

rava una precedente area necropolare, atto sacrilego, ma andava ad interessare una zona su cui erano già state compiute operazioni di bonifica che avevano occultato, almeno in parte, le sepolture. L'analisi compiuta dall'A. evidenzia, infine, una concentrazione nell'area di testimonianze della presenza di culti orientali: essi vengono messi in relazione con la presenza nella zona di *castra*. Le forme di cultualità provenienti dall'Oriente sarebbero state importate dai soldati e avrebbero trovato veloce diffusione nell'area proprio in virtù della sua natura residenziale nella quale forte era la presenza di comunità straniere.

Il volume di E. Marroni nel suo complesso si presenta ricco di spunti di riflessione e si distingue per la capacità di utilizzare testimonianze di matrice eterogenea nella ricostruzione della natura

dei culti e delle aree sacre dell'Esquilino. Esso costituisce un fondamentale strumento di lavoro per gli studiosi che vogliano affrontare sia l'analisi delle principali tematiche relative all'ambito culturale sia quelle inerenti la ricostruzione topografica dell'area e i rinvenimenti archeologici ad essa pertinenti. Se alcune interpretazioni, soprattutto collegate al ciclo calendariale femminile risultano non completamente condivisibili poiché travalicano il dettato delle fonti per inserirlo in una struttura interpretativa predefinita, tuttavia, merito principale del lavoro dell'A. è quello di offrire un valido contributo al dibattito e di sollecitare la discussione su tematiche fondamentali per la ricostruzione di Roma antica.

*Alessandra Valentini*

ASHER OVADIAH, YEHUDIT TURNHEIM

## ROMAN TEMPLES, SHRINES AND TEMENE IN ISRAEL

(Supplementi alla «Rivista di Archeologia» XXX), Roma, Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 2011, pp. 155, pls. 78. ISBN 978-88-7689-258-5

It would be no exaggeration to assume that there were hundreds of temples erected in Israel during the period in which the Romans ruled this strip of land, extending from the first century BCE until the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century. The temples, built mostly within wide-spaced and impressive sanctuaries, stood alongside bathhouses, fortresses and administration buildings as imposing and monumental constructions which symbolized above all the loyalty of the Kingdom of Iudaea during Herodian times, and later on as Provincia Iudaea and Provincia Syria-Palaestinae, to Roman rule.

Scores of temples among these, presumed hundreds, have been mentioned in various historical and literary sources or were described even if only schematically on coins.

However, only a few of these Roman period temples have survived in a condition that allows for their exact architectural reconstruction. Indeed, the authors of this book, Professor Asher Ovadiah and Dr. Yehudit Turnheim of Tel Aviv University, have done well to note in their Preface how great was the devastation that had fallen upon the Roman temples

in Israel with the rise of Christianity, not to mention the decay and erosion that were caused and still continue to be caused by natural agencies, such as earthquakes, besides the destruction due to the robbery of construction stones. All this has led to the fact that, in the book under review, the Roman temples, described on the basis of their architectural remains, do not exceed fifteen in number.

This small residual sum of Roman temples that survived in Israel stands out even more conspicuously against a background of the far greater number of excellently preserved temples in Lebanon and Syria. It would not be difficult to point out the reason for this situation. The sparsely populated mountains of Lebanon, the distance of this region from urban centers, and the almost total abandonment of the region during the Middle Ages, is sufficient to explain the marvellous preservation of Roman temples in this area (D. Krencker, W. Zschietzschmann, *Römische Tempel in Syrien*, I-II, Berlin und Leipzig, 1938). Another example for the wondrous preservation of Roman temples in Syria is Palmyra, which is located about 200 km to the east of Damascus. In this famous caravan city four sanctuaries

with their temples have survived in a superb state of preservation (On the Sanctuary of Bel, see: H. Seyrig, R. Amy, E. Will, *Le temple de Bel a Palmyre*, Paris, 1975. On the Sanctuary of Baal Shamin see: P. Collart, P. Coupel, *Le sanctuaire de Baalshamin a Palmyre, vols I-II (Topographie et Architecture)*, Rome, 1971. On the Sanctuary of Allat, see: M. Gawlikowski, *Les Principia de Diocletien (Palmyre 8)*, Warsaw, 1984. On the Sanctuary of Nabu, see: A. Bouni, *Le Sanctuaire de Nabu a Palmyre (Texte)*, Beyrouth, 2004).

The book is divided into two distinct parts. In the first part the discussion focuses on the sanctuaries and temples that have enough archaeological remains to allow for architectural analysis. The authors decided for their own reasons not to separate the discussion between sanctuaries and temples and so both are surveyed together. For example, the third chapter deals with the sanctuary and temple of Baal Shamin in Kedesh, in Upper Galilee, while the fourth chapter discusses the remains of four temples that were researched in area of Beth Shean, which is Roman Scythopolis. As said earlier, the analysis covers fifteen temples in all.

The second part of the book includes a discussion of fourteen temples, the information for which is not based on archaeological evidence but on historical, literary, epigraphic and numismatic sources. The two parts of the book are thus essentially quite different.

We shall focus initially on the first of the two main parts of the book. A glance at the list of the sanctuaries and temples that are described here shows clearly how varied and dissimilar they are. Besides this, there is the added difficulty in that some of the temples were excavated, such as the Baal Shamin temple in Kedesh, while some have hardly ever been excavated, as for instance Elijah's Cave on Mount Carmel.

Moreover, a number of sanctuaries and temples, such as the temples in Paneas (Baniyas), were in fact excavated but no reports on them have yet been published, while the temple in Omrit is still in the process of being excavated. The same applies to three out of the four temples that have so far been excavated in Beth Shean (Scythopolis). These examples are sufficient to indicate the enormous difficulties faced by the authors in their attempt to present a balanced picture of Roman cultic architecture in Israel. It seems to me that it is this situation which has led the authors to the conclusion that it would not be advisable to try and construct

a typology of the temples and sanctuaries. Nevertheless, they have utilized all the available information, whether archaeological, historical or numismatic, in order to portray as far as possible a clear and reliable picture of the temples and sanctuaries described in the book.

In the first part there is a detailed description of the Temple of Baal Shamin at Kedesh in the Upper Galilee. This impressive temple was excavated by a team of the University of Tel Aviv headed by Prof. Asher Ovadiah (A. Ovadiah *et al.*, *The Roman Temple at Kedesh, Upper Galilee: A Preliminary Study*, Tel Aviv 11, 1984, pp. 146-172). It is so far the only Roman temple in Israel that has been preserved in a satisfactory state and that has been both excavated and published.

All the temples and shrines dedicated to Pan and to other gods which are situated at the foot of the cave in Paneas (Baniyas) form a fascinating complex, but the findings of their excavation that has already ended more than ten years ago have not yet been published. The excellent description of this unique complex, as presented by Prof. Asher Ovadiah and Dr. Yehudit Turnheim, is therefore based on preliminary reports that have so far appeared and on an analysis of the historical, epigraphic and numismatic sources (Z. U. Ma'oz, *Baniyas in the Graeco-Roman Period: A History Based on the Excavations*, Archaeostyle Scientific Research Series 3, Qazrin, 2007).

In the sanctuary in Omrit in Upper Galilee which, in the past few years, has been in the process of being excavated by a team from the United States, three temples were discovered. Superimposed on the earliest temple was a second temple which was then expanded into a third temple (A. Overman, «Horvat Omrit», in E. Stern (ed.), *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, V, Jerusalem, 2008, pp. 1987-1989). According to the excavators, the more ancient one of the three temples was erected in the first century BCE, perhaps in Herodian times.

The second temple, which had a tetrastylon-prostylon plan, belonged to the end of the first century BCE or the beginning of the first century CE, while the third temple (hexastylon-peripteron) which was an expansion of its predecessor, was constructed in the second century CE. In spite of the fact that the excavation at the site is still in process and far from being completed, there is no doubt that we have here the most impressive complex of Roman temples that have ever been found in Israel.

In Chapters VII and VIII there is a description

of two temples erected in the first century by Herod in honor of Emperor Augustus. These are the Augusteum in Samaria-Sebaste and the Augusteum in Caesarea Maritima. In spite of the very few remains that were found in the temple of Augustus in Caesarea, the authors managed to present a convincing picture of the sanctuary, that had been built on an artificial platform above the port, and to reconstruct the appearance of the temple, based on the extremely poor findings of wall segments in the temple foundations and the few items of architectural decorations that were unearthed in the excavations at that site.

A little more has remained of the Augusteum in Samaria-Sebaste. The temple stood within a magnificent sanctuary at the highest point in the city. Despite the fact that the sanctuary and temple were excavated by two teams, an American and a British one, during the first half of the 20th century, and were published, the researchers are still in disagreement over the stages of construction and plan of the temple (G. A. Reisner, C. S. Fisher, D. G. Lyon, *Harvard Excavations at Samaria, 1908-1910*, I-II, Cambridge, Mass., 1924; J. W. Crowfoot, K. M. Kenyon, E. L. Sukenik, *The Buildings at Samaria*, I, London, 1942; E. Netzer, *The Augusteum at Samaria-Sebaste: A New Outlook*, *Eretz Israel* 19, 1987, pp. 97-105).

Of the temple of Zeus Hypsistos, excavated in Tell er-Ras on Mt. Gerizim above the city of Shechem, not much remains. However, a wealth of historical sources and valuable numismatic information together with the excavation findings allow for a reconstruction of the plans for the sanctuary and the temple (I. Magen, *Flavia-Neapolis, Shechem in the Roman Period*, Jerusalem, 2005; *Idem*, *Mount Gerizim*, in E. Stern (ed.), *New Encyclopedia of the Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem, 1993, vol. 2, pp. 488-490). This temple, which apparently had a tetrastylon-prostylon plan, was placed within a rectangular sanctuary built on two levels. A processional road, the *Via Sacra*, which led towards the sanctuary, was constructed mostly by stairs that ascended in a direct line over the steep slope of the mountain. The *Via Sacra* branched off from the main colonnaded street in the city and led up towards the sanctuary at the top of the mountain.

With regard to four temples: the Temple of Zeus/Jupiter, the Temple of Aphrodite/Venus, the Temple of Asclepius/Serapis and the Temple of Tyche/Fortuna, which were erected in Jerusalem when

Aelia Capitolina was founded in 130 CE, we derive our information about them mainly from historical, literary and numismatic sources, since very few archaeological remains exist. In view of this, it may have been more appropriate to include the concise but carefully detailed discussion on these temples in the second part of the book.

The first part of the book concludes with the discussion about the two *temene*, the one in Elonei Mamre near Hebron and the sanctuary of Me'arat Hamachpelah (Tombs of the Patriarchs) in Hebron (L. H. Vincent, E. J. H. Mackey, *Hebron: Le Haram el-Khalil*, Paris, 1923; I. Magen, *Mamre*, in E. Stern (ed.), *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem, 1993, vol. 3, pp. 939-942). These two *temene* were built at the end of the first century CE, apparently during the reign of Herod, at the same time as the temples in honor of Augustus were erected in Samaria and Caesarea. Yet there is no connection or similarity between these temples and the *temene* built in Elonei Mamre and Hebron.

These *temene* were merely rectangular plazas bordered by solid stone walls built of large ashlar. The walls of each *temene* enclosed the unroofed plazas in which thousands of worshippers could gather for communal ceremonies and prayer. The two *temene*, although built during the days of Herod, which means during Roman times, derived their inspiration and design from ancient traditions of Eastern origins.

In the second part of the book, which the authors entitled *Varia*, thirteen sites were surveyed, arranged in accordance with their geographical location from north to south, wherever evidence could be found for the existence of temples. Such evidence was mainly based on historical, literary or numismatic sources, but it also included temples such as the one in Hippos-Sussita, for which there is indisputable archaeological confirmation. The descriptions of the temples in this part of the book are concise and pinpointed, but like the descriptions in the first part, they also excel in their precise and scientific scholarship based on historical, epigraphic and numismatic sources.

The Epilogue concludes both parts of the book. The importance of this brief conclusion, which covers only six pages, lies mainly in its analysis of the different types of sources, from which the authors had derived their vast and varied information.

Listed here are also the names of eighteen gods,

to whom the sanctuaries and temples described in the book were dedicated. Finally, a rich bibliography and 128 plates were appended. It is needless to emphasize how important such illustrations are for a work concerning architecture, and these plates do indeed admirably complement what is said in the text. Many of the illustrations were photographs that were taken by the authors, and several appear here for the first time.

The book before us is a pioneer work of research that has greatly contributed to the study of the material culture of the Land of Israel during the Roman period in general and in the study of cultic architecture in particular. This is the first book that deals with the architecture of temples that were erected in this region of the Roman Empire.

The poor state of preservation in which the temples and sanctuaries were found, the limited number

of excavations and the very partial quantity of publications about the temples that were excavated have all posed formidable difficulties on the authors to present a reliable and comprehensive picture of Roman cultic construction in Israel.

Thanks to the excellent utilization of scholarly and scientific methods based upon a wealth of historical, literary and legal sources and on the basis of epigraphic and numismatic finds, the authors have succeeded in supplementing to a great extent what could not be learnt from the architectural finds.

We can only hope that this pioneering study will prove to be a source of inspiration and encouragement in advancing the archaeological enterprise and lead to an increased number of excavations in sanctuaries and temples that still await discovery.

*Arthur Segal*

## L'ABITATO, LA NECROPOLI, IL MONASTERO. EVOLUZIONE DI UN COMPARTO DEL SUBURBIO MILANESE ALLA LUCE DEGLI SCAVI NEI CORTILI DELL'UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA

A cura di Silvia Lusuardi Siena, Maria Pia Rossignani, Marco Sannazaro

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Questa pubblicazione, apparentemente di tono minore, rappresenta la sintesi finale di una serie di pubblicazioni e di attività di scavo iniziate nel 1986 e terminate nel 2004. Si presenta come una messa a punto di nuovi studi e nuove interpretazioni, e ripercorre le tappe dei diversi eventi, che hanno visto il popolamento di questo settore extraurbano di Milano e il sorgere in veloce successione di attività economiche connesse non più soltanto con il lavoro agricolo, ma anche con attività di tipo artigianale per la fabbricazione di oggetti in metallo e in vetro, per l'estrazione di materiali per l'edilizia. Il "racconto" archeologico prosegue ancora seguendo tutte le trasformazioni di occupazione del territorio fino a comprendere la costituzione del monastero di S. Ambrogio e l'età attuale. Ci si presenta davanti agli occhi uno spaccato archeologico dell'area suburbana sud-occidentale della città, emerso dagli scavi effettuati nei cortili dell'Università Cattolica, che vuole essere uno sguardo d'insieme e nello stesso tempo una sintesi di ricerche decennali che

hanno avuto peraltro negli anni passati esiti editoriali in monografie, articoli, atti di Convegni (1999, 2000, 2001), seminari.

Vi sono alcuni aspetti metodologici importanti che vanno preliminarmente sottolineati:

1. Mi sembra apprezzabile non aver voluto presentare solo una parte dell'evoluzione storica di quest'area e cioè o solo quella antica, o solo quella medievale e post-medievale, ma di aver compreso nella parabola del suo sviluppo tutte le vicende che dall'età preromana, romana e tardo-antica hanno portato alla realizzazione di impianti rustici, alla attuazione di imprese artigianali, alla trasformazione della zona in necropoli, fino alla costruzione del monastero di S. Ambrogio e ancora più in là col tempo alla sua trasformazione in ospedale militare e poi in sede universitaria, seguendo un arco cronologico amplissimo che attraverso i primi secoli della romanizzazione giunge ai nostri giorni, superando la frammentarietà della documentazione.