (1985), Walker (1990: 106-116); Drijvers (1992: 57); Wharton (1992); Jacobs (2004: 143-146); Irshai (1999: 208). The very idea of a “Holy Land” having been the invention of Constantine was central to Joan Taylor’s conclusion (1993: 331) – that late-antique reverence of sacred topography as essentially a “pagan concept grafted onto Christianity” at the hand of the emperor himself.

<sup>17</sup> Perrone (2006: 147-149). Considering the influence of Constantine, H.A. Drake (2000: 24) asserted the danger of studying a singular person as the sole initiator of social, political, or religious change. Bitton-Ashkelony (2005: 23) furthered this by considering the theological distance between the New Testament and the development of Christian sacred topography in late antiquity: “It would be naive to think that such a radical change in religious perceptions and practices - an obvious departure from the New Testament’s stance on sacred space - could have occurred ‘suddenly’ and as a result of the work of one man, emperor, and ‘friend of the all-sovereign God’”.

<sup>18</sup> It is under this assumption that accounts of pilgrimage have been considered as forms of cartography in Leyerle (1996) and (Smith 2007).

and the relationship between them through our pre-conceived notions of pilgrimage and sacred space during the Constantinian age.

## **Itinerarium Burdigalense: Structure and Significance**

The *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, or Bordeaux Itinerary, is a concise, near-complete account of one traveller's roundtrip journey from Bordeaux to Palestine.<sup>19</sup> It is helpfully dated to 333, as the author lists the consuls while passing through Constantinople.<sup>20</sup> Such precise dating situates the text in the midst of great transition in the urban layout of Jerusalem; our traveller arrived on the heels of Constantine's church building programme in and around Jerusalem, as well as the imperial tour taken on behalf of the Empress Helena.<sup>21</sup> The Itinerary is an important text as it testifies to the topography of Jerusalem in the midst of imperial intervention. It is often referred to as the first Christian pilgrimage account, and therefore stands at the "beginning of a great tradition" of witnesses to Jerusalem's emergence as a prominent and venerable Christian city.<sup>22</sup>

The Bordeaux Itinerary primarily follows the conventions of its genre; the majority of the text consists of a list of place names, which outline the various points of the journey, and the

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<sup>19</sup> The itinerary has small omissions that seem to have been removed as part of an editing process. See Elsner (2000: 183), Matthews (2010: 183), Salway (2012: 310-11). While the trip was essentially from Bordeaux to Palestine and back, Salway has convincingly argued that the central destination might have been Constantinople and not Jerusalem (2012: 299, 312-322). While we do not know the identity of the author, certain pieces of information can be gleaned. The text, in Latin, suggests the author was a Latin speaker. This is corroborated with the itinerary's starting point at Bordeaux and end point in Milan, which assumes a home, if not in Bordeaux, then at least in Northern Italy or Gaul. The interests expressed in the document, particularly in the descriptive Palestinian section, suggest the author was a Christian. The author could conceivably fit within the ranks of female pilgrims known to visit Palestine in the fourth century, thus the question of gender has been an interesting subject of scholarly debate. Douglass 1996 made the case that the author was a woman, given the pilgrim's focus on female biblical characters and fertility-related healing springs. This case was re-examined by Susan Weingarten in 1999. It is important to note, however, that the traveler significantly predates the influx of aristocratic female pilgrims of the later fourth century (excluding the pilgrimage of Empress Helena, narrated in Eusebius' *Vit. Const.*) and that our source material on female pilgrimage in the fourth and fifth centuries is likely an overrepresentation, as is argued by Falcasantos (2017: 117).

<sup>20</sup> *It. Burd.* 571.6-8. The pilgrim mentions leaving Chalcedon on the 30th of May and returning to Constantinople on the 25th of December. Salway (2012:312) has argued that the listing of the consuls at Constantinople suggests that the year had changed on the journey to the city. Since the author only returns to Constantinople at the end of 333, the total journey began in 332 and ended in 334. It is also this mention of a date, which occurs at the midpoint of the itinerary along with the traveler's arrival at Constantinople which led Salway to reorient the destination of the *Itinerarium*.

<sup>21</sup> These events are narrated in Eusebius, *Vit. Const.* 3.1-47. The account precedes the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which took place in 335.

<sup>22</sup> Elsner (2000: 182). See also Limor (2006: 331), who calls it the "inauguration of the genre"; See also Douglass (1996: 313); Salway (2012: 294 n. 7).

distance between them.<sup>23</sup> The author included further annotations: references to cities [*civitas*], resting stations [*mansio*], and changing stations [*mutatio*] were also recorded.<sup>24</sup>

However, the Bordeaux Itinerary is not solely an inventory of place names. Its defining feature is its change in style for a central portion of the text, from Sarepta to Hebron.<sup>25</sup> It is in this section that the text takes on a far more descriptive tone and abandons its previous focus on changes and rest-stops.<sup>26</sup> In lieu of previous concerns, the itinerary is illuminated with the presence of biblical landmarks and natural phenomena.<sup>27</sup> In this part of the text, occasionally titled the “Holy Land” section, the central focus shifts from the journey to a series of destinations relating to scriptural reference.<sup>28</sup> At this point, the Itinerary abandons its linear structure to take on a more erratic sense of wandering.<sup>29</sup>

The varied composition of the Bordeaux Itinerary has led to divergent opinions on the text’s significance. The timing of the visit makes it a crucial witness to the development of sacred topography during the Constantinian age. However, in comparison to the detailed accounts of later religious visitors, the text has been previously dismissed as “brief” and “stenographic”,

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<sup>23</sup> Various examples of Roman *itineraria* still exist, such as the compilation known as the Antonine Itinerary. The genre is discussed in Elsner (2000: 183-186), Salway (2001); (2012: 302-7), Bowman (2001: 17); and Johnson (2016a). Matthews (2006 and 2010) drew connections between the Bordeaux Itinerary and the travel account of Theophilus of Hermopolis, whose journey to Antioch was illuminated further by a list of personal expenditures. Illustrative forms of Roman *Itineraria*, such as the Peutinger Map (a medieval map or an early fourth century map, itself likely a copy of an earlier map dating prior to the eruption of Vesuvius in 79CE) are evidence of a “rich cartographic tradition” in both textual and pictorial forms, observed Elsner (2000: 185). Another example of a cartographic text that reconfigures the traditional genre of the Roman *Itinerarium* is the mid-fourth century *Expositio totius mundi*. While incorporating descriptive elements not unlike the Bordeaux Itinerary, the *Expositio* shows no interest in Christianity and misses out Jerusalem altogether; Elsner (2000: 188), Stemberger (2000: 193), (Johnson 2016a: 45).

<sup>24</sup> The inclusion of *mansio* and *mutatio* is one of the unique features of the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*. Salway (2012: 307) argued that the author most likely composed his itinerary of a basic template, which was then annotated throughout the journey. A similar practice has been suggested of Theophilus’ annotated itinerary. These additions reveal the flexibility and subjectivity of the genre; personal annotation imposes a sort of hierarchy of places encountered on the journey. Examples of deviation in the author’s choice of *mansio* and *mutatio* is discussed in Salway (2012: 305). While the genre of the *Itinerarium* could vary on the degree of annotation and description, a common feature seems to be its orientation to the route. This method of writing geography is foundational for arguments of a Roman “hodological” view of space and geography - one that is oriented along the pathways and networks of pathways that make up the Roman world. See Brodersen (2001); Salway (2001); Johnson (2016a: 44); Drijvers (2018: 364).

<sup>25</sup> *It. Burd.* 583.11-599.9. However, the author already began to gloss biblical places in Tarsus (579.4).

<sup>26</sup> On this shift, see Milani 1983. While the author abandons their meticulous annotation of changes and rest-stops, cities are still included. This shift is comparable to the Greek *periploi*, such as Arrian’s *periplous* of the Euxine Sea, which was oriented around movement, however less structured than the *itinerarium*, and further engaged with the literary and legendary history of place. The tradition of describing and mythologizing geography beyond solely nomenclature is exemplified also in *periegesis*. For a brief but informative comparison of influential genres, see Elsner 2000: 185-6.

<sup>27</sup> Irshai (2009: 471) called the text an “amalgamation of two entirely different types of description”. See also Elsner 2000: 187; Bowman 2001: 17. In contrast, see Salway (2012).

<sup>28</sup> However, as Elsner (2000: 190) has observed, there is always a sense of motion, albeit slower, and perhaps touristic.

<sup>29</sup> Elsner (2000: 192). Wilken (1992: 110) associated the text’s erratic organisation with its (supposed) lack of theological consideration by noting the author “moves indiscriminately from one place to another... If a site is mentioned in the Bible and it can be located, it is worthy of a visit”.

lacking any sort of theological reflection.<sup>30</sup> More recently, scholars have re-examined these dismissals. The Bordeaux Itinerary has been considered as a creative reconfiguration of geography through established genres and terminologies, as a sort of catechetical text in which locality was a means of exegesis and eschatology, as exemplary of Christian appropriation of Jewish memory and monuments in pursuit of a ‘Holy Land’, and as a potentially subversive voice against Constantine’s building programme.<sup>31</sup> Such revisions reveal the scope of diverse interpretations that the seemingly “stark” Itinerary invites.<sup>32</sup>

A difficulty in interpreting the Itinerary is the tendency to compare it to the account of Egeria, which “furnishes a more penetrating glimpse into the devotion of the Christian traveller”.<sup>33</sup> Egeria offers a lengthy and enthusiastic first-hand account of the religious experience in Jerusalem and its environs. For that reason, it has become the standard to which late antique Christian pilgrimage is often held.<sup>34</sup> However, Egeria’s account is unparalleled in its depth of description. Comparing all other accounts to this standard is reductive and misses the significance of our less-captivating examples and skews our assumptions of late-antique pilgrimage and engagement with sacred topography. I argue that the Bordeaux Itinerary causes us to stretch our understanding of the content and context of early Christian pilgrimage. Before discussing the text in earnest, I will offer a few observations of the tendencies and challenges of defining sacred space and travel.

## Defining Sacred Space and Travel

Defining early Christian pilgrimage is a difficult task for several reasons. Firstly, there are many issues in attempting to classify a phenomenon with such “diversity [in its] practice and purposes”.<sup>35</sup> This is made worse by terminology; the Latin *peregrinatio/peregrinus(-a)* does not

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<sup>30</sup>Hunt (1982: 86). Similar judgements are made in Campbell (1988: 27). See also Hamilton (1952: 84), who judged the “economy” of words and content in the *Itinerarium* as the “stamp of a primitive tradition not yet inflated by the curiosity of Pilgrims or the growing opulence of ecclesiastical foundations.”

<sup>31</sup> Elsner (2000); Bowman (2001); Kalleres (2014); Irshai (2009).

<sup>32</sup> Hunt (1982: 86).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. See also Bowman (2001: 12); Irshai (2009: 472).

<sup>34</sup> This is observed in Irshai (2009: 472, f.18); Bowman (2001: 12).

<sup>35</sup> Falcasantos (2017: 93), in highlighting the specificity of pilgrimage within its own cultural environment, asserted that “any attempt to consolidate a collection of practices under a unified model of pilgrimage imposes an artificial structure on an inherently unstable and dynamic category”. This can be asserted further with regards to the ambiguity of an individual or group’s own intentions, as Wheeler (1999: 35) stated in her theory of confluence in pilgrimage: “Of course pilgrimage represents different things to different people, but it also represents ‘different things, though in various proportions, to one and the same individual’”. In attempts to define pilgrimage,

share the same connotations as “pilgrimage” and “pilgrim”.<sup>36</sup> While a lack of cohesive terminology does not discount that some sort of “pilgrimage” existed within the religious practice and sensibilities of our late antique sources, it complicates any further attempt at categorisation.

Secondly, the extent to which Christian pilgrimage was a novel practice or one originating out of existing cultural practice is much debated. In their volume on pilgrimage in antiquity, Rutherford and Elsner presented the “pilgrimage problem”, which accentuates the tension between continuity or change along the contours of antiquity and Christendom.<sup>37</sup> The lines have long been drawn between those who emphasise the influence of pagan and Jewish practices on the formation of early Christian pilgrimage<sup>38</sup> and those who insist that it began with the Constantinian period and the exemplary figure of Helena.<sup>39</sup> Advocates for a new sort of pilgrimage under Constantine face the additional task of reconciling the few examples of early Christian travellers to Jerusalem, which were recalled by late antique authors.<sup>40</sup> It is in this tension that pre-Constantinian journeys to Palestine have been defined as traveling for the sake of intellectual interest, or *ιστορία*.<sup>41</sup> This is drawn in contrast to pilgrimage for the sake of “worship” in late antiquity, of which our most charismatic voice - that of Egeria - faithfully portrays.<sup>42</sup>

One of the enduring voices on the composition of sacred topography and pilgrimage is Jonathan Z. Smith, whose book, *To Take Place*, has become an essential volume for scholars of spatial theory, sacred topography, and the history of ritual. With fourth-century Jerusalem as one of his primary examples, Smith famously discussed the creation of sacred topography as the product of human design and action.<sup>43</sup> In his words, “Human beings are not placed, they bring

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scholars have expressed reservation on assuming religious reasons as a prerequisite. See Elsner and Rutherford 2007: 7-8 and Falcasantos 2017: 93.

<sup>36</sup> A similar comparison can be made to Greek *ξεντεία/ ξένοσ*. Pullan (2007: 390) considered the ambivalence of terminology as reflective of the general ambiguity of pilgrimage. While these terms illustrate the essence of pilgrimage - movement and estrangement - these can take on a range of sense: geographical and spiritual. A pilgrim’s earthly journey mirrors their journey to heaven and therefore exists in, or perhaps between, both of these realms. See also Bitton-Ashkelony (2005: 18); Falcasantos (2017: 93-94).

<sup>37</sup> Elsner and Rutherford (2007: 3).

<sup>38</sup> For instance: Kötting (1950); Wilkinson (1990); Hunt (1999).

<sup>39</sup> For instance: Holum (1990); Drijvers (2013); Taylor (1993).

<sup>40</sup> The remains of Jerusalem’s biblical and Christian attracted the interest of visitors such as Origen, Alexander of Cappadocia, Firmilianus and Melito of Sardis. However, the purpose and content of these journeys has been scrutinized; See Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 4.26.13; 6.11.1-2; 6.19.15-16; Jerome, *de Viris Illustribus* 54. See Hunt (1984: 1999).

<sup>41</sup> See Hunt 1984; Falcasantos 2017, 96.

<sup>42</sup> Often related to the concept of *θεωρία*. As is observed by Falcasantos (2017: 96-7). Campbell (1988: 20) strongly asserted the originality of the Christian *peregrinatio* using Egeria’s account: “With Christianity we find at last an audience for the first-person travel account and a metaphysic, in which private experience is valued and self-consciousness imperative...” Campbell’s remark was used as evidence of the “pilgrimage problem” mentioned by Elsner and Rutherford (2007: 3).

<sup>43</sup> Jonathan Z. Smith adopted what has been referred to as a “situational” approach to sacred space, in which human agency, ritual practice, and symbolic interpretation are integral to the formation of sacred topography. See Knott 2005: 11; Chidester and Linenthal (1995: 15-16).

place into being”.<sup>44</sup> Smith highlighted the role of Constantine and Eusebius as having crafted a “Holy” land through architecture and text.<sup>45</sup> Constantine’s buildings created the settings for significant liturgical advancement.<sup>46</sup> Jerusalem’s liturgy involved a creative layering of the temporal and the spatial as readings and psalms were carefully chosen accordingly for their “appropriateness”.<sup>47</sup> For this reason, Smith considered the interaction between place, story, and ritual as the essential components for the construction of sacred space in the context of late-antique Jerusalem.<sup>48</sup>

Using Smith’s framework, we will now consider the interaction between place, story, and ritual in the Bordeaux Itinerary. In doing so, I argue that the text contrasts the core assumptions of Smith’s framework. As a source predominantly interested in the exposition of history and scripture in the local topography, the lack of personal interaction, ritual, or ‘worship’ stands at odds with the expectations of a pilgrimage itinerary penned after Constantine’s revitalisation of Jerusalem.

### **Place and Story: Historia in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense***

As mentioned earlier, the descriptive departure of the Bordeaux Itinerary during the author’s visit to Palestine marks a clear shift in the text. In this section of the Itinerary, we can observe a departure from the perceived and measurable world, characterized by the stops and changes of the greater Itinerary. Instead, the text takes on a more descriptive form, as the author was keen to note natural phenomena and architectural monuments, as well as its historical and scriptural associations.<sup>49</sup> An example of this is in the frequent depiction of water in the itinerary; the author often observes the presence of springs, fountains, pools, and wells.<sup>50</sup> The author’s

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<sup>44</sup> Smith (1987: 28).

<sup>45</sup> Smith (1987: 79). See note 15 above.

<sup>46</sup> Bowman 2001: 8. The importance of Christian liturgy in this development is widely emphasised; much of this is founded on the influence of Dix (1945).

<sup>47</sup> The proliferation of place-specific liturgical exercises is an essential element of Egeria’s later account. Her observations of Jerusalem during the Lenten period are an invaluable witness to the flourishing of liturgical development in Late Antique Jerusalem and the development of readings *apta dei* and public, ecclesiastical processions. A more extensive look at liturgical development in Jerusalem will be provided below.

<sup>48</sup> Smith (1987: 86).

<sup>49</sup> The Bordeaux pilgrim’s attention to Jewish monuments and memory has led some to question the pilgrim’s identity and intel. While H. Donner (1979: 29) considered the pilgrim a baptised Jew, however this does not make sense given the overall tone of the Itinerary. We might expect the author might have had a Christian guide, who sought to convey how pre-existing monuments of Jewish memory were being incorporated into a Christian framework. See Stemberger 2000: 88-89.

<sup>50</sup> Observations include the bath of Cornelius (585.7), Jacob’s well near Sychar (588.4), various pools around Jerusalem (589.7-594.4), Elisha’s spring (596.7), the Dead Sea (597.8), the Jordan (598.2), and the spring where Philip baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch (599.1).

interpretation of water is revealing of the tension that exists between the perceived and conceived worlds of the viewer. While the author noted natural phenomena, emphasis is given to the symbolism that underlines the brief glossing of fountains, pools, and cisterns. The author's attention to these monuments incited various vignettes of biblical memory; an example of this is the Spring of Elisha:

A mile and a half past the city is the spring of the prophet Elisha. Previously, if any woman drank from it, she would not have children. On the side is the clay vessel of Elisha; throwing salt in it, he came and stood over the spring and said: "*Thus said the Lord: he has cleansed these waters*". Since then, if any woman drinks of it, she will have children.<sup>51</sup>

The parallel timeframes reveal the fountain's change of use on account of Elisha's intervention. The author of the Itinerary conveyed a layered compilation of stories embedded into the landscape. Showing little concern for accurate chronology, the author recapitulated the history of Palestine through various, co-existent narratives, which all seemed to play out at once.<sup>52</sup> Glenn Bowman observed this sort of arrangement as a sense of contiguous, rather than continuous, time.<sup>53</sup> Unlike the later accounts of pilgrimage, in which a sense of personal contact conjured past events and "localised" them in the present, there is not a strong authorial presence in the Bordeaux Itinerary.<sup>54</sup> Rather, historic events, though occurring at once, do not necessarily interact with one another, nor does the author directly engage with them. The text instead displays time as a sort of comparative: the frequent juxtaposition of time impresses on the reader the way things changed. In the case of Elisha's spring, the correlation of events revealed its properties both before and after Elisha's cure, thus highlighting the significance of his cleansing act.

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The sheer number of instances led Glenn Bowman (2001: 26) to consider the itinerary as a sort of catechetical text, designed to prepare candidates for baptism. Lauren Douglass (1996: 329) argued that the author's concern for water, particularly monuments related with healing and fertility, was an indication of the author's gender. Contrary to these assumptions, Susan Weingarten (1999: 4) suggested that the author's attention to water might have been reflective of the general necessity of water during travel.

<sup>51</sup>*It. Burd.* 596.7-10. *A civitate passus mille quingentos est ibi fons Helisei prophetae. Antea si qua mulier ex ipsa aqua bibebat, non faciebat natos. Adlatum est vas fictile Heliseo, misit in eo sales et venit et stetit super fontem et dixit: Haec dicit dominus: sanavi aquas has; ex eo si qua mulier inde biberit, filio faciet.* (Cuntz 1990: 97)

<sup>52</sup> The layering of biblical memory became standard practice in pilgrimage accounts, as Falcasantos observed: "A common thread throughout these accounts, even those that treat Jerusalem as a real, physical location, is that the city is a treasury of typology, where sacred event piled upon sacred event within an inhabitable topography" (2019: 294). Johnson (2016a: 29) referred to this as an "archival impulse".

<sup>53</sup> Bowman (2001: 15). Using this observation, Bowman delineates between two distinct domains, the present and the eschatological. Reconfiguring Leo Spitzer's remark that in Egeria's account "the eye of the pilgrim wanders incessantly from the biblical locus to the locus of Palestine" (1949: 239), Bowman illustrated the way in which "world" became "word". Bowman thus considered the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* foremost a scriptural, "spiritual voyage" (2001: 33).

<sup>54</sup> Markus (1994: 271)

The manipulation of different timelines fulfils a wider objective in the Itinerary: the amalgamation of biblical events produces a sense of narrative that carries the reader through Jewish and Roman history and into a new Christian era.<sup>55</sup> The author's interest in projecting scripture and history onto the topography of Palestine creates a predominantly "historicised" vision.<sup>56</sup> Only in a few brief remarks does the itinerary emerge into the present tense, which direct the reader to fill in the gaps between the past and present. This mode of writing is epitomized in the city of Jerusalem, which served as a focal point in the itinerary and as a place reconfigured during the Constantinian era.<sup>57</sup> In the author's tour of the city, Solomon, Hadrian and Constantine all co-exist. The author's configuration of parallel time creates a specific ideological tone: Constantine's enterprises and the historical figure of Jesus enforce the theme of Christian succession in the composition of Jerusalem. It is also in Jerusalem, where the Itinerary finally, and briefly, enters the present to illustrate the city's current condition.

Upon entering the city, the author first observed the various edifices identified as the enterprises of Solomon - the pools of Bethsaida and the Jewish Temple.<sup>58</sup> Such architectural description is intermingled with episodes of the life of Christ – both explicit and implied. While left unstated, Jesus' presence at Bethsaida is suggested by the remark: "There, the sick used to be cured".<sup>59</sup> Shifting to the ruined Temple, the author's architectural observations were foregrounded by Solomon and Jesus' respective interactions with demons:

There is also a crypt, where Solomon tortured demons. There is the corner of the highest tower, where the Lord went up and said to the one tempting him, 'And the Lord said to him, *you shall not tempt the Lord your God, but serve him only*'.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> The comparison of new and old is observed by Bowman 2001 and Elsner 2000, however the ideological implications of this hierarchy is elucidated most thoroughly in Irshai (2009: 475-485). As Ora Limor asserted in her discussion of spatial "conversion", the development of religious places in situations of cultural contact and transition insists on confrontation; she asserted that new occupants must find a way to relate to old things. Limor (2014: 32-33). This was often done through both physical and cognitive overhaul.

<sup>56</sup> Jacobs (2004:111-117) considered the author's mode of representation as depopulating the terrain from all except for the "dead heroes" from the Old Testament and their associated *criptae* and *monumenta*. Leyerle (1996: 126) observed a theme of omission in pilgrimage accounts, which produce a sense of "social emptiness".

<sup>57</sup> Elsner (2000: 189-190) observed a "rising curve of mythologization" approaching Jerusalem and a "gradual diminution" upon return. In contrast, see Salway (2012: 295).

<sup>58</sup> Irshai (2009: 476-7, f. 32, 33) disagreed with the assumption that the author entered through the northern Damascus gate, but rather likely first saw the temple from the Mount of Olives, thus following an early Christian practice, which ultimately became the "triumphal entry". Douglass (1996: 327-8) considered the *Itinerarium* as early evidence of this practice, albeit on the author's exit: *dextra est arbor palmae, de qua infantes ramos tulerunt et vieniente Christo substraverunt*. (595.1-2, Cuntz (1990: 96)).

<sup>59</sup> *It. Burd.* 589.9-10. *Ibi aegri multorum annorum sanabantur*. (Cuntz 1990: 96) For comparison, see Cyril of Jerusalem's *Homily on the Paralytic by the Pool*.

<sup>60</sup> *It. Burd.* 589.11-590.3. *Est ibi et cripta, ubi Salomon daemones torquebat. Ibi est angulus turris excelsissimae, ubi Dominus ascendit et dixit ei is, qui temptabat eum, et ait ei Dominus: Non temptabis dominum deum tuum, sed illi soli servies*. Cuntz (1990: 96). Irshai (2009: 478) noted that the episode of Solomon alluded to in the *Itinerarium* was a "widely disseminated rabbinical and Christian

In this instance, the viewer once again invoked a sense of parallel time. However, the organisation of topography and history asserted a sense of hierarchy: Solomon's crypt and the high tower mirrored Jesus' superiority not just in torturing, but defeating, the devil.<sup>61</sup> The rendering of memory in this way strikes a Christian tone. In the author's portrayal, Jewish Jerusalem – epitomized by the Temple and Solomon – is superseded by the presence and authority of Christ.<sup>62</sup> This episode prefaces the next series of scenes, which convey the ultimate Jewish dispossession of Jerusalem through a similar strategy of comparative vignettes.

Following Jesus' temptation on the pinnacle of the Temple, the author 'observes' the great "cornerstone" rejected by the builders and the blood of Zacharias, which still stained the front of the altar. However, underlying these observations is the reality that the temple and its altar were long destroyed by the time of the visit in 333. Mentally re-constructing the rubble and remains of the Temple, the author conjured images of the past to make sense of the present landscape. The Itinerary shifts to the present tense, revealing the remains of the Temple through the statues of Hadrian and *lapis pertusus*.<sup>63</sup> While left unsaid, the comparison of the altar and the statues invokes Christ's judgement of Jerusalem<sup>64</sup>:

.... upon you will come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I tell you, all these things will come upon this generation. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate.<sup>65</sup>

Leaving the Temple behind, the author continued to juxtapose Jewish and Christian monuments of the past and their present state throughout the remainder of their tour of Jerusalem. Jewish

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tradition". Related to this, Johnson (2008 and 2016b) has made a fascinating comparison between the accounts of Christian pilgrimage and apocryphal literature.

<sup>61</sup> The strategic comparison of events is furthered by an underlying theme in the temptation of Christ on the pinnacle of the temple. Bowman (2001: 24) considered Christ's success in rejecting the temptation of fleeting earthly power and architectural glory contrasts Solomon's destroyed Temple. Irshai (2009: 480) further interpreted the division of vertical planes as an allusion to the heavenly and earthly realms.

<sup>62</sup> It is worth noting that the author associated the rubble not with Herod but its first builder, Solomon. Doing so made the Jewish architecture and memory as a sort of foil on which Christian symbols could be associated.

<sup>63</sup> *It. Burd.* 591.1-5. *Sunt ibi et statuae duae Hadriani; est et non longe de status lapis pertusus, ad quem veniunt Iudaei singulis annis et unguent eum et lamentant se cum gemitu et vestimenta sua scindunt et sic recedunt.* The pierced stone was visited annually on the ninth of Ab. Jacobs (2004: 114) has observed that this is the only instance where the author alludes the presence of contemporary Jews in the landscape of Jerusalem. However, their presence is brief and ultimately "underscore[s] their material absence from a Christian space".

<sup>64</sup> Christian interpretations of the ruined Temple Mount composed the foundation for arguments of Christian possession of supersession. The invocation of the prophecy in Matthew 23 was frequently used to convey Jewish dispossession. See Thorpe (2009).

<sup>65</sup> Matthew 23:35-36.

synagogues that were “plowed and sown” were contrasted with Golgotha and the Mount of Olives, now marked by basilicas “built by the order of Constantine”.<sup>66</sup> The itinerary shows evidence of the urban and ideological processes of appropriation and Christianisation that we observe in Jerusalem during the fourth century. It is in this context that the author’s own perspective of the contested histories and sacred spaces of the city becomes apparent: the Itinerary advocates for a “Christian Jerusalem”, superimposed over the fabric of its previous Jewish and Roman histories.<sup>67</sup>

## Ritual in the *Itinerarium*

The Bordeaux Itinerary reveals how the physical and ideological landscape of Jerusalem was changing during the time of Constantine. However, there is a crucial difference between this text and later accounts of Christian pilgrimage. Over the course of the century, the proximity to places of biblical memory instigated different forms of interaction. Both before and after Constantinian intervention, visitors’ engagement with religious topography offered additional means of relating to scripture.<sup>68</sup> However, in the later fourth century, engagement was not just textual, but tactile.<sup>69</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem perhaps best captured this in his remark: “Others only hear, but we both see and handle”.<sup>70</sup> The invitation to “touch” and “see” became integral to the liturgical experience in Jerusalem. Combined with a unique temporal and spatial applicability, the psalms and readings chosen were ‘suitable to the place and time.’<sup>71</sup> These developments blurred the lines between past and present as biblical scenes were “re-presented” and “re-enacted” through liturgical

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<sup>66</sup> modo iussi Constantini imperatoris. The author’s reference to the synagogues invoked another condemning prophecy from Isaiah 1:8. On Constantine’s structures, see *It. Burd.* 594.3; 595.6; 598.7; 599.6. The comparative nature of Temple Mount would have offered excellent opportunity to praise the Constantinian church on Golgotha, however the author of the *Itinerarium* actually mentions very little: Dayna Kalleres (2014: 142-3) has considered this as evidence of “dialogue, if not conflict” in the reception of Constantinian intervention. While Kalleres perhaps reads too much into the author’s brief remark, the author’s brevity alone is worth considering. If not entirely subversive, the author’s lack of interest in Constantine’s church reveals a more ambiguous reception of Constantine’s projects by visiting Christians.

<sup>67</sup> Smith (1987: 79).

<sup>68</sup> For this reason, Bitton-Ashkelony (2005: 10) asserted that pilgrimage in the Holy Land was essentially “textual”, in which the essential purpose was “verifying and interpreting Holy Scriptures”. The textual nature of Holy Land pilgrimage is observed in Limor’s (2001) study of Egeria and Paula’s “reading” of sacred space.

<sup>69</sup> Levinson (2013: 114).

<sup>70</sup> *Cat.* 13.22. For a similar sentiment, see Paulinus of Nola’s *Ep.* 49.14. For a discussion on the relationship between touch and sight in late antiquity, see Frank 2000: 118-133.

<sup>71</sup> Antiphons, hymns, readings, and orations were often described as *apta dei et loco* in the *Itinerarium Egeriae*. See for instance: 25.5; 29.2; 31.1; 32.1; 35.4; 36.1; 37.6. Smith (1987: 93-94) considered the overlaying of a temporal and spatial system in this practice. This was most evident in the development of the “Great Week”, leading up to Easter, in which the liturgical program was exhausted with services and processions, which re-enacted the movements, memories, and emotions of Jesus’ life approaching his crucifixion and resurrection.

celebration.<sup>72</sup> The tactile nature of the sacred allowed worshippers to interact with space and memory in a new way. A famous example of this was Jerome's account of Paula during her own pilgrimage in 385. Her emotive reaction to Christ's cross and tomb is worth comparison:

Before the Cross she *threw* herself down in adoration as though she *beheld* the Lord hanging upon it: and when she entered the tomb which was the scene of the Resurrection she *kissed* the stone which the angel had rolled away from the door of the sepulchre. Indeed, so ardent was her faith that she even *licked* with her mouth the very spot on which the Lord's body had lain, like one thirsty for the river which he has longed for...<sup>73</sup>

The mixture of emotive contemplation and gesture in this account, while likely overstated because of Jerome's own literary aims, describes a reaction to Golgotha that transcended solely a recognition of sacred history: Paula beheld the events as if they unfolded before her.<sup>74</sup>

It is here that we might return to Bowman's idea of 'contiguous' rather than 'continuous' time in the Bordeaux Itinerary. While in later accounts, the lines between past and present converged in a sense of continuity, the Itinerary treated time differently. The author used past and present not necessarily as a vehicle for personal encounter, but as a juxtaposition of 'then' and 'now' to convey a transformed, Christian topography. While past events were remembered for the sake of the author's own temporal observations, we are given no indication that they sought to experience these personally, in the present.<sup>75</sup> This lack of personal encounter, of which the *Itinerarium* is often judged, might be explained by the incorporation of the second person, which further blurs the lines between the narrator and reader.<sup>76</sup> The author occasionally used this to direct movement: "As you ascend Sion [*ascendas*]", "As you leave [*eas*] the gate of Sion's walls...".<sup>77</sup> However, this is extended to direct the reader's vision and interpretation of the 'miraculously-preserved' remains on the Temple Mount:

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<sup>72</sup> Bowman (2001: 9). See also Markus (1994: 271). The historicizing nature of liturgy was classically argued by Dix (1945). Georgia Frank (2000: 133) argued that the combined elements of sight and touch "created the conditions for a biblical realism". As Levinson (2013, 114) put it, "This powerful link between sacred text and sacred land erased the boundaries of time and enabled the pilgrim to close the gap between past and present".

<sup>73</sup> Jerome, *Epistula* 108.9. *Prostrataque ante Crucem, quasi pendentem Dominum cerneret, adorabat. Ingressa sepulcrum resurrectionis, osculabatur lapidem, quem ab ostio monumenti amoverat angelus. Et ipsum corporis locum in quo Dominus jacuerat, quasi sitiens desideratas aquas, fidei ore lambemat.* (Trans. Cain (2013)). Emphasis mine.

<sup>74</sup> Cain (2010) argued that Jerome likely used his *Epitaph* in order to promote a cult in Bethlehem around Paula. A similar encouragement is Jerome's invitation to Marcella: "As often as we enter the Lord's Sepulcher, we see the Saviour in his grave clothes" (*Ep.* 46.5.)

<sup>75</sup> As is observed in Frank 2000: 107.

<sup>76</sup> Elsner (2000: 194-5) notes this distinguishing feature of the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, whereas Roman *Itineraria* are typically impersonal, using the third person. The subjective, "conversational" nature of the *Itinerarium* is made evident by the second person. Salway (2012:301-302) observes the use of the second person, in addition to dative present participles of motion verbs "definitely read like the sort of practical orientation provided by a modern tourist guidebook".

<sup>77</sup> *It. Burd.* 591.7; 593.1; See also 556.2; 561.5-6; 562.8; 571.9-19; 595.4-5.

... Before the altar in marble is the blood of Zacharias - you would say it had been shed today [*ibi dicas hodie fusum*]. Also, all around are the hobnails of the soldiers who killed him, throughout the area, so that you might think [*putes*] they had been pressed in wax...<sup>78</sup>

Insertions such as this make it unclear whether the *author* is taking the journey or the *reader* is. In this way, the journey seems instructive, not contemplative. Through an ideological transposition of geography, the author illustrates Christian succession and asserts this “new dispensation” over Jerusalem.<sup>79</sup> However, the author’s encouragement is to move, see, and think, not necessarily to touch, pray, and kneel.

## Conclusions

The *Itinerarium Burdigalense* reveals how the landscape of Jerusalem and its interpretation was changing during the time of Constantine. The author’s complex and carefully considered version of topography was subordinate to scriptural event.<sup>80</sup> History was construed in such a way as to convey a new Christian dispensation of the Roman Empire and the region of Palestine. Rather than the account of Egeria, a reasonable comparison is Eusebius’ *Onomasticon*, which reconfigured a traditional means of writing, compiling, and categorising geography within a new, Christian framework.<sup>81</sup> Additionally, both texts have been limited by their associations with early pilgrimage and sacred topography.<sup>82</sup> On this note, Dennis Groh argued that the *Onomasticon* was not a text for “pious pilgrims” but was rather an assertion of “Christian continuity”:

Eusebius is doing spatially... what he has already done chronologically in the *Chronicon* and what he will go on to do narratively in the *History* - namely, bringing biblical, Roman, and Christian realities together in such a way that Christian in his own day can be seen to be the successor of the biblical realities in the Roman World.<sup>83</sup>

In similar way, the central aim of the Bordeaux Itinerary was to assert a sense of Christian succession through its composition of topography and historical event. In both texts, geographical

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<sup>78</sup> *It. Burd.* 591.2-4...Sanguinem Zachariae ibi dicas hodie fusum; etiam parent vestigial clavorum militum, qui eum occiderunt, per totam ecream, ut putes in cera fixum esse (Trans. Jacobs (2004), 113).

<sup>79</sup> Elsner (2000: 192-3); Bowman (2001: 21).

<sup>80</sup> The relationship between sacred topography and text is discussed in wider Christian practice and history in Bowman (2013).

<sup>81</sup> Elsner (2000: 191).

<sup>82</sup> As is the preface of Groh’s inquiry (1983: 23).

<sup>83</sup> Groh (1983: 29).

interest was primarily oriented around apologetics and scriptural exegesis. Pious encounter was secondary to this aim, if a concern at all.

Therefore, Smith's framework is somewhat lacking in its depiction of Christian sacred space and practice in Jerusalem during the reign of Constantine. The Bordeaux Itinerary is an important text as it came on the heels of Constantinian intervention and lacks any interest in the ritual component, which underscores many of our assumptions of sacred travel and topography during this period. Rather, the Bordeaux Itinerary illustrates how the origins of this practice emerged from a pre-existing tradition of travel and travel writing, while also adapting, and abandoning certain conventions in order to fashion both geography in a new way. The *Itinerarium*, rather than being an account of 'pilgrimage' or 'sacred space' *par excellence*, helps to stretch our definitions and assumptions regarding the content and context of Christian religious travel and sacred space. Rather than being the sole product of an industrious emperor and his "Holy Land Plan", the Christianisation and consecration of Jerusalem was negotiated by the bishops, pilgrims, and locals, who continued to occupy the city over the course of the fourth century.

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