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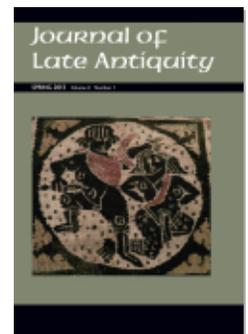
The Palestinian Earthquake of May 363 in Philostorgius, the Syriac *Chronicon miscellaneum*, and the Letter Attributed to Cyril on the Rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple

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The Palestinian Earthquake of May 363 in Philostorgius, the Syriac *Chronicon miscellaneum*, and the Letter Attributed to Cyril on the Rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple¹

Of the sources that report the Palestinian earthquake of 363, only an eighth-century fragment of the fifth-century Ecclesiastical History of Philostorgius, the seventh-century Syriac Chronicon miscellaneum, and the (probably) fifth-century letter attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the rebuilding of the Temple record details of destruction outside Jerusalem. Analysis of these texts establishes a close but indirect connection among them, made even clearer by a new reading of the manuscript correcting an error in the standard edition of the Syriac chronicle, which inaccurately reports the textual evidence for the date of the earthquake. The most likely source of the information about the earthquake is the hypothetical Arian (Homoean) History, probably written in Antioch in the 370s, in which the earthquake was seen as punishment for the Palestinian cities that persecuted Christians in the reign of Julian, and is thus to be understood in the wider context of the debate over the reign of Julian between Antiochene Christians and pagans, such as Libanius, who interpreted the catastrophe as announcing and mourning the emperor's death. That Antiochene tradition, represented by John Chrysostom, Ammianus, and Theophanes, does not mention an earthquake in connection with the failure of Julian's attempt to rebuild the Temple suggests that the earthquake that hit the Palestinian cities and the fire that stopped the rebuilding of the Temple could be circulated and debated as independent events, raising the possibility that it was Christian tradition that conflated them, producing the early and widespread tradition that both an earthquake and a fire stopped Julian's project.

¹ I am grateful to *JLA*'s anonymous referees for their helpful comments; to the British Library and, in particular, the staff of the Asian and African Studies Reading Room, for enabling access to the manuscript of the *Chronicon miscellaneum*; to Sebastian Brock, who shared his work on the letter of Cyril with me even before it was published; and to Glen Bowersock, Yaron Eliav, Oded Irshai, and the late John Strugnell for discussions over the years about the sources and issues analyzed here.

The sources for the Palestinian earthquake of May 363 hold a particular interest for at least three groups: archaeologists who use them to date precisely the destruction of many sites in the area; historians of the religions and cultures of Late Antiquity who seek to understand the literary and ideological function of earthquakes and other catastrophic events widely understood as evidence of the divine acting in history; and students of the individual texts in which the earthquake reports are found. A working model of how these sources relate to one another is fundamental for each group. Archaeologists need to base their work on sources that provide independent evidence rather than on those that report secondary elaborations.² And for literary and cultural historians, it is often those elaborations and the development of traditions that are most interesting to trace, a task that must rest on some source-critical hypothesis.

The aim of this study is to investigate the interrelationships among the sources for the Palestinian earthquake with a particular focus on three key texts, each of which presents interpretative problems: (1) The lost fifth-century *Ecclesiastical History* of Philostorgius, whose partial list of cities hit by the earthquake has to be reconstructed from an eighth-century text that has preserved fragments of the work; (2) A Syriac letter attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the rebuilding of the Temple, which provides a specific (although at points corrupt) list of cities struck by the earthquake and a precise date for the event, but whose authenticity, provenance, and sources are uncertain; and (3) A seventh-century Syriac chronicle, designated *Chronicon miscellaneum* by its most recent editor, which has clear connections to a possible source for the first two documents, connections that have been partially obscured by an inaccurate presentation of the manuscript evidence in the standard critical edition.

Fourth- and Fifth-Century Sources

Other sources also discuss the Palestinian earthquake of May 363. The earliest are marked by explicit and divergent ideological interpretations. Libanius, for example, Julian's ardent admirer, connected the earthquake with the emperor's death. In his *Funeral Oration over Julian (Epitaphios)*, probably written in 365, he interpreted it as a sign of mourning:

² For a lack of an indication of the relationships among sources for the earthquake of May 363, note E. Guidoboni, A. Comastri, G. Traina, *Catalogue of Ancient Earthquakes in the Mediterranean Area up to the 10th Century* (Rome, 1994), 264–267, and M.R. Sbeinati, R. Darawcheh, M. Mouty, “The Historical Earthquakes of Syria: An Analysis of Large and Moderate Earthquakes from 1365 B.C. to 1900 A.D.,” *Annals of Geophysics* 48 (2005), 347–435 at 386. For archaeological evidence, see K.W. Russell, “The Earthquake of May 19, A.D. 363,” *BASOR* 238 (1980), 47–64; and Idem, “The Earthquake Chronology of Palestine and Northwest Arabia from the 2nd through the mid-8th century A.D.,” *BASOR* 260 (1985), 47–64.

Earth, at least, was duly aware of her loss and has honored our hero with fitting mourning. Like a horse tossing its rider, she has destroyed ever so many cities—in Palestine many, in Libya all.³

In a section of his autobiography probably written in 374, the earthquakes are divine signs of the emperor's death:

[We] in Antioch discovered it [the emperor's death on 26 June 363] through no human agency: earthquakes were the harbingers of woe, destroying the cities of Palestine Syria either wholly or in part. We were sure by these afflictions that heaven had given us a sign of some great disaster, and, as we prayed that our guess should not be right, the bitter news reached our ears that our great Julian was being carried out in his coffin.⁴

For Christians, the earthquakes provided one of many examples of God's wrath directed against the emperor and his allies. In the first extensive Christian responses to Julian after his death, both Ephrem the Syrian's *Hymns against Julian* and Gregory of Nazianzus' *Orations against Julian* mentioned the earthquakes that overthrew cities in the context of their accounts of the miraculous storm, earthquake, and fire in Jerusalem that brought a sudden end to the emperor's attempt to rebuild the Temple.⁵ Before recounting the divine acts, Ephrem proclaimed,

Cities were overthrown as a reproach to paganism; Jerusalem especially condemned the accursed ones and crucifiers who dared, threatened, even entered to build the ruins, which they had destroyed by their sins.⁶

Gregory's report⁷ came after his dramatic account of the storm and earthquake that drove the Jewish crowds seeking safety into a holy place, only to

³ Or. 18.292: A.F. Norman, tr., *Libanius: Selected Works*, vol.1 (Cambridge, MA, 1969), 477. For the date, see Norman, *ibid.*, (end of 365 "or very soon after"), and M. Henry, "Le témoignage de Libanius et les phénomènes seismiques du IV^e siècle de notre ère: Essai d'interprétation," *Phoenix* 39 (1985), 36–61 at 61 (beginning of 365). P. van Nuffelen, "Earthquakes in A.D. 363–368 and the Date of Libanius, *Oratio* 18," *CQ* 56 (2006), 657–661 at 657–658, argues for a date shortly after the earthquake that struck Nicaea on 11 October 368.

⁴ Or. 1.134 (Norman, 79); for the date, xii–xiii.

⁵ Ephrem, *Hymns against Julian* 4.18–26 (also 1.16–20, 2.7); Greg. Or. 5.3–7. For Julian's attempt to rebuild the Temple, see D.B. Levenson, "The Ancient and Medieval Sources for the Emperor Julian's Attempt to Rebuild the Jerusalem Temple," *JSJ* 35 (2004), 409–460; Idem, "A Source- and Tradition-Critical Study of the Stories of the Emperor Julian's Attempt to Rebuild the Jerusalem Temple" (diss. Harvard Univ., 1980).

⁶ Ephrem, *Hymns against Julian* 4.18; E. Beck, ed., *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Paradiso und contra Julianum*, CSCO 174, *Scr.Syri* 78 (Louvain, 1957), 89. Given the focus on the Persians taking over Nisibis in the second half of Hymn 2, the hymns probably were completed in summer or fall, 363; see A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), 40.

⁷ Greg. Or. 5.4–7.

be destroyed by a fire coming from within the building. A cross in the sky and the sudden appearance of crosses on the garments of those who heard or told the story make it clear that the miraculous acts were the work of the “God of the Christians” and also led to mass conversions. Between these two reports of staurophany, Gregory recounted the destruction of cities “for the very same acts of impiety,” a punishment that fulfills Psalm 9:7: “Their cities you have destroyed; the memory of them has perished with a sound and a destruction noised abroad” (5.6).⁸

Ephrem’s poetry and Gregory’s rhetoric obscure the exact connection between the earthquake in Jerusalem and the earthquake(s) in the other cities. That the authors both mention earthquake(s) beyond Jerusalem is not surprising, for they cover much of the same material not only in their accounts of the miracles ending Julian’s project but also throughout their polemics against the emperor. As it is unlikely that they knew each other’s works, one might suppose that they were reporting what must have been a dynamic oral tradition circulated among Christians in the triumphant aftermath of the emperor’s death.⁹

Indeed, all the fifth-century church historians—Rufinus, Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret—report an earthquake accompanying the fire in Jerusalem that ended the attempt to rebuild the Temple. Rufinus, writing almost forty years after the event, reports that the earthquake in Jerusalem occurred on the night before the actual construction was to begin and right after Cyril of Jerusalem had predicted, on the basis of either Daniel or the Gospels, that the Jews would not be able to place “stone upon stone.”¹⁰ Rufinus’ sources cannot be determined with confidence. Much of his story could be explained as a combination of (1) oral tradition that he picked up during his years living on the Mount of Olives, (2) the accounts in Gregory and John Chrysostom (who mentions only a fire that stopped the work), and (3) Cyril’s exegesis of Daniel and of Jesus’ saying that “there will not be left here one stone upon another” (Mk 13:2, Mt 24:2, Lk 21:6) in *Catechetical Lecture* 15.15.¹¹ It is possible, although unlikely, that he used a version of the story in the lost

⁸ For text, translation, and commentary, see J. Bernardi, *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 4–5* (Paris, 1983), 298–306, and L. Lugaresi, *Gregorio di Nazianzo. Contro Giuliano l’Apostata. Oratio V* (Florence, 1997), 90–101, 177–185. S. Elm, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 2012), 342–343, dates Oration 5 to late 365 or early 366; Bernardi, *Grégoire*, suggests that both orations were completed in spring 364.

⁹ See J. Geffcken, “Kaiser Julianus und die Streitschriften seiner Gegner,” *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum* 21 (1908), 161–195 at 174–178, and S. Griffith, “Ephrem the Syrian’s Hymns ‘Against Julian’: Meditations on History and Imperial Power,” *VC* 41 (1987), 238–266 at 246–247.

¹⁰ Rufinus, *HE* 10.38–40.

¹¹ Cf. *Catech.* 10.11 on the Gospel passage. O. Irshai, “The Jerusalem Bishopric and the Jews in the Fourth Century: History and Eschatology,” in L.I. Levine, ed., *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (New York, 1999), 204–220 at 212–214, argues that Cyril might have revised *Catech.* 15.15 in the light of Julian’s project.

church history of Gelasius of Caesarea.¹² In any case, he does not mention any earthquakes beyond Jerusalem, nor do Socrates (*HE* 3.20), who depends for this story solely on Rufinus; Sozomen (*HE* 5.22), who weaves together almost all the previous Christian accounts; or Theodoret (*HE* 3.20), who uses Rufinus (possibly in Greek translation) and a source that he shares with Philostorgius.¹³

Of the fifth-century historians, only Philostorgius mentions earthquakes in neighboring cities. His evidence is crucial and exceedingly complex. There are two chief witnesses to his *Ecclesiastical History*: an extensive ninth-century epitome of the work by Photius of Constantinople, and the eighth-century *Artemii passio*, probably written by John of Damascus, which uses material from Philostorgius as background for the martyr's story.¹⁴ Both contain material about the events in Jerusalem connected to the rebuilding of the Temple. In one place Photius mentions a fire and an earthquake,¹⁵ and in another he provides a lengthy account of the unique story of the discovery of the Gospel of John in a cave underneath the Temple Mount.¹⁶ The testimony of the *Artemii passio* is particularly significant. After an account sharing much with Theodoret, including a storm, earthquake, and fire,¹⁷ it reports:

It also happened that cities fell: those around Nicopolis, Neapolis, Eleutheropolis, Gaza, and many others. A stoa of Aelia, that is to say, Jerusalem, by the synagogue of the Jews, fell and killed many of those just mentioned, and fire broke out mysteriously and burned up a great number of Jews. And there was darkness in those places, and continual earthquakes wreaking much destruction in many cities.¹⁸

¹² For Rufinus' sources, see Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 419–421; also F. Thélamon, *Paiens et chrétiens au IV^e siècle: L'apport de "Histoire ecclésiastique" de Rufin d'Aquilée* (Paris, 1981), 294–309.

¹³ For the sources used by Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, see Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 424–425, and the *apparatus fontium* in the GCS editions: G.C. Hansen, ed., *Sokrates Kirchengeschichte* (Berlin, 1995), 215–216; J. Bidez, G.C. Hansen, eds., *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1995), 229–232; and L. Parmentier, G.C. Hansen, eds., *Theodoret Kirchengeschichte*, 3rd ed. (Berlin, 1998), 198–200.

¹⁴ J. Bidez assigned the *Artemii passio* to an otherwise unknown ninth-century John of Rhodes: J. Bidez, F. Winkelmann, eds., *Philostorgius Kirchengeschichte*, GCS 21, 3d ed. (Berlin, 1981), xlv–xlv. For the attribution to John of Damascus, see P.B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 5 (Berlin, 1988), 185–187.

¹⁵ Philostorg. *HE* 7.9 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 96).

¹⁶ Philostorg. *HE* 7.14 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 99).

¹⁷ Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.5.

¹⁸ *Art. pass.* 68: "Καταπεσεῖν δὲ καὶ πόλεις συνέβη, τὰς περὶ Νικόπολιν καὶ Νεάπολιν Ἐλευθερόπολιν τε καὶ Γάζαν καὶ ἑτέρας πλείους· στοὰ τε τῆς Αἰλίας ἤγουν Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἢ παρὰ τὴν συναγωγὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, πολλοὺς τῶν εἰρημένων κατενεχθεῖσα ἀνεῖλεν, πῦρ τε ἐκραγὲν ἀδήλωος πλείστους Ἰουδαίων κατέκαυσεν. ἐγένετο δὲ καὶ σκότος κατὰ τοὺς τόπους ἐκείνους, καὶ σεισμοὶ συνεχεῖς πολλὰς φθορὰς ἐν πολλαῖς ἐργασάμενοι πόλεσιν" (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 96). See also Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, 5.242; for translations, P.R. Amidon, *Philostorgius: Church History* (Atlanta, 2007), 105, and M. Vermes in S.N.C. Lieu, D. Montserrat, eds., *From*

The *Artemii passio* thus mentions not only Palestinian earthquakes but also the names of cities destroyed. Whence does this material derive, and is it possible to evaluate its reliability? These questions can be approached by considering the relationship of Philostorgius' report to two Syriac documents, the letter attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the rebuilding of the Temple, and the so-called *Chronicon miscellaneum*.

The Letter Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the Rebuilding of the Temple

In 1977 Sebastian Brock published a letter attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple. The edition was based on an 1899 Syriac manuscript in Harvard's Houghton Library and a late sixth-century manuscript from the British Library, which contains only the first half of the letter.¹⁹ Brock subsequently noted the existence of two additional manuscripts.²⁰ Brock does not believe the letter was written by Cyril, but still places it relatively early, at the beginning of the fifth century, because, among other reasons, he does not detect any influence from the fifth-century church historians.²¹

Claiming the authority of an eyewitness, the letter describes in vivid detail, from the perspective of the Jerusalem Christian community, the events in Jerusalem "when the Jews received the order to rebuild the Temple."²² The body of the letter, sections 6–9, reports a series of miracles: a storm, which initially prevented the construction on Sunday; an earthquake that night, which saw the Christian community proceeding to the Mount of Olives while praying for a clear sign against the Jews; and a miraculous fire suddenly emerging from the synagogue doors, which killed many of the Jews seeking shelter there and led to acclamations of faith, mass conversions of unbelievers, and the appearance of crosses on the garments of those who did not believe. Also reported are the expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem and the raising of a statue of Hadrian that they had torn down.²³ After what appears to be a clear and effective conclusion in section 10—"Thus we have felt compelled to write to

Constantine to Julian: Pagan and Byzantine Views (London/New York, 1996), 254, who gives the possible alternative translation of "many deaths" for "πολλὰς φθορὰς."

¹⁹ S.P. Brock, "A Letter Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the Rebuilding of the Temple," *BSOAS* 40.2 (1977), 267–286.

²⁰ Damascus Patriarchate 4/12 from 1911 and a manuscript belonging to Rev. John Khoury "of perhaps the thirteenth or fourteenth century," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 26 (1981), 321. The Khoury manuscript also contains a Syriac translation of Cyril's *Letter to Constantius*, which has been published by J.F. Coakley, "A Syriac Version of the Letter of Cyril of Jerusalem on the Vision of the Cross," *AB* 102 (1984), 71–84.

²¹ Brock, "Letter Attributed to Cyril," 281–282.

²² Section 1, section numbers from Brock's edition.

²³ Section 9. Harvard Syr. 99 has the name "Herod," but this is a corruption introduced by a scribe influenced by the apocryphal correspondence between Herod and Pilate found in both

you the truth of these matters, that everything that is written about Jerusalem should be established in truth, that ‘no stone shall be left in it that will not be upturned’”²⁴—the letter appends in section 11 a list of twenty-one, twenty-two, or twenty-three cities that were damaged in the earthquake, with an indication of the degree of devastation for each one:

Now we should like to write down for you the names of the towns that were overthrown: Beit Gubrin—more than half of it; part of Baishan, the whole of Sebastia and its territory (χώρα), the whole of Nikopolis and its territory (χώρα); more than half Lydda and its territory (χώρα), about half of Ashqelon, the whole of Antipatris and its territory (χώρα); part of Caesarea, more than half Samaria; part of NṢL, a third of Paneas, half of Azotus, part of Gophna, more than half Petra (RQM); Hada, a suburb of the city (Jerusalem)—more than half; more than half Jerusalem. And fire came forth and consumed the teachers of the Jews. Part of Tiberias too, and its territory (χώρα), more than half ‘RDQLY’,²⁵ the whole of Sepphoris (ṢWPRYN) and its territory (χώρα), Ḥaina d-Gader; Haifa²⁶ flowed with blood for three days; the whole of Japho (YWPY) perished, (and) part of ‘D’NWS.²⁷

The letter ends with a date for the event and a report of the emperor’s death:

This event took place on Monday at the third hour, and partly at the ninth hour of the night. There was great loss of life here. (It was) on 19 Iyyar of the year 674 of the kingdom of Alexander the Greek. This year the pagan Julian died, and it was he who especially incited the Jews to rebuild the Temple, because he favored them because they had crucified Christ. Justice overtook this rebel at his death in enemy territory, and, in this, the sign of the power of the Cross was revealed, because he had denied him who had been hung upon it for the salvation and life of all. All this that has been briefly written to you took place in actual fact in this way.²⁸

manuscripts; Brock, in a book review published in *JSS* 26 (1981), 317–321 at 321, reports that the name Hadrian also appears in Damascus Patriarchate 4/12.

²⁴ Brock, 275–276.

²⁵ Russell, “The Earthquake of May 19,” 51, tentatively suggests this might be a corruption of “Archelais.” Guidoboni et al., *Catalogue*, 266, suggest “Areopolis” on palaeographical grounds and the evidence of Jerome’s *Commentary on Isaiah* (CCL 73.2.176). Russell, 53–54, does not find Areopolis in the list but does argue that it was hit by the earthquake of May 363

²⁶ Brock, “Letter Attributed to Cyril,” 279, tentatively suggests reading ḤYP for the manuscript’s HLP. See below for a different explanation of this part of the text.

²⁷ Section 11, Brock, tr., 276, including his parenthetical notes.

²⁸ Section 12, Brock, tr., 276. Of the two manuscripts Brock uses, only Harvard Syr. 99 (1899) has this ending. BM Add. 14609 (dated by Wright to 586–587 CE) ends just after the beginning of section 7. Coakley, “A Syriac Version,” 76 n. 23, reports and translates the ending of the text of the letter in the Khoury manuscript, which inserts between 11 and 12, “End of the letter which Cyril the Bishop wrote, who told about the great tremor which took place when Julian the pagan

This passage provides not only a precise date, but a list of cities, specifying the damage in each, data that were exploited by archaeologists soon after the publication of the letter and that appear to accord well with earthquake patterns in the region and with damage at particular sites.²⁹ But how reliable is the information in the letter? Is the letter really by Cyril, and if not, what sources were used in its composition? How does it relate to the other texts describing the same events? Before discussing these questions, it is necessary to introduce the evidence from the *Chronicon miscellaneum*, the only extant source reporting the Palestinian earthquakes that does not mention the attempt to rebuild the Temple but still has a clear relationship with the material from Philostorgius and the letter attributed to Cyril.

The Text of the Report of the Earthquakes in the Chronicon miscellaneum

The connection to the letter attributed to Cyril can be clarified by considering a more accurate version of the text of the chronicle than that reported in the two published editions of the document. The chronicle (or, more precisely, collection of chronicles), first edited by Land, who called it *Liber Chalipharum*, and then by Brooks, who produced the standard edition and renamed it *Chronicon miscellaneum ad annum p. Chr. 724 pertinens*, long has been recognized as an important witness to the late antique chronographic tradition.³⁰ It was composed around 640, probably by a priest named Thomas from the Rhesaina region; a list of caliphs extending to 724 was added by an eighth-century copyist.³¹ It contains a number of passages that have close parallels with Greek chronicles, as well as additional material. There are a number of brief notices of earthquakes, as well as two extended descriptions

emperor commanded that the Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem be rebuilt. And this Cyril is he who composed the short stichoi which are said on Good Friday in the day offices. (And) so that you may know this account precisely: this event took place on Monday [etc., as in section 12].” He argues that the additional material “seems less easy to explain as an interpolation than as a passage omitted by the text of Harvard Syr. 99, published by Brock.” This leads him to conclude that “the dating of the events belongs outside the letter itself, and therefore probably in some chronicle from which the letter was taken.” If the manuscript contains all of section 12 (as Coakley implies), including its second conclusion, this only confirms the impression of a clumsy writer, working from several different sources.

²⁹ Russell, “The Earthquake of May 19.”

³⁰ J.P.N. Land, *Anecdota Syriaca* (Leiden, 1862–1868), 1.2–24 (text), 103–122 (tr.), 165–177 (“Scholia”), 2.2–6, 16–19 (“Addenda et Emendanda”); E.W. Brooks, *Chronicon miscellaneum ad annum p. Chr. 724 pertinens*, *Chronica minora* 2, CSCO 3, *Scr. Syri* 3 (Louvain, 1904), 77–155; tr. J.-B. Chabot, CSCO 4, *Scr. Syri* 4 (Louvain, 1904), 63–119.

³¹ See A. Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool, 1993), 5–7; see 13–19 for a translation of the section covering the years 450–640.

ing Avi-Yonah's claim that Julian's attempt to rebuild the Temple ended on 27 May, a date Avi-Yonah derived from the Ethiopic *Synaxarion* and supported by a reference to the *Chronicon miscellaneum*.⁴⁷ Bowersock notes that the *Chronicon miscellaneum* makes no reference to the attempt to rebuild the Temple and observes that the *Synaxarion* does not give 27 May as the date for the abandonment of the project but instead in connection with the story of the bodies of John the Baptist and Elisha.⁴⁸ This case can be made even stronger with the recognition that the Ethiopic *Synaxarion*, a translation of the Arabic *Synaxarion*, represents a widely attested Alexandrian Christian tradition that recounts Theophilus' *translatio* of the bones of John the Baptist and Elisha to the new church he dedicated to them on 2 Paone (27 May) 397.⁴⁹

The problem with the text of the manuscript as well as the possible discrepancy with the date of the earthquakes in the letter attributed to Cyril can be resolved easily. The phrase "and on the 27th day" does not refer to 27 May (Iyyar) but to 27 June (Ḥaziran) and belongs with the immediately following notice, which reports the accession of Jovian, who was in fact crowned on Friday, 27 June, 363.⁵⁰ This division of the text is confirmed by the *Julian Romance*, which has a number of verbatim parallels with the *Chronicon miscellaneum*.⁵¹ After recounting how the crown miraculously descended on Jovian's head from the Cross, the *Julian Romance* reports:

On this day Jovian, the son of Urninus, reigned over the Romans in the land of the Persians in the region of Beth Aramaye on the Tigris River, which is on the north side of Ctesiphon, in the month of Ḥaziran of the year 674

⁴⁷ M. Avi-Yonah, *The Jews of Palestine* (New York, 1976), 200.

⁴⁸ Bowersock, *Julian*, 121.

⁴⁹ See the Coptic *Panegyric of John the Baptist* in A. Van Lantschoot, "Fragments coptes d'un Panegyrique de S. Jean-Baptiste," *Le Muséon* 44 (1931), 235–254 at 246; Garshuni, *Life of John the Baptist* in A. Mingana, "A New Life of John the Baptist," *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1927), 138–145, 234–287 at 281, 283; and Theophanes in C. de Boor, ed., *Theophanis Chronographia* (Leipzig, 1883), 75. De Boor follows Codex Vaticanus 154 ("b"), which mistakenly gives the month as June. C. Mango, R. Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor* (Oxford, 1997), 114, translate de Boor's text. For discussion of this tradition in these sources and further bibliography, see Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 440–444.

⁵⁰ Amm. 25.5.1.

⁵¹ For parallels with *Chron. misc.*, 131–134, see J.G.E. Hoffmann, *Iulianos der Abtrünnige, Syrische Erzählungen* (Leiden, 1880), 3, 5, 102, 140, 144, 187, 201, 223–225, 239–241, and a new fragment from the beginning of the work published by Brock and A. Muraviev in "The Fragments of the Syriac Julian Romance from the Manuscript Paris Syr 378," *Khristianskii Vostok* 2 (2000), 14–34 at 22, lines 7–20 (left column). T. Nöldeke, "Über den syrischen Roman von Kaiser Julian," *ZDMG* 28 (1874), 263–292 at 285–286, mentions that both Land's chronicle and the *Julian Romance* know the correct date for Jovian's accession, but his observation has gone unnoticed in subsequent scholarship.

The Chronicon miscellaneum and the Letter Attributed to Cyril on the Rebuilding of the Temple

The recognition that the *Chronicon miscellaneum* associates the twenty-seventh day with Jovian's accession to the throne not only eliminates a discrepancy between the chronicle and the letter attributed to Cyril but also leads to a further consideration of the relationship between the two documents. The most likely possible correspondence relates to the number of cities overthrown. The chronicle gives the number as 21, and the letter provides a similar, even if not exactly certain, number. Brock says the letter appears "to give 23 names (22 excluding Jerusalem), 21 excluding the 'suburb' Hada as well."⁵⁵ A precise count is further complicated in that several names are clearly corrupt. Brock lists six. The one least likely to be the name of a city is HLP, which Brock tentatively emends to HYP and translates "Haifa."⁵⁶ Because there is no indication of the degree of the devastation for this name or the previous one (ʿAina d-GDR), as there is for every other name in the list, it is possible that neither is a town. Although HLP remains problematic, ʿAina d-GDR could be taken as "the spring of GDR" (perhaps connected with Sepphoris, immediately before it), in which case it would go well with the phrase "flowed with blood."⁵⁷ Without ʿAina d-Gedar and HLP, the number of cities listed in the letter would be twenty-one, a remarkable similarity to the number in the *Chronicon*.⁵⁸

Although some connection is clear, the nature of the relationship between these two works is not obvious. It does not seem that the chronicle depends directly or indirectly on the letter.⁵⁹ There is no other evidence for any connection between the chronicle and the letter; for example, the chronicle does not report the attempt to rebuild the Temple. More significantly, the chronicle interprets the earthquakes as punishments for the cities that shed Christian

⁵⁵ Brock, "Letter Attributed to Cyril," 279.

⁵⁶ Note his comment that "perhaps this should not be read as a name at all" (279).

⁵⁷ Brock, "Letter Attributed to Cyril," 279, tentatively suggests "ʿAin Gadur on the Zerqa" or Ein Gedi. Russell, "The Earthquake of May 19," 51, opts for the former. Rabbinic tradition mentions hot springs at Gadara: Qid. 3.12 (64c [end]) (see b. Shab. 109a, where the received text has the graphically similar GRR). For a possible connection with Sepphoris, see b. Moed Qatan 25b: "At the death of R. Jose, the roof gutters of Sepphoris ran with blood."

⁵⁸ Even if the number would be 22 or 23, "this correspondence is remarkable and can hardly be attributed to chance" (Brock, "Letter Attributed to Cyril," 279). Russell, "The Earthquake of May 19," 49, 51, 61 n.3, arrives at the number 21 (without reference to *Chron.misc.*) by eliminating HLP, which he suggests is "probably a geographical distinction" and arguing that Samaria was a region rather than a town. The number 22 in Agapius' history (*PO* 7.581; *CSCO*, *Scr.Arab.* 10 [Louvain, 1911], 299) probably derives from a Syriac chronicle related to the *Chronicon miscellaneum*; see Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 439–440. Although it does not give a number, the *Chronicle of Seert*, which seems to use the same source as Agapius (*ibid.*), notes "the earth shook, and a strong wind blew, destroying a number of cities neighboring Jerusalem" (*PO* 5.229).

⁵⁹ A dependence apparently assumed by Brock, "Letter Attributed to Cyril," 279, 281.

blood, a theme not found in the letter. Furthermore, sections 11 and 12 of the letter are poorly integrated into the rest of the letter, because, as noted above, section 10 would provide a fitting conclusion, and the insertion of a brief notice of a fire in Jerusalem into the list is exceedingly odd, given the dramatic account earlier in the letter. It even has been suggested that this material appears to come from a chronicle.⁶⁰ There is a good possibility, then, that sections 11 and 12 circulated independently of the letter and were found in a source also used by the *Chronicon miscellaneum*. Indeed, the report of Julian's death in section 12 is almost certainly based on a Syriac chronicle, as can be seen from the sudden shift to the emperor's apostasy and divine punishment and the Syriac method of dating ("674 of the Kingdom of Alexander the Greek").

The Chronicon miscellaneum, the Letter Attributed to Cyril, and the "Arian Historiographer"

An excellent candidate for the common source of the list in the *Chronicon miscellaneum* of cities overthrown by the earthquakes and the material in sections 11 and 12 of the letter is a work, at least partially in the form of a chronicle, whose fragments Bidez collected in an appendix to his edition of Philostorgius and whose author he called an "Arian Historiographer."⁶¹ This work, which Bidez reconstructed from a number of Byzantine and Near Eastern chronicles, appears to be Antiochene and to have covered the period from Constantine to the 360s or 370s.⁶² Bidez suggests that it was used by both Philostorgius and

⁶⁰ Brock, "Letter Attributed to Cyril," 281, suggests that the letter was excerpted from a chronicle, because the title in the Harvard manuscript ends with the words "and the signs which occurred in the region of Asia," indicating a document with more than the letter in it. P. Wainwright, "The Authenticity of the Recently Discovered Letter Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem," *VC* 40 (1986), 286–293 at 288–289, defends the authenticity of the body of the letter but excludes sections 11–12, suggesting that they come from the chronicle. See also Coakley, "A Syriac Version," 76 n. 23. J.W. Drijvers, *Cyril of Jerusalem: Bishop and City* (Leiden, 2004), 141 n. 52, raises the possibility that section 11 is based on the *Chronicon miscellaneum*.

⁶¹ Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, cli–clxiii (introduction), 202–241 (Appendix VII: "Fragmente eines Arianischen Historiographen"). For a translation of the fragments, see Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 205–238. Note also P. Batiffol, "Un historiographe anonyme arien du IV^e siècle," *Römische Quartalschrift* 9 (1895), 57–97; and H.C. Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer. Der Osten bis zum Ende der homöischen Reichskirche* (Tübingen, 1988), 92–157. Although "Homöean" would be more precise, according to scholarly convention the terms "Arian History" and "Arian Historiographer" (Bidez's "arianische Historiograph" and Batiffol's "historiographie arien") are used here.

⁶² R.W. Burgess, *Studies in Eusebian and Post-Eusebian Chronography* (Stuttgart, 1999), 122–126, argues that the material up through 350 CE is an Antiochene continuation of Eusebius' *Chronici canones* and that the *Chron. miscellaneum* is a witness only to that work. Given the significant overlap between the *Chronicon paschale* and Theophanes both before and after 350, it is likely that the material up through the 360s or 370s was eventually part of one work, with the more expansive material after 350 being a continuation of the earlier chronicle; see Burgess, *Studies*, 124–125 n. 31.

Theodoret, thus accounting for the common material.⁶³ Several fragments concern the reign of Julian, and this section centered on anti-Christian violence in the empire in general and in Palestine in particular, thus paralleling the stories of the martyrs of Palestine in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*.⁶⁴

That the *Chronicon miscellaneum* contains passages that read like a literal translation from the Greek fragments collected by Bidez strongly suggests that the Syriac chronicle ultimately depends on that source.⁶⁵ The report of the cities devastated by the earthquakes does not appear in any of the main sources Bidez used to reconstruct the work other than the *Chronicon miscellaneum*.⁶⁶ However, the interpretation of the earthquakes as punishment for the cities that persecuted the Christians would fit well with one of the major themes of the *Arian History*, and for that reason Bidez included a revised version of Chabot's Latin translation among the fragments.⁶⁷

A good case for the use of this source by the author of the letter attributed to Cyril also can be made. The key piece of evidence is the striking similarity between the beginning of the list in the letter and the aforementioned reference in the *Artemii passio* to specific Palestinian cities being destroyed: "It also happened that cities fell: those around Nicopolis, Neapolis, Eleuthero- polis, Gaza and many others. A stoa of Aelia, that is to say, Jerusalem, by the synagogue of the Jews, fell and killed many of those just mentioned, and fire broke out mysteriously and burned up a great number of Jews." The beginning of the list of cities here is remarkably close to the beginning of the list in the letter, which cites Beit Gubrin (Eleutheropolis), Baishan (Skythopolis),⁶⁸ Sebastia (Sebaste),⁶⁹ and Nikopolis.⁷⁰ Equally striking is that the *Artemii*

For the connection of the *Chronicon miscellaneum* with the material after 350, see the discussion below of the link between the account of the Palestinian earthquakes of 363 in the *Chronicon miscellaneum* and the accounts of the martyrs under Julian, which feature prominently in the *Chronicon paschale* and Theophanes. See also the dating to the year of the peace of the churches: year 50 in *Chronicon paschale* s.a.361 and year 52 in the *Chronicon miscellaneum* (Brooks, 133, line 6).

⁶³ Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, cxxxvi; Parmentier, Hansen, *Theodoret*, lxxxix.

⁶⁴ Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, clvii; Brennecke, *Studien*, 94.

⁶⁵ Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, clii–cliii.

⁶⁶ See below for related passages in Agapius and the *Chronicle of Seert*.

⁶⁷ Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 237.

⁶⁸ Skythopolis is not in the *Artemii passio*, but it appears in the sources connected with the Arian Historian as one of the sites of anti-Christian violence in the time of Julian, specifically the desecration of the remains of Saint Petrophilus; see *Chron.pasch.* s.a.362, Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 47 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 228); Brennecke, *Studien*, 120–121.

⁶⁹ Just northwest of Neapolis. For the desecration of the remains of John the Baptist at Sebaste reported by sources connected with the Arian history, see *Chron.pasch.* s.a. 362; Philostorg. *HE* 7.4; Theodoret, *HE* 3.7.2 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 228); Brennecke, *Studien*, 119–120.

⁷⁰ Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 49, reports that Julian ordered the healing spring in Nikopolis, where Jesus washed his feet, to be covered up. This is not listed among Bidez's fragments, presumably because Julian's action there is not reported in any other source connected to the Arian historian.

passio, like the letter, inserts a brief notice of the fire killing Jews in Jerusalem. The inclusion of only four cities in the *Artemii passio* could be explained as an abbreviation of a longer list, either by the author of the *Artemii passio* or by his source, Philostorgius. Nor is the appearance of Gaza in the list in the *Artemii passio* necessarily problematic, for two reasons. The list of the cities, which has not been preserved in the sixth-century manuscript of the letter attributed to Cyril, has several names that are clearly corrupt and cannot be identified.⁷¹ More significantly, Gaza would make sense in this list. As already seen, the *Chronicon miscellaneum* presents the damage to the cities in the earthquake as punishment for anti-Christian violence during the reign of Julian, and Gaza was one of the prominent places where such violence was reported to have taken place.⁷²

Additional support for the letter's author having used the *Arian History* for the material in sections 11 and 12 is the striking parallel in section 12 of the letter, "Justice overtook this rebel at his death in enemy territory," with the statement in Theophanes, probably drawn from the Arian historiographer, "For while in foreign territory, he was destroyed by divine justice."⁷³

There are, of course, other ways to explain a relationship between the *Artemii passio* and the letter. The most obvious would be that Philostorgius (or, less likely, the author of the *Artemii passio*) might have used the letter. This seems unlikely because neither Photius' *Epitome* of Philostorgius nor the *Artemii passio* has any of the distinctive features of the letter, in particular the dramatic stories of the procession to the Mount of Olives and of the fire emerging from the miraculously opened doors of the synagogue. The latter is especially significant because Philostorgius clearly reported a different and much less dramatic version of the fire miracle.⁷⁴ There is no reason

⁷¹ As discussed above; I have not been able to check the unpublished manuscript of the letter cited by Coakley, "Syriac Version."

⁷² For reports of the violence in Gaza (often paired with Askalon, which does appear in the letter) in the sources associated with the Arian Historiographer, see *Chron.pasch.* s.a.362, Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 47 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 228), Theodoret, *HE* 3.7.1; Brennecke, *Studien*, 122. See further Greg. *Or.* 4.86, Soz. *HE* 5.9–10, and Ambrose, *Epist.* 74.15 (= *Epist. extra coll.* 1a.15; Maurist, ed., *Epist.* 40), which mentions churches burned at Damascus, Gaza, Ascalon, Berytus, and Alexandria. It is possible that Ambrose depends on the Arian Historiographer for these reports as well as for his account of Julian's attempt to rebuild the temple (*Epist.* 74.12; Maurist, ed., *Epist.* 40.12) and the martyrdom of Aemilianus (*Epist.* 74.17; *Epist. extra coll.* 1a.17); also *Chron.pasch.* s.a. 363; Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 51; Jerome, *Chron.* 243a (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 234); Brennecke, *Studien*, 131–132.

⁷³ "ὑπερόριος γὰρ θεῖα δίκη ἀνῆρέθη" (de Boor, *Theophanes*, 53, lines 1–2; Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 237). Mango and Scott, *Chronicle of Theophanes*, 83, cite the "Hypothetical Arian" as the source for the passage.

⁷⁴ Both Photius' *Epitome* (7.9) and the *Artemii passio* report a fire burning those beginning the work; *Artem.pass.* 68 states that it came out of the excavated foundations. This probably derives

to believe that either Philostorgius or the Arian Historiographer would have hesitated to use material from a letter from Cyril had they had access to one, for both report the celestial Cross in Jerusalem in 351 in the bishop's *Letter to Constantius*.⁷⁵

Another possibility that remains to be considered is that the Arian Historiographer found the list of cities in the letter. If this were the case, the letter in its entirety would almost certainly have to be accepted as genuine, because the probable date of the history is within a decade of the event. As will be seen, however, it is unlikely that the letter is Cyril's.⁷⁶

The Authenticity of the Letter of Cyril

For Brock, two points against authenticity are conclusive: (1) Even though the letter claims to be written while the earth was shaking, it reports the death of Julian a month later; and (2) It is hard to explain why no fourth- or fifth-century writer seems to be aware of an eyewitness account written to the "bishops, priests, and deacons of the Church of Christ in every district" (section 2).⁷⁷ To Brock's case against authenticity five more points can be added: (3) The report of Julian's death in section 12 is clearly from a later Syriac source;⁷⁸ (4) The brief notice of a fire in Jerusalem in the list of cities could hardly have been originally part of a letter that described the fire in such detail earlier; (5) the clumsy composition, inconsistencies, and awkward transitions throughout the rest of the letter⁷⁹ contrast sharply with the highly polished rhetoric of Cyril's genuine *Letter to Constantius*, the document that must have inspired it;⁸⁰ (6) The letter seems to refer to Jerusalem as a foreign city;⁸¹ and (7) it is very unlikely that Cyril would have said that the city of Jerusalem, rather than

from the Arian Historiographer; see Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 51–52 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 235–236); Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 422–423, 435). The reference to the stoa in the report of the fire in Jerusalem (*Artem.pass.* 58) might indicate the influence of Rufinus' account (10.40).

⁷⁵ Photius 3.26; *Artem.pass.* 11 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 51–52); *Chron.pasch.* s.a.351; Theophanes, de Boor, 41 (Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 22).

⁷⁶ For more extensive arguments against the authenticity of the letter, see Levenson, "Source- and Tradition-Critical Study," 84–97; Idem, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 428–434.

⁷⁷ Brock, "Letter Attributed to Cyril," 281. This point can be made even stronger by the contrast with the *Letter to Constantius*, which was well known.

⁷⁸ As noted above.

⁷⁹ E.g., in one sentence the Jews are driven out of town, whereas in the next they are baptized (see also Coakley, "A Syriac Version," 76). Section 3 does not fit well between sections 2 and 4. The part of section 6 describing the procession to the Mount of Olives interrupts the narrative (section 7 should follow immediately after "fled and took refuge in the Church of the Confessors").

⁸⁰ See also Coakley, "A Syriac Version," 76.

⁸¹ E.g., "the foundations of Jerusalem" (3); "the Mount of Olives, which is east of Jerusalem" (6); "the statue of Hadrian which stood in Jerusalem" (9).

the Jews or the Temple, was punished.⁸² It seems likely that the letter is a forgery that used the Arian Historiographer for sections 11 and 12 and perhaps some features in the body of the letter⁸³ together with the dramatic account in Gregory's *Second Invective against Julian* (*Or.* 5.3–7). It would, of course, have been modeled on Cyril's genuine *Letter to Constantius*⁸⁴ and quite possibly on a letter from the bishop of Jerusalem sent out to all the churches of the world in 419, which reported the collapse of many Palestinian cities in an earthquake and the conversion and baptism of Jews and pagans followed by the appearance of the sign of the Cross on the garments of those baptized.⁸⁵ It is possible that the letter of 419 contained an account of a procession to the Mount of Olives, similar to the one awkwardly inserted into the Syriac letter, as Marcellinus Comes refers to a Christophany on the Mount of Olives in his report of the events of 419.⁸⁶

The use of material ultimately deriving from the Arian Historiographer in a pseudepigraphical Syriac letter dealing with Julian and the Jews would not be surprising, given that a version of the *Chronicon miscellaneum* was mined extensively by the author of the *Julian Romance*, a work that in fact contains a number of pseudepigraphical letters. That the letter and the *Julian Romance* come from a common milieu can be seen in the claim in section 12 of the letter that Julian's motivation for rebuilding the Temple was that he favored the Jews because they killed Christ, a motivation found only here and in the *Julian Romance*.⁸⁷ The phrase in section 12 of the letter that "justice overtook

⁸² In *Catech.* 10.11 and 15.15, Cyril writes that Mt 24:2 refers to the "Temple of the Jews," not the city of Jerusalem, as the letter states.

⁸³ Aside from the material in sections 11 and 12, the letter shares several characteristics with Philostorgius and the sources associated with the Arian Historiographer: a report of a strong storm before the earthquake at night (Letter of Cyril 6; *Artem.pass.* 68; Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.5; Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 51, has a strong storm, but no earthquake); the description of the fulfillment of Mt 24:2 as an apophysis (Letter of Cyril 2; Photius *Epitome* 7.14; Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 51; also used by Cyril in *Catech.* 15.15 and 10.11, passages with which the writer of the letter was certainly familiar); and possibly the account of the staurophanies (Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 52; Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.7), although these also appear in *Greg. Or.* 5.6–7.

⁸⁴ For parallels, Levenson, "Source- and Traditional-Critical Study," 87–88.

⁸⁵ References in Hydatius, *Chron.* 71a (AD 419): A. Tranoy, ed., *Hydace: Chronique* (Paris, 1974), 1.124; R.W. Burgess, *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana* (Oxford, 1993), 86; *Consularia Constantinopolitana* (AD 419): T. Mommsen, ed., *Chronica minora*, vol. 1, MGH AA 9 (Berlin, 1894), 246; Burgess, *Chronicle*, p. 244; Augustine, *Sermo* 19.6, C. Lambot, ed. (Turnhout, 1961), 258; Marcellinus Comes, *Chron.* s.a. 419: T. Mommsen, ed., *Chron.min.* 2, MGH AA 11 (Berlin, 1893), 74.

⁸⁶ Marcell.Com. *Chron.* s.a. 419 (Mommsen, 74).

⁸⁷ *Jul. Rom.* (Hoffmann, 133, line 22). For the common milieu of the letter and the *Julian Romance*, see Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 433; Drijvers, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, 149–152; Idem, "The Syriac Julian Romance: Aspects of the Jewish–Christian Controversy in Late Antiquity," in H.L.J. Vanstiphout, ed., *All Those Nations . . . Cultural Encounters within*

him in a foreign land” is a repeated frequently in the account of the emperor’s death in the *Julian Romance*.⁸⁸ A connection of both documents with the *Arian History* might be seen in Theophanes’ report, probably drawn from the Arian Historiographer, “For while in foreign territory, he was destroyed by divine justice.”⁸⁹

Whether or not the writer of the letter attributed to Cyril used the *Arian History*, it is clear that the list of cities, with a survey of the degree of devastation in each and a brief notice appearing after Jerusalem, fits better in a history or a chronicle than in a letter written immediately after the event.⁹⁰ The specific hypothesis that the author of the letter used an Antiochene chronicle composed in the 360s or 370s explains how a fictional Syriac letter might preserve data that accords so well with archaeological and seismological data.⁹¹

The Palestinian Earthquakes of May 363 and Julian’s Attempt to Rebuild the Temple

With the exception of the *Chronicon miscellaneum*, all of the Christian sources that mention the Palestinian earthquakes do so in the context of Julian’s attempt to rebuild the Temple. In these accounts they are associated with the earthquake in Jerusalem preceding the fire that finally stopped the

and with the Near East (Groningen, 1999), 31–32 at 37–39, where he develops a convincing case for composition of the *Julian Romance* during the episcopate of Rabbula (first part of the fifth century), which witnessed intense Jewish–Christian conflict. The theme of expulsion of the Jews, which is prominent in the *Julian Romance* and found, in the entire tradition of the Temple rebuilding story, only in the letter of Cyril, would fit well in the time of a bishop whom the *Chronicle of Edessa* credits with building the church of St. Stephen on the site of a synagogue; *Chron. Edessenum* 51, I. Guidi, ed., *CSCO 1 Scr.Syri* 1 (Louvain, 1903), 6. This is also an appropriate context for the Syriac *Teaching of Addai*, which also includes a number of fictional letters and is characterized by an intense anti-Jewish polemic; see Drijvers, “Syriac Julian Romance,” 38, and Idem, “The Protonike Legend, the Doctrina Addai and Bishop Rabbula of Edessa,” *VC* 51 (1997), 298–315.

⁸⁸ *Jul. Rom.* (Hoffmann, 185, lines 22, 25; 184, line 23; 186, line 16).

⁸⁹ As noted above.

⁹⁰ See section 4: “While the earth was shaking [i.e., shook].”

⁹¹ See above, n.2, especially Russell, “The Earthquake of May 19, AD 363.” Brock sees a connection with the festival of Lag BaOmer, which falls on the 18 Iyyar, the date, according to the letter, that the project was started. For problems with this hypothesis and discussion of the sources for Lag BaOmer, and for Jewish traditions about an earthquake on 18 Iyyar, see Levenson, “Ancient and Medieval Sources,” 454–455, n.207. G. Baudy’s argument that the letter of Cyril invented the date to correspond to Lag BaOmer is unconvincing, given both the late date of the holiday and the clear evidence of Palestinian earthquakes in May 363. See “Die Wiederkehr des Typhon: Katastrophen-Topoi in nachjulianischer Rhetorik und Annalistik. Zu literarischen Reflexen des 21. Juli 365 n.C.,” *JAC* 35 (1992), 47–82 at 69 n.157.

construction.⁹² It is certainly possible that an earthquake in Jerusalem associated with an earthquake throughout Palestine set off a fire, as commonly happens during earthquakes. On the other hand, there is another different version of the story and of the fire, attested twenty to thirty years after the event by John Chrysostom, Ammianus, and Ambrose.⁹³ Here, there is no mention of a storm or an earthquake. The rebuilding effort was abandoned because of a fire shooting out suddenly from the ground and killing many of the workers who had begun the excavation of the foundations.

If a fire, not an earthquake, stopped the work, it would not be surprising for Christian tradition to conflate the report of the Palestinian earthquake that punished the cities in which Christians suffered persecution with the story of the fire in Jerusalem that ended Julian's project.⁹⁴ If so, this must have happened soon after the incident, as both Ephrem and Gregory, who composed the two earliest accounts, mention an earthquake in Jerusalem and a fire stopping the enterprise.⁹⁵

Evidence for the separation of the two traditions might be found in the fragments of the Arian Historiographer read in the context of Antiochene tradition. Like John Chrysostom and Ammianus, Theophanes does not mention an earthquake and reports a fire coming forth as the Jews were persisting in the undertaking. Theophanes' mention of Alypius of Antioch as supervisor of the project, which is also found in Ammianus and in the *Artemii passio*, is further evidence for a connection among these sources and suggests the

⁹² For discussion of the earthquake traditions associated with Julian's project, see Levenson, "Source- and Tradition-Critical Study," 201–214.

⁹³ Amm. 23.2.3; Ambrose, *Epist.* 74.12 (Maurist, ed., *Epist.* 40.12); John Chrysostom, *De sancto Babyla* 119–120, *Adv. Judaeos* 5.11, *Quod Christus sit Deus* 16, *De laudibus sancti Pauli* 4.6, *Exp. in Ps. 110* (PG 55.285), *Hom. in Mat. 4*, *Hom. in Acta Apost.* 41.3. If these sources depend on a written source, the Arian history would be a good candidate. For arguments that Ammianus used this source elsewhere, see H.C. Brennecke, "Christliche Quellen des Ammianus Marcellinus?" *ZAC* 1 (1997), 226–250; G. Kelly, *Ammianus Marcellinus* (Cambridge, 2008), 230–231, 322–333; B. Bleckmann, "Von Tsunami von 365 zum Mimas-Orakel: Ammianus Marcellinus als Zeithistoriker und die spätgriechische Tradition," in J. den Boeft, J.W. Drijvers, D. den Hengst, H.C. Teitler, eds., *Ammianus after Julian* (Leiden, 2007), 7–31 at 13–19. For discussion of the tradition of the fire, see Levenson, "Source- and Tradition-Critical Study," 183–200.

⁹⁴ For this suggestion, see Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 455–456; J. Brodd, "Apostate, Philo-Semite, Syncretic Neoplatonist? Julian's Intentions for Rebuilding the Jerusalem Temple" (diss. University of California, Santa Barbara, 1992), 48–49; G. Stemmerger, *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land* (Edinburgh, 2000), 215–216.

⁹⁵ The fire miracle in Ephrem and Gregory (coming out of the suddenly opened doors of a sacred building into which a crowd was rushing for protection) is quite different from the account of fire suddenly bursting forth from the foundations and killing the workmen. Of course, if the letter were genuine, it would explain the similarities between Ephrem and Gregory. But note that both Ephrem and Gregory present the earthquakes as punishments of pagan cities, an interpretation not found in the letter, but like that in the *Chronicon miscellaneum*.

possibility of an Antiochene provenance for Theophanes' source. This is made even more likely by the passage that continues the story:

In these times the holy Cross was seen shining in the heavens, from Golgotha to the holy Mount of Olives, circled by a wreath of light; it was even brighter than in the time of Constantius. Of its own accord, the sign of the Cross appeared on altar-cloths, books and church vestments as well as on clothes, not only of Christians, but of Jews, not only in Jerusalem, but in Antioch and other cities. Those Jews and pagans who did not believe, found their clothes covered with crosses. On some they were even black.⁹⁶

Because there is good evidence that Theophanes used the *Arian History* as one of the two main sources for this section of his chronicle,⁹⁷ it is possible, as Bidez thought,⁹⁸ that he preserves the main features of the account of the attempt to rebuild the Temple in that work, which would then have included several significant features: the motivation to falsify Jesus' prophecy; the name Alypius; a storm initially preventing the work; a fire killing the workers; a Cross in the sky; black crosses appearing on the clothes of unbelievers.⁹⁹ The fact that all the elements in Theophanes' report are found in either Theodoret or the sources reflecting Philostorgius (primarily the *Artemii passio*),¹⁰⁰ both of which probably depended on the *Arian History*,¹⁰¹ supports the hypothesis that Theophanes' account derives from the same source.¹⁰²

The possibility that Theophanes (or a lost source on which he depends) omitted mention of an earthquake cannot be ruled out. Theodoret, Photius'

⁹⁶ Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 52, lines 10–17, tr. Mango, Scott, *Chronicle of Theophanes*, 82, who list the source as “[Hypoth. Arian].” They accept the existence of the *Arian History* but stress that “its reconstruction is at best hypothetical” (lxxx–lxxxix).

⁹⁷ The other is clearly the *Epitome* of Theodorus Anagnostes' *Tripartite History*. See G.C. Hansen, *Theodoros Anagnostes Kirchengeschichte*, 2d ed. (Berlin, 1995), xxix–xxx.

⁹⁸ Bidez, Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 235–236.

⁹⁹ Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, de Boor, 51–52.

¹⁰⁰ Falsifying Jesus' prophecy: Philostorg. *HE* 7.9, 7.15 (Phot.; *Artem.pass.* 68); Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.1. Alypius: Philostorg. *HE* 7.9a (*Artem.pass.* 58). Storm: Philostorg. *HE* 7.9 (*Artem.pass.* 68); Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.5. Fire: Philostorg. *HE* 7.9 (Photius; *Artem.pass.* 68); Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.5. Cross in the sky: Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.7. Black crosses on garments: Theodoret, *HE* 3.20.7.

¹⁰¹ On the *Arian History* as the source for the Temple rebuilding story in both Philostorgius and Theodoret, see Parmentier, Hansen, *Theodoret*, lxxxix. On this hypothesis, agreements between Philostorgius and Theodoret against Theophanes in both distinctive content (e.g., use of silver excavating tools) and wording (e.g., “πῦρ ἐκ τῶν ὀρυττομένων θεμελίων”) would be better witnesses than Theophanes to the text of the Arian Historian.

¹⁰² Material shared by Theophanes, Philostorgius, and Theophanes can also be explained by Theophanes (or a lost source he used) conflating Theodoret and Philostorgius and by Theodoret using Philostorgius, as I argued in “Source- and Tradition-Critical Study,” 54–58. The large body of scholarship on the Arian Historian over the years since then has convinced me that Bidez's reconstruction provides the most economical hypothesis.

epitome, and the *Artemii passio* all include an earthquake among the miracles in Jerusalem.¹⁰³ Theodoret's description of it, however, clearly depends on Rufinus,¹⁰⁴ and Philostorgius could have introduced the well-known earthquake from Rufinus, Gregory, or another earlier source.¹⁰⁵ In any case, it would seem odd for Theophanes to omit an earthquake mentioned in his source, given his interest in earthquakes throughout his work.

The brief report of a fire in the letter of Cyril (11) and in Philostorgius (*Artem.pass.* 68) mentioned in connection with Jerusalem in the list of cities damaged by the earthquake might also be seen as evidence that the *Arian History* associated the earthquake and the fire that ended the attempt to rebuild the Temple. Given the brevity of the notice and the fact that a fire in Jerusalem would have already been mentioned in the fragment preserved by Theophanes, it seems more likely that the fire in the list represents an insertion, based on one of the Temple rebuilding stories, into a later version of the *Arian History*.

If, then, Theophanes has reproduced the elements of the Temple rebuilding story in the *Arian History*, the fire that stopped the project would not necessarily have been connected in that source with the report of the Palestinian earthquake of May 363, preserved in the *Chronicon miscellaneum*, that would have been set in the context of the stories of the persecutors of the Christians in the time of Julian.

Finally, it should be noted that if an earthquake was not the cause of the failure to rebuild the Temple, it is possible that the date for the abandonment of the project need not be placed as late as May. On the other hand, a conflation of the stories of the fire and earthquakes so early in the tradition suggests that there could not have been a lengthy interval between them.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ As does Michael the Syrian, *Chronicon* 7.5, in J.B. Chabot, ed., *Chronique de Michel le syrien patriarche jacobite d'Antioch*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1910), 146, right col.; tr. vol. 2, 288–289. The beginning and end of the notice follow Theophanes, but the earthquake report is clearly from Socrates; see Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 438–439 n.128, for the argument that the material parallel with Theophanes is ultimately derived from the Greek chronicler. Another notice of the attempt to rebuild the Temple, also with material deriving from Socrates, is found earlier in the chronicle (4.141, left col.; tr. 2.283).

¹⁰⁴ A. Guldenpenning, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Theodoret von Kyrrhos. Eine Untersuchungen ihren Quellen* (Halle, 1889), 26–39 (28–30 discuss the Temple rebuilding story); Parmentier, Hansen, *Theodoret*, 435–436 (parallels with Rufinus reflect use of Gelasius of Caesarea).

¹⁰⁵ The introduction of the well-known earthquake into Philostorgian material by Photius and John of Damascus, although unlikely, cannot be ruled out, because *Artemii passio* 4 mentions both Socrates and Theodoret, and Photius read the church histories of Socrates (*Cod.* 28), Sozomen (*Cod.* 30), Theodoret (*Cod.* 31), and Gelasius of Caesarea (*Cod.* 89).

¹⁰⁶ For critiques of Bowersock's arguments (*Julian*, 120–122) for a date before Julian left Antioch in March 363, see T.D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality* (Ithaca, 1998), 48–49; and literature in Levenson, "Ancient and Medieval Sources," 456 n.212.

The Palestinian Earthquakes and the Pagan–Christian Conflict in Antioch

If the present analysis is correct, the list of cities damaged by the Palestinian earthquake of May 363 featured prominently in the *Arian History*, as it dramatically demonstrates the divine retribution against those who had attacked the Christians during the time of Julian. Although its exact location in the work is unclear, the list probably stood close to accounts of two other climactic events: the failure of the Jews to rebuild the Temple, and the death of the emperor who sought to destroy the church. The prominence of these events in the *Arian History*, which would have been the first continuation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, is not surprising, because they correspond to two of the major Eusebian themes: the destruction of the Temple as punishment of the Jews for killing Jesus and the apostles and the death of the persecutors of the church.

It now is possible to understand the account of the Palestinian earthquakes of May 363 in the larger context of the ideological battle over the interpretation of the reign of Julian, which continued to be waged for several generations after the emperor's death.¹⁰⁷ That Antioch was a center for this battle from the time Julian took up residence in the city in July 362 is clear from the emperor's own writings and the works of John Chrysostom, Libanius, and Ammianus.¹⁰⁸ There might not have been a pagan version of the *Arian History*, but there certainly was a pagan interpretation for many of the events mentioned in it. In fact, Libanius, Ammianus, and Julian all provide evidence of a pagan interpretation of a series of events that Antiochene Christian tradition took as clear signs of God's rejection of Julian and of those associated with him. In addition to the story of Julian's attempt to rebuild the Temple, such events, often appearing in the works of John Chrysostom as a long list for rhetorical emphasis,¹⁰⁹ as well as in the sources associated with the *Arian Historiographer*, would include: (1) the purification of Daphne,¹¹⁰ (2) the

¹⁰⁷ See, e.g., L. Cracco Ruggini, *Simboli di battaglia ideologica nel tardo ellenismo* (Pisa, 1972), 75–89 (“Appendice I: Il regno di Giuliano nelle interpretazioni provvidenzialistiche pagane e cristiane”).

¹⁰⁸ See, e.g., R.L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1983), 128–132; C. Shepardson, “Rewriting Julian's Legacy: John Chrysostom's *On Babylas* and Libanius' *Oration 24*,” *JLA* 2 (2009), 99–115; Elm, *Sons of Hellenism*, 269–335.

¹⁰⁹ For discussion of the list in Chrysostom and pagan responses, see Levenson, “A Source- and Tradition-Critical Study,” 363–367.

¹¹⁰ Chrysostom, *Pan.Bab.* 2.16, 1.2, *Laud.Paul.* 4; also *Exp. in Ps. 110*, 4; Philostorg. *HE* 7.8 (see also 7.12); Theodoret, *HE* 3.10; Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 49–50; Julian, *Misopogon* 361B; *Lib. Or.* 60.5 (also *Or.* 17.7); *Amm.* 22.12.8.

burning of the Temple of Apollo,¹¹¹ (3) the death of Julian's uncle,¹¹² (4) the death of the royal treasurer Felix,¹¹³ (5) the desiccation of the springs,¹¹⁴ (5) the famine,¹¹⁵ and, most notably, (6) the ill-fated Persian expedition and the emperor's death.¹¹⁶

For the Palestinian earthquakes, there is the Antiochene Christian tradition represented by the Arian Historiographer, whose work interprets them as divine punishment of the cities that had allied themselves with the emperor's persecution of Christians.¹¹⁷ For the pagan side, there is the testimony of Libanius, cited above, who interprets them, in speeches from around 365 and 374, not as God rejecting, but as the cosmos mourning the champion of their cause and announcing his death. Libanius' chronology and facts, especially the reference to the cities being destroyed "either wholly or in part," just as in the reports of the *Chronicon miscellaneum* and the letter of Cyril, raise the possibility that Libanius is either responding directly to the *Arian History* from the 360s or 370s or is using a city chronicle that served as one of its sources. In any case, the earthquakes that devastated so many cities south of Antioch, represent only one of many calamities for which Antiochene pagans and Christians were eager to blame each other and proclaim as signs of divine approval of their own cause.

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¹¹¹ *Pan.Bab.* 2.17, 1.2; *Laud.Paul.* 4; *Exp. in Ps.* 110, 4; see also *Hom. in Act.* 41.3; Philostorg. 7.8; Theodoret, *HE* 3.11; Theophanes, *Chron.*, 50; Julian, *Misopogon* 361B; *Lib. Or.* 17.30; Amm. 22.13.2–3.

¹¹² *Pan.Bab.* 2, 17, *Exp. in Ps.* 110, 4, *Hom. in Matt.* 4, 1; *Laud. Paul.* 4; Philostorg. *HE* 7.10; Theodoret, *HE* 3.12–13; Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 50; alluded to by *Greg. Or.* 5.2 and Ephrem, *Contra Jul.* 4.1; Amm. 23.1.5.

¹¹³ *Pan.Bab.* 2.17, 22, *Exp. in Ps.* 110, 4; *Hom. in Matt.* 4, 1 (the deaths of the uncle and treasurer are confused with one another); *Laud. Paul.* 4; Philostorg. 7.10; Theodoret, *HE* 3.12–13; Theophanes, 50; Amm. 23.1.5.

¹¹⁴ *Pan.Bab.* 2.22, 1.2, *Exp. in Ps.* 110, 4, *Hom. in Matt.* 4, *Laud. Paul.* 4; Julian, *Misopogon* 369A (see also 368C–370C); Amm. 22.13.4. 22.14.1.

¹¹⁵ *Pan.Bab.* 2.21, 1.2, *Exp. in Ps.* 110, 4, *Hom. in Matt.* 4; Julian, *Misopogon* 386C–370C; Amm. 22.14.1.

¹¹⁶ *Pan.Bab.* 2.22, *Laud.Paul.* 4; also *Exp. in Ps.* 110, 4; Philostorg. *HE* 7.15; Theodoret, *HE* 3.21–25; Theophanes, *Chron.*, de Boor, 53; cf. Ephrem, *Contra Jul.* 3.12–16, 4.8–16; *Greg. Or.* 5.8–14; Amm. 25.3.6; Zosimus, *Hist.nov.* 3.29; *Lib. Or.* 1.133.17.32, 18.274–75, 24.6.

¹¹⁷ Chrysostom (*Pan.Bab.* 1.2) mentions earthquakes in the reign of Julian but never associates them with Palestine or the attempt to rebuild the Temple.