The Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered

New Perspectives on the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome

Edited by

PETER SCHÄFER

Mohr Siebeck
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The Urban Layout of Aelia Capitolina: A New View from the Perspective of the Temple Mount*

Yaron Z. Eliav
University of Michigan

For more than a hundred years scholars have been trying to reconstruct the Roman colony Aelia Capitolina and figure out its urban infrastructure.1 This study revisits this issue from the viewpoint of the Temple Mount. In what follows, I do not intend to discuss all aspects of Aelia’s landscape or physical layout but only those that pertain to the role of the Temple Mount within this municipality and shed light on its relation to the city. Although this enclosure is mentioned in all modern accounts of post-Second Temple Jerusalem (henceforth “the Roman period,” without the finer distinction between “Roman” and “Late Roman”), it has never, as far as I know, been the focus of any discussion in and of itself. The question at the heart of the present study is therefore geographical-historical in nature: What place did the Temple Mount occupy in the urban plan of Aelia Capitolina?

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* This paper emanates from my work: Y.Z. Eliav, “A ‘Mount without a Temple’ – The Temple Mount from 70 C. E. to the Mid-Fifth Century: Reality and Idea,” Ph. D. diss., Jerusalem 1998 (Heb.), which was written under the supervision of Yoram Tsafrir and Mosheh D. Herr. My teacher Prof. Tsafrir, although disagreeing with much of what I claim here, graciously invested hours in supporting my own path, and I am deeply grateful and admire him for that. I also like to extend my thanks to Glen Bowersock, Werner Eck, and Benjamin Isaac for critically reading some of my discussion on the parallels, and providing important comments and insights. By no means, however, this is to imply that they agree with any of my arguments.

1 The most up-to-date comprehensive treatment of this subject is Y. Tsafrir, “The Topography and Archaeology of Aelia Capitolina,” in Y. Tsafrir and S. Safrai, eds., The History of Jerusalem: The Roman and Byzantine Periods (70–638 CE), Jerusalem 1999, pp. 115–166 (Heb.). A good English summary of the material may be found in H. Geva, “Jerusalem: The Roman Period,” NEAEHL II, pp. 758–767. In what follows I refer mostly to Geva’s English study.
The principal difficulty faced by scholars who have tried to envision the city’s structure in the Roman period has been the paucity of sources, both inanimate finds and written information. Even though Jerusalem has been the subject of many archaeological excavations, which peaked in the extensive projects after the 1967 war and are still continuing although at a slower pace, no substantial findings have surfaced that could be dated to the Roman period after the destruction of the Second Temple. There remains in Jerusalem almost no evidence of public buildings, entertainment structures, or other edifices such as civic basilicas, temples, theaters, stadiums, and hippodromes, or considerable remains of the city walls and streets – all of which serve archaeologists as a foothold for the work of reconstruction and have been discovered often enough in other sites in Israel. The digs have indeed yielded a multitude of smaller objects – pottery sherds, especially roof tile fragments imprinted with the stamp of the Tenth Legion, coins, inscriptions, and other items – but, except for a recently re-discovered bathhouse (see below n. 17), they produced very little evidence of well-defined architeconic wholes.2

There are a number of reasons for this deficiency. Sometimes the absence of a certain structure simply reflects the city’s history. For example, no remnants of the fortification system were discovered because, as most scholars now agree, Aelia did not have any such walls in the first century and a half of its existence.3 But apparently the scarcity of substantial


3 Geva, “Jerusalem,” pp. 761–762; G. J. Wightman, The Walls of Jerusalem: From the Canaanites to the Mamluks (Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 4), Sidney 1993, pp. 199–200. Contra J. Magnes, “The North Wall of Aelia Capitolina,” in L. E. Stager et al., eds., The Archaeology of Jordan and Beyond: Essays in Honor of James A. Sauer, Winona Lake 2000, p. 331. The written sources do not provide unambiguous evidence on this issue. On the one hand, one of the later traditions about the exclusion of Jews from the city during Hadrian’s reign uses the Greek semeia (σημεῖα) to mark the city limits, without mentioning any city walls. See Alexander Monachos, Inventio crucis (Gretser, PG 87:3, col. 4068). However, it is more than likely that he is only rephrasing his earlier sources on this issue (such as Aristo of Pella), and it is difficult to determine what was the original wording in this case. On the other hand, it would be problematic to rely on the mention of the city wall built during Hadrian’s reign in The Dialogue of
findings is caused mainly by the fact that Jerusalem is a “living city,” occupying the same territory ever since the days of Aelia Capitolina, and thus its ongoing life has done considerable damage to its earlier layers.

What has nevertheless survived of the Roman colony? The most complete architectonic units are two arched entrance structures. In the north, under the Ottoman Damascus Gate, which is still in use, a series of excavations from the 1930’s onward has revealed the porta Neapolitana (map 1: figure 1; henceforth all numerical references are to the two maps accompanying the discussion), a massive three-bayed triumphal gate, embraced by two pentagonal towers, one on each side, and a paved plaza on the inside. Built on an east-west axis, this gate served people entering the city from the north to the south. Although scholars are not unanimous about the stages of its construction, and in particular about whether there was an earlier gate on this site from the Second Temple period, they agree that it was erected during the early days of Aelia Capitolina. For the first century and a half the gate stood independently and was not incorporated into any system of fortifications, since, as mentioned, no such system existed. Only after the city wall was built in the late third century was the gate made a part of it; before that it was a freestanding architectonic element.4

A second entrance structure is located to the east. This well-known architectonic unit, resembling a triumphal arch and consisting of three openings, is situated along the route of the Via Dolorosa (1:2). By the time of the Crusader conquest in the eleventh century it was already identified in the Christian tradition as the place of Pontius Pilate’s exclamation when Jesus the prisoner was brought before him, “Here is the man” (John 19:5) – in Latin ecce homo. The general axis of this entrance is perpendicular to that of the Damascus Gate, and it therefore served travelers walking in the east-west direction. In the 1850’s Alphonse Ratisbonne, an affluent French Jew who converted to Christianity and re-

Timothy and Aquila 130 (Conybeare, p. 98), as historians tend to date this source to a much later period (apparently the sixth century); see R. G. Robertson, “The Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila: A Critical Text, Introduction to the Manuscript Evidence and an Inquiry into the Sources and Literary Relationships,” diss., Cambridge Mass. 1986 (Ann Arbor 1997), pp. 372–383. The same holds true for the report about a city wall built by Hadrian in Orosius, Historiarum adversum paganos 7:13:5 (Zangemeister, CSEL 5, p. 469). Orosius, who visited the city in the fifth century, was probably influenced by its Byzantine scenery. See also E. M. Smallwood, The Jews under Roman Rule from Pompey to Diocletian (Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity 20), Leiden 19812, p. 461 n. 130.

located to Jerusalem, acquired the site, and the Sisters of Zion convent was built there (1:3). During the construction, the northern of the unit’s three arches was revealed and then incorporated into the building of the monastery. The southern arch remained hidden, flanked by the houses on the side of the street, and at present passersby can see only part of the central arch, which tops the path of the Via Dolorosa. Over the years, much attention has been devoted to this structure. From the days of Pierotti, who drew the first plans of the gate and prepared a lithograph of its remains when the Sisters of Zion convent was established, the arched entrance has been studied time and again. Notable for their efforts are the French scholar (and Dominican monk) Louis Hugues Vincent and his nun students, who conducted a series of excavations at the site in the 1930’s as part of their endeavor to locate the Antonia fortress of the Second Temple period. The results were published as an assiduous study of the arch and nearby elements. Additional digs were carried out by the Franciscans in the nearby Monastery of the Flagellation (1:4), east of the convent.

As in the case of the northern Damascus Gate discussed above, an area paved with large stones lay adjacent to the Ecce Homo arch as well, except that here it was on the external (eastern) side of the arch. Supported by subterranean vaults, part of this pavement covers the Second Temple open-air Struthion pool. The pavement owes its famous name – lithostroton (“pavement” in Greek) – to the inclination of some scholars to link it with the courtyard of the Second Temple Antonia fortress and therefore to identify it with the praetorium, the seat of the Roman procurators in Jerusalem and thus the location of Jesus’ trial. Despite these tendencies, as Pierre Benoit concluded based on excavations carried out by Coüasnon, the paved plaza is an organic part of the Ecce Homo complex and was created concurrently with the arch.

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6 One of Vincent’s students summarized and extensively discussed the excavations and findings in her doctoral dissertation; see Marie Aline, “La forteresse Antonia à Jérusalem et la question du Prétoire,” diss. Jerusalem 1955.


8 The attribution of the pavement to the Antonia fortress is based on the nineteenth-century “Great Antonia” concept, and it received its fullest expression by Vincent and his students; see Aline, La forteresse, pp. 88–142. It was reiterated, with certain variants, by Y. Blommé, “Faut-il revenir sur la datation de l’arc de l’Ecce Homo,” RB, 86 (1979), pp. 244–271. For a summary of Coüasnon’s findings see RB, 73 (1966), pp. 573–574. Benoit’s arguments are laid out in P. Benoit, “L’Antonia d’Hérode le Grand et le forum oriental d’Aelia Capitolina,” HTR, 64 (1971), pp. 145–147.
accordingly, although at first the date of its erection was contested and was
proposed to be the Second Temple period, scholars now agree that this
arch, which is architectonically similar to that of the Roman Damascus
Gate, actually dates from the time of Aelia Capitolina.9 There was also
some disagreement about the function of the arch. Benoit, countering
the claim that the pavement is the Antonian lithostrotion, suggested
that it was the "eastern forum" of Aelia and that the Ecce Homo was
a sumptuous passage to this civic center. Although only an exploratory
alternative, presented for the purpose of refuting Vincent's opposing
view, Benoit's suggestion was accepted by many scholars as pure fact,
and the "eastern forum" found its way onto the various maps and re-
views of Aelia Capitolina as an integral constituent of the city.10 Others,
including myself, as will shortly become clear agree with Benoit's criti-
cism of his predecessors but reject his reconstruction, instead viewing
this site as the eastern entrance to Aelia Capitolina.11

Aside from these two entrance structures — the Damascus Gate in the
north and the Ecce Homo arch in the east — other architectural elements
that can be attributed to the time of Aelia are extremely fragmentary,
and in many instances their identification and date are either doubtful or
controversial. Such are the two additional arches that were discovered in
the city and in its vicinity. One of them, about 900 feet north of the
Damascus Gate, was reconstructed by Savignac as a triumphal arch
from the days of Hadrian, based on two dedicatory inscriptions, to the
emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, that were found in the same area
by Clermont-Ganneau in the early twentieth century. Vincent accepted

9 Cf. C. Arnould, Les arcs romains de Jérusalem: Architecture, décor et urbanisme
(Novus Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus 35), Göttingen 1997. Although I find her gen-
eral conclusions about the date and function of the two entrance structures rather con-
vincing, her attempt to pinpoint the date of each structure to specific years seems too
particular in light of the available evidence.

10 Benoit, "L'Antonia," pp. 162–163, and following him (and at times placing the
arch erroneously in their maps) Geva, "The Camp," p. 249 (map); idem, "Jerusalem,"
p. 764; D. Bahat, The Illustrated Atlas of Jerusalem, Jerusalem 1989, p. 59 (map); D. Bar,
"Aelia Capitolina and the Location of the Camp of the Tenth Legion," PEQ, 130 (1998),
pp. 14–16; N. Avigad The Upper City of Jerusalem, Jerusalem 1981, p. 227 (map; Heb.);
A. Segal, From Function to Monument: Urban Landscapes of Roman Palestine, Syria and
Provincia Arabia (Oxbow Monograph 66), Oxford 1997, p. 136 (but cf. ibid., n. 139,
where he asserts that "we know too little about the city plan of Jerusalem in this period
in order to be certain that the arch was in fact the entrance to the forum"); Magnes,

11 The view that considers the Ecce Homo arch to be the eastern gate of Aelia was
already articulated by Vincent; see: L. H. Vincent and F.-M. Abel, Jérusalem — Re-
cherches de topographie d'archéologie et d'histoire, II: Jérusalem nouvelle, I, Paris 1914,
p. 24; Wightman, The Walls, pp. 197, 199. And see also Tsafrir, "The Topography," p. 156 (Heb.).
this suggestion, but all who dealt with this material had to admit that the preserved remains are insufficient for determining the nature and purpose of the structure. A second arch, which is now on the grounds of the Russian hospice (1:6), east of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, was identified by a number of scholars (first and foremost by Corbo) as the eastern entrance of the central forum of Aelia (on which see below). Here too, however, there is much uncertainty. Various suggestions have been made for identifying the remnants of the immense construction project, which lies underneath the Holy Sepulcher complex (1:5) and of which the arch is only one component. It is difficult to determine whether the huge supporting walls belong to the days of Hadrian (perhaps the foundation of the temenos he built there) or to the later Constantinian building venture. Equally ambiguous is the case of the arch under discussion, with some scholars attributing it entirely to the time of Constantine.

In addition, other segments of massive pavement that were unearthed throughout the current Old City of Jerusalem and nearby areas were also associated with the Roman colony and identified as portions of its ramified street alignment. Completing the picture of the city’s thoroughfares are the colonnaded street-side walkways – huge columns made out of marble or local stone and topped with floral capitals that were placed along the street and supported covered porticos on its sides – that lined the central traffic arteries, in accord with the common architectural practice of those days. A small number of such pillars can still be found in situ along the course of the Roman streets; others were found in secondary use all around. A full illustration of these post-lined streets appears in the Madaba mosaic map, which, as most scholars agree, reflects the Roman street plan, even though it was drawn after this period and depicts the situation of the Byzantine city in the sixth century.

As mentioned, almost no well-defined architectonic structures that clearly belong to the Roman period have been discovered. Nevertheless, here and there fragments of walls and parts of structures have surfaced in stratigraphic settings that make it plausible to link them with this period. Above (see n. 13) I mentioned the results of the excavations un-

12 Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, Recueil d’archéologie orientale, VI, Paris 1905, pp. 188–199, who believed that the inscriptions were etched in the city walls (mur d’enceinte, p. 196); R. Savignac, “Inscription romaine et sépultures au nord de Jérusalem,” RB, 13 (1904), pp. 90–99; Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem nouvelle, I, p. 36.

13 For a succinct summary of the findings and their various interpretations see Geva, “Jérusalem,” p. 763.


15 Ibid.
nder the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and its vicinity (1:5), especially the
area that is now included in the Russian hospice, which scholars often
identify as remains of Aelia’s forum (such as a gate, some steps, and a
square). But these findings are at most part of some huge podium, sup-
porting walls, or foundations; even as such their nature is rightly dis-
puted.

Other remains were uncovered north of the Temple Mount and at its
southwest corner. The remnants found in the northern part, in the area
of Saint Anne’s Church (1:7), just inside the current eastern gate to the
old city (St. Stephen’s gate or, in Hebrew, the Lions Gate), conglomerate
to the most preserved built-up complex that can be attributed to the
Roman period. A series of excavations that began in the mid-nineteenth
century revealed an architectonic unit that includes a pool, water con-
duits, mosaic-tiled floors, walls, and a subterranean vault whose walls
are decorated with colored plaster (see below). On the external side of
the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount walls, Mazar’s excavations
also revealed fragmentary structures, architectonic elements (such
as broken columns, stone flooring, and hypocaust bricks from a bath
house), art objects (various types of broken statues), several inscriptions
in secondary use, and some small articles (such as coins and oil lamps)
that belong to the Roman period.16 Recent excavations were able to clar-
ify the structure of a large Roman bath occupying the outside south-
western corner of the Temple Mount (1:11).17 Here too, however, most
of the findings are insufficient to clarify the nature of the area beyond
the existence of the bathhouse.

Other items thought by scholars to belong to the Roman period as
well are spread out over Mount Zion, in the area of the Armenian quar-
ter and the enclosure of the citadel (the so-called Tower of David; 1:9).18
To this, one may add the upper aqueduct descending from the so-called
Solomon’s Pools some 6.5 miles south of the city, which apparently
reached the area of the present-day Jaffa Gate; a number of inscriptions
on its sections reveal its builders, or at least its restorers into active use,
to be the soldiers of the Tenth Legion.19 All in all, the claim that some

16 B. Mazar, The Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem Near the Temple Mount:
17 E. Mazar, “The Roman-Byzantine Bathhouse at the Foot of the Western Wall of
the Temple Mount,” in A. Faust and E. Baruch, eds., New Studies on Jerusalem: Pro-
ceedings of the Sixth Conference, Ramat Gan 2000, pp. 87–102 (Heb.).
18 Collected and summarized in Geva, “The Camp”; idem, “Jerusalem.”
19 Geva, “Jerusalem,” p. 766. In his map of Aelia, Geva includes the lower aqueduct
as well, and there seems to be some logic to this, since no reasonable person would want
to give up such a resource of water.
sort of architectural construction did indeed take place in Roman Aelia is clearly supported, but its nature and scope remain undetermined.

In addition to the inanimate evidence, some information about the city’s landscape can also be obtained from literary sources. The seventh century *Chronicon Paschale* enumerates a long list of architectonic structures that crowded the city’s landscape.\(^{20}\) Eusebius in his *Chronicon* mentions a gate where the road to Bethlehem originated.\(^{21}\) The anonymous pilgrim from Bordeaux alludes to another gate in the southern part of the city.\(^{22}\) This same gate is probably attested more explicitly several centuries later when another visitor to the city, who is known today by the name Antoninus of Piacenza, described an arch located at the site of what he claims to be the ancient gate of the city (*antiqua porta fuit civitatis*), which was situated along the eastern *cardo* (following the route of the “Tyropoeon”) in its southern section and therefore encountered by people strolling from the Temple area toward the Siloam pool (1:10).\(^{23}\) It is not implausible that fragments of a huge dedicatory inscription of a gate that were found in this area and dated to the days of the emperor Septimius Severus (193–211) belong to the same structure.\(^{24}\) Representations of the city’s temples were stamped on the city’s coins, but only schematically, which makes it difficult to glean information about concrete details.\(^{25}\) Temples are also introduced by the Roman historian Cassius Dio,\(^{26}\) and the Church Father and historian Eusebius, who refers to a temple of Aphrodite (Venus) that was built near the site

\(^{20}\) For a full discussion of this text see Eliav, “A Mount,” pp. 96–98 (Heb.), where I have raised some doubts about the validity of this source as authentic evidence about Aelia.

\(^{21}\) Eusebius, *Chronicon* year 136 (Helm, *GCS* 47, p. 201 l. 18–19). It is not clear whether this detail was taken from the original writings of Eusebius or whether it was supplemented by Jerome, since it does not appear in the Armenian version (Karst, *GCS* 20, p. 221), but in any case it may well refer to a gate from the days of Aelia.

\(^{22}\) *Itinerarium Burdigalense* 591:7 (Geyer and Cuntz, *CCSL* 175, p. 16). The clue comes from the use of the verb *exeo* (to exit), and it was already understood in this way, as alluding to an ancient gate, by Wightman, *The Walls*, p. 207; Tsafrir, “The Topography,” p. 142.


\(^{25}\) Cf. Meshorer, *The Coinage*.

of Jesus' tomb. The latter also reports leveling and raising operations and stone flooring that covered this part of town.\(^{27}\) Another spot that should be included in the city's cultic arrangement is the site neighboring Saint Anne Church (1:7; discussed in detail below); various votive objects discovered there attest to its sanctity and probable connections with Asclepius, the god of healing.

Undoubtedly, statues were set up throughout the colony as well, just as they were ubiquitous in all Roman cities. I am reluctant to accept the testimonies of the traveler from Bordeaux and of Jerome that a statue of Hadrian was erected on the Temple Mount at the time of the colony's establishment, and I also doubt Jerome's statement concerning statues of Jupiter and Venus that were placed on the Golgotha Hill (1:5).\(^{28}\) But it is still quite certain that statues were prevalent in Aelia, and perhaps even on those two sites. Eusebius mentions a marble figure of a pig at the southern gate of the city; Many fragments of sculpture, some rather impressive, were found in Mazar's excavations at the southwest corner of the Temple Mount;\(^{29}\) niches made for statuary were revealed in the remains of the Roman gate under the Damascus Gate and the Ecce Homo arch; and inscriptions, especially in secondary use, that regularly accompany these objects have been found here and there.\(^{30}\)

The scantiness of well-defined, meaningful finds, compelled scholars to use other sorts of "information," mainly the data embodied in the city's landscape as it was preserved through the centuries. First and foremost, they examined the blueprint of the present city – i.e., the Old City of Jerusalem. By the nineteenth century, many shared the assumption that the Roman city plan is concealed underneath the intricate disarray of the Ottoman city, and therefore, if later additions are to be subtracted, the skeleton of the Roman colony would be laid bare. The orderly base of straight streets, nearly vertical to one another that can be discerned through the present irregular layout supported this conjecture. The discovery of the Madaba map with its exquisite portrayal of Jerusalem reinforces this view even further. The map displays a great similarity between the main arteries it depicts – especially the two routes crossing the city from north to south (the *cardines*, in the language of the Roman engineers) – and the two major thoroughfares in the present-day Old

\(^{27}\) Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 3:26 (Heikel, GCS 7, p. 89–90).

\(^{28}\) Eliav, "A Mount," pp. 83–93 (Heb.).


\(^{30}\) Eusebius, *Chronicon* year 136 (Helm, GCS 47, p. 201 l. 20–21). Fragments of broken statues are listed throughout Geva's summary (Geva, "Jerusalem").
City, namely, the Suq khan ez-zeit-Habad streets and the El-Wadi (Ha-
gai) street east of it. Many years prior to the discovery of the map,
Germer-Durand made the first systematic presentation of this theory,
drawing a hypothetical map of Aelia based on the map of the Old City
of Jerusalem. Almost unanimously accepted thereafter, his proposal al-
lowed scholars to define the outline of the Roman city as following
the boundaries of the Old City walls and to envision its street arrange-
ment according to existing major routes.\textsuperscript{31} In a recent encyclopedia entry, Oleg
Grabar encapsulated this trend of a hundred and fifty years of research
in a short line, thus describing Aelia as “walls surrounded a squarish
space (more or less today’s old city) that included the area of the Temple
and the western hills.”\textsuperscript{32} The plainness of the statement demonstrates
how deeply ingrained in our consciousness such a picture of Roman
Jerusalem has become.

Once this model was conceived, it became easier to fit the archaeo-
logical and literary pieces into a seemingly homogeneous picture. The re-
 mains in the vicinity of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (1:5) were
coupled with the reports of the church fathers Eusebius and Jerome
about pagan temples, either to Aphrodite or Jupiter or perhaps both,
that were situated there, leading to a reconstruction of the main forum
of the city on the grounds of today’s Christian quarter (“the Muristan”).
This major civic center was reproduced as a massive square, whose easter-
n side was marked by the Suq khan ez-zeit Street. The street itself was
given the title \textit{cardo maximus}, and intersecting this line at a more or less
right angle, the route of the David-Chain (Bab al-Silsila road) streets was
perceived as a \textit{decumanus}, the classical transverse thoroughfare of a Ro-
man city. Emanating from Benoit’s proposition, the \textit{lithostroton} paved-
ment and the Ecce Homo arch (1:2) were identified as a “secondary
forum” in the eastern part of the city. Another temple to Asclepius
was positioned adjacent to them to the east, in the area of the Probatika
pool (1:8), next to Saint Anne’s Church. The various stone pavements
were also interpreted as part of the now well-defined street plan, and
the ancient gate uncovered under the Damascus Gate (1:1) was matched

\textsuperscript{31} J. Germer-Durand, “Aelia Capitolina,” \textit{RB}, 1 (1892), pp. 369–387. His view of the
city contours underlies all the reconstructions that have been put forward since then. It was
taken \textit{ad absurdum} by Wilkinson, who dates the road system even earlier, claiming
that it was built in the Second Temple period. See J. Wilkinson, “The Streets of Jerusa-
lem,” \textit{Levant}, 7 (1975), pp. 118–136. A more balanced reconstruction based on Germer-
Durand’s principles has recently been presented, exhaustively and fully referenced, in
Tsafir, “The Topography.”

\textsuperscript{32} O. Grabar, “Jerusalem,” in G. W. Bowersock et al., eds., \textit{Late Antiquity: A Guide to
with the gate appearing on the Madaba map as the central gate in the north of the city.

Details extracted from the literary sources were integrated into these reconstructions as well. A typical example is the attempts to arrange (or rather squeeze) the city’s map, which became an identical twin to the map of the current Old City, according to the seven districts mentioned in the Chronicon Paschale and to locate the various public buildings that are mentioned in this source. Furthermore, most scholars adopted the suggestion put forward by Charles Wilson (see n. 38 below) that the camp of the Tenth Legion, which was quartered in the city after the destruction of the Second Temple, was located in the territory of the southwestern hill, that is, on the site of the Upper City of the Second Temple period (see map 2). Finally, the accepted view also included the Temple Mount in this layout, whether as the site of the temple of Jupiter mentioned by Cassius Dio or as a plain and anonymous “place of worship.”33 Exemplifying this scholarly process are the numerous maps that were drawn to recreate the appearance of the Roman colony, which, in spite of their variations, all coincided, more or less, with the territory of the Old City and were delimited within its boundaries.34

* * *

The major drawback of these reconstructions is the great gap between the final result and the findings that presume to substantiate it. Two controversies that divide the scholarly world concerning Aelia can elucidate this claim. Did the main street of Aelia – the “cardo maximus” – which stretched south from the area of the Damascus Gate, continue to the southern part of the colony as well, crossing the line of the David and Chain streets? The old maps drawn by the scholars who investigated the city in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – Germer-Durand, Wilson and Vincent – naturally include such a route, which traverses the city along its entire north-south axis.35 Yet the results of Avigad’s excavations have shaken this assumption, if not proved it wrong altogether. Conducting a large-scale dig after the ‘67 war in the so-called Jewish quarter, Avigad and his team indeed came across a magnificent colonnaded street in the southern part of the city, along the route of Suq el-

33 For a full survey of these views see Eliav, “Hadrian’s Actions,” pp. 126–129.
34 The two most recent studies that express this all-encompassing view are: Geva, “Jerusalem”; Tsafir, “The Topography.” A more popular summary intended for the general public but based on the same principles is: Bahat, The Illustrated, pp. 58–67.
husur (the modern Jews-Habad streets), and this road indeed turned out to be a continuation (with a slight southwestern deviation) of the route emerging from the Damascus Gate in the northern part of the city. However, not only did the pottery that came from under the street date it to the Byzantine period – probably the sixth century – but no remains of any earlier Roman street were found there. The question is how to construe this lack of finds and what its implications are for understanding the structure of the Roman colony. One group of scholars dealt with the problem by refuting the traditional assumption that there had been a road cutting across the city from north to south, claiming that in the days of Aelia the street ended at the northern edge of the southwestern hill. In contrast, Tsafrir clung to the traditional view, offering weighty arguments to explain the absence of Roman material from Avigad’s excavations. In his opinion, it would be incorrect to deny the possibility that the road had extended to the southern part of the city, and the reason he gave for its absence in the dig is that Byzantine construction had caused it to “disappear.”

An even sharper debate surrounds the issue of the location of the Tenth Legion’s camp. Nearly all scholars had accepted the traditional stance, that this camp had been located at the southwestern hill, since Wilson first proposed it in the late nineteenth century. Contrary to this notion, some current views shift the camp’s location and propose alternative sites for it all over Jerusalem: the Christian quarter, the northern part of the Old City, or even the Temple Mount itself. In this case, too, archaeology had a hand in undermining the accepted opinion. The testimony of Josephus, who described a Roman camp set up in the ruined Jerusalem near the three Herodian towers, in the shadow of the wall encircling the city on the west, was brought into question by Avigad’s


findings in the Jewish quarter and a series of smaller excavations in the enclosure of the Ottoman Citadel (known as the Tower of David; 1:9) and the Armenian gardens (1:12). These showed, as in the case of the cardo, that there were no real remains of the military camp that was supposed to have been there. No streets were found, no typical structures were revealed, and, most importantly, there was no trace of the system of fortifications that would be expected in a camp of this sort. Making sense of these findings divided modern scholars once again into two groups. One maintains the traditional approach that the camp was nevertheless located on the southwestern hill, resolving the absence of any finds either by means of an archaeological interpretation that explains how the material evidence “disappeared” and how it is nevertheless possible to find hints of such a military camp (Tsafirir), or through a new interpretation of the nature of the camp that justifies the lack of finds (Geva). The second group rejects the traditional location of the tenth Legion camp and offers alternative sites (Isaac; Bar; E. Mazar).

The common denominator underlying these two debates – about the southern portion of the cardo and the location of the tenth legion’s camp – reveals the weak point in the research on Aelia Capitolina – the paucity of factual findings. Consequently, there is only a thin, often vague, line between the theory and the evidence that is supposed to support or refute it. The theory came first. Germer-Durand never doubted the shape he bestowed upon the colony and the manner in which he arranged its particular architectonic details. He did not, however, have much solid evidence to support his reconstruction, except, of course, for the silhouette of the nineteenth century Ottoman city he saw in front of him.

The attempts to draw an analogy from the circumference of the current city and the alignment of its streets to the pattern of the Roman city of the past are not totally implausible. Such a line of thought confirms to the principle of urban continuity and the construction processes that took place in many urban centers throughout the ages. But this is still no more than a working assumption that must be examined in light of continuing research. After all, no one would claim that some straight roads found among the disarray of winding streets in an Arab city must necessarily be a remnant from the Roman period. The Byzantines also knew how to build cities with perpendicular roads, as the Byzantine

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40 Geva, “The Camp.”

Cardo uncovered by Avigad attests very well. If Justinian could execute such a plan in the sixth century, then surely Constantine, the founder and builder of Constantinople, could as well. Thus, even though the straight streets spotted by Germer-Durand in maps of the City of Jerusalem could have originated during the time of the Roman colony, they could just as easily fit in a later period. And even if some of them – such as the northern part of the cardo, between Damascus Gate and the David-Chain streets, whose dating to the days of Aelia no one doubts – do indeed belong to the Roman period, this is not enough to prove that all the streets were built in the same period. Many scholars have noted that Aelia developed sluggishly and that there was great momentum in construction only from the time of Constantine, as is demonstrated by the dramatic change in the finds and the sources. It is plausible that the Byzantine builders of Jerusalem, who had the task of planning and paving the roads, did this according to the orthogonal principle, which was still widely held in their day. All this argues against the sweeping acceptance of Germer-Durand’s theory and points to the need to base any working theory on better evidence.

*A reconstruction of the Roman colony: A new proposal (see map 2)*

Any new reconstruction of Aelia Capitolina ought to begin with the established facts about the city that have survived through the ages. Such solid information includes, for example, the two splendid entrance complexes – the one found beneath the Damascus Gate and the Ecce Homo arch (the former is an actual gate while the latter is a triumphal arch) – which share a similar architectonic style and are both dated to the second century. The fact that the city had no fortification system for a century and a half is also verifiable. These two items are interrelated. What is the point of setting up entrance complexes in a city lacking walls? Based on what was customary in the Roman world, the answer that suggests itself is – to mark its boundaries.42

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42 As mentioned above (n. 11), in my inclination to see the Ecce Homo arch as marking the eastern boundary of the city, I am joining other scholars who have already suggested this, each for his or her own reasons. Recently I discussed the phenomenon of entrance structures delineating the city’s limits in another context; see: Y. Z. Eliav, “Pylè – Puma – Sfat Me‘ınah and a Halakha Concerning Bath-houses,” *Sidra*, 11 (1995), pp. 5–19 (Heb.). In addition to the familiar parallels to this phenomenon in neighboring regions – in Tiberias, Gadara, and the southern gate in Gerasa, not to mention the Hadrianic gate in Athens, which its inscriptions explicitly note was intended to mark the border between the old and new cities – another parallel has recently been discovered in Beit She’an-Scythopolis. Two gates, dated to the second century, were uncovered, in
Regarding these wall-less entrance structures, two other features are also significant. The Damascus Gate is in an ideal location for an entrance arch—on the natural traffic route for people coming from the north, along the course of the central valley that traverses Jerusalem (known as the Tyropoeon). As for the Ecce Homo arch, the important point is that it is more or less on the same line with the western wall of the Temple Mount enclosure. At present this fact goes very much unrecognized because the arch is submerged in the congested neighborhood around it. But that would not have been the case when the colony was established, since at that time the territory north of the Temple Mount was open and mostly unpopulated. As I see it, the placement of an arch along this line is part of the underlying planning principle described above, by which arches and gates define the boundary of the city. It manifests the wish of Aelia’s founders to mark the eastern limit of the colony by the western wall of the Temple Mount; they therefore placed an arch signifying this boundary on the continuation of this line, at its northern end.

Two additional finds are the colonnaded street running south from Damascus Gate, along the route that is now represented by Suq khan ez-zeit and Habad streets, and the massive construction that was uncovered on the northwestern hill, in the area of the Russian hospice and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. As mentioned above, most scholars have rightly connected the latter with the literary reports of pagan temples in this area, identifying the site as the forum of the Roman colony (see n. 13). In this case, the urban continuity implied by the massive building project at the same place during the time of Constantine supports the claim regarding the location of the Roman forum. It is more likely that Constantine would make use of the existing urban center, endowing it with Christian character and consequently reshaping its appearance but at the same time maintaining its nature, than that he would neglect and alter the urban texture altogether by shifting the core of the city somewhere else. The forum was thus on the northwestern hill, in the area where the Christian quarter stands today.

the northern and western parts of the city, while the city wall that connects them belongs to the Byzantine period. At the time the gates were constructed, Scythopolis had no city walls, and the gates stood as markers of the city boundaries. I thank Gabi Mazor for providing me with this information and sharing his conclusions with me.

43 Cf. above n. 11 for several studies that failed to acknowledge this point, placing the arch too far east. In reality, topographical constraints involving the hefty boulders in the northwest corner of the Temple Mount made it necessary to shift the arch somewhat west of the line of the Temple Mount wall.
Merging these pieces of information into one picture, or rather puzzle (whose parts do not produce a full map), allows a certain comprehension of the rationale behind the urban configuration of Aelia, which in turn provides the basis for a partial outline of the colony’s plan. Most importantly, the above examination shows that although Aelia Capitolina was situated adjacent to the old Jerusalem, the city of the Second Temple period, it was in many senses a new entity. The location of the Roman forum represents a major transformation in the spatial organization of the city, shifting its core to the northwest. This change was not merely a technical matter but expressed the Roman builders’ intention of abandoning the municipal layout of ancient Jerusalem.

From the earliest days, the city’s source of life was the Gihon spring, located at the bottom of the Kidron valley south of the Temple Mount. In addition, during the thousand or so years prior to the establishment of Aelia, a second municipal nucleus was the religious center on the Temple mount. Jerusalem’s landscape was shaped by these two foci, and thus its urban layout oriented toward the southeast – whether on the Temple-City of David axis in the First Temple period or in the Temple-Lower City-Upper City triangle of the Second Temple period. Hadrian and his engineers did not return to this terrain, which at the time was undoubtedly strewn with ruins. For the first time in Jerusalem’s history, the hub of life reallocated northward to the northwestern hill, an area that had always been far from the city’s heart, either outside the city entirely or at least on its periphery. Moreover, the construction of both the forum and the pagan temples on that hill, now known as the Christian quarter, created a new cultic and economic center for a city used to associating these functions with either the Temple Mount or the markets on the southwestern hill (“the upper city”). Finally, setting the city’s eastern edge on the line running from the Ecce Homo arch to the western wall of the Temple Mount left the compound of the old Temple, the Temple Mount, outside the boundaries of the Roman city (further on this below). Unlike the old southeast oriented city, Aelia was now clustered around the northwestern hill.

The major arteries of the city also changed unrecognizably. The main street of the colony, which almost everyone agrees proceeded southward from the Damascus Gate along the path of the ottoman Suq khan ez-

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44 Working separately on this issue, Magnes has reached a similar conclusion; see Magnes, “The North Wall,” p. 331, end of n. 3. But this has led her to reconstruct the Roman colony far north of the current old city of Jerusalem. In general, I am not convinced by her arguments, mainly because I do not see a reason to go so far and then come back.
zeit,⁴⁵ was a totally new route replacing the main road of Second Temple Jerusalem, which had run to the east of it, along the central valley (the Tyropoeon). This is an inevitable change, due to the northwestward shift of the city detailed above. The eastward traffic routes were also modified. As mentioned before, during the Second Temple era, the precinct of the Temple Mount dominated the eastern part of the city, where all the roads from the Upper City and the Lower City converged. This is attested by the famous colossal arches in the western wall of the Temple Mount – named the Robinson and Wilson arches (1:13–14) after those who discovered them in the nineteenth century – and the huge staircases and perhaps even a bridge that they supported leading to the temple grounds, as well as by the magnificent stairways allowing the entrance to the Temple from the south. All roads led to the Temple.

In Aelia, by contrast, a new infrastructure was crystallized. The Ecce Homo arch points to an east-west “detour” to the Temple Mount that bypassed the enclosure from the north. This change reflects the urban revolution that took place in the city. For the first time, so to speak, people walked eastward in Jerusalem without the primary intention of going to the Temple area.⁴⁶

Within the framework of this reconstruction, the more obscure details concerning the Roman colony can find their place as well. The major unresolved problem remains whether or not the southwestern hill was an integral part of the colony. Due to insufficient evidence, the precise

⁴⁵ Challenging this view now is D. Bar, “Aelia Capitolina’s Main Street Layout – Where was the Main Cardo of the City?”, in A. Faust and E. Baruch, eds., New Studies on Jerusalem: Proceedings of the Seventh Conference, Ramat Gan 2001, pp. 159–168 (Heb.).

⁴⁶ In general, the transversal roads in Aelia have not been studied sufficiently due to the lack of archaeological findings. It is not clear, for example, how the street continued west of the Ecce Homo arch, but it is not impossible that the route along the modern St. Francis–el-Khankah streets is a remnant of such a road. This line of streets, which travels west to east along a fairly straight line north of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, is parallel to the more southern route of David–the Chain streets and makes a right angle with Khan ez-Zeit Street near what is now called “the Seventh Station.” If this thoroughfare indeed traces Aelia’s transversal decumanus, or at least one such road, it was not reconstructed correctly in the various scholarly discussions of the city because of the attempt to compress the Roman colony into the straitjacket of the walls of the current Old City. To be sure, this analysis of the traffic routes is not meant to imply that old roads were not included in the new plan. The el-Wad road continued to function as an important path, even if it was secondary to the one west of it. Another road from the Second Temple period, the one that descends eastward along the route of David–Chain streets, continued to exist and, according to the evidence of the latest excavations, even reached the wall of the Temple Mount, which was the eastern boundary of Aelia. But the existence of these routes is not enough to negate the fundamental change that occurred in Jerusalem.
location of the Tenth Legion camp, for many years widely believed to be on the southwestern hill, cannot be established with certainty. Likewise, no decisive evidence has been offered to determine whether the streets descending from the north of the city continued into the southern part, beyond the David-Chain streets line. It seems preferable to leave such matters open. A looser conclusion may run as follows: The southern part of Jerusalem was definitely not totally abandoned at that time. Construction fragments and remains of habitation, however small, were found in this part of town – at the Citadel, the Armenian gardens, and other sites (see n. 18); traces of paved streets were found near the Chain Gate; and the Mazar excavations at the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount revealed a well-defined Roman stratum (see ns. 16–17). To be sure, city limits, especially when not rigidly fixed by walls, tend to be elastic, and, as the picture of the Byzantine city proves, the colony indeed grew beyond its own borders over the years.

On the other hand, we do not know when this expansion occurred or at what rate. More importantly, even if the southern area of the city was settled at some stage, this does not refute my major claim that the center had shifted northward. The missing section of the puzzle does not detract from the general reconstruction.

The Area North of the Temple Mount

When contemplating the general layout of the colony and reassessing the place of the Temple Mount within this picture it is essential to examine the role of the topographic unit north of the Temple Mount enclosure and its function within the framework of the city. As mentioned, most scholars include this area within the boundaries of Aelia, although they maintain certain vagueness as to its substance. The commonly held view argues for the presence of a “second forum” in the paved square called lithostroton, east of the Ecce Homo arch. It also claims that a few hundred feet to the east stood a sanctuary to Asclepius, neighboring the sheep pool (the Probatica). 47 What do the archaeological findings have to say about these assertions?

Benoit’s meticulous criticism elucidated the speculative nature of the highly detailed reconstructions of the lithostroton plaza, devised by Vincent and his students and, later on, Bagatti. According to his sharp

47 The fullest reconstruction was made by Aline, “La forteresse” (esp. chart 34). For others who hold these views see, e.g.: Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem nouvelle, chart 1, but cf. their arguments below, n. 62; Wilson, Golgotha, p. 144; Bahat, The Illustrated, pp. 63, 67; Geva, “Jerusalem,” pp. 764–765.
tongue it is all but a “castle in Spain (Châteaux en Espagne).” Neither the porticoes surrounding the square as some sort of a praetorian peri-style, nor the galleries, nor the stone benches, all central features in the common reconstruction of the site, can be supported with conclusive evidence.48 At most the area consisted of some rooms, whose nature cannot be determined with certainty. Moreover, not all the findings at this location can be attributed to the same period. A bulky stone wall positioned west of the Ecce Homo arch, one of the more impressive remnants in the area, is certainly of a later period, since it blocks the arch’s path and makes it impossible to use it.49 It is not even clear whether all the flagstones in the pavement belong to the same construction stage. The broad plan reveals a clear difference in typology between the large stones used to pave the rectangular plaza east of the Ecce Homo arch, which are oriented along a north-south axis, and the grooved stones that almost certainly belonged to the east-west transversal road. With the existing evidence, there is no way to determine whether the plaza and the road were built during the same period, just as there is no way of dating the construction of the road leading eastward from the arch. Like Hadrian, the Byzantines knew how to pave roads with grooved stones (or rather smooth stones that were slit over the years).

There is thus nothing to prevent us from seeing the lithostroton as the external piazza of the gate at the egress of the city, similar to the internal plaza at Damascus Gate. The placement of the pavement on the exterior of the arch should not be surprising; I believe it derived directly from its original purpose – to cover the Struthion pool that operated there during the Second Temple period and thus create a leveled ground that would allow passage to the paved road there.50 As Geva recently admitted, the term “forum” that was applied to the site does not faithfully reflect its actual function, and even Benoit, who first coined this term here, did not see it as anything more than a “petit commercial plaza ornamenting the eastern exit of Aelia Capitolina.”51

49 Ibid., p. 152.
50 The details about these findings are summarized in Aline, “La forteresse,” pp. 88–142; Bagatti, “Resti romani.” An analysis of the sort offered here accounts for the asymmetry of the Ecce Homo arch and the pavement adjacent to it, which troubled various scholars; see, e.g., Benoit, “L’Antonia,” p. 163; Wightman, The Walls, p. 199. According to what has been argued here, the reason for this is that these two elements, even though they were built at the same time, were intended for different purposes: the pavement for covering the pools and blazing the trail, and the arch for marking the boundary and functioning as a gate.
With regard to the Probatika pool (1:8), we are on firmer ground. Research has been conducted in the area of Saint Anne’s Church since Sultan Abd al-Magid handed it over to the French after the Crimean War of 1856. The site was uncovered over the course of many years, beginning with a reconstruction of the church by the French architect Mauss, continuing with the extended efforts of the White Fathers monks, into whose custody the French authorities had given the site, and concluding with the systematic excavations of the Dominicans, led by Roussé, in the 1950’s. These digs yielded a long series of finds. Mauss discovered two basins, which were immediately but mistakenly identified as the Sheep Pools (Probatika) of the Second Temple period. Under the Crusader structure of Saint Anne’s Church he also discovered various building remains flanking the pools. Somewhat later, during the laborious excavations of the White Fathers, who cleaned up hundreds of cubic feet of debris, it became clear that the pools found by Mauss were actually small reservoirs, built by human hands within a huge ancient pool, and that an identical pool was situated south of this large structure. These twin pools were very likely to be the original Probatika of the Second Temple period.

From the very start, the excavations at the site unearthed various votive objects. Already in 1866, workers had come across a broken marble foot with a dedication inscription by a woman named Pompeia Lucilia. Among the objects uncovered later were a broken marble statue of an outstretched nude woman; a clay statuette of a female figure taking off her clothes; stone models of small boats; and two relief fragments of a colonnaded building topped by a gable – one with a snake curled around

52 C. Mauss, La piscine de Béthesda à Jérusalem, Paris 1888. The excavations were carried out a little at a time and without any systematic publication for many years. An important tool for following the findings and the suggestions that were made for interpreting them can be found in the reports delivered from time to time by Conrad Schick, Claude Condor, and others to the British society for Near Eastern studies; see: PEFQst, 20 (1888), pp. 115–134, 259–260; 22 (1890), pp. 18–20; 33 (1901), pp. 163–165; 53 (1921), pp. 91–100. The research of the White Fathers in the first third of the twentieth century, which Vincent was involved with almost throughout, is summarized in N. van der Vliet, “Sainte Marie ou elle est née” et la Piscine Probatique, Jerusalem and Paris 1938, pp. 176–207. Concerning the Dominicans’ excavations in the 1950’s see: J. M. Roussé, “L’église Sainte-Marie de la Probatique: Chronologie des sanctuaires à Sainte-Anne de Jérusalem d’après les fouilles récentes,” in Atti del VI congresso internazionale di archeologia cristiana (Studi dianitichità cristina 26), Rome 1965, pp. 169–176; M. J. Pierre and J. M. Roussé, “Sainte-Marie de la Probatique état et orientation des recherches,” PrOrChr, 31 (1981), pp. 23–42. For a good summary of the whole project see also: J. Jeremias, The Rediscovery of Bethesda (New Testament Archaeology Monograph 1), Louisville KY 1966; A. Duprez, Jésus et les dieux guérisseurs: A propos de Jean V (Cahiers de la RB 12), Paris 1970, pp. 28–56.
it, and the other with the tip of a spike showing at its side, which is generally considered part of an offering tendered by the figure standing to the left of the structure. Possibly related to these findings are coins minted in Aelia that are dated to the mid-third century and show an image of Hygieia, the personification of "health" and the daughter of Asclepius, sitting on a stone and feeding a snake.  

In the 1920's, even before the Dominicans began their extensive excavations, Vincent (also a Dominican) collected all the literary evidence about the Probatika, summarized the archaeological data that had been discovered thus far, and formulated a theory about a consecrated healing institution (not necessarily a temple) at the site. He brilliantly offered to trace the origin of this setting back to the Second Temple pools, whose waters were known for their miraculous remedial powers, as described in John 5:2–4, and suggested its evolution first into a pagan establishment and then into the Byzantine churches that later populated the area.

Vincent's views were largely supported by the Dominican excavations, which clarified the site's relative and absolute stratigraphy. The archaeologists were able to discern a well-defined architectural layer on top of the remains from the Second Temple period and beneath the Byzantine church. Pottery facilitated the dating of this layer to the third or fourth century. It turns out that the Probatika pools were not in use at that time; if anything, it was the two small basins built inside the northern pool that were operating. With the huge water system abandoned during the period of Aelia Capitolina, the site extended to the east of the Second Temple pools. Its most salient features were the many water installations that were arranged in a branching network of canals, as revealed in the 1950's by the Dominican digs east of the pools. The preserved walls belong mainly to the foundations of a massive architectonic structure that dominated the site; at some points these walls go down to a depth of 240 feet or more. The upper layers were "erased," whether by an act of deliberate destruction or in the process of constructing the Byzantine church, later known as St. Mary of the Probatika. The preceding Roman layer is represented by two underground rooms with vaulted ceilings, which were preserved almost intact, and a number of massive walls extending southward on the eastern side of the pools; it seems that they can be connected with similar remains that were discovered by Mauss.

53 Meshorer, The Coinage, pp. 56–57. Meshorer himself associates the coins with the Siloam pool, but the links to the findings cited here make it at least plausible that the coins depicting a cultic-healing center and the other votive objects are related to each other.

54 Abel and Vincent, Jérusalem nouvelle, IV, pp. 669–698.
under the pulpit of Saint Anne’s Church. It also seems reasonable to accept the suggestion that fresco-decorated tesserae that dotted the ruins in great numbers belonged to these structures and thus that they were part of some decorated plaster walls. An entire segment of a mosaic floor was preserved in another area under a Byzantine mosaic, and many mosaic cubical stones were scattered all over the debris piles and ruins.\textsuperscript{55}

As mentioned previously, Vincent was also the first to propose, even before the water systems were discovered, that the site might be related to Asclepius, the god of medicine. He based his case on the votive objects that were found in the area and the story about Jesus healing the paralyzed man (John 5:1–9) that supposedly took place at the site – the pool of the Probatika. Now that this suggestion has been supported by the results of the excavations in the 1950’s, it is widely accepted.\textsuperscript{56} The area probably encompassed a healing complex relying on the miraculous qualities of the place and under the aegis of Asclepius. Structures of this sort were widespread in the Roman world. Aside from the famous large temple compounds that were associated with Asclepius – in Epidaurus, Pergamum, and the island of Cos – there were also hundreds of smaller ones throughout the empire. Predominantly, these institutions provided medical services and sometimes hospitalization of patients as well. Concomitantly, as was common in the ancient world, medicine and religion were mingled indiscriminately, and thus a ramified system of ritual worship, including ceremonies, sacrifices, and offerings, probably functioned at the site as well, in varying degrees of intensity.\textsuperscript{57} Recently, Avalos’ studies have demonstrated the close association between the ancient world’s conceptions of medicine and ritual worship, especially in the Orient, as well as the continuity between Near Eastern localities where healing was practiced and their counterparts in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.\textsuperscript{58}


\textsuperscript{56} But the use of the word “temple” in the discussions of this site should not lead us to infer that it consisted of a Roman temple in the full sense. Pace Rousée, “L’église”; Duprez, Jésus, who reconstructed the site as a temple of Sarapis. Modern scholars have adopted this “extended” approach far too literally and placed a full-size temple at the site. The material, if closely examined, does not offer any evidence to support this claim.

\textsuperscript{57} The most comprehensive studies of Asclepius and the health installations associated with him are E. J. Edelstein and L. Edelstein, Asclepius: A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies, Baltimore 1945; T. S. Miller, The Birth of the Hospital in the Byzantine Empire (Bulletin of the History of Medicine 10), Baltimore 1985, esp. pp. 30–49.

\textsuperscript{58} H. Avalos, Illness and Health Care in the Ancient Near East: The Role of the Temple in Greece, Mesopotamia, and Israel (Harvard Semitic Monographs 54), Atlanta 1995. This sort of continuity does not, however, make it necessary to reconstruct pagan rituals in Jerusalem during the Second Temple period, as claimed decisively by Benoit, “L’An-
Considering the evidence in John, it is not impossible that the Roman colony in Jerusalem retained a local custom that assigned special curative powers to the Probatika pool and erected a "healing outfit" east of the ruined pools from the Second Temple period.

If this was indeed some sort of medical multiplex, it is unnecessary to include it within the municipal boundaries of Aelia Capitolina. Healing sites of this kind sprang up in many places with special "supernatural traits," in the vicinity of springs and caves or at the shores of seas and lakes. The exclusivity of these geographical locations, which endowed the medical facilities with their extraordinary status, was anchored in past traditions, not determined by city boundaries. The particularity of such a place associated with its "historical" records is somewhat analogous to the scientific formula that makes modern medicine work. Therefore, the crucial factor as to where to build them were not city limits but the special location that has been transmitted from one generation to the next. In the clear generalization of Ramsay MacMullen, "Holy places only by chance lay where cities grew." Moreover, in the case of Asclepiea, there was a clear preference for situating such complexes far from the general population, outside the city, mainly in order to prevent the spread of diseases. If other evidence were to indicate that this northeaster sector was part of the city, there might be reason to reconsider the matter, but it should not be annexed to the city just because of the Asclepieon on the site.

These conclusions may also shed new light on the nature of the lithostroton pavement and its function outside the city entrance structure. As mentioned, a flagstone-paved square near a city gate is not an unusual phenomenon, especially in the particular circumstances that emerged in this part of town. A healing complex with distinctive miraculous qualities only a few hundred feet outside the city limits probably attracted native inhabitants as well as others and no doubt acquired an aura of holiness over time. Visitors who walked out of the Ecce Homo arch to visit the sacred site would require animals to sacrifice or votive objects on which to have their names incised; on their way back they would probably want to buy some souvenirs. The gate through which they would leave and eventually return to the city would thus naturally be-

tonia," and even more by Duprez, Jésus, but this issue is beyond the scope of the present study.

come a bustling place that would draw peddlers, merchants, artisans, and, as accepted in Roman cities, especially a colony with a nearby military camp, prostitutes and other loafers as well. Echoing such a reality, for example, is the story in the book of Acts about Paul and Barnabas’ visit to Lystra in Asia Minor. There the city gate served as a gathering place for a pagan festival arranged by a priest at the Temple of Zeus, which was outside the city.\(^{61}\) Such understanding of the nature of the Ecce Homo site clarifies the socio-urban context for the lithostrotion plaza. In this (extra) urban context its existence seems natural and expected, and it fits in well with the texture of the area, as do the rooms (possibly shops?) that were built around it over time. The lithostrotion should therefore be seen more as a commercial “piazza” just outside the city entrance than as a “city forum.”

**The Temple Mount Area**

How does the above archaeological discussion affect our understanding of the Temple Mount enclosure and its relation to the Roman colony? The data about the urban layout of Aelia that have been discussed so far indicate that this area of the Jewish Temple, which had been in ruins since the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, was left outside the city.\(^{62}\) To be sure, as already mentioned, for at least the first 150 years of its existence, Aelia Capitolina lacked a well-defined fortification system; walls did not encircle it. This does not imply, however, amorphous city boundaries, in the eyes of either the planners or the inhabitants. Marking the inner territory of a city, aside from having been a religious ceremony in the Roman world, is such a basic urban requisite that it is

\(^{61}\) *Acts* 14:13

\(^{62}\) Vincent had already suggested that the Temple Mount enclosure was left out of the colony; see his discussion in Vincent and Abel, *Jérusalem nouvelle*, I, p. 24, and chart I of that study, where the city map he produced places the eastern boundary of Aelia in a line stretching south from a point east of the Damascus Gate to the Ecce Homo arch. On this issue our views concur, but from this point onward we develop our arguments in totally different directions, since he claims that the Kodra mentioned by the Chronicon Paschale was located on the Temple Mount, and accordingly he reconstructs there some sort of a sanctuary; see his intricate discussion, ibid., p. 35. But his view leads to a paradox: Why should anyone build such a monument and then leave it outside the city? (The same difficulty applies to Wightman, *The Walls*, p. 179.) Vincent does attempt to resolve this problem, however, saying, “Dans la restauration de Jérusalem par Hadrien, le Temple et ses abords immédiats formaient une sorte de quartier à part que l’on distinguait de la cité proprement dite d’Aelia” (Vincent and Abel, *Jérusalem nouvelle*, IV, p. 671, n. 2). But this answer only strengthens the question: Why do such a thing? And what proof is there that it was actually done?
hard to imagine any community doing without it. One of the most rudimentary outcomes of such conceptualization of urban space is that not only municipal authorities but also city dwellers and visitors could easily distinguish between what was inside and what was outside the city. For this reason unwalled cities established other techniques for designating their borders, such as placing gates and monumental arches on the four edges of town. This was the case in Jerusalem as well.

According to the reconstruction suggested here, when the Roman founders of Aelia modified the shape of the city, shifting its center to the northwestern hill in addition to stretching new roads and so forth, they did not include the immense Herodian temenos of the Temple Mount within its boundaries. This conclusion rests on a number of considerations. First, not even one piece of archaeological evidence indicates the presence of any architectonic structure on the Temple Mount during the Roman period—no gates to the precinct were found; neither were stairways nor repairs to its walls. Furthermore, as I have claimed elsewhere, there are no literary references to any such structures in the sources from that period. My studies dispute Cassius Dio’s assertion about a pagan temple built on the Temple Mount; this must be regarded as a later source motivated by a religious agenda. As for a statue, or perhaps two, that some sources locate in the Temple Mount enclosure, I have argued that even if accepted, they alone do not indicate inclusion of a large area within in the city limits. Without the information extracted from Dio, there is no literary justification for including the area of the Temple Mount within the limits of the city.

On the contrary, a string of hints suggests that the opposite was the case. The huge enclosed platform built by Herod was the dominant topographic and architectonic feature in the city of the late Second Temple period. If the builders of the Roman colony had desired to incorporate it in their new city, they could have embraced its remains, but it would entail much effort of both human and financial resources. If the great terraced trapezoid had been cleaned of its rubble, it would have been an ideal location for many urban functions, such as temple compound, forum, or military camp. Yet the new spatial organization of the urban landscape of Aelia, as analyzed above, reflects a certain detachment from the Temple Mount area. The northwestward shift of the municipal center and the creation of roads that detoured around the Temple Mount demonstrate this distancing. This conclusion is further supported by the placement of the entrance arch, which I argue signifies the eastern

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63 Eliav, “Hadrian’s Actions.”
64 Eliav, “A Mount,” p. 93 (Heb.).
boundary of the city, on the line of the western wall of the Temple Mount, thus excluding everything to the east of it, including the Temple Mount itself, from the city limits.

It is difficult to determine why the Roman engineers and architects who sketched the plan of the Roman colony abandoned the traditional layout of Jerusalem and left the Temple Mount precinct outside their city's boundary line. Did they have logistic concerns stemming from the technical difficulties presented by the old city, filled with ruins? Or was their incentive more ideological? Christian writers tended to portray Hadrian's moves in Judaea and Jerusalem as defiant toward Judaism and its people. Modern scholars have often adopted this position as fact without critically examining it. According to this view, the new colony is to be seen as motivated by anti-Jewish sentiment. 65 I tend, however, to agree with those scholars who believe that attributing such a position to Hadrian is anachronistic, especially in regard to his actions prior to the Bar-Kokhba revolt. 66 In the absence of evidence for any animus against Judaism, it seems more likely that practical considerations dictated the moves that ultimately left the enclosure of the ruined Temple outside the newly built town. One such incentive may have been the difficulty of clearing away the huge stacks of debris from the ruins of the Second Temple edifices. It had taken Herod and his successors, with all the manpower and means that were available to them, sixty-five years to build the place; imagine how long it would have taken the Romans to clear it.

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It is not easy to find scholarly discussions underscoring parallels to the phenomenon presented here – namely for the Romans, when founding a new colony, to erect a temple on grounds that abut the ruins of an earlier local sanctuary but at the same time to relinquish the latter's actual site, or even leave it out of the city's borders altogether. According to the widely held view, especially in its more romantic 19th – and early 20th – century version, which directly associated “urbanism” and “Romaniza-


tion,” the Romans have been expected to incorporate a prestigious and ruined sanctuary into their new municipality.\(^67\) Indeed, one does not have to think far to come up with very famous examples for such procedures. The celebrated Greek polis Corinth, destroyed by Lucius Mummius in 146 BCE and left more or less in ruins for 102 years, was rebuilt as a colony – *Colonia Laus Iulia Corinthiensis* – occupying similar grounds and resurrecting the sacred Greek compounds.\(^68\) On the other side of the Mediterranean, almost identical measures were carried out in Carthage, captured and burnt to the ground by Scipio Aemilianus Africanus in 146 BCE only to be refounded in 44 BCE “on the ruins (*in vestigii*) of Great Carthage,” to use the words of the Elder Pliny.\(^69\) It is very likely, although admittedly not explicit, that a conceptual outlook of this kind induced scholars re-creating Aelia Capitolina to include the Temple Mount within the Roman colony. It may have seemed to them inconceivable for the Romans to leave out such a structure.

Reality, however, was evidently much more diverse. For one thing, some of the Roman colonies – whether *Eburacum* (modern York) in *Britannia* or *Thamugadi* (modern Timгад) in the north African province of *Numidia*, to name two well-known western instances – were erected more or less from scratch, preceded only by either a legionary fortress, as at York, or nothing as in Timгад. In such cases, the logistics and the economic quality of the spot were the primary considerations for the new city’s location, and there were no exalted ancient sanctuaries to be included.\(^70\) In numerous other instances, colonies were founded within

\(^{67}\) This is too broad a topic to cover in a short note. Illuminating surveys of both old conceptions and current tendencies can be found in D. J. Mattingly, ed., *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism: Power, Discourse, and Discrepant Experience in the Roman Empire* (JRA, Supp. 23), Portsmouth RI 1997, and – more specifically for my suggestion here – C. R. Whittaker, “Imperialism and Culture: The Roman Initiative,” ibid., pp. 143–163, esp. pp. 144–148.


\(^{69}\) *N. H*. 5.24 (Rackham, *Loeb* II, p. 236). Extensive archaeological excavations that were carried out in Carthage confirm the contemporary testimony of Pliny against the later second-century writer Appian, who, in an attempt to mediate between the actions of Augustus and the famous curse (*consecratio*) of Scipio, asserted that the city was built “quite near” (*ἀγχοστάτω μάλιστα*) the original site. See: App., *Pun*. 136 (White, *Loeb* I, p. 644); Gros and Torelli, *Storia*, pp. 284–291; F. Rakob, “The Making of Augustan Carthage,” in E. Fentress, ed., *Romanization and the City: Creation, Transformations and Failures* (JRA Supp. 38), Portsmouth RI 2000, pp. 73–82, esp. p. 79 about the Roman Temple’s location on top of its Punic predecessor.

the framework of existing and established, even if not always the most prominent, settlements. At their inception, these urban ventures typically involved adding new settlers, usually military veterans, to the local population, restructuring the governing and political systems, and upgrading the legal status of the old place (at times, especially from the second century on, it entailed only the legal change). Many of the colonies in both Anatolia and Gallia illustrate such measures.\(^7\) In regions neighboring Aelia, such coloniae as Acco-Ptolemais, dating from the days of Claudius, and Caesarea Maritima, from the days of Vespasian, were established in the same vein.\(^2\) Although certainly not always comfortable for the locals, the urban transformation in these cases was relatively peaceful, involving neither destruction of existing temples nor reconstruction of ruined ones.

Furthermore, even when rebuilding ruined towns that retained important local cult centers, it was not utterly predetermined that the Romans would return to the former site and restore the old sanctuary. More than a few cases, especially from the western part of the empire, each growing from different circumstances, demonstrate this claim. In Germania inferior, for example, when the major town and cultic hub of the Batavi – the oppidum Batavorum, as it is called by Tacitus – was burned down during the upheaval known as the “Batavian Rebellion” (69–70 CE), the center was relocated a few miles west and rebuilt as the new town of Noviomagus (under the heart of the modern city of Nijmegen in the Netherlands), later to be promoted to colonial status by Trajan.\(^3\) Other towns in the

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\(^7\) Gross and Torelli, Storia, pp. 331–338.


\(^7\) For a good up-to-date summary and bibliography see: T. Bechert and W. J. H. Willems, Die römische Reichsgrenze von der Mosel bis zur Nordseeküste, Stuttgart 1995, pp. 65–70 (bibliography on pp. 75–76).
same region were dealt with quite differently. In Xanten, for example, about 70 miles east of Noviomagus, the nearby military camp at Vetera was also burnt in the days of the uprising. A new fortress was built near by, and survived until the third century. So when Trajan, at the turn of the first century, was seeking a place for a new colony, he chose the grounds of an existing prosperous town, probably the center of the local tribe (Ciberni/Cugerni), for his new *Colonia Ulpia Traiana*.

Clearly, there is a major difference between the two cases, since in Xanten there was no ruined local center to replace. Nevertheless, here are two urban endeavors, relatively close in both time and space, in which the Romans treated the indigenous hubs in distinct, if not opposing, ways; one swings away from the local center while the other adheres to it. These divergent measures point to the lack of uniform paradigms for such actions, which is precisely my current argument.

Another case that illustrates the complexities of urban dynamics, and thus illuminates the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, comes from Britain. In 43 CE under the emperor Claudius, the Romans captured the town of *Camulodunum*, now Colchester in eastern England and then the capital city of the local tribes. Immediately after the conquest, a fortified military camp was built there, but soon thereafter, in 49 CE, when the Roman garrison moved to the other side of the country, the colony – *Colonia Claudia Victricensis* – was established on the grounds of the evacuated military camp and crowned the capital of the province. The centerpiece of this enterprise was a sizeable sanctuary comprising a precinct and a shrine dedicated to Claudius (apparently after his death), which came to supervise and administer the emperor’s cult throughout Britain and later was destroyed together with the colony in a local uprising led by princess Boudica (60–61 CE).

One major distinction between Jerusalem and Colchester is that, whereas in the latter the military was sent away and the new colony took its fortress, Aelia was instituted at a time when the army was still

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stationed in the area (although we do not know for sure where; see above n. 38). Nevertheless, in regard to the old local temple in Cæmuloventum, the numerous archaeological excavations in the past century indicate that the military camp (followed by the colony) and the Claudian temple were not situated on the grounds of the old native town, at the time in ruins. Rather, the Romans shifted the site of their fortress and the new cultic center, locating it east of the old demolished city. They neighborhood old Camulodunum, but on land that had previously been mostly uninhabited. This situation, even if reflecting different causes, is similar to what I suggested above concerning Jerusalem: Romans do not always return to the sites of devastated local sanctuaries.

From the more immediate vicinity of Jerusalem it is also worthwhile to examine the Roman temple on Mount Gerizim, at that time part of the town of Neapolis (Shechem). The Romans initiated the pagan temples in Aelia and Neapolis in the first half of the second century.\(^77\) Whether it was built by Hadrian, as attested by some written sources, or Antoninus Pius, as seems to be indicated by the numismatic evidence,\(^78\) some interesting analogies between the pagan shrine to Zeus (Jupiter) on Mount Gerizim and its contemporary neighbor in Aelia Capitolina come to mind. The geographical-historical background of the two places is quite similar, with the roots of their prestige fixed on an ancient sacred tradition, manifested in a city with a sanctuary at its core. Similar to urban developments in Second Temple Jerusalem, a large city on Mount Gerizim, not only a holy precinct as scholars previously thought, is recently being uncovered, with the cultic Samaritan compound at its center.\(^79\) The political events

\(^{77}\) I am not going into the complex questions about the Samaritans' relations to the Jewish community and the Roman Empire in the period of the Bar-Kokhba revolt. These are extremely complicated matters, on which various contrasting opinions have been expressed. See M. Mor, "The Samaritans and the Bar-Kokhba Revolt," in A. D. Crown, ed., The Samaritans, Tübingen 1989, pp. 19–31, and the references there. Only one chronological fact is important for the present purpose – namely, that the two pagan temples, the one in Jerusalem and the one on Mount Gerizim, were built around the time of the Bar-Kokhba revolt. The connection between the construction of the temples and the revolt, if indeed there was such a link, is yet to be resolved and makes no difference here.

\(^{78}\) For the first view, which is the one accepted by most scholars, see, e.g., M. Mor, Tha Bar-Kochba Revolt: its Extent and Effect, Jerusalem 1991, pp. 179–180 (Heb.). For the view relying on the coins, which dates the construction to a later time, see Y. Magen, "Mount Gerizim and the Samaritans," in F. Manns and E. Alliata, eds., Early Christianity in Context: Monuments and Documents (SBF 38), Jerusalem 1993, pp. 126–127.

\(^{79}\) Y. Magen, "Gerizim, Mount," NEAEHL II, pp. 484–487. Neither the rivalry between Jews and Samaritans nor the tension between the two temples will be discussed here. For a good bibliography on these issues and other topics involving the Samaritans see A. D. Crown, A Bibliography of the Samaritans (ATLA Bibliography Series 32), Metuchen NJ 1993\(^2\) (on the issue under discussion here, see his index, 1003.4).
that led to the extinction of the two local temples and the construction of alternative pagan sanctuaries correlate to some degree as well. Both cities had been devastated in wartime and their temples demolished – the Jewish temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 CE, and the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim about 180 years earlier by John Hyyranus I. In both instances the obliteration of the shrine did not impair the veneration of the site among its people, and both places continued to function in the national and religious spotlight for many years.\textsuperscript{80}

If I am correct in my claim throughout this paper, the Roman planners in Jerusalem abandoned the old urban layout and for practical reasons shifted the city center about six hundred feet northwest. They acted similarly on Mount Gerizim, although the urban circumstances and the chronological framework there were quite different. When Vespasian established the town Flavia Neapolis in 72/3 CE, the Romans did not revert to the old Samaritan city on top of Mount Gerizim but chose a site about a mile north, at the base of the mountain, which provided a more convenient topography, being on a main road and near the sources of water.\textsuperscript{81} Admittedly, there are also some major differences between the situations, especially since a second settlement, the old city of Shechem, as well as the village of Mabartha, were also located at the bottom of Mount Gerizim, and the Romans probably took that into account when they established Neapolis.

Nonetheless, the status of Mount Gerizim within the new town deserves further consideration. It appears that the city founders of Neapolis decided against the inclusion of the Samaritan sacred mountain in the new urban infrastructure, and it took another two generations to build a temple on its hilltop. What is even more illuminating is that even when they decided to return to the mountain, the Romans did not retrace the old enclosure, although the ruins of the ancient sanctuary protruded in plain sight. Rather, they selected a new site for the temple to Zeus, about half a mile north of the sacred Samaritan site, on a summit now called Tel er-Ras.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{80} Regarding the status of Jerusalem and the Temple among the Jews after 70 see Eliav, “A Mount,” pp. 173–174 (Heb.). Many scholars have examined the prominence of Mount Gerizim after the destruction of the Samaritan temple; see, e.g., E. Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (rev. ed. G. Vermes et al.), II, Edinburgh 1979, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{81} On the subject of Shechem-Neapolis see Y. Magen, “Shechem-Neapolis,” NEAEHL IV, pp. 1354–1355. Clearly the foundation of Neapolis preceded Aelia by many years, but this does not change the principles underlying these activities, which are the essence of the comparison presented here.

\textsuperscript{82} This is one of the most salient new conclusions arising from Magen’s excavations on the peak of Mount Gerizim; see Magen, “Gerizim.” It refutes the theory presented by Bull, who excavated the site in the 1960s, that the Samaritan temple was underneath the
The motives for this move are far from obvious. We cannot say for
sure whether they took this action out of consideration for the feelings of
the Samaritans or a wish to avoid infuriating them. The possible result of
such rage was illustrated three centuries later, when the construction of
the Mary Theotokos (= the mother of God) Church by the emperor
Zeno (in 484) on top of the Samaritan sanctuary inflamed the region
with fierce Samaritan riots. By the same token, however, there is no
evidence to suggest the opposite: that this was an anti-Samaritan act
that eventually led to a Samaritan rebellion. Likewise, the view that it
manifested the Samaritans’ religious syncretism – a desire to integrate
their sacrosanct altar on one hilltop with a pagan temple built on an-
other – is mere speculation. It seems to me that, even if such factors
played some role, we should not ignore the simpler aspect of urban plan-
ning – the need to merge the new temple and the existing town it now
belonged to, Flavia Neapolis. The municipality, situated in the valley
beneath the Gerizim mountain, was amalgamated with the temple on
the summit by a monumental staircase rising from bottom to top. This
binding is reflected in the city’s coins, which featured three embossed
components – city, temple on a hill above it, and stairway climbing to
that hill. Fragments of the steps have been uncovered in archaeological
excavations, and the three-piece complex is also mentioned as one civic
unit by various literary sources. According to this line of thought, the
old Samaritan site was simply too far away, and erecting the Roman
temple there would have created a topographic gap between it and the
city at the bottom of the hill.

In any case, the correspondence with the temple in Jerusalem is ap-
parent. Just as the old temple site of Jerusalem was neglected and the
new temple in Aelia Capitolina was shifted about fifteen hundred feet
northwest of the Temple Mount, to the area that is now the Christian
quarter, so, too, the new temple on Mount Gerizim was transferred
about twenty-one hundred feet north of the old site in order to link it
with the new urban setting. Once again, this demonstrates the Romans’

83 Scholars at some point expressed all these views. See, e. g.: Mor, “The Samaritans,”
pp. 28–31; M. Avi-Yonah, “The Samaritan Revolts against the Byzantine Empire,” Eretz
Israel 4 (1956), pp. 127–132 (Heb.).

84 For the coins see Y. Meshorer, City Coins of Eretz-Israel and the Decapolis in the
Roman Period, Jerusalem 1985, pp. 48–52, esp. coin no. 135. For written sources repre-
senting the close ties between the city and the Temple on Mount Gerizim see, e. g.:
Chronicon Adler (Adler and Sëlighsöhn, REJ 45 [1902], p. 82); Damaskius Diadochos,
Vitae Suidor reliquiae 141 (Zintzen, p. 196, ll. 1–2)
willingness to neglect traditional temple grounds when those obstruct other practical exigencies. New cities created new needs, and these led to the adoption of new sites.

There is no point in pressing these comparisons too far. As in any two cases they are not totally identical. There are striking disparities between the two cities, such as the topographic situation— the difference in altitude between Neapolis and the top of Mount Gerizim is far greater than that in Jerusalem— the period when they were built, and the circumstances that led to their establishment. Aelia became a typical pagan city, while Flavia Neapolis sustained a mixed population and culture. And even more striking, both of these settlements are quite unlike Camulodunum, in which, as mentioned above, the colony was erected on the site of a vacated military camp. There are variations with respect to the temples as well. Unlike Jerusalem, the ancient Samaritan sanctuary continued to function in one way or another within the framework of the new pagan entity, as can be seen, for example, in the city’s coins, which represent a hill crowned by a temple adjacent to another hilltop with an altar.\(^{85}\) Yet the uniqueness of any particular case does not preclude the possibility of isolating comparable features. This is what comparative research is all about. In the present case, I use comparisons to argue that the Romans did not necessarily return to ancient temple sites when establishing a new city. Just as they did not revert to the old situation in Noviomagus, Camulodunum, or Flavia Neapolis, so it was not imperative for them do so in Jerusalem. All in all, no one can assure us that the question of what to do with a ruined local temple when refounding a city had an inexorable answer, and it seems very likely that it did not.

**Conclusion**

In order to appraise the landscape of the Roman colony Aelia Capitolina and come to terms with its urban layout, we must detach ourselves from the traditional model of the city as it has been fixed in our consciousness by local traditions (both Jewish and Muslim) throughout the centuries and study it from the viewpoint of its Roman founders. The evidence, as analyzed in the present study, indicates that for the most part the builders of Aelia forsook the boundaries of the old city, which lay in ruins, much of its grounds sprinkled with broken walls, fallen columns, and debris. They reconfigured the spatial organization and designed

\(^{85}\) Meshorer, *City Coins*, pp. 48–52.
their colony in an innovative urban setting, with the municipal centers, traffic arteries, temples and other architectonic elements joining together to form its new shape.

According to the reconstruction suggested here (map 2), Aelia was a relatively small, unwalled colony with monumental, triumphal-style, entrance structures marking its limits: Damascus Gate to the north, the Ecce Homo arch to the east, most probably also a gate to the west near the site of the present-day Jaffa Gate and perhaps a southern gate as well. Due to inconclusive information, the structure and extent of the city in its early stages, especially in the southern part, are rather vague. But even without determining the southern portion precisely, it may be safely concluded that the city's area stretched over approximately 75 to 125 acres. On the one hand, these are relatively small measures compared to the large metropolis of Jerusalem during the late Second Temple period or to the city's later size in the Byzantine era. On the other hand, there have been times when Jerusalem's dimensions were even more modest. In comparison with other cities and colonies that were founded at the same time in various parts of the Roman Empire, Aelia should be considered among such middle-sized settlements, as Camulodunum, which extended over approximately 110 acres, but it was larger than various cities in Asia Minor or Timгад, which at the time of their inception covered only about 30 acres.

Naturally, the settlement in Jerusalem was not confined to the official city limits, and, as the population grew, the territories expanded outward. The therapeutic installation under the patronage of Asclepius operated northeast of the city, and some sorts of buildings were constructed south of the ruined Temple enclosure. Here too the urban dynamics of Jerusalem were not unprecedented but followed a common pattern of urban growth, with parallels all over the Roman Empire. In Timгад,

The calculations about the city's area were carried out by M. Broshi, "Estimating the Population of Ancient Jerusalem," BAREv, 4:2 (1978), pp. 10–15. My inference about the small size of the colony agrees with that of other recent scholars, who nevertheless reconstructed the contour of the city differently; see, e.g.: Bar, "Aelia"; Wightman, The Walls, pp. 196–197. As far as I know, the only study that comes to almost exactly the same conclusion as mine is that of B. Lifshitz, "Jérusalem sous la domination romaine: Histoire de la ville depuis la conquête de Pompée jusqu'à Constantin (63 a. C. – 325 p. C.)," ANRW II 8 (1977), p. 484, who claims about Aelia: "Le tracé de l'enceinte de la colonie laissait en dehors de la ville le Bézétha, l'esplanade du Temple, l'Ophel et le quartier du Cénacle."

for example, the westward expansion of the city included the construction of an arch, an external square, a market structure (the markets of Sertius), a temple, and a fountain, as well as an external gate intended to mark the boundary of the expanded area, some 900 feet from the city wall. Another example closer to Jerusalem was the growth of Caesarea, on the Mediterranean coast of Palestine, beyond the city walls of the Roman city. This process extended so far that in the Byzantine period it became necessary to build new city walls to enclose the area outside of the old walls. A similar process occurred in Jerusalem, and over the years a larger territory, to be encircled by the Byzantine fortification system, swallowed Aelia’s original grounds.

And where was the Temple Mount in all this? The religious and economic center of the new city inhabited the heart of the Roman colony, on the northwestern hill, in the area of the present-day Christian quarter. The forum and the city temples were situated there. The Temple Mount was not part of this newly shaped reality. The Romans redesigning the city had no need for this enclosure, which was overflowing with rubble, and it remained desolate, outside the limits of the colony.

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Map 1

Contemporary Old City of Jerusalem

1. Porta Neapolitana
2. Ecce Homo Arch and Lithostrotos
3. Sisters of Zion Convent
4. Monastery of Flagellation
5. Church of the Holy Sepulcher
6. Russian Hospice
7. Church of Saint Ann
8. Probatica Pool (Bathesda)
9. Ottoman Citadel, "Tower of David"
10. Siloam Pool
11. Remnants of Roman Bath
12. Armenian Gardens
13. Robinson's Arch
14. Wilson's Arch